

Interior Dialogue in Wordsworth's "Resolution And Independence": A Dialogic Reading

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Abstract

This study presents a close reading of Wordsworth's "Resolution and Independence" from a dialogic perspective, making use of the method of discourse analysis developed by Mikhail Bakhtin in his book on Dostoevsky's art. More broadly, the essay draws on the socio-linguistic theory of discourse and literature expounded by the Bakhtin school. It argues that when such a perspective is applied to the poem, it emerges as an intricate dialogic text ultimately figuring the inner dialogue of the narrator. Such dialogue is presented in the poem as enacting the narrator's response not only to himself but, through himself, to another and to the world. The reverse is equally true. This is in keeping with Bakhtin's notion of dialogue as the inevitable addressivity of the individual—the fact that one cannot escape the condition of having to form a mental response to life, that is, to others, and to oneself in relation to others. In this respect, the poem offers an implicit illustration of the basic tenet of dialogism that the subject is constituted in relation to others, and that otherness is the condition of identity.

A lot has been said on the dialogically rich and complex encounter between the speaker and the leech-gatherer in "Resolution and Independence" in ways that probe the relationship between internality and verbal exchange in the poem. The present study aims to deepen the perspective of dialogic scrutiny to focus on what I will, adopting Bakhtin's terminology, call "interior dialogue" of the speaker. Thus attention will be drawn to the extent of the internality that pervades the poem by means of an application of Bakhtinian concepts and method of discourse analysis (dialogics).* Consequently, it will be shown that what the poem ultimately

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' in his *Making Tales*, Don Bialostosky offers a close reading of "Resolution and Independence" in the chapter titled "Dialogic Personal Anecdotes" (pp.148-159). This is a highly illuminating dialogic interpretation on which I will be drawing throughout this paper. But Bialostosky's main object being an examination of the poem as dialogic *narrative*, he does not treat the poem as fundamentally the *utterance*, or discourse of the narrator as I will be doing.

puts on stage is the speaker's inner speech addressed to himself, and that the dialogue with the leech-gatherer is only a part of it although the dialogue itself conduces to, and is essential to the existential and dialogic deepening of the interior dialogue.

Dialogism is the name given to the world view, and socio-linguistic and literary theories developed by Mikhail Bakhtin and his circle (notably Voloshinov and Medvedev). The ground conviction of dialogism is the ontological premise that human existence is an event that has the nature of dialogue (Holquist 1990:27). Here dialogue is to be understood in the broadest possible sense, as interaction between mind and world and between two minds: "Life by its very nature is dialogic. To live means to participate in dialogue: to ask questions, to heed, to respond, to agree, and so forth" (Bakhtin 1984:293). Dialogicality is an inherent quality of discourse in life and art arising either from the interaction of two different voices embodying two different meanings, two opposing ideological positions, or from a split occurring within a single voice, or subject-position. This last is termed by Bakhtin as a single voice becoming "double-voiced," or "internal dialogization" of an utterance as a result of a hesitation, doubt, or any difference or conflict entering into it (1984:198). Hence dialogicality can be discerned even within a single utterance, or even a single word depending on its context or tone. In reading "Resolution and Independence" we will basically be studying the internal dialogization of the narrator's discourse in response both to his own consciousness and to another whom he meets.

Dialogism conceives of a fundamental continuity between discourse in life and discourse in literature. This notion is based on the premise that "the potential (possibility) of future artistic form [lies in ordinary *real-life speech*]," and that, therefore, "the key to the understanding of the linguistic structure of literary utterances is to be found in the simplest utterances" (Voloshinov 1924-8:10; Todorov 1984:67). Furthermore, all verbal utterances both in life and in literature are seen by dialogism as a product of *addressivity*. In any kind of verbal communication, "the word... is determined equally by *whose* word it is and for whom it is meant. As word, it is precisely the *product of the reciprocal relationship between speaker and listener, addresser and addressee*. Each and every word expresses the 'one' in relation to the 'other'" (Voloshinov/Bakhtin 1994:58).* Thus every

* It is commonly accepted by Western scholars that "all the significant writings signed by Voloshinov and Medvedev had been written largely by Bakhtin." See P. Morris, "Introduction" in *The Bakhtin Reader*, ed. P. Morris (London: Arnold, 1994), p.2. In light of this information the references to the extract from Voloshinov's *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* (1929) in *The Bakhtin Reader* will be documented in the text by indicating joint authorship.

utterance addresses someone, and is shaped by the response that it provokes: "every word is directed toward an *answer* and cannot escape the profound influence of the answering word that it anticipates" (Bakhtin 1981:279).

