

Interrelated Functions of Space and Seeing in Wordsworth : as compared with the case of Ted Hughes

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By providing suitable symbolic space, Ted Hughes tries to explore the otherwise too dim and unexplicable inner world of his own mind and of the mind of his nation alike. This is characteristic of his poetical stance. Symbolic space may, at one time, be a forest as in his poem "The Thought-Fox" and may, at another, be a pond as in "Pike"; rather than a mere reflection of the hidden world of mind, the space stages what he calls "the world of final reality", namely the inner world of memory, emotion, intelligence, etc. In fathoming space, Hughes employs the imagery of eyes or of seeing, a typical case of which is his eyes being directed into space only to be met with those of another rising out of the depth of it. This change in his position from that of seeing to being seen means that he has encountered another self of his, not known until that time. What he is interested in is the acquisition of wisdom brought about in this way.

To trace the growth of his mind as a poet, Wordsworth had also to penetrate into the dark areas of his mind and the ones in the past at that, a task more challenging than Hughes'. He shares much of a poetical stance with Hughes in his exploration of the inner world. With eyes as a metaphor for exploration and landscapes as a space to be explored, he grapples with his project, first, if insufficiently, through so-called "spots of time" in the two-part *Prelude* and then fully in later versions. Notice, for instance, how the poet as a boy "watches" the lake in the drowned man episode till, as is made more explicit later in the 1805 version, he affirms the existence of fear and death.

Unlike our contemporary poet who has had his eyes met with other ones, the romantic poet does not seem to be satisfied with a seemingly

objective presentation of the scene of self-realization, but adds a new passage in the later version to “explain” the significance the incident had to him as a boy.

Wordsworth’s obsession with “under-presence”, “under-powers” or “the sense of God” required his eyes to be geared into the exploration of the interrelations between his mind and the cosmic world.