

To the Virgins, To Make Much of Time: Experience of the Sex Life

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The poem "To the Virgins, To Make Much Of Time" is written by Robert Herrick. Robert Herrick was born in 1591 in London and died in 1674. In his life of 83 years, he has written lots of poems and lyrics to contribute to the English literature. After one year his father died and he stayed with his uncle. He graduated in 1617. He never married. "To the Virgins, to Make Much of Time" is one of his good poem telling about women and sex life. Because of his time period he is naturally influenced by classical concept. Also his greatness rests on simplicity and this poem is somewhat sensuous about the life and the age. Lots of his poems reflect the sensuousness of human life and age like in this poem. He never married; it may be the reason of this poem to be a cautious about one's age. And his suggestion through this poem may be the reason of his life spending without sex. This poem is a good example among his various creations to urge something about his experience of the sex life.

Sex life is important time period of any creation of this earth. Every living thing and we need sex. On the other hand

sex never be the same in every time or age of any life. It definitely has certain time or proper age. Because of this, if we lose this time doing nothing or gaining nothing experience about sex, we will not able to capture this time repeatedly. It shows that the central idea of this poem could be about utilization of time. And the theme could be the "time comes but never repeats". Every stanza is concerned about age, life and sex, therefore all the times, mentioned in this poem, is connected with our youth life.

Structure of this poem is "End-stopped" where we pause at the end and indirect rhyme is used in every stanza. For example, "flying" and "dying" in first stanza, "getting" and "setting" in second stanza, and "warmer" and "former" and "marry" and "terry" in third and fourth stanzas are sincerely applied. Not only that, each sentences has same indirect rhyme connected to next sentences inside the same stanza.

"The poet employ symbol and allusion and use mythical materials to convey complex ideas and a great deal of information as quickly and economically as possible two symbols, rosebuds

and flowers - point beyond themselves to youth and the brevity of life as well as to sexuality, marriage, family and full engagement with life (Jacobs, 1998)."

In this poem exercise of persona is also a very good way to compare one types of life to another types of life. Here, "rosebuds" refers girls, especially virgin (line 1) and "old time" refers the youth age of our human life. This makes good comparison between flower lives to human life. Another aspect of this poem is reconnection between the time and the sex joy or fun or may be sex experience. "Gather ye rosebuds...still a-flying" (1st stanza, line 1 & 2) tries to explain the importance of utilizing our youth time. Next two sentences is example what would happen if we miss this time, as it says "... the same flower that smiles today, tomorrow will be dying" (line 2 & 3, 1st stanza).

The poet is influenced by the classical idea because he feels the importance of first sex experience rather than the next coming experience. In our modern world, sex has become different and there is no meaning to remember first sex experience as we are having lots of fun in our youth life and also because of

sex-freedom. Hence, this types of concept is became a classical thinking.

Sexual experience is much more enjoyable in our youth when we have warm blood flowing through the vein, relatively better than our later days of life. The poet also suggests us to grab the time before we lose our appropriate time to make fun and to understand the value of first sex in our rest of life. If we fail to do so, the time will be former and never comes again. "That age is the best When youthwarmer" (3rd stanza, first 2 lines) and "But being spent, Times still.... Former" (same stanza, last 2 lines)

This poem is written many years ago, in old literature style and using old types of words. The word "ye" (1st line, 1st stanza) and "coy" (1st line, 4th stanza) is the prime example of old written style. "Ye" has two meanings pronoun "you" and determiner "the" (Dictionary, 1995) (Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, 3rd Ed., 1995). But in this poem the "ye" refers as "you" because several times the poet is repeating word "your" (1st and 2nd line, 4th stanza), and the poem is also concerned with the ones' life and the time.