



Wordsworth's Lucy poems as the Reflections of the French Revolution: A New Historicist Study

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Abstract

The current study takes a New Historic outlook toward William Wordsworth's the "Lucy Poems" and believes that by a minute scrutiny of these poems we can expose the power structure and the dominant discourses that according to New Historicism have shaped the poet's character, society and world. Accordingly, the paper suggests that the poet through symbolic and non-symbolic ways has embedded historical and political facts in these poems. To do so, the research will reveal some controversial correspondences among these poems, William Wordsworth's life and historical facts of the French Revolution. To support this idea, the study will bring quotations not only from modern conspicuous literary critics but also from the poets and Romantic contemporaries to show how the historical and political discourses of the period have greatly influenced both William Wordsworth and even the literature of the whole era, i.e., Romanticism. As a matter of fact, this research intends to connect the "Lucy Poems" to the contemporary historical context and the poet's ideals of the Revolution in France. The findings, however, reveal that William Wordsworth has been submissive to the historical events of his time.

Key Words: Wordsworth, Lucy Poems, New Historicism, the French Revolution.

انعكاسات الثورة الفرنسية في قصائد لوسي لوردزورث: دراسة تاريخية جديدة

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المستخلص

تأخذ الدراسة الجارية رؤية تاريخية جديدة تجاه "قصائد لوسي" لوليام وردزورث وتعتقد أنه من خلال الملاحظة النقدية الدقيقة، والفحص الدقيق لهذه القصائد يُمكننا الكشف عن بُنية القوة وهيكلها، و الخطابات السائدة التي شكلت وفقاً لتاريخية جديدة شخصية الشاعر ومجتمعه وعالمه. وبناءً على ذلك، يوحي النص بأن الشاعر قد غرس حقائق تاريخية وسياسية، بطرق رمزية غير مباشرة وأخرى غير رمزية في هذه القصائد. لمعرفة ذلك، سيقوم البحث بالكشف عن بعض التطابقات أو التشابهات المتصلة المثيرة للجدل بين هذه القصائد، حياة وليام وردزورث والحقائق التاريخية للثورة الفرنسية.

لتطوير هذه الفكرة ودعمها، ستجلب الدراسة اقتباسات ليس فقط من نقاد الأدب البارزين الحداثيين بل، وأيضاً من الشعراء المعاصرين الرومانسيين. لإظهار كيف أن الخطابات السياسية والتاريخية في تلك الفترة قد أثرت، وانعكست بشكل كبير على "وليام وردزورث" وحتى على أدب العصر بأكمله، أي الرومانسية.

في الحقيقة يُبين هذا البحث على ربط "قصائد لوسي" بالسباق التاريخي المعاصر وأفكار ومُثل الشاعر العليا للثورة في فرنسا. ومع ذلك، تظهر النتائج أن وليام وردزورث كان خاضعاً للأحداث التاريخية في عصره.

الكلمات المفتاحية: وردزورث، قصائد لوسي، التاريخية الجديدة، الثورة الفرنسية

Introduction

Perhaps numerous studies have been done to investigate the nature of one character in William Wordsworth's poetry: *Lucy*. But who or what can Lucy stand for? There is almost no doubt that Lucy is the creative inspiration of a series of Wordsworth's poems, but the nature of the character of Lucy has remained a matter of dispute and mystery among the literary critics. The current study claims that by a close research into these poems there can exist some undeniable correlations between Wordsworth's character of Lucy and

some fundamental incidents concerning the French Revolution. Maybe these interrelationships can be best exemplified in Francis Jeffrey statement that connected “the revolution in our literature” with “the French Revolution” (Christ et. al. 2004, p. 7). Indeed, in these poems the poet is constantly concerned about the impending death of Lucy and the lessening of his poetic power that can be regarded as a parallel with the Revolution’s endangered values and ideals. If we extend our examples to some other Wordsworth’ poems, this matter would become more tangible even throughout the Romantic period. The main point the research is to take an investigative journey in the wide glimmering world of Wordsworth’s the “Lucy Poems” with the intention of showing how they are beyond what many literary critics have supposed.

From a New Historicist perspective, literature, history, religion, politics, etc., are intermingled discourses or interconnecting forces that constitute the episteme of each era. Therefore, based on this view this research maintains a Cultural Poetics approach toward William Wordsworth’ “Lucy poems” and some of other poems, because the poet smudges the boundaries between the discourses of literature, history and politics.