Even when we are thinking, or engaging in "inner speech," we direct our words to an ideal inner addressee, who functions as the "other" of our own consciousness, and whom we assume to be endowed with the qualities necessary for understanding us (Voloshinov/Bakhtin 1994:57-58). In Bakhtin's view of discourse, which comprises both actual speech and actual writing, or textually represented utterance, meaning is realized only in the process of active, responsive understanding arising from a dialogic interaction between a speaker and an addressee in a specific social context even if the latter is only one's own inner addressee. Otherness, or another's point of view is a condition of meaning, knowledge, and self-understanding. However, "[d]ialogue, in the narrow sense of the word, is... only one of the forms—a very important form, to be sure—of verbal interaction," which produces meaning and knowledge (Voloshinov/Bakhtin 1994:58). For, ultimately, another's point of view is assessed internally; it is internalized or rejected by consciousness, which manifests itself through inner speech, or dialogue (see Voloshinov/Bakhtin 1994:50-61).

in "Resolution and Independence" there is an asymmetric dialogic situation in the dramatic sense.. For the narrator is cast as a questioner who does not even listen to much of the answer he elicits from his interlocutor, let alone respond to it verbally. However, despite the lack of reciprocity in the form of a balanced dialogue, the inner, deeper receptivity of the narrator leads him ultimately to respond profoundly, not only to the words, but also to the very being and existence of his interlocutor. The poem illustrates in a way Bakhtin's premise that "being heard as such is already a dialogic relation" (qtd. in Macovski 1994:19). For it entails a mental response, if not an actually uttered one. The addressivity that places speaker and listener within a field of dialogic interaction is often figured in Romantic literature by means of a textually represented audience who "becomes a surrogate for dialogic form... this form persists even when a given auditor remains silent, implicit, or for the moment forgotten" (Macovski 1994:19). "Resolution and Independence" offers an excellent example of such a dialogue with its for the most part silent speaker-narrator and for-the-moment-forgotten interlocutor.

The narrator and the leech-gatherer have in fact diametrically opposed roles within the two frameworks of the poem. Within the dramatic framework the leech-gatherer is by far the more active participant in dialogue. He is the one that does all the talking in response to the question asked him by the speaker, who remains silent throughout except for

repeating his question once. Within the narrative framework, however, it is the speaker whose voice dominates the poem, and we do not hear the leech-gatherer's own words except for three lines in Stanza 13 for the reason indicated above. Robert Langbaum's distinction between dramatic and lyrical characterization helps to explain this discrepancy:

In his dramatic characterizations, Wordsworth portrays social class and what Aristotle calls *ethos* or moral choice... In his lyrical characterizations, Wordsworth alludes to social class only to show its unimportance for the kind of spirituality he is portraying. *Ethos* is also negated; moral quality in Wordsworth's lyrical characterizations derives not from conscious choice but from a state of being. (1982: 320)

Langbaum describes "Resolution and Independence" as a perfect blend of these two modes of characterization. It must be added, though, that this is by no means an even combination, and that the dramatic in the poem is subordinated to the lyrical. Hence the words of the leech-gatherer are pushed to the background of the inner speech of the narrator, becoming "meaningful" sound like music.

In fact the poem is so structured that the whole encounter with the leech-gatherer and not just the dialogue takes place against the current of interior dialogue already in effect in the narrator's mind. The meeting significantly functions as catalyst for this inner process, intensifying the dialogic inwardness of the narrator's consciousness. As Howard observes, "less and less emphasis" is laid on the answers given by the leech-gatherer, and "more and more on the effect that the process of questioning has on the auditor's [narrator's] mind" (1988:226). The etymological link between "questioning" and "questing" that Howard draws attention to underlines the fact that the acts of questioning and questing are more central to the structure and meaning of the poem than the acts of listening and verbally responding. In other words, the foregrounding of the narrator's inner speech in the poem is a function of his search for a proper perspective on life. This quest underlies the discrepancy between the dramatic and the lyrical frames, which results in the subordination of dialogue by internal musing.

Yet it must be observed that this mood of self-listening is established at the very beginning of the poem, where the mental landscape is characterized by shifting moods. The happy change in the natural scene where the encounter is to take place described in Stanza 1 leads to, and is echoed by the positive change in the narrator's mood in Stanza 3, although only for a brief moment as we are told in Stanza 4.

