

# Report to wordsworth and flower-fed buffaloes essay



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Literature Poetry Compare and contrast the portrayal of nature in “ Report to Wordsworth” and “ The Flower-Fed Buffaloes” Both poets of “ Report to Wordsworth” and “ The Flower-Fed Buffaloes” depict nature in their poems in different ways as well as similar ways with the usage of imagery, figurative devices and through the structure. Vachel Lindsay talks about the approaching of modernization and its wreckage to the natural environment, including the buffaloes. Boey Kim Cheng is informing about the disintegration of nature by man to ‘ Wordsworth,’ who is the father of Romanticism.

The tone in “ The Flower-Fed Buffaloes” is sadness and nostalgic and in “ Report to Wordsworth” it is devastation. In both poems nature is revealed with numerous examples of imagery. In these poems the destruction of nature is being described differently. In “ Flower-Fed Buffaloes,” Lindsay uses buffaloes and associates spring to portray nature and in “ report to Wordsworth”, Cheng talks about the general destruction of nature with imagery associated with pollution and sea water, which has to do with the corruption of the water and land of the sea.

In addition, “ The Flower-Fed Buffaloes” nature is portrayed in a positive way, to compare the transformation of there being no more buffaloes. For example, the line Lindsay uses, “ tossing, blooming, perfumed grass” to show how the wonderful ‘ flowers’ the buffaloes fed on were always there but the buffaloes were gone. The word ‘ perfumed’ enables the reader to imagine the amazing scents given off by the flowers and the word ‘ tossing’ allows the reader to see the flowers swaying through the wind. With the Blackfeet, lying low, With the Pawnees, lying low” enables the reader to

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imagine the destruction of nature as the native American tribes that once herded the buffaloes, were just sitting there as a result of the ' locomotives' which caused the buffaloes to leave. This is similar to the line used by Cheng, " the birds are few in a sky slowing like a dying clock" which evokes the image the birds decreasing little by little as a result of the pollution which is caused by man. His famous horns are choked, his eyes are dazed is an example of sea water imagery and its associated with the Greek sea-god, ' Trinton' who is suffering just like the ' buffaloes. ' The sea-god ' horns are choked' because of the garbage from the land that goes in to the sea and ' his eyes are dazed' because of the liquids that are dumped in to the sea. There are also other examples of imagery used. For example, " Neptune lies helpless as a beached whale", which is another example of sea water imagery.

The Roman god of the sea, ' Neptune' is in desperate need of help to protect the sea so that he may not suffer, just like a whale being stranded on a beach and crying for help to survive. This enables the reader to imagine what it feels like to be ' Nature. ' In " The Flower-Fed Buffaloes," Lindsay uses the line " the flower-fed buffaloes of the spring/Left us, long ago," to reveal the outcome of what has happened, as the buffaloes are gone forever because nature was not being treated in the right way. Smothered by the smog" is used by Cheng to describe how ' Nature' is being surrounded by the polluted air; this is similar to the line used by Lindsay, " Ranged where the locomotives sing. " This line speaks to the trains taking over just like the ' smog. ' Throughout these poems there are various figurative devices that

convey nature. “ locomotives sing” which is a personification as it reveals the disruption to nature, the buffaloes.

The trains are brought to life by Lindsay as if they were a loud intruding voice and it emphasizes how the construction of railroads hastened the depletion of the buffaloes. Likewise, Cheng uses “ She has been laid waste” which is also a personification, as ‘ Nature’ is literally brought to life as the poet is trying to emphasise that ‘ she’ should be treated with respect like a real human being. Cheng expresses that ‘ she’ has been thrown away and forgotten like garbage, which is similar to what Lindsay unveils of the buffaloes being wanted no more.

The words “ last cry” in “ Report to Wordsworth” is an allusion to the crucifixion as ‘ God’ is struggling and begging to protect nature, in addition it is used in the last line of the poem to persuade humans to save nature . While at the end of the “ The Flower-Fed Buffaloes” the poet uses repetition of ‘ Lying low’ to symbolize the death of the buffaloes no longer being present. It is continually repeated to leave the image of the death of the buffaloes in the reader’s mind and to let the reader know what the outcome will be if nature continues to be destroyed.

Through the structure of the two poems, nature is unveiled. The structure of “ The Flower-Fed Buffaloes” contains alternate indented lines which gradually decrease and it has fifteen lines which are heavily punctuated. This causes the reader to pause frequently to think about nature and it is being disturbed. The lines “ They gore no more, they bellow no more, They Trundle around the hills no more:-,” is an effective example as there are many

pauses and it allows the reader to really imagine the pain 'Nature' is in and the help 'she' needs.

For example, "You should be here, Nature has need of you. She has been laid waste. Smothered by the smog." This line makes the reader stop and think about what is happening to nature right now. In addition, Cheng uses a English sonnet, [abab/cdcd/efef/gg] with rhymes to confess and emphasise the extent of nature being destroyed, the next eight lines reveal in detail and the extent of nature dying and the last four lines concludes the poem, with the two last lines having the final thought and moral about how badly nature is suffering and the desperation of 'she' needing the reader's help.

The structure also helps the poet to easily reveal his thoughts and allow the reader to remember Cheng's message. With the use of imagery, figurative devices and through the structure the reader is able to know the similar and different ways each of the poets describe nature in "The Flower-Fed Buffaloes" and "Report to Wordsworth." Lindsay's and Cheng's view of nature reveal their care and love for the environment. It makes the reader feel the poet's pain as well as the need to also care and treat the earth with respect.