Recognitions: Dim and Faint

Chapter 4

Recognitions: Dim and Faint

Comparative Literature, as a branch of Literature, faces a sharp decline in the west. At the same time, literary historians vouchsafe that comparatism in India still enjoys its heyday. According to G.N.Devy, one of the foremost comparatists in India, there are three visible trends in this field:

1. Traditional bilingualism and biculturalism without critical self-awareness; 2. Critical technology imported from the west and perceived as means of modernizing Indian literary study; 3. Multi-lingual literary study in the context of modern Indian languages. ¹

Comparative Literature is an attempt to cross the boundaries of Literature and to establish historical, stylistic and thematic correspondence with other Literatures. It helps to transcend the boundaries of narrow nationalism and to synthesize the best in all Literature. Thus we can attribute a noble aim to comparative approach to Literature. Noted American comparatist Henry H.H.Remak defines Comparative Literature as follows:
Comparative Literature is the study of Literature beyond the confines of one particular country and the study of the relationship between Literature on the one hand and other areas of knowledge... In brief, it is the comparison of one Literature with another or others, and the comparison of Literature with other spheres of human expression.²

This definition makes room for comparisons of two literary works at various levels:³

1 Aesthetic Standpoint
2 Thematic Comparisons
3 Generic Comparisons
4 Influence Studies
5 The Stand Point of Fine Arts
6 Comparative Linguistics.

This study is an investigation on the thematic line, of the works of two poets from two different ages and from two different languages. This can be called a “binary study”, which according to Susan Bassnett, is “a study of two authors from two different systems.”⁴

Having discussed the attributes of didactic poetry in general and analyzed the poetic elements of the two poets in the preceding chapters, the investigation now proceeds to discuss the didactic elements in the
poems of Wordsworth and Ulloor, comparing them with each other. This is based on the hypothesis that these two poets have more similarities than differences. What Matthew Arnold propounded as the basis of Comparative Literature is significant in the selection of these two poets apart from the preliminary hypothesis: “everywhere there is connection, everywhere there is illustration”.

These two poets hail from the two hemispheres of the globe. They represent two different ages as well as two different cultures, systems and civilizations. All these factors had their say in their poetry and yet we see some indelible marks of similarity between the two poets. Ulloor was born 27 years after the death of Wordsworth. Wordsworth wrote poetry when English Literature was rich and flowering with divergent themes and sources. Wordsworth's poems initiated the Romantic era by emphasizing feeling, instinct, and pleasure above formality and rigid conventions. More than any poet before him, Wordsworth gave expression to inchoate human emotions.

On the other hand Ulloor came to the scene when Malayalam Literature was at its outset. Malayalam Poetry of that time had moralization and other didactic themes as its subject matter. New experiments were being conducted in the area of aesthetic achievements and themes. Ulloor, like Wordsworth, with whom he had many other
similarities, was instrumental in ushering in the era of Romanticism into Literature. If Wordsworth, along with Coleridge, inaugurated a new sensibility in English Literature, with the publication of the *Lyrical Ballads*, Ulloor appeared on the literary forefront as a classicist and a staunch follower of the Keralavarma School. But later one can discern the influence of Venmani Poets and the Romantic Movement in his poems. According to Dr. K. N. Ezhuthachan, both Ulloor and Vallathol began writing in classical tradition and turned to the new order gradually. \(karnabhu:sanam\) is hailed as the index of this change in Ulloor. But the most remarkable similarities between Ulloor and Wordsworth transcend the borderlines of various poetic creeds and also those of place and time.

Both of them had to face many problems and adverse circumstances in their lives, which affected and influenced both the poets and their poetical outlook very much. "Wordsworth the young man was on the whole, solitary, painfully proud, self critical and self suspecting." He was quite convinced and determined about his vocation to be a great poet of humanity even at that time. But at the same time, he was doubtful about achieving this because of the circumstances of his life. Poverty, lack of family security, responsibility to and sense of guilt regarding Annette Vallon, lack of circumstances for poetic training—all these left him in depression and dejection.
This was the case of Ulloor too. He also had to bear the burden of family at a tender age, following the untimely death of his father. His first wife died leaving his three children with him when he was just 25. Financial problems were a constant worry for Ulloor. He had to face the stiff resistance of a section of the literary society for a variety of reasons. In short, both the poets felt some sort of insecurity about their vocation from a fairly early stage of their lives.

