

Poetry
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Lecture 34
William Wordsworth-1

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William Wordsworth (1770-1850)



- The Romantic Movement
- Romantic Poets
- Lake District Map
- Wordsworth
- Wordsworth's poetic forms
- Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*
- *The Prelude*
- Book I of *The Prelude*
- Selected Passages 1-282
- Analysis



Hello, the first point that we look into the romantic period is William Wordsworth, he was born in 1770 and died in 1850. And it was he and Coleridge, who announce this romantic movement. We will see the romantic poets together in one slide, then we will see the map of Lake District because many of these poets were called Lake District poets or lake poets.

The prominent of this lake poet is Wordsworth. We will see some of the poetic forms experimented by Wordsworth. Then pay attention to Preface to Lyrical Ballads, which we mentioned earlier in the previous video. And now, pay attention to the Prelude from which we have book 1 for our discussion. Even from this book 1, we have certain selected passages in this lecture and in the next lecture we will see some more selected passages and complete this discussion of Wordsworth poetry.

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Romantic Movement



- **Political:** American Revolution (1776), French Revolution (1789); radically democratic
- **Literary:** Interest in real Nature and reaction against stereotypical and elitist culture of poetic diction and tone
- **Linguistic:** ordinary language of common people
- **Thematic:** rural, poor, simple, communal, universal, spiritual, nurturing, etc.
- **Technical:** experiment in line and stanza forms, subjects, interaction between man and nature
- **Landscape:** hills, dales, rivers, streams, plants, flowers
- **Undercurrent:** Man & Nature; Mind & Natural processes



Romantic Movement has several dimensions: political, literary, linguistic, semantic, technical, landscape and even one idea called undercurrent. Politically, American Revolution in 1776, French Revolution in 1789 created a climate where there was a desire for a radically democratic society. And in literature poets took interest in nature and they reacted against the stereotypical and elitist culture of poetic diction and tone of the previous era. In language, they chose to write about common people in ordinary language.

When it comes to themes, they chose subjects from rural, poor areas simple people, living in community or in common areas. And they were also thinking about people's relation to spirituality and the ability of nature to nurture them in an environment where there was some universal peace and all that.

Now, when we move to technical aspect of Romantic Movement, we find that poets were experimenting in line and stanza forms, in subjects, in their interaction between, man and nature. They brought in lots of landscape into their poetry: hills, dales, rivers, streams, plants, flowers, everything that they could see from outside. And the major undercurrent of romantic poetry is the relationship between man and nature and the interaction between mind and the natural processes. They noticed close resemblance between whatever is happening in nature and whatever happened in their own mind.

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Romantic Poets



William Blake (1754-1827) – 70 years
William Wordsworth (1770-1850) – 80 years
Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834) – 62 years
Robert Southey (1774-1843) – 69 years
Lord (George Gordon) Byron (1788-1824) – 36 years
Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792-1822) – 30 years
John Keats (1795-1821) -26 years

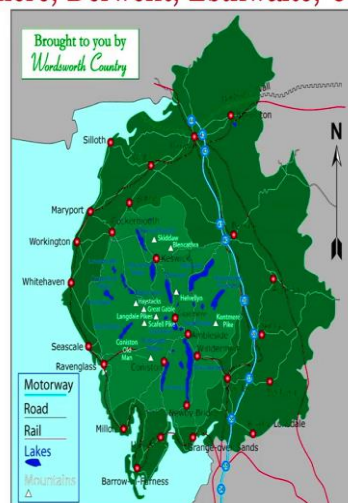
Lake District/ Lake Poets



Here we have the list of Romantic Poets William Blake, William Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Robert Southey, Lord Byron, Percy Bysshe Shelley, John Keats. First three were called lake poets: Wordsworth, Coleridge and Southey. And we can see that, it was Wordsworth who lived the longest and it was John Keats who lived for a short period of time but all of them produced great poetry which we cherish today.