The term “Lucy Poems” is exclusively applied to five highly sentimental poems when his sister, Dorothy, and he were in Germany. The poems were written in 1799 after the publication of *Lyrical Ballads* in 1798; therefore, they are added to the second and third editions of *Lyrical Ballads* in 1800 and 1802. These poems are “Strange Fits of Passion Have I Known”, “She Dwelt among the Untrodden Ways”, “Three Years She Grew”, “A Slumber Did My Spirit Seal”, and “I Travelled among Unknown Men”. Many critics believe that the character of Lucy is not fictitious, but these critics have been unable to remove the mask of Lucy in the poet’s life. Another group of critics remark that Lucy is just a figment of the poet’s visions. In one very real sense, whether Lucy has had actual existence or not, she has certainly been an impressively great source of inspiration and poetic power for the Romantic poet. In these five poems Wordsworth is extremely concerned about Lucy’s health and even talks about her death, so Lucy, as most critics believe, cannot be the poet’s sister, daughter or wife and her identity has remained a matter of dispute among the literary critics.

William Wordsworth as an Idealist Revolutionary

If we want to discuss the beginning of the Romantic Movement, one of the fundamental causes of Romanticism is undoubtedly the occurrence of the French Revolution in 1789. To find out the truth of this idea, with the break out of the Revolution and the political, social and religious transformations and also tremendous changes in the power structure of the monarchy, there was this supposition that the Revolution would pave the way for more changes. In fact, these unprecedented reformations in the political structure triggered fundamental transformations in literature and other arts. These changes in literature created one of the literary cornerstones; that is, Romanticism.

William Wordsworth is one of the pivotal forerunners in this field. Of great significance is the fact that Wordsworth became an eager supporter of the French Revolution. During his life in France (November 1791 to December 1792), Wordsworth became a fervent supporter of the French Revolution—which seemed to him and many others to promise a “glorious renovation of society” (Christ et. al. 2004, p. 243). Actually, Wordsworth strove to resist against the strict traditional literary styles of the eighteenth century and to establish revolutionary shifts in the literature of the era. Christ also “also discussing Wordsworth,. Hazlitt declared his school of poetry the literary equivalent of the French Revolution, which translated political change into poetical experiment” (Christ et. al. 2004, p. 12). As a matter of fact, it can be claimed that Wordsworth was greatly influenced by the French Revolution and its consequence and even in the summer of 1790 travelled to France to celebrate the first anniversary of the Revolution. When he returned from France he had a negative perspective toward poverty and injustice in his own society. About the outlook that we may observe in most great Romantic poets and their works, Mason asserts that:

“If the poor were being left desolate by enclosure, they were plunged into still greater destitution by the impact of Britain’s continued war with France. The two countries had been at war since 1689, each driven by a desire for religious and colonial power” (Mason, 2010, p. 30).

In this respect, maybe the most conspicuous characteristic of William Wordsworth is his revolutionary proclivities and individualist inclinations. As

mentioned earlier, he decided to apply this individualism and subjectivity to literature and establish new forms. This means that the poet, unlike Neoclassic principles, is free to dominate every part of life that he wants to describe and exploit his pure imagination and poetic power. This essential feature in Wordsworth's poetry can be construed in this way: Exploiting the Revolution in France to challenge the objective and fixed principles in literature and utilizing this art as a tool to instigate and transcend human feelings. Thus, maybe we can say that Wordsworth believed in a mystic and spiritual form of life that is beyond the existing terrestrial laws. Indeed, he believed in a kind of subjective idealism that considers life and literature as a result of subjective poetic mentality of the poet. In effect, he believes the poet – by this mentality – can build an ideal and democrat society which is a kind of reaction against the slavery of humankind by Capitalist structure. Such ideal society is the one in which that common people are the real citizens. Mason keeps that “Here was a habitat in which Wordsworth could reflect on his months in London, a period in which he had absorbed the political fervor produced by English reactions to the Revolution in France” (Mason, 2010, p. 4). To obtain this assurance, he even declares that, the language of poetry should be the “language really used by [people]” (Bressler, 2012, p. 35).