The shift in the third line of the first stanza from past to present tense is an interesting peculiarity of the poem, which turns out to be misleading in terms of temporal orientation. For the shift back to past tense in Stanza 3 informs us that the narrative already presented as well as its continuation to be shortly told constitute a reconstruction of a past experience. The violent storm of the previous night has given way to a brilliant sunny day, when the whole of nature is filled with joy and harmony. The use of present tense in the first two stanzas serves to underscore the sense of immediacy and oneness with nature that the speaker feels, and is explicitly stated in Stanza 3. Yet this explicitness involves a distancing from the experience told through a sudden shift to past tense. Compare "The hare is running races in her mirth" in Stanza 2 with "I saw the hare that races about with joy" in Stanza 3. Just as the storm of the night was replaced by a sunny day, we are told by the narrator that his depressing thoughts and memories led to a feeling of harmony with the world and with himself so complete that he identified himself with the hare. "I bethought me of the hare: / Even such a happy child of earth am I." The next shift back to depression hinted at in Stanza 3 is introduced in Stanza 4 with full force:

But, as it sometimes chanceth, from the might
Of joy in minds that can no further go,
As high as we have mounted in delight
In our dejection do we sink as low;
To me that morning did it happen so.

Yet another distancing from a sense of wholeness and harmony is effected through the bracketing of the lines expressing the narrator's identification with the hare between lines that convey his present depression ("fears and fancies thick upon me came") and anxiety about his future ("But there may come another day to me— / Solitude,... distress, and poverty"). The seemingly self-confident assertion that he is such a happy child of earth as the hare is thus qualified by its semantic neighbours pointing toward opposite meanings. The emergent sense is therefore divided between self-assurance and self-doubt. This is an instance of double-voiced discourse that reveals the internal division within a consciousness. The lines rendering carefree happiness do not, of course, passively yield to dialogization by what precedes and follows them. They form an active response to the mood of dejection stated in the immediately preceding lines (Stanza 4), and also actively anticipate, or prepare the way for the concession of possible future insecurity. Thus, the dialogization of interior monologue that is the mark of interior dialogue (Bakhtin 1984:74-75) starts penetrating the narrator's discourse. The contrast he draws between the carefree life he says he has so

far led, and a possibly bleak future that might be in store for him brings to fulfilment the conflict of voices arising from his identification with the hare.

The dialogic relationship of the narrator with his own self is further unfolded by self-questioning caused by anxiety. In reviewing his life, he "plays the role of another" (Bakhtin 1984:212) in relation to himself. In this way his voice assumes an external quality dialogizing his own utterance from within. This is done by a hypothetical construction revealing the falsity of the premises on which he says he has hitherto based his life, followed by a concession in the form of a rhetorical question:

My whole life I have lived in pleasant thought,
 As if life's business were a summer mood;
 As if all needful things would come unsought
 To genial faith, still rich in genial good;
 But how can He expect that others should
 Love him, who for himself will take no heed at all?

The use of third person pronoun here embodies linguistically the externalization of the speaker's internal "other" at whom he directs his criticism. By thus objectifying his own situation the speaker at once gains the distance necessary for a healthy examination of himself (looks at himself from the point of view of another), and confirms the reality of the threat involved in living thus. The emphatic repetition of the hypothetical subordinate clause beginning with "As if serves to convey a sense of urgency that is index of a mind in intense dialogue with itself. It must be noted that the questioning to which the speaker subjects himself comes about as a result of the anxious brooding he at first could not articulate ("Dim sadness—and blind thoughts, I knew not, nor could name" [Stanza 4]).

Next comes the revelation of the narrator's identity, which leads to a coupling of author (Wordsworth) and speaker in the poem:

By our own spirits are we deified:
 We poets in our youth begin in gladness;
 But thereof come in the end despondency and madness.

Significantly, the narrator sights the leech-gatherer just when he reaches the apex of his dark thoughts, projecting the tragic fate of Chatterton and Burns onto all poets including himself. In the total design of the poem this adds to the ironic effect arising from the contrast between the speaker's and the leech-gatherer's attitudes to life, which can in a sense be seen as a

consequence of their respective stations and occupations in life. For, it can be thought that a leech-gatherer cannot easily afford the "luxury" of self-absorption and dejection as he has to prosaically struggle with sheer physical, material hardship, and that a poet's disposition and leisure may give him ample "psychic time" for these. The leech-gatherer's appearance then and there has the effect of a providential gift on the narrator:

Now, whether it were by peculiar grace,
 A leading from above, a something given,
 Yet it befell, that, in this lonely place,
 When I with these untoward thoughts had striven,
 Beside a pool bare to the eye of heaven
 I saw a Man before me unawares.

The narrator's attribution of a possible divine design to the presence of this man emphasizes the urgency of his need for an encounter that might provide for him some affirmation or illumination—a new outlook on life that may cure his anxiety. Wolfson describes this moment: "The man seems projected from the self..., as if the third person "He" of the poet's earlier question about dependence and independence were now embodied in a figure who mysteriously appears in answer" (1986:169). The narrator's emphasis on the leech-gatherer's age endows him with a symbolic dignity and wisdom, of which the narrator himself seems to feel the lack because of his youth and sense of disconnection: "The oldest man he seemed that ever wore grey hairs." The narrator's vision of him vacillates between inanimate and animate. Jonathan Wordsworth and Langbaum describe the leech-gatherer as a typical Wordsworthian "border" figure that is half animate, half inanimate; half human, half inhuman ("Such seemed this Man, not all alive nor dead, / Nor all asleep—in his extreme old age") (J. Wordsworth 1982:1-5, Langbaum 1982:321). First he is likened to a sea-beast that in turn is said to resemble a "huge stone." Then his humanity is acknowledged in an imaginative and touching description of his frame:

His body was bent double, feet and head
 Coming together in life's pilgrimage;
 As if some dire constraint of pain, or rage
 Of sickness felt by him in times long past,
 A more than human weight upon his frame had cast.

David Sampson offers a most subtle and convincing reading of the narrator's inner response to the old man before engaging in a dialogue with him:

Contradictory feelings of contempt and humility coincide in the presence of this contradictory old man in a kind of reserved judgment. The notion of decline which has so depressed the narrator is mocked by an apparition of circularity... It is the very "meanness" of the leech-gatherer, so completely antithetical to the proud and youthful poets,... and therefore to the narrator's image of himself, that makes him seem, in his barren surroundings ("Good God! Such a figure, in such a place," Wordsworth wrote to Sara [his sister-in-law]), repellent, ridiculous and yet awesome, a confirmation of the radical disturbance of the narrator's previously easy relationship with the external world. He is such a caricature of the narrator's worst fears that his being alive at all is both an anomaly and a reproach. (1982a :46)

Sampson's account parallels Wolfson's (quoted above) and Langbaum's observation that the leech-gatherer's portrait is partly a projection of the narrator's own mind, as the observed figure always is in Wordsworth's poems in which the object is characterized from a lyrical point of view—as, for instance, in the poet's encounter with the discharged soldier in *The Prelude*, Book 4 (Langbaum 1982:324).

What is most interesting and psychologically realistic about the poem is that the self-absorption of the narrator when he first sees the leech-gatherer does not disappear during the conversation he has with him. On the contrary, it is only intensified so as to acquire a dreamy quality, as if the leech-gatherer has a mesmerizing effect on him. The leech-gatherer, by contrast, shakes off his ethereal quality in conversation, and is extremely lively and prosaic in his response to the narrator's inquiry. As John Beer remarks, Wordsworth's accounts of what Jonathan Wordsworth and Langbaum call "border figures" such as

The Old Man Travelling,... the old Leech-gatherer... and the discharged soldier [are given such a] passive, emblematic quality... by [Wordsworth's] description, which builds them up to such a degree of "objectivity" that one half expects them to remain permanently silent. We feel surprise, first, that they should speak at all, and then, when they do speak, that they should say such ordinary things. (1978:131)

The narrator greets the leech-gatherer with a conventional utterance more or less the equivalent of the modern "Hello; nice weather, isn't it?" Some

critics draw attention to the tone of politeness that rings in this address. Bialostosky, for instance, asserts that the "deferential" tone of the narrator reveals an attitude which acknowledges the superiority of his interlocutor in terms of age, experience, and wisdom (1984:155). This stems from the narrator's present sense of insufficiency, which leads him to crave for a kind of wisdom that only an older and more experienced person can offer him. The leech-gatherer's gentle reply encourages the narrator to ask him what he is doing all alone in such a dreary place. "The flash of mild surprise" that the old man radiates before replying must be interpreted as an indication of the degree to which he feels himself part of the landscape, which the narrator's question ignores. Ironically, the leech-gatherer's oneness with his surroundings reflects the degree to which the narrator himself has been distanced from that sense of unity he had momentarily experienced before the encounter. In other words, the leech-gatherer's rootedness in nature serves as a comment on the narrator's present sense of alienation.