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Cockermouth, Penrith, Windermere, Grasmere, Derwent, Esthwaite, Ulswater



This is the map of the Lake District, certain key points we have, locations we have Cockermouth, Penrith, Windermere, Grasmere, Derwent, Esthwaite and Ulswater. The lakes are indicated through blue colour we can see. Many lakes are there and Wordsworth and his

friends, they were living here for some time and they were moving around walking in nature , breathing in nature, living with nature and drawing inspiration from nature to write poetry about themselves and nature.

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Wordsworth (1770 -1850)

- Motherless at 8 and fatherless at 13
- Supported by relatives and friends
- Cambridge educated
- Revolutionary thought
- 'Lasting' friendship with Coleridge
- Inspiring sister Dorothy
- Managing wife Mary
- Distributor of Stamps
- Poet Laureate (1843-1850)
- *The Prelude* (1805 and 1850)



To give a brief introduction to Wordsworth, he was motherless at 8 and fatherless at 13, that impacted his life. He was supported by relatives and friends with all that he was able to get education in Cambridge and he developed certain natural revolutionary thoughts because of the spirit of the age. And he was able to make lasting friendship with Coleridge and he was lucky that he had his sister Dorothy most of the times with him and she was always inspiring him to write poems.

Similarly, when he married this lady Mary, she was managing many of the activities of Wordsworth. In later life, Wordsworth was able to get disposed of distributor of stamps only then he was able to become financially a little independent. And then after the death of Robert Southey, he became Poet Laureate.

The poem that we discuss, the poem for which he is known as a great epic poet and English poetry was published only after his death in 1850, that too by his wife. The title, *The Prelude* also was given by his wife. Many short poems we have, where they are well known but this one 'The Prelude' which he wrote throughout his life, which he revised throughout his life was published only after his death.

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Wordsworth's Poetic Genres



- The **blank verse** tradition: almost all poems
- The **ballad** tradition: "Simon Lee"
- The **pastoral**: "Michael"
- The **sonnet**: "London, 1802"
- Lyric**: "My Heart Leaps Up"
- Lyric**: "Tintern Abbey"
- The **ode**: "Intimations"
- The **elegy**: "Elegiac Stanzas"
- The **epic**: *The Prelude*



Wordsworth experimented with different kinds of poetic forms. To begin with, he was using the blank verse in his poems, in most of his poems. He was also drawing on this ballad tradition, one example is, "Simon Lee." He was writing from this pastoral setting as we have in Michael. He was experimenting with the sonnet form as we have in "London 1802."

Then many of his poems are lyrical, two examples we have, "My Heart Leaps Up" and "Tintern Abbey." He also worked with the ode form in Intimations of immortality. Elegy also he tried in "Elegiac Stanzas" and lastly, we have this epic, one of the innovative Epics in English is The Prelude, an autobiographical epic.

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Preface to *Lyrical Ballads* (1800)



- **Poet**: a man speaking to man
- **Poetry**: spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings recollected in tranquility
- **Subject**: common people, landscape, countryside, rivers, valleys
- **Exploratory region**: mind and heart of man in nature
- **Aim**: didactic/ therapeutic – the healing power of nature and poetry
- **Language**: the language of the common man
- **Rhythm**: common speech patterns
- **Figures of speech**: functional, not ornamental
- **Model**: Nature



What do we have in the Preface to Lyrical Ballads? we hinted at some points earlier, now we will see some more points about the Lyrical Ballads, particularly, the preface to Lyrical Ballads. We will raise questions like, who is a poet? according to Wordsworth, a poet is a man speaking to man, not speaking to conventions, not speaking to Elite Society.

What is poetry? According Wordsworth, 'poetry is spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings recollected in tranquillity.' What are the subjects useful for writing poems? According to Wordsworth, common people are good enough for writing about in their poetry, Landscape is good, countryside is good, rivers and valleys they are all suitable for poetry in Wordsworth.

