

How do the poets' presentation and attitude toward london compare essay sample

[Profession](#), [Poet](#)



Within the two poems Composed Upon Westminster Bridge by William Wordsworth and London by William Blake we see a differing view of London. We see one of optimism and beauty through the eyes of Wordsworth and one of corruption and anger.

It is interesting to note that Wordsworth, who grew up in the Lake District and only lived in London in his later life shows the city as a thing of beauty, yet Blake, who was born and raised in London only presents the corruption that exists within the city. We can also see how Blake was heavily influenced by his anti-authoritarian views.

Composed Upon Westminster Bridge by Wordsworth is written as a petrarchan sonnet which is typically a love poem which refers to a concept of unattainable love. This shows quite clearly that Wordsworth has a deep love for London and it is typical of romantic poets to convey deep emotions whilst containing them in formed structures to show their emotions in a clear way. This is also reflected in Blake's poem London which is written in iambic tetrameter meaning that it follows an ABAB rhyme scheme and has four beats per line.

Blake illustrates through his poem his feelings of anger towards the monarchy and his dispassion for London as a result of the corruption he can see. This resentment of the establishment is expressed through the word "Charter'd" which shows that he feels the streets, and even the river, are ruled over by the establishments. This idea of control by the Government and the Church is furthered when he describes the people of the city as having "

Mind forg'd manacles." This shows that Blake feels the people of the city are prisoners even within their own minds and there is a sense of reluctance.

Wordsworth creates a sense of serenity when he describes how the " River glideth at its own sweet will" The word " Glideth" has connotations of being effortless and calm, and the river is a symbol for London so the line can be seen as a metaphor for how London seems to continue no matter what.

Glideth also has an elongated vowel sound which means that the word slows down the pace of the poem. This is effective as it mirrors the river and this reinforces the image in the reader's mind.

It can also be argued that, though Wordsworth clearly adores the physical aspects of London he feels that this beauty is marred when the city is bustling. We can see this through Wordsworth's vivid description of how " Never did the Sun more beautifully steep, in its first splendour" This conveys his appreciation for the beauty of London, yet he also mentions that it is also early in the morning.

We then see that he describes " That mighty heart is lying still" and this can be interpreted in many ways. We can see this as a reference to the heart as the most integral part of the body and that the city is only beautiful when the heart is not working. We could also see this phrase as imagery of the heart as the organ associated with love, which would demonstrate that Blake feels one of the most endearing qualities of London is the people. I feel that within the poem Wordsworth is solely trying to explain the beauty and elegance of London through its physical aspects and he is not trying to show a love for

the people of London. Furthermore this feeling is conveyed to the reader with words such as “ silent, bare” which also give the audience a sense that London has a soothing effect on Wordsworth when it is not full of people.

Additionally this soothing feeling is highlighted throughout the poem through the use of punctuation and the use of plosive, elongated vowels in the first eight lines. A powerful phrase which highlights this point is “ Ne’er saw I, Never felt, a calm so deep!” the use of caesurae slows down the pace of the phrase and helps to display the wonder and excitement evoked in Wordsworth by London.

In Blake’s London we see the streets of London at night time when the corruption held within the city shows through. He describes how “ The youthful harlots curse blasts the new-born infants tear” the curse of the harlots is syphilis and the line is powerful as there are many meanings behind it. It is clear that the infants tear is a thing of innocence which has been sullied by the corruption of the city. We can also view the infants tear being blasted as it’s purpose has been changed. Infants normally cry because they want something but they will never be free from the effects of syphilis, therefore their tears are useless.

There is also an indication that Blake feels sympathy for the prostitutes as he describes them as youthful. It hints that Blake understands that many of the women would have been prostitutes out of necessity from the extreme poverty felt by many people of the time.

Throughout *Composed Upon Westminster Bridge* it is clear that Wordsworth is passionate about London. He says “The world has not anything to show more fair” which is powerful as it illustrates to the reader how struck Wordsworth is over his realisation of the beauty of London.