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Aesthetics in Walt Whitman's *Song of Myself*

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Letter of Recommendation

Mr. Ashish Basnet has completed his thesis entitled “Aesthetics in Walt Whitman's *Song of Myself*” under my supervision. I hereby recommend his thesis to be submitted for viva voce.

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Letter of Approval

This thesis entitled “Aesthetics in Walt Whitman’s Song of Myself”,
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Abstract

This thesis argues in poem *Song of Myself* by Whitman the ethic and value to provide an enriched experience to the reader mobilizes aesthetics. The aesthetic experience in the poem *Song of Myself* comes from firstly, the poem being an autonomous entity enriched with a veracity of creative apprenticeship, secondly; the poem with the mould of inhibiting the intactness intricately woven to fathom authenticity, thirdly; a mature handling of craft ship for the sake of the art, fourthly the patience to adhere a work of an art and the pleasure derived from such work crafting it. The thesis uses tools of aesthetics from Kantian notion of disinterestedness: as a contemplative attention without any personal stake on art into representation. Hegelian conception of historical dialectics with art as a complete process not open to future innovation. Ranciere's notion into politics of aesthetics in history, Santayana's notion on sanity of judgment and distinction of taste in poetry and Adorno's notion of aesthetic dialectics.

Aesthetics in Walt Whitman's *Song of Myself*

Aesthetics in general means a philosophical branch, which deals with beauty. Aesthetics here not only is presupposed to be in creation, it also refers to the consumption and its vital experience to stir the stimulus in the senses of the receptor. These sensation of experiences have been captivated by Whitman in his poem *Song Of Myself*. It is possible for oneself to diminish into the art of poetry and its aesthetics. Similarly, Aesthetics is about study of beauty and taste in philosophy, the forfeiture of the art of poetry has been questioned by the intellectuals of different generation. Every artist have their own response reposed to their own aesthetic belief seeing poetry as a form of art. Similarly, Whitman has his own aesthetics in the work of poetry *Song of Myself*. The hypothesis here is that poetry elevates and gives a liberty of soul to the artist from its expression and also poetry salvages the reader in its essentially artistic beauty. Thus, the tool used here is the tool of aesthetics to view the poetry of Walt Whitman and his poem *Song of Myself*.

Walt Whitman's poetry when seen from the lenses of aesthetics justifies the beauty in poetry and in expression of such art. Poetry is an art in which expressions of emotion are controlled through words by the precision of language and vagueness of compassion. In such way beauty of poetry enthralls to feel compassion for other humans which is also one of the very beauty of this art.

Walt Whitman has been known as the father of free verse and a transcendental poet. While his aesthetics has been discarded. Thus the research work intends to clarify how Walt Whitman has used his own aesthetics to enunciate such poetry which has a highly influential stigma in his poem *Song of Myself* in a subtle stimulating form.

Aesthetical branch of philosophy has yet not been distained in poetry of Whitman. Ezra Pound states Whitman's Poetry as, "The expression of certain things related to cosmic consciousness seems tainted with this maramis" (9). Moreover, for Carl F. Strauch, Whitman furnished spiritual expression of experiences and imagination with grand "Pictorial talent" is a hard long practiced skill and well achieved accomplishment in originality in an art of poetry. With his own interior melody, "a melody of the soul" harmonious with a mystical force the soul is the source of the poets knowledge built on his own "cognitive dissonance" (Strauch 53). Jason Frank views Whitman's *Song of Myself* as Whitman's aesthetic democracy. While the current research focuses on aesthetics from continental philosophy.

Mustaq Ur Rehman explores poetry of Whitman rejected the conventional form as he, "dispensed with cramping limitations of poetic metre, rhyme-scheme, stanza-pattern, elaborate similes and puerile drapery in his poetry" (249). For Rehman Whitman tried using vernacular language rather than the language of elitist in the then America. Nevertheless the appeal was not only to the general audiences it was also to the audiences all over the world.

As Betsy Erkilli remarks in *Whitman the Political poet*, "Whitman sounds a cry of revolt that is implicit in the design" (5). Erkilli means the poet broke the traditional format of following a format and as a revolt to art form creates his own revolutionary formation in poetry, where even the common people held a part in his poetic expression. In this way, Whitman's poetry has been a concern to many thinkers in their own way as per the perception of the art of poetry is concerned with the emotional enactment into the mind of the scholar.

This thesis deals with aesthetics from continental philosophy ranging from Hegel to Santayana and also few modernist aestheticians. The nature and beauty of

poetry carries the artist away from the real world. Thus this being away from the real world, can be considered as a fiddle to life, in which there is the apparatus of aesthetics in poetry. The aesthetics of poetry remains to be an irrevocable art; for the artists who search for aesthetics in art, it also becomes a mode to express such experiences. Poetry is one form which represents such experiences of poets expression, delivered in language, which endeavors a task of finding beauty in futile experiences of life. Thus a poet is seeking for aesthetics in such expression of experiences through poetry.

As Whitman writes, "Houses and rooms are full of perfumes, the shelves are crowded/ with perfumes,/ I breathe the fragrance myself and know it and like it,/ The distillation would intoxicate me also, but I shall not let it" (27). The poet is in love with the perfume in the shelves. The poem of Walt Whitman *Song of Myself* carries aesthetics which emphasizes the taste of the poet and his concern into self and world around him. For the poet it is in himself he finds the very aesthetics and this own dwelling to his innermost self and the nature is his aesthetics. For the experience of aesthetic lies in the reception of the world and so does the poet receive through his senses - the sensation which he finds has an aesthetic quality. Immanuel Kant in antinomy of taste highlights, "the archetype of taste, is a mere idea. An idea which everyone must generate within himself and by which he must judge any object of taste" (79). So is the idea of taste developed by Whitman as he claims the poetry to be his own song and self. Whitman finds aesthetics in such gustatory natured things.