When it comes to the region which he explored, the mind and heart of man in nature, mind, mind and heart of man not in isolation, not away from nature but in nature. What is the aim of writing poems? Didactic aim, Wordsworth that is why is considered to be somewhat difficult poet, in the sense, he was not writing great poetry, some people may not like his poetry because he was giving some message. But for him and many readers of poetry throughout the world, we like him because of some message, some healing power, that is therapeutic power that we have in his poetry.

The kind of language that Wordsworth wanted to use was the language of the common man, not of Latinate language, not of Greek language, poetic diction as Pope and Dryden were using. The rhythm also he drew from the common speech patterns of people. Actually, he was working around his own place and many places along with Coleridge and other poets. He observed people speaking, and took the speech patterns from the people and introduced them into his own poetry. For him, figures of speech should be functional, not ornamental as in the case of previous poets. And for him, the best model for writing poetry is nature herself, that is why in most of the poems he writes about nature or human beings in nature.

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The Prelude (1850)



- Prelude to a long philosophical poem *The Recluse: Or Views of Nature, Man and Society*
- Written in different forms from 1798 to 1832
- Largely chronological, Revised endlessly.
- **Theme of the Self**
- Various Titles
 - 1. Poem to Coleridge
 - 2. Poem on the Growth of a Poet's Mind
 - 3. Poem on My Own Life
 - 4. Poem – title not yet fixed upon
 - 5. *The Prelude, or the Growth of a Poet's Mind*
- Final title given by Mary Wordsworth



The poem that we want to discuss here is the Prelude. It has 14 books. We are not going to look into all those 14 books. We will have only one book that is a first book. Here we have some preliminary information about The Prelude. Wordsworth considered this poem to be an introduction to a long philosophical poem called, ‘The Recluse: Or Views of Nature, Man and Society.’ He wrote this poem in different forms, from 1798 to 1832, over a long period of time he was writing it. Mostly, this poem was chronological and Wordsworth spent his whole life time to revise it again and again.

The theme of the poem is his ‘own self.’ There are many titles for this poem, Poem to Coleridge, Poem on the Growth of a Poet’s Mind, Poem on My Own Life, Poem- title not yet fixed upon. The last one, the fifth one is The Prelude or the Growth of a Poet’s Mind, that is a title that we have now for this poem. It was given by his own wife Mary Wordsworth after his death.

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The Prelude, 14 Books



- Bk1: 23 verse paras: Childhood and School-Time
- New found freedom to settle down in **Grasmere**
- Commitment to the long poem addressed to Coleridge
- **Exploration of themes:** mythical, historical, and self
- Examination of own potential for the task
- A tale from his own heart –an option
- Child and Nature – foundational relationship
- River Derwent, Skiddaw Mountain, Hawkshead school, Lake Ullswater, Esthwaite valley
- Outdoor and indoor games/ activities
- Boat incident (ll.358-401) playing cards (ll.524-537)
- “The story of my life”; “The road lies plain before me;”



The Prelude, an epic poem has 14 books. Book 1 has 23 verse paragraphs. And it deals primarily with childhood and school time. He discusses the new found freedom to settle down in one place called Grasmere. He also discusses his commitment to the long poem address to Coleridge in this book 1. He explores many themes. What kind of theme that he can choose to write about in this poem? whether he should choose subject from mythical stories or historical events or his own self, he considers many options.

Then, he also examines his own potential, how much of talent that he has to write about all these different kinds of subjects. Finally, he chooses one option. That is, a tale from his own heart, that he considers to be his main option. Then when he starts writing, he starts writing about his own childhood; the way in which he lived as a child in nature and he finds a close relationship between him and nature he calls it foundational relationship for the man that he grew to be, for the poet that he became.

The places that he lived around River Derwent, Skiddaw Mountain, Hawkshead school, Lake Ullswater, Esthwaite valley all these are projected in book 1. He deals with two different kinds of activities; outdoor activities and indoor games. He learnt many things from both outdoor and indoor activities he deals with them. A major incident that is discussed in book 1 is boat incident and he deals with this in quite a few lines we will see them. And also, he discusses playing cards that is indoor game, we also have some focus on this.