Historical Context and the “Lucy Poems”

When people invaded to the Bastille on July 14 and the Revolution broke out in France, many people did not have the intention of ousting the king and slaughtering the aristocrats and prisoners. This group of people just wanted to gain more equality and to remove injustice and poverty. William Wordsworth was one of the fervent supporters of such an ideology.

The Revolution began in 1789 but there exist various and sometimes contradictory ideas about the time when it ended. For instance, some critics believe that the Revolution ended just three years after its beginning in 1792 when “September Massacre” happened and thousands of people were executed in the prisons. Other specified times, according to critics, are 1795, 1799, 1804, or 1815. Those who say that the Revolution had ended up eclipsed in 1792 believed that by the “September Massacre” and after that the “Reign of Terror” under Robespierre the Revolution had deviated from its

genuine ideals and had shown its destructive effects. Actually, in 1792, which is the first presented date to refer to these deviations, Jacobins and radical revolutionaries deposed and arrested the king. At this time the constant wave of executions had been started and many aristocrats and even ordinary people had been guillotined. In one very real sense, these measures for William Wordsworth are not pleasant and even are disappointing. He is constantly concerned about the destruction of the Revolution's primarily ideals and tries to depict this in his poems. Christ believes that "his divided loyalties between England and France, and his gradual disillusion with the course of the Revolution brought him according to his account in *The Prelude* 10 and 11 to the verge of an emotional breakdown" (Christ et. al. 2004, p. 243). It is clear, however, that the same situation happens to many people of England as well; the people that at first were hopeful to the Revolution and its consequences. It can be claimed that another influential reason for the disappointment of English people toward the French Revolution was the wars which were waged between France and the European countries. The wars which were not in parallel with the Revolution's ideal and values. Christ et. al. assert:

"But English sympathizers dropped off as the Revolution followed its increasingly grim course: the accession to power by Jacobin extremists, intent on purifying their new republic by purging it of its enemies; the "September Massacres" of the imprisoned nobility in 1792, followed by the execution of the king and queen; the new French Republic's invasion of the Rhineland and the Netherlands, which brought England into the war against France; the guillotining of thousands in the Reign of Terror under Robespierre" (Christ et. al. 2004, p. 2).

Therefore, this article claims that William Wordsworth has expressed these throes as some symbols in "Lucy Poems". In a more general context, it is, however, essential to remember that the Romantic art and literature become a fertile ground for symbolism and symbolically depicting socio-political insights. In fact, the paper takes "Lucy Poems" into consideration as the

poet's feeling that are "recollected in tranquility." That is the emotions that are symbolically embedded in these poems.

Review of the Literature

Wordsworth did not show the inspiration for the character of Lucy, and over the years the topic has generated intense speculation among literary historians. Little biographical information can be drawn from the poems—it is difficult even to determine Lucy's age. In the mid-19th century, Thomas De Quincey (1785–1859), author and of Wordsworth, wrote that "the poet always preserved a mysterious silence on the subject of that "Lucy", repeatedly alluded to or apostrophised in his poems, and I have heard, from gossiping people about Hawkshead, some snatches of tragic story, which, after all, might be an idle semi-fable, improved out of slight materials" (De Quincey, 1839. P.147). Critic Herbert Hartman believes Lucy's name was taken from "a neo-Arcadian commonplace", and argues she was not intended to represent any single person (Hartman, 1934, p.136). In the view of one of Wordsworth biographer, Mary Moorman (1906–1994),

"The identity of 'Lucy' has been the problem of critics for many years. But Wordsworth is a poet before he is a biographer, and neither 'Lucy' nor her home nor his relations with her are necessarily in the strict sense historical. Nevertheless, as the *Lyrical Ballads* were all of them 'founded on fact' in some way, and as Wordsworth's mind was essentially factual, it would be rash to say that Lucy is entirely fictitious" (Moorman, 1968. P.425).

