



**New York City in Federico Garcia Lorca's *Poet in New York* and London in William Wordsworth's Poetry: A Comparative Study**

مدينة نيويورك في ديوان "شاعر في نيويورك" لفديريكو غارسيا لوركا  
ولندن في شعر وليام ويردزورث: دراسة مقارنة

**Prepared by**

**Shorouq Adnan Al-Adwan**

**Supervised by**

**Professor Tawfiq Yousef**

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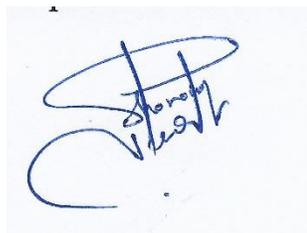
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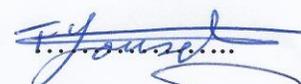
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Examination Committee

Signature

Dr. Tawfiq Yousef

Supervisor



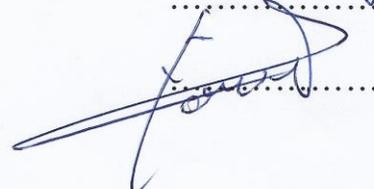
Dr. Nadia Tariq

Internal Examiner



Dr. Yousef Awad

External Examiner



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## **Dedication**

This thesis is dedicated to my lovely and wonderful parents whom I love the most. They encouraged and provided me with great support along the whole path and lit my way with their guidance and unconditional love. I dedicate this thesis to my sisters and brothers who were supportive.

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# **New York City in Federico Garcia Lorca's *Poet in New York* and London in William Wordsworth's Poetry: A Comparative Study**

**By**

**Shorouq Adnan Aladwan**

**Supervised by**

**Prof. Tawfiq Yousef**

## **Abstract**

This thesis is a comparative study between Lorca's depiction of New York City in his *Poet in New York* and Wordsworth's portrayal of London City in a few selected poems dealing with London. It explores the differences and the similarities between the portrayals of the two cities by the two poets

Adopting the techniques and methods of comparative literature and drawing upon the Romantic as well as Existentialist and Surrealist theories/Movements, the study explores the related poems of the two well-known poets through emphasizing the image of the city that each one presents. The different poetic techniques, the societal, political and cultural dimensions each of the two poets explores in his poems are highlighted in an attempt to explain the similarities and the differences between the two poets' treatment of the city he describes.

For Wordsworth, London is a place of cultural, literary, and intellectual exchange. He is both fascinated and disenchanted by the city and so his portrayal reflects positive and negative qualities of what he perceives while wandering in the city at different times. On

the other hand, Lorca shows great aversion to the city he describes. He is primarily concerned with the negative aspects he pictures about the city. Nevertheless, the two poets show interest in the regional and universal features of the modern city. Both writers concentrate on the past to reflect on the contemporary situation of the modern city they are describing. They seek inspiration from the biblical, literary and cultural traditions in order to shed light on the present and to show how the life in a big city has deteriorated compared with their situation in the past. While Wordsworth is interested in communal and natural life, Lorca proves to be an isolated and alienated poet away from the daily experiences of New Yorkers for most of the time he lived there. He is critical and detached rather than participant and involved.

**Keywords:** New York City , Federico Garcia Lorca's Poet , New York and London , William Wordsworth's Poetry.

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ويردزويرث: دراسة مقارنة

إعداد الطالبة

شروق عدنان العدوان

إشراف

الأستاذ الدكتور توفيق يوسف

### الملخص

هذه الرسالة مقارنة بين وصف لوركا لمدينة نيويورك في ديوانه "شاعر في نيويورك" ووصف ويردزويرث لمدينة لندن في مجموعة من قصائده المختارة التي تصف المدينة. تكشف الدراسة أوجه التشابه والاختلاف بين تصوير كل من الشعارين للمدينة التي يصورها. وباستخدام أساليب الأدب المقارن وبالاستعانة بنظريات او حركات الرومانسية والوجودية والسريالية تتناول هذه الرسالة القصائد ذات العلاقة لكلا الشعارين المشهورين حيث تركز على صورة المدينة كما يبرزها كل منهما . وتبين الدراسة الجوانب الاجتماعية والسياسية والثقافية التي يتناولها كل من الشعارين من أجل شرح أوجه التشابه والاختلاف بين الطريقة التي يعالج فيها كل منهما المدينة التي عني بوصفها.

بالنسبة لويردزويرث فإن مدينة لندن مكان للتبادل الأدبي والفكري والثقافي وهو معجب وغير معجب في آن واحد بالمدينة التي يصفها لهذا فإن تصويره لها يعكس الجوانب الإيجابية والسلبية لما يشاهده أثناء تجواله في المدينة خلال فترات مختلفة. ومن الناحية الأخرى يكشف لوركا عن بغضه

للمدينة التي يصفها، فهو معني أساسا بالجوانب السلبية للمدينة . وعلى الرغم من ذلك فإن كلا الشعارين يظهر اهتماما بالجوانب المحلية والعالمية للمدينة الحديثة. يركز كل من الشعارين على الماضي ليتمكن من الإمعان في الوضع الحاضر للمدينة التي يصفها فهما ينشدان الأيحاء لشاعريتهما من المصادر الدينية والثقافية والأدبية ليتمكننا من تسليط الضوء على الوضع الراهن وليبيننا أن الحياة في المدينة الكبيرة قد ساءت وازمحت مقارنة بما كان عليه الحال في الزمن الماضي. ومع أن ويردزويرث يبدي اهتماما بحياة الطبيعة والحياة الاجتماعية إلا أن لوركا يبقى منعزلا عن الحياة اليومية لسكان مدينة نيو يورك خلال الجزء الأكبر من الفترة التي قضاها هناك ناقدا للمدينه وبعيدا عن حياتها بدلا من أن يكون مشاركا فيها وجزءا من حياتها .

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** مدينة نيويورك ، ديوان "شاعر في نيويورك" لفديريكو غارسيا لوركا ولندن ، شعر وليام ويردزويرث

# **Chapter one**

## **Chapter One**

### **1.0 Introduction**

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

#### **The Image of the City in Literature**

Writing about cities in poetry shows that poets do not write only about what we call feelings, emotions, ideas, and imaginations, but also write about physical things such as cities, stations, mountains, etc. Because every poet has his own different perspective in which he/she describes the city, the same city may be described in different ways. It may be seen as gloomy, dreary, sad, and sorrowful by a certain poet and as comfortable, entrancing, heavenly, and joyful by another poet. This difference in the way of looking at the city depends on the difference of the background of each poet, which includes his/her life, personality, experiences, memories, psychological attitude, worldview, etc.

There is a big difference between country and city life, and each person has his own notion of belonging which makes him/her feel part of one of them rather than the other. Looking at cities can give us different feelings including a sense of pleasure or a sense of revulsion depending on the way it looks to us or how we see it. Lynch (1960) states that the beauty of this mixture cannot be seen by the eye only, but by our hearts and our minds. The overlapping of many individual images creates the general image of any city. The picture that is created by an individual is very distinct and unique in the sense that it has a major role in creating the general public image that is distinguished from any other environment. By creating this unique picture or image, each person in the city may be considered as a special part of a certain city like any other important and special part. Lynch (1960) clarified that:

Washington Street set in a farmer's field might look like the shopping street in the heart of Boston, and yet it would seem utterly different. Every citizen has had long associations with some part of his city, and his image is soaked in memories and meanings. (p.1)

Moreover, people are also considered as an essential part of the city with their traditions, activities, and routines. They have a very significant role in constructing the culture and the life of the city. Most importantly, the city image in literature can be defined as the production of the picture that is in the writer's mind. This picture is considered as a combination between the objective city image and the writer's thoughts and feelings. It is a process between the observer (the writer) and the observed (the city) (Lynch, 1960).

Lehan (1988) explains how it is very complex and difficult to clarify why writer x looks at a city in a certain way and why he/she describes it from certain perspective, because the city may represent more than one thing at the same time: memory, imaginative creation, or re-creation. And that depends on the person's experience in this city; if this experience is bad, it will affect his/her perspective and vice versa.

### **Federico Lorca (1898 – 1936)**

Federico Garcia Lorca was born in 1898 in a small town west of Granada, Spain, and died at the age of thirty-eight. He was murdered by the Falangists (Merwin, 2005). He was a poet, playwright, musician, theatre director, and lecturer. This artist was an arguable and a controversial one. He attracted the greatest part of critical attention in that period (Newton, 1995). Lorca is considered perhaps the most significant Spanish literary figure in the twentieth century. Lorca's first journey to New York was a very influential journey for it had a great impact on his own writings. Timms & Kelly (1985) state that Lorca's journey to

New York in June 1929 was his first journey outside Spain and that it was very remarkable because he was thirty-one years old and mature when he went there. His experience in New York was very influential because it stimulated his poetic sensibility and had profound effect on his imagination. Moreover, this particular journey was a kind of escape from a personal crisis in the poet's life. Before his remarkable and highly influential journey, Lorca's reputation as a poet and as a dramatist had been established. Indeed, the poet was in need of a certain change in the course of his literary career so as to explore a new area of experience in his literary career.

### ***Poet in New York***

*Poet in New York* was published in one volume in 1940 as a product of Lorca's surrealist period (Craig, 2015). It embodied his own experience as a poet moving in a new direction in his poetic career. *Poet in New York* symbolizes Lorca's experience of depression and isolation in a foreign city that he described as chaos. He moved from a participant in the natural world of Spain to becoming alienated and isolated in the technological world of New York. Lorca's deep reactions are expressed in the form of violent images describing that world. The previous harmony he felt among his own community no longer existed in the city in which he found this harmony replaced by separation, loneliness, absence, isolation and emptiness. Lorca's collected poems indicate his own perception of New York as a representative of a dehumanized civilization in which there is no center and there is a great deal of corruption everywhere.

## **William Wordsworth (1770 – 1850)**

William Wordsworth, perhaps the greatest English Romantic poet, was born in 1770 in Cockermouth, a small town near the northwest coast of England, in Lake District, which is one of England's most literary regions, and the setting of much of Wordsworth's poetry (Robinson, 2010). He is one of the major English Romantic poets and one of the literary figures who contributed to launching the Romantic age in English literature. Wordsworth believed in the irrational elements in the human psyche which include hope, faith, kindness, sympathy, and love. His poetry is always about things that are related to society and his relationship to its people or its members. In his poetry, he mostly shows that the love of nature can lead to the love of humankind. From Wordsworth's point of view, there must be a combination of reason and emotion, and according to him, good poets are the ones who have more than usual organic sensibility and have a wider range of perception. Wordsworth died in 1850. He was the longest-lived of the great English Romantic poets.

### **Wordsworth's Poetry about London**

Wordsworth wrote few short poems about London and another long one (about 750 lines). They include "London 1802," "Lines Composed upon Westminster Bridge" and "Book Seventh (Residence in London)" which is part of Wordsworth's *The Prelude*. In the first poem "London 1802", the speaker laments the fact that Milton isn't around anymore and condemns the state of the nation, saying that the English people have forgotten all the things that used to make them so glorious, including religion, military might, and literature. The speaker wishes Milton could return and inspire England to greatness once again. The second poem "Lines Composed upon Westminster Bridge" is one of Wordsworth's major poems that is inspired by the natural world. Gast (2005) explains how the poet was inspired

by nature when he wrote this poem. Wordsworth uses his imagination to make connection between nature and the city in order to describe the beauty of the city of London in that charming moment.