Furthermore, the poet writes, "Stop this day and night with me and you shall possess the origin of all poems" (28). Immanuel Kant notes about the receptors taste in his book *Critique of Judgement* in a chapter dealing "On the Ideal of beauty" : "There can be no objective rule of taste, no rule of taste that determines by concepts

what is beautiful. For any judgment . . . is the subject's feeling and not the concept of an object" (79). As the poetry of Whitman is his own feeling and taste of his own feelings are besmeared in his poetry as an art with beauty. In such art there is a point for Whitman from which a poetry originates and this poet's aesthetics of a poem being personified as an art, is what makes Whitman craft an aesthetics of his own from his self. Nevertheless for Whitman taking things in freshness is aesthetics as he writes, "You shall possess the good of the earth and sun . . . You shall no longer take things at second or third hand" (28). Here freshness of an art is necessity for the poet to create an aesthetic effect in an art of poetry. Thus Whitman means to understand the origin of a poem is to indulge in such unsullied experiences from life itself.

Similarly aesthetics can be found from the tradition of experiences too. About experience and perception of an American society existing then. Walt Whitman writes, "The blab of the pave, tires of carts, sluff of boot-soles, talk of the/ promenaders,/ The heavy omnibus, the driver with his interrogating thumb, the/ clank of the shod horses on the granite floor, The snow-sleighs . . ." (33). Immanuel Kant in his book *Critique of pure reason* writes, "There can be no doubt that all our knowledge begins with experience" (37). Whitman's experience in sensibility to life in the experiences of aesthetics comes from his knowledge of society which existed in that time period. Whitman writes, "The flap of the curtain'd litter, a sick man inside borne to the/ hospital, The meeting of enemies, the sudden oath, the blows and fall,/ The excited crowd, the policeman" (33). Likewise these experiences of sight are noted down clearly by Whitman from the consign of his experience. These are details of people which provide us with an idea, how Whitman represents such experiences in his art of poetry. Whitman does not create a sense of disgust to these feature of life rather glorifies these little fiddles of human as an aesthetic life holds in such occurrence of phenomenon.

Whitman in his precise observation of daily details finds an aesthetics when he stares upon the work of a butcher boy and notes, "The butcher-boy puts off his killing-clothes, or sharpens his knife at/ the stall in the market" (36). Similarly, Whitman notices blacksmith too creating heat in fire on which he writes, "Blacksmiths with grimed and hairy chests environ the anvil,/ Each has his main-sledge, they are all out, there is a great heat in the fire" (36). Whitman follows both their movements and notes how in their work they hold an aesthetics, "The lithe sheer of their waists plays even with their massive arms,/ Overhand the hammers swing, overhand so slow, overhand so sure,/ They do not hasten, each man hits in his place" (36). For Whitman their exact intuition and precise movement carries an aesthetics which compels for the poet to wait and observe their task in detail. Whitman describes it with his free verse the beauty of everyday life the common people hold and which goes unnoticed.

As Jacques Ranciere notes in *The Politics of Aesthetics* about the implication of aesthetics, "artistic practices are ways of doing and making that intervene in the general distribution of ways of doing and making as well as in the relationships they maintain to modes of being and forms of visibility" (8). Similarly, Whitman has an originality of his self expression which intervenes in the way of making a poem using a free verse with his own originality and visibility. Whitman's poetry consists of his own originality in free verse.

In his poetry Whitman brings these subordinating pictures of the lively beauty life holds from the act of living. The beauty of color from the very perception of his senses, which he brings amalgamates in readers a beauty from the eyes of the poet himself. In the poem *Song of Myself* Whitman writes:

I believe in those wing'd purposes,

And acknowledge red, yellow, white, playing within me,
 And consider green and violet and the tufted crown intentional,
 And do not call the tortoise unworthy because she is not something
 else,
 And the jay in the woods never studied the gamut, yet trills pretty well
 to me,
 And the look of the bay mare shames silliness out of me. (37)

Here Whitman knows from the sensibility of his eyes, the colors from which he chooses different colors in his poem. This playing of colors within him to make him fly in the flight of experience. Whitman believes the beauty of tortoise does not lie in its slowness, it lies in its calmness. The sense of sound created by a bird jay is natural aesthetics, which poet believes exists naturally without being taught by anyone. The looks of the mare (female horse) creates in the poet an inner silliness out from the beauty it upholds in resemblance to power. The poet arranges from the three elements of air: jay bird, from earth: bay mare, from water: tortoise - to assert the aesthetics of being into this world. How every creatures are special in themselves to create sensibility to human experiences from its beauty incomprehensible in any form. Similarly we can find the calmness of turtle, natural melody of jay bird and power of mare as his poetry is authentic experience from his sensory drawn from the pleasure of observing such phenomenon. So this ability to see the better part of human existential value per se is aesthetics poet Whitman utilizes with full sensibility to sensationalize his readers senses. Whitman's taste of beauty lies in incorporating these all beautiful elements of water, earth and fire in a fugitive of aesthetics arranged in his poetry per se.

