

**Collective Expressions of Aesthetic Leitmotifs: A Study of
Oran Ryan's *Portrait of an Atheist Monk at Prayer***

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Critical studies in the field of humanities always explore the humanistic approaches applied at the different aspects of life. It has been observed that human mind is full of personal, familial, social, economical and political upheavals. Importantly, among all of these, the psychological dominance of interest, preference, and human needs is superior and most required aspect of an individual. However, one has to seek the social satisfaction of one's performance in the different strata of the So, psychological regimentation of individuals ask for a commitment of a person towards society and all other belongings. Famous Irish poet Oran Ryan's books titled *Ten Short Novels by Arthur Kruger*, *The Death of Finn*, and *One Inch Punch* have achieved great distinction in the field of human emotions, values, needs, beliefs and philosophies of life. He has made wonderful efforts to explore the personal, social, economical, political, psychological, scientific and cultural values which bring out an incisive introspection of human life. His new book of poetry titled, *Portrait of an Atheist Monk at Prayer* has a great combination of sharp intensity, deep introspection and virtual consideration about the different aspects of life ranging from different individuals, times and places. This collection exhibits how the vivid consignments of human world keep on changing with the progress of time, situation and allied human associations and worldly formulations.

The poet shows that how the emotional level of a person affects the circumstantial response of the individuals. Oran Ryan in this collection formulates a substantial form which revolves around the emotional, artistic, technically committed by an individual towards the different acts and scenes of a dramatic phase of one's life. Individuals respond to the various moments of life through their ranging psychological commitments and substantial human affiliations which help, guide and

nurse the life and allied events of psychological movements. Ryan's heart touching poem, "My Last Day on Earth" shows the emotional bonds of human mind and life. The poet shares, "You were Daddy to me, you held my hand. And we talked about Joyce Carol Oates, and Mohammed, and the Death of Kings"(07). The effects of memories vary to the transitional acceptance of individuals in forming the trusts of other companions of one's life. Life keeps all the substance in the memories of the individuals.

Oran Ryan further reminds us the kindness we all are blessed in this universe, he sings, "made us laugh, and by four in the day the showers washed the fields, and I said Daddy, Daddy, I love you Daddy (Ryan 7). The poet has more commitments to love and memories. In the poem, "Opus Dei", the poet writes, " And outside that charitable shop we sat, Eating Ices as old men smoked and read, Wondering what our time would be like, We talked about death as we passed the Pieta" (Ryan 12). The human bonds of souls are well observed and the poet feels that these bonds stay living ever after in one's memories. Life has close sensations with different individuals. The time spent together has ever lasting values. Human beings have the maximum submission one passes through and gets on presently with. Human relationships are supposed to be accepted as the integral parts of souls. One cannot detach oneself from other associates. He voices the changing values, faiths and other commitments. In "Opus Dei", he says, "You kill yourselves to build new gods- You kill your gods to make them new" (Ryan 13). There comes a sense of worldly race among human beings which inspire them to achieve their self created goals. There are a few who actually believe in the race of humanity, divinity and spirituality.

Human minds are surrounded with affections, love and regards are well realised in Ryan's poems. He seems committed to ideal values of feminine acceptance of powers and love. The human submission of affections and different allied human values are virtually carried on by the poet throughout the book. The poet in the poem, "Opus Dei" says, "Let us kill everything and we shall be gods, Let fire eat everything and make the world anew, Let us make the world in the image of truth, And we held each other, And our dreams consumed us. (Ryan 13). The sensational consumption of human powers and human wills overpower all the allied things of human life. The

superfluity of human wishes duly not censored by the human needs outplay the anxiety of life.

Family is always aspired about the human growth of each member. Especially the support of the female members motivate and generalize the human affections towards others. Ryan also highlights this fact and wishes to share this human phenomenon with others. In fact, he discusses and provides solutions to the different emotive issues that heal them as whole. He shows his accumulative and supportive combined apprehension of regards for the female members of family. The poet recalls this in his poem, “A Mother Encourages her Beloved Firstborn to Finish Her Degree in Economics and Organizational Psychology and Take That Government Job”, “Dear Daughter, my Daughter, When you get older,...You’ll get down to the business...O Mother, my Mother, My mind is on fire...Ecstatic evergreens” (Ryan 15). The aspiration of family members towards always arouse a sense of responsibility among other members of the family.

Marriage is an emotional and social bond which get through the different human stages of life like emotions, aspirations, sorrow, responsibility, laughter, happiness, silence, accomplishments, noises, expectations, peace, anger, company, agony etc. Joseph Addison has made an explicit ideology of a formidable substance of married life. The collection not only helps to re-define but address all the different states of conflicts, human issues and worldly crisis of this world which actually possess the sense to finalize the platform to undergo the acute process of re-generate, re-birth of new beliefs and sensibilities. D.H. Lawrence’s exploration on ideal relationship is universally acknowledged. Ryan in “**The Cygnet Committee**”, states, “After our marriage was over, We made love in the thunderstorm...And I was back there-Earth, Dublin...And I exhaled, and I came back to the bedroom, And we fell asleep in each other’s arms” (Ryan 16). The moments of love between husband and wife create sensible undertaking of meeting all the crisis of life together and face them together. These moments call for huge commitments for the other partner. It enables them to stand and fight against all the tyrannies of life. The poet understands and accepts the reconciliation of human stance throughout the universe. Everyone has the spirit and this spirit has the everlasting effects, “My world within, it’s really cool, My world within, it kills the real” (Ryan 17). The psychological stances of each individual surpass with the different stages of life. It always differs in childhood, adult age,