Even though, Literature was not “an ideology” for them, as Terry Eagleton was to define later, they believed in the power of influence of Literature and decided to harness it to the maximum. Wordsworth and Ulloor believed that poets and other artists in a wider sense had some duties to perform. They never deviated from this self-assigned endeavour throughout their lives. Neither of them regarded poetry as an end in itself. They had their own philosophies, which determined values for them to impart to the reading public.

Poets are endowed with a mission to build a bridge between this shore of misery, strife, desolation and pain and that of dreams and sunshine. The contention throughout the History of Literature was only about the means for this: didactic or aesthetic. The philosophic insight and vision of a poet help him create a new awareness and drive home the noblest ideals of humanity. In the second and third chapters of this study,
the researcher has briefly surveyed the influences on the poetry of Wordsworth and Ulloor respectively. What is attempted in this chapter is a comparison of two eminent poets, celebrated for their poetic endeavour to edify human mind and spirit. It also examines the nature of their moral and ethical stand points and exhortations.

It was Socrates who first asked: 'What is man?' Any question about the meaning of life, which Literature is all about, leads invariably to the grounds of Philosophy. Philosophy is supposed to be a quest after eternal truth and trans-empirical dimensions of reality. The philosophy of art or the study of ideal forms in art alone will not stand up as philosophy in art. All Literature exudes Philosophy. In other words, Philosophy breathes life into works of art. The doctrines and principles may be different from writer to writer. The values upheld in theory are mirrored in Literature. Then the poet and the philosopher become one. So a search for Philosophical influences on Literature is highly relevant.

The readers are familiar with the famous declaration of Wordsworth that he wishes to be known as a teacher or as nothing. He claims that his poems direct the reader to some moral principles and general truths. Thus it becomes very clear that he wrote with some definite purposes and what these purposes are. More over, the poet has made it clear in many of his letters and other writings. His poems are
estimated as having a consoling effect. John Stuart Mill writes that his poetry was a medicine and the "very culture of the feeling" which he was in search of:

In them I seemed to draw from a source of inward joy, of sympathetic and imaginative pleasure, which could be shared by all human beings ... from them I seemed to learn what would be the perennial sources of happiness, when all the greater evils of life shall have been removed.9

This great facility of his poetry is drawn from nature, as he testifies:

Sweet is the lore which Nature brings:

Our meddling intellect

Misshapes the beauteous form of things;

We murder to dissect. (25-8) 10

Wordsworth was deeply influenced by the French Revolution and the teachings of Rousseau. In addition to these his pantheistic beliefs also had a deep influence in shaping his own philosophy. He developed it to the extent of a quasi-religion. Wordsworth's poems are not simple lyrics which emanate from the Aeolian harp of Romanticism. On the contrary, they have a special philosophical blend, "a specific blend of deistic theology, Newtonian Physics and pantheistic naturalism which pervades the Wordsworthian landscape."11 A detailed study of his philosophy is
outside the scope of this study. But the investigator is concerned with his concept of poetry and poet. He described himself "as a man talking to men." He fully conceived the heavy responsibility of doing so. He observes in the "Preface" to the Lyrical Ballads (second edition):

... habits of meditation have, I trust so prompted and regulated my feelings that my descriptions of such objects as strongly excite those feelings will be found to carry along with them a purpose. If this opinion be erroneous, I can have little right to the name of a poet.12

Wordsworth is widely known as a poet of Nature. It is not the sensuous manifestations of Nature that delighted him, like other Nature poets. He deals with the inner significance of Nature. He repeatedly assured us that moral enhancement and spiritual solace could be attained only through a life close to Nature. The republican ideals like love, peace and equality are laws that prevail in Nature.