As in his book *The Sense of Beauty* George Santayana notes about pleasure, "Had our perceptions no connexion with our pleasures, we should soon close our eyes on this world; if our intelligence were of no service to our passions (4). Whitman is such sensitive observer who takes pleasure from his observation, and becomes maxim to his passion (art of poetry) inserting an aesthetics from authentic experiences of life. These experiences of pleasure in such modes of life in being is his authenticity.

Whitman writes in an exotic form the experiences he enamors from the outdoors of life which provides a vital role in the expression of poetry as an art from his finitude, "I am enamour'd of growing out-doors,/ Of men that live among cattle or taste of the ocean or woods,/ Of the builders and steerers of ships and wielders of axes and/ mauls, and the drivers of horses,/ I can eat and sleep with them . . ." (37). Whitman finds pleasure and passion from the charm of being among cattles, ocean, woods. Whitman knows how the wood has an immense beauty for humans intelligence to build ships and axes. These beauty of such transformation of a matter into different form with various function is felt by the poet as a nature's service to human kind to which the poet appears sensible. Similarly, Hegel writes in his *Aesthetic Lectures in fine arts*, "sensuous must indeed be present in the work of art, but should appear only as the surface and as a pure appearance of the sensuous" (38). These sensuous images are captured by Whitman in his poem *Song of Myself* which comprehends into an aesthetic maneuver to portray beauty of daily life from his experiences. Poet does this from his observation and his art of poetry to reintegrate the ethereal sense of beauty from his memory.

Moreover, Whitman writes the aesthetics people gain from such trivial experiences in ordinary life, "the pure contralto sings in the organ loft,/ The carpenter dresses his plank, the tongue of his foreplane whistles/ its wild ascending lisp," (38).

These common people get lost in such beauties of everyday common experiences which is portrayed by Whitman in his poem *Song of Myself*. The experience of aesthetic lies in the reception as Immanuel Kant notes in *Critique of Pure Reason*, "The capacity (receptivity) to acquire representations through the way in which we are affected by objects is called sensibility. Objects are therefore given to us by means of sensibility . . ." (172). For a poet this intense heightened sensation which remark in perception have deeper meaning of aesthetic beauty; comprehending in the art of poetry.

Whitman captures everyday life from the common people to President in power. Whitman finds their own everyday futile experiences to have an aesthetic quality, for which he brings the experiences from peddler to President. Everyone has his/her own features which holds beauty which can be observed in their daily life affairs. Whitman tries capturing these observations through his senses to note how everyone are busy in their own life and can still be happy in suffering. These observations of poet going on through his senses has more insinuating deeper meaning. These reflections itself from his memories come from the experiences of the poet with sensibility to fellow beings. In *The Sense of Beauty* George Santayana states, "The poets and philosophers who express this aesthetic experience . . . do a greater service to mankind and deserve higher honour than the discoverers of historical truth" (6). This reflection itself carries the enigma of being into the chasm of *erlebnis*. Such poetry comes from the brilliance of poets mind. To constitute such experiences, to create an artwork is a poet's aesthetic capability. While *erlebnis* in German is experiences and *erfahrung* is experience we can say the poetry of Whitman carries such aesthetics of *erlebnis* in a work of an art.

Whitman portrays everyday triviality in his musical chasm, as he writes, "The pilot seizes the king-pin, he heaves down with a strong arm,/ The mate stands braced in the whale-boat, lance and harpoon are/ ready, The duck-shooter walks by silent and cautious stretches, The deacons are ordain'd with cross'd hands . . ." (38). Dewitt H. Parker in his book *Principles of Aesthetics* writes, "For the best poems achieve a synthesis of the elements of words,--they are at once musical and imaginative and thoughtful. Yet with difficulty" (76). The imagination is what creates an aesthetic experience to the receptor. In a sense they provide a getaway from the ordinary life. This getaway is a gateway to the aesthetics of an art. Similarly poetry of Whitman has such musical enchant which echoes from the depth of his experience of aesthetics.

G. W. F. Hegel's *Aesthetic: Lectures on Fine Arts* highlights "art which sets truth before our minds in the mode of sensuous configuration . . . which in this its appearance has itself a loftier, deeper sense and meaning" (101). Like an art creating a sensation which in itself is an aesthetic appeal. Aesthetics cannot be seen it can only be felt like an air cannot be seen but felt. So is aesthetics, which can only be felt through the sensuous upheaval it creates in our senses. Whitman writes from this trivial experiences: "And such as it is to be of these more or less I am,/ And of these one and all I weave the song of myself" (40). Whitman feels such aesthetics in such visibility in life of people in their small things. As happiness and aesthetics lies in small things in life; which have more greater and deeper meaning.

Whitman identifies himself into the position of other to feel such experiences with sensibility. As he writes, "I am of old and young, of the foolish as much as the wise,/ Regardless of others, ever regardful of others,/ Maternal as well as paternal, a child as well as a man . . ." (40). These aesthetic of experiences comes from his sensibility to other fellow beings with whom he senses to share his life. As George

Santayana in *The Sense of Beauty* notes, "To feel beauty is a better thing than to understand how we come to feel it" (6). It's a poet's task to celebrate life with the fellow beings in its most aesthetic form with his observation to the experiences of fellow humans. So does Whitman in his poem *Song of Myself*. The appreciation of beauty is celebration of common life in its divine attribute.