Moorman suggests that Lucy may represent Wordsworth's romantic interest Mary Hutchinson, but wonders why she would be represented as one who died. It is possible that Wordsworth was thinking of Margaret Hutchinson, Mary's sister who had died. There is no evidence, however, that the poet loved any of the Hutchinsons other than Mary. It is more likely that Margaret's death influenced but is not the sore foundation for Lucy. Embroidering on that, Hunter Davies contended that the series was written for the poet's sister Dorothy, but found the Lucy–Dorothy allusion "bizarre" (Davis, 1980, p.101). Earlier, literary critic Richard Matlak tried to explain the Lucy/Dorothy connection, and wrote that Dorothy represented a financial burden to Wordsworth, which had effectively forced his separation from

Coleridge. Wordsworth, depressed over the separation from his friend, in this interpretation, expresses both his love for his sister and fantasies about her loss through the poems (Matlak, 1978, p. 48). Throughout the poems, the narrator's mixture of mourning and antipathy is accompanied by denial and guilt; his denial of the Lucy/Dorothy relationship and the lack of narratorial responsibility for the death of Lucy allow him to escape from questioning his desires for the death of his sister. After Wordsworth began the "Lucy poems", Coleridge wrote, "Some months ago Wordsworth transmitted to me a most sublime Epitaph/whether it had any reality, I cannot say. Most probably, in some gloomier moment he had fancied the moment in which his Sister might die" (Coleridge, 1956, p. 479). It is, however, possible that Wordsworth simply feared her death and did not wish it, even subconsciously. Reflecting on the significance and relevance of Lucy's identity, the 19th-century poet, essayist and literary critic Frederic Myers observed that:

"here it was that the memory of some emotion prompted the lines on "Lucy". Of the history of that emotion, he has told us nothing; I forbear, therefore, to inquire concerning it, or even to speculate. That it was to the poet's honour, I do not doubt; but whoever learned such secrets rightly? or who should wish to learn? It is best to leave the sanctuary of all hearts inviolate, and to respect the reserve not only of the living but of the dead. Of these poems, almost alone, Wordsworth in his autobiographical notes has said nothing whatever" (Frederic Myers, 1906, p.45).

Literary scholar Karl Kroeber argues that Lucy

"Possesses a double existence; her actual, historical existence and her idealized existence in the poet's mind. In the poem, Lucy is both actual and idealized, but her actuality is relevant only insofar as it makes manifest the significance implicit in the actual girl" (Karl Kroeber, 1964, pp.106-107).

In the similar token, Geoffrey Hartman holds the same view; to him Lucy is seen "entirely from within the poet, so that this modality may be the poet's own", but then he argues, "she belongs to the category of spirits who must still become human the poet describes her as dying at a point at which she would have been humanized" (Hartman, 1967, p. 161). The literary historian

Kenneth Johnston concludes that “Lucy was created as the personification of Wordsworth's muse”, and the group as a whole “is a series of invocations to a Muse feared dead. As epitaphs, they are not sad, a very inadequate word to describe them, but breathlessly, almost aware of what such a loss would mean to the speaker: 'oh, the difference to me!’” (Johnston.2000, p.463). Scholar John L. Mahoney observes that whether Lucy is intended to represent Dorothy, Mary or another is much less important to understanding the poems than the fact that she represented “a hidden being who seems to lack flaws and is alone in the world” (Mahoney, 1997, p.105). Furthermore, she is represented as being insignificant in the public sphere but of the utmost importance in the private sphere; in “She dwelt” this manifests through the comparison of Lucy to both a hidden flower and a shining star. Neither Lucy nor Wordsworth's other female characters “exist as independent self-conscious human beings with minds as capable of the poet's” and are “rarely allowed to speak for themselves” (Mahoney, 1997, p.106).

Theoretical Framework

New Historicism as an approach came into prominence in 1980s in the theories of Stephan Greenblatt, so it is a relatively new critical approach. In effect, New Historicism- also called Cultural Poetics- is the reconsideration and truly recontextualization of the role that history plays in the studying of literature. In order better to understand it, New Historicism emphasizes the link and connection which exist between the discourses of literature and history, and/or the interconnectedness of literature and society. In a more specific context, New Historicism is “a practice that has developed out of contemporary theory, particularly the structuralist realization that all human systems are symbolic and subject to the rules of language, and the deconstructive realization that there is no way of positioning oneself as an observer outside the closed circle of textuality” (Richter, 2018, p.26). Before New Historicism, history had been regarded just as secondary the literary text itself which had been considered to be of primary significance in the process of interpretation of a text.

“Literary studies in the 1980s challenged the literary assumptions of "practical criticism" or New Criticism as practiced by F. R. Leavis, I. A. Richards and others who located and interpreted the literary text within a broader sphere of literary and moral traditions, invariably de-linking it from the social, political and historical context that gave rise to it” (Williams, 2000, p. 115).