Wordsworth's philosophy of nature can be traced back to those forefathers of western philosophy, the Sophists, through Rousseau. Sophists or those travelling teachers of wisdom reflected on their own thought and nature to find an answer to the imposing questions about the meaning of man's existence. Later Rousseau was to develop this to the doctrine of going back to Nature where no inequalities could be found.
His love of Nature is linked with mysticism. He saw an all-pervading spirit in Nature. Wordsworth believed in Plato's concept of a Soul of the World. He advised men to go to Nature with a heart that watches and receives and in that state of receptivity, to find lessons of morality and wisdom. There is nothing other than the message of Nature to be taught, according to Wordsworth. He prescribed a discourse with Nature for all the miseries of mankind. He says:

Bad is the world, and hard is the world's law

Even for the man who wears the warmest fleece;

Much need have ye that time more closely draw

The bond of nature, all unkindness cease,

And that among so few there still be peace: (505-9)\textsuperscript{13}

He learned to overcome such moods by taking refuge in Nature. He cites his own experiences. His poetry is didactic in that sense.

He was equally a poet of humanity also. Throughout his life, he was very much concerned with the sufferings of human beings, even though his political perspectives changed decisively in the later years. The contemplation of suffering and despair abounds in his poems. He records the sad plight of humanity, with a real sense of sympathy. Thus the children working in cotton factories, old men having no shelter or support, discharged soldiers, female vagrants, beggars, idiots and others
representing the suffering humanity became powerful symbols of the basic elements of human condition, like emptiness and desolation. The capacity to describe them and to relate his emotional response along with it can be called one of his merits as a poet.

He believed that love of nature, properly cultivated would lead to the love of man:

While I was yet a boy
Careless of books, yet having felt the power
Of Nature, by the gentle agency
Of natural objects, let me on to feel
For passions that were not my own, and think
On man, the heart of man, and human life. (28-32)

Like Rousseau he believed that Nature is good and that by nature all men are equal, becoming unequal by regulations of the society. It springs from his conviction that the universe is a super spirit, all pervading and merciful. Nature influences and guides man, if he is willing at all to take lessons from it:

Nor less I deem that there are powers
Which of themselves our mind impress;
That we can feed this mind of ours
In a wise passiveness. (21-4)
What we feel here is the influence of Locke or to be more precise that of Hartley, who insisted that physical sensations are the starting point of the process of intellectual and moral development. Moral and spiritual development is possible only in such a condition. Nature teaches valuable lessons to humanity, like equality, love, purity, innocence etc.

Dr. Radhakrishnan has pointed out in his *Eastern Religions and Western Thoughts*, that India has performed repeated experiments for the fusion of the divergent races, cults, faiths and philosophies that came into or arose in this land; what worked in this regard and made India home to all was the larger human outlook based on a deeper realization of spiritual values.  

This is the unique and persistent tendency of Indian civilization. The history of India during at least the last five thousand years has shown a remarkable capacity for such judicious assimilation and synthesis, as well as for appreciation of the universal ideals of humanity. It has ensured a cosmic or universal outlook in its discourses. At the same time it is not forgetting of the rich tradition of India. One can’t absorb the good elements of a foreign culture unless one possesses a definite stand point of one’s own. Ulloor was a staunch follower of the values and principles envisaged by the philosophers of ancient India. His poems
celebrate the universal fraternity and internationalism as propounded by India.

saJi:vama:jullo:ru sarvara:Jja-
sakhjam pratištta:pitamajiṭṭhe,

.......................................
cara:caram sarvavumekani:dam
sakṣa:l parabrahmamakhaṇḍamenna:ji
nissamśajam tan munivarjaro:ti
nirihar,niśkincanar,nitjaśuddhar
prajo:gbhuvil prasaricitumbo:]
manuṣjanissañdhijil ma:lijattum
madaJvaro:paḷavam astamikkum.17

[Let an active league of nations come to being!
The whole world is one nest; the cosmic Soul is
One undivided self, says the sages of India
Who are ascetics, penniless and ever pure.
If this ancient wisdom radiates in the land
Man will be saved from this reckless race.]

