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ENGL 2120  
23 April 2022

### My Take on William Wordsworth's Poetic Style

William Wordsworth was a Romantic poet who composed in simple language because he believed that everyone should be able to read poetry and access the true knowledge behind its words. Though the language itself is basic, he uses it to relay his complex ideas of the world. At the time of Wordsworth's poetic career, England was going through the Industrial Revolution, which he greatly opposed. He placed great value on the rustic lifestyle; such subordination of Industrial developments can be seen in his poems titled "We Are Seven" and "Lines Written in Early Spring." My poetry chapbook echoes Wordsworth's anti-Industrialization ideas and the elevation of a life surrounded by nature by detailing the ways in which choosing the industrial lifestyle has led to dissatisfaction. The appeal to emotion and inducing certain ones from the reader to get across this message is a shared goal of Wordsworth and mine.

First in my chapbook is "Tempestatas," a play on the English sonnet. The fact that this poem contains a reference to both a Greek and a Roman god/goddess parallels the confusion in the narrator's search for meaning; the Truth. The last syllable of the first line is substituted with a dash to act as a break in thoughts, much like the first line of Wordsworth's "We Are Seven." Both first lines use the word "simple" to refer to a person and a time in which the narrator was more connected to the truths of Nature and/or her prophets. The first stanzas of this Wordsworth poem and "Tempestatas" take place in the present and serve as an introduction to an upcoming narrative of the past, which in both poems involves a highly-knowledgeable female presence with links to Nature. The act of Tempestatas knocking on the narrator's door is described as a "Child's game," which can be interpreted as either something minor and foolish or, as

Wordsworth and other Romantics would prefer, a ‘truth came knocking on the door’ moment where Truth is in a way taunting the narrator (Berman 1). The same could be said about the little cottage girl in Wordsworth’s “We Are Seven” and her debate with the older man where he dismisses her words and tries, to no avail, to prove her wrong.

My second poem, “Sweet May,” details the feelings of loss experienced by someone close to May, who has gone out into the new industrial world. Throughout the poem, the narrator experiences rapid shifts in his or her ideas about May’s departure, going from excitement and support to doubt in a short amount of time. The main subject here is a female, like in “We Are Seven,” who also gets the last word. Where Wordsworth’s last line is “And said, ‘Nay, we are seven!’” the last line of my poem is “She said, ‘I may’” (“Seven” 113) (Berman, “May” 2). The essence of both ending couplets is similar and they even have a rhyming element with “Nay” and “may.” To add on, “Sweet May” and “We are Seven” use diction which gives away the injections of religion into their creations. The repetition of the action of praying in my poem can be compared to Wordsworth’s applications of “church-yard,” “pray,” “God,” “heaven,” and even the number seven, commonly attributed a religious significance (“Seven” 111-113).

“Summa,” the third poem of the series, has a title which in Latin means “in sum.” It contains slight variations to the traditional English sonnet structure. This embodies the ideas that Romantics in Wordsworth’s time would’ve had about it being unnecessary to follow strict rules and guidelines when writing, as it would limit creativity. “Summa” directly contrasts “I,” the narrator, living the rustic lifestyle, with “you,” the person living the industrial lifestyle and to whom the poem is addressed. This poem suggests a duality of being; the idea that the two subjects exist separately yet simultaneously as a singular unit: humankind. “Summa” has connections to the themes and setting of Wordsworth’s “Lines Written in Early Spring.”

Wordsworth's narrator's state of being, illustrated by "in a grove I sate reclined" is echoed by my first line, "I sit and watch the day's events unfold" (113) (Berman, "Summa" 3).

Furthermore, both poems discuss other forms of life happily moving about; birds existing with full freedoms. While Wordsworth ends "Lines Written in Early Spring" by lamenting "what man has made of man," the narrator of "Summa" begs for answers to the complex existential questions which nag the equally complex mind of "man," of humanity as one: "Bring answers to our mind, so tortured and divine" (114) (Berman, 3). S/He turns to the Lord to pray for these answers. With this choice diction, "Summa" matches the religious devotion which Wordsworth gives his lines through the words "belief," "heaven," and "holy."

Coming in fourth is "A Day," my heroic couplet poem. The title is "A Day" to emphasize the simplicity of this particular moment in time. This is not a special occasion for either character; rather a depiction of routines which can be completed any time, any day. In a similar fashion, the conversation taking place in Wordsworth's "We Are Seven" does not occur under any special circumstances. The diction used in the narrator's attempts to depict the young maid as naive in his recount of their disagreement – "A simple child" – while explicitly questioning her knowledge base – "What should it know of death?" – works to understate the significance of the moment he is recalling (Wordsworth, "Seven" 110-111). "A Day" has connections to a second Wordsworth poem as well: "Lines Written in Early Spring." These connections take form in both poems' utilization of sounds and smells. In "A Day," sounds include the chirping birds, humming Colorado River, whispering wind, and honking car. Such sounds are paralleled in "Lines Written in Early Spring" by the assumed chirping of the birds which "hopp'd and play'd" and the combination of all such sounds of Nature into the line "I heard a thousand blended notes" (Wordsworth, 113). When it comes to smells, Wordsworth does not directly state any but we can

gather from numerous repetitions of the word “air” surrounding plant terms that his poem has a flowery aroma. In comparison, “A Day” mentions two highly-contrasting olfactory sensations: (1) a generalization for the fresh scents of Nature carried by the flowing river and (2) flesh-eating car fumes.

My fifth and final poem is titled “Behind the Veil.” The first two lines greatly resemble the first two lines of “Tempestas” and much the same mirror the way in which “We Are Seven” begins; all three poems start off in the present and recall, to certain degrees, times that have passed. An aspect of questioning, indicating a search for knowledge, is present in my final poem. This is a connection to both of Wordsworth’s aforementioned works. More specifically, my lines asking, “My question is now for you all: / What has become of human kind?” is influenced by the end of Wordsworth’s “Lines Written in Early Spring,” where he wonders, “Have I not reason to lament / What man has made of man?” (Berman, “Veil” 5) (114). A shared symbol of these two poems happens to be birds who are, in both cases, assigned cheerful dispositions: Wordsworth’s birds hop and play with “thrill[s] of pleasure” while my birds “flutter by so merrily” (“Spring” 113) (Berman, “Veil” 5). From an analytical perspective, my line “Dispersed we are among the hills” can be linked to the physical separation of the seven siblings in “We Are Seven” (Berman, “Veil” 5).

Emulating the writing style of William Wordsworth allowed me to take a stab at composing some poetry of my own. By using the worldly ideas of Wordsworth as a Romantic of his time and bouncing off of themes presented in his “We Are Seven” and “Lines Written in Early Spring,” I was able to set specific guidelines for myself in terms of my final expected product. Keeping in mind a goal of thematic coherence, I, like Wordsworth, used simple language to create poems that just about overflow with underlying meaning. Some of these

poems talk about the simple rustic life as one of the past while others examine the duality of being with the two worlds, industrial and rustic, existing simultaneously. In the poems indicating rural life as a thing of the past, such a past could be connected to childhood; therefore, it can be inferred that the people in their youth were more connected to universal Truth than when they got older and joined the industrial world. With this Romantic logic, the older one gets, the more questions he or she has for the universe and its creator.

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