

Stylistic Analysis of William Blake's "The Divine Image"

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Abstract: This paper aims to determine the stylistic features of the poem "The Divine Image" by renowned poet William Blake. The stylistic choices made in "The Divine Image" are categorized under four levels, namely phonological, morphological, graphological, and lexico-syntactical. Results showed that William Blake made distinct stylistic choices that were motivated by the message of the poem. This stylistic analysis helps identify the message of the poem and the linguistic techniques employed by the author.

Keywords—stylistic analysis; phonological level; morphological level; graphological level; lexico-syntactical level

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Style

Part of what makes poetry popular is its freedom when it comes to utilizing linguistic tools to produce an aesthetic effect, even more so than prose. This utilization of language beyond its conventional use and established rules is referred to as "style." Verdonk (2002) simply states that style is distinctive linguistic expression and it is a motivated choice. Leech (2007, p.9) defines style as "the way in which language is used in a given context, by a given person, for a given purpose, and so on." According to Lawal (1997), as cited by Manuel (2017), style is the selection of words, phrases, and sentences that are coherent with the subject matter. With that mindset, style in literature then is the distinct linguistic choices used by an author to write a literary piece with a particular purpose in mind. Additionally, Crystal and Davy (2016, p. 9) say that style is the linguistic habits or choice of habits, which they call "linguistics idiosyncrasies," that distinguishes a person from others. According to Manuel (2017), style is not only a means to deliver the author's intent but is also an expression of their individuality.

1.2 Stylistic Analysis

Applied linguistics is a branch of linguistics where methods and approaches in the study of language are used to solve real-world problems. The study of language applied to literature is called stylistics. Watson and Zyngier (2006) assert that stylistics is a useful tool in pedagogy when used in the second language context because stylistics forces the learner to commit conscious attention to language features used in the literature of the second language. Toolan (2013) states that stylistic analysis is the process of determining the linguistic components or techniques employed by a text to understand why such is considered a work of brilliance. This paper analyzes "The Divine Image" in four levels of stylistic analysis:

Phonological – concerned with the sound system of a language (Sinha, 2005).

Morphological – concerned with the structure of words (Sinha, 2005).

Graphological – concerned with the writing system of a language (Crystal and Davy, 2016).

Lexico-Syntactical – comprised of lexicology which is the systematic description of vocabulary (Ginzburg, 1966), and syntax, or the arrangement or structure of words in a sentence (Tallerman, 2019).

1.3 Introduction to the Author: William Blake

William Blake is one of the most prominent English poets. Blake, who was also a painter and engraver, was born in London on November 28, 1757. According to him, he had seen visions of angels when he was young. This later rippled in his work as many of his poems gravitated towards themes about the universe and the divine. Art or writing is where Blake operated spiritually and is where he expressed his personal spiritual beliefs even containing his mythological creatures (*The Life and Works of William Blake*, 2004). The political environment of his time also influenced the poet's works. Amid the industrialization of Britain, a movement called English Romanticism emerged. English Romanticism emphasized feeling, individuality, and unique experience over generalization (*The Romantic Period*, 2022). This movement became a response to the growing dominance of science and rational thinking. Blake wrote and published 20 books, some of which are prophetic books and others collections of poems. He is known for his poems "The Tyger" and "London."

1.4 Introduction to the Poem: The Divine Image

William Blake wrote a collection of poetry that he bound into a book called "Songs of Innocence" published in 1789. In 1794, Blake wrote the second part of the book, "Songs of Experience," and published the two books as one. The final collection was called "Songs of Innocence and Experience." One of the 19 poems from the "Songs of Innocence" is "The Divine Image." The poem is relief etched on a copper plate. This means that the writings and illustrations on the page are

raised surfaces from the copper plate (Chilvers, 2009). “The Divine Image” was written before the spurt of English Romanticism; however, it had already possessed characteristics (e.g. focus on feeling) of the works produced by the movement. The poem talks about Christian virtues and through it compares God to man. The poem shares themes of the relationship between God and man with many of Blake’s other poems like “A Cradle Song” and “Little Black Boy” which are also found in “Songs of Innocence and Experience” (Abella, 2020).

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research Design

This paper is a qualitative research. It makes use of the content analysis research design to examine the stylistic choices made in “The Divine Image.”

2.2 Source of Data

The source of data is the poem “The Divine Image” written by William Blake.