The ancient philosophical treatises of India, namely The Upanishads tell us about the cosmic soul, Brahman. Man is a part of that
supreme soul. The Svetasvatara Upanishad, one of the later Upanishads in point of time, takes us further into an understanding of Brahman:

What is perishable—the body, for example—is primary matter says the Upanishad. What is immortal and imperishable is Hara (the Self) and over perishable and the self, the one God rules. To know that the eternal (the Atman, Brahman) was present in the Self, to acknowledge that there was nothing higher than that to be known, was to know all. Running through all Upanishads like a golden thread is the single theme that man is not to be distinguished from all other things—animate or inanimate, that within man is the great principle of the universality of the Self, that in the understanding of the self lies the understanding of what life is all about.¹⁸

Ulloor had drunk deeply from the rich fountain of Indian Philosophy. The all embracing universality of Indian mind has worked on him also.

appuram tuccana:mente—
jakama:ma:lilajkkume:l
brahma:ndatte vahicci‡um
pre:ma:tma:va:kumi:švaran
Then I saw God who is love, carrying the whole universe.

I saw Him who binds all living things with the silken thread

Of friendship shining with all glory in my humble being.

Ulloor never leaves out an occasion to sing in praise of the culture and values propounded by the sages and scholars of Ancient India (aṃśa bha:ratam). As mentioned elsewhere, if Wordsworth can be called a poet of Nature, Ulloor is entitled to get the title of the poet of morals and values of Ancient India. He had the firm conviction that all that are valuable to be imparted to the readers are there in the Literature of Ancient India viz. Epics, Puranas, The Vedas and Vedanta (Upanishads). Thus he makes use of the story of Karna to establish the importance of sacrifice and munificence. He does not merely relate stories from these sources, but interprets them too, to drive home the ideals that are dear to him. It is true that more often than not, these endeavours misfire due to his over enthusiasm to preach. But he neither cares about this, nor worries about the lapses happened in the poetic structure. He believes that, whatever is the theme and the way of presentation, a good poet should
concentrate on enlightening people with valuable insights and advice. In short, the subject matter and aesthetic factors should be subservient to the precepts.

Ulloor wrote about the function of a poet:

\[
\text{nabho:ma:rgattilemmaṭṭil - nakṣatraṃjaḷ vilanumo,} \\
\text{subha:ṣītajalammaṭṭil - šobhippu ka:vjavii:thijil} \\
\text{mano:harajalajori - mahadvakjaḷennije} \\
\text{mattentullu manuṣjarku - ma:rgadi:pajalu:rijil} \\
\text{addi:pa:vali ūna:nalpam adhvaganmama:ṛku kaṭṭiṭam;} \\
\text{e:tanṭiṭajku kattijkkam enṭejum kaivilakkukal (21 - 26)}^{20} \\
\text{How the stars twinkle in the milky way,} \\
\text{Thus the dictums shine in poetry.} \\
\text{These beauteous dictums are the lone light} \\
\text{Houses to men in this world} \\
\text{I wish to show this light to others} \\
\text{And I will light my own lamps} \\
\]

He wrote about traditional values like the significance of good deeds, munificence, courage, love etc. Critics termed his philosophy as religious humanism. To him God is omnipresent and formless. He calls it love. The foci of Ulloor's philosophy are 'Karma', piety, and love. 'Karma' or deed has a pivotal role in his thoughts. Man must do his duty
without desiring rewards, Ulloor advises in the line of the Bhagavad Gita (The Song of God). Our enthusiasm is the decisive factor of our success or failure. Enthusiasm combined with sincere deeds will remove all the obstacles from our paths. Our deeds must be beneficial to others. We must do our duty even when confronted with death. Optimism, service, sacrifice, diligence etc. are some of the values preached by Ulloor.