young age and old age. However, life makes the individuals feel differently with its varied movements and stages. He writes, “Our marriage still went on, our so called talk show love, For the beatings they give us makes morale improve” (Ryan 17). The other poem of Ryan titled “Sigmund Jesus” exhibits how human situations of life need the substantial responses to execute the human behaviour. The poet recalls again in “The Cygnet Committee”, “We made love in the thunderstorm, Bodies awash in the flickering brilliance, Our eyes signalling yes in that rolling multiverse (Ryan 16). Later on, he adds, “And I exhaled, and I came back to the bedroom, And we fell asleep in each other’s arms” (Ryan 16). These words show his sense of humble consideration of the fact that how human beings regard and value their relationships. People may increase the sense of human sensibilities which may rise high with the acceptance of naturalism of their relationship with their partners.

The book contains the beauty of this world that this human life is a journey. Human life associated with worldly sensations depends on another. The poet discusses one and all. In “Life’s Been Good”, he begins telling, “Good evening, and thank you all for coming tonight”(Ryan 29). All these associated pillars are one’s parents, nurses, doctors, technicians, teachers, manufactures of food and drink, footwear, clothing, makers of fridges, televisions, computers and furniture, all housing manufacturers, bankers, brokers, publishers, management and team members, spouse and last the entire society. He ends, “Finally I would like to thank our great society... Thank you all, I love you all, and may the Empire Live on for a thousand years (Ryan 30). The poet’s humble submission towards the different parts and pillars of life underline his commitment towards the responsibilities assigned to him. Robert Figueroa and Claudia Mills have provided a meaningful remembrance of the cognizance of ideal behaviour which delves on the environment of human justice. The poet somehow understands his sense of irresponsibility towards the different stances of life. In fact, these words are not just his submission but a declaration too regarding the human race he is accomplished to respond to.

Ryan concentrates on the sublimity of acceleration of passage of time. It is sometimes neither felt nor realized that one has spent an amount of time of life without realising the essence of this world. The poet counts the stars of realities of this universe. He considers time as the most important thing of this world. In his poem, “More Beautiful Ruins for Tourists”, the poet counts the value of time, “Look, look,

it's the old man, the old man Joe. Look at the boy, The old boy Joe" (48). Time has the ultimate attendance to enforce aligned sanctions of virtual submissive realities in one's life. He says, "Our marriage still went on, our so called talk show love, For the beatings they give us makes morale improve" (Ryan 17). The essence of the word named marriage seems to be conditioned in the light of so called hyperbole mimic values. The commitment, sensual fervour and heartily support the emotive apprehension of the couple.

Life has the different forms of human emotions and conflicts which are visible in human life. Things which seem the most important in life sometimes result into the most fragile and weak in realities. Ryan shares this cavity of substantial existence among human beings, "I cannot speak, Of those who suffer without love, Who cling but cannot touch, All day alone among friends, All of us waiting, waiting for the word" (26). The unspoken sensations and unrealized emotions are taking place in the modern times greater in numbers in comparisons to the past. The poet explores the lack of sensuality and commitment for each other in the life of modern habitants.

Mature level of subconscious of a human beings may lead one towards the actual cognitive level of existence. Writers across the world have penned time and again about the importance of one's potential to realize the substantial level to fight and rise high with the passage of time. Ryan also pens the values of different fronts in one's life. His poems underscore this very theme. Life has challenges every time and again for an Individual. The poet says:

But for the Father there would be no Son,
But for the Son no Father,
... I have become my Father.
I, the Father, killed my Son.
... My son still dies for love of me,
And I still die for him,
He is my freedom from identity (Ryan 19)

The sense of realization about the virtual and imposed fronts of life lead one towards the 'nirvana'. The different fronts of life enable one to fight and be victorious. The world has been blessed with the different patterns of assessing the

things around. Man is interdependent on one another and obedient towards the commitment of his behaviour and his sensual representative of different acts. The intelligence and ignorance are the virtual classics of one's personality. In "The Sceptics' Beatitudes" he defines:

Blessed are the educated classes,

for truly they believe they know things.

Blessed are those who use rigorous scientific method in the pursuit of facts.

Blessed are the intelligent and the gifted,

for they shall live long miserable lonely lives.(Ryan 22)

However, one's classification of both knowledge and ignorance is measured by the valued reception of the society for its uses. Though, the natural flow of the things blows through the proceedings of his classifications. These classifications value the acceptance and rejection of one's social recognition.

Thus, Ryan's *Portrait of an Atheist Monk at Prayer* exhibits the worldly exposition of human life and one's mutuality of submission, apprehension of consideration and sensibility of commitment towards the social illuminations. Through his philosophical contexts of different illuminations and experiences of human life, the poet has evolved a sense of rethinking and remaking of one's behaviour again with a thought of bringing and introducing new paradigm of actions and formulations. The poet addresses the importance of each aspect of this universe. He counts the reason of every particle existing and peaceful outcome of the noise, sorrow and laughter. The collection makes out a substance of life which guides the human beings about the practical representation of practical sensibilities of emotions and aspirations.

Works Cited

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