The "stately speech" which the leech-gatherer produces in reply to the narrator's question is extremely at odds with his appearance and socio-economic status. More importantly, it is in conflict with the actual content of his words, which is merely about gathering leeches—a topic hardly compatible with an elevated diction or tone. Such discrepancy is an instance of the tendency in Wordsworth's poetry of the lyrical, or subjective to absorb the dramatic, or socially specific, which results here in a displacement that elevates the discourse of a socio-economically determined leech-gatherer to lyrical heights.

As Sampson observes, presentation of the characters' literal speeches from imaginative points of view is a characteristic property of Wordsworth's poetry, in which "Rural speech..., like the leech-gatherer's speech, is not representative but is 'above the reach / Of ordinary men'" (1984b:62). Indeed, poems such as "The Excursion" and "Michael," which is a "lyrical ballad," amply illustrate this. It must thus be granted that even in *Lyrical Ballads* Wordsworth cannot be safely said to have carried out his project of imitating "the real language of men," however selectively, as he states his aim is in his Preface (1968:241). Yet he does to a considerable extent succeed in approximating the language of poetry to prose, ridding it from artificial ornament and poetic clichés. However in "Resolution and Independence" (which is not a lyrical ballad) the emphasis on, and valorization of a higher language has important implications for Wordsworth's general concern with transforming poetic language so as to make it in no way different from good prose except with regard to meter (1968:252). Richard Bourke draws attention to Wordsworth's inversion of his own ideal of a simple and natural poetic language in the narrator's praise of the leech-gatherer's speech: "The man's words come with something of a

'lofty utterance dressed': precisely, it seems, the linguistic operation which the poet was supposedly dethroning. Language as adornment, as the dress of sentiment" (1993:238). Ironically, such language is *depicted* in the poem as figuring an utterance occurring in ordinary conversation, and thus embodying a content normally expected to be expressed in prosaic language. I use the word "depicted" as the leech-gatherer's actual words are not given except one sentence in Stanza 18. And that sentence is stylistically not different from the poet-narrator's own. This also implies the valorization of poetic language and of the poetic as a privileged site in the poem.

Although an essential part of their characterization, speech is only one element of the lyrical quality of figures such as the Cumberland beggar and the leech-gatherer, "who dwindle or expand, break up or fall aside, as the poetic need dictates" (Peter Ure qtd. in Sampson 1984a:49). Sampson supports this observation by commenting that the leech-gatherer "is elusive not merely because Wordsworth pays insufficient attention to him; elusiveness is part of his very being" (1984a:49). In other words, elusiveness is an essential part of his textual function, which is basically to help reveal the workings of the mind of a man "possessed of more than usual organic sensibility," that is, a poet (Wordsworth 1968:246). The indefiniteness of such characters as the leech-gatherer in Wordsworth's poetry is in a sense a measure of its centripetal tendency "to assimilate the outer world to the mind, to absorb object into subject" (Wasserman 1964:26). Significantly, out of twenty stanzas only two are reserved for either a report or an objective representation (quotation) of the leech-gatherer's words.

In Stanza 15 the narrator conveys in reported speech the account which the leech-gatherer gives of his poverty and the hardships that he has had to endure in his occupation of gathering and selling leeches. This gives the impression of being a near reproduction of his words before the narrator turns inward again. Then the leech-gatherer's words become completely overcast by the narrator's inner voice. The partial objectivity which the narrator's report of his words had conferred on him disappears by the same token. He becomes, once more, a projection of the narrator's inner vision. His words lose their distinctiveness as verbal content, becoming a vague sound that approximates to the sounds of nature, which Wordsworth conceives of as a transcendent language:

The old man still stood by my side;
 But now his voice to me was like a stream
 Scarce heard; nor word from word could I divide;

As Will Christie observes, "Here the utterance is inseparable from the utterer" (1983:45), whose body assumes a spiritual quality so as to answer the narrator's need for correction:

And the whole body of the Man did seem
Like one whom I had met with in a dream;
Or like a man from some far region sent,
To give me apt admonishment.

The return of acute existential anxiety prompts the narrator to resume conversation:

Perplexed, and longing to be comforted,
My question eagerly did I renew,
"How is it that you live, and what is it you do?"

This is a most interesting "turn of conversation," which apparently takes the dialogue back to its starting point as if the leech-gatherer has not done all that talking about what he does and how he lives. What we really have here, at a deeper level, is internal dialogization of the narrator's voice: words that are "directed not outward, not toward another, but toward [the narrator's] own self (Bakhtin 1984:212). To put it in another way, while at the level of dialogue this question is directed at the leech-gatherer, it is, at the level of interior dialogue directed at the narrator himself. The superfluity of the question is then only a surface matter; it characterizes only one of the voices, or meanings it carries: its referential meaning. The other voice in it, on the other hand, is concerned with, or anticipates an illumination—a reply that will "un-perplex" and "comfort" the narrator. At this level of interior dialogue, it is possible to paraphrase the concern of this question as "How is it that / live, and what is it I do?"; for it articulates the narrator's anxiety about his own future. The leech-gatherer repeats his words "with a smile," politely indulging the narrator despite his apparent lack of proper attention:

"Once I could meet with them on every side;
But they have dwindled long by slow decay;
Yet still I persevere, and find them where I may."