Ulloor's concept of Nature is strictly neo-classical. If his love of Nature reveals anything to us, it is his didactic enthusiasm. He never seems to be charmed by Nature, like his contemporary, Vallathol Narayana Menon. He certainly has written on Nature and things like the sun, the moon, rivers, hills trees, moonlight, stars, dewdrops etc. Nature for him is a backdrop of human action, having no soul or spirit. He advises man to learn from Nature, not its message as Wordsworth puts it, but as how God envisaged it to be:

iruppavanum malar gandhame:kum
vetṭṭunnavanum taru cu:ṭakatťum
haṇippavanum kili pa:ṭṭu pa:ṭṭum
paro:paka:ra pravaṇam prapancam
(Flower gives fragrance to those who pluck it.
Tree lends shade to the woodcutter
The bird sings melodiously to the hunter

Benevolence is the driving force of Universe)

Love is a long cherished ideal to both the poets. Wordsworth, like Ulloor, had very little to sing of romantic love. He derives the principle of universal love from Nature:

Love, now a universal birth,

From heart to heart is stealing,

From earth to man, from man to earth:

- It is the hour of feelings. (21-4) 22

The power of love to heal the wounds of man has been correctly recognized and acknowledged by the poet. Wordsworth apprehended the law of Nature as 'love'. Love is combined with duty. "The Thorn", "The Mad Mother", "The Idiot Boy" etc. have love as the main theme. His love is a passionate affection, as we can see in 'Michael', 'The Brothers' etc. Sir Grierson remarks that this love, in a sense, "sympathy with his fellowmen and desire for their welfare-that is the key note of all his poetry, the source and inspiration of the joy . . ." 23

To the surprise of the reader, Ulloor propounds the same view of love in his famous "pre:masamgi:tam". Love is the unifying spirit of the universe, the facets of which are love for God; love for one's country, parental love, conjugal love, and sympathy to others. His concept of love
is based on the love for God and love for the Universe. His opposition to caste-system, untouchability, racial prejudices, inequality, discriminations and other social evils are based on this perspective. Both the poets had an exalted sense of love. Wordsworth says in “Laodamia” that love should not be an expression of sensual pleasures:

Learn, by a mortal yearning, to ascend –
Seeking a higher object. Love was given,
Encouraged, sanctioned, chiefly for that end;
For this the passion to excess was driven
That self might be annulled: (146-50) 24

Wordsworth can be called a mystic poet in the sense that he finds out, in his poems, a silken thread of the unity of Man, Nature and God. His recognition of an all pervading spirit immanent in all things and his conviction that a communion of man with nature leads him to a higher realm of bliss, which can be called the realization of God, were parts of his pantheistic faith. It was the result of many influences. For instance, association with the ideas of Spinoza helped to enrich his naturalistic concepts. Spinoza commented that God is not extraneous but immanent which prompted Coleridge to describe as a confusion of God with Nature. Spinoza identified Nature as the underlying reality of life and universe, which he called substance. He envisaged Nature as an active and vital
process. To him, the fixed and unchangeable laws of Nature and the eternal decrees of God are the one and the same reality. This is what he wanted to communicate through his poetry. One has only to go through the poems of Wordsworth to know how great the influence of Spinoza was. Even during the period of his later orthodoxy, the undertones of such an influence can be discerned.

This can be called another meeting ground of the poets. Both believed in the existence of God, but in different ways. It was also different from the common canon. Ulloor firmly believed that there was no better way to God other than service to others. According to him one who forgets the basic values and principles like, piety, love, kindness, sacrifice, charity etc. cannot hope for salvation.

It may seem that Wordsworth is not specific in pointing out or propagating any concrete ideals. He is more interested in the means as a whole; the way of Nature. He is concerned with human life as a whole. And he wants to "console the afflicted." For this he puts forward an integrated approach through the love of nature. Guidance of nature is essential for humanity and that alone will suffice. Other philosophical and moral standpoints of the poet are fundamentals of this. At the same time love, morality, joy etc. can be identified as the guiding principles of his philosophy.
Wordsworth had strong Republican convictions. He was much influenced by the ideals of French Revolution: liberty, equality and fraternity. Rousseau and his radical disciples wanted to destroy the degenerated social set up and build a new order which would be guided by the principles of liberty, equality and fraternity. Wordsworth was attracted more to the romantic ideals of Rousseau than to the reasoning of Voltaire. Even though he denounced the revolution later, the ideals imbibed had a lasting influence on his mind and outlook. The revolutionary fervour, political outlook and the romantic sensibility made William Wordsworth a great champion of the suffering humanity. He believed in the intrinsic nobility of human beings. To see ‘the generations low in dust’ was painful to him. According to him all human beings are equal. He laments thus the sad plight of the multitude: “...Not for these sad issues / Was man created; but to obey the law/ Of life, and hope, and action.” (126-8)

Throughout the poems of Wordsworth, the readers can see a deep love for the rustic, the rustic life and their simple and direct ways and language, which can be traced back to Rousseau. According to the poet, the elementary feelings found in the humble and rustic life were the purest and simplest. This is so because of the influence of Nature, which
lends its energy to them. Thus man and Nature are one and the same. This
was a truth, which he sought throughout his life.

