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WORDSWORTHE**

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**LANDSCAPE AND NATURE IN THE POETRY OF
WILLIAM WORDSWORTH**

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ABSTRACT

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The object of the undergraduate thesis is to reveal the main principles and features of the poetry of William Wordsworth, the leading representative of English Romanticism, concerned with landscape and nature.

The thesis is divided into two main sections. The first section is focused on Romanticism generally, specifics of English Romanticism, historical background and social conditions which contributed to the origin of this cultural movement. It also includes explanation of the Sublime, both as a philosophical notion and the source of Romantic authors' inspiration.

The second section deals with individual works of William Wordsworth which are connected with nature and landscape. The poems are separated into particular chapters according to different topics: Nature and Landscape in the Poet's Recollections, Childhood, Lyrical Ballads, and Wordsworth's Love Poems. Their analysis is concerned with form, poetical means, and motifs used in the poems. Some partial results are expressed in these chapters. The final part – Conclusion – summarises the knowledge and findings.

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INTRODUCTION

William Wordsworth is one of the most influential English poets, a significant representative of English Romanticism. Together with S. T. Coleridge and R. Southey he belonged to the group of poets known as the Lake Poets. They were friends sharing interest in nature, poetry, the same beliefs and ideals.

The poet was born on 7th April 1770 in Cockermouth in Cumberland. There he spent years of idyllic childhood. This was disturbed by his parents' death. He had several siblings, but his sister Dorothy was the closest. He studied in Hawkshead and in Cambridge. During his youth he was a witness of the revolutionary events in France. He spent part of his life in Rydal Mount, where he died on 23rd April 1850. Seven years before his death he had become Britain's Poet Laureate. Wordsworth's creative work is very rich and his contribution to the world of poetry is immeasurable. His poems represent variety of forms, extent, chosen motifs, plots, and poetical means. William Wordsworth is respected as the founder of Romanticism in English literature. He formulated its programme in the "Preface" to the *Lyrical Ballads*.

The first chapter deals with Romanticism as an artistic movement which influenced the literature of the end of the 18th and the 19th century. During this period the world was convulsing in the maelstrom of dramatic political events and was exposed to changes connected with the Industrial Revolution. For better understanding of the causes which led to the birth of Romanticism as an important cultural and social movement it is necessary to acquaint with the historical and social context. The attention is paid to Romanticism in the world and to the specific features of English Romanticism. Romantic poets experienced unique exalting sensations in the relation with the majesty of nature, natural elements and the dramatic atmosphere of the landscape, which became the inspiration for their creation. Notion of the Sublime is explained on the basis of study of the secondary literature. Perception of this lofty sensation by William Wordsworth is demonstrated in the analysis of his poem "The Simpon Pass".

The second chapter introduces the poet as an admirer of nature who frequently celebrated in his poems the landscape of north-west England, which he had been familiar with since the days of his childhood and where he spent most of his life. It is a picturesque area full of deep blue lakes, beautiful hills, mountains, woods, sparkling waterfalls and

torrents. These images persisted in the poet's memory. The poet's recollections and memory are one of the sources of his inspiration. How important role they played in the author's poetry is a very important matter which deserves our attention. *The Prelude* is introduced as a typical work based on reminiscence.

The third chapter draws on Wordsworth's *Lyrical Ballads*, focusing on his famous "tourist poem" known as "Tintern Abbey", but introducing also "The Thorn" which originated in Somerset Quantock Hills.

Nature and landscape are in Wordsworth's works the home of rural people living in a traditional way of life for generations, working in their fields, living their everyday lives with everyday occurrences. Common people were in the centre of Wordsworth's interest. The poet loved people and told his stories. Among their heroes there is Martha Ray – the character of the poem "The Thorn" or Michael – the shepherd and loving husband and father – the main character of the eponymous poem. The volume *Lyrical Ballads* – the collection of poems which brought William Wordsworth immortality – contains such pieces of art.

A significant role in William Wordsworth's poems is played by children which is the focus of the fourth chapter. It is a little girl, whom the author met during his journey, Johnny - a boy with mental retardation, enchanted by the nocturnal landscape and whose adventure the author tells, lonesome Lucy Gray – roaming in the winter countryside, or Lucas – Michael's beloved son. It might be interesting to compare some of these children, for example Johnny and Lucy – two children in the woods. Childhood fascinated the poet. More philosophical attitude can be found in the poem "Ode on the Intimations of Immortality".

Love, the deepest human feeling, is the eternal subject of poetry. Poems discussed in the fifth chapter, dedicated to Lucy could contribute to attaining knowledge about this part of Wordsworth's creativity. Whether there is a muse or a beloved woman who inspired the poet appears a very attractive issue.

William Wordsworth is considered a poet, who had decisive influence on the appearance of English poetry. Why his style of writing is revolutionary and what new it brings, is another scope of the research of William Wordsworth's poetry concerned with landscape and nature.

Unfortunately, neither the name of William Wordsworth nor his poetry is well known among the Czechs, even the university educated ones. He and his works were thrown into the shade of Byron and Shelley. Last but not least there was the aim to attain deeper knowledge of William Wordsworth's poetry concerned with nature and landscape, Romanticism, and reveal the principles the poetry is based on.

WORDSWORTH AND ROMANTICISM

Romanticism belongs to the most powerful and most intensive artistic movements in the history of European and American cultures. It is often considered the last one which affected all kinds of art (literature, music, visual art, architecture) and spheres of lifestyle, everyday culture, and social communication (clothing style, manners, way of speaking, or correspondence). Romanticism originated in England at the end of the 18th century and reflected disappointment with the fact that the new era had not brought freedom for individuals. Supporters of the movement preferred emotions and imagination to reason.

The Man of science seeks truth as a remote and unknown benefactor; he cherishes and loves it in his solitude: the Poet, singing a song in which all human beings join with him, rejoices in the presence of truth as our visible friend and hourly companion. Poetry is the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge..... If the labours of Men of science should ever create any material revolution, direct or indirect, in our condition, and in the impressions which we habitually receive, the Poet will sleep then no more than at present; he will be ready to follow the steps of the Man of science, not only in those general indirect effects, but he will be at his side, carrying sensation into the midst of the objects of the science itself. (Wordsworth, 1888, para., 20)

It soon expanded to other countries. Among the representatives of Romantic literature there are poets as Karel Hynek Macha, Michail Jurievitch Lermontov, Alexander Sergejevitch Pushkin, Adam Mickiewicz, Julius Slowacki, Victor Hugo, Friedrich Schiller, Johann Wolfgang Goethe, Heinrich Heine, William Wordsworth, Samuel Coleridge, Percy Bysshe Shelley, John Keats, or George Gordon Byron. They found inspiration in the past, in distant countries, rural life, nature, travelling and wandering. Their characters are outcasts, lonely wanderers, gypsies, hermits, sailors.

The Industrial Revolution caused that huge masses of people were brought to cities and a new class - working class was established. Bad working conditions, unsatisfactory social status and poverty soon led to anti-aristocratic mood, demands for adequate representation in Parliament. The radicals and Dissenters required overthrowing the throne, the aristocracy, and the established church. France became the focal point of changes. On the 14th July 1789 the Bastille fell. The French Revolution struggled for equality and

liberation from tyranny and selfish, corrupted aristocracy. In 1792, Louis XVI was imprisoned and in the same year in September, massacre in Paris started. In 1793 the king of France was executed and the reign of terror began. The fight turned into cruel, pointless slaughtering, and unrestrained ravaging. France started a crusade to eliminate tyranny all over the world and in 1792 declared war to Austria and Prussia, in 1793 to England. Edmond Burke, an English politician, philosopher, and orator criticized the French Revolution for barbarities let loose in France. Most people in England did not want to overthrow the king and eliminate the nobility. England faced threatening war led by Napoleon. And therefore previous supporters of the revolution hesitated between revolutionary ideals and patriotism. William Wordsworth was one of them.

After living in London for a short time, he went to France and associated with some of the leaders of the French Revolution. Their influence and the radicalism that seeped into his mind from all sides led him to believe that everything in the established order was wrong. As a result, he became a radical and ardent agitator for democracy. Wordsworth's hopes in the French Revolution and its principles were blasted. French democracy veered into military aggression and embarked upon a program to spread its doctrines by the force of arms. As a result, Wordsworth for a time lost his faith not for democracy but also for humanity. (Deferrari, Brentano, & Sheekey, p. 506)

English Romanticism is divided into two ideologically and aesthetically contrary movements: conservative – represented by the Lake Poets, and revolutionary – represented by Byron and Shelley. The former sought salvation in history, in their early works they sympathized with the French Revolution, later their enthusiasm faded. The latter criticized negative social situation and endeavoured to create a society freed from oppression and exploitation. According to Ousby (1996), there were sharp differences between the two groups. Their political views were conflicting and they felt mutual antipathy. Both groups believed in the poet's mission (p.333). Romanticists perceived that the current human society and established social system were not developed and morally advanced to be prepared for such changes and they did not want to follow the example of France. This situation led to disappointment. And therefore the Lake Poets turned their attention to nature. William Wordsworth was astonished by its beauty, potency, and spiritual power. A

human being was seen as part of the empire of freedom. Romanticists adored the cult of wild, untamed nature, spontaneity, and natural genuine emotion which impresses individuals.

Nature was for them the only guarantee of moral principles in the world because they felt the spiritual basis of the universe there. According to these ideas, the only solution is the return of people to nature.