Finally, he chooses the theme of his own self as, “The story of my life” that is going to be the subject of the autobiographical poem that he writes. And he says, when he gets this kind of confidence he says, “The road lies plain before me;” let me write about my own life, my own story, my oneself in this Prelude.

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Opening Lines: Invocation

Oh there is blessing in this gentle breeze,
A visitant that while it fans my cheek
Doth seem half-conscious of the joy it brings
From the green fields, and from yon azure sky.
Whate'er its mission, the soft breeze can come 5
To none more grateful than to me; escaped
From the vast city, where I long had pined
A discontented sojourner: now free,
Free as a bird to settle where I will.
What dwelling shall receive me? in what vale 10
Shall be my harbour? underneath what grove
Shall I take up my home? and what clear stream
Shall with its murmur lull me into rest?
The earth is all before me.



We had opening lines; we have to remember that this is an epic poem an autobiographical epic poem begins with an invocation. These are opening lines:

Oh there is blessing in this gentle breeze,

A visitant that while it fans my cheek.

Doth seem half conscious of the joy it brings,

From the green fields and from yon azure sky.

Whate'er its mission, the soft and breeze can come 5

To none more grateful than to me; escaped

From the vast city, where I long had pined.

A discontented sojourner: now free,

Free as a bird to settle where I will.

What dwellings shall receive me? in what vale 10

Shall be my harbour? underneath what grove

Shall I take up my home? and what clear stream

Shall with its murmur lull me into rest?

The earth is all before me.

This is how he begins, and the kind of interaction that he has with the breeze and the kind of freedom that it gives him is visible in these lines, opening lines.

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Liberty

Dear Liberty! Yet what would it avail
But for a gift that consecrates the joy?
For I, methought, while the sweet breath of heaven
Was blowing on my body, felt within
A correspondent breeze, that gently moved 35
With quickening virtue, but is now become
A tempest, a redundant energy,
Vexing its own creation. Thanks to both,
And their congenial powers, that, while they join
In breaking up a long-continued frost, 40
Bring with them vernal promises, the hope
Of active days urged on by flying hours,—
Days of sweet leisure, taxed with patient thought
Abstruse, nor wanting punctual service high,
Matins and vespers of harmonious verse! 45



What is important for Wordsworth is the liberty, the freedom that he has got, so he addresses liberty directly.

“Dear liberty! Yet what would it avail,

But for a gift that consecrates the joy?

For I, methought, while the sweet breath of heaven

Was blowing on my body, felt within
 A correspondent breeze, that gently moved 35
 With quickening virtue, but is now become
 A tempest, a redundant energy,
 Vexing its own creation. Thanks to both,
 And their congenial powers, that, while they join
 In breaking up a long-continued frost, 40
 Bring with them vernal promises, the hope
 Of active days urged on by flying hours,-
 Days of sweet leisure, taxed with patient thought.
 Abstruse, nor wanting punctual service high,
 Matins and vespers of harmonious verse!" 45

Wordsworth is able to see this harmonious verse from his interaction with the correspondent breeze that happens in him in his own mind that is an inspiration. When there is a gentle breeze in the nature, there is a breeze in him which inspires him to find out the relations between day and night, morning and evening, man and nature he feels liberated, he feels happy that he could write his own poem.

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Friend



Thus far, O Friend! did I, not used to make
A present joy the matter of a song,
Pour forth that day my soul in measured strains
That would not be forgotten, and are here
Recorded: to the open fields I told 50
A prophecy: poetic numbers came
Spontaneously to clothe in priestly robe
A renovated spirit singled out,
Such hope was mine, for holy services.
My own voice cheered me, and, far more, the mind's 55
Internal echo of the imperfect sound;
To both I listened, drawing from them both
A cheerful confidence in things to come.



We have to remember that, the whole point was written for Coleridge, his friend. So, he addresses his friend.

“Thus far, O Friend! did I, not used to make

a present joy the matter of a song.

Pour forth that day my soul in measured strains

That would not be forgotten, and are here

Recorded: to the open fields I told. 50

A prophecy: poetic numbers came

spontaneously to clothe in priestly robe

A renovated spread singled out,

Such hope was mine, for holy services.