Ulloor also contemplated that his poetry should stand for those who
needed it the most. A common impression was that he was a staunch
supporter of royalty and other traditional institutions and values. But a
careful perusal of his poems like “ente svapnam”, “vica:radha:ra”,
“Rickshaw,” “pañakka:ran,” “tumbappu:v”, “pullinte collu” and
“paṭakkina:vu” will convince one that Ulloor was not a poet of ivory
tower despite the high offices he held. He was very keen to sing of the
poor. He bravely came forward for the cause of the downtrodden. He
never hesitated to criticize the rich and the powerful for their avarice and
cruelty. He made fun of their piety and charity to temples. In
“naṭaturakkal” he severely ridicules those who came to the temple to pay
obeisance to the deity:

pañam kilukkija:l bhagava:n nidra vi—

ṭṭunarnnerunnelkkum utaṇṇeno:rrkuvo:ṛ;
totālum ti:ntalum akaluva:n ve:ṛği —

jiṭajku pojkajum kiṇarum te:tuvo:ṛ

atikrisamati vibhu, avitiutte —
catikkilumenṭennu ninacciṭukkuvo:ṛ;
taniṭikkilenkilum tarakke:ti,llanja—
Some think that God shall awake to the noise of their gold sovereigns

Some perform ablution for they touched low caste in temple

Some think of cheating God who may be simpleminded

Some pray for distress to others, not for a boon to the self

Some perform offerings to harm others as possible.

He reminds them that these are of no use and they cannot please God, for God is with the poor. He was also with the poor. See how strongly he argues for the weaker section of the society:

(Freedom is not an exclusive luxury for a few. God not for the mighty alone made this world.)

Wordsworth once asked a skylark: "Dost thou despise the earth where cares abound?" Later he offered praise and wished peace to those:
... who of the moral law

Established in the land where they abide

Are strict observers; and not negligent

In acts of love to those with whom they dwell,

Their kindred, and the children of their blood.

Praise be to such... (136-41) 29

Love, peace, equality, fraternity and simplicity were some of his ideals in youth. He added neoclassic ideals like order, duty, security etc. to them later. For example, "Ode to Duty", which is the most didactic of his poems, tells us about the necessity of performing our duty for moral discipline. He addresses duty:

Thou, who art victory and law

When empty terrors overawe;

From vain temptations dost set free;

And calm'st the weary strife of frail humanity! (5-8) 30

The socio-political standpoints of the poet are recorded in his poems. But in general we can say that his philosophy is the vision of Nature. His deep insight into human life is reflected in his didactic poems. Being a profoundly earnest and sincere thinker, he displayed a high seriousness which is at times comparable to that of Milton, but at the same time tempered with tenderness and love of simplicity.
As a true romanticist, Wordsworth’s main concern was with man. Ulloor was less interested in man as man than in his relationship with God and his fellow beings. The ethics and values of Ancient India were to Ulloor like what Nature was to Wordsworth. He wrote of universal love:

\begin{flushleft}
oroṭṭa matamunṭulakīṇnūjira:m preːmamatonnallo:
parakke namme palamṛutuːttum paːṛvaṇa ṣaṣibimbaṁ.\textsuperscript{31}
\end{flushleft}

Love, the only one religion, is the world’s life

A nectar fallen to us from the full moon’s bliss.