Therefore, based on this critical approach and literary theory literary and non-literary texts have the same significance in interpreting a text and does not envisage any borderline between these two; on the contrary, it adopts the intertextuality and interactions among these texts. Actually, New Historic critics believe that not only the text but also the author himself are the products of such discourses and there is no pure objectivity either in the text or in the author himself.

Greenblatt lays down four “enabling presumptions” of new historicism in *Genre*, which have acquired the force of law. ” They are:

1. Literature has a historical base and literary works are not the products of a single consciousness but many social and cultural forces. In order to understand literature one has to take recourse to both culture and society that gave rise to it in the first place.
2. Literature is not a distinctive human activity hitherto believed, but another vision of history. This has obvious implications for both literary theory and the study of literary texts.
3. Since literature and human beings are both shaped by social and political forces, it is not possible to talk of an intrinsic human nature that can transcend history. And since history is not a continuous series of events but ruptures, there is no link between one age and another or between men belonging to different ages. This being the case, a Renaissance man is rooted in his Renaissance idiosyncrasies just as a modern man is rooted in his. A modern reading of a Renaissance text cannot be the same as a Renaissance reading. At most a literary interpretation can reconstruct the ideology of the age through a given text.'
4. Caught in his own historicity, a historian cannot escape the social or ideological constraints of his own formation. And, therefore, he cannot fully

understand the past objectively on its own terms (as quoted in Mukesh Williams, 2000, p.118).

As a matter of fact, this article has adopted a New Historic approach to give a fresh scrutiny to William Wordsworth's "Lucy Poems" and to adopt a parallel study of these poems and history.

Inferential Analysis of the "Lucy Poems"

First of all, it is essential to know that what has made these poems so mysterious is the poetic subjectivity of the poet in depicting the character and her surrounding incidents. Up to here, we tried to prove that William Wordsworth, as a fervent revolutionary, was greatly influenced by history and other dominant discourses of his own era. In the following section, we are going to illustrate that how he applied such an influence to his "Lucy Poems" through symbolic signs, and in fact test our primary hypothesis that the character Lucy can stand for the French Revolution.

Lucy: A Symbolic Interpretation

In all five poems the poet talks about the nonexistence or death of Lucy. Many literary critics believe that Wordsworth describes Lucy with such a lovely sentimentalism and passionate emotion that we cannot take Lucy into consideration just as an imaginary entity. The fervent enthusiasm that the French Revolution gave the poet firstly can have resulted in such an ardent description. But due to the fact that he had somehow become, as referred formerly, disappointed to the course of the Revolution after the "September Massacre" of 1792 (three years after the beginning of the Revolution in 1789) and then the "Reign of Terror", we can claim that his mysterious character Lucy stands for the Revolution in France; interestingly, Lucy in his poems dies after three years. In truth, the poet may have portrayed Lucy's death as a symbol of the lost ideals, i.e., the aspirations of the Revolution. Wordsworth is constantly worried about what has bestowed him the poetic power, revelation, and unlimited inspiration which we can appropriately claim that is mostly due to the French Revolution which granted him boundless individualist ambitions both to his character and to his poetry.

In this case, Lucy and her character in these five poems are the poet's long-wished, but lost, ideals of the Revolution in France which are remembered and "recollected in tranquility." In one very real sense, Lucy, in a New Historic outlook, is the product of history that has taken root in the poet's mind. Thus, Lucy can be the French Revolution which is the poet's creative imagination. Lucy lives in Wordsworth's mind and actually is the queen of his mind. So, we must search for Lucy inside Wordsworth's mentality, as shown in the poem *Strange Fits of Passion Have I known* :

"Strange fits of passion have I known:
And I will dare to tell,
But in the Lover's ear alone,
What once to me befel.
When she I loved looked every day
Fresh as a rose in June,
I to her cottage bent my way,
Beneath an evening moon.
Upon the moon I fixed my eye,
All over the wide lea;
With quickening pace my horse drew nigh
Those paths so dear to me.
And now we reached the orchard-plot;
And, as we climbed the hill,
is The sinking moon to Lucy's cot
Came near, and nearer still.
In one of those sweet dreams I slept,
Kind Nature's gentlest boon!
And all the while my eyes I kept
On the descending moon.
My horse moved on; hoof after hoof
He raised, and never stopped:
When down behind the cottage roof,
At once, the bright moon dropped.
What fond and wayward thoughts will slide
Into a Lover's head!