The aesthetics of poetry is either imagined or experienced by the poet in past that remains in history for future. As Santayana notes in *The Sense of Beauty*, "To have imagination and taste, to love the best, to be carried by the contemplation of nature to a vivid faith in the ideal, all this is more, a great deal more, than any science can hope to be" (6). These building of images into a work of art not only constitutes the poet's memory, it also stimulates future readers' imagination, to provide a taste of Erlebnis of past events in such aesthetic work of an art.

The poetry of Whitman consists of universality the people bear in life. Whitman writes, "This is the grass that grows wherever the land is and the water is,/ This the common air that bathes the globe" (42). He means that the earth grows the same grass wherever the land and water is; also the air is same from which the world purifies. When the middle aged poet wrote of the 'leaves' he wanted to glorify the leaves of grass that is common to others but a tranquility to Whitman's soul. Every aesthetician has a quest of his own kind in the answer of which Whitman finds the beauty of life in its experience. Whitman asks more in depth philosophical question as he expresses the innermost turmoil of his question of being a human, "What is a man anyhow? what am I? what are you?" (42). The beauty of this question in philosophy lies as an apparatus of being; answered by many scholars, academicians, philosophers and poets in their own way. More or less Whitman senses what sagacity of aesthetics in life is, from his etiquette of experiences. Nevertheless, the aesthetics of human lies

in being part of the whole and being also a whole from the parts. This same inquiry of what humans are, has led humans to strive for the deepest core of their consciousness.

As Whitman notes, "In all people I see myself, none more and not one a barley-corn less,/ And the good or bad I say of myself I say of them" (43). The aesthetics of poetry is in appealing to common humans and standing upon a humanitarian stand point in which the poet is totally inclined to repose his situation of being a poet with sensibility upon fellow humans. Theodor W. Adorno notes in *Aesthetic Theory*, "Aesthetic identity seeks to aid non-identical, which in reality is repressed by reality's compulsion" (5). These non-identical is being identical to all for the poet as Whitman believes the aesthetics of being a human is knowing all people are same and the beautiful feature people hold same everywhere is humans ephemeral nature which is itself a compulsion of reality.

The aesthetics of such art in poetry has its intelligibility of echoing the reverberating flow of energy from its very acceptance of human temporality. What is written shall never change. One universal taste the humans encounter is of temporality. To accept the fact we all are same is accepting the aesthetics life yields in its experiences of sensibility. So has Whitman felt as he writes, "I know I am solid and sound,/ To me the converging objects of the universe perpetually flow,/ All are written to me, and I must get what the writing means" (43). Among all these temporality lies the aesthetics of experience the humans should yield out of life. The beauty itself is temporality.

D.H. Parker views aesthetic attempt as an attempt for understanding the "general idea of beautiful objects, our judgments upon them, and the motives underlying the acts which create them,--to raise the aesthetic life, otherwise a matter of instinct and feeling, to the level of intelligence, of understanding" (4). Similarly Whitman's poem *Song of myself* carries in it the instinct and feeling to the level of

intelligence from his art itself. The poetry is a form of an art which articulates emotional experiences from intelligence by providing a structure of words, which has deeper meaning. The elegance of Whitman's poetry upholds such authenticity with beauty.

After accepting the truth of temporality, Whitman shades his light by expressing his own self, "I am the poet of the Body and I am the poet of the Soul,/ The pleasures of heaven are with me and the pains of hell are with/ me,/ The first I graft and increase upon myself, the latter I translate into/ a new tongue" (44). So it is the job of the humans to experience from the shades of life both heaven and hell like a poet translates his sensation of experiences rendered by perception, filtered by cognition, in the eminence of life converting from his intelligence a poetry of an art per se. Dewitt H. Parker notes, "For beautiful things are created by men, not passively discovered, and are made, like other things which men make, in order to realize a purpose" (4). Likewise, the art of poetry is created by men with a vast and vague obscured feelings, expressed in just few words on rhythmic pattern, structure or even freely. While the aesthetics of life for Whitman is having emancipation from experience of expression through artwork per se.

Dewitt H. Parker views, "The work of art is the tool of the aesthetic life" (11). Poetry is a work of an art which is an apparatus to the aesthetics life yields from poet's sensibility into an experience of life. Whitman writes, "All truths wait in all things,/ They neither hasten their own delivery nor resist it . . ." (53). So truth can be found and similarly beauty can also be found if not hastened. For Whitman, poetry is an art per se to measure his aesthetic experience through eloquent expression.

The aesthetic Whitman draws from observing the peaceful and composed life of animals is something Whitman desires to look for a long time. As Whitman notes,

"I think I could turn and live with animals, they are so placid and self-/ contain'd,/ I stand and look at them long and long" (54). Also Whitman finds aesthetics in animals when he writes:

They do not sweat and whine about their condition,
 They do not lie awake in the dark and weep for their sins,
 They do not make me sick discussing their duty to God,
 Not one is dissatisfied, not one is demented with the mania of
 owning things,
 Not one kneels to another, nor to his kind that lived thousands of
 years ago,
 Not one is respectable or unhappy over the whole earth. (54)