It is refreshing to leave the narrow cobbled streets in London and journey by train to the beautiful Lake District of England. It is like going off on a pleasant holiday jaunt with a mind free for adventure and with the hubbub of city life left far behind. In passing from the literature of the eighteenth century to that of the nineteenth the reader discovers a similar change of mood and locale in English books. It is not crowded Grub Street or Piccadilly that is pictured for us, but the rolling heather or the Border Country or the broken ruins of some moss-grown abbey. (Deferrari et al., p.434)

The motifs seen in the landscape, which appear in the poetry are high mountains, rivers and brooks, trees, flowers, ruins of old castles, temples, and monasteries, exotic countries. The Lake Poets were overwhelmed by the Sublime. When Wordsworth wandered, either physically or in his mind, he met rural people living in concord with nature, solitary travellers, the outcasts, or children. To approximate nature, the real life and therefore to come closer to the trueness, William Wordsworth considered appropriate to write his poems in a language used by real people in everyday situations. Common events in the lives of rural people, their feelings as anxiety, pleasure, pain, passion, affection are reflected in their conversation. The manner they talk when they work, love, hate, envy, worry, rejoice are the real language worthy to serve the poet's purpose – to express genuine emotions. This is the fundamental idea of the deliberate poetical programme Wordsworth formulated in the "Preface" – added in a later edition of the *Lyrical Ballads*. Wordsworth (1888) explained:

The principal object, then proposed in these Poems was to choose incidents and situations from common life, and to relate or describe them, throughout, as far as was possible in a selection of language really used by men, and, at the same time, to throw over them a certain colouring of imagination,

whereby ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an unusual aspect; and, further, and above all, to make these incidents and situations interesting by tracing in them, truly though not ostentatiously, the primary laws of our nature: chiefly, as far as regards the manner in which we associate ideas in a state of excitement. Humble and rustic life was generally chosen, because in that condition, the essential passions or the heart find a better soil in which they can attain their maturity, are less under restraint, and speak a plainer and more emphatic language; because in that condition of life our elementary feelings coexist in a state of greater simplicity, and, consequently, may be more accurately contemplated, and more forcibly communicated; because the manners of rural life germinate from those elementary feelings, and, from the necessary character of rural occupations, are more easily comprehended, and are more durable; and lastly, because in that condition the passions of men are incorporated with the beautiful and permanent forms of nature. (para. 5)

Romanticists were convinced that poetry was a primary creative activity, which had existed long before people separated from nature and therefore it has got the highest importance for their return to it. Poetry is able to express essential emotion connected with nature common for all people.

The romantic movement in English poetry was recognizable not only in the choice of themes and motifs, but also in using specific poetical forms. Some of them were rediscovered and altered, the traditional forms were usually broken as a demonstration of new ideas.

Stimulated by the spontaneity and metrical variety of Renaissance poetry, the new poets rejected the couplet and stereotyped poetic phrasing. They made extensive use of the old forms such as the ballad, tale, ode, lyric, sonnet, blank verse, and Spenserian stanza. Stimulated also by the freedom they saw dawning in the world, they took liberties with the old forms and tended to be as free and spontaneous as nature itself. As a result, their ideas and mood dictated the form and language of their poetry. Their cult of freedom and spontaneity gave birth to a variety of stanzas, to freer rhythms,

and to numeral metrical irregularities and substitutions. (Deferrari et al., 1946, p. 505)

William Wordsworth, the leading personality of English Romantic poetry, is an author of extensive poetical work. During his rich career of a poet he created various types of poems. On the one hand, there are very short poems consisting of several lines, on the other hand, there are very long poems counting hundreds of verses as the individual books of *The Prelude*. The variety can be seen in diversity of forms mentioned.

Technically, his range is very wide: the blank verse of *The Prelude* and *The Excursion* (the two long autobiographical poems), though originally owing something to Milton, emerges as recognisably Wordsworth's own; the Italian sonnet-forms and the free Pindaric metre are used with mastery. Wordsworth, when he fails, fails more dismally than any other major poet has ever done; his much more frequent successes are as triumphant as anything in Shakespeare. (Burgess, 1993, p. 168)

However, William Wordsworth introduced more ideas, which were revolutionary in the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries. Instead of lofty figurative language he used the language of everyday communication of common people. According to Burgess (1993), "he was insistent that the language of poetry should be the language of ordinary men and women, found at its unspoilt in the speech of rural people. He was against 'poetic diction'" (p. 166). The poet decided to avoid using common means of poetical language, which had been typical for generations of poets. Wordsworth (1888) proclaimed:

Something must have been gained by this practice, as it is friendly to one property of all good poetry, namely, good sense: but it has necessarily cut me off from a large portion of phrases and figures of speech which from father to son have long been regarded as the common inheritance of Poets. I have also thought it expedient to restrict myself still further, having abstained from the use of many expressions, in themselves proper and beautiful, but which have been foolishly repeated by bad Poets, till such feelings of disgust are connected with them as it is scarcely possible by any art of association to overpower. (para. 9)

Wordsworth claimed that there is not any significant difference between prose and poetry. He considered science as the contrary to poetry, not prose. Poetry is according to

him the most philosophical one out of all kinds of literature. Even in poems some prosaic lines can be found and therefore the language of prose is suitable for poetry. Prose and poetry are very close. The question appears why the author did not write prose instead of poetry. And he replies:

All that it is necessary to say, however, upon this subject, may be effected by affirming, what few persons will deny, that, of two descriptions, either of passions, manners, or characters, each of them equally well executed, the one in prose and the other in verse, the verse will be read a hundred times where the prose is read once. (Wordsworth, 1888, para. 26)

Initially, William Wordsworth was criticized, especially the *Lyrical Ballads* raised a wave of misunderstanding and protests not only from the readers but also from some other poets. Winkler (1990) illustrated:

The climate of opinion in which, during the last generation or so, renewed importance has been attached to the element of 'wit' in poetry has, perhaps, been especially unfavourable to the appreciation of Wordsworth. But misgivings about his verse are of much longer standing than that. Keat's remarks, quoted above, was thrown out in reference to Wordsworth himself, Jeffrey's famous tirade ("This will never do!...") and Shelley's satirical parody in *Peter Bell the Third* are only the most extreme expressions of an attitude that was common. (pp. 244-245)

Fortunately, Wordsworth did not resign. Later, the new face of poetry was accepted and the *Lyrical Ballads* launched the Romantic period in English literature.

Wordsworth's conception of the Sublime

The concept of the Sublime as an aesthetic quality was formulated by English philosopher Edmund Burke in his *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* in 1757.

It is also one of his most influential, appearing in numerous editions and translations throughout the Romantic period as more and more people concerned themselves with the workings of the mind in relation to nature. Burke himself was not primarily interested in nature, but his basic ideas equating the sublime with astonishment, fear, pain, roughness, and obscurity

and the beautiful with a set of opposite qualities (calmness, safety, smoothness, clarity, and the like) pervade thinking and phrasing in everybody's nature writing – for example..... and Wordsworth's "sublime and beautiful features of landscape" in his "Guide to the Lakes". (Stillinger & Abrams, 2010, The romantic period: Topics)

As it was said, Romanticism celebrated the deepest and most genuine human sensations. These feelings are usually evoked by strong emotive experiences. Romantic poets found them among wild nature. Their hearts were filled with emotions as celestial terror, adoration, astonishment. William Wordsworth found this overwhelming impression that there is something greater than us during his wandering in the woods, climbing mountains, listening to roaring waters of creeks, rivers, and waterfalls, deafened by rumbling thunders, blustering wind, rowing alone on a lake in Lake District surrounded only by wild nature. During his school days in Hawkshead he used to skate on the same lake till the dusk. Chudoba (1947) described, that young Wordsworth stopped bouncing when sliding on the frozen lake and the hills and mountains seemed to fly back, but getting slower and slower as if everything stayed sombre and still like in a dreamless sleep. He experienced similar moments when together with his schoolmates he was walking along ruins of an old abbey, stood under a rock at night when thunderstorm was coming closer, listening to the sounds, which were the terrifying tongue of the old land (p. 131).

When the poet was twenty years old, he decided to visit the Alps. The main reason for such a journey was craving for strong emotions which made him feel alive. This travel was not a mere touristic activity, Wordsworth undertook dangerous activities including climbing mountains and spent a night trapped in the mountains in the dark. Later he depicted impressions which the Alps left in his mind in *Descriptive Sketches*. Ackroyd (2005) has claimed:

Wordsworth was beginning to recognize that the natural world was something more than retreat from private pain and disappointment. It was the power at the heart of his imagination. It could render him small and insignificant, yet, it could also connect him with eternity. (The Romantics: Nature)

The Sublime is an extraordinary feeling, that we are part of divine existence represented by nature, which is too exalted that it could not be expressed by words.

William Wordsworth mastered to do it in his verses. And what is more, he did not use lofty, ornamental figures commonly used by other poets of his era. A poet draws his inspiration from nature when all the forces and elements have an important impact on his spirit. Marks of this ungraspable truth are engraved deep in the mind, and then, in times of tranquillity serve as a source of positive feelings and joy. A poet writes verses and enriches other people's spiritual life, cultivates their imagination.

Expressions of such emotions can be found in Wordsworth's poem "Lines Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey". The poet confesses that all the beauty of the landscape exalts his mind and makes difficulties of life easier and bearable.

Of aspects more sublime; that blessed mood,
In which the burthen of the mystery,
In which the heavy and weary weight
Of all this unintelligible world,
Is lightened.....

("Lines Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey", 37-41)

The untamed natural elements depicted in "The Simplon Pass" are so vivid that the reader can nearly listen to the sounds they produce: "stationary blasts of waterfalls" (6), "The rocks that muttered close upon our ears" (10), "Black drizzling crags that spake by the wayside, As if a voice were in them" (11-12). Wordsworth describes his roaming, calls a brook and road his fellow travellers. He beholds on woods, waterfalls, the sky with free clouds and rain, fighting winds, and rocks with crags. The poet confesses that they have strong impact on him. He depicts the landscape as a dramatic scene: "Winds thwarting winds bewildered and forlorn" (8), "The torrents shooting from the clear blue sky" (9), "And giddy prospect of the raving stream" (13). On the other hand, there are some images which are mild and gentle: "...and region of the heavens" (14), "...blossoms upon one tree" (17). Furthermore, some other contrasts can be found in the poem: "tumult and peace, the darkness and the light" (15). At the end of the poem, William Wordsworth concludes that all these diversities are parts of a transcendental unity: "the features of the same face" (16-17), "Characters of the great Apocalypse" (18), "The types and symbols of Eternity" (19). The endlessness of the universe is expressed with these phrases: "The immeasurable height of woods decaying, never to be decayed" (4-5), "Of first, and last, and midst, and without end" (20).

As the analysis of “The Simplon Pass” indicates, Wordsworth expressed the forceful feelings in a spectacular way, in a relatively short poem, it means in a small space. The choice of words enables the readers to imagine the place as if they walked together with the author, and, what is more, he conveys experience of the Sublime to us.

Romanticists were the first ones, who found the Sublime in nature. They introduced us to the world beyond rational understanding, bestowed mechanical world in rapidly developing English industrial towns and cities in contrast with the world of freedom. Their works and ideas became inspirational for transcendentalists in the US – Emerson, Thoreau.

