

# London- analysis[blake]

Business



LONDON - WILLIAM BLAKE The poem that I have selected to comment on is "LONDON" by William Blake. London is a poem by William Blake published in Songs of Experience in 1794.

It is one of the few poems in Songs of Experience which does not have a corresponding poem in Songs of Innocence.. This work is dedicated to the analysis of the poem and the importance of the poem in Blake's life.

PERSONAL ANALYSIS OF THE POEM: In the poem, William Blake is specifically describing a very corrupted society dominated by the power of materialism and the contrast between upper and working-class sections of society. It is written from a very negative perspective portraying the sufferings of common man and the consequences of corruption by those in power.

For this reason, Blake wants people to be aware of the misery surrounding them. No wonderful streets, no pleasant people. A world with a very depressing atmosphere, where everything is poverty stricken and the evil prevails in the society and all these ideas are represented in one place: London. The poem is divided in four quatrains in iambic tetrameter, with a basic rhyme scheme starting a/b/a/b. In the first quatrain, the author is talking about how he is walking through every transitory street. The adjective "chartered" seems to connote the importance of money to live everyday in this ephemeral world, where everything is focused around money, richness and its value to reach anything.

But, in despite of the role of money has in the world and happiness because of its value, many people are dominated by sorrow and sadness. The verses "In every cry of every man" and "in every infant's cry of fear" are examples

of this fact. People are not happy. They are living in fear all the time, inside the dark of a society influenced by materialism. Human beings are losing the real sense of life. The materialism of words is reflected in the second quatrain with “ the mind-forged manacles”, which represents people’s preoccupation for money and the dependence to the important institutions.

In the third quatrain, the author is comparing two different representations: a chimney-sweeper and a soldier. Both of them are archetypal that represent the most important institutions of that time: Monarchy and the Church, which are the reason of the suffering of human beings. This one has a clear connotation of power and manipulation in society. The fourth quatrain represents the author talking again about what he hears metaphorically while he is walking through the street. “ The youthful harlot’s curse” makes reference to the disease of syphilis, very frequent in that time, in the 18th century, which is the principal cause of death. The term “ harlot” has negative connotations, as “ curse”.

It is interpreted as something which destroys life and society. Syphilis destroys life, whereas harlots destroy families, and family is the most important part in society, in this case, in English society. “ The marriage-hearse” could be understood as a “ vehicle in which love and desire combine with death and destruction” . The final idea of this poem is the claim of a free society, without any chains, without any kind of ideological condition. The message is to be free yourself from the restriction of your own mind and the conceptions to be able to find freedom.

Dangerous industrial conditions, child labour, prostitution and poverty are just some of the topics Blake explores. His poem shows that if the institution and structure of a place is corrupt, then people can never have a chance for innocence. Within this context, it is necessary to point out that London is the only poem from this collection without an innocent pair. This reiterates Blake's disgust at the state of affairs in London. There's no nice innocent side