For Whitman aesthetics is more understood by animals, which can be observed in their composed environment. There is suffering in life and humans have become slave to sufferings rather than finding aesthetics in life people are busy finding flaws and whining over it. So for the poet it is necessary for humans to live in such encumber of life thus humans should learn from animals rather than being dissatisfied with experiences of life. Sebastian Gardner in *The Blackwell Companion to Philosophy* notes, "A world without aesthetic qualities would be an inferior, if not uninhabitable, world, and a person without any capacity for aesthetic response, if imaginable, would not qualify as a fully developed human being" (231). Therefore, humans should stop whining about inferiority and start living with aesthetic response to life. So Whitman expects to imagine a world of beauty where there are no prejudices in the mind. The world of animals do not have to kneel to another and no one is unhappy. Aesthetic judgment respite on felt objects like animals. The observable qualities of the poem is also a world with aesthetic response in which even animals are made superior and

livable. Thus the aesthetics of being with animals is - it oeuvres some emotions in the poets sensitivity to fill such sensibility to life like animals do. An object to become beautiful needs to surfeit a response to its subject. Similarly, the animals draw Whitman's attention and fills him with bliss. This in itself is aesthetics in the poetry of Whitman in finding animals who never whine of sufferings.

Furthermore the aesthetics in nature is glorified by Whitman as an aesthetic poet in his poem *Songs of Myself*, "growing sugar, over the yellow-flower'd cotton plant, over/ the rice in its low moist field,/ Over the sharp-peak'd farm house, . . . Over the western persimmon, over the long-eav'd corn" (55). Nature is simply which has life in it and has the ability to provide life. Whitman knows how these elements in life has a quality to provide life.

The eminence and quality of such things are mentioned by Whitman in the poem, "buckwheat, a hummer and buzzer there/ with the rest,/ Over the dusky green of the rye as it ripples and shades in the/ breeze . . . Where the quail is whistling betwixt the woods and the wheat-lot . . ." (56). Moreover Whitman mentions, "brook puts out of the roots of the old tree and flows to/ the meadow,/ Where cattle stand and shake away flies with the tremulous/ shuddering of their hides,/ Where the cheesecloth hangs in the kitchen . . ." (56). These all images used by Whitman voluntarily from the womb of his mind has its own aesthetics of nature the poet has found. Theodor W. Adorno once noted in *Aesthetic Theory*, "Aesthetic objectivity, the reflection of the being-in-itself of nature, realizes the subjective teleological element of unity; exclusively thereby do artworks become comparable to nature" (105). The *raison d'être* of Whitman's poetry subsumes in its volatile images of nature which presents aesthetics of its prominence in poetry itself. The teleology of such nature's glorification also provides a way to view aesthetics in what nature gives to us i.e. life

and what makes things appear beautiful in life is also nature. Thus, the work of an art by Whitman produces such teleological inclination towards nature for manifestation of its aesthetics from experiences of nature.

These visually enchanting images of nature are brought through by Whitman selectively in his poetry to provide aesthetics in the art of poetry itself. The poet seems too much obsessed from the nature, which provides and reassures life with the touch of beauty in its own magnitude. Roger Scruton in *Art and Imagination* views that aesthetics deals with mainly two points:

philosophical analysis of an area of human experience, the area involved in our responses to the objects of aesthetic interest. Secondly, philosophers attempt to analyse our judgements about the objects of aesthetic feeling and appreciation. (2)

The beauty of such landscapes are portrayed in his poem which itself provides the peace and ease from its imageries from which humans get aesthetic from its presence.

Whitman writes, "Approaching Manhattan up by the long-stretching island,/ Under Niagara, the cataract falling like a veil over my countenance,/ Upon a doorstep, upon the horse-block of hard wood outside,/ Upon the race-course . . ." (56). We make significance verdict about these matter, and we describe them in a irregular relation to their aesthetic implication. Furthermore, Whitman expresses the adoration of nature via his poetry as he notes, "At he-festivals, with blackguard gibes, ironical license, bull-dances,/ drinking, laughter,/ At the cider-mill tasting the sweets of the brown mash, sucking the/ juice through a straw . . ." (56). The poet finds aesthetics in such indulges of drinking, laughter, tasting brown mash and juices. The poet is clear, "At apple-peelings wanting kisses for all the red fruit I find,/ At musters, beach-parties, friendly bees, huskings, house-raisings . . ." (56). These little gatherings carry

beauty of its own in poets sensibility. In art it is essential to use these heightened sensitivity to show what creates these sensations, which a poet like Whitman tends to make out of his art from the voice of his soul. Roger Scruton thinks, "We must discover what these descriptions and evaluations mean, and how they might be supported if they can be supported at all" (2). Whitman's poetry subsequently provides such understanding of life in experiences of aesthetics described poetically.

Moreover, Whitman notes, "Where the mocking-bird sounds his delicious gurgles, cackles,/ screams, weeps,/ Where the hay-rick stands in the barn-yard, where the dry-stalks/ are scatter'd, where the brood-cow waits in the hovel . . ." (57). We can find the sound of mockingbird crackling, screaming and weeping and images of hay-rick in barnyard. Scattered stalks and brood cows tend to give emphasis on natural things. As Colin Lyas in his books *Aesthetics* puts forth this idea, "Natural and man-made things, as we have seen excite our attention" (17). So Whitman intends to create an art in which the readers are taken into consideration by the free verse and the song of his own self-created from the initiation with a work of patience and passion arranged to carry the spectrum of life, from such definite experiences of the than condition of aesthetics in natures beauty.