Wordsworth's *The Prelude* is composed of fourteen different books. In Book Seventh titled "Residence in London" Wordsworth gives a detailed description of the streets, the inhabitants, the museums, and the theatres of London. He records the things which he liked or disliked about London. The poem provides Wordsworth's recollections on a city as a contrast to his feelings about nature. He notes that although people live so geographically close, they are emotionally extremely distant. The city to Wordsworth is unimaginably filled with individuals from all walks of life. Wordsworth's view of London is coloured by disappointment because the capital did not live up to his imaginative anticipation.

In this research, the image of the city will be discussed in Lorca's and Wordsworth's poetry by focusing on some relevant poems by each poet. These poems will include selected poems from Lorca's collective work *Poet in New York*, and some poems by Wordsworth. From Lorca's somewhat lengthy collected poems the researcher will select and concentrate on the following poems<sup>1</sup>: "Dawn", "Landscape of a Vomiting Multitude", "The King of Harlem", "Sleepless City", "Dance of Death" and "Return from a Walk". These poems will be the focus of this discussion regarding Lorca's *Poet in New York*. At the same time, other poems in the anthology may as well be referred to whenever

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<sup>1</sup>All references to Lorca's poems are taken from *Poet in New York* by Federico Garcia Lorca , translated by Pablo Medina and Mark Statman .

necessary. Likewise, selected poems from Wordsworth's poetry<sup>2</sup> about London will be powerfully discussed such as, "London 1802," "Composed upon Westminster Bridge, September 3, 1802" and "Book Seventh" of the *Prelude*. The researcher will compare the poems selected from each poet and investigate the way that each poet describes his city and from which perspective each one looks at it with a view to showing the similarities and the differences between the two sides.

## 1.2. Statement of the problem

This study investigates Lorca's *Poet in New York* with special concentration on the more relevant ones and some selected poems by William Wordsworth which deal with the city of London. The differences and similarities between the poems of the two writers will be discussed and the researcher will try to identify the way in which each poet perceived the city he described. **In addition, the research highlights the movement that each poet followed in composing his poems and how it affected his works.**

## 1.3. Objectives of the Study

This study aims at achieving the following objectives:

1. Investigating the differences and similarities between Lorca's *Poet in New York* and Wordsworth's London poems.
2. Identifying the way in which each poet perceived the city and how he described it.

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<sup>2</sup> "Composed upon Westminster Bridge" and "London 1802" are taken from *The Romantic Poets Blake, Wordsworth and Coleridge: Ignatius Critical Editions* by Robert Asch  
"Book Seventh (Residence in London)" of *The Prelude* is taken from *The Prelude of 1805, in Thirteen Books* By William Wordsworth.

3. Highlighting the thematic and the technical elements deployed by each of the two poets in his selected poems.
4. Highlighting the movement that each poet followed in composing his poems and how it affected his works.

#### **1.4 Questions of the Study**

1. What are the main differences and similarities between Lorca's *Poet in New York* and Wordsworth's London poems?
2. How did each poet perceive the city and how did each one of them describe it?
3. What are the themes and the techniques utilized by the two poets in their poems?
4. What is the movement that each poet followed in composing his poems and how it affected his works?

#### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

The significance of the present study arises from focusing more on the image of the city in Lorca's *Poet in New York* and Wordsworth's few poems about London and how the city was described from different perspectives. Besides, the results of this study will be beneficial for those who are interested in literature in general and particularly in poetry. Hopefully, the study will fill a gap in the literature on this subject especially because the city has become an important motif in contemporary literature and literary criticism. Furthermore, this study will discuss which movement each of the two poets followed in composing his poems and how it affected his work.

## 1.6 Limits of the Study

The current study is limited to the work of Federico Lorca *Poet in New York* and the work of William Wordsworth's on the city of London. Some selected poems from Lorca's collection and a few short poems and a long one by Wordsworth which deal with London will provide the primary text for the study.

## 1.7 Limitations of the Study

The findings of this study cannot be generalized about other works of the same poets. As Lorca's poems are read and treated in their English translation, they might lose some of their original flavour and even their intended meaning. Another limitation is that the two poets belong to different periods and to different historical and cultural backgrounds.

## 1.8. Definitions of Key Terms

**Comparative Study:** involves a systematized endeavor to compare two items, with an eye toward identifying points that the items hold in common, along with citing areas where the two items differ. Comparative studies take place in a number of different environments, and usually have a specific purpose in mind. Remak (1906) defines comparative literature as:

The study of literature beyond the confines of one particular country, and the study of the relationships between literature on one hand and other areas of knowledge and belief, such as the arts (e.g., painting, sculpture, and music), philosophy and history (p.1).

**City Poetry:** Throughout this thesis the term ‘city poetry’ is used in a way similar to that of John Johnston where poetry of the city does not only describe the physical real city but also reflects on the nature of living within cities (Johnston, 1984, p. xvii).

**Image of the City:** the way that people or writers see and perceive the city and imagine and draw it in their minds and works. Lynch (1960) argues that people perceive cities as consisting of underlying city form elements such as “paths” (along which people and goods flow), “edges” (which differentiate one part of the urban fabric from another), “landmarks” (which stand out and help orient people), “districts” (perceived as physically or culturally distinct even if their boundaries are fuzzy), and “nodes” where activities, and often paths, meet.

**Romanticism:** A movement in the arts and literature which originated in the late 18th century, emphasizing inspiration, subjectivity, and the primacy of the individual.

Wolfreys et.al (2006) define Romanticism as:

The literary term that refers to the literary, artistic and general culture of the first half of the nineteenth century. Romanticism is distinguished by its general embrace of the emotions and nature, particularly in response to a growing sense of materialism and to such moments of violence and upheaval as the French Revolution of 1789. In addition to rejecting the forms and conventions often associated with classicism and neoclassicism, romanticists sought value in spontaneity, subjective experience and original expression (p.87).

**Surrealism:** Surrealism was a revolutionary movement in painting, sculpture, and the other arts and literature. According (Baker, 2007) it is a revolt against all restraints on free creativity, including logical reason, standard morality, social and artistic conventions and norms, and all control over the artistic process by forethought and intention. The influence, direct or indirect, of surrealist innovations can be found in many modern writers of prose and verse who have broken with conventional modes of artistic organization to experiment with free association, a broken syntax, illogical and non-chronological order, dreamlike and nightmarish sequences, and the juxtaposition of bizarre, shocking, or seemingly unrelated images. Surrealists turned to automatic writing (writing delivered over to the promptings of the unconscious mind), and to exploiting the material of dreams, of states of mind between sleep and waking, and of natural or artificially induced hallucinations.

## **Chapter Two**

## Chapter Two

### Review of Related Literature

#### 2.1 Theoretical Studies

##### City Poetry

In its general sense, the city is an artistic and cultural environment where many people live and work. It is an inhabited place of great size, population, or importance. It reflects its inhabitants' lifestyle; how they live their routine life, how they think, how they behave in their everyday life. For a long time, the city has been a very important motif in literature including novels, stories, and poetry. Throughout history, the city has inspired many writers and poets all around the world because of its natural magic which is felt and seen from different perspectives. The most fascinating thing about the city in literature in general and in poetry in particular is that the same city can be described in different ways by different writers because every writer has his/ her own perspective.

There are many poets who have written about cities in their poems, such as William Wordsworth, Federico Lorca, T. S. Eliot, William Blake, Robert Bridges, Amy Lowell, and many other poets. On the other hand, there are cities that have inspired many poets to write about them such as New York, London, Paris, etc. New York and London are considered as two of the most famous cities in world history.

One of the most important sources on city poetry is a volume of collected essays by Michael Bennett and David W. Teague (1999). In their introduction, the editors emphasize that the various contributors to their collected essays focus on the nature of the city by exploring the basic elements of ecocriticism and highlight the importance of understanding

urban life and culture (Bennett and Teague 1999, p.4). Another related study in the field is Bassel Almasalmeh's dissertation "Transcending Boundaries: Modern Poetic Responses to the City" (2007) which contains a good theoretical background on how the city has been viewed over the ages showing multiple perspectives on the city in different literatures of the world.

### **Romanticism in Life and in Literature**

Gleckner (1974) explains how the word "romanticism" can be seen from two different perspectives. The first one is the general perspective which is a permanent characteristic of mind, art, and personality, found in all cultures and in all periods. The second is from the historical perspective which is defined as a specific historical movement in art and in ideas which occurred in Europe and America in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Besides, Romanticism or the Romantic Movement historically is a revolution in art and ideas which is often considered to be an expression of general redirection of the life in Europe in general. Furthermore this revolution is not only in art but also in politics, industry, economy and other fields because there is a connection between revolution in ideas and the arts.

According to Schneider (2007), Romanticism appeared at an important stage in the history of Western civilization. There were economic and social changes, in addition to the beginnings of the revolution in industrial manufacturing. All these factors affected where people lived and how their lifestyle changed. The intellectuals of Romanticism developed their aesthetic theories and created works of art that were considered as a reaction to the enlightenment which happened in their world. There is a clear contrast between Romanticism and this enlightenment; enlightenment focuses on rationalism; on the other

hand, Romanticism is interested in emotions. This contrast simplifies the complex interrelationship between the two concepts. Romanticism did not ignore rationalism, nor did the enlightenment abandon emotion at all.

Berlin (1999) clarifies that Romanticism is considered as one of the most important literary movements and the largest movement which happened to transform the thought and the lives of the Western world. It is considered as the greatest shift in the consciousness of the West, and all the other shifts that have occurred after that period are less important and are deeply influenced by it.

## **Existentialism**

Existentialism is all about human existence. Wolfreys (et.al) (2006) defines Existentialism as:

A philosophical movement that involves the study of individual existence in an infinite, unfathomable universe. Existentialism devotes particular attention to the individual's notion of free will and interpersonal responsibility without any concrete knowledge of what constitutes right and wrong. A variety of twentieth-century thinkers and writers have explored the possibilities of existentialism, including Jean-Paul Sartre, Martin Heidegger and Simone de Beauvoir, among others (p.40).

Flynn (2009) offers the main themes of Existentialism. It focuses on the idea that existence precedes essence in the sense that one becomes what he/ she is as a result one's choices. Another theme is that time is of the essence; this means that the meaning and value of time differ from one to another. He defined Existentialism as "a person-centered

philosophy. Though not anti-science, its focus is on the human individual's pursuit of identity" (p.11). Also, it is a philosophy of freedom and responsibility in which humans are free and responsible for their freedom. Freedom is practiced while taking into consideration the ethical values.

Gordon (2013) proposes some relevant thoughts that deal with existentialism, such as alienation, freedom, authenticity, anguish and anxiety. He stated that existentialism spread widely after WW2. It describes a philosophy that emerged in the 19<sup>th</sup> century with the works of Friedrich Nietzsche, Soren Kierkegaard, and Fyodor Dostoyevsky. What distinguishes these writers from any other writers is their focus on the existence of human beings and the whole being of each person. When relating to human existence, they think of freedom as something prior and essential. As for the idea of alienation, one can feel alienated or separated from one's self through self-deception about the past, through a state of denial for the future or through the preoccupations of everyday public existence. As for anguish, existentialists describe it as "a mood or state of mind revealing one's being- in-the-world in its immediacy. It is a universal possibility of human existence and an abiding threat" (p.8). Also, it is reflective of one's freedom and personal existence.

## **Surrealism**

According to Mical (2005), Surrealism was a cultural, artistic, intellectual, and literary movement led by poet André Breton from 1924 through World War II. Andre Breton is considered the pioneer of the Surrealist movement; he defines Surrealism as a pure state of mind that allows someone to express thoughts freely and without the encumbrance of rational thought and societal rules. He refers to Surrealism as a:

pure psychic automatism in its pure state, by which one proposes to express – verbally, by means of the written word, or in any other manner – the actual functioning of thought. Dictated by thought, in the absence of any control exercised by reason, exempt from any aesthetic or moral concern. (p.221)

Breton and the other Surrealists were trying to introduce more open, free-thinking concepts that would allow people, particularly artists, to be aware of themselves without any influence from the outside world. The Surrealists sought to overthrow the oppressive rules of modern society by demolishing its backbone of rational thought.

