

Close analysis of follower by seamus heaney essay sample



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Follower a poem selected out of Seamus Heaney's first books of poem like a lot of his other poems is relating back to the memories which he had remember or experienced when he was at a younger age when his father. Through my knowledge about Heaney's I can to understand that it was a joyful and very rural lifestyle.

He was brought up on a potato farm and in many of his poems relates to this a lot suggesting maybe his enjoyment in farming or expressing the family's traditions. Follower is a poem, which relates to his past life. Which can be regarded as a big space of time. This gap in time can be noticed by the regularity of the poem. Not only does it have an even number of four-line stanzas and the combination of six stanzas in all but the regularity can also be seen through the regular internal rhyme:

" Strung and tongue..."

"...Round and ground".

Time can also be implied as one of the main themes due to the enjambment of the lines through the poem.

In a lot of the Heaney poems that I have read it is noticeable that he relates to the past a lot of the time, as though he regrets living in the present age or finds it to hard or painful to speak of it? This can be quite easy to understand due to the violent murderous activity going on in Ireland through out the last 25years.

Back in his youth there was no conflict, well, not as much anyway. Both

Catholics and protastens lived in peace. My view of Heaney write about the

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past a lot, is him trying to relive them days again with the people effected to day. He tries to express it to his people of what it was live and that they could live like that again and stop all the war.

Not only does he wish to succeed in bring his nation to peace, the use of looking back into the past was also to try and follow in the foot set of his ' father'. Who's " shoulders globed like a full sail strung between the shafts". I believe that this maybe the main theme. The alteration of my quote expresses a shape stabbing sound suggesting the power of his father. This could also be an oxymoron between present fighting and killing to the peaceful farm work.

But I am left asking questions weather he did something wrong with or towards his father and wishes to try again or trying to express the joy he had for farming? In Ireland tradition was a high fact in families so I think he wanted to do his father proud but it could be criticized.

The powerful opening to the second stanza express the respect he had for his father its so short and direct it makes me feel like shouting it out with the top of my voice. It's the shortest sentence in the poem implying its importance.

All throughout the poem Heaney speaks of his father as a mechanical object:

"...setting the wing..."

"...his eye narrowed and angled..."

as if he is jealous of him and wishes that he could be as good. This makes me think maybe this poem is about regret or a way of saying sorry to his father for being a poet not a farmer. You can relate 'Follower' to 'Digging':

"...pen rests; snug as a gun..."

the pen is mightier than the sword where as in this case the sword is "steel-pointed sock". I believe here, Heaney tries to reveal to his father that he will never be as big and as strong in the body but he will be a lot stronger in the mind and through words. A horse-plough can dig up a hundred thousand potatoes but a few words can save a nation.

We see in the stanza the smallest amount of punctuation than any of the others because it's the only stanza we truly get the chance to see some joy of his childhood "dipping and rising" on his father's back. But this one scene of brightness and joy quickly disappears behind a shadow, which stood over him however much he tried to be like it. His father! "Who never tripped or fall".

The concluding line I believe is the most powerful like in a lot of Heaney's poems. It's his father who stumbles now I think it's due to stumbling of death, Heaney's is sad to seem his go I think that they were really close and that he "will not go away" his father will always remain in his heart.