In some of his works, Wordsworth is preoccupied with the glory of the past that has gone forever. In "London, 1802," the speaker exhorts the spirit of the centuries-dead poet John Milton to teach the modern world a better way to live:

\begin{flushleft}
England hath need of thee: she is a fen
Of stagnant waters: altar, sword, and pen,
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,
Have forfeited their ancient English dower
Of inward happiness. We are selfish men;
Oh! Raise us up, return to us again;
And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power. (2-8)\textsuperscript{32}
\end{flushleft}
Here the poet reiterates the power of poetry and poets. He calls upon Milton, the great poet to redeem them for, his “soul was like a star, and dwelt apart.”

Wordsworth, befitting a true romanticist, found solace in glades and bowers. This investigation has already discussed the poet’s brief stint as a sympathizer of revolutionary ideals. Moreover, he was an idealist and a seeker of beauty. His poetry attracted millions of readers by beauty and originality. His verse celebrates the moral influence exerted by Nature on human thoughts and feelings. He never attempted to make a direct didactic approach or preached any dos and don’ts. For him, making the reader delighted was an instruction in itself. A.C. Bradley rightly points out:

It was a part of his endeavour to find something of the distant ideal in life’s familiar face. And though this attitude of sympathy and humility did become habitual, the first bent towards grandeur, austerity, sublimity, retained its force.... Wordsworth is indisputably the most sublime of our poets since Milton.

Wordsworth aimed at rather high and abstract things. Though he was a didactic poet, he did not preach from a high pedestal, but on the
other hand he was near to console and heal. His aim was to make life fuller and saner.

In contrast to Wordsworth, Ulloor was not satisfied with such a subtle approach. With the same vigour of singing of his dear ideals like munificence, love, piety etc. he wrote elaborately about the importance of being clean and tidy too. Wordsworth never went to such details. Ulloor was a thorough moralist. He was careful and diligent enough to give pieces of advice concerning even trivial, day-to-day matters like food and clothing. Here is a fine example:

\[
de:\text{ham},\text{vasanama:ha:ram}, \ - \ \text{ge:ham toṭṭullatokkejum} \\
\text{malinjamāṭirippo:rkke:} \ - \ \text{ma:ṇasam suddhi vanni:ṭu}^{35}
\]

The bliss is to those who are clean in body

Dress, food and their houses.

He was a realist, out in the public to help people live a life, which he felt they should lead. He was ready to go to any end to impart a moral lesson. For instance we have his much-ridiculed poem "mrina:lini" penned with the good intention of enlightening people about the evil of drinking. He never showed any sign of revolutionary or reformative ardour. It may be because he was a government servant. Moreover his balanced and peaceful temperament might have exerted its influence. But certainly Ulloor could be credited with a progressive outlook.
Wordsworth's poetry has its simple, undeniable force and freshness, while Ulloor's is beautiful and elegant. If Wordsworth gives due importance to all senses, Ulloor's poems are verbal treats. Wordsworth was a more consummate artist, while Ulloor was a scholar who proved his mettle as a poet. Ulloor had a wonderful command over language and was gifted with the ability for hard work. These faculties he utilized fully for poetic composition.

While the moral exhortations of Wordsworth took on the appearance of Neoclassical ideals in the later poems, Ulloor showed an inclination towards Romanticism although his poetry remained highly objective even then. There was a widespread criticism that the poetic genius of Wordsworth began to wane as he advanced in age and as he discarded his former liberal and radical perspectives. As it has already been discussed else where in this study, this phenomenon has political, artistic and philosophical roots. Will Durant attempts an explanation for the conversion of Wordsworth to conservatism:

The first half of the nineteenth century was the age of pessimism. All Europe lay prostrate. The revolution was dead; and with it the life seemed to have gone out of the soul of Europe. ... was this almost universal calamity the vengeance of a just god on the age of reason and unbelief?
Was it a call to the penitent intellect to bend before the ancient virtues of faith, hope and charity? So Schlegel thought ... and Southey, and Wordsworth and Gogol; and they turned back to the old faith like wasted prodigals happy to be home again.

Thus it is clear that the later retreat of the poet from his radical ideas have something to do with the philosophical crises too. Ulloor had to face this charge from fairly an early stage of his poetic career. This study does not seek to vindicate him.