The above review of the city as a concept and as a literary motif and the relevant critical approaches mentioned above will be drawn upon in the discussion of the poems selected for the study and in the critical analysis in this thesis. Together, they will provide an essential theoretical background for this study.

## **2.2. Empirical Studies**

### **Wordsworth's Poems about London**

In his article “**Theatrical Spectacles and the Spectators' Positions in Wordsworth's London**”, Meyer (2003) observes that “The seventh book of *The Prelude*, 'Residence in London', represents Wordsworth's subjective experience of urban aesthetics and society. He perceives the capital as a series of spectacles for a mass audience”. He also explains that Wordsworth views London on both the diachronic (the past) and the synchronic (the present) levels with special focus on the poet's present reaction to the city. The writer highlights Wordsworth's communal rather than personal experience in London and draws

attention to the poet's growing interest in the theatre and the effect of the theatrical experience on the audience's "untaught minds." He also argues that in this long poem, Wordsworth juxtaposes the rural and the urban. He points out Wordsworth's depiction of social insincerity or hypocrisy and how Wordsworth remains a spectator more than a participant: "The poet presents London as a stage where the spectator Wordsworth turns into a character, who enters a potentially deluding play-within-the-play" (Meyer, 2003 Webpage). Meyer also notes that although Wordsworth depicts the poverty he sees in London, he does not comment directly on it and leaves it to the reader to make his own comments and to observe the alienation that the people suffer from in their metropolitan society. The writer highlights that "Wordsworth is probably the first writer to discover and expose the performative simulation of life as a central characteristic of modern urban culture."

Allen (2005) contests the view that Wordsworth's depiction of London features a conservative view of the city and of capitalism, and instead argues that "Wordsworth does not flee the social variety and perceived chaos of London in preference for his bourgeois domestic retreat in Grasmere." (Allen 2005, p.1). Furthermore, he shows how Wordsworth conveys the alienating character of London and affirms the city and nature. For Allen, Wordsworth is undogmatic in his delineation of London and the poem as a whole is free of ideological prejudice. The writer also traces Wordsworth's interest in the city to an early period of his poetic career, the writing of *The Lyrical Ballads*. In his opinion, "Wordsworth's rejection of London in favour of the peace of Grasmere and its surroundings suggests a classic civic humanist attitude towards modernity." London, for Allen, represents a formative experience in the life of the poet himself. For Wordsworth,

“The city is a place where subjects are transformed into objects, inseparable from the things they sell or consume. .... To Wordsworth, people appear hopelessly shorn of their proper identities (Allen 2005, p.2).

Gast (2005) discusses Wordsworth’s poem “Lines Composed upon Westminster Bridge” saying that it concentrates on a subjective description of the city of London in the morning when everything is quiet and calm, people are still asleep, the sun is shining, the sky is clear and the chimneys of the industry have not yet started polluting the air. Wordsworth uses well-known images from nature. Because he has a very good experience in describing nature, he describes the city’s beauty in natural terms. In this poem, there is a connection between nature and the city; this connection is achieved through the great imagination of the poet. The speaker imagines the city’s beauty and describes it by remembering all the details that turned in the moment when he was on the bridge into a special one. And because he believes in his own imagination, he can refresh his feelings and emotions that he had while walking over there.

Chandler & Gilmartin (qtd. in Barfield and Spaar 2009 Webpage) states that “Lines Composed upon Westminster Bridge” is one of the most important of Wordsworth’s poems that are related to Romanticism. It creates an overlay of natural impressions by describing London before the noise, pollution, and rush of the working day. In this poem, the Romantic poet has achieved an exercise that casts a deathly sleep upon the city of London and describes life and motion, not along the bridge or road, but in the seeing of the natural movement of the river. Also, Romanticism appears in this sonnet when the speaker talks

about “smokeless air” which reflects the new character, the new image of the city, and the new relations between country and city.

### ***Poet in New York***

*Poet in New York* is a poetical work which was written by the Spanish poet Federico Lorca and published as one volume in 1940 (Craig, 1977). This work was categorized as surrealist because it had been written after the poet’s close relationship with Salvador Dali and Luis Bunuel, who were both followers of this movement. As Craig (1977) stated, “Consequently it received only minor critical attention as a serious work of symbolic expression which was influenced by surrealism, certainly, but was finally illuminated by “the clearest consciousness” (ibid., P.2). *Poet in New York* is considered as a symbolization of Lorca’s experience of isolation and depression in a foreign real world which seems to Lorca as a hostile chaos. This poetical work expanded Lorca’s private vision of the modern world and modern civilization. Furthermore, it represents man’s recognition of the spiritual “waste land” in which he discovered himself empty, alone, lost, without roots, without origins, and without a god.

In his study, Nadal (1974) refers to the significant role of surrealism in Lorca’s writings. Nadal explains the unorthodox techniques of surrealism mainly in Lorca’s plays but his discussion of the subject is useful for examining Lorca’s poetry especially his *Poet in New York*.

One of the most illuminating studies of *Poet in New York* is that of Craig (1977). As aforementioned, the writer concentrates on Lorca’s vision during his stay in New York and illustrates it with detailed analysis of some of Lorca’s representative poems. The writer

further compares Lorca's earlier vision when he depicts some Andalusian cities and the different vision that led to Lorca's grim and pessimistic view of New York. Additionally, the writer deals with Lorca's apocalyptic vision. She bases her treatment of the subject on Biblical and mythological sources that have a direct bearing on Lorca's vision and view of life at this stage of the poet's development. She also observes that *Poet in New York* was surrealist in origin and marked "a rejection of the traditional style of his [Lorca] earlier poetry and an embarkation upon a new experiment in poetic creation" (Craig, 1977, p. 84). She concludes that the New York collection represents Lorca's alienation from society and a departure from his earlier work whether in terms of its themes or techniques. For Craig, seen as a whole, *Poet in New York* is an account of a journey from alienation and disorientation toward regained identification with the force of the blood and a harmonious relationship with the universe" (p.84).

Morris (1997) discusses Lorca's poetry, tracing in details the various phases in the development of Lorca's poetry. He ends his discussion with an epilogue in which he sheds light on Lorca's *Poet in New York*. He points out that "Lorca depicted the dawn in New York as squalid, foul to the taste and, through its groans, distressing to the ear" (Morris, 1997, p. 389). He also explains how the poems in this collection differ in their depiction of New York from Lorca's previous positive description of Spanish cities and their beauty. He further singles out some of the basic motifs that recur throughout the collection. Besides the dawn in New York, there are the Brooklyn Bridge, the Hudson River, the unsleeping city at night, the escape to the Coney Island, the city and life as seen from the poet's sensitive perspective.

Knowles (2001) indicates that *Poet in New York* is considered as a poet's self-conscious creation and performance of his poetic persona. Lorca created a fictitious identity that he appropriated for himself in his lectures on the collection. He attempted to animate an emptiness of his own, the real identity. The performance of Lorca's poetic persona presents the link between the real person of Lorca that appears in writing cheerful letters home to his parents and the metaphysical one, the poetic self evoked in the collection.

Majeed (2013) observes that when the Spanish poet Lorca went to New York, he was surprised by this city; the new environment was different from his original city Granada at that time. New York had become a metropolis rather than a city. Lorca was depressed because he saw and believed in the American dream, and then he saw the collapse of that dream. This is considered to be one of the main factors that paved the way for Lorca to make the city of New York the main theme of his work. Besides, there is another main factor of choosing New York as the main theme which is Lorca's personal crisis that had already come within him. Lorca's experience in New York and the whole city made the poet fall in a process of hallucination that was presented in his American poetical work.

Obviously, we can find studies that investigate the work of Federico Lorca *Poet in New York* and other studies which investigate Wordsworth's poems on London. What distinguishes this present study from previous ones is that this one is the first that combines together the works of these two poets on different cities in a comparative study that will include both the thematic and the technical aspects of their poetic representations.

## **Chapter Three**

## Chapter Three

### 3. Methodology and Procedures

The methods that will be used in this study will include descriptive, analytical, comparative and critical methods. These methods will allow the researcher to discuss the differences and the similarities between Lorca's work *Poet in New York* and Wordsworth's London poems as outlined in Chapter One. Moreover, the study will highlight the way each poet describes the city, and how the city image looks like from the perspective of each poet. Some poems from Lorca's collection will receive greater emphasis than the other poems because they have a greater bearing on Lorca's overall representation of New York City. Wordsworth's shorter poems will provide a close examination of the text while his longer poems "Residence in London" will provide an opportunity for a more panoramic view of the city as it contains more than 700 lines.

#### 3.1. Sample of the Study

The sample of the study will consist of Wordsworth's poems: "London 1802," "Lines Composed upon Westminster Bridge" and "Book Seventh of *The Prelude* (Residence in London). The following poems from *Poet in New York* will receive the greater part of the critical discussion. They include: "Dawn," "Landscape of a Vomiting Multitude," "The King of Harlem," "Sleepless City," "Dance of Death" and "Return from a Walk". The image of the city will be investigated in the selected poems from the perspective of each poet. Spatial and temporal as well as thematic and technical similarities and contrasts between the two representations of the two different cities will be

emphasized. As mentioned above, some of the selected poems will receive greater emphasis than the others.

### **3.2. Method of the Study**

The researcher will analyze the selected poems and works by focusing on the image of the city drawn by each poet. Each of the selected poems will be discussed on its own as well as part of a general picture given by the poems as a whole, i.e. its relation with other poems. The various critical approaches and literary movements mentioned earlier will be drawn upon for further clarification of the concepts and ideas embodied in the poems and in the poet's overall vision.

### **3.3. Procedures of the Study**

The following procedures will be followed in researching and writing the thesis:

1. Reading the biography of Federico Lorca.
2. Reading the biography of William Wordsworth.
3. Identifying the main topics of *Poet in New York*.
4. Defining the main topics of Wordsworth's London poems.

5. Analyzing the differences and similarities between the images of the as depicted in the selected poems or works.
6. Discussing the findings and citing critical opinion about the two works to enlighten the discussion.
7. Making some recommendations based on the findings of this research.
8. Writing references including primary and secondary sources according to the APA style, the documentation system adopted by Middle East University.

## **Chapter Four**

## Chapter Four

### Discussion

This chapter deals with the way in which each poet, William Wordsworth and Federico Lorca, presented the metropolis in his works. Certain important facts about both Wordsworth and Lorca would help us understand their respective representation of London and New York better. Wordsworth's London poems were written at a time when he was recognized as a major poet and one of the leaders of the Romantic Movement in Britain. In contrast, Lorca's collection was written by a poet who was still unable to support himself financially and who had not yet become well renowned. Before he wrote *Poet in New York*, Lorca had already earned his reputation as "Gypsy Poet", a reputation he did not like. He is reported to have said: "This 'gypsy' business gives me an uneducated, uncultured tone and makes me into a 'savage poet,' which ... I am not. I just don't want them to pigeonhole me" (qtd. in Maurer, 1998, p.xi). In his new collection Lorca wrote a new type of poetry which he believed, would "satisfy the desires of modern readers" (ibid, p. xvii).

#### 4.1. William Wordsworth's Poetry

Wordsworth visited London on a number of occasions. He came to London in 1791. As a Romantic poet, he readily associated with the untamed natural world than with the man-made artifice of a city; nonetheless, Wordsworth threw himself into London life. In particular, London-life made him politically active, and he attended debates in parliament. Although he spent relatively little time in London, it seems that Wordsworth was able to

find in the mad rush and architecture of the city, something that engaged his attention and deepened his experience and knowledge of human life.

### **Composed upon Westminster Bridge, September 3, 1802**

Wordsworth's famous sonnet "Composed upon Westminster Bridge, September 3, 1802", as its title indicates, was composed in 1802. At this time, Wordsworth was living in his native Lake District. The sonnet must have been composed during a visit to London. The precision of that title draws attention to the immediacy of Wordsworth's experience. He is simultaneously writing the sonnet and encountering the city. In the summer of 1802, he traveled with his sister, Dorothy, to Calais, France. They stopped in London and left London early in the morning, crossing over the famous Westminster Bridge to get out of town. Dorothy Wordsworth later reported that it was a beautiful morning, the city, St Paul's, with the river made a beautiful sight as they crossed Westminster Bridge. The sun also shone brightly (Robinson, 2010). Wordsworth's poem which is often considered to have been written earlier in June that year rather than September, is a beautiful depiction of London in the morning and a beautifully constructed poem composed in simple language. Wordsworth apparently wrote the sonnet while sitting on top of his coach. He was fascinated by the city because he had not lived there. He had spent much of his time up in the scenic [Lake District of England](#). Although Wordsworth had been to London before, it still felt like a different world to him. He was stunned by what he saw and he immediately recorded his experience and what he saw in what later became one of his most famous poems. At this point in his career, in 1802, Wordsworth was writing at the peak of his

creative powers, having already published the greatly influential *Lyrical Ballads* with his friend Samuel Taylor Coleridge in 1798

The short poem is an Italian sonnet which expresses the attitude of the speaker towards London in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. “Composed upon Westminster Bridge” captures the feeling of those happy moments while one is travelling. For Wordsworth, this experience happened while he rode across the Westminster Bridge in his coach, a small carriage drawn by horses. A sense of novelty characterizes this poem. This novelty comes from the fact that Wordsworth had been living in one of the most scenic places in the world, the Lake District. Although he had been to London before, he still found on this occasion and at this time of the day and the year a very bright and impressive scene which inspired the writing of one of his best known poems ever. Indeed, Wordsworth’s depiction of London contrasts not only with Lorca’s depiction of New York but also with Blake’s description of the same city in some of his poems. Unlike Blake who expressed his dissatisfaction with a bleak city, Wordsworth was in one sense at least impressed with the beauty and brightness of the same city.

The speaker in the poem believes that he has found the most beautiful scene on earth. He maintains that one must be with no taste for beauty, to pass over the Westminster Bridge that morning without stopping to marvel at the beautiful sights. In a typically Romantic style, London is depicted as wearing the morning's beauty like a shapely garment. It is early morning; everything is quiet. The River Thames is flowing smoothly and the city of London is blissfully asleep. Several landmarks visible from the bridge such as [St. Paul's Cathedral](#) and the [Tower of London](#), appear to the speaker in all their grandeur in the morning light. The speaker is so much impressed by the fantastic scene including the

shining sun on the buildings that he declares that such a beautiful sight cannot be seen anywhere, even in the countryside.

### **London, 1802**

In another poem about London (“London 1802”), Wordsworth gives a different view of the city in particular and of England in general. He wrote the poem in the same year he wrote the previous one. “London, 1802” is a sonnet written by William Wordsworth and inspired by one of the greatest poets and sonnet writers of the English language, John Milton. Milton in this poem is treated as a kind of muse, capable of inspiring both the poet Wordsworth and the English nation as a whole.

This poem is written in and about London. The title of the poem declares the setting of the above poem to be London in 1802 and consequently makes the poem parallel to Blake’s poems about London written several years earlier. That is why the poem can be considered as one of Wordsworth’s poems on London even though it develops into a depiction of England as whole. The description given of London does not center on the city as a bustling, noisy or squalid place. Instead, there is more concentration on the spiritual, historical, cultural and moral aspects of the city. Though Wordsworth draws a positive picture of London in the first poem, he depicts a relatively negative picture of it in the second poem. Viewing London as a symbolic representative of the whole country in all times and ages, Wordsworth views England as a stagnant swamp, a “fen of stagnant wares” (2-3). The swamp metaphor used here is meant to reflect the current stagnation in England’s state of affairs. Wordsworth is comparing the present and the past to show how great England used to be but how it is now impoverished spiritually and morally. The

people were previously clear, transparent and pure in contrast with the present unhealthy, inactive and static state of the nation. At the beginning and the end of the poem, Wordsworth invokes Milton to come back and provide a guiding voice for the nation and a broad expanse representing the spiritual greatness of the English past. Although Wordsworth knew that Milton could not literally be revived, in this sonnet he seeks to reawaken and renew interest in his great mentor and so he urges the English people to adopt Milton's role as a public poet addressing issues of great ethical concern. Throughout the poem, Wordsworth identifies issues and talks about them in an optimistic manner expecting a better future for England and a restoration of past glory for its representative city. The poet is certain that Milton could inspire people to restore their traditional moral and spiritual values and all the things that lead to glory including military power, literature and religion. Later in the discussion, Wordsworth's invocation of Milton will be compared to and contrasted with Lorca's address to the American poet Walt Whitman.

Historically speaking, during the early 19<sup>th</sup> century England and other countries were experiencing difficult and tragic moments. Poverty, harsh living conditions and human suffering were present in England and elsewhere in the world. Like William Blake before him, Wordsworth was addressing the same subjects, themes and problems present in England during this period. Both poets chose London to stand for itself and for the whole country. The two poets addressed the same problems but approached them differently. They used London as their poems' titles and different language to depict the same harsh situation in London at the time. Wordsworth uses a plaintive and reflective mode to show how London and the whole country were lacking some of the old traditional values that used to make England a great country. Wordsworth believed that England in 1802 was at a

time of crisis. He places the setting of his poem in London at a particular period in time probably when the relations between England and France were at their lowest ebb following the French Revolution of aggression and expansion and the dissipation of the ideals of that Revolution. The poet paints a picture of the English people as he saw them in a specific period and in a particular place. Compared with their ancestors, the English people of Wordsworth's time are seen less worthy and less glorious than their great forefathers.

### **The Prelude Book Seventh (Residence in London)**

*The Prelude*, widely regarded as Wordsworth's greatest work, is an autobiographical poem in blank verse. Though it was begun in 1798, revised and actually finished in 1805, it was published posthumously in 1850 in 14 volumes. The poem is considered the product of a lifetime. It was originally meant to be a philosophical poem, containing views on man, nature, and society. The lengthy work comprises various stages in the poet's life from childhood to old age, but it is on Book Seventh (Residence in London) that we are going to concentrate our brief discussion. Because of the comparatively great length of this work (more than 770 lines), reference will be made to specific parts and lines of the text without giving the full text of the poem.

Wordsworth had been in London before as a transient visitor, but now (1791) he has determined to take lodgings in the city. The poem opens with childhood memories of distant London. Early in his childhood, Wordsworth had imagined London as a place of wonders, which even surpassed the worlds of romances and wonders. All the fairy tales he had read about the magic of exotic cities were nothing compared to what he imagined of

London. As a boy, one of his companions had been permitted to go to the capital, and, on his return, the young Wordsworth questioned him about the atmosphere of the place. But the boy's account was not nearly as rich as the poet's imaginary picture.

There was a time when whatsoe'er is feigned  
 Of airy palaces, and gardens built By Genii of romance;  
 fell short, far short,  
 of what my fond simplicity believed  
 And thought of London.  
 Much I questioned him;  
 And every word he uttered, on my ears  
 Fell flatter than a caged parrot's note,  
 That answers unexpectedly awry,  
 And mocks the prompter's listening.

*(Prelude 7, 77- 102)*

Wordsworth says his fancy had fed upon the romantic night life in the parks of London (120-121). It also dwelt upon many of the city's landmarks — the Thames "proudly bridged," the dome of St. Paul's, "the tombs of Westminster," the monuments, the Tower, among others (130-135). Those sights he imagined were the result of his fancy; now he can behold the originals and get a more authentic perspective: "Those bold imaginations in due time/ Had vanished, leaving others in their stead" (143-144). Viewing London as an "ant-hill," (149), he recalls the buzz of activity and the sounds, the shops, the wares, the houses, the signs, and the historical monuments of Shakespeare and Newton among many others (150-167). The sound and the uproar of the crowded streets immediately give way to some

quiet places. When he enters the quiet byways, he encounters some of the street entertainments: a peep show, minstrels, and a ballad singer (168-1180). Back in the heart of the city, he sees every nationality and every racial type: Italians, Jews, Turks, Swedes, Russians, Spaniards, etc. (215-229). He describes the wonder of the museums and the art galleries and tells of some of the sculptures and art models he has viewed (235-258). He simultaneously admires and condemns the variety and the multiplicity of the urban scene and in the same way he appraises the glamour and vitality of city life while indicting its corruption and declining morals (260-275).

Wordsworth mixes his recollections of the past with his experiences of the present. Watching the story of the Maid of Buttermere as performed in a melodrama on a stage in London, he recollects the origins of that painful story when it first began in a real life story about a virtuous and innocent country girl in Lake District who was deceived by a bigamist man who came from the city. Wordsworth elaborates in great details on this story (about one hundred lines: 295-395) with a view to showing the contrast between urban and rural life and in this way to condemn the corrupted city life. This is clearly evidenced by Wordsworth's juxtaposition of a rural maid who lost her child but not her honour and an urban woman who lost her honour but not her child.

To a large extent, Wordsworth views London as a series of spectacles. In many scenes in the poem, Wordsworth poses himself as a spectator. Nonetheless, he is also involved in the events and spectacles he perceives becoming a sort of actor as well. He mentions the types of urban entertainments he enjoys most such as watching theatrical performances. In addition to the theatrical performances, Wordsworth is amazed by other

public performers. He is bewildered by the preachers in the church, the politicians in parliament and the lawyers in the courts and is critical of the way they perform their social duties. Wordsworth is particularly satirical of a preacher who tries to mislead his audience (550-572). Similarly, he is critical of the insincerity of other public speakers and social leaders (578-593). Wordsworth's indicts these public leaders because, unlike the actors on the stage who ultimately reveal themselves as actors, they do not reveal their real nature and true identity lurking behind their cheating words.

Life in the streets of London is no better. As Meyer (2003) observes: "Life in the streets is even more deceptive because it does not clearly separate the stage from the audience and the spectacle from the spectator as the theatre, the court or the church". The speaker is impressed by the rampant visual and auditory images of the city but the juxtaposition of the random images gives the reader a striking picture about the chaos dominating the urban scene:

... the quick dance

Of colours, lights, and forms; the deafening din;

The comers and the goers face to face,

Face after face; the string of dazzling wares,

Shop after shop, with symbols, blazoned names,

And all the tradesman's honours overhead" (154- 159).

Wordsworth's delineation does not depend entirely on the current moment but draws substantially on his past recollections of the city. He refers to two phases of his

development as a poet and to two different stages of his attitude towards the city in his youth and in his maturity. As he writes:

Those bold imaginations in due time  
 Had vanished, leaving others in their stead:  
 And now I looked upon the living scene;  
 Familiarly perused it; oftentimes,  
 In spite of strongest disappointment, pleased  
 Through courteous self-submission, as a tax  
 Paid to the object by prescriptive right. (142- 148)

In so doing, Wordsworth reminds his readers of two different attitudes to London. Gassemeier and Gurr (2005, p.309) observe that critical opinion tends to believe that Wordsworth's representation of London was predominantly satirical rather than panegyric. They point out that several commentators have maintained that Wordsworth's London was a kind of "inferno", a recollection of a "bad dream" and "Wordsworth's labyrinth" (ibid, p.309). They further explain that this description fits in particular the Barthelmeo Fair passage with its penetrating denunciation of the city and its inhabitants: (Prelude 7, 1805, lines 650- 710). Nevertheless, the two authors believe that "closer analysis, however, would reveal that Wordsworth offers a long sequence of largely positive and enthusiastic impressions of the city" (Gassemeier and Gurr 2005, p. 310). This sequence of positive images of London, they argue, may be seen as a counterpoint to the previous negative images.

When he makes a tour of the city, Wordsworth is impressed by the exciting urban spectacle. In a central passage, Wordsworth expresses a mixed feeling of attraction and repulsion to the bustling and colorful city. Wordsworth's Barthelmeo Fair passage describes

the experience of walking down the streets of London. The tone alternates from a sense of wonder to a sense of contempt throughout this section of the poem. The section illustrates the reasons for which Wordsworth preferred the quiet aspects of nature. The poet describes Bartholomew Fair in a tone of disgust and horror. The frenzied and confused comings and goings at the fair are an epitome for the poet of the city itself. The masses are frightening and confuse the mind of the poet. However, Wordsworth's impression of the masses is not that completely negative after all. The fact is that the masses seem to stimulate the mind of the poet. The poet's condemnation of the Bartholomew scene is countered by a sense of amazement at the theatrical variety of the urban scenery that strikes his attentive eye as he wanders in its streets of London. Wordsworth seems to be ambivalent about the crowd: His attitude is a mix of condemnation and respect. He takes townspeople to task for their lack of depth and individuality. He talks about the crowds: foolishness and madness exist in plenty and he will do his best to ignore them. Though he displays an antagonistic attitude towards the masses, he also seems to admire the vitality of the city's masses.

Towards the end of the poem, Wordsworth's positive rendering of the "vast metropolis" leads to a passage revealing strange feelings of mystery and insecurity. As the speaker wanders among the crowd in the crowded streets of London, the sight of the passers-by seems to oppress his mind and transform them into mysterious dreamlike and visionary figures. It is at this moment that the speaker finds himself facing a blind beggar who is provided with transcendental properties. The beggar whom Wordsworth encounters during his wandering in the streets of London serves as a metaphor for all who are suffering and are oppressed. He also symbolizes the mood of alienation prevailing in urban society where individuals and masses feel isolated.

And once, far-travelled in such mood, beyond  
 The reach of common indication, lost  
 Amid the moving pageant, 'twas my chance  
 Abruptly to be smitten with the view  
 Of a blind beggar, who with upright face,  
 Stood propp'd against a Wall; upon his Chest  
 Wearing a written paper, to explain  
 The Story of the Man and who he was;  
 My mind did at this spectacle turn round  
 As with the might of waters, and it seem'd  
 To me that in the Label was a type,  
 Or emblem, of the utmost that we know,  
 Both of ourselves and of the universe. (635-646)

Wordsworth recounts his encounters with individuals and with the masses. Urban life is full of pretense and artifice and in the urban setting, there is a dominant state of isolation and alienation. Consequently, it is difficult to have a sense of distinct and independent identity. Indeed, the individual finally becomes separated from the crowd and from himself as well. Eventually, London is denounced as a mother who brings misery upon her children. It brings menace, confusion and anarchy to its enraged crowds:

Oh, blank confusion! true epitome  
 Of what the mighty City is herself,  
 To thousands upon thousands of her sons,  
 Living amid the same perpetual whirl  
 Of trivial objects, melted and reduced  
 To one identity, by differences

That have no law, no meaning, and no end

*(Prelude 7, 722- 727)*

In this way, Wordsworth emerges as a poet who is engaged with the question of identity and selfhood in urban societies. As Meyer (2003) observes: “Wordsworth is probably the first writer to discover and expose the performative simulation of life as a central characteristic of modern urban culture”.

In the final analysis it becomes evident that Wordsworth gives two contrasting and contradictory pictures of London. Though he delineates series of negative images, he also depicts positive aspects about urban life in the metropolitan city. The overall picture we get of the city is not an entirely negative one. The negative depiction of London is obviously based not on Wordsworth’s visit to London when he was twenty-one years old but rather on Wordsworth’s mature experience when he was thirty-two. Gassemeier and Gurr (2005, p. 310) explain that these contradictory images of London can be shown to correspond to two different phases of the poet’s development in the days of his “youth” and in those of his “riper mind” (ibid, p. 311). This explains why we get different and contrasting images of London; the first one is that of the 1790s when Wordsworth was in his prime of youth and the one at the time of composition in 1804 when the poet began to feel the impact of his old age and mature experience on his attitude to the city. Wordsworth’s condemnation of city life and townspeople is in sharp contrast with his praise of life in the countryside and the pure people who spend more time in nature in thinking of the wide world beyond, he links nature and spiritual beauty. In the end, Wordsworth abandons the perceived turmoil of the city for the quiet order and certainty of nature. Intent on grasping London in its totality, he

calls on the “spirit of Nature” (736) to help him compose a harmonious work where the parts can work together to produce a complete and harmonious whole:

This did I feel, in London’s vast domain.

The Spirit of Nature was upon me there;

The soul of Beauty and enduring Life

Vouchsafed her inspiration, and diffused,

Through meagre lines and colours, and the press

Of self-destroying, transitory things,

Composure and ennobling Harmony. (765-770 )

#### **4.2 Lorca’s *Poet in New York***

Wordsworth’s depiction of London contrasts sharply with Lorca’s depiction of New York. Unlike Wordsworth who was impressed with the beauty and brightness of what he deemed a beautiful city, Lorca expressed his dissatisfaction with what he saw as a bleak city. After the breakdown of his passionately involved relationship with a few fellow artists, Lorca felt depressed. As a solution, his family arranged for him a visit to the United States. In 1929 Lorca accompanied his friend Ferdinando de Los Rios on a visit to the US where they spent most their time in New York. Though Lorca enrolled at Columbia University to study English, he soon became absorbed by writing than study. During his stay which lasted from 1929-1930, he wrote a good number of poems which were posthumously published in 1942 under the translated title *A Poet in New York*. Lorca’s poetry collection is generally about his feelings of alienation and isolation aggravated by New York’s Wall Street crash which he personally witnessed. His collection was a strong

condemnation of capitalist society and materialistic modernity-- a clear departure from his earlier folklorist work concerned with the themes of nature, religious faith and isolation. Most of the poems came as a result of his experience of travelling through New York's impoverished areas of African-American population.

Several studies have pointed out that Lorca never learned English at the summer session he spent in New York. But his 10-month stay resulted in one of his greatest works, *Poet in New York*, a collection of poems about the city of New York which were originally written in Spanish. Lorca, who had been born into a prosperous farming family in Andalusia, knew little of city life, and when he arrived in New York he was stunned by what he saw. The city was a perfect metaphor for his spiritual condition, its "extra human architecture, its furious rhythm, its geometry and anguish," as he described it later, according to a biography by Leslie Stainton (1999).

### **Return from a Walk**

On his arrival in New York in June 1929, Lorca was both amazed and depressed by what he saw in the city. His sense of alienation and depression may be determined from his poem "Return from a walk". In this poem, Lorca uses a tree stump to symbolize man's dehumanized condition. The tree, a symbol of human life, is pictured as having no power of regeneration; it is now cut off its roots and incapable of being part of the cycle of life. This poem marks Lorca's initial experience of losing his identity in a city where he finds himself divorced from nature. The speaker is suffering from a crisis of identity; he feels he is uprooted from the earth that gave him his existence, is threatened by the sky which provided his spiritual life, and so he finds himself with no desire for living.

in the volume: the amputated tree that doesn't sing, the child with the blank face of an egg, and the little animals whose skulls are cracked, dressed in rags, but with dry feet and a butterfly drowned in the inkwell. The poet feels isolated from his roots on earth and divorced from the sky. With no god to resort to, the poet feels he is alone and helpless. Encompassed by a hostile world, the only reaction the speaker can make is "I will let my hair grow" (4). In the chaos of this god-forsaken world, the poet is suffering from a crisis of identity from which he cannot easily recover. Lorca feels he is stifled in a city that is murdering him day in, day out.

On its symbolic level, the poem can be interpreted as a direct reference to New York and its scrapers. The poet is caught between "the forms that move toward the snake/ and the forms searching for crystal" (2-3), that is between the subway and the glass roofs of the skyscrapers. Craige comments that the snake imagery "suggests concrete labyrinth, a concrete Hades in which man is completely cut off from the lights of God" (Craige, p.10). Furthermore, the image of the child "with the white egg face" (6) may be taken to mean a kind of mass-man without individual or true identity. The butterfly, traditionally a symbol of vitality is now "drowned in an inkwell" (10). The last two lines of the poem express a feeling of disintegration of identity resulting from contact with both earth and the sky: "Stumbling onto my face, different every day/ murdered by the sky!" (11-12). In this kind of surrealistic representation, the world is discordant, fragmented and disorderly. Instead of a close connection with the natural world, a threatening chaos prevails.

Thus presented, New York strips its inhabitants of individuality (the child's "blank face of an egg") and strangles nature. But in counterpoint to this alienation, the sequence's basic mood, we find moments of delicate lyricism: memories of childhood, evocations of

friends, more pastoral poems written in Vermont and upstate New York. "After a Walk" is followed by "Intermezzo", with its recollections of innocence: "Those eyes of mine on the pony's neck, on the pierced breast of Santa Rosa as she sleeps, on the rooftops of love, with moans and cool hands, on a garden where cats devour frogs".

## **Dawn**

In New York, Lorca had never seen such materialism and decay. He saw in it fragments of modern mechanization and dehumanized urbanity. New York has brought him a sense of alienation which was exacerbated by his previous experience of loss of identity. This is clearly expressed in one of his New York City poems "Dawn":

In this poem, dawn can initially be associated with its traditional meanings of hope and a new start. However, this optimistic feeling does not materialize when we read the whole poem. In New York the dawn appears in a different way. While the dawn exists as a signifier of a day break, the new day is devoid of hope: "Dawn arrives and no one receives it in his mouth/ because morning and hope are impossible there" (9-10). As Nandorfy (2003) observes: "In this poem the dawn in New York is a perpetual night devoid of the connotation of unconscious potentiality and jubilant differentiation" (p.58). This explains why the inhabitants are described as sleepless (insomniacs). That people in this city cannot sleep indicates that they cannot have dreams which are an essential part of sleep. Consequently, the dawn in New York denies the possibility of renewal or regeneration of life or even the possibility of salvation. As Morris (1997, p. 389) observes, "Lorca depicted the Dawn in New York as Squalid". In fact, dawn in this poem and in the other poems which make reference to New York dawn are grim images suggesting a negative I impression of dawn which otherwise would be a sign of hope and optimism.

## Sleepless City

"Sleepless City" was one of these poems and is filled with surrealistic images that speak to the ills that still exist today: slums, poverty, racism, and violence as well as the loneliness and alienation experienced by immigrants new to the city. Lorca also raged against the injustices inflicted on ordinary people by wealth and power. "Sleepless City" has beautiful universality in that it explores modernity and what it means to be human—to desire. In "Sleepless City", the separation from nature brought about by man's intellect and his materialistic predilections ultimately lead to sterility. Thus, sterility and sleeplessness have become the two most distinct characteristics of the modern city and ultimately of modern civilization. In this poem and in the final poems of the volume, Lorca identifies with nature in an attempt to counteract the sterility and spiritual drought of the "sleepless city". Lorca utilizes animal imagery (serpents, reptiles, dogs, corpses) to reflect his nightmarish experience in that city. In "Sleepless City" Lorca uses surrealistic images to emphasize that modernity has ripped man of his natural origins. Again, lack of sleep in the city is used to indicate that man has been cut off from the regenerative forces of sleep: "Nobody is asleep on earth. Nobody, nobody. /Nobody is asleep" (7, 8).

Moreover, images of death abound in this poem. In her paper, Quin (2015) argues that there are two types of death in Lorca's poems of *Poet in New York*: the death of the children and the death of the city. She further explains that the death in the first kind "signifies the loss of innocence, while the death of the city... signifies a terrifying living death. The former is a concept that Lorca lamented and ritualized....The latter is a concept he detested and condemned" (p.73). She also shows that both concepts are reflections of his personal plights and tribulations in life and his own experiences in New York (ibid, 73).

Both kinds of death occur in “The City that Does Not Sleep”. Terrified of death, Lorca talks of death in real life. A dead child is presented as if he were alive. In Lorca’s poems as a whole, the death of children can often be taken to represent the death of innocence. In “Sleepless City,” “a boy who was buried this morning cried so much/ they had to call the dogs to quite him” (13). Quin (2015) points to the frequent occurrence of paradox in Lorca’s poetry in general and in this poem in particular: “Thus in his poems, what is alive turns out to be living a life of death, and what is lost and dead will return more alive than ever.... Those who are alive in the dead of the city are walking corpses while the dead dancing and coming back to claim their righteousness” (p.75). As the speaker in the poem vindicates:

Whoever his pain pains will feel that pain forever  
and whoever is afraid of death will carry it on his shoulders.

.....

Another day  
we will watch the preserved butterflies rise from the dead  
and still walking through a country of gray sponges and silent boats  
we will watch our ring flash and roses spring from our tongue. (29)

Obviously, Lorca is utilizing a new kind of imagery different from the imagery patterns which he used in the works prior to *Poet in New York*. The choice of words and imagery is now different and has close affinities with surrealist and symbolist poetic techniques. It is predominantly surrealistic and so somewhat illogical imagery characterized by violence, distortion and fragmentation of experience. As shown in “Return from a Walk” the poet selects his images to suit the experience of an industrialized and

dehumanized society symbolized by the city he is describing. Similarly in other poems of the volume, the imagery used is appropriate for the description of a world of a decadent world. In “Scream toward Rome” for instance, Lorca employs Christian symbolism to present a civilization destroyed from within:

Apples lightly wounded  
 by the fine little swords of silver,  
 clouds scraped by a hand of coral  
 that carries on its back an almond of fire  
 fishes of arsenic like sharks,  
 Sharks like tears to drown a multitude,  
 Roses that wound.....(1-7)

The poem opens with a series of violent images: apples pierced by small silver words representing the Fall from the Garden of Eden; the clouds are scraped by a coral hand (as the heavens are torn by skyscrapers) leading to the poisonous fish and the sobbing sharks whose tears drown the multitude, and the rose (love) that now brings pain. These illogical surrealistic images of the initial vision and many others that follow from them are piled up to represent the collapse of a civilization that has turned away from its traditional myths toward a materialistic civilization where there is no one to recognize the spiritual reality that was symbolized by Rome . To these violent images one can add many others such as that of the polluted waters:

The teachers show the children  
 A marvelous light that comes from the mountain;  
 But that which comes is a collection of sewers  
 Wherein cry the dark nymphs of cholera. (36-39)

In New York, the waters of baptism have become a carrier of disease and death rather than of hope and regeneration of life. Now, there is no baptism, no renewal; there is only stagnant and murky water.

The last part of the poem returns to logical and ordinary language with an obvious view to restoring a sense of hope to this god-forsaken world. The apocalyptic vision comes when the downtrodden will begin to scream at the top of their voices. They will continue to do so until the cities begin to tremble like little girls until they break out of their prisons (57-70). Apparently, the poem ends on a note of hope symbolized not only by a return to ordinary and prosaic language as the poem's medium of expression but also by the calmness of a prayer itself an indicator of hope and salvation. The final lines of the poem are indicative:

Because we want our daily bread  
 flower of the alder and a threshed tenderness  
 because we want to be fulfilled the will of the Earth  
 that gives its fruits for all. (71-74)

### **Landscape of a Vomiting Multitude**

Taken as a whole, the poems of *Poet in New York* can be said to follow a certain pattern: vision, apocalypse [destruction] and reconciliation (Craig, p. 33). This view counteracts the vision represented in some poems where it becomes as Craig observes, “a vision of a civilization that has killed God by its extreme consciousness and now exists without roots, without sacred time and space, without hope for the morrow” (p. 33). To further illustrate this point, let us examine "Landscape of a Vomiting Multitude" subtitled as "Dusk at Coney Island".

Reading the poem, we realize that the world portrayed is a highly personal nightmare resistant to all forms of naturalization implicit in the actions of “the fat woman” of the poem: “The fat woman led the way/ tearing out roots and moistening drumskins’ (1-2). The principal action of the “fat woman” in the opening verses consists of uprooting or disconnecting things from their life source. By wetting the drumskins she silences them. At the same time, her actions are said to summon and unleash the dormant powers such as the Furies and Pan, the Greek god Pan, the god of woods, fields and flocks. The whole territory is one of utter desolation where there is prevalent void or emptiness: “the deserted streets and buildings”, “the subterranean tunnels” (10-11). In this dissolute environment, the cause of vomiting becomes disturbing for the speaker. Amidst this dissolution, sensual overindulgence and corruption, the speaker begins to feel confused and finally ends up in a feeling of despair and impotence together with a loss of identity:

I protect myself with this gaze  
 that flows from waves where no dawn dare go  
 I, poet without arms, lost  
 in the vomiting multitude, with no effusive horse to shear

the thick moss from my temples. (24-39)

The last verses in the poem which are meant to represent revival after destruction gives a sense of hope for the speaker and the multitude. The crowd begins to heed the speaker's admonition and rushes over to the railings to vomit. The last line of the poem indicates a positive ending as the crowds are breaking free of their imprisonment.

But the fat woman went on ahead

and people searched for the pharmacies

where the bitter tropics are set.

Only when the flag went up and the first canines arrived

did the entire city rush to the railings of the boardwalk. (40-44)

In New York, Lorca also witnessed the Stock Market crash in October 1929. Traveling down to Wall Street to see firsthand the crowds and the chaos, he wrote in "Dance of Death," "Time for the cobras to hiss on the uppermost levels, / for the nettle to jostle the patios and roof-gardens, /" "for the Market to crash in a pyramid of moss,/ time for the jungle lianas that follow the rifles -- / soon, soon enough, ever so soon./ Woe to you, Wall Street!" (79-84).

(but symbolic) work. It was a startling departure from his previous poetry which was distinguished by its immersion in the natural world. As a surrealist work, *Poet in New York* is distinguished by its violent imagery drawn from the technological world of New York (Craig p.2). The whole collection was "the symbolization of Lorca's experience of depression and isolation in a foreign reality he apprehends as a hostile chaos" (Craig, p.2). Craig further argues that *Poet in New York* transcends Lorca's personal vision and comes to

reflect the spiritual wasteland in which modern man finds himself isolated, empty and without roots. The previous harmony which was felt when man viewed himself part of the natural world was replaced by a feeling of anguish resulting from his separation from that world. The collection represents a vision of a fragmented world in which things fall apart without any sense of unity or harmony.

In the course of his stay in New York, Lorca began to feel the disintegration of the modern world as a result of a mechanical life and a materialistic society that rob the individual of his basic humanity. Lorca's *Poet in New York* was born of the poet's feelings of anguish and alienation in a chaotic and hostile world, a waste land that deprives man of his humanity and connection with his origins. Craige believes that *Poet in New York* marked an essential interim stage in Lorca's reintegration into the natural world after a period of experimentation in the surrealist techniques of writing. The book therefore marks Lorca's outrage against an oppressive civilization. It is also the poet's quest for a renewed harmony with the natural world. Craige (1977) maintains that "by the end of the volume the poet is approaching reconciliation with the natural world" (p.4).

### **The King of Harlem**

As the United States gained importance as a major economic power, New York was booming. However, industrialization created great economic disparities between the rich and the poor, the whites and the blacks. Lorca's feelings about the cruelty of the city were worsened when he witnessed the stock market crash of 1929 and after he visited Wall Street where he witnessed so many desperate people. Lorca saw Harlem as a place that seemed spiritually pure amid the entire city's corruption and decline. In "The King of

Harlem." he wrote: 'You Harlem! You Harlem! You Harlem!/ 'No anguish to equal your thwarted vermilion, / your blood-shaken, darkened eclipses,/ your garnet ferocity, deaf and dumb in the shadows,/ your hobbled, great king in the janitor's suit.'" (31-35). Lorca's images of black people are stereotypical. They are depicted as purely sensual and primitive, but they are the victims of the injustice of racism and mechanized modern life.

Like most of the poems of *poet in New York*, "The King of Harlem" is as much about the poet's own psychological state while he was visiting the city as it is about New York itself. In this poem, Lorca concentrates on the theme of the alienation of the black man from that city. Most critics maintain that Lorca had come to New York hoping that the journey would distract him from a severe emotional crisis he was suffering from at that time. Once he arrived, however, Lorca began to suffer from an identity crisis. In New York, Lorca was immersed in a culture that was as different from his native Andalusia (southern Spain). In his personal alienation from the dehumanized and industrialized city, he identified with the black inhabitants of the city who were also going through an identity crisis as well. In this poem as indeed in several others, the theme of alienation is the focal point of the poem. Lorca finds the black population divorced from their roots. This is clearly reflected in a series of fragmented images that point to a prevalent disintegration and spiritual regression. The black man is portrayed as the slave of the white man, himself a slave to his own technological progress.

Written in free verse, this long poem (119 lines) focuses on the plight of the black people in Harlem, a section of New York City and one of the largest Black communities of the US. Though the blacks were masters or "kings" of their destinies in their countries of origin, they have now become the "king" (used ironically) of an alien land and culture

symbolized by New York City. The blacks have now embraced the ideals of their white masters and forsaken the lifestyles of their old life (1-15). Nevertheless, there is a sense of hope. The Blacks of Harlem maintain a full culture that Lorca values even within the dehumanizing city for they have retained their cultural heritage, which connects them to nature. Though they live in a city, they seem to understand nature and the natural world which the poet seems to value. Despite all the odds, Lorca envisions a cultural rebirth for the Blacks and depicts a seething violence that needs to be freed:

The negroes wept bewildered  
 between umbrellas and golden suns,  
 mulattoes chewed gum, trying to get a white torso,  
 and the wind clouded mirrors  
 and broke the dancers' veins  
 Negroes, Negroes, Negroes, Negroes.(49-54)

During his stay in New York, Lorca witnessed the stock market crash of 1929. Later that year he left New York in disgust and frustration. The pomes that he wrote about New York in his *Poet in New York* (1940) represent his severest indictment of the city.

Craige (1977) views *Poet in New York* as “a poetry of anguish and outrage, a poetry of the solitary individual isolated within a chaotic, hostile universe with which he has no communication” (p.10). In these poems, the poet raises his cry against a modern, dehumanized world represented by New York.

## Dance of Death

While living in New York, witnessed the collapse of New York Stock Exchange of 1929. Lorca went to the site of the market in Wall Street and was horrified by the event. The sight of so many desperate people shocked him. Though Lorca wrote a letter to his parents describing the event, it was several months later that he wrote his long-awaited poem "Dance of Death" in which he described how the city had plunged into chaos. The sight gave Lorca a new vision of American civilization and confirmed his perception of American civilization and his view that the whole country was controlled by a few bankers and financiers. Several months later, he wrote in his long poem "Dance of Death" warning of the dangers ahead: "The mask will dance among columns of blood and numbers, / among hurricanes of gold and the groans of the unemployed, / who will howl, in the dead of night, for your dark time." (47-49).