The leech-gatherer thus reproduces what appears to be more or less the same reply as the one which he gave to the narrator's initial question with the addition of the content of the last line quoted above, which embodies the kind of answer eagerly anticipated by the narrator. However, the immediate reaction of the narrator is further brooding, whereby he this time projects his

own fears upon his interlocutor within an imagined scenario of lonely perseverance:

While he was talking thus, the lonely place,
 The old man's shape, and speech—all troubled me:
 In my mind's eye I seemed to see him pace
 About the weary moors continually,
 Wandering about alone and silently.

Meanwhile, the leech-gatherer resumes his "cheerfully uttered" discourse after a pause. The narrator finally awakens from his reverie:

...when he ended,
 I could have laughed myself to scorn to find
 In that decrepit Man so firm a mind.

The leech-gatherer is a survivor—physically, economically, and psychologically: just what the narrator fears he might not become in the future. His final words underscore both this fear and this acknowledgement:

"God," said I, "be my help and stay secure;
 I'll think of the Leech-gatherer on the lonely moor!"

The narrator thus seems to have reached a self-understanding through the knowledge he has acquired about another. Yet as Bialostosky and Sampson comment, "we are left unsure of the precise nature of the narrator's new outlook" (Sampson 1984a:48), and what kind of effect it may have on him in the future. For his invocation of God reveals more his sense of weakness and irresolution for the moment than anything else: the only certainty expressed in these lines is the narrator's resolution to *think of* the leech-gatherer (Bialostosky 1984:157; Sampson 1984a:48-49).

However, the lack of a confirmed gain for the present is compensated by what Bialostosky formulates as the speaker's declared intention to preserve the memory of the encounter and the insight he has gained through it for future need:

Though this needful thing has "come unsought," he determines no longer to act "As if all needful things would come unsought"... but to become his own providence to the extent of saving up those needful things which Providence has given. In this respect it is not the old man's strength or his providential appearance but his management of scarcity that touches the poet and makes him recall only the words

that address this problem: "Once I could meet with them on every side; / ... Yet still I persevere, and find them where I may."
(1984:157)

Indeed, the only utterance by the leech-gatherer which is presented in direct speech is those lines expressing more directly his "management of scarcity" than his perseverance; for the reward, or result of perseverance is nothing but "finding them where I may." The independent status accorded to this utterance in the poem—the fact that it is not reported, thus not subordinated to, or objectified by the discourse of the narrator—serves to reinforce its thematic value. It is this utterance that addresses the interior dialogue of the narrator more centrally than any other articulated by the leech-gatherer. Charles Rzepka points out that "the concern with poverty [and] the prominence Wordsworth gives the question of making a living in "Resolution and Independence" suggests that by 1802 [the year he composed the poem] earning money had become one of his major preoccupations" (1989:224,233). It is clearly the imperative of economic independence that underlies the self-criticism of the narrator in Stanza 6, which expresses his realization that the "summer mood" of getting all he needs as a free gift from others cannot last forever. Until 1802 friends had made it financially possible for Wordsworth to pursue his poetic career. It is therefore obviously a mixture of guilt and anxiety stemming from a sense of dependence on others' generosity that led him to question the moral and practical soundness of such a way of life. He had until then expected that others should "build for him," and they had built for him: Calvert, Pinney, Beaumont, Lord Lonsdale and his brother, John Wordsworth (Simpson 1987:38-39; Rzepka 1989: 242). In light of this information it becomes possible to read the absence of a resolution at the end of the poem as tied to the difficulty of achieving economic independence based on a poetic career. Indeed, the narrator's pressing curiosity about the leech-gatherer's livelihood is prime evidence of the financial and vocational anxiety that is registered in his interior dialogue. In other words, this curiosity translates the narrator's deeper concern about his own way of making, or rather not being able to make a living. Hence, as I have suggested above, the question that is outwardly addressed to the leech-gatherer is inwardly addressed to the narrator himself, and the second voice that emerges from the internal dialogization of this question may be read in the following terms: "How is it that I live? What is its market value? Is it possible to make a living by publishing poetry? Will I be able to survive on the literary market? What must I do to become self-sufficient?" The redundant questioning of the leech-gatherer by the narrator dissimulates and reveals at once these pressing questions for a young poet dependent on others for survival and continued practice of his profession.