So we can conclude with the comment that there is the difference of indirect teaching and direct moralization between Wordsworth and Ulloor. Wordsworth is a didactic poet as he is a mystic, a nature poet, and a poet of humanity and of solitude. But Ulloor is primarily a didactic poet, giving out precepts and maxims as a theologian or spiritual leader. It must be added that he is a gifted poet.

It is a common practice to attack these poets and their poems because they try to explain the problems of life or provide solutions for them. It is true that we expect much more from poetry nowadays. Perhaps the sensibility and concept of poetry have undergone sea changes. But that is not an excuse to be oblivious of the finest aspects of didactic
poetry, like that of these two poets. What A.C. Bradley observes about the perpetual influence of Wordsworth, is relevant in the case of Ulloor too:

And the reason is that they find his way of seeing the world, his poetic experience, what Arnold meant by his 'criticism of life' to be something deep, and therefore something that will hold. It continues to bring them joy, peace, strength and exaltation. It does not thin out or break beneath them as they grow older and wiser; nor does it fail them, much less repel them, in sadness or even in their sorest need.37

Wordsworth was a poet who came to sing and he taught through his songs. Ulloor was a scholar who had to teach. He chose to sing so he could teach.
NOTES


5 Susan Bassnett, 21.

6 Dr. K.N. Ezhuthachan, Deepamala (Kozhikkode: Poorna, 1981) 756.


12 John F. Danby, 16.


14 Wordsworth, “Michael” 152.


21 Ulloor, “sukham sukham” 692. Vol 1

22 Wordsworth, “To My Sister” 575.

24 Wordsworth, “Laodamia” 249

25 Wordsworth, *The Excursion* 1048.

26 Ulloor, “nataturakkal” 377.

27 Ulloor, “paṭakkina:vu” 556.


29 Wordsworth, “The Old Cumberland Beggar” 676.

30 Wordsworth, “Ode to Duty” 587.

31 Ulloor, “pre:masamgi:tam” 147.


APPENDIX

Glossary of Non-English Words

Purana - an encyclopaedic collection of myths, legends and genealogy in Hinduism. Composed in verse, they date from A.D. c 400 to c.1000. There are 18 principal Puranas exalting Vishnu, Shiva or Brahma. pa:ttu - Songs

ki:lippa:ttu - Bird’s Song: A type of Dravidian versification in which a bird is supposed to sing the verses.

tuRlal - A kind of dance performed in temples, invented by Kunchan Nambiar.

maha:ka:vja - Great Poem of epic standards: Poem with all characteristics described in poetics.

eRtuvi:ttil Pillaiimar - The eight feudal lords of erstwhile state of Travancore.

kiraRna:vali - A flood of rays.

maRnimanJuRs - A flower basket; jewel box.

ta:Raha:ram - A garland of stars.

taraRni - River

amgutadha:ra - Flow of nectar.

di:pa:vali - Festival of light.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sanskrit</th>
<th>English</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ṛḍidajakaumudi</td>
<td>Enticing heart.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kalpaśa:khi</td>
<td>The celestial tree.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aruṇo:dajam</td>
<td>The dawn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ratna:ma:la</td>
<td>Necklace of gems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pre:masamgi:ta:ma</td>
<td>The music of love.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vica:radha:ra</td>
<td>Stream of thoughts; Deliberations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bharati:japra:tha:na</td>
<td>An Indian prayer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>viśvaviJajam</td>
<td>The conquest of Universe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uma:ke:ra:ja:ma</td>
<td>Keralam of Queen Uma.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ra:macandra:vilasa:ma</td>
<td>The name of Ramachandra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>piṭṭa:la</td>
<td>Woman with golden complexion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>citṛo:dajam</td>
<td>Rising of King Chithira Thirunal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vanci:sag:ti</td>
<td>A song in praise of King of Vanci.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chaitraprabha:va:ma</td>
<td>The majesty of King Chithira Thirunal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(former ruler of the princely state of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Travancore).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bhaktidi:pi:ka</td>
<td>The light of piety.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>citṛa:sa:la</td>
<td>The gallery of portraits.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ba:ladi:pika - Light for Children
sada:ca:radi:pika - Light of Morals
campu - Cante Fable (Glossary: State Languages Institute); a poem with a mixture of verse and prose.