This poem describes the arrival at Wall Street of a monster in a shape of an African mask that spreads chaos and mayhem. Using a series of surrealistic images, the speaker in the poem informs New York of the arrival of the mask, the face of death. The speaker warns, leaving no doubt that death is an overwhelming and nearby presence. He sees himself as part of the nocturnal scene, the background of death. The speaker employs some surrealistic images such as windowpanes biting at the night's thigh, sky cows drinking from his eyes and winds reducing glass to ashes emphasizing that the arrival of the mask of death to Broadway exceeds concrete poetic images. In "Dance of Death," the mask symbolizes all those who suffer and are suffocated in society. The multitude of the society is living a life of death: "Crowds stagger sleeplessly through the boroughs / as if they had just escaped

a shipwreck of blood” (19, 20). Those who are alive among the dead of the city are walking corpses while the dead are dancing and coming back to claim their righteousness.

The poem condemns the cruelty of capitalism: “Between the sphinx and the bank vault, there’s a tense thread / that pierces the heart of all poor children” (38-39). The poem ends on an ominous note:

The Stock Exchange shall become a pyramid of moss.

Jungle vines shall come in behind the rifles

and all so quickly, so very, very quickly.

Ay, Wall Street! (81-84)

In one of his letters, Lorca wrote:

I was lucky enough to see with my own eyes the recent stock-market crash, where they lost several million dollars, a rabble of dead money that went sliding off into the sea. Never as then, amid suicides, hysteria, and groups of fainting people, have I felt the sensation of real death, death without hope, death that is nothing but rotteness, for the spectacle was terrifying but devoid of greatness (qtd. in Quotations.com).

### **4.3 Comparison and Contrast:**

Though there is no direct link between Wordsworth’s and Lorca’s works, the relationship between their works cannot be denied. They both depicted the same looming modern metropolis. The main difference, however, is that Wordsworth depicted London whereas Lorca depicted New York. In both cities, the two poets show a representation of human corruption and nature abuse. The difference between them is a matter of degree. Lorca was an acute critic of New York. Wordsworth was a mild critic of London. For

Wordsworth, London was a place in which he found many things he didn't like. For Lorca, New York was a nightmare he could not overcome.

The two poets identify similar problems. The authors are united by their concern about these issues, yet they often express different opinions and solutions to the apparent problems. The second thing is the crowd or the multitude. Here the two poets have different attitudes. **Both** of the two poets saw the city as a perilous place. Both poets admire childhood and children. Like Wordsworth who had deep-rooted concepts of childhood, Lorca sides with childhood in the same way he sides with the natural. For Lorca, the world's problems are a byproduct of the disruption of the natural lifecycle. This tradition, the dance of death, represents an equalizing force in which peasant and king are rendered equal in their appearance before death. New York, however, thwarts this cycle and when death appears, it is not as an equalizing force. "But don't let the Pope dance! No, Don't let the Pope dance! Nor the King, nor the Millionaire with blue teeth nor the barren dancers of the cathedrals ("Dance of Death" 45). The supposedly equal life cycle has been thwarted, protecting the wealthy and powerful from the equalizing force of death. They are protected by unnatural means, and thereby lose access to the natural world. This same theme appears in both works, emphasizing the way that capitalism and the metropolis have conspired to work against humanity. Lorca seems to see in capitalism, especially the capitalism he saw in America, a growing industrialization and dehumanizing effect on people. He saw Harlem as a surviving pocket of humanity, oppressed as it was, among the dehumanized city. His commentaries on money, then, should be aligned with this discourse concerned with the ways in which greed and capitalism allow humans to turn each other into sub-humans. Similarly, Wordsworth deals with the question of race and multiculturalism in his Prelude.

Lorca found the values of the city completely foreign and difficult to comprehend. Man's forgetting about the miracle of life and the natural world is what worries Lorca. He feels that the people of New York whom he feels may represent humanity's future, are being negligent about these values. For Lorca, the only hope for humanity can be found in the children. For Lorca it seems that children and their unique mindset are the only way to free human kind from the evils of the metropolis. He himself yearns for that natural knowledge of the life cycle would cure the failings of the modern city. Lorca sees in this new order the possibility for humanity's rebirth and the re-humanizing of the city.

Throughout the book, Lorca attempts to use the biblical tradition to portray his New York experience. Lorca refers to the human figure of Jesus Christ: his qualities of forgiveness and love. For example, in "After a Walk," it is the poet who experiences the violence of the modern metropolis. Cut down by the sky! (5), the city has a transformative power over the poet. The city is responsible for the death of its citizens, reducing them to a dehumanized form. The poet himself is subject to this violence, his face, his identity, has been taken by the city. There is a fascinating relationship between the poet's interior emotional life and the pain of the world that he sees around him. The city offers a violent vision of the world, a vision that the poet/narrator seems to feel he must watch, though it makes him suffer.

The aspects of Catholicism offered by Christ's figure, redemption and love, did not appear possible in the modern metropolis. Around him, Lorca saw poverty, industrialization, and the mistreatment of the blacks, with whom he sympathized. Through Lorca's eyes, the modern capitalist city is suffering from not only physical death but also spiritual death as well: a modern world of rootlessness, hopelessness. Love and religion

have been corrupted; there is worship only of money, where value is reduced to financial terms and the individual no longer counts. There is cruelty and indifference towards all living things. Faced with the modern metropolis, Lorca feels that God has abandoned humanity. The anti-religious nature of the city, as it is regarded as inherently unspiritual, is depicted through the corruption of religious acts within the metropolis.

Both authors came from Romantic backgrounds. “Elements of Romanticism are an established part of Spanish and Andalusian culture, therefore Lorca seems to fit in perfectly as a Romantic writer within this culture” (Polydorou, 2011, p. 83). It is not surprising to find Romantic elements in Lorca’s poems even those of *Poet in New York*. Though Lorca’s early work was influenced by Spanish romantic tradition, his later poems particularly in *Poet of New York* were greatly influenced by the avant garde views of surrealism and symbolism. Lorca’s stay in America, particularly [New York](#) was his first adult experience of a democratic society, albeit one he considered it to be dominated by rampant commercialism and the social oppression of minority groups. His collection of poems *poet in New York* explores his alienation and isolation through some graphically experimental poetic techniques. The “Ode to Walt Whitman”, written during the poet's stay in Manhattan, is one of the greatest works to emerge from this period, demonstrating Garcia Lorca's new style that merged Whitman's free verse with surreal imagery.

It is attested that before he embarked on writing *Poet in New York*, Lorca had read Eliot’s *The Waste Land* and was influenced by it. Lorca was inspired by Eliot and his description of the universalized city represented by London, the city which Wordsworth celebrated in the selected poems we have discussed. In her online article, Dinitia Smith asserts: “Lorca's friend Angel Flores, was translating Eliot's "Waste Land." ‘Lorca saw that translation and read it,’ said Mr. Young, "and some of the vocabulary and feeling for disengagement and broken objects and lack of

direction crept into 'Poet in New York.'" (Smith 2000). Some of the fragmented vocabulary and broken objects crept into *Poet in New York*. Lorca had clearly internalized that poem. New York is his "unreal city," its teeming stinking hordes the human incarnation of the mechanized modern man. It was in New York that Lorca first read Eliot. Furthermore, Gala (2011) maintains that "Lorca must have known about the lines Wordsworth wrote when he saw the statue of Isaac Newton in the antechapel of Trinity college in Cambridge. Wordsworth saw the statue bathed in the moonlight, a similar moon to the one Lorca describes in the background [to his poem]" (p. 200).

Born and brought up in Andalusia, Lorca reacted strongly to the brutality and loneliness of New York City in particular and to America in general. Lorca's poetry was also impacted by this visit as it took a new turn away from the romanticism which characterized his poetry in Spain. It moved away from the lyricism of the early poems and became a vehicle for experimental techniques through which he expressed tortured feelings of alienation and dislocation. Instead of his early overwrought, melodramatic romanticism that distinguished the early period, Surrealist images and symbols characterize the new period. Moreover, in his new poetry collection *Poet in New York*, Lorca became influenced by the poetry of the American poet Whitman, a type of poetry distinguished by its use of common language and the vernacular and whose style is reminiscent of Wordsworth's celebration of "the language of ordinary people." However, Lorca's later poetry is distinguished by its use of surrealist style of writing.

Lorca's collection of poems explores his alienation and isolation through some experimental poetic techniques. The "Ode to Walt Whitman", written during the poet's stay in Manhattan, is perhaps one of the greatest works to emerge from this period. It demonstrates Lorca's evolving style that combined Whitman's free verse with the surreal imagery of the 1920s. Lorca was also influenced by the Wall Street crash which he personally witnessed. This condemnation of urban capitalist society and materialistic modernity was a sharp departure from his earlier work and label as a folklorist.

Concerning the technical ways that Lorca adopted in his poems, he relied frequently on the use of images, symbols, and advanced/complicated figurative expressions to express what he feels or sees. For example, in New York, the water becomes polluted and a source of disease rather than of hope and purity. In this poem we see the Hudson River becoming stagnant and covered with oil. Man is pulled away from God and so he is no longer a unified whole but a fragmented object. The vision of a man living in harmony with the universe and with God no longer exists. Here we see a man isolated from nature and the world in the form of complete chaos. In his depiction of New York, Lorca is giving his own subjective reaction which reveals a depressed and isolated poet who views the scene as disorderly, fragmented and chaotic. The images suggest no harmonious relationship between the individual and the cosmos. The poet remains isolated from a hostile world with which he cannot establish a harmonious relationship. He is alienated from nature. Compared with Wordsworth's poem 'Composed upon Westminster Bridge' (1802), this image stands at the opposite extreme. There is an image of serenity and calmness in Wordsworth's poem as the city evokes a deep sense of tranquility: 'Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie/ Open unto the fields, and to the sky / All bright and glittering in the smokeless air (6-8). The cityscape is completely different. Lorca's description presents a fragmented picture to give a bleak impression about the city; in contrast, Wordsworth's depiction attempts to develop a unified whole. However, both poets try to universalize the type of urban experience the city generates.

In some cases, however, there appears great similarity between the two descriptions. Images of moral decay in the city can be recognized in Lorca's poems and Wordsworth's description of London in his poem entitled "London 1802". Wordsworth is more specific in

his treatment of London because though Lorca lived in New York, his poetry does not reveal specific sites in New York in the way Wordsworth's poetry does with London. Wordsworth gives an account of the actual names of places, streets, scenes and sites in London. Lorca presents a dreary and desolate urban landscape. Wordsworth's description of the city moves continuously and smoothly from one place to another preserving a sense of spatial order. Lorca's description reveals a discontinuous and fragmented picture meant to symbolize the negative image he intends to give of the city. Wordsworth's poem is written in a sonnet form and employs personification to give the city life and vitality. The description of the city in the morning intermingles with the poet's emotional responses and feelings. As a Romantic poet, Wordsworth tries to project a sense of personality and immediacy unto his poems. As a surrealist poet, Lorca endeavours to give nonchronological, nonlogical and unrelated images. In some of his poems about the city Wordsworth gives harmonious and personal images where man and nature unite. Wordsworth's view of London in "Lines Composed upon Westminster Bridge" shows the poet looking at the city from a fixed point on Westminster Bridge. This view contrasts with that given by Lorca because it is limited in perspective. Lorca's poem contrasts sharply with his "City that Does not Sleep" because the latter employs surrealist writing that depicts reality from various perspectives using dreamlike and nightmarish sequences, and the juxtaposition of bizarre, shocking, or seemingly unrelated images.