My own voice cheered me, and, far more, the mind's 55

internal eco of the imperfect sound.

To both I listened, drawing from them both

A cheerful confidence in things to come.”

Wordsworth was able to see this harmonious verse, taking shape in his own mind and then he addresses his one friend Coleridge. Poetic numbers came spontaneously, penned. Wordsworth was in the right mind, in the right place with this liberal feeling, sense of freedom, sense of freedom that he got when he came to Grasmere, he was able to write this poem cheerfully. He was able to get support from natural surroundings, a cheerful confidence in things to come established here for Wordsworth.

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Poetry and Tree



Content and not unwilling now to give
A respite to this passion, I paced on 60
With brisk and eager steps; and came, at length,
To a green shady place, where down I sate
Beneath a tree, slackening my thoughts by choice
And settling into gentler happiness.
'Twas autumn, and a clear and placid day, 65
With warmth, as much as needed, from a sun
Two hours declined towards the west; a day
With silver clouds, and sunshine on the grass,
And in the sheltered and the sheltering grove
A perfect stillness.



Poetry and Tree, yes, there is a close relationship between poetry and tree as specified by Wordsworth here in these lines:

“Content and not unwilling now to give

A respite to this passion, I paced on 60

With brisk and eager steps; and came at, length,

To a green shady place, where down I sate.

Beneath a tree, slackening my thoughts by choice

And settling into gentler happiness.

‘Twas autumn, and a clear and placid day,

65

With warmth, as much as needed, from a sun

Two hours decline towards the west; a day

With silver clouds, and sunshine on the grass,

And in the sheltered and the sheltering grove

A perfect stillness.”

When we go to nature, when we sit under a tree, we have this sense of stillness, a perfect stillness. A kind of calm, peace, quietness that we feel happy about and we are sheltered in the sheltering grove. This shelter, security, sense of security, sense of being with nature is what gives cheerful confidence to Wordsworth. Poetry is not just poetry; it is powerful poetry when it is written spontaneously sitting under a tree or at least imagining and sitting under a tree or getting the bliss of the breeze from the tree into the heart and mind the poem pours out for his friend Coleridge.

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The Poet

And now it would content me to yield up
Those lofty hopes awhile, for present gifts
Of humbler industry. But, oh, dear Friend!

The Poet, gentle creature as he is, 135

Hath, like **the Lover**, his unruly times;

His fits when he is neither sick nor well,

Though no distress be near him but his own

Unmanageable thoughts: his mind, best pleased 140

While she **as duteous as the mother dove**

Sits brooding, lives not always to that end,

But like the innocent bird, hath goadings on

That drive her as in trouble through the groves;

With me is now such passion, to be blamed

No otherwise than as it lasts too long.



Now, let us see the poet how does he think about himself.

“And now it would content me to yield up

Those lofty hopes awhile, for present gifts

Of humbler industry. But, oh, dear friend!

The poet, gentle creature as he is, 135

Hath, like the lover, his unruly times;

His fits when he is neither sick nor well,

Though no distress be near him but his own.

Unmanageable thoughts: his mind, best pleased

While she has duteous as the mother dove 140

Sits brooding, lives not always to that end.

But like the innocent bird, hath goadings on

That drive her as in trouble through the groves;

With me is now such passion, to be blamed

No otherwise then as it lasts too long.”

The poet, who is the poet? the poet is like the lover; very often the poet and the lover they get unmanageable thoughts in themselves. What to do with themselves? becomes difficult situation for them. And Wordsworth, because he was not able to get a subject, proper subject to write the poem to his friend, many times he had some difficulties and here to overcome those difficulties, those unmanageable thoughts and now he is able to do it after coming to Grasmere.

