

Md. Ziaul Haque's *Give Me a Sky to Fly*: The Beginning of Post-postmodernism in Literature

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ABSTRACT: This article concentrates on the way literature enters a new era i.e. Post-postmodernism with the publication of Md. Ziaul Haque's "Give Me a Sky to Fly" in 2014. In every age, the people with creative minds are highly respected and appreciated. However, among other features, Post-postmodernism is supposed to value originality and innovative ideas more than the earlier eras. In this sense, "Give Me a Sky to Fly" works as a forerunner. The book has the presence of creativity almost everywhere. For example, Md. Ziaul Haque has coined a word 'poetentry' that means 'poems of ten lines' and each of the poems in the book consists of ten lines. Besides, the poems cover the topics that are exceptional and the way the thoughts are presented is entirely different and pleasant. From this perspective, we can rightly say that "Give Me a Sky to Fly" marks the beginning of Post-postmodernism in literature.

KEYWORDS: Creativity, Literature, Md. Ziaul Haque, Poet, Poetry, Poetentry, Post-postmodernism

I. INTRODUCTION

The poems in Md. Ziaul Haque's *Give Me a Sky to Fly* shape up the characteristics that Post-postmodernism should possess. They reflect the common sense of the poet, understanding of character, intellectual supremacy and adherence to elevated principles. Creativity, the different but very simple style of presentation and the wide-ranging topics are the pillars of the book. The poems not only please us but also teach and "give readers the sense of wonder, which is a major function of poetry" (Huey-jen Kuo, 2005, p. 188). In other words, they teach us by making us think deeply. In brief, they develop us intellectually. Considering all the above-mentioned characteristics, it will not be an exaggeration to say that Post-postmodernism in literature starts with Md. Ziaul Haque's *Give Me a Sky to Fly*.

II. MD. ZIAUL HAQUE'S *GIVE ME A SKY TO FLY*: THE BEGINNING OF POST-POSTMODERNISM IN LITERATURE

Generally, 'Post-postmodernism' is considered as something against Postmodernism. But, Md. Ziaul Haque defines Post-postmodernism as the age that is not against Postmodernism but acts as a byproduct of the latter and the thing that marks the distinction between the two terms is 'creativity'. In other words, Post-postmodernism embraces the postmodern set of expansions in philosophy, critical theory, structural design, art, culture and literature but at the same time does not hesitate to break the established rules and regulations for the sake of creating something new. If Modernism is called Modern Age, similarly, Post-postmodernism can also be called "Post-postmodern Age where anything is possible..." (Ziaul Haque, 2012, para. 07). Now, almost all the poems in Md. Ziaul Haque's *Give Me a Sky to Fly* have something new in them as compared to the postmodern ones and their exceptional characteristics are going to be regarded as the foundation of post-postmodern literature by literary circles and numerous readers all around the world. Notably, he has selected the title of the book from the very first poem i.e. "Give Me a Sky to Fly". The poems contain two quartets followed by a couplet. There are variations in rhyme schemes as well. These include- abab, cdcd, ee; abba, cddc, ee; aabb, ccdd, ee; aabb, ccdd, cc; abca, defd, gg; aabb, ccdd, ee and abca, defd, gg. It is worth mentioning that among the 193 poems in the book, the poem "Dangerous Curiosity" does not follow the usual rhyme schemes as are found in other poems; only the couplet of the poem rhymes. Nevertheless, along with the extensive use of mythological elements, anaphora and alliteration, the following characteristics take the poems to a higher position:

- 1) Optimism,
- 2) Pessimism,
- 3) Creative Ideas and Unique Presentation,
- 4) Treatment of Love,
- 5) Symbolism,

- 6) Romanticism (feeling, imagination, love of beauty and nature etc.), and
- 7) Humanism (patriotism and philanthropy).

As Robert Browning has “the confidence to establish an optimistic attitude to life, to the world, and to almost all existing things, which was the extract of his uncircumscribed love. All these contribute a lot in making him the chief exponent of what has been called ‘Victorian Optimism’” (Shrivastava, n.d., p. 01), similarly, ‘Post-postmodern Optimism’ finds its fullest expressions in the poems of Md. Ziaul Haque. Several of the poems reflect the optimistic attitude of the poet such as “Give Me a Sky to Fly”, “Imagine...”, “Destined to Shine...”, “Success: The Dream of Heaven on Earth”, “Pursuit of Happiness”, “Be My Guiding Light”, “Protect Your Dream”, “Wall: Finishes a Road or Begins a New One?”, “Wish of a Seed!”, “Prosaic Justice”, “Breathing Alone”, “I will be with You” etc. In fact, most of the love-poems contain optimistic feelings. To begin with, the poem, “Give Me a Sky to Fly” is full of optimism. In the title, the word, ‘sky’ symbolises an ‘opportunity’ or ‘chance’ that a post-postmodern man eagerly wishes to get so that he can ‘fly’ i.e. ‘prosper’ in life or move ahead:

Give me a sky to fly!
With clouds being a home afloat,
Where can I ponder and sigh,
Travel freely as if on a solitary boat. (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 01)

Normally, a post-postmodern person is very practical in his attitude. Sometimes, he acts as a daydreamer and waits for a mystery or miracle that will change his life by bringing prosperity to him. Obviously, this is a little contradictory to his ‘post-postmodern persona’. It is the proof of the fact that the process of thinking works in a very unusual and unexpected way. The second stanza also conveys the sense of magic realism. As the poet utters:

Ears of mine receiving messages heavenly,
The birds translating resonance from the wind,
Shower bliss with utter ecstasy,
Beckon the Creator for being thus kind. (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 01)

But, the most magnificent lines appear in the couplet where the poet represents all the post-postmodern men in general and expresses his earnest desire to touch the ‘horizon’ or ‘success’. Touching the horizon is impossible; the moment we seem to reach it, the very next moment, the distance lengthens like a mirage in the desert. However, the poet urges the readers to dream on and try harder to become successful in life. Even if anyone faces defeat by trying, it is better than not trying at all. As a remark:

Yearning to tap the horizon afar,
Once I, who knows, may draw closer. (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 01)

However, some of Md. Ziaul Haque’s poems also echo pessimism. For example, “‘Comma’ Loves ‘Full Stop’”, “Let Troy Burn”, “Lend Me Some Oxygen Please!”, “I Want to Taste Happiness”, “The Man and a Society” etc. The poem, “‘Comma’ Loves ‘Full Stop’” is pessimistic in nature but incredibly creative regarding the subject-matter as it appears from the title itself. It reveals the romantic nature of the poet. No other poets have ever thought in this manner as has been done and well-executed by Md. Ziaul Haque. He has presented ‘comma’ as the lover and the ‘full stop’ as the beloved:

My name is ‘Comma’,
In love with ‘Full stop’,
Whose fragrant aroma,
Ignites my buried hope. (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 60)

They can never meet since the words act as their guardians and they always appear before the lover and beloved. As a result, they can never be united; they feel so close yet so distant like the ‘rail lines’:

I even cajole the words on a daily basis,
To help me earn ‘Full stop’, my darling,
But they rather act like Juliet’s relatives,
Alas! I wish I were an archaic King!

Like the rail lines' vain struggle to unite,
We are so close evermore, yet so remote. (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 60)

In "Let Troy Burn", the speaker is so upset and sad; he has been thinking that the so-called beloved, Helen, loves him but his thinking is totally wrong. He compares the girl with Helen of Troy who is already married and she is not interested to involve herself in an illegal relationship. As a result, though he is in pain, he decides to try to forget her forever:

Helen is a mirage and will always be,
It's time I got conscious,
And should keep up distance,
Even if I stay amid the turbulent sea. (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 43)

Regarding creativity and unique presentation, we can say that Md. Ziaul Haque's invention of the word 'Poetry' (poems of ten lines) itself indicates his creative mind. In addition to it, some of the topics are exceedingly exceptional. For example, in "Mr. Zuckerberg, Are You Listening?", he has made a very straightforward and definite suggestion about the necessity of a 'Sympathise' button for Facebook through proper example. According to him, the 'Like' button is not enough since the users cannot press the 'Like' button when a friend posts a status about the death of a loved one. He finds it really strange or weird especially when someone clicks the 'Like' option even when his friend may have faced an accident. How can we 'like' this matter when the concerned person is not happy? That is why, he has suggested that 'Sympathise' can be the most suitable option. Certainly, this proves that Md. Ziaul Haque is a great thinker who has written this poem focusing on a matter that is totally connected with technology. Thus, it can be said that poetry can embrace every aspect of life "that for the sake of humanity will be something wise" (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 166).

Similarly, "Ctrl + Z" also reflects creativity not only regarding the title but also the overall presentation of the idea. The title is a buzzword for the computer-users particularly those who use Microsoft Office Word. It means to 'undo' something. Evidently, Md. Ziaul Haque is the first poet who has compared life with a computer-software. Sometimes, we do something very bad both intentionally and unintentionally but we cannot 'undo' them as it is possible in computer. Obviously, the poet's mood is pessimistic here; he eagerly wants to undo some moments from his life:

I really wish I could,
Undo some of the moments,
From my existence,
By shouting aloud. (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 11)

The poem, "Ma Luv 4 U Follows No Grammar", is also full of newness in it. It has been written totally in the informal way. Md. Ziaul Haque has intentionally violated the grammatical rules here to present something unique to the readers. Actually, the sentences remind us of the language used by the Facebook-users across the world. They use such short expressions and do not bother much about the grammatical rules in order to save time. Besides, the readers do not face any difficulty in understanding the words. We find the following words very interesting:

as everythin' iz fair in luv n war,
same goze wid ma luv 4 u,
it duzn't follow any rule, it needs no grammar,
like water it behaves givin' no clue. (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 146)

In "Post-postmodernism", Md. Ziaul Haque has indicated the necessity of a new name for the 'present time' as is prevalent in these words, "Which era do we exactly belong to?... The time longs for a fresh name to be given birth to" (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 82). Besides, the poem predicts about the difficulties that lie ahead in the life of a post-postmodern person. Similarly, the poem, "Work: The Noun that Verbs the World!" has something new in it. Here, the poet has used the word 'verb' as a 'verb':

It is work alone that is verbing the world, indeed,
A core literally seizing both the plant and the seed. (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 161)

Correspondingly, “Jealousy [jealousy + beauty]” is the mirror-image of creative thinking. The poet has invented a word i.e. “Jealousy” (jealousy + beauty = jealousy); a feeling of being jealous of another person’s beauty or handsomeness. He thinks that it can be the perfect English translation of the Bangla word, ‘পরশ্রীকাতরতা’ (transliteration: ‘porosrikatorota’). The poem teaches us not to be jealous of the beauty of another person “since beauty is temporary, notable works will make us known” (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 192). As he utters:

Thank God, I don’t have jealousy,
A disease that makes a person feel bad,
Injecting the sense of inferiority,
Killing him or her from within, something very sad. (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 192)

Indeed, “Transliteration of My Promise to You” is also another nicely-written poem that is full of inventiveness. As the title suggests, we can see the ‘transliteration of feelings’ here. The poet represents the letters or words in the equivalent characters of another alphabet i.e. English. In the poem, the speaker feels a little sad about the brief separation from the beloved. But, he promises that he will always be with her and is hopeful about the reunion soon:

Ami achhi,
Thakbo sobsomoi,
Khuje pabe amai, tomar kolponai,
Dakbe amai jokhoni.

Tarara hoitoba lukabe kovu,
Tomar porichito akash janona kothai,
Korechhe churi kalo meghe dol, pabe amai,
Firbo tomar oi misti thote hasi hoye tobu. (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 187)

In *Give Me a Sky to Fly*, Md. Ziaul Haque’s treatment of love is extraordinary. He has observed love from every possible perspective, tested its theories, experienced its delights, and welcomed its miseries. Like John Donne, he combines “his love for love and his love for ideas”, becomes “love’s philosopher/poet or poet/philosopher” and “presents his experience and experiments, his machinations and imaginations, about love” (Naugle, n.d., p. 01). There is an extreme emotional aspect attached to the love-poems; any lover and beloved from any part of this world will imagine himself and herself at the positions of the characters portrayed in the poems. In a word, they can relate to the poems. As Joan Bennett (1973) says that Donne’s poetry is “the work of one who has tasted every fruit in love’s orchard. . .” (p. 134) and these same words are also applicable when we talk about the love-poems of Md. Ziaul Haque. His “You are the World that My Heart Returns to” reminds us of Donne’s “A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning”. In the former poem, the lover believes that they are still one; nothing can separate them, the present separation is momentary. In the same way, Donne’s poem represents the similar message- “the famous conceit of the twin compasses has been employed to console the beloved. The lover addresses his beloved to say that their souls may be two but they are united at a centre like the two legs of a compass” (Ali al-Khamisi, 2011, chapter vii). In “Love Means...”, love is “the smile” on the beloved’s face and it “lives in the sweet kisses” (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 02) of the beloved. The poet has tried to define love in “What is Love?”:

Love is the way you look at me, stealthily,
Similar to the way honey a bee sucks,
Without, the least, hurting the flowers,
It’s also the kisses that I paint on your lips daily. (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 51)

On the other hand, in “L.O.V.E.”, he talks about the difficulty to define love because “love bears no silhouette”, it “can only be felt from the heart’s heart, /Thus, trying to define it is feeble” (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 50). In “Sleepless without You”, the poet mentions about the lover’s wish to make “a home of love” (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 04) in a distant land. The theme of love is also present in “My Love for You is Sufiyana” where the lover is sad because he is not getting love from the girl whom he loves much; he searches for “purity” (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 09) or Platonic love. “If we suppose that by the modern times, such pure and perfect kind of love shall have become extinct”; “the perfect meeting” of the lovers’ spirits is rare; Md. Ziaul Haque emphasises the “communion of hearts” (Shrivastava, n.d., pp. 2-3) as Robert Browning does in “By the Fireside” and “Post-postmodern Love” reflects this fact e.g. “In this post-postmodern age of ours, /Bodily attraction defeats the

union of souls” (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 157). Again, in “You are not My Destination, You are My Destiny”, the lover says that he is ‘nothing’ without his beloved:

You are my destiny,
I always have this feeling,
Without you I am nothing,
As the branch without a bird on it loses its beauty.

The way the rainbow has an affair with the rainfall,
Seeing you once my restless soul takes rest,
Believe me my dearest,
Even in summer I see snowfall!

It’s you that I was born for,
If you are my sea-waves then I am your sea-shore. (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 05)

The poem “Lovelorn” deals with extramarital love; the lover’s “mind is not obedient” and it is “not content with the bliss in sight and longs for more” but his new or “novel beloved keeps distance being shy”; so, his heart “bitterly aches in its core” (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 32). In “Be My Guiding Light”, the lover wants that the girl whom he likes should be his “guiding light” and he can do anything for her; even, he is so desperate for her love that he can “steal the stars” (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 36) for her. In “Colour of Love”, the poet tries to search for the true colour of love; some say that it is red, some others think that it is blue. But, the poet believes that “love akin to water should have no colour(s), /Feeling it from the heart is what really matters” (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 38). Love dominates even in “Under the Fallen Leaves”. Here, there is a momentary separation between the lover and the beloved. Now, he misses her a lot and cannot wait to talk to her. Everything seems ‘empty’ without her:

I try to trace the footsteps of yours,
Under the fallen leaves,
I don’t mind taking the help of course,
Even from the hum of the bees.

Where are you? My heart asks the moon,
The morn is empty without you,
So is the noon,
As the leaves love the earth, my love for you is true.

The leaves fall, move and settle somewhere else,
But my heart without you is always restless. (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 14)

“But, so far matter, depth and touchy-feelings are concerned about the love between a man and a woman, the everlasting knot of love with timeless union” (Shrivastava, n.d., p. 01), Robert Browning has a competitor and the name is Md. Ziaul Haque. The poem, “I Love You” is all about the appreciation of love as the title suggests. Here, he loves her because of the way she is and he does not want her to “change”; he thinks that she is his “breath” and separation or “parting is impossible”; he would “rather embrace death” (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 46). Interestingly, in “She is Very Special!”, the poet refers to the beloved as ‘she’ and ‘her’ in the quartets but switches to ‘you’ in the couplet; perhaps, he tries to indicate the dialogue that the lover is having with his close friend about the beloved and the last two lines suggest that the beloved has appeared before the lover while the conversation is still going on and he starts to address her directly. “Miss You” is another wonderfully written poem that has ‘love’ as its subject matter:

I miss you the way,
Earth misses the raindrops,
And the seabed cries for ray,
The wind’s touch that crave, crops.

Don’t know whether missing,
Is divine or sinful,
Yet it seems to be a blessing,
Not seeing you nearby is god-awful.

Missing you the same as the Old Mariner missed water,
Don't blame me for missing you, it's my only pleasure. (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 47)

In *Give Me a Sky to Fly*, other notable poems that deal with love include- "My Valentine", "Can't You...?", "Let's Catch the Rainbow", "The Sun is Different Here", "Let's Walk in the Rain", "Breathing Alone", "The Courageous Kiss", "I will be with You", "Another World", "I become Happy...", "For You", "Can My Feelings be Translated?", "Fell in Love Again", "Do you..?", "Never Leave Me", "I Bleed", "You will Fall in Love with Me...", "The Sweet Kiss", "Let My Heart Burn", "I can Feel Your Presence", "Shyness and You", "Love at First Sight", "Your Love Keeps Me Alive", "I Can't Live Without You", "Would You Mind...?", "You are My Sky!", "I am Your Shadow", "Thank You for the Unforgettable Journey", "When You are Alone", "Boulevard of Love", "An Insect's Love for the Fire", "An Incomplete Love Story", "I Need Your Love", "I Miss You Much when It Rains", "I Love You Because...", "Ma Luv 4 U Follows No Grammar", "Let Me Hold You in My Arms", "Your Smile is Paradise", "Your Voice is a Song", "Beauty Lives in Her Eyes", "When I will not be Here...", "You have Made Me Yours", "Who can Love You More than Me?", "You are Everywhere!", "Will You See the Sky with Me?", "When There was No One beside You", "I will Still Love You", "Believe", "I Really Can't...", "I am Sorry", "Why do You Love Me So Much?" and "Transliteration of My Promise to You".

Regarding the application of symbolism, it can be said that most of the poems in *Give Me a Sky to Fly* are enriched with symbols. In "Death of a Crowded Planet", the word 'death' refers to the 'sinking' and 'crowded planet' symbolises the Titanic. The line, "The water scheming with the ice-berg devoured her in totality" (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 30) indicates the way the Titanic goes under water on the very first voyage. She has nowhere else to go or move; the seabed is the only place to rest forever, "The crowded planet will laze on the ocean floor save for eternity" (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 30).

Now, in "Blank Darkness", 'Hades' symbolises the source of eternal darkness. Even, Md. Ziaul Haque has tried to portray the way 'blank darkness' finds its way directly from the inferno to the human heart. Darkness has its own 'uniqueness'. Even a tree leaves its dark shadow behind. In this regard, the existence of darkness and light is natural and we must not go against nature's 'whim'. Darkness of human heart is never expected and 'blank darkness' indicates that particular moment or point in time when a very bad person (Shylock) finds himself totally confused and scared after his evil activities are known to everyone:

Enlightening all darkness is an idea shocking,
Must it be there to make nature's whim safe,
Even the least challenge ends up in mocking,
The sighs of ours that wander as waif.

Dark heart of Shylock did experience 'blank darkness',
While he was all null in utter madness. (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 54)

In "You and Your Blue Sari", the poet makes a reference to Aphrodite, the Greek goddess of love and beauty, to represent the stunning beauty of his beloved. In "Sleepless without You", the lover is telling his beloved that he will make a home for the two of them in 'Mars'. Here, 'Mars' symbolises a distant and peaceful place. In the couplet, the poet compares himself with 'Kumbhakarna' who was the brother of Ravana and son of Visravas and Kaikasi in the great Hindu epic *Ramayana*. He slept for six months and was fully awake for another six months. Actually, the lover thinks that he may start sleeping more in much happiness if the beloved looks at him with a big smile:

You can bring sleep in my world with only a little smile,
Not a big one since it can turn me into Kumbhakarna for a while. (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 04)

The use of symbolism is also found in "The Day when the Sky Cried Much". The word 'cry' denotes 'rainfall' and the phrase 'the sky started smiling' implies the 'clear sky'. In "Destined to Shine", perhaps, the speaker is the poet himself. His use of the simile, "Like Robert Frost he shall glow among the immortal changers", indicates his confidence and optimism and reminds us of the easily understandable poems of Robert Frost. In fact, Md. Ziaul Haque has used very simple language and the readers like to read on and on. The poem "Ctrl + Z" has a very unique symbol, which is 'jail'. Here, the poet compares the world to a prison and all the people are prisoners and the universe is a 'bigger jail' that holds the world within its sphere:

But life is not software,

It can only reshape,
Can't dare to believe in any escape,
Since the world itself is a jail within a jail bigger. (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 11)

In "Let Troy Burn", the word "Troy" (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 43) signifies the lover's heart. Again, in "You are Poetry in Motion", the lover compares the eyes of the beloved to a "distant lighthouse" (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 17). The sailors become happy and relaxed after seeing a lighthouse, similarly, the lover's tension, fear, etc. go away when he looks at the eyes of his beloved. Again, in "What is Love?", love is compared to an "unseen energy, binding us all through magical chain..." (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 51). In "Blessed Land", the poet has indicated Sylhet, a holy city that he originally belongs to. The poem "Never Leave Me" also contains symbolism in it. The word 'oxygen' signifies the 'love' of the lover for his beloved. Love can only be felt like oxygen. As we cannot stay alive without oxygen, similarly, the lover thinks that he will die without the love of his beloved:

My love for you is like oxygen,
You don't seem to feel its presence,
But it's there taking care of you,
As the paper's love is for the pen. (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 101)

The poem, "Eternal Leave in Advance" has a very nice use of symbols in it. The words, "you have taken a leave in advance" represent the death of the beloved and her presence in the afterlife. In "I Love Words", the 'words' are compared to "Delphic oracle" and "designers of unique miracle" (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 119) since they can change the world through their miraculous power. Regarding the use of symbolism, "Sitting by the Pond" is no exception to it. In the poem, the word, 'toy' symbolises the 'frog'. The poem, "I am a Word Cultivator" is full of symbolism from the beginning till the end. For example, we see a brilliant comparison of the 'thoughts' to the 'seeds', 'words' to the 'little plants', 'words' to the 'children' etc:

I love to cultivate words,
The thoughts are my seeds,
And the words are the little plants,
Turning into big trees in the readers' hearts.

Word-cultivation is not that easy to do,
The thoughts would simply die,
If the tools didn't come to help,
The cultivator in the *creatio ex nihilo*.

The words are like children too,
Since nourished they are affectionately so. (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 163)

No poet has ever before used the term 'infinite city' to indicate 'sky' as has been done by Md. Ziaul Haque in "First Touch". In "Post-postmodern Love", the words, "indebted those lovers are to the face[less] book" represent the passion of most of the lovers for 'Facebook'; the term "face[less] book" (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 157) indicates those particular Facebook-users who hide their true identities or mask their real faces and try to present themselves in a positive manner. In the last line, 'Facebook' has been compared to an 'ocean'. In "Beauty Lives in Her Eyes", the lover compares his beloved's eyes to those of Elizabeth Bennet in Jane Austen's novel *Pride and Prejudice*. Besides, the metaphor, 'her eyes' are the 'well of beauty', is extremely wonderful:

Beauty lives safely in one place,
Her eyes are the address,
So beautiful they are to look at,
Reminding us of Elizabeth Bennet.

Only a few are blessed,
With eyes so wonderful and sacred,
A thousand nights will seem nothing,
To spend evoking the beauty that her eyes bring.

Her eyes are the precious well of beauty,
In which I would love to descend for eternity. (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 150)

In addition, Md. Ziaul Haque is a romantic poet in every sense especially because he, like the romantic poets, “formulates an innovative...way of understanding the world” (Hazarika, 2012, p. 32) and his poems contain the basic characteristics of romantic poetry, which are- feeling, intuition, imagination, individualism, spontaneity, solitary life rather than life in society and the love of beauty and nature. He believes that nature loves us unconditionally and shows us the way to love nature. “Lovejoy indicates the philosophical transition concerning the Great Chain. This parallels the change in poetry from indifference to Nature to love of Nature. The early part of the eighteenth century was characterised by the belief that man’s environment and all creatures were made for his benefit. As the century progressed, benevolence based upon Plato’s philosophy eventually caused man to feel that since God created the universe through love, all the parts of that universe are endowed with that same love; therefore it behooved man to show good affections to all” (Johnston, 1954, p. v). Likewise, “Almost all the romantic poets... tried to heal sorrow of the human beings by writing their verses about nature. Romantic poets believed that nature is the source of inspiration. Nature has answer for all unanswered questions of the mankind” (Bose, 2013, p. 290).

Through the nature-poems, Md. Ziaul Haque preaches an understanding between nature and human. “A significant one among the predominant ideas of the Romantic poetics is the poets’ attitude toward nature. The importance they attach to nature is conspicuous and extraordinary”. Certainly, Md. Ziaul Haque “seems to be driven to nature by...his love of nature” and it is nature that “fills his mind with love and feeling” (Huey-jen Kuo, 2005, pp. 188-201). The way he deals with nature in his poems is extremely different and we feel at ease after reading the nature-poems and cannot but think seriously about the wellbeing of natural elements. The poems make us astonished; this is where Md. Ziaul Haque stands apart compared to the earlier nature-poets. We are not saying that we do not learn anything from the previous poets who wrote about nature in their poems but there is something magical and spellbinding in the nature-poems of Md. Ziaul Haque. The readers feel like reading on and on.

“The treatment of nature as no more than a resource for human ends, and as having its significance and value conferred by or through human interests, presents the class of humans as the master” (Plumwood, 1993, p. 147). Md. Ziaul Haque’s “world of imagination has explored the affection of humanity and the beauty of nature...People are not aware of nature in modern life. Meanwhile, because of the ignorance of nature, people create lot of pollutions”. Therefore, Wordsworth’s poems teach us ‘how to walk with nature’ and Md. Ziaul Haque’s poems teach us ‘how to communicate with nature’ “which could illuminate the perception of readers about nature in modern society” (Xiaoyang, 2013, p. 6). According to Md. Ziaul Haque, the equation is quite simple; if we destroy nature, nature will destroy us as is the subject-matter in “Don’t Let the World Yawn”:

The world is losing colour,
Once lively but not so now,
A crucial concern to ponder over,
You and I must act, don’t say how?

We must not fail to remember,
“Every action has an equal and opposite reaction”,
The world is sobbing in the centre,
Getting ready to pay back in its own fashion.

Don’t let the world yawn,
If it does so, we will never witness a new dawn. (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 69)

Md. Ziaul Haque is different from other poets because he believes that nature is a ‘living thing’. He thinks that it possesses all the features of humanism such as life, will, emotion and thoughts. He has an immense consideration for the exceeding capacity of natural world and intentionally puts the comforting nature beside the distressed world of the humans. He uses his imaginative mind that selects, cuts, and rearranges the natural view to prove that ‘nature is pleasing’. Md. Ziaul Haque writes about nature, its power and its beauty in “The Rose and Its Thorns”, “Snake Charmer”, “Music of Nature”, “Roads are Never Alone!”, “Sitting by the Pond”, “Night Watchman”, “Will You See the Sky with Me?”, “Water Can Speak!”, “Cunning Wind”, “Nature of Nature”, “Another World”, “Wish of a Seed!”, “Let’s Walk in the Rain”, “Let’s Catch the Rainbow”, “Fugitive Cloud”, “Life of Grass”, “Greenhouse is not Green!”, “Under the Fallen Leaves”, “The Sun is Different Here”, “You are

My Sky!”, “Death of a Crowded Planet”, “Fly of a Butterfly”, “Fly” etc. There are so many natural elements in his poems such as stars, flowers, glow-worms, sky, mist, bird, dew, branch, snake, sea, moon, sun, snowfall, rain, tree, grass and so on. Whenever Md. Ziaul Haque feels sad, he, like Wordsworth, searches for a friend and the friend that comes with a helping hand is ‘nature’. For instance, in “Life of Grass”:

Although grass to a handful surfaces vain,
The very being of it,
Mounting all over reminding of equivalence,
Endures constant pain. (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 24)

Md. Ziaul Haque believes that the birds, flowers and the moon bring delight and satisfaction. He feels an immanent reality (throughout the communication between the natural world and his mind), which is present in the aspects of the outer world. In his poetry, this immanent reality and good judgment of life in natural objects appear nearly as accurate fact. The poet adopts a technique here. He willingly characterises those natural objects so that a beautiful and peaceful nook can be created in his mind. He does so only to avoid the sadness in the human world. Another characteristic of Md. Ziaul Haque’s poems is that he, like Shelley, Keats and Wordsworth, “seeks the help of nature to generate happiness” (Bose, 2013, p. 291) as we see in “Let Your Hair Fly in the Air Please”:

Oh symbol of beauty! Don’t be so cruel,
Let your gorgeous hair fly ‘my jewel’,
Because the air does wait to play,
With your hair everyday. (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 07)

Like Wordsworth, Md. Ziaul Haque believes that nature, sometimes, seems to be the power that makes the world meaningful; so, he hails nature. His natural world is always related to the existence of human beings. His characters are isolated females, elderly people, beggars, lovers and ordinary man. He connects their life with the greatness of the natural world and admires them as supreme individuals. Md. Ziaul Haque thinks that the cruelty and other vices have dishonoured and dehumanised human beings in city. Therefore, the loveliness of nature and modest humanity are found in his poems. This makes us remember the words of Johnston (1954):

Certainly the society of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries placed man at a distance from, if not out of sight of Nature. Animals were held in indifference. Sophisticated man was above and beyond the lower creatures. Then science discovered that man and animals showed remarkable similarities. The nature poets sounded the same key. As in a musical crescendo the chord of humanitarianism swelled to reach the mysticism of Blake and the spirituality of Wordsworth. (p. 92)

The poems of the romantic poets are full of emotion, imagination and the love of beauty as well. *Give Me a Sky to Fly* also echoes these features. The poet is extremely emotional in “I am a Poet”, “I am a Word Cultivator”, “My Heart Can Also Cry”, “If You don’t Love Me, No Problem, Love My Poems”, “My Blood is Also Red”, “‘Bangla’: My Mother, My Language” etc. Notably, we see some similarities between Md. Ziaul Haque and Kazi Nazrul Islam. The latter “is romantic in romantic ardour, rich imagination and intense emotion. Throughout his poetry, he exercises the concept of love, freedom, revolution, humanity, and symbolism” and “to Nazrul, nature is the indivisible part of life. His treatment of nature is strong enough to prove how much romantic he is” (Deb & Shafiqul Islam, 2013, pp. 1-4) and the former is no exception to it. In “Another World”, the poet’s imagination is at work. In “You and Your Blue Sari”, the speaker appreciates the beauty of the beloved passionately. Her beauty becomes unmatched and the lover even imagines that she transforms into Aphrodite, the goddess of love and beauty, when she appears before him in ‘sari’:

Beauty of yours reaches an untouchable peak,
Every time you appear in the blue sari,
The colour of the generous sky and the bountiful sea,
I keep looking at you losing the power to speak!

Aphrodite starts breathing in you,
As distinction is hardly possible,
Can I even think of another parable?
To praise your beauty true. (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 03)

The poet's love of beauty and emotional outburst are also found in "Let Your Hair Fly in the Air Please". Here, the lover addresses the beloved as a "symbol of beauty" and praises her hair as "gorgeous" and "shiny" and wants her to let "beauty be born around" her by freeing her hair so that it can "fly in joy" (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 07). The similar appreciation of beauty is found in "You are Poetry in Motion" where the lover considers the beloved as "beautiful, gorgeous and charming" (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 17). In "You are Beauty", the lover is so charmed by the attractiveness of the beloved that he does not call her "beautiful" but "beauty" (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 84) itself as is apparent in the title. The poem, "My Cleopatra" also worships loveliness:

Beauty of yours doesn't let me lie,
Breathtaking eyes seem to be galloping,
No sense of fear even when to die,
To feel your lips with mine, yearning. (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 25)

When it comes to humanism, Md. Ziaul Haque dreams about a 'new dawn' for humanity. He loves nature and mankind simultaneously. We can consider his "retirement to nature as a strategic withdrawal for the betterment of humanity" (Saeed Khan, 2013, p. 86). As the 'shepherds' in *The Prelude* "symbolize Wordsworth's love of mankind" (Yu, 2005, p. 211), similarly, the poems, "Imagine...", "Blessed Land", "An Old Beggar", "Tokai [A Street Kid]", "BANGLADESH", "Imaginary Homeland!", "Nobody Catches Their Teardrops", "Empty Cry of a Fallen Lady", "A Little Girl with Flowers in Hand", "May Day", "Who is Truly Poor?", "Fearless Boston" and "Bangla: My Mother, My Language" express Md. Ziaul Haque's patriotism as well as philanthropy in general. Broadly, the mentioned poems demonstrate a universal love for the whole humanity. The beggar in "An Old Beggar" looks at the "useless stars" (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 20); he does not care whether they are beautiful, whether they exist or not, he just thinks about his and his family members' existence on earth. This is a poem that teaches us to be sympathetic to the poor. As the poet expresses his humane feeling in "Nobody Catches Their Teardrops" after seeing a street-kid who needs some money badly to buy food:

For some money the little child has stretched a hand,
Against mine I can suddenly sense,
He looks so hungry and tired,
The teardrops of his sister are about to collapse.

Some have the luxury of catching raindrops,
Those flood-stricken grab relief,
An infant is happy seizing its mother's fingers,
A special phenomenon that does lessen her grief.

But do we amplify our hearts honestly,
For those whose teardrops perish hopelessly? (Ziaul Haque, 2014, p. 78)

III. CONCLUSION

In fine, Md. Ziaul Haque's *Give Me a Sky to Fly* truly begins Post-postmodernism in literature. He has an extraordinary "power of imagination" (Saeed Khan, 2013, p. 87) and the poems act as a proof of this matter. His poems are the 'tiny pieces of wisdom' and represent the truth and simplicities of human life. He teaches his readers how great personalities take shape; how we can translate our pain and grief into power; how we can stick our mind to superior principles, how we can get real contentment, familial bonds of love and warmth at the time of frustration and how we can defeat unimportant desires. In addition, he wants to spread the necessity of creativity among us through his poems and teach mankind that brutality is not a part of nature but external to it. He wants to convey the message of humaneness, decency, righteousness and integrity. He dreams of a society where subjugation, poverty, abhorrence and inhumanity will be replaced by love, freedom, compassion and goodness. Hence, Md. Ziaul Haque's poems remind us of the claim of Wordsworth that his poetry is:

... to console the afflicted, to add sunshine to daylight by making the happy happier, to teach the young and the gracious of every age, to see, to think and feel, and therefore to become more actively and securely virtuous. (as cited in Owen, 1974, p. 111)

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