In Lorca's early descriptions "Return from a Walk" there is an attempt to express a crisis of the self through discourse. This is not the case in Wordsworth's treatment of the city of London. The speaker is not seen from one perspective but from a variety of fragmented viewpoints. The speaker starts with a juxtaposition of different images of the

place and of himself. In this technique, Lorca is obviously indebted to surrealism. Lorca's style is impersonal in the sense that it employs various voices while Wordsworth's is personal in that it employs a personal viewpoint. Wordsworth's poetry juxtaposes rural and urban images while Lorca's poems rely primarily on urban pictures. It is noticeable that what is characteristically urban in both poets is generally associated with corruption and degeneration while the rural is primarily positive in the sense that it stands for the spiritual and the divine. To put it differently, the poems underline a tension between the rural setting as a symbol of purity, fertility, and rebirth through religious and Christian themes, and the urban setting of death, degeneration, and gloom.

The titles *Poet in New York* and *Residence in London* seem to suggest poets who are out of place in the capital city each of them describes. Lorca's New York presents a strange, desolate, landscape, and an isolated, lonely, and out-of-place poet who denounces the violence and emptiness of a fallen city. He seems to find the city's only sign of hope in its African-American community: a community with which he, as poet, identifies and sympathizes. Lorca can be seen originally as a poet who has elements of classical romanticism in his early works, a feature that recurs in his *Poet in New York* in different forms. Lorca's fascination with death has no similar form in Wordsworth.

The works of the two poets differ not only in their themes and subjects but also in their styles and techniques. While Wordsworth was drawing upon a predominantly traditional romantic style of writing, Lorca was searching for a non-romantic and experimental technique based on surrealist methods, images and symbols. Wordsworth expresses himself in notably plain language. In Lorca's poems the cityscape violates

ordinary reality and the surreal dominates the real. But their poems focus on such themes as nature, isolation, religion, childhood, poverty, etc.

However, the two poets came from two different backgrounds. Lorca came to New York at a time when he was suffering from a personal crisis while Wordsworth was not passing through a personal problem when he came to London. Lorca found in a New York a metaphor for his personal condition. This difference in background impacted the outcome of the poets' description of the metropolis each of them chose to write about. Each of the two poets concentrated on a special crisis that affected the city he described. While Wordsworth focused on the theatres and streets of London, Lorca directed his main attention to the financial and racial issues in New York. Wordsworth went to the theaters and fairs of London but Lorca went to Wall Street to witness and describe the Stock Market crash. Unlike Wordsworth who focuses on urban setting **from** different rural background, Lorca focuses on the problem of poverty and moral decay. Only partially can any of the two poets be described as a political poet. Though Wordsworth's short poems present him as a poet of nature, *Residence in London* shows him as a poet who is concerned about the poor. The poems of the two poets have a religious overtones about them. They draw substantially on the Bible and the apocalypse for their inspiration and themes. They also celebrate childhood. Lorca came to New York to escape the mental pressures and anguish that were starting to take hold of him. His style of writing changed dramatically during this extended visit and the Wall Street Crash affected him profoundly. Themes of alienation and isolation were explored in his *A Poet in New York* Collection.

In the two short poems about London, Wordsworth delves into the inner side of the city of London revealing what London meant to him. London, as we have seen, gave Wordsworth a deeper insight into human nature and the suffering of others.

Unlike Lorca in his *Poet in New York*, Wordsworth invariably praises nature, as opposed to cities and man-made constructions, in poem “Composed upon Westminster Bridge” he praises the city of London in the early hours of the morning.

Earth has not any thing to show more fair:

Dull would he be of soul who could pass by

A sight so touching in its majesty:

The man-made structures are intermingled with the more natural landscapes of the area.

Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie

Open unto the fields, and to the sky;

Wordsworth depicts the beauty of the city since he has chosen an early time in the morning when none of the factories or chimneys are bellowing much smoke. The quiet city in the morning seems like a natural landscape because the daily activities of the city have not yet begun. The city is pictured as quiet and "glittering in the smokeless air." In this manner we see a calm and impressive city scene reminiscent of the softness of the sun shining on any valley, rock, or hill. Wordsworth actually establishes unity and harmony between the natural and the man-made worlds, for even the houses seem alive and part of nature: "the very houses seem asleep". In comparison to a city's usually busy, noisy state, the London of the morning seems much more serene; it is as serene as a natural landscape.

Wordsworth views London as a “cosmopolitan” place to which he has decided to move for settlement after he has been living in the countryside for the greatest part of his life. He came to London very curious to learn more about the place he has been dreaming about all his life. Wordsworth uses a narrative (compared with reflective and philosophical) style to talk about his wanderings in London. He often digresses to talk about his experience in rural areas and about the country cape. In the town center he sees every nationality and every racial type and wonders about the museums and the art galleries he has viewed. He also recollects his past experience and elaborates on the story of a rural woman seduced by a city man and gives himself enough time to dwell on the attractions and benefits of childhood and motherhood. As an observer, he generally enjoys what he sees. In the London theatres which he admires most, he enjoys watching the absorption of the audience in the spectacle performed on the stage and the performances of the story of (The Maid of Buttermere) leaves a lasting impression on him. He also enjoyed his visits to London’s trial courts and found the courtrooms as exciting as the theater. He also visits the House of Commons with much pleasure and lauds some clergymen whose sermons he praises and appreciates. However, Wordsworth has no liking for the crowds.

On the other hand, Wordsworth’s descriptive and narrative style appears at its best in his depiction of the St. Bartholomew's Fair scene where he evokes the form and colour of a grand pageant. The confusion and bustle of the fair become the epitome of the city itself. The people he meets in the fair lack depth and individuality compared to people who live in the country who have a fuller and more rewarding life. Wordsworth depicts poverty in the city very accurately and in the story of the Blind Beggar he presents a very moving and thought-provoking incident that leaves the poet and the reader to wonder about the

question of identity and selfhood. Unlike Wordsworth, Lorca takes up the question of identity but deals with it on a deeper level making it similar to an issue of identity crisis from which Lorca himself was suffering even before he came to stay in New York for a while. Wordsworth takes the crowds to task for what he sees as their foolishness and madness. Before he finally establishes a connection between nature and spiritual harmony, Wordsworth rails against the city dwellers for their lack of individual identity. However, he concludes with some reflection on the importance of nature in human life and sees a sharp contrast between city and country life and in this way he saves himself from the boredom, corruption and confusion of life in the city.

This did I feel, in London's vast domain.  
 The Spirit of Nature was upon me there;  
 The soul of Beauty and enduring Life  
 Vouchsafed her inspiration, and diffused,  
 Through meagre lines and colours, and the press  
 Of self-destroying, transitory things,  
 Composure, and ennobling Harmony. (765-771)

Finally, we can say that the general procedure in *The Prelude* is to record an experience from the poet's past and then to examine its philosophical and psychological implications and ultimately relate it to nature and society at large. Much of Wordsworth's "Residence in London" conveys a longing for life away from the city. In other words, Wordsworth in the city remains inseparable from the traditional image of a romantic poet who is invariably fascinated by nature and its impact on human life even in the midst of the great city turmoil and confusion. Moreover, the language, the diction, the metrical and

verse forms remain traditional in contrast with the experimental and avant-gardist style of Lorca's poem. The imagery as well as the diction reflects the natural environment, especially the English countryside. The result is a clear capturing of much of the wildness and beauty of that terrain, a feature that is in sharp contrast with Lorca's representation of New York and its cityscape. Wordsworth's rural background continues to shape his imagination in the city unlike Lorca who departs far from his Andalusian and romantic background and begins to experiment with new and innovative techniques to express the absurdity of the city life that shocked him a great deal. In his long poem Wordsworth keeps moving from the city to the countryside and vice versa until the end. Taken as a whole, nature underlines and pervades Wordsworth's view of city life. Compared with Lorca's poems, there is a curious lack of introspection in Wordsworth's depiction of London and its inhabitants. In *The Prelude* section on London, Wordsworth saw strangeness, a loss of connection with self and society, a failure of identity in the overwhelming multitude,

## **Chapter Five**

## Chapter Five

### Conclusion

Wordsworth's seventh book of *The Prelude* is one of the major records depicting the city of London. Wordsworth sees the city with his country experience shaping his vision. He begins with a vision similar to those who lived away from London wondering about its magic and beauty whether in the present or in old times. In the poem "London 1802" Wordsworth sees London not just as a city but the capital city, representing, reflecting and directing the whole country. He concentrates on London as a form or society distinguished from the society of another city. In contrast in his "Composed upon Westminster Bridge", he depicts London as a separate city with special reference to its beauty and glamour in the early morning. However, in Book Seven of the *Prelude*, Wordsworth represents a picture of the city that focuses on the social, political and cultural background of the city.

Regarding Lorca's representation of New York, the poet gives a total image of the city that concentrated on the squalor, the chaos and the social injustice that characterize this city. In contrast with Wordsworth's multiple images of London, Lorca does not make any references to the beauty of nature when he deals with New York. Thus, we see two different ways of presenting the two cities.

In their poems Wordsworth and Lorca explore and record the moral, cultural, and social problems which the city engenders. In both cases the metropolis is a reflection of the current condition. The two poets use different mediums to diagnose the problems of the

modern city. While Wordsworth uses images derived from the Romantic tradition, Lorca resorts to the strange symbols and images associated with surrealism.

Though the works of the two poets on their respective cities were written more than 125 years apart, a careful reading would reveal the relationship that exists between Wordsworth's and Lorca's works. They both depicted a similar looming modern metropolis, London and New York respectively. Nevertheless, both texts reveal very different meanings. The metropolis represented by the two poets is not at all the same. For Wordsworth, the city is a place of cultural, literary, and intellectual exchange, and a place that elicits literary associations. Lorca, by contrast, does not endow New York with any source of moral, spiritual or cultural inspiration. By concentrating on the conditions in both cities, the two poets show interest in the regional and universal features of the modern city. The description given in the poems of Wordsworth and Lorca represent a universal tradition associated with the modern city in Western literature. In addition, both writers concentrate on the past to reflect on the contemporary situation of the modern city. In the same way that Wordsworth invokes Milton to provide a new revolutionary spirit, Lorca makes reference to Walt Whitman to suggest a new spirit that highlights the social role of the poet and the ability of poetry to provide a language that focuses on the life of the common man. In addition, the two poets seek inspiration from the biblical, literary and cultural traditions to compare the present with the past and as a way to renew the present.

Wordsworth visited London in 1791, 1802 and 1805. These visits form the basis of the poems which have been examined in this thesis. The seventh book of *The Prelude*, 'Residence in London', represents Wordsworth's experience of urban life and society. He depicts the capital in the form of a series of spectacles. Wordsworth performs the role of a

participant at the same time, for he becomes involved in one way or another in the events and sights around him. He enjoys the communal experience of theatrical scenes and becomes emotionally engaged in the sufferings of people around him and the stories of the characters he views on the stage.

In contrast, Lorca's poems such as 'Christmas on the Hudson' offer a bleak glimpse of an alienated, almost dystopian world, where "the 'world/ is alone in the sky". The rejoicing of Christmas is reduced to empty words. Lorca visited New York in the late 1920s and left the city without returning to it again. His stay in New York did not allow him to become an active participant in the life of the city. The only time we see him becoming somewhat involved in the American scene and the current events is when he visits Wall Street after hearing about the Stock Market fall in 1929. In the poem that he wrote about this tragic experience, he gives a sympathetic picture of the people who suffered as a result of the great crash. Thus we see the two poets each wandering in the city that he describes and giving his impressions about the human scene that he observes.

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