In work of an art aesthetics is a necessity. If aesthetics is necessary. How does it come? The artist's very ethics and value to provide an enriched experience to the reader mobilizes it. If the enriched experience comes from the delight of the receiver, The delight in the cognition is what beholds: Firstly, an art as an autonomous entity enriched with a veracity of creative apprentice, secondly; an art with the mould of inhibiting the intactness intricately woven to fathom it's certainty and authenticity, thirdly; a mature handling of craft ship for the sake of the art, fourthly the patience to adhere a work of an art and the pleasure derived from such work crafting it. Whitman

finds delight in such experiences from his memory which are related to nature. Thus it is necessary to note Whitman from *Song of Myself* as his poetry reflects a unity towards nature, "Where the heifers browse, where geese nip their food with short jerks, Where sun-down shadows lengthen over the limitless and lonesome prairie, Where herds of buffalo make a crawling spread of the square mile" (57). As Edmund Burke notes in *A Philosophical Inquiry Into The Origin Of Our Ideas Of The Sublime And Beautiful*, "I call beauty a social quality; for where women and men, and not only they, but when other animals give us a sense of joy and pleasure in beholding them" (24). These all description of cock, hen, heifer, geese, herds of buffalo, prairie which holds all these beings is what creates a sundown aesthetics with its images and beings spread on nature sustaining on the moulds of nature.

Furthermore, describing nature Whitman notes, "Where the humming-bird shimmers, where the neck of the long-/ lived swan is curving and winding,/ Where the laughing-gull scoots by the shore, where she laughs her/ near-human laugh . . . " (57). Jacques Ranciere views, "The aesthetic regime asserts the absolute singularity of art and, at the same time, destroys any pragmatic criterion for isolating this singularity" (19). The natural appreciation of the beings in poem created Whitman's value to prioritize the natural beings around him with a singularity of poetic novelty.

The divine appreciation of Whitman continues in his aesthetic gesture as he further notes, "Where bee-hives range on a gray bench in the garden half hid by/ the high weeds,/ Where band-neck'd partridges roost in a ring on the ground with/ their heads out,/ Where burial coaches enter the arch'd gates of a cemetery . . . " (57). These all beautiful bee-hive, garden half hidden by high weeds which denote life and cemetery which denotes death. Whitman brings this juxtaposition of life and death at

the same time. Where above cemetery life blossoms these all are so called the beauty of aesthetics a life beholds in living and enjoying the bliss of existence in civilization.

Moreover, Whitman notes, "Where winter wolves bark amid wastes of snow and icicled trees,/ Where the yellow-crown'd heron comes to the edge of the marsh at night and feeds upon small crabs/ . . . splash of swimmers and divers cools" (57).

These wolves, icicled trees, heron feeding at night in marsh, swimmers in the warm noon show how life is enjoyed by every being and foremost the poet enjoys such situations finding aesthetics in his nature, which holds all these moments from his memory drawn into a singular work of an art: poetry. The aesthetics of life itself shapes the art of Whitman's poetry. Aesthetics of an art comes from the intuition of an artist pledged by the morality of his soul to create a melody from his self.

Similarly, Whitman uses the poem *Song Of Myself* to encumber such entity from the sensibility of an artist. Jacques Ranciere notes, "It simultaneously establishes the autonomy of art and the identity of its forms with the forms that life uses to shape itself" (19). Beauty lies in the poetry being a form autonomous in its affability nevertheless the work of an art draws from the being itself to assert aesthetics of making an art.

Whitman notes, "Where the katy-did works her chromatic reed on the walnut-tree/ over the well,/ Through patches of citrons and cucumbers with silver-wired leaves,/ Through the salt-lick or orange glade, or under conical firs . . ." (57). These all features of aesthetics in nature makes Whitman's poem conquer beauty in ordinary life which is blessed from the piousness of nature's glory to carry such different beings into a singular canvas of poetic beauty. As the poet writes being pleased by all these feature:

Pleas'd with the native and pleas'd with the foreign, pleas'd with

the new and old,
 Pleas'd with the homely woman as well as the handsome,
 Pleas'd with the quakeress as she puts off her bonnet and talks
 melodiously,
 Pleas'd with the tune of the choir of the whitewash'd church,
 Pleas'd with the earnest words of the sweating Methodist preacher,
 impress'd seriously at the camp-meeting;
 Looking in at the shop-windows of Broadway the whole forenoon,
 flattening the flesh of my nose on the thick plate glass. (57)

Beauty for Whitman lies in both native and foreign, in new and old, homely woman and handsome man. Thus the idea of beauty lies in what makes a person hold a pleasure in which he diminishes in to a task of losing himself or herself in such experiences. These experience is distinctive from other experiences, while genuineness of Whitman's poetry comes from adjoining these features into his poetry by marking a significance in being lost even in the shop-windows of Broadway. Beauty thus exists in nature and man-made things and in the perception of such work. Whitman thus praises man-made things and natural things which resonate a melody to the civilization Whitman lives in.

While aesthetics of Whitman's poetry lies in his appreciation of both high and low art. High art which lies in the Broadway shop window and low art which lies in the nature discarded from humans abundance of pleasure from it. Poet wants the reader to enjoy the mundane experiences of life and when Whitman writes his poetry he conjoins these features in a single appreciable pleasure of bestowing both man-made and natural things. The free verse of Whitman is beautiful in a sense it has both expressive and representative quality in it.