"O mercy!" to myself I cried,

"If Lucy should be dead!"(Greenblatt, 2007, p.274).

At the very beginning of the poem Wordsworth expresses his strange passion which may have transformed his whole existence for it is a fresh perception to him. When the French Revolution broke out, for many people a new era had been begun. A period that was of a splendid and unprecedented freshness, vigor and liveliness.

In this poem Wordsworth compares the Revolution to a lovely girl and a flower that have made his life meaningful and valuable. He has discovered his beloved that has transferred to the poet a very special mental vigor. So the poet determines to travel and move towards her with his whole soul. Indeed, Lucy's cottage and the poet's journey toward it can stand for France and Wordsworth's travel to it.

Interestingly, if we analyze the etymology of the word "Lucy", we will come to know that this word originally means "light" and "being lustrous". When the poet is going to Lucy, he is truly moving towards the Revolution in France which shines like the moon. Another engaging matter is that the term "Revolution" in the French "*La revolution*" is a feminine name as Lucy is. The poet, on the back of a horse, goes towards Lucy's hut which is actually Wordsworth's journey to France. This way is dear for the poet due to the fact that he is moving towards the origin and source of his poetic power and revelation. The poet in this poem climbs a hill which can be the representative of the difficulties that he may have had in travel to France, but this hardship is meaningless to him and is like a sweet dream.

The more the horseman gets closer to the cottage, the more the Moon gets dimmer, as though the poet is worried about the values that he anticipates to discover in the cottage. He is so anxious that he constantly keeps his on the Moon, for the Moon is Lucy herself that shines and emits this brightness. So the Moon is the symbol of Lucy, and Lucy is stands for the French Revolution. When the Moon vanishes, it can imply the declining of the values for which the poet goes on this journey. But he continues to move towards Lucy's cottage because he unconsciously knows that Lucy is still alive. The Moon in this poem, which stands for Lucy, is not a static entity, and the poet considers it as a vital and essential being because Wordsworth

connects his poetical vigor to it. With the declining of the Moon, the poet's poetical aspiration also declines, and he has a fear unless Lucy is dead. In fact, William Wordsworth, in a poetical dream, takes step towards his elevated ambitions that all are summarized in Lucy; but little by little he recognizes that these aspirations are in expose of malicious dangers. Le us have a look at Wordsworth's *She Dwelt Among the Untrodden Ways*:

“She dwelt among the untrodden ways
Beside the springs of Dove,
A Maid whom there were none to praise
And very few to love:
A violet by a mossy stone
Half hidden from the eye!
—Fair as a star, when only one
Is shining in the sky.
She lived unknown, and few could know
When Lucy ceased to be;
But she is in her grave, and, oh,
The difference to me!” (Greenblatt, 2007, p.275).

In the poem “She Dwelt Among the Untrodden Ways”, the poet has come to this understanding that Lucy (the symbol of the French Revolution) may not possess the former vigor and is left isolated due to its deviations. In this situation, maybe few people can be found to have remained devoted to the primary and ambitious aspirations of the Revolution. Actually, many people have banished Lucy because they may have come to know with the grim results of her possible disastrous consequences (such as political radicalism, guillotining people, and regicide). These incidents can be ascribed to the beginning of “September Massacre”.

If we take Lucy into consideration as an ideal beloved that lives just in the poet's unconscious mind, and that this ideal beloved is the source of poetic inspiration for him, our hypothesis most probably comes true, because according to contemporary and modern literary critics this is the Revolution in France which mostly gives life to his poetry not an actual beloved named Lucy. To proceed our method, we can say that the growth of violet among mossy stones means that the French Revolution has occurred amid numerous