NATURE AND LANDSCAPE IN THE POET'S RECOLLECTIONS

Memory and recollections were very important for William Wordsworth's works. They became the source of strong emotions, the creative and healing power. Such memories engendered when the poet wandered in the countryside, observed nature and was impressed by natural features. He travelled through England, France, Italy, Germany, and Switzerland. The picturesque sceneries of Lake District and South England as well as the astonishing majesty of the Alps deeply affected William Wordsworth. Together with his sister Dorothy he walked in the surroundings of Rydal Mount, Helvellyn, Racedown. They both found a shared interest in admiration of all the beauties offered to them by the landscape both in daylight and in the night, even during stormy weather. They perceived the reflection of the sun on the lake, watched waterfalls, forested hills, trees, tiny flowers, rustic cottages and their dwellers. All events, encounters and observations remained deeply engraved in the poet's mind. In times of tranquillity he recollected all the impressive moments. William Wordsworth was aware of the importance of memories and recollection for poet's creativity. Salvesen (1970) stated:

He knew the continued influence and the accumulated power of memories held in the mind; and he understood how they generated new emotions, so that if some poetry seemed to be the immediate result of a particular experience or observation, it nevertheless owed something to all Wordsworth's previous experience, to his past in general – and much of his finest poetry was, he knew, only possible as the result of past experience long and deeply held in the mind. (p. 36)

William Wordsworth paid tribute to memory in his "Preface to Lyrical Ballads" in 1800, where he explained the principles of poetry and poet's work. According to his acquaintance and creed, poet's inspiration roots from strong emotions based on previous experiences. These are saved in poet's mind and when are recollected after some time the poet is able to convey the overwhelming feelings he has experienced in the past (e.g. the beauty of nature) to his readers.

I have said that poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquillity: the emotion is contemplated till, by a species of reaction, the tranquillity gradually disappears, and an emotion, kindred to that which was before the subject of

contemplation, is gradually produced, and does itself actually exist in the mind. In this mood successful composition generally begins, and in a mood similar to this is carried on; but the emotion, of whatever kind, and in whatever degree, from various causes, is qualified by various pleasures, so that in describing any passions whatsoever, which are voluntarily described, the mind will, upon the whole, be in a state of enjoyment. (Wordsworth, 1888, para. 26)

William Wordsworth alludes on memory and recollections in some of his poetical works. One of them is a short poem written in Grasmere in 1804 called “I wandered Lonely as a Cloud”, also known under the title “The Daffodils”. The poet was inspired by a large quantity of yellow flowers which he saw on the margin of Ullswater. The daffodils swing in a gleesome dance as if they danced with the waves of the lake. This spectacle made the beholder feel delight and happiness. The festive and exhilarating feeling persisted in the poet’s memory and like the sun warms his soul in bad days.

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,

And dances with the daffodils. (“I Wandered Lonely” 19-24)

Initially, he did not fully appreciate the benefit which the experience would have in the future.

“I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:”(17-18)

The author conveys the positive feeling he experienced during his spring wandering in Lake District to his readers, who can almost see the host of yellow flowers and feel the breeze and splashing cold water waves. The flowers are described like living creatures, dancing and tossing their heads. The scenery is full of motion, the poet used verbs as “flutter”, “dance”, “toss”, or “float”. On the other hand, time of tranquillity is embodied with phrase: “when on my couch I lie” (19). Expressions describing the poet’s feelings have got positive meaning: “sparkling waves in glee” (14), “not but be gay” (15), “jocund company” (16), “my heart with pleasure fills” (23). For recollection verb “flash” is used

because memories suddenly emerge in the poet's imagination. The choice of lexical means together with the form – four stanzas consisting of eight syllable verses following pattern A B A B C C contribute to the sense of freshness prevailing in the poem. The original affection matured into creative energy in which the lightsome and fresh poem sprang. The inward eye is the poet's possibility of recollection of images which he previously saw with his eyesight. Salvesen's (1970) in his study stated:

This was the reward of diligent looking, of observation which had been assimilated, reflected upon, and allowed to mature in memory: to see 'into the life of things' was the vision only of an 'eye made quiet'. It was a vision which grew continuously from the remembered forms of an actual landscape transmuted by reflection to ideal forms: It was the true vision of both inward and outward understanding. It was by way of memory, by way of conscious reflection on remembered sense, that Wordsworth tamed his over-dominant sense of sight, the eye that had been 'master of the heart'. The eye, though perhaps growing in sensuous power became gradually subordinated to inward seeing. (p. 74)

The poetry of William Wordsworth is essentially retrospective. He used his own past personal experience to create poetry. The most extent poetical work *The Prelude* is based on the author's reminiscences.

The Prelude

Biographical features which we could recognize in "Tintern Abbey" are in more details elaborated in *The Prelude: or, Growth of a Poet's Mind*. This work consists of 13 long poems called "Books". The idea to express his thoughts in a philosophical poetical composition had grown in Wordsworth's mind since the time of edition of the *Lyrical Ballads*. He planned to create a piece with tittle *The Recluse, or Views on Man, Nature and Society*. The author did not accomplish his plan, he only wrote the first part – *The Prelude*. Work upon this collection lasted for 7 years – from 1798 to 1805 and was adjusted repeatedly for his whole life. The book was published after author's death by his wife, who entitled the work with its name.

The first book with the title "Childhood and School Time" introduces the reader to the landscape where young William spent years of his boyhood and school attendance –

Lake District. At the beginning the idea of contrast between the city and the countryside reappears. Return to nature is depicted as liberation from a dungeon, the author considers himself a prisoner.

A captive greets thee, coming from a house
Of bondage, from yon City's walls set free,
A prison where he hath been long immured.

(“Childhood and School Time” 6-8)

He writes about the familiar places he remembers from his school years and feels free. He recollects how he enjoyed the beauty of nature and drew energy and inspiration.

To drink wild water, and to pluck green herbs,
And gather fruits fresh from their native bough.
Nay more, if I may trust myself, this hour
Hath brought a gift that consecrates my joy;
For I, methought, while the sweet breath of Heaven
Was blowing on my body, felt within
A corresponding mild creative breeze, (37-43)

Young William spent hours climbing hills, roaming crags and folds, regardless the time of day. The landscape had its charm for the boy and he was overwhelmed by it. He was enchanted by the beauty of nature and somehow became its part. The young poet discovered even instincts of a hunter in his mind when he prospected the countryside and trapped small birds. From the point of view of the adult poet William Wordsworth it seems rather childish and immature. He is aware that nature helped his mind grow. Beauty and fear contributed to his growth. Nature used various means to develop the poet's mind, some of them were rough.

Discordant elements, makes them cling together
In one society. How strange, that all
The terrors, pains, and early miseries,
Regrets, vexations, lassitudes interfused
Within my mind, should e'er have borne a part,
And that a needful part, in making up
The calm existence that is mine when I
Am worthy of myself! Praise to the end!

Thanks to the means which Nature deigned to employ; (343-351)

One of the strongest experiences which had an important impact on William Wordsworth's future mental development and perceiving was a boating which took place in Ullswater. The poet as a boy borrowed a boat without the owner's permission and set sail. It happened in the evening and the lake had a special, frightening atmosphere. This event remained deeply written in his memory and had never faded out. Again, the poet expresses his opinion that it was all caused by nature with a certain purpose.

One summer evening (led by her) I found
A little boat tied to a willow tree
Within a rocky cave, its usual home.(357-359)

It is obvious that William Wordsworth recalls the feelings and events of his childhood with love and pleasure. He does not regret any misfortunes he had to face as a child and understands that they contributed to his mental growth.

The second chapter, "School-time", tells poet's adventures in years of school attendance in Hawkshed, together with his schoolmates, recollects their everyday events including lack of money and food, trips to the neighbourhood of old monastery ruins or joyride on the horse. Then William Wordsworth started to perceive nature with deeper awareness of its beauty.

Those incidental charms which first attached
My heart to rural objects, day by day
Grew weaker, and I hasten on to tell
How Nature, intervenient till this time
And secondary, now at length was sought
For her own sake. (198-203)

He equates this process to a process during which a child learns sense and love from his relationship to mother.

Blest the infant Babe,
(For with my best conjecture I would trace
Our Being's earthly progress,) blest the Babe,
Nursed in his Mother's arms, who sinks to sleep
Rocked on his Mother's breast; who with his soul

Drinks in the feelings of his Mother's eye! (232-237)

Similarly, he found his love to nature and this affection strengthened him. At the same time, the poet was born in the mind of a small boy.

The other books of *The Prelude* contain autobiographical features as well as. William Wordsworth looks back at his life, tells about the moments in Cambridge during his university studies, in London, where he lived for some time, recollects his travels in the Alps, or his stay in France. He expresses his love to nature, explains how nature together with fortunes and misfortunes formed his mind, his approach to people and ideas about poetry.

LYRICAL BALLADS

The period of Romanticism in England was launched by publishing the *Lyrical Ballads* in 1798. The authors of this volume of poems were William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge. They were associated by strong friendship and belief in the same ideals. They professed the same views that contemporary society needs to be reformed. People are not equal and this must be changed. They protested against oppression and inequality. The French Revolution did not fulfil this aim and therefore the poets decided to start the revolution in poetry. They endeavoured to express their ideas in the *Lyrical Ballads*. Deferrari et al. (1946) described:

The two poets had spent some time in Somerset, in southern England, during 1797 and 1798. There while visiting one another almost daily they planned a book which they hoped would be different from any published during the eighteenth century. Both felt that English poetry needed new subject matter and new modes of expression. (p. 434)

Novelty consisted both in choice of themes and the poetical language of the work. Wordsworth contributed to the volume with majority of poems and his objective was to depict everyday incidents from rustic people's life. Coleridge's intent was directed to supernatural, mysterious and fantastic subject matters. Originally, the volume contained 19 Wordsworth's poems and 4 Coleridge's poems.

The poets considered writing such poems as an experiment which should prove the idea that the purest and most genuine human emotions can be expressed with using the language of the common man. According to Thornley and Roberts (1995): "Wordsworth was so filled with the love of nature that in later editions of the *Lyrical Ballads* (1800-2), he said that the language of poetry ought to be the same as the language of a simple farmworker" (p. 91).

However, the first edition was not accepted favourably by the readers, critics, and the other poets. Two years later the *Lyrical Ballads* were published again in the expanded edition complemented with the "Preface". This meant the beginning of a new era in poetry. "Preface" is considered the manifest of Romanticism where Wordsworth explained his opinion about poetry.

Among Wordsworth's poems such titles as "Lines Written above Tintern Abbey", "The Thorn", "Goody Blake and Harry Gill", "The Idiot Boy", "We Are Seven", "The

Female Vagrant”, “Lucy Gray”, and many others can be found. As Marek (1988) claimed, love for nature which had inspired the poet since his early childhood, streams from these verses. He also found there principles of eternal truth in the time of his adulthood. Untouched beautiful nature depicted in some of his poems is contrasted with poet’s cognition of injustice and poverty. Distinctive confessional elements which can be found in “Tintern Abbey” are in the antimony with his feeling of moral condemnation of wrongfulness and deep humanism in “The Old Cumberland Beggar” describing adversity of a peasant expelled from his land (p. 133).

In spite of the initial negative reception which the volume had to face, the *Lyrical Ballads* are acknowledged as an exceptional piece of art where the revolutionary literary ideas were accomplished.

The Thorn

This is one of the poems collected in the volume *Lyrical Ballads*. William Wordsworth chose as a motif a plain, at the first sight not very interesting thing, which nobody would call beautiful – an old dry thorn covered with lichens and tufts of moss, with a height of a two-year-old child. According to Gill (2006), “Making an individual plant or tree the subject of a poem was a feature of Romantic poetry. It raised problems. Some contemporary reactions to Wordsworth expressed disquiet: should everyday objects be the focus of strong feelings and deep thoughts” (p. 454)? Nevertheless, the poet gazes at the thorn. It seems to him as if nature tried to drag it to the ground, but it has been standing in the scenery for many years upright, resisting storms and gales.

And all had joined in one endeavour
To bury this poor thorn for ever. (“The Thorn”, 20-21)

High on a mountain’s highest ridge,
Where oft the stormy winter gale
Cuts like a scythe, while through the clouds
It sweeps from vale to vale. (23-26)

Near the thorn a little muddy pond and a heap of moss can be found. The poet describes beauties of the landscape which he knows from his roams and it seems that he wants to

draw reader's attention to a tiny dry plant and reveal charm of ordinary things. But there is something more what the author wants to convey.

Subsequently, the reader gains a dim creepy sensation that something more substantial will continue according to these hints: "Is like an infant's grave in size" (52), "An infant's grave was half so fair" (55), or "That's like and infant's grave in size" (61). The story starts to advance when a character of a rural wretched woman in a scarlet cloak comes. Her name is Martha Ray and she lingers in a hut on the mountain ridge. She spends days and nights sitting near the thorn, pond, and moss heap.

At all time of the day and night
This wretched woman thither goes,
And she is known to every star,
And every wind that blows; (67-70)

The narrator queries why the woman climbs to the place, sits on the spot and cries and laments all the time. He repeats his questions and the suspicion of something dark and mysterious increases. The author makes a throwback and starts narration of the desperate love which resulted in the woman's madness and pregnancy.

Sad case for such a brain to hold
Communion with a stirring child!
Sad case, as you may think, for one
Who had a brain so wild! (144-147)

Although it seems that thanks to her undelivered child her senses were brought back. However, after some time Martha Ray is seen without her baby and nobody knows what has happened. She is seen alone, sitting near the thorn up on the mountain ridge.

There's none that ever knew:
And if the child was born or no,
There's no one that could ever tell;
And if 'twas born alive or dead, (158-161)

Village people scheme what could have happened with the poor child. Some say that the mother "hanged her baby on the tree" (215), the others that "she drowned it in the pond" (216). They all are sure that the baby's body is buried under the old thorn, and moss covered his grave. This idea is supported by the fact that Martha Roy spends her time there. Red cups on the moss heap evoke drops of the child's blood.

The author claims that he had known this story before he met the woman. He encountered her when he tried to hide from rain and storm. At first, the poet mistook her for a “jutting crag” (193). He does not believe that she could have been able to kill her newly born child. Local people are convinced about their truth and try to exhume the child’s bones. Nature protects the woman and does not allow the villagers to dig the moss heap up. Martha became part of the landscape and therefore she cannot be exposed to human justice.

The Thorn is a poem of a middle length. It consists of 23 stanzas, each of 11 octosyllabic verses. They follow this pattern: A B C B D E F F E G G. The poem starts with the description of the thorn and landscape. Nature is both the place of the story and one of the agents involved in the plot, perhaps the main one. Martha, her baby and the landscape compose one indivisible whole. The old thorn protects the child’s grave, the woman resembles a rock, the colour of the moss heap looks like human blood, and nature does not allow people to reveal its mystery.

The poet describes the admirable picturesque landscape full of colours: “Of olive-green and scarlet bright” (46), “Green, red, and pearly white” (48), “So deep in their vermilion dye” (44), “When the blue day-light’s in the skies” (72), “While yet the summer-leaves were green” (134), “I’ve heard the scarlet moss is red” (221). He pays attention to even tiny details as the dry thorn, lichen and moss.

William Wordsworth uses some similes, he compares the height of the thorn to a height of a two-year-old child, the thorn to a rock, the moss heap to an infant’s grave and network woven by hand of a lady, the stormy winter gale to a scythe, Martha’s suffering caused by her lover’s infidelity and betrayal to a tormenting cinder. There are also parallels as: moss and lichens – melancholy crop, the thorn – a wretched thing forlorn, a mass of knotted joints, a hill of moss – a beauteous heap, cups – the darlings of the eye, a metaphor: a cruel, cruel fire for mental pain, and a synecdoche: to any eye was plain. There can be found examples of anaphora:

Or when the whirlwind’s on the hill,
Or frosty air is keen and still, (84-85)

Whatever star is in the skies,
Whatever wind may blow. (102-103)

William Wordsworth does not use lofty, sophisticated poetical figures, images or complicated symbols. The poem is written in an easily understandable language. Only few expressions could be considered bookish or archaic, e. g. thither, wherefore, blithe, ere. And therefore the poem is pleasingly readable and understandable.

Martha Ray, the main character of poem “The Thorn” is a representative of a Romantic hero. She lives her lonely desperate life in the heart of wild nature regardless of storm, rain and wind. Martha is a woman whose mind was split after deep harrowing experience when her former lover forsook her for another girl and she remained on her own expecting a baby. What is more, her child had never been seen by anybody and the woman became insane. The less she was a member of human society, the more she transformed into part of the landscape (the author confused her and “a jutting crag”). A similar character can be found in Czech literature. In Božena Němcová’s novel *Babička* (1855) a rural girl called Viktorka spends nights and days strolling in the woods and meadows, sitting at a weir singing sorrowful lullabies to her dead child. The bad state of her mind was caused by the loss of a beloved man. Both women – Martha and Viktorka suffer from mental disease caused by a suddenly interrupted love affair. Their children, reminders of their love are dead, commended to the care of nature and they live their solitary lives bound with the landscape, avoiding any contact with other people.

The first part of poet’s narration is dedicated to the description of the landscape. The reader can admire the beauty of nature as if they were looking at picturesque scenery of a painting. Consequently, the author adds a story to the landscape and the narration becomes dynamic. In the preface to “The Thorn” William Wordsworth (1888) claims that the idea for this poem appeared when he visited the ridge of Quantock Hill and observed a thorn on a stormy day. This special circumstance revealed uniqueness of the plant to the poet who had not noticed it before, during his previous walks when the weather had been calm. He decided to capture this remarkable impression in his poem and preserve the image he had experienced. (Preface to The Thorn)

The thorn primarily plain appears significant. It is a guard which preserves the woman’s secret. A thorn is an ephemeral phenomenon in comparison with the eternity of mountains, rocks, or the sky. William Wordsworth made the thorn on the ridge of Quantock Hill immortal.

Tintern Abbey

William Wordsworth as an admirer of a beautiful landscape guides us around the countryside of Tintern Abbey. There can be found an astonishing historical monument – spectacular ruins of a Gothic Cistercian Abbey built in 1131. It is situated at the southern end of Tintern Abbey in Wales close to the border with England. The Wye, a tidal river with a very low flow in summer and raging torrent during winter floods, created a valley surrounded by hills covered with woods changing colours according to the season. The poet visited the region for the first time in 1793 with his friend and the images he witnessed embedded deeply in his memory. Five years later he returned there with his sister Dorothy during their walking tour. Stillinger and Abrams (2010) suggested:

Wordsworth's contemporaries, whatever they saw in Tintern Abbey, would have immediately placed it in a genre of poems written on tour. The abbey was the centrepiece of the most frequently made British tour of the 1790 (the Wye River valley, the historical border between England and Wales); thousands of travellers, with Gilpin or another guidebook in hand, visited and revisited the picturesque ruin and responded with feeling to the beauties and sublimities or the surrounding nature. (The Romantic period: Topics)

The complete title of the poem is “Lines Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey, on Revisiting the Banks of the Wye During a Tour July 13, 1798” and it was published in the collection of poems *Lyrical Ballads*. The poem consists of 164 unrhymed lines, the form is blank verse – a iambic pentameter, where a stressed syllable follows an unstressed one. There are some lines consisting of 9, 11, or 12 syllables: “Mid groves and copses. Once again I see” (14), “In hours of weariness sensations sweet” (28), “Unprofitable, and the fever of the world” (55). Utterances usually continue in following lines, the thoughts have overlap. The poem sounds rhythmical and fluent.

At the beginning of the poem, the poet mentions that between his previous visit and the latter one, five years have elapsed. He emphasizes his return by repetitive using adverb “again”.

Five years have passed; five summers, with the length
Of five long winters! and again I hear
These waters, rolling from their mountain-springs
With a soft inland murmur – Once again

Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs, ("Lines Composed"1-5)

The reader is not only informed about this fact but he can recognize speaker's enthusiasm and delight because he is back in Tintern Abbey where he meets the features of nature which he has preserved in his memory. His second visit revives the images and sounds of mountains, waters, the sky, the sycamore under which he used to stand and observe the landscape. Some human creations as dwellings, orchards, and farms with smoking chimneys contribute to the scenery. The author stands at the same raised place under the sycamore as he used to stand and observe the landscape five years ago. Everything seems to him small from his post, like a picture: "These hedge-rows, hardly hedge-rows, little lines" (15). The poet conveys his surmise that someone could live in the woods or in the cave, supposedly a vagrant or a hermit.

Sent up, in silence, from among the trees!
With some uncertain notice, as might seem
Of vagrant dwellers in the houseless woods,
Or of some Hermit's cave, where by his fire
The Hermit sits alone. (18-22)

In the following lines Wordsworth describes how the memories, which remained in his mind helped him to surmount difficulties of the life and heal his exhausted soul.

But oft, in lonely rooms, and 'mid the din
Of towns and cities, I have owed to them
In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,
Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart;
And passing even into my purer mind,
With tranquil restorations: - (26-31)

The noisy and anonymous towns and cities are put in contrast with the quiet, idyllic rural landscape, where the villagers live in invariable, traditional manners in the everyday occurrences. The poet is conscious of what else he is grateful to nature for. He supposes that he has become a kinder and better man, more sensitive to love.

As have no slight or trivial influence
On that best portion of a good man's life,
His little, nameless, unremembered, acts
Of kindness and of love..... (33-36)

The author has acquired another gift – the feeling of something sublime that extends beyond our existence, reason, and corporeal frame. The soul prevails over the material body and we are led by emotions and senses.

.....that serene and blessed mood,
In which the affections gently lead us on,-
Until the breath of this corporeal frame
And even the motion of our human blood
Almost suspended, we are led asleep
In body, and become a living soul; (42-47)

Consequently, he claims that in moments of his disbelief in the established social order and disappointment with the development in France where all chances for a just society were dashed, it was the Wye River, to which the young poet turned his mind in a hope of comfort. In the following lines, the French revolution and situation in Europe are expressed as “fretful stir” (54) and “the fever of the world” (55). The river is called “sylvan” (58), the author has a vision of a creature living and strolling through the wood.

The current poet’s visit in the region of the river Wye is not only a source of instant experiences and impression. Nature brings him beautiful memories to serve as spiritual nourishment for future times in case of potential difficulties and obstacles.

While here I stand, not only with the sense
Of present pleasure, but with pleasing thoughts
That in this moment there is life and food
For future yea.... (64-67)

That all differs from his previous approach, when he was five years younger and did not have much life’s experience. William Wordsworth is aware that five years ago, strongly affected by charm of the landscape, he could not realize the depth of the beauty and compares himself to a roe jumping over the mountains and hills and to a man trying to escape from something he is afraid of.

Though changed, no doubt, from what I was when first
I came among these hills; when like a roe
I bounded o’er the mountains, by the sides
Of the deep rivers, and the lonely streams,
Wherever nature led: more like a man

Flying from something that he dreads..... (68-73)

The poet does not regret the past years, since he received some other benefits: he learnt to listen to nature and feel sympathy with people. He also reached knowledge of unity of nature, universe, and human beings. The knowledge, that there is something more sublime – perhaps God or a kind of energy which masters the world.

.....a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:

A motion and a spirit, that impels

All thinking things, all objects of all thought (97-103)

This revelation together with a healing effect on the poet's split mind and positive impact on his mental maturing arouse even stronger worshipping of the kingdom of nature, which according to Wordsworth is:

The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,
The guide and the guardian of my heart, and soul
Of all my moral being. (111-113)

Nature is addressed as a human being, a close friend. Expressions: nurse, guide, guardian of my heart indicate that nature is perceived as a spiritual leader or teacher by the poet.

Then he turns attention to his sister Dorothy who accompanies him on his walks around Tintern Abbey. Expressing love, adoration and gratitude to nature naturally proceeds in confession of strong feelings towards Dorothy. That was Dorothy who helped her brother surmount his mental crisis. William and Dorothy had the same very intimate relationship to nature and the same ability to perceive shades of its beauty and see details which others could not even notice (tiny plants, little birds, common people).

May I behold in thee what I was once,
My dear, dear Sister! and this prayer I make
Knowing that Nature never did betray (123-125)

All the wonderful images and memories connected with natural sceneries protect us against merciless and hypocritical human society and it cannot be destroyed by selfish and bad people.

With quietness and beauty, and so feed
With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues
Rush judgements, nor the sneers of selfish men,
Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all
The dreary intercourse of daily life,
Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb
Our cheerful faith, that all which we behold (130-136)

The last part of the poem concerns memory. After some years, live experiences, breath-taking images and deep impressions gained in nature will mature into pleasure in the human heart. The human mind will become a shelter for our memories which will help us in less advantageous situations, then we will recollect all the positive feelings.

When these wild ecstasies shall be matured
Into a sober pleasure; when thy mind
Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms,
Thy memory be as a dwelling-palace (141-144)

At the end, the author turns to his sister to convey this idea. He confines to Dorothy that these memories will be with him when he is far away from her. The countryside makes the poet's heart purer and warmer. Dorothy's presence in Tintern Abbey intensifies potency of the positive influence which nature has on the poet.

And this green pastoral landscape, were to me
More dear, both for themselves and for thy sake. (161-162)

The poem is not a shallow description of a picturesque landscape. William Wordsworth explains significance of nature for his spiritual development. Nature is for the poet a source of healing power and exhilaration, an educator who enhances people's personalities. Memories are a reservoir of positive thoughts. Sensitive observation of the sky, river, wood, plants, and people fills the poet with knowledge that everything and everybody is part of an enormous, well working system, better than a man could have ever created.

The language of the poem is not as lofty as it was usual with Wordsworth's contemporaries. The poet tried to prove that the purest human thoughts and the truth when expressed with colloquial expressions then gain genuineness.

Like all great poems (certainly all those of the Romantic period), “Tintern Abbey” is a texture of contradictions from beginning to end: simultaneously a celebration of and a lament over the speaker’s maturing, a depiction of both the harmony and the disharmony of humans and nature, an alternately successful and unsuccessful attempt to reconcile the “two consciousnesses” of the opening lines of book 2 of *The Prelude*, and a view of the speaker’s and his sister’s future that is once tenderly optimistic and funereal. We know that “Tintern Abbey” is about nature, time, mortality, memory, imagination, society, the city, humanity, and God..... But, just as in Wordsworth’s own time, it remains the task of the individual reader to sort out the combination and emphases among these -.....(ibid., The Romantic period: Topics)

There is a reciprocal relationship between Wordsworth and Tintern Abbey. The Wye River and the countryside enriched the poet’s life and he contributed to the popularity of this area with his famous poem.

CHILDHOOD

On the one hand, childhood was a reservoir of splendid memories for William Wordsworth when he was growing up among the beautiful landscape of Lake District, and on the other hand, a source of cheerless experience of loss, when his parents died and he was separated from his beloved sister Dorothy who had to live far away with her relatives. In spite of orphanage and sad consequences, he spent happy years in the arms of marvellous nature, which helped him to overcome the adversity.

William Wordsworth was father to a girl who he could not bring up, protect and educate. During his stay in France, he had a love affair with a French girl Annette Vallon and consequently Annette gave birth to their daughter Caroline. Unfortunately, political situation made Wordsworth leave for England. Therefore, he could hardly participate in her upbringing. Later, he had children with his wife Mary, two of them – Thomas and Catherine died in 1812.

For the Romantic writer the child is holy and pure and its proximity to God will be corrupted by civilisation. The child then is a source of natural and spontaneous feeling. When Wordsworth wrote that ‘the Child is father of the Man (in My Heart Leaps Up) he stressed that the adult learns from the experience of childhood (Carter and Rae, 1998, p.211).

For Wordsworth childhood embodies a stage of human life when a man is nearest to nature and God and is in his most perceptive period. It is believed that children have special capabilities to see things which the adult cannot. He expressed these ideas in the following poem.

Ode on the Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood

In the opening of the poem Wordsworth reminisces the time of his childhood. For this period of human life, maximal perception for nature and its miracles is characteristic. Nature has a significant effect on the child. The poet says that everything he saw as a boy was “Apparelled in celestial light” (4). Simultaneously, he laments over the fact that he is adult and is not given this gift any more.

It is not now as it hath been of yore; --
Turn wheresoe'er I may,
By night of day,

The things which I have seen I now can see no more. ("Ode on Intimation ..." 6-9)
Although the poet still appreciates the beauty of landscape, he feels instinctively that there is something missing and that he has lost some connections with nature. He is able to see wonderful natural features but is aware of the difference between the adult and infant sights. He enumerates individual sensations which appear in his mind: the rainbow, the rose, the Moon, the birds' singing, the waterfalls, echoes from the mountains, the wind, and the land and sea. Everything resembles an exhilarating celebration. In spite of grief, the poet feels relief when he has expressed his thoughts.

A timely utterance gave that thought relief,
And I again am strong: (23-24)

Then Wordsworth apostrophizes a little shepherd boy, whose happy shout, joy and naturalness remind him of his own childhood. When he views the jubilee and bliss, he cannot be sullen. However, a memory of a particular tree, a flower, or a field, they all arouse a question:

Whither is fled the visionary gleam?
Where is it now, the glory and the dream? (56-57)

Deferrari et al. (1946) stated "when first composing the ode, Wordsworth stopped with these lines, unable to answer the question he had posed. Three years later he completed the poem, attempting to reply to his own question with Plato's doctrine of pre-existence" (p. 445).

In the fifth stanza the reader starts to learn what the cause of the state is. The author claims that these special dispositions start fading since the baby's birth. He compares the human soul to a star which stays somewhere else. The soul is immortal, living in the heaven, when comes to us, remembers his dwelling with God. Childhood is according to the author an ideal phase of everyone's life. Maturing causes that we become more distant from the heaven.

The Youth, who daily farther from the east
Must travel, still is Nature's Priest,
And by the vision splendid
Is on his way attended;
At length the Man perceives it die away,
And fade into the light of common day. (71-76)

Peculiar causations are revealed in the sixth stanza. They are certain circumstances connected with human maturing, which distract human mind. Nature endeavours human beings to forget the glorious vision they have brought from their heavenly home. Therefore, not the man, but nature is responsible for this distance. Using the expression Foster-child Wordsworth indicates that nature is the child's foster mother, because his real father is God.

The homely Nurse doth all she can
To make her Foster-child, her Inmate Man,
Forget the glories he hath known, (81-83)

Further, William Wordsworth concerns in depicting a small, six-year-old child, who is enchanted by the world around in the centre of his parents' love and care. Together with this he predicts child's future full of fortune and misfortune. The poet is aware of both positive and negative events which wait for him. Actually, it is a kind of a plan which urges the little man to move from his naturalness and connection with nature, because he is drawn to people's concernments.

See, at his feet, some little plan or chart,
Some fragment from his dream of human life,
Shaped by himself with newly-learned art; (90-92)

During the process of aging and maturing, the person learns a lot of new things - to communicate with other people about love, business, or strife. He is engaged in social relationships and masters social skills and a lot of new things. He is proud of his improvement. The boy imitates other people and does not live his own life, he is like an actor and the life is a stage. In this part Wordsworth made an allusion on Shakespeare's famous quote.

The little Actor cons another part;
Filling from time to time his "humorous stage (102-103)

He adopts manners of older people whose behaviour is a pattern for him. The endless imitation seems the man's vocation. This idea is close to R. W. Emerson, who considered conformity, abidance in traditions and following rules inherited from our ancestors harmful for human originality and greatness.

Nevertheless, the author is grateful for the hints of immortality and recollections of the heavenly life. They enrich human life and assist to cope with misfortunes. He calls

them “the fountain light of all our day” (151), “a master light of all our seeing” (152). Our lives are only short moments in comparison with eternity, therefore we can believe that our soul is immortal. The poet does not want to cry for the loss of glorious vision but is determined to live with the remains of this special capability and rejoice at the wonders which he can perceive. He is even happy when he realizes that the hints of immortality bring people hope for eternal life.

In the soothing thoughts that spring
Out of human suffering;
In the faith that looks through death,
In years that bring philosophic mind. (182-185)

Author’s love for nature remains and is even deeper presently, when he is older and more experienced. He also expresses his acknowledgements to other people and their emotions, which cultivated his mind. Thanks to them his own feelings are deeper and genuine.