Whitman notes, "Wandering the same afternoon with my face turn'd up to the/ clouds, or down a lane or along the beach"(58). These words itself asserts the aesthetics of afternoon facing the clouds and along the beach. These images are drawn by Whitman in a way to express his ideal view of spending time with nature's graceful beauty. Hegel writes, "The beautiful is the Idea as the immediate unity of the Concept with its reality, the Idea, . . . is present immediately in sensuous and real appearance" (116). Similarly, the taste of beauty for Whitman is the idea of unity with the concept with its reality drawn from real things.

Whitman's thought passes into the constellation of the beauty. The idea of relating one's own self beyond a real affability itself draws a certain resonance for Whitman, as he finds amusement in such spaces beyond the world. It is worth mentioning how Whitman imagines and expresses the beauty which lies even beyond the world. As Whitman flaunts, his imagination has such quality of moving beyond the paradigm of the world. It is evident when Whitman writes:

Speeding through space, speeding through heaven and the stars,
Speeding amid the seven satellites and the broad ring, and the
diameter of eighty thousand miles,
Speeding with tail'd meteors, throwing fire-balls like the rest,
Carrying the crescent child that carries its own full mother in its
belly,
Storming, enjoying, planning, loving, cautioning,
Backing and filling, appearing and disappearing, I tread day and night
such roads. (58)

For Whitman in the stars above the sky amid satellites these all aesthetic features enable us to understand how the space above us is defined in the very poetic detail. To assert such highly artistic free verse, as an art which speaks for art itself. From the

very constellation of beauty lies the adhered attention of Whitman's view into the space of the beyond world holds. An aesthetic judgment is personal and based on universal. While Whitman's imagination moves beyond the passage of nature in earth. The utmost will to move beyond the world for Whitman is evident because there is always a sense of beauty in such pursuit of seeking of the quest: what lies beyond.

Similarly, Whitman's poetry has its aesthetics as it moves from the worldly affairs of people, nature and also clinging to move beyond the worldly materials to something what beyond holds. Similarly, free verse can be taken as a poetry which tries to break such limitation to move into certain rhythm. Rather it wills to break such tradition of poetry to express in rhythm. Free verse is also an art of breaking such boundaries and moving beyond such boundaries. These armistice is also evident in his art, as his art is in free verse moving beyond the rhythm as he asserts the title of his poem *Song of Myself*. We can understand how Whitman creates an art, which is his own melody of inner vibes, which moves beyond the tradition carrying its own aesthetics of appeal, inertly in shift from person, nature to what lies beyond in its art form of poetry.

Whitman writing from the vastness of his memory and experiences, which conjoins to create a highly preserved memories of beauty draws his art of poetry with an aesthetics of experiences from the novices of life. Hans-Georg Gadamer writes in *Truth and Method*, "One has a memory of some things, and not for others; one wants to preserve one thing in memory and banish another" (15). Whitman preserves the aesthetics of life in the form of an art. The art Whitman chooses is of poetry. Poetry is such an art which preserves memories through expression of language constructed from the memory of life or imagination of some sort. The aesthetics of Whitman's poetry lies in the art which speaks for itself.

Similarly Theodor W. Adorno in his book *Aesthetic theory* writes, "Art is the Mnemosyne. The instant of appearance in artworks is indeed the paradoxical unity or the balance between the vanishing and the preserved" (111). Art works have the potentiality to transcend its beauty above human beings afar their purpose and worldly things. Adorno uses the Greek personification of memory in a sense to relate art of poetry has the power to poses memory. For which Adorno proclaims art as Mnemosyne. In Greek mythology it is evident from Zeus and Mnemosyne nine muses were born. Muses in Greek mythology are considered Goddesses of Arts, literature and science. Similarly poetry is also an art which consists of such Mnemosyne collected in the form of words adjourned together. In poetry artwork becomes a precise language which accumulates vast memories, experiences, images, emotions, time and space together. Likewise it is in the work of an art, an artist finds aesthetics and provides aesthetics beyond a certain time in memories it holds.

Furthermore, Whitman writes expressing his memories of visiting the places which has relation to him and his life with an attachment to the memories. Whitman talks about anchoring his ship into freedom. Whitman's art itself renders to seek freedom in poetry. To write a free verse is to seek freedom in the domain of art as if no one is taking control of the artist. It is losing oneself into the wombs of memory preserving the beauty of it in the form of a poetry. He notes:

I visit the orchards of spheres and look at the product,
 And look at quintillions ripen'd and look at quintillions green.
 I fly those flights of a fluid and swallowing soul,
 My course runs below the soundings of plummets.
 I help myself to material and immaterial,
 No guard can shut me off, no law prevent me.
 I anchor my ship for a little while only,

My messengers continually cruise away or bring their returns to
me.

I go hunting polar furs and the seal, leaping chasms with a pike-
pointed staff, clinging to topples of brittle and blue. (58)

Considering the expression of Whitman it is evident to draw from Gordon Graham from his book *Philosophy of the Arts*, "Beauty is subjective, but it is not merely personal, as the expression of a preference is when we refer to something of which we happen to be especially fond – a tune that has personal associations" (18). Whitman is preferring quintillions green meaning the nature has value of quintillions for the poet. Whitman believes to have the flying soul which has no particular place to rest, which seeks aesthetics. Perhaps even more, Whitman prefers both material and immaterial, as both have its aesthetic quality inert into it. The later part, Whitman talks about freedom and the freedom in which there is no law, no restrictions, no boundaries, no limitation, as Whitman finds a primordial unity of aesthetics in hunting polar furs and the seal, clinging to move ahead in fragile blues in these sense the aesthetics lies in a sense what Whitman believes to hold such primordial unity with mankind. As Gordon Graham notes a tune of Whitman has his own personal preferences. Moreover, own taste and own aesthetic values are disposed in subjectivity of an individual's taste.

