

Poetical epistle by him in wales

[Literature](#), [Poetry](#)



To Dr. Moore, in answer to a Poetical Epistle Written by Him in Wales was written by Helen Maria Williams. The poem provides an insight into the thoughts of Williams following the French Revolution. It contemplates the disaster and carnage caused by the revolution, but also celebrates the great success for the federation. The poetic technique used allows the reader to understand how Williams cared about mind and spirit more than body. The last stanza of the poem we gain understanding of the relationship between Dr. Moore and Williams. This essay will analyse the poem, concentrating on the poetic form, the language used and the way that they contribute to the meaning and effects of the poem.

Helen Maria Williams poem is an epistle written during the romantic period and is written in predominantly rhyming couplets. The first Stanza contains a great amount of detail about the dramatic landscapes of Wales. Line 4 " The landscapes of my native isle you trace" allows the reader to become aware that Williams is homesick for her, and Dr. Moore's native land Scotland. The poet uses adjective/noun pairing imagery to enhance the mood and recapture the places that the poet has been missing. These combinations create detailed pictures in the mind. For example, lines 5 and 6 " Her cultured meadows, and the lavish shades. Her winding rivers and her verdant glades" line 8 " ... The rough Welsh mountain lifts its craggy brow; ..." encouraging the reader to think of grand inspiring landscapes . This use of imagery illustrates the need for the poet to lift her spirit.

As the second stanza describes to the reader the beauty of the place Williams is located at the time of writing the poem. Williams uses a metaphor in line 12 " purple harvest " to describe the grapes on the vine. The use of <https://assignbuster.com/poetical-epistle-by-him-in-wales/>

purple brings a feeling of passion for the reader. The positioning of the caesura creating an extended pause in lines 13 and 15 prior to citing to the joys of the gains of the harvest marks a change in mood with the poem and enhances the sense of optimism.

In Stanza three , Williams tells of her great excitement that the Revolution had been won by the people and shows the reasons why feudalism had been banished

" Delightful Land ! Ah now has a general voice

The village sons and daughters may rejoice;

Thy happy peasant, now no more- a slave

Forbade to taste one good that nature gave-"

The use of the exclamation mark at the end of line 27 emphasises her great enjoyment of victory for the federation. Line 27 shows the use of - as caesura, this slows the speed of the reader. It allows the reader to reflect on the reality to the past. Before the revolution people were not allowed to eat the food they had grown and harvested themselves. Sometimes this would lead to death by starvation.

The rhyming couplets throughout the stanza allow the reader to understand the sacrifice and rewards for success throughout the struggle voice/rejoice... slave/gave... pain/vain. Further describe and admiration for the people is shown in line 34 when Williams uses the word " iron"

" To size with iron grip his scanty store"

This compares iron to grip. Iron is adamant and significant therefore an iron grip is strong, important and unbreakable. This metaphor reminds the readers that people are hard working and strong, that they will not give up their new found freedom, setting a defiant tone for the reader.

Williams has been able to speed the pace of the poem up or slow it down where she felt appropriate. Throughout Stanza 3 she makes the reader pause to reflect upon what they have just read. As a result of the frequent use of caesura, this stanza does not flow as smoothly as others. It frequently pauses in the middle of sentences to allow the reader the seriousness of the situation. It also gives the reader to reveal the importance the revolution, not only for France but the World. The further use of the figurative language and polysyllabic words such as; delightful... indignant... impartial... illumined are all words used to slow the reader and give them further time to reflect on the events. The use of these positive adjectives enhances the happiness Williams is feeling.

" Auspicious Liberty! in vain thy foes

Deride my ardour and thy force oppose"

The first two lines have four beats rather than the standard five beats expected in iambic pentameter verse. The result of this is the stanza begins with a slow pace and enhances the description of how the mood of the poem is changing.

" Or hope their eloquence with taper-ray

Can dim the blaze of philosophical way"

As this stanza is predominantly iambic, but a problem occurs with both eloquence and philosophical. If the reader strictly reads by the meter, then they must fuse the last two syllables of the word. However, if they read the word normally, we have a breakage in the line's metrical structure. In this way, Williams forges a tension between meter and rhythm. Such tension adds meaning to the poem by using meter and rhythm to create drama in certain conflicts. The drama is being created with those who oppose the revolution.

The use of a question mark as a caesura in line 52... 54... 56 allows the reader an opportunity to pause and question their own beliefs. The caesura allows the reader to slow the pace of reading. With the ending of each of these couplets the words wrong? (52) ... past? (54) ... plan?(56) Williams encourage the reader to think about the past wrong doings of the past and the way forward for the federation.

" The jealous drawbridge and the moat profound,

The lovely dungeon in the caverned ground;

The sullen dome above those central caves,

Where lives one deposit and a host of slaves?-"

Line 59-61 uses adjective personification to give human descriptions to describe something non-human. Williams is highlighting the human emotion given to the return of the old regime. The use of this language allows the reader to speed up the reading of the poem. The further use of assonance thought seems to enhance the view that Williams is encouraging the reader to speed up at this time. It is at the end of line 62 that the reader is given a chance to reflect. What would be the outcome if the previous regime was to return?

The last stanza further highlights the relation between Dr Moore and Williams. The friendship the reader understands from the first stanza.

" For me, my friend, with rich poetic grace"

This use of caesura draws attention to the relationship that Williams has with Moore. The enjambment at the end of the line 3 gives further meaning to the importance of their relationship. Williams develops her strong feelings are shown in the last stanza and describe her great affection for Moore.

" Oft, while with glowing breast those scenes I view,

They lead, ah friend beloved, my thoughts of you!"

The use of caesuras in line 74 slows the readers down and brings a change of theme to the poem. This pause draws the readers thoughts back to the relationship between Moore and Williams.

" The joy whose keen sensation swells to pain,

And strives to utter what it feels, in vain."

The use of sensation is another work used to slow the reader down. This allows the reader to experience her mood of unrest with her feelings toward Moore. Immediately starts the reader thinking along that Williams has undisclosed love for Moore . The use of the caesura in the final line draws the reader attention to the fact that the feeling may not be acknowledged by Dr Moore. This caesura also intensifies her vulnerability.