

Blake, songs of innocence

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The Number 12 September Blake, Songs of Innocence My primary goal in this paper is to summarize William Blake's poem "The Lamb". Apart from this, the paper aims at discussing Blake's activity and his poems' significance in British literature.

"The Lamb" starts with a rhetorical question "Little Lamb, who made thee?" (Blake 53). It is followed by a series of similar questions that ask the lamb who gave him life, fed and clothed him, presented him with a beautiful voice. These rhetorical inquiries make up the first part of the poem. They represent a lamb as a lovely and innocent creature. At the same time, these questions raise the theme of Creator and His creation. On the contrary, the second part of the poem contains solely answers. Here the pure and peaceful animal is associated with Jesus Christ. This can be guessed through the use of capitalized "He" and "Lamb" (Jesus is called a Lamb in the New Testament). In this part of the poem, Jesus is described as "meek" and "mild", as loving and loved ("Little lamb, God bless thee!") (Blake 53).

William Blake (1757-1827) was a prominent English poet representing the Romantic movement. He was also an outstanding visual artist, as well as a printmaker. Blake's most popular works include Songs of Innocence and of Experience, Jerusalem, The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, And did those feet in ancient time, The Four Zoas. Christianity is the central theme of Blake's poetry and art. Interestingly, he filled his works with mysticism and philosophical, as well as mythical elements. Also, Blake's works appear to have been greatly influenced by his visions that he saw from his childhood (Bentley 36).

Significance of Blake's heritage has been recognized by contemporary critics, despite the fact that his poetry and art works were neglected during

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his lifetime. Blake's poetry, referred to as Romantic, inspired a number of writers of the 20th century Modernist movement. Also, his poems provided inspiration to the poets and writers of 1950s and 1960s among whom there were Bob Dylan, Jim Morrison, Aldous Huxley, etc. As Edward Larissy said, "Blake is the Romantic writer who has exerted the most powerful influence on the twentieth century" (Larissy 1) .

Works Cited

Bentley, Gerald Eades and Bentley Jr., G. William Blake: The Critical Heritage. 1995.

Print.

Blake, William. Songs of Innocence. Courier Dover Publications, 1789. Print.

Larissy, Edward. Blake and Modern Literature. Houndmills: Palgrave, 2006.

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Appendix

Illustration of the poem " The Lamb" done by William Blake (Plate 30)

Frontispiece for William Blake's Songs of Innocence (Plate 2)