Whitman also portrays the experience of civil war fought in the then America. For Whitman experience of in between life and death is what entangles the poem altogether. While Martin Heidegger notes in *The Origin of The Work of Art*, "Aesthetics takes the work of art as an object, the object of *aísth sis*, of sensuous apprehension in the wide sense. Today we call this apprehension lived experience" (133). These experiences of Whitman is portrayed in an object of a sensuous poetry *Song of Myself*. As Heidegger notes in *The Origin of The Work of Art*, "The way in which man experiences art is supposed to give information about its essence" (133).

Similarly, the poetry of Whitman carries such essence of himself. In 1856 Whitman called the poem *A Poem of Walt Whitman, an American*. Four years later in 1860 Whitman decided to change the title of the poem and made the title 'Walt Whitman'. It was later in 1881 Walt Whitman decided to make the title of the epic poem as *Song of Myself*. As Whitman expresses in the poetry, "I understand the large hearts of heroes,/ The courage of present times and all times, . . . All this I swallow, it tastes good, I like it well, it becomes mine,/ I am the man, I suffer'd, I was there" (59). So the poetry itself invokes the essence of Whitman's lived experiences in a work of an art: poetry. The concept of beauty may differ from generation to generation although the essence of man (temporality) did not change, so Whitman had decided to make the title of the poem *Song of Myself*.

An art work can be considered to carry aesthetics if it carries in it the semblance of the time period it lives in. Without the semblance of the time period an art can hardly qualify to become great. Moreover, Walt Whitman's *Song of Myself* carries the façade of the history Whitman lived in, which itself is set in the art of Whitman's poetry resonating the time period of the history.

The aesthetics in Walt Whitman's poetry comes from the poet's very own inclination to lean back to life experiences and desires of being in the constellation above from the oeuvre of delicately dismantled America. The poet uses images, objects, plants, animals, space and the perception of society described in an epic poetry of free verse. *Song of Myself* contains in it the very essence of being a man amongst a time period which would define America in years to come.

An artwork is something in which an artist devotes his compassion of memories with the subtle blend of an overwhelming situation in life from the quest of beauty. Whitman in the period of war seeks such aesthetic realm in the very existing appearances. These facades foretells some of the very refined memories with the very distilled intellectual paradigm in an aesthetic praxis.

Poetic beauty is something of an art which consists in it the very motif to evoke humans faculty of sensibility. These sensibility occurring via words contribute to enchant a magnanimous stir of illuminating images, from the memories of the poet itself. The poet using the faculty of intellect and sensibility of emotion adjourns to create a poetic venture into the experiences of life with aesthetics in between the background of civil war.

The poetic journey intends to reach to the reader to create an exotic sphere of American society. Singing from the very soul of his existence Whitman arranges such continuum of poetic aesthetics. Poetry has the potentiality to liberate the poets soul and also the soul of his readers through such aesthetic endeavor to captivate life. Basking in the history, penning down the time, freedom in expression, aesthetics in its teleology, poetry of Whitman ensures the facades in life arranged in beautiful semblance of aesthetic details. *Song of Myself* by Whitman has in its poetic venture a motif to express aesthetics in poets sensibility.

Thus abandoning the worldly affairs, so far crushed to believe there exists some beauty amongst it is the very aesthetics human search in beliefs of several kinds inclined to a single motif i.e. to feel a blissful peace in such beliefs. It is the very search of beauty by humans into different beliefs leading towards one single designation of a higher beauty.

This is evident in Whitman's poem itself:

Lithographing Kronos, Zeus his son, and Hercules his grandson,

Buying drafts of Osiris, Isis, Belus, Brahma, Buddha,

In my portfolio placing Manito loose, Allah on a leaf, the crucifix
engraved,

With Odin and the hideous-faced Mexitli and every idol and
image. (67)

Whitman's very own delight is seen in the existence of multiple beliefs of people which inclines to create an aesthetics from its very profundity and multiplicity. As Jacques Ranciere notes in *The Politics of Aesthetics*, "At the root of this identification there is a specific interpretation of the structural and generative contradiction of aesthetic 'form' . . ." (22). Likewise, in the poem *Song of Myself* endows with it the power to create an aesthetic form by self formation amongst such multiplicity of beliefs created from an aesthetics to adore.

As from the very words of Whitman in *Song of Myself*, "No friend of mine takes his ease in my chair,/ I have no chair, no church, no philosophy" (74).

Whitman's artistic poetic beauty is its very acceptance of differences amongst humans in an ideal form of aesthetic thinking. These paradigm itself is enough to find an urge towards higher beauty from poet himself making the poetry of Whitman too flourish into a retreatment towards a poetic aesthetics, which is multiplicity in humans life. The very essence of poetic beauty in Whitman lies in the very understanding of basic differences and finding pleasure in different beliefs.

Poetry is an art of expression through words about aesthetic experiences of the poet. This experience upholds art in its aesthetics from an authenticity of poetry, when it stands autonomous to other poetry. Thus Whitman through his expression of experiences brings out a unity of time and space with an aesthetics of poetry. In his poetry we find, people, nature, memories, experiences, an urge for freedom, an urge for primordial unity, sense of time and space, humans essence in its temporality, paradox of life and death and multiplicity of beliefs in a singularity of poem.

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