Free article review on " the two languages " by kenneth koch

Linguistics, Language

" The Two Languages" is chapter 1 in Part I of book " Making Your Own Days" written by Kenneth Koch essentially " to say some clear and interesting things about poetry. The term " The Two Languages" is a metaphor for poetry identifying poetic language as its own language within language it's written. While regarding poetry as a mysterious being that no one has quite been able to explain where and how it comes from, author Kenneth Koch invokes the ancient Greeks calling the Muse the source of poetry and others ascribing it to coming from some residually creative place in an unconscious way to the mind of a creative genius.

In exploring things that might explain how poems are written and read, Koch describes poet as someone writing in the language of poetry. Writing in the language of poetry in a masterly manner does require talent, inspiration and rigorous practice of reading as well as writing poetry. The language itself is invariably inspired by certain words, phrases and sentences. Unless until the writer understands this poetic language and the importance of the kind of words, phrases and rhythms employed, poetry cannot flow freely and often from his pen or pencil.

Koch also invokes the analogy of a verbal synthesizer, computer or pipe-organ in describing poetry. To him, the idea of a synthesizer seems to explain the joy and intoxication experienced by both the writer and the reader. Another comparison the author brings about is likening writing poetry to going to a party with music, drinking, talking and flirting. However, the elation in writing poetry lasts much longer after finishing it while going to a party in good mood evaporates soon after the party concludes. Moreover, writing poetry is hard work requiring ability to bring it to a conclusion

whereas going to a party involves no work or much effort.

In conclusion, author Koch succeeds well in bringing about the pleasures and even the social purposes of poetry, be it in writing or reading. He elaborates this further with several examples of poetic phrases and their succinct meaning, albeit hidden from surface.