The construction of a frame of values based on work and economic independence in the poem entails a mutual displacement of material and poetic pursuits. For the example set by the leech-gatherer speaks forth the necessity of sustained physical labor for an independent living in the face of all kinds of hardship. If the narrator is to achieve the same ability to gain "an honest maintenance," he must transform poetic labor into profit by combining imaginative work with hard physical labor (Rzepka 1989:244). The new value of creative work would thus emerge as surplus material value that poems as commodity bring as a result of such labor. The labor of the leech-gatherer, on the other hand, is not only visualized by the narrator in terms that recall the lonely process of poetic labor, but is ultimately turned into surplus literary value in the shape of the finished poem. As Bialostosky suggests, the description of the leech-gatherer "fixidly" looking at the muddy water which he himself has stirred up creates an analogy between leech-gathering and "thought-gathering" (my word) involved in poetic composition: his "conning" the water "As if he had been reading in a book" connotes an interpretive effort mirroring the narrator's mental search for an adequate response, which in turn enacts the intellectual labor of the author during the creative process itself (which may be assumed to have started with the very sighting of the actual leech-gatherer who served as model for Wordsworth [see Dorothy Wordsworth 1971:42]). The narrator's bleak vision of the leech-gatherer endlessly roaming the moors "alone and silently" also registers this scene of prosaic manual work in terms that are suggestive of the scene of poetic labor (Rzepka 1989:244); for Wordsworth did enormous amounts of solitary walking when composing, which cost him intense and often painful mental and physical effort.

Furthermore, the valuation of independence in the poem is initiated at a site that further problematizes its relation to imaginative activity: actual poverty in society. To be able to elucidate the implications of this we must first briefly look at the political framework that produced in the eighteenth century an effective discourse on poverty, prescribing an ethic of independence for the poor. Gary Harrison draws attention to the postscript of *Yarrow Revisited and Other Poems* (1835), in which Wordsworth condemns the practical obstacles that would inevitably prevent the new Poor Law Amendment Act (1834) from giving the poor sufficient aid, fervently advocating state aid for the disabled and the unemployed (Harrison 1989:327-328; Wordsworth 1971:756-758). Harrison traces in this text two contradictory attitudes to the problem of poverty. On the one hand, Wordsworth elaborates at length on the advantages and moral soundness of state protection for the needy. On the other hand, he praises "the spirit of independence" displayed by a pauperized couple, who were reported to have dragged the body of their dead child wherever they drifted as they could not

afford a burial, and did not want parish or private charity. Relating this to "Resolution and Independence," Harrison claims that Wordsworth's valuation of "the spirit of independence" in this poem through the portrayal of the leech-gatherer serves to valorize the condition of being a poet by means of the affinity between poets and the poor stemming from their common marginality:

in appropriating the leech gatherer as the means to figure the marginality of poets Wordsworth does not simply conflate mental and poetic labor, nor does he simply project doubts about his profession onto a comfortably stable sign of some transcendent permanence. Rather, through "Resolution and Independence" Wordsworth inscribes a figure of the poet into a discourse on poverty that valorizes the independent subject as a site of productive industry and thereby makes of marginality an "ennobling" condition. Thus, the poem places the subject within a discursive field of relations and meanings that invests the marginal with symbolic power while at the same time producing an ethic of labor for the poor. (1989:329)

Seen from this angle, the displacement of the leech-gatherer—his portrayal from a lyrical, imaginative point of view—comes to imply certain ideological meanings that are inscribed in Wordsworth's pastoralism expounded in the Preface, and figured everywhere in his poetry. The idealizing tendency in his essentialistic view of human life, which has its locus of permanence in rural existence, presents rural work and workers as the constants of such idealized universality. Accordingly, the leech-gatherer's portrayal is built on a model of

industrious, grateful, and obedient agrarian laborers [that] constitute(s) what Mikhail Bakhtin calls the agricultural idyll that unites human life and natural life in a common language. Within the agricultural idyll, laborers and their work lose historical specificity and come to signify "essential life *events*" whose mythic dimensions in the late eighteenth century were drawn from the conventions and motifs of the pastoral. (Harrison 1989:330)

This corresponds to what Jerome McGann sees as a predominating tendency in Romantic works to displace historically determined events and situations by a universalizing discourse that aims to transcend the conflicts manifest in specific social contexts by resituating them in idealized localities. Wordsworth's poetry, regarded by McGann as normative and in every sense exemplary for Romantic discourse, achieves this displacement

by recreating its objects of knowledge within a field of organic sensibility whose center is the psyche of the poet himself (see 1983:66-92).

Simon Malpas rejects a reading of the poem which would view the inattention of the narrator to the leech-gatherer's story as an indication of "what McGann refers to as a 'self-regarding spiritual economy'" that negates the materiality of the other (1997). For, argues Malpas,

it is just this economy that is put on stage in "Resolution and Independence". Although a "spiritual economy" might legitimately be said to characterise the first half of the poem while the narrator walks "Far from the world, and from all care"; it is this economy that leads to the anxiety which the old man interrupts. Furthermore, the narrator appears aware of his "displacement" of the Leech-Gatherer, and his inability to listen to the story is explicitly discussed. In other words, the poem appears to contain its own self-conscious reflection on the supposedly unconscious ideological structure of Romantic art.

Thus the narrator's self-consciousness, embodied by his interpretive record of an introspective mood which he lived in the past, is equivalent to the self-consciousness of the poem itself. Furthermore, such self-consciousness is registered by the poem as largely a product of dialogic interaction with another, although full attention to him is lacking. After all, the leech-gatherer's very presence in the "actual" encounter is interpreted on both the dramatic and the narrative (retrospective) levels as an aid to self-understanding, which always requires the perspective of another.

Yet, of course, the interaction of the narrator with the leech-gatherer yields full meaning only within the frame of interior dialogue already in effect in his mind. It is not, as some critics partially observe, the case that the narrator turns inward after meeting the leech-gatherer. As we have seen, from Stanzas 5 to 7, just before seeing the leech-gatherer, the narrator is presented as intensely thinking—talking to himself. It is, therefore, also only partially true that "dialogue in 'Resolution and Independence' peters out into monologue" (Baron 1995:11). For dialogue in the usual sense of the term cannot establish itself in the poem against the strong current of interior dialogue, which comes to assimilate the monologue of the leech-gatherer—albeit selectively. And it is only towards the end of the poem that the narrator displays a sudden move for outward responsiveness in the form of a seemingly awkward repetition of his initial question, which is really prompted by genuine inner responsiveness arising from anxiety. The leech-gatherer's ensuing reply, apparently a repetition of his initial one, does not succeed in fully directing the self-indulged thoughts of the narrator outward; rather, it provides an external point of reference that heightens their inwardness. For the example of resolution and independence which the

leech-gatherer provides serves to intensify the narrator's sense of dependence through a new insight. Dialogue thus reinforces and consummates interior dialogue. Hence the dialogic self-consciousness that characterizes interior dialogue inhabits the whole structure of the poem.

Özet

Wordsworth'ün "Azim Ve Bağımsızlık" Başlıklı Şiirinde İçsel Diyalog: Diyalojik Bir İnceleme

Bu çalışma Wordsworth'ün "Azim ve Bağımsızlık" başlıklı şiirinin diyalojik açıdan ayrıntılı bir incelemesini sunar. Yazıda Mikhail Bakhtin'in Dostoyevski'nin sanatı üzerine yazdığı kitapta geliştirdiği söylem çözümlemesi yönteminden yararlanılmıştır. Daha geniş olarak bu yazıda Bakhtin okulunun ortaya koyduğu sosyo-dilbilimsel söylem ve yazın kuramından yararlanılmıştır. Bu bakış açısı uygulandığında şiir anlatıcının içsel diyalogunu çizen karmaşık bir diyalojik metin olarak karşımıza çıkar. Böyle bir diyalog şiirde anlatıcının yalnızca kendisiyle değil, kendisinde yola çıkarak bir başkasıyla ve dünyayla olan ilişkisini de canlandırma işlevini üstlenir. Aynı zamanda şiir içsel diyalogda bireyin bir başkası ve dış dünya aracılığıyla kendisini sorgulamasını da göz önüne serer. Böylece şiir Bakhtin'in diyalog kavramına yetkin bir örnek oluşturur. Buna göre birey yaşamla, başkalarıyla ve başkalarıyla ilişkisinde kendisiyle ilgili bir tepki ve tutum oluşturmak zorunluluğundan kaçamaz. Bu bakımdan Wordsworth'ün bu şiiri, öznenin başkalarıyla ilişkide olduğu ve başkalığın kimliğin kaçınılmaz koşulu olduğu konusunda diyalojizmin temel görüşünün sezgisel bir örneklemesidir.

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