2.3 Analysis of Data

The method used in analyzing the data is thematic analysis which analyzes classifications and themes (Alhojailan, 2012). It was used to determine features and patterns in the poem at the phonological, morphological, graphological, and lexico-syntactical levels.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 On Phonological Level

3.1.1 On Alliteration

To Mercy, **Pity, Peace**, and Love (Line 1)
 All pray in **their distress**; (Line 2)
 For Mercy, **Pity, Peace**, and Love (Line 5)
 And Mercy, **Pity, Peace**, and Love (Line 7)
 For Mercy **has a human heart**, (Line 9)
 And Love, **the human form divine**, (Line 11)
That prays in his **distress**, (Line 14)
 Love, Mercy, **Pity, Peace**. (Line 16)

Alliteration is the repetition of a consonant sound at the beginning of words across a line (*Poetry 101: What Is Alliteration In Poetry? Alliteration Definition with Examples, 2021*). Lines 1, 5, 7, and 16 repeat the *p* sound all from the words “pity” and “peace.” Lines 2, 11, and 14 use the hard *th* sound and *d* sound that when spoken as it is written in the poem can sound almost identical. Line 9 repeats the *h* sound with the words “has,” “human,” and “heart.” Blake used alliteration to add a rhythmic quality to these lines. The repetition of the *p* and *d* sounds produces a percussive effect.

3.1.2 On Assonance

To Mercy, **Pity, Peace**, and Love (Line 1)
 All **pray in their distress**; (Line 2)
 And to these virtues of delight (Line 3)

For Mercy, **Pity, Peace**, and Love (Line 5)
 And Mercy, **Pity, Peace**, and Love (Line 7)
Is Man, his child and care. (Line 8)
Then every man, of every clime, (Line 13)
 Love, Mercy, **Pity, Peace**. (Line 16)
In heathen, Turk, or Jew; (Line 18)
Where Mercy, Love, and **Pity dwell** (Line 19)
There God is dwelling too. (Line 20)

Assonance is the repetition of a vowel sound across a line regardless of whether the vowel is placed at the beginning, middle, or end of a word (*Poetry 101: What Is Alliteration In Poetry? Alliteration Definition with Examples, 2021*). Lines 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 16, 18, 19, and 20 repeat the *i* sound whether that be the long or short. Line 2 also repeats the diphthong *ei* in “**pray**” and “**their**.” In line 13, the *e* sound is repeated. Same case with line 19 (“**where**,” “**mercy**,” “**dwell**”) and line 20 (“**there**,” “**dwelling**”). Blake also assonance with the sounds *i* and *e* to add a euphonic effect.

3.1.3 On Consonance

To Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love (Line 1)
 All **pray in their distress**; (Line 2)
 And to these virtues of delight (Line 3)
Return their thankfulness. (Line 4)

For Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love (Line 5)
Is God, our father dear, (Line 6)
 And Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love (Line 7)
Is Man, his child and care. (Line 8)

For Mercy has a human heart, (Line 9)
 And Peace, the human dress. (Line 12)

Then every man, of every clime, (Line 13)
 That prays in his distress, (Line 14)
 Prays to the **human form divine**, (Line 15)
 Love, Mercy, Pity, Peace. (Line 16)

And all must love the **human form**, (Line 17)
In heathen, Turk, or Jew; (Line 18)
Where Mercy, Love, and **Pity dwell** (Line 19)

There God is dwelling too. (Line 20)

If alliteration is the repetition of a consonant sound found at the beginning of a word across a line, consonance is the repetition of a consonant sound across a line regardless of where it is placed within a word (*Poetry 101: What Is Alliteration In Poetry? Alliteration Definition with Examples, 2021*). Line 1 repeats the *t* sound. The first instance is at the beginning of a word (“**to**”) while the second is found within the word (“**pity**”). This points to it being a consonance instead of an alliteration. Eighteen out of the twenty lines of the poem make use of consonance. The lines that repeat the consonants *t*, *s*, *r*, *n*, *m* are intended to produce euphony. Lines 8 and 20 repeat the plosive *d* to help express the importance of the lines.

3.1.4 On Repetition

To **Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love** (Line 1)
For Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love (Line 5)
 And **Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love** (Line 7)
For Mercy has a **human** heart, (Line 9)
 Pity a **human** face, (Line 10)
 And Love, the **human** form divine, (Line 11)
 And Peace, the **human** dress. (Line 12)
 Prays to the **human** form divine, (Line 15)
 And all must love the **human** form, (Line 17)

The use of the same word or phrase in a piece of writing, especially when used to create a particular effect, is a literary device called repetition (*Writing 101: What is repetition? 7 types of repetition in writing with examples*, 2022). Blake uses the phrase “Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love” in lines 1, 5, and 7 to tell the readers that these virtues are the poem’s subject matter.

3.1.5 On Rhythm

To **Mer** | cy, **Pi** | ty, **Peace**, | and **Love** (Line 1)
 All **pray** | in **their** | dis-**stress**; (Line 2)
 And **to** | these **vir** | tues **of** | de-**light** (Line 3)
 Re-**turn** | their **thank** | ful-**ness**. (Line 4)

Rhythm refers to the pattern of beats in a line of a poem (*Examples of Rhythm in Poetry*, 2019). The poem makes use of a common meter. The poem employs a common meter which is the alternation of two different metrical feet (*Common Meter*, n.d.). In this case, the lines alternate between iambic tetrameter and iambic trimeter. An iamb is a foot with two syllables, the first one being unstressed and the second stressed. Tