

Nature and man



Charles Baudelaire is a controversial French poet during the 1840's. Choosing not to take up law, he was sent him to a trip to India during which he discovered his passion for poetry. Later on he was part of the 1900's movement, the Symbolist, whose goal was to show the world different perspectives or the "hidden meanings" of objects. Scandalizing the masses his book *The Flowers of Evil*, which contained *Correspondences*, was condemned by the public. In *Correspondence*, Charles Baudelaire uses metaphors to connect the nature and the senses of a person. This is evident through out the poem.

Temples according to Merriam-Webster is a building for religious practice. Therefore temples are sacred and in the very first line of the poem, "Nature is a temple in which living pillars", Baudelaire uses metaphor to connect sacredness and nature. Naturally, nature has trees and temples have pillars, which hold the structure. Again, he uses metaphor to make nature's trees the living pillars of the temple in this instance are nature. In the next line, one will see how a sacred place like this can be a safe haven to its people. Whenever a person of a certain religion is at lost, he seeks refuge in his respective religion.

Now, nature as a temple can be a place where it can "give voice to confused words". The third line is connected to the first one. Baudelaire uses the verbs "is" in the first line and "passes" in the third line. So while nature is a temple, man passes through it. It gives the impression that while man is changing, nature is constant. Also, all things sacred are kept secured thus the poet's use of the term "forests of symbols". He shows the need of nature to be kept sealed, as it is sacred. And though the man passing

through is confused, the sacredness in which he is engulfed in “ look at him with understanding eyes”.

In the next stanza, Baudelaire uses the technique alliteration. Though it is not evident in the translation made by William Aggeler, it can be heard in the video of the original French version of the poem being read by Gilles-Claude Theriault. At the first line he talks about prolonged echoes and in the next 2 lines the words Baudelaire used words, which sort of sounded alike. It was like he was using the words to represent the prolonged echoes he was talking about. Then the last line of this stanza talks about how “ perfumes, sounds and colors correspond”.

Baudelaire will further discuss the similarities of these 3 in the next stanza. In the third stanza, synesthetic metaphors were used heavily. The sense of touch of the flesh of children, taste of oboes and sight of a color of meadows were all used as comparative devices for perfume, which is normally, uses the sense of smell for its description. The 5 senses are a major part of the poem and it's most obvious in this stanza. Even the poem ends with the word senses. The third line of the third stanza he now uses contradicting moralities to attribute to the other kinds of perfume he didn't describe in the previous lines.

In the last stanza, Baudelaire talks about the power of perfume to spread. Looking at this in the perspective of nature, it can be said that perfume represents everything around us. As perfume is a liquid that requires the sense of smell, it is potent enough to be able to disperse in the air of nature. Also, since perfume is dispersed in the air, it is in a way inescapable because the scent will follow you. If another scent comes along, it will either mix, or

over power the other one. He says it is “ like amber and incense. Musk, benzoin” all of which are ingredients used in the process of making perfume.

And while a perfume has the “ power to expand into infinity”, it “ sings the ecstasy of soul and senses”. The personification in the last line of perfume is used because he reiterates the point he made in the stanza before this, how perfume does not only touch the sense of smell, but all the senses. Baudelaire uses metaphors to connect nature and the 5 senses to wonderfully weave a tapestry depicting the relationship society of man and the aspects of this society. He shows the beautiful interconnection of man and nature despite the traces of imperfections surrounding it.