Thanks to the human heart by which we live,
Thanks to its tenderness, its joy, and fears,
To me the meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears. (200-203)

Wordsworth proposed this theory as a shadowy notion rather than a definite belief. As a poetic device it serves to emphasize the sensitive nature of the child and the transition from childhood to manhood. The idea may be accepted only in so far as they teach that the soul comes from God and is for this reason still unspoiled by the standards of the world during childhood (Deferrari et al., 1946, p. 445).

Similar ideas are presented in another of William Wordsworth’s poems – “My Heart Leaps Up”. Again, there is the motif of maturing connected with worshipping nature. The poet comes to the same conclusion that he will feel strong affection to nature for all his life. This poem summarizes the ideas conveyed in the ode.

Children lost in Nature

However, not all children reach adulthood. Some of them die in their early childhood, the others never attain mental maturity. Another poem in which the poet deals with the motif of childhood in connection with nature is “The Idiot Boy”. Wordsworth is concerned with influence of nature on a mentally deficient boy’s mind. The poem is predominantly based on a narration of a simple night incident.

Betty Foy is a warm-hearted countrywoman, who is always ready to help anyone who is in emergency. One of her neighbours – old Susan is found in urgent need of her help. She lives in a secluded house somewhere in the countryside and becomes seriously ill. She lies in bed suffering from torturing pain. There is not anyone else who could relieve her suffering. And therefore Betty decides to stay with her and send her son Johnny to the doctor who lives in a near town. Her action is rather exceptional, because her son is an idiot boy.

There’s scarce a soul that’s out of bed;
Good Betty! put him down again;
His lips with hoy they burr at you,
But Betty! what has he to do

With stirrup, saddle, or with rein? (“The Idiot Boy” 17-21)

His mother is aware that she entrusted him a very responsible mission which is somehow at the edge of his mental capabilities. Betty loves him with all her heart, the boy is the most precious thing in her life. Nevertheless, mother sets her son on a horseback of the family pony which is used to working in the wood and carrying heavy burdens. Careless Johnny on the pony’s back enjoys the ride and special enchantment of nature around him. He forgets to lead the horse and it walks to the wood lured by hooting owls.

And while the pony moves his legs,
In Johnny’s left-hand you may see,
The green bough’s motionless and dead;
The moon that shines above his head
Is not more still and mute than he.

His heart was so full of glee,
That till full fifty yards were gone,

He quite forgot his holly whip,
And all his skill in horsemanship,
Oh! happy, happy, happy John. (87-96)

Betty sits by Susan's bed and keeps ensuring her that her son will return soon together with the doctor. However, how the time lapses, she becomes more and more anxious. She feels dilemma: either to stay with the ill woman or to start seeking for her son who is somewhere out in the night. She tries to provide relief to the old woman but most of all she would like to go out and find her dear Johnny. Her hopeful expectation mingles with rage and fear. Her mind is tortured with images what could have happened. Mother's rising anxiety is emphasized with hourly clock striking.

Cries Betty, 'he'll be back again;
They'll both be here, 'tis almost ten,
They'll both be here before eleven.

Poor Susan moans, poor Susan groans,
The clock gives warning for eleven; (154-158)

The clock is on the stroke of twelve,
And Johnny is not yet in sight, (162-163)

The clock is on the stroke of one;
But neither Doctor nor his guide
Appear along the moonlight road. (182-184)

Eventually, she is determined to go to the night woods and bring him home. Unfortunately, she cannot see him anywhere. She comes to the doctor's house in the town and here her hope fades out because the doctor does not know anything about the boy. His mother even considers possibility of committing suicide in a sudden fit of desperation.

Poor Betty now has lost all hope,
Her thoughts are bent on deadly sin;
A green-grown pond she just has passed,
And from the brink she hurries fast,
Lest she should drown herself therein. (302-306)

A salutary idea to go to the wood brings Betty new strength and she finds her son sitting on the feeding horse near the waterfall unaware of her anxiety and his mission. Betty is overwhelmed by happiness and exhilaration because she has found her beloved child. Nothing more is important at that moment of reunion.

She looks again – her arms are up –
She screams – she cannot move for joy;
She darts as with a torrent's force,
She almost has o'erturned the horse,
And fast she holds her idiot boy. (382-386)

That night, another miracle happens. Old Susan surprisingly recovers, perhaps under the influence of fear for the two close friends' circumstances and walks to the wood to meet them.

The poem starts with describing of the setting of the story. According to the first stanza the plot is set in the countryside at night. There is a motif of a hooting owl which opens and closes the poem. As another repeating motif, the Moon and moonlight appear during the whole poem.

Tis eight o'clock, - clear March night,
The moon is up – the sky is blue,
The owlet in the moonlight air,
He shouts from nobody knows where (1-4)

The description of landscape is limited because of the time of the story. The poet provides images of nocturnal nature where sounds predominate over other images. The only colours which are mentioned are blue, black and green and they are contrasted by moonlight. Although nature is a very important constituent of the story it is present in gentle hints.

The owlets through the long blue light
Are shouting to each other still:
Fond lovers, yet not quite hob nob,
They lengthen out the tremulous sob
That echoes far from hill to hill. (297-301)

The characters are introduced with the description of their actions, the reader does not know anything about their appearance, because it is not important. Poet's endeavour is focused on people's personalities together with influence of nature on human mind. The

reader can recognize that Betty is a good woman as contrasted to the selfish and kindless doctor who is not willing to help the desperate mother seeking her lost disabled son, which is also a symbolic expression of huge difference between the town and rural areas where genuine qualities among villagers still persist. Johnny is depicted as a happy, careless being with lunatic, childish ideas.

Johnny perhaps his horse forsook,
To hunt the moon that's in the brook, (224-225)

Perhaps he's climbed into an oak, (233)

And joined the wandering gypsy-folk. (236)

To lay his hands upon a star,
And in his pocket bring it home.

Perhaps he's turned himself about,
His face unto his horse's tail, (330-333)

The life in the country is pure and not complicated. If there is someone, who needs help, it is clear that the others must do something regardless to difficulties. This idea is supported with the form of the poem. It consists of ninety-two stanzas each of five verses. They follow a b c c b pattern. There are eight syllables in each verse. The form of the poem resembles folk rhymes. Frequently there can be seen anaphora.

In high and low, above, bellow,
In great and small, in round an square,
In tree and tower was Johnny seen,
In bush and brake, in black and green, (217-220)

Repetition is quite common in this poem. A line "Him whom you love, your idiot boy?" (11) is often the fifth line of many stanzas, slightly altered to "Him whom she loves, her idiot boy?" (16), "And cannot find her idiot boy." (371), "And fast she holds her idiot boy." (386), or "To hear again her idiot boy." (391). Another example is lines referring to passing time: "Tis on the stroke -....." (159), "The clock is on the stroke of twelve," (163), "The clock is on the stroke of one;" (182). In certain places of the poem with emotional

tension, there are individual words laid one after another: “Twas Johnny, Johnny everywhere” (221) or “Oh! happy, happy, happy John” (96).

The poem is readable and the reader’s attention is permanently maintained. The story of the poem is thrilling and the reader feels a lot of sympathy with Betty Foy and her son. They experience anxiety when the mother impatiently expects Johnny’s return with the doctor, feels enormous quandary whether to stay with the ill neighbour or to leave her and seek for her son. In one of the most thrilling moments the poet apostrophes the reader and retards the action with hypotheses what happened to him. Subsequently, the poet complains to his muses that they do not assist efficiently to depict some other possibilities of Johnny’s adventures.

In the preface to this story, William Wordsworth (1888) has claimed that the whole poem was based on the last stanza of the poem. He heard these words from his friend Thomas Poole and from some mentally disabled people. Then he remarks that this long poem was composed in the groves of Alfoxden and practically nothing changed, only omitted one stanza. Writing this story brought him a lot of pleasure (Preface to *The idiot boy*).

Lucy Gray is the heroine of the eponymous poem by William Wordsworth, another infant character living in a concord with nature, appearing in his poetry. Lucy is a little girl who dwells together with her parents in the hamlet surrounded by the woods. She is a solitaire, has not got any friends or companions of her age. She roams about the countryside, it is even easier to see timid animal inhabitants of the mountainous landscape than her.

One winter day, her father asks her to accompany her mother with a lantern on her way home from the town because of a nearing snow storm. The girl obeys his father and sets forward the town. It is cold and the snow lies everywhere. The task does not seem difficult because it is only afternoon and the storm is still far away. Unfortunately, the storm comes earlier and the girl loses her way and does not reach the destination. Her desperate parents search the area, cross the landscape, call her name. However, there is not the least hint of Lucy’s presence anywhere. After a long unsuccessful search the parents lose hope and they lament that they will meet their daughter in the heaven. Suddenly, mother notices small footmarks in the white snow. The two follow them from the steep hill’s edge to the middle of a bridge, but there are not any further ones. They are the last

marks of Lucy Gray's existence. Local people rumour abroad that since then the child has been seen walking aimlessly, whistling and singing, like a phantom.

William Wordsworth claims that his poem is based on an accident which he was told by his sister Dorothy. A little girl from Halifax in Yorkshire, who was lost in the wild, became poet's model for the character of Lucy Gray. On the contrary of the poem, the real girl was found dead. Wordsworth (1888) described:

It was founded on a circumstance told me by my Sister, of a little girl who, not far from Halifax in Yorkshire, was bewildered in a stow-storm. Her footsteps were traced by her parents to the middle of the lock of a canal, and other vestige of her, backward or forward, could not be traced. The body, however, was found in the canal. The way in which the incident was treated and the spiritualising of the character might furnish hints for contrasting the imaginative influences which I have endeavoured to throw over common life with Crabbe's matter of fact style of treating subjects of the same kind. This is not spoken to his disparagement, far from it, but to direct the attention of thoughtful readers, into whose hands these notes may fall, to a comparison that may both enlarge the circle of their sensibilities, and tend to produce in them a catholic judgement. (Preface to Lucy Gray)

There is a difference between the conclusion of the poem and the real event. The poet aimed to support his readers' imagination and give them opportunity and space to think about unusual things.

The poem consists of sixteen four line stanzas, rhyming according to the pattern ABAB. The author used a simple form resembling a child's chant and clear language to describe a moment in the life of a pure, innocent rural girl. Therefore, the form agrees with the context.