obstacles and troublesome situations. The stone can imply the French monarchy and the difficult and distressing situation which the monarchy has caused. Violet, on the other hand, is the symbol of love and resistance. It is also a symbol of Lucy or the Revolution. This violet grows up alongside a mossy stone which can refer to the corrupted French government. The poet compares Lucy to a fair star that embodies her singularity. To tell the truth, when the French Revolution occurred, the same uniqueness was applied to it and even it was compared to the traditional prophesies and millennium. But when the Revolution deviated from its ideals for people such as William Wordsworth, they gradually leaned towards more conservative proclivities and got disillusioned towards its course. At the end of the poem, it seems that Lucy has gone. But the poet declares her death in the third poem. In the third line of "She Dwelt Among the Untrodden Ways" Lucy becomes anonymous just as the Revolution deviates three years after its initiation. Many critics believe that "star" in this poem refers to the place and position of poetry in the material and industrial world. But according to the strong hypothesis introduced in this research, we cannot ignore the fact that star can also stand for the poet's unique and singular vision towards the Revolution which gradually declines. Also, "the untrodden ways" may embody the mentality of those people who had not even dare to imagine the Revolution and also to emphasize the greatness of such a happening. Similarly, Wordsworth might be maneuvering the above two forgoing poems in his *Three Years She Grew*:

"Three years she grew in sun and shower,
Then Nature said, "A lovelier flower
On earth was never sown;
This Child I to myself will take;
She shall be mine, and I will make
A Lady of my own. 1
"Myself will to my darling be
Both law and impulse: and with me
The Girl, in rock and plain,
In earth and heaven, in glade and bower,
Shall feel an overseeing power
To kindle or restrain.

"She shall be sportive as the fawn
That wild with glee across the lawn
Or up the mountain springs;
And hers shall be the breathing balm,
And hers the silence and the calm
Of mute insensate things.
"The floating clouds their state shall lend
To her; for her the willow bend;
Nor shall she fail to see
Even in the motions of the Storm
Grace that shall mould the Maiden's form
By silent sympathy.
"The stars of midnight shall be dear
To her; and she shall lean her ear
In many a secret place
Where rivulets dance their wayward round,
And beauty born of murmuring sound
Shall pass into her face.
"And vital feelings of delight
Shall rear her form to stately height,
Her virgin bosom swell;
Such thoughts to Lucy I will give
While she and I together live
Here in this happy dell."
Thus Nature spake—the work was done—
How soon my Lucy's race was run!
She died, and left to me
This heath, this calm, and quiet scene;
The memory of what has been,
And never more will be"(Greenblatt, 2007, p.275).

Perhaps it can be said that this poem is, in one aspect or another, the complement of the two previous poems. In "Strange Fits of Passion Have I known" and "She Dwelt Among the Untrodden Ways" Wordsworth, is doubtful and does not precisely mention Lucy's death. At the end of the first

poem, the poet expresses his fear that if Lucy dies what would happen. At the end of the second poem, he talks about a greater probability about Lucy's death, "But she is in her grave, and, oh/The difference to me!" These oscillations about Lucy's life can be related to the ideological plagues that menaced the Revolution in the first two years. But in the third poem, "Three Years She Grew", Wordsworth obviously alludes to Lucy's death. In fact, he mentions the collapse and breakdown of a historical turning point that he interconnected a great deal of his poetical aspirations to it.

In this poem, Lucy grows in "sun and shower", in the summer and in the winter that imply the dangers and the difficulties which the virgin Revolution may have encountered. The poet refers to Lucy as a "lovelier flower" to reveal that the Revolution in France has been much more pleasant to him than any other incident. Therefore, the poet intends to protect such a magnificent gift that nature has bestowed to him, but at the end Wordsworth talks about Lucy's death or the collapse of a set of values. In this poem Lucy lives just for three years, just the same time that the Revolution is fertile and has not been contaminated. Lucy dies but the effects that she caused remain alive. So the poet somehow does not insist on her death but on a truly fresh perspective which he has gained from such an incident.

Conclusion

The main objective of this research was to interpret William Wordsworth's "Lucy Poems" from a radically new perspective. In fact, the paper took a New Historic approach to show that Wordsworth's mysterious character, Lucy, can have a historical being and can stand for the French Revolution. According to New Historicism, we have to give a new a greater prestige to the role that history plays in reaching a more correct interpretation of a literary text. Accordingly, this research tried to prove that there exist many undeniable correspondences between the poet's life and ideals and some upheavals in the French Revolution. Therefore, it can be terminated at this point that Wordsworth was greatly under the influence of historical context of his own period, and through a minute analysis one can have a greater understanding of his controversial character, i.e., Lucy.



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