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Themes



Will settle on some British theme , some old	168
Romantic tale by Milton left unsung;	169
How Wallace fought for Scotland ; left the name	214
Of Wallace to be found, like a wild flower ,	215
All over his dear Country; left the deeds	
Of Wallace, like a family of Ghosts,	
To people the steep rocks and river banks,	
Her natural sanctuaries, with a local soul	
Of independence and stern liberty.	220
Sometimes it suits me better to invent	
A tale from my own heart , more near akin	
To my own passions and habitual thoughts;	



Wordsworth explores many themes in this section.

“Will settle on some British themes, some old	168
Romantic tale by Milton left unsung;	169
How Wallace fought for Scotland; left the name	214
Of Wallace to be found, like a wild flower.	215
All over his dear country; left the deeds	
Of Wallace, like a family of Ghosts,	
To people the steep rocks and river banks	
Her natural sanctuaries, with a local soul	
Of independence and stern liberty.	220
Sometimes it suits me better to invent	
A tale from my own heart, more near akin	
To my own passions and habitual thoughts.”	

This is a typical problem that every writer will come across, what to write about? Wordsworth in his own case, thought about historical themes or mythical themes or legendary themes or some themes left by other poets like, Milton not yet written about. And here in this passage, Wordsworth mentions about William Wallace, a knight who fought for their independence of Scotland. Imagine, the spirit of Wallace lying all over Scotland, all over the country in different forms. Wallace fought for Scotland and then left the name of Wallace to be found like a wild flower all over his dear country, left the deeds of Wallace like a family of ghost to people, the steep rocks and river banks her natural sanctuaries everywhere, a local soul of independence and stern liberty. The spirit of liberty was given to Scotland people because of his fight for the independence of Scotland from Britain long, long ago in 13th century and that 13th century night is remembered even today. And similarly, Wordsworth is thinking about some spirit of independence from some source for his poetry.

And finally, he thinks, shall I think about a tale from my own heart? that is, invent a tale from my own heart. Invention is a key to writing poetry and here that invention comes from his own imagination, thinking about his own life from his own childhood.

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Themes

Some variegated story, in the main
 Lofty, but the unsubstantial structure melts 225
 Before the very sun that brightens it,
 Mist into air dissolving! Then a wish,
 My last and favourite aspiration, mounts
 With yearning toward some philosophic song
 Of Truth that cherishes our daily life; 230
 With meditations passionate from deep
 Recesses in man's heart, immortal verse
 Thoughtfully fitted to the Orphean lyre;
 But from this awful burthen I full soon
 Take refuge and beguile myself with trust 235
 That mellow years will bring a riper mind
 And clearer insight.



He continues the themes, the experiments or the explorations he continues in this passage:

“Some variegated story, in the main

Lofty, but the unsubstantial structure melts

225

Before the very sun that brightens it.
Mist into air dissolving! Then a wish,
My last and favourite aspiration, mounts
With yearning toward some philosophic song
Of truth that cherishes our daily life. 230
With meditations passionate from deep
Recesses in man's heart, immortal verse
Thoughtfully fitted to the Orphean lyre;
But from this awful burthen and I full soon
Take refuge and beguile myself with trust 235
That mellow years will bring a riper mind
And clearer inside.”

It is a matter of time for Wordsworth to get into his own heart, the innermost parts of the mind and heart he would be able to discover some thoughts for his own poems.

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River Derwent

Was it for this 270

That one, the fairest of all rivers, loved
To blend his murmurs with my nurse's song,
And, from his alder shades and rocky falls,
And from his fords and shallows, sent a voice
That flowed along my dreams? For this, didst thou, 275

O Derwent! winding among grassy holms
Where I was looking on, a babe in arms,
Make ceaseless music that composed my thoughts
To more than infant softness, giving me
Amid the fretful dwellings of mankind 280
A foretaste, a dim earnest, of the calm
That Nature breathes among the hills and groves.



River Derwent played a major role in shaping Wordsworth's imagination. So, he addresses river Derwent here in this passage:

“Was it for this 270

That one, the fairest of all rivers, loved

To blend his murmurs with my nurse's song.

And, from his alder shades and rocky falls,

And from his fords and shallows, sent a voice

That flowed along my dreams? For this, didst thou, 275

O Derwent! winding among grassy holms

Where I was looking on, a babe in arms,

Make ceaseless music that composed my thoughts

To more than infant softness, giving me

Amid the fretful dwellings of mankind. 280

A foretaste, a dim your earnest, of the calm

That nature breathes among the hills and groves.”

Repeatedly Wordsworth is pointing to the calm, peaceful quality of stillness that he can get to manage his own thoughts, to put them together and write some poems. And here, Derwent like a mother, has actually sang lullaby for him to get that kind of peace and quietness.

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Thematic Contrast

Blessing and Curse	Hope and Despair
Gentle and Rough	Harmony and Disharmony
Conscious and Unconscious	Joy and sorrow
City and Village	Spontaneous and Studied
Contentment & Discontentment	Stillness and Motion
Free and Constrained	Normal & Mad (poet, lover)
Home and Homeless	Innocent and Mature
Restful and Restless	Old and New
Liberty and Restriction	Truth and Untruth
Virtue and Vice	Heart and Head
Creation and Destruction	Clear and confused
	Dream and Reality



In this poem, in this autobiographical poem, epic poem, we can see this kind of thematic contrast. Wordsworth is able to find blessing, he is able to notice the difference between gentle rough aspects of nature, the conscious and unconscious aspect of nature and his own mind. He is able to contrast city and village, in this village environment, rural environment he is able to get this inspiration.

Contentment or discontentment, free and constrained mind, home and homelessness feeling, restful and restless feeling, liberty and restriction, virtue and vice, creation and destruction, hope and despair, harmony and disharmony, joy and sorrow, spontaneous and studied, stillness and motion, normal and mad; that is poet and lover, innocent and mature, old and new, truth and untruth, heart and head, clear and confuse, dream and reality, imagination and reality these are the various kinds of contrast that we can see in the selected passages that we have looked into this poem.

He is able to get blessing, we have highlighted those aspects which Wordsworth considers to be valuable for him like, blessing, conscious exploration, the rustic environment, liberty that he feels, the virtue of being in a rural environment, the kind of creation- creative thought that he gets, the hope and harmony that he finds, the spontaneous flow from him writing for his friend, and innocence, the truth heart, the dream of life that writing his own poem that he presents to us.

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Poetic Devices



- **Questions and anaphora:**
What dwelling shall receive me? In what vale
Shall be my harbor? Underneath what grove
Shall I take up my home? And what clear stream
Shall with its murmur lull me into rest? (10-13)
- **Personification:** blessing in this gentle breeze (1)
- **Apostrophe:** Dear Liberty (31), Oh Friend (46)
- **Allusion:** The poet and lover, Shakespeare's play (135)
- **Epic Simile:** Wallace name like a wild flower (214)
- **Personification:** River Derwent (276)



Many poetic devices can be found, here we have noted down questions and anaphora, personification, apostrophe, allusion, epic simile, personification. In all these cases we have seen, when it comes to questions, we have many here. What dwelling shall receive me? In what vale shall be my harbour? Underneath what grove shall I take up my home? And what clear stream shall with its murmur lull me into rest?

This is a series of questions, and within these questions we have one word beginning the question what, and this is repeated many places that is why we call it Anaphora. And also, shall, shall, shall that also can be considered an example of this anaphora, the same word begins every line here. When it comes to personification, it is a notable to see that the gentle breeze is considered to be a human being or a divine being which blesses Wordsworth.

Next, we have this Apostrophe in many places; he addresses his friend and also liberty in two cases. We have Allusion to Shakespeare's play, where we have this comparison between the poet at the lover. And next we have the simile, epic simile; if we paid attention to this, how

William Wallace was spreading like a wildflower throughout his country and how he is remembered even today. And lastly, we saw this Personification of River Derwent, like a Mother River Derwent taught many things to Wordsworth.

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Rhyme, Rhythm, and Meter



Rhyme: No end rhyme; the poem is in blank verse.

Assonance: The heavy **w**eight of many a **w**ear**y** day (22)

Alliteration: Proud **s**pring-tide **s**wellings for a regular **s**ea, (167)

Meter: Unrhymed iambic pentameter

Caesura, Enjambment, end stopped line: 26-30

Long months | of ease | and un | disturbed | delight
Are mine | in pro | spect; whi | ther shall | I turn,
By road | or path | way, or | through track | less field,
Up hill | or down, | or shall | some floa | ting thing
Upon | the ri | ver point | me out | my course?



Now, when we see this rhyme, rhythm and meter we notice that there is no end rhyme because it is written in blank verse. We can see some assonance and alliteration. Assonance in the case of, ‘The heavy weight of many a weary day;’ heavy, weight, weary, day. And in the case of alliteration we can see, ‘Proud spring tide swellings for a regular sea,’ in line number 167 we have highlighted this yes, yes, yes that is a case of Alliteration.

The meter of this particular poem is, unrhymed iambic pentameter. We have lots examples for Caesura, Enjambment, end stopped line. We have just one example here,

“Long months of ease and undisturbed delight

Are mine in prospect; whither shall I turn

By road or pathway or through track list field,

Uphill or down, or shall some floating thing

Upon the river point me out my course?”

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Overall Impression



- Wordsworth invokes the blessing of the gentle and correspondent breeze to help him write the philosophical poem he promised for his friend Coleridge.
- He has come to Grasmere to engage with the task.
- He discusses the possible themes for his grand poem from history and mythology.
- Finally, he decides to write about his own life and introduce a new form of epic writing in English.
- He starts off with childhood experiences in Lake District – the rivers, hills, lakes, esp., River Derwent – a playmate and a mother.
- The poet is like a pilgrim looking for rest and inspiration to complete his journey of the epic writing.



On the whole, we have a good impression of Wordsworth's poem here. Wordsworth invokes a blessing of the gentle and corresponded breeze to help him write the philosophical poem he promised for his friend Coleridge. He has come to Grasmere to engage with the task of completing this poem. He discusses the possible themes for his grand poem from history and mythology. Finally, he decides to write about his own life and introduced a new form of epic in English.

He starts of with childhood experiences in Lake District, the rivers, hills, lakes, especially, river Derwent a playmate and a mother. The poet is like a pilgrim looking for rest inspiration to complete his journey of the epic poem he has promised for his friend.

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Summary



- The Romantic Movement
- Romantic Poets
- Lake District Map
- Wordsworth
- Wordsworth's poetic forms
- Preface to Lyrical Ballads
- *The Prelude*
- Book I of *The Prelude*
- Selected Passages 1-282
- Analysis



In summary, we have seen the Romantic Movement, the list of Romantic Poets, Lake District map and we found something about Wordsworth's own life; a fatherless, motherless child how he was able to shaped himself in association with nature, in association with other people and how he experimented with various forms like ballad, ode, epic, and other things.

We paid attention to the preface to Lyrical Ballads, where he has defined the role of poet language, poetic diction and all that. And we specifically moved on to The Prelude and examined book 1, particularly some selected passages from line number 1 to 282 we saw. And we will see the rest of the book 1 in the next lecture.

We analyze the poem using the proposed methodology that we have adopted for this particular course, thematic contrast, poetic devices, rhyme, rhythm, meter, and overall impression.

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References



- Ellis, David.** 1980. "Autobiographical and Reminiscence in the First Two Books of *The Prelude*," *Critical Quarterly*, 22 (1): 21-29.
- Heffernan, James A W.** 1988. "The Presence of the Absent Mother in Wordsworth's *Prelude*," *Studies in Romanticism*, 27 (2): 253-272.
- Mook, Lorne.** 2006. "The Everyday and the Teleological: Time-Conflict, Progression, and Affect in Books 1 and 2 of *The Prelude*," *European Romantic Review*, 17 (5): 593-605.



Some references are here. Those of you are interested in reading more about Wordsworth's poetry can understand something more from these references in addition to the poem that we have read. Thank you.