Some similarities can be found when we compare heroes of the two poems: "Lucy Gray" and "The Idiot Boy". Both children, Lucy and Johnny, grew in the heart of nature. They live beloved by their parents in harmony with natural principles and rules, scarcely visiting the near town. The empire of the sky, mountains, animals and plants is their home. Under certain circumstances, in the state of emergency, the children are given a responsible task: Johnny – to ride to the town in the night and bring the doctor to a sick neighbour and Lucy – to accompany her mother on her way home from the town on a

stormy winter day. Unfortunately, neither John, nor Lucy completed their missions. Johnny was too impressed by the ride and nature to be able to bring help to the ill woman. Lucy failed because the storm came suddenly. Johnny was disadvantaged with his mental handicap and Lucy went astray due to bad weather. Lucy's parents and Johnny's mother spent hours in strong anxiety searching for their children who were somewhere out instead of at home. However, only Mary Foe found his son, Lucy's parents were left in exhausting, devastating uncertainty. Both children were exposed to danger in connection with their journey to the town. For Romanticists town was a bleak place where human relationships, moral values and the purest feelings were stained and warped by the power of money. People are able to live full, healthy lives filled with genuine sensations only if they obey natural laws.

We Are Seven

In 1793 William Wordsworth visited the area of Goodrich Castle above the River Wye, in Herefordshire – the borderland between England and Wales. The ruins of a Norman medieval castle made of red sandstone are a distinctive dominant of the landscape. Roaming the countryside, he met a little girl who inspired him for writing the poem “We Are Seven”. He composed the poem when he was walking in the grove at Alfoxden in the period spent together with Dorothy and Coleridge. First of all, Wordsworth created the last stanza.

‘But they are dead; those two are dead!

 Their spirits are in heaven!

 Twas throwing words away; for still

 The little Maid would have her will,

 And said, ‘Nay, we are seven!’ (“We Are Seven” 65-69)

Then he nearly completed the poem. Coleridge added the first stanza. Wordsworth (1888) confessed:

I mentioned in substance what I wished to be expressed, and Coleridge immediately threw off the stanza thus: “A little child, dear brother Jem,”...I (1) objected to the rhyme as being ludicrous, but we all enjoyed the joke of hitching-in our friend, James T-----’s name, who was familiarly called Jem. (Preface to We are seven)

The author describes his encounter with an eight-year-old curly village girl, who enchanted him with her freshness, liveliness, and naturalness.

She had a rustic, woodland air,
And she was wildly clad:
Her eyes were fair, and very fair;
Her beauty made me glad. (“We Are Seven” 9-12)

He gave her one of typical questions, which the adults usually ask if they talk to a child they have never met before. The poet asked the girl how many siblings she had. The main purpose of his query is to enter communication with the nameless girl. The girl enumerates her brothers and sisters.

..... She answered, “Seven are we;
And two of us at Conway dwell,
And two are gone to sea.

Two of us in the church-yard lie,
My sister and my brother;
And, in the church-yard cottage, I
Dwell near them with my mother.” (18-24)

The little girl’s answer is confusing for the poet and he starts persuading her that there are only five siblings if two of them are dead. The girl determinedly insists on her truth and does not understand the poet’s objections because she feels that her dead brother and sister are still with her, although they lie in the church-yard. She spends a lot of time near their graves, knits stockings, hems her kerchief, eats her supper there, and sings songs. Although they are dead, she is convinced about their presence and belonging to the family and never says that they died. Instead of this she uses these phrases: “And then she went away.” (52), or “My brother John was forced to go.” (59) The girl growing in the countryside considers death part of the life. It seems that the little maid finally wins the disputation because the last two stanzas end in these exclamations: “O Master! We are seven.” (64) and “Nay, we are seven!” (69)

The poem is a dialogue between an adult person and a child and compares their views on the life and death. William Wordsworth was deeply impressed by the encounter with the rural girl whose belief made him review his opinion. In the prologue to this poem

Wordsworth confesses that when he revisited Goodrich Castle in 1841 he would have been pleased if he had met the girl again. Unfortunately, it did not happen, he even did not know her name.

The author conveyed the main idea of the poem that children are in many aspects wiser than adult people, especially if they live in the concord with nature. The maid's truth is very simple just like the form which the poet chose for his poem. It consists of sixteen four line stanzas – most of them follow the pattern ABAB, suggestive of a poem for children. There are eight syllables in all first lines and majority of third lines of each stanza, six or seven syllables in second and fourth lines. The last stanza consists of five lines and the pattern is ABCCB. Two stanzas have got this type of rhyme: ABCB. It means that the poem has got a regular form which is sometimes broken. There are examples of the middle rhyme in this stanza:

‘Their graves are green, they may be seen,’
The little Maid replied,
‘Twelve steps or more from my mother’s door
And they are side by side.’ (37-40)

The language of the poem is simple and pure, typical for people living in the countryside, for a little girl. It can be considered a proof of the theory of the Lake Poets that the language of common people is the most suitable one for expressing the deepest human feelings and the truth.

Michael: A Pastoral Poem

The impact of disconnection of bond between people and nature is depicted in William Wordsworth's pastoral poem "Michael". It is a long poem written in blank verse – a iambic pentameter, consisting of 491 lines structured into some extensive stanzas.

The opening of the poem introduces the setting of the poem. It is a detailed engaging description of the way to a place in Grasmere where the characters of the story live. The author leads us to a heap of stones and starts telling the story bound to the stones. The poet expresses his affection for the countryside and the inhabitants – common people. He was getting such relationship during his childhood in Lake District and years of school attendance in Hawkshead where he was meeting rural people. William Wordsworth confessed that he had felt the power of the nature since his boyhood.

The earliest of those tales that spake to me
Of Shepherds, dwellers in the vallies, men
Whom I already loved, not verily
For their own sakes, but for the fields and hills
Where was their occupation and abode. ("Michael" 22-26)

Then he used to perceive the beauty of the landscape headlong and imperfectly because of lack of education needed for deeper understanding of his feelings. The author's aim was to tell the story for attention of people with pure hearts and young poets, whom he calls his descendants.

For the delight of a few natural hearts,
And with yet fonder feeling, for the sake
Of youthful Poets, who among these Hills
Will be my second self when I am gone, (36-39)

The main character is Michael – an old shepherd, a strong, able, and wise, skilful man, who has spent all his life in the countryside. He is familiar with the hills, plants, and animals, and for long years he has been exposed to the influence of natural elements. He can understand the land where he has experienced many events and adventures.

Hence he had learned the meaning of all winds,
Of blasts of every tone, and often-times
When others heeded not, He heard the South
Make subterraneous music, like the noise
Of Bagpipers on distant Highland hills. (48-52)

Michael lives together with his wife Isabel and their son Luke in a cabin built on the slope of a hill. There is always light in the house and therefore local people named it the Evening Star. The family work all days, their life is simple, peaceful and satisfying. The son is beloved by his parents, he is their delight, hope for the future, continuance of their lives, and confidence that he will enter the family property after their death. Michael brought the boy up with love and wisdom, tried to engrave affection and respect for nature and animals to the young mind. Lucas was taught the shepherd's job, to drive the cattle and other important and useful skills by his father.

From such, and other causes, to the thoughts
Of the old Man his only Son was now

The dearest object that he knew on earth.
Exceeding was the love he bare to him,
His Heart and his Heart's joy! For oftentimes
Old Michael, while he was a babe in arms,
Had done him female service, not alone
For dalliance and delight, as is the use
Of fathers, but with patient mind enforced
To acts of tenderness; and he had rocked
His cradle with a woman's gentle hand. (158-168)

When Luke reached the age of 18 years, Michael received some bad news. He was obliged to pay a large amount of money. This debt arose when the old shepherd gave his property as security for his nephew. The relative did not meet his liabilities and therefore the old man has to pay the money instead of him. The sum represents the price of a half of the family property inherited from their ancestors. Such a loss is for peasants bound with their land disaster comparable to the loss of a dear person. Michael, also, could not cope with the idea of losing some of the property, which had been maintained for generations. The only chance is Luke, whom he decided to send to a rich relative living in the town. He could help Michael's son earn some money and pay the debt off. The decision to send Luke to the town was very difficult for the old shepherd and his wife. The evening before Luke's departure, the father and his son came to the heap of stones. Michael confesses his deep love to Luke, tells him how much he means for him, with tenderness he recollects years of son's early childhood. The shepherd explains that he has been trying to give him the love he got from his parents.

And still I loved thee with encreasing love
Never to living ear came sweeter sounds
Than when I heard thee by our own fire-side
First uttering without words a natural tune,
When thou, a feeding babe, didst in thy joy
Sing at thy Mother's breast. Month followed month,
And in the opened fields my life was passed
And in the mountains, else I think that thou
Hadst been brought up upon thy father's knees.

- But we were playmates, Luke; among these hills,
as well thou know'st, in us the old and young
Have played together, nor with me didst thou
Lack any pleasure which a boy can know. (354-366)

Michael appeals to his son to lay one stone to the planned sheep fold and hopes that when Luke returns home, the building will be there instead of the heap stones. At this symbolic moment, the shepherd promises that he will love him whatever happens.

When thou return'st, thou in this place wilt see
A work which is not here, a covenant
'Twill be between us – but whatever fate
Befall thee, I shall love thee to the last,
And bear thy memory with me to the grave. (423-427)

William Wordsworth inserted very emotive words into the shepherd's speech. The author could not hear them from his father because he had died before son's adulthood. The confession is sincere and full of strong feelings.

After that Luke left for the town. At first, the old parents received positive and commendatory letters from the relative and excited letters from their son. The time passed and Lukas became addicted to negative influence of the town, lost his good name, was expelled and finally had to hide somewhere over the sea. That destroyed the old man. To survive such disappointment, he tried to find comfort in work and in nature and therefore he slowly continued in building of the sheep fold. However, he could not complete it because he died. Three years later, Michael was followed by his wife Isabel. The Evening Star was sold, the fields were ploughed up. Only the stones and an old oak were saved there. All the area was subjugated, distinctive changes were introduced in the countryside.

William Wordsworth deals with the motif of quitting the native landscape, eradication of the rural man from the arms of nature and the positive influence of natural elements on the local dwellers. Michael spent all his long life in the mountains. He was both physically and psychically strong and healthy, obeying moral and natural laws. He had a firm relationship to the land.

And grossly that man errs, who should suppose
That the green Valley, and the Streams and Rocks
Were things indifferent to the Shepherd's thoughts

Fields, where with chearful spirits he had breathed
The common air; the hills, which he so oft
Had climbed with vigorous steps; which had impressed
So many incidents upon his mind
Of hardship, skill or courage, joy or fear;
Which like a brook preserved the memory (62-70)

Michael instinctively led his son to respect for the nature and all living beings. Luke's personality had been developing in a proper way till he lived together with his parents in the native land. After boy's moving away from the beneficial influence of nature his character started to become deformed and the young man's failure meant disaster to the rural family.

The author saw the negative impact of the Industrial Revolution on the landscape and people living there. The town or city and the countryside stand in contrast. In pure nature the child has got the best conditions to grow up, to be a strong and resilient personality following natural and moral laws. Just a short stay in the town causes decline of the human personality that has been cherished meaningfully for 18 years. The life in urban areas threatens the mankind with their allurements.

WORDSWORTH'S LOVE POEMS

Poetical work of William Wordsworth is penetrated with positive emotions, affection and love. It is love for nature, life, freedom, England, literature, human cognition, people. People are in the poet's conception part of nature. It is not different in case of his love poetry. Poems about love to a woman are in comparison to extensity of his other works a scarce matter, unique appearance. William Wordsworth devoted several his short poems to Lucy, a modest rural girl who lives somewhere in the bosom of nature.

According to Chudoba (1947), maternal love, hardship, and love to a woman are for Wordsworth nearly natural powers and if they should be expressed in the way to raise the impression of spontaneity there must not be added anything subsidiary and blunting to the words. Every expression has to confide its own power. If the poet's words are colours, he must use them like an artist, who wants to picture an image of something great in a small place. He must not distract it with details, but simplify and unify. The poet will have only fundamental features of nouns and verbs. Wordsworth wrote his poems about his mystic love using such style. They are almost the only erotic verses he created. His erotica is exceptional, sombre like a cloudy day in the moorland, devoid of all amorous sentimentality as the cragged landscape which shapes its background. The bleak dream about departed love is dreamt with wide open eyes (pp. 184-185).

There were several women in William Wordsworth's life, who significantly influenced the poet and his writings. Among them there is his mother who deceased too early. Her absence led him closer to nature. Then there is his sister Dorothy beside whom he spent most of his life and who was not only a sibling for him but also an advisor, friend, the first reader and critic, fellow traveller on his excursion tours. The stay in France gave him not only acquaintance with revolutionary ideals and their supporters, but also with Annette Vallon – the woman whom he loved and with whom he had an illegitimate daughter – Caroline. He could never marry Annette because of the political situation in France. In 1802 William Wordsworth married Marry Hutchinson, who lived in the common household together with her husband and his sister till the poet's death.

William Wordsworth devoted some of his short poems to Lucy – a rustic girl who lives somewhere in wild nature. The identity of the girl remains veiled, we even do not know whether she is a real person – the object of the poet's love and desire or a fictional ideal being invented in his imagination as an ideal woman. It is not surprising that the

author inserted his love in natural environment. Lucy lives in a cabin in a hidden place where anybody scarcely walks in.

She dwelt among the untrodden ways
Beside the springs of Dove,
A Maid whom there were none to praise
And very few to love:
(“She Dwelt among the Untrodden Ways” 1-4)

The poet introduces the girl as a fresh and tender being growing up among hills, woods and meadows. Only the moon high in the sky witnesses her existence. Nature in which she lives gives her something out of its beauty.

The floating clouds their state shall lend
To her; for her the willow bend;
Nor shall she fail to see
Even in the motions of the Storm
Grace that shall mould the Maiden’s form
By silent sympathy.
(“Three Years She Grew in Sun and Shower” 19-24)

Lucy’s beauty is in Wordsworth’s verses modest and discreet, silent nevertheless unique.

A violet by a mossy stone
Half hidden from the eye!
Fair as the star, when only one
Is shining in the sky.
(“She Dwelt among the Untrodden ways”, 5-8)

The poet compares the beloved girl to natural objects – foremost to flowers. In “She Dwelt among Untrodden Ways” it is “a violet by a mossy stone” (5), in “Strange Fits of Passion Have I Known” it is “a rose in June” (6), or “a lovelier flower on earth was never sown” (2) in “Three Years She Grew in Sun and Shower”. Poet’s affection to the rural girl is very intensive and peerless although he has experienced many bursts of emotions in his life.

Strange fits of passion have I known:
And I will dare to tell,
But in the Lover’s ear alone,
What once to me befell. (“Strange Fits of Passion” 1-4)

In the poem “I Travelled among Unknown Men” the love to a woman is interconnected with love to poet’s native county – England, where he always returns, which he is determined not to leave and which is also the home of his beloved Lucy.

Tis past, that melancholy dream!

Nor will I quit thy shore

A second time; for still I seem

To love thee more and more.

Among thy mountains did I feel

The joy of my desire. (“I travelled among Unknown Men” 5-10)

The reader does not learn anything about Lucy’s appearance. It is not known what her eyes, hair, figure are like. Actually, there is only certain impression combining tenderness, freshness, innocence and clasp with nature.

She shall be sportive as the fawn

That wild with glee across the lawn,

Or up the mountains springs;

And her’s shall be the breathing balm,

And her’s the silence and the calm

Of mute insensate things. (“Three Years She Grew...” 13-18)

At the end of the poems dedicated to Lucy the poet expresses his grief at the girl’s death. In the poem “Strange Fits ...” it is anxiety that she could die. These mentions of death are in contrast to the preceding lines full of cheerful images and sensations and picturesque descriptions of nature. The last lines surprise and astonish the reader.

What fond and wayward thoughts will slide

Into a Lover’s head!

“Oh mercy!” to myself I cried,

“If Lucy should be dead!” (“Strange fits ...” 25-28)

“But she is in her grave, and, oh,

The difference to me!” (“She Dwelt ...” 11,12)

Thus Nature spake – The work was done –

How soon my Lucy's race was run!

She died and left to me

This heath this calm and quiet scene; ("Three Years ..." 37-40)

Considering that it is not possible to identify Lucy in the poems and what is more, Lucy's identity was never revealed, William Wordsworth gives his readers opportunity for their own imagination and interpretation. Therefore, Lucy can be a symbol of womanhood and embodiment of author's notion of an ideal woman as the object of his love. Furthermore, it can be suggested that Lucy can be the personification of nature, where the author desires to live and that the repetitious motif of death relates with author's fear that nature will never be the same.

This heath, this calm and quiet scene;

The memory of what has been,

And never more will be. ("Three Years" 40-42)

Lucy – a girl's name can be found in another poem written by William Wordsworth – "Lucy Gray". The name belongs to a little girl who disappeared somewhere in the countryside. The reader may surmise that Lucy is the same girl in a certain timing relationship. However, it is mere speculation. The fact is that whatever poet's inspiration was, it resulted in tender love poems.

CONCLUSION

The poetry of romantic poets reflects the time of its origin. William Wordsworth and the other poets perceived the injustice of the world. When their hopes of equal social system were disappointed they started the revolution in poetry. They used new forms with freer rhymes and metrical irregularities and turned their attention to nature. It was the place where they experienced majestic sensations called the Sublime. Wordsworth shared these feelings with his readers via his poems.

Nature is for the poet a source of life force, the place where human stories are enacted and where relationships are not deformed by the power of money. Nature is a reservoir of positive emotions, the strongest ones are called the Sublime. At the moments of tranquillity they are the poet's inspiration. Even poet's love poems are intermingled with love to nature and his native land – England. William Wordsworth is able to be aware of stealthy incursion of civilisation with its shortcomings into the country and lives of its inhabitants. He thinks that this influence is derogatory.

The early loss of the parents and the stay at school in Hawkshead drew Wordsworth closer to nature. His love to nature helped him surmount moments of desperation and loss of illusions and formed his very positive relationship to common people. And they became the heroes of his poems – rural people, farmers, wanderers, children, reapers, hermits, beggars. Although they are members of the lower class, in Wordsworth's poems they are on the pedestal. As Ackroyd (2005) has claimed, "by making art out of revolutionary philosophy, Wordsworth and Coleridge succeeded where the Revolution had failed. They gave politics a human face. The *Lyrical Ballads* were a revolution in 23 poems" (Romantics: Liberty).

Childhood was for the poet a very happy period of the life. He spent it in Lake District. He believed that in the time of childhood the human soul is maximally receptive to the beauty of nature and is able to recollect the life in the ideal place, in God's Kingdom. He considered children wise and pure beings, that proceed in the right way if they live in the connection with nature.

Another significant phenomenon, which contributed to form the poet's creation, is the memory. Recollections of natural sceneries provided him comfort and relief during his residence in the city. *The Prelude* is the autobiographical work completely based on the

poet's reminiscence. He considers his memory a source of images, which he can evoke and use in a creative way in his poetry. He calls this process poet's imagination.

William Wordsworth proved that using of ornamental language, exaggeratedly emotional phrases and idioms, rich attributes and lofty poetical figures, having been passed from one generation of poets to another, are not necessary for expressing the strongest human feelings. He manifested that it is possible to achieve even better effect if he uses the language of common people devoid of awkwardness and defective expressions. He was exposed to relentless criticism for his belief and style of writing. However, later it was obvious that his experiment was successful. For understanding of the author's design it was very useful to study the preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*. They were together with *The Prelude* the essential source of knowledge of the experts at the life and poetry of William Wordsworth.

The point that Wordsworth realized that to become a poet of worth – and what other kind of poet would do? – he needed to find his own way. To be of use to mankind entailed a responsibility towards poetry that couldn't be squared with contemporary orthodoxies, because very obviously they weren't of use (Lucas, 1991, p. 89).

William Wordsworth's poems are well comprehensible even for the contemporary readers, mainly for the sake of the choice of the language. The *Lyrical Ballads* tell interesting stories about human lives and fortunes and misfortunes. Wordsworth's poems are definitely not plain descriptions of nature and landscape. The poet offers the readers a deeper insight and gives them enough space for their own interpretation and imagination. William Wordsworth's works deserve our attention even nowadays – more than 200 years after the first publication.

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SUMMARY IN CZECH

Předmětem bakalářské práce je odhalit hlavní principy a rysy poezie Williama Wordsworthe věnované krajině a přírodě.

Práce je rozdělena do dvou hlavních částí. V první, teoretické části, jsou definovány a vysvětleny základní pojmy – romantismus jako světové kulturní a společenské hnutí, specifika anglického romantismu, objasnění pojmu „Sublime“ z filosofického a literárního hlediska. Dále je zde popsáno historicko-spoločenské pozadí vzniku romantismu.

Druhá část se zabývá jednotlivými pracemi Williama Wordsworthe, které mají spojitost s přírodou a krajinou. Básně jsou rozděleny do kapitol podle dílčích témat: Příroda a krajina v básníkových vzpomínkách, Lyrické balady, Dětství, Wordsworthovy milostné básně. Jejich analýzy se zaměřují na formu, básnické prostředky a motivy.

V jednotlivých rozborech jsou vysloveny určité poznatky a zjištění, které jsou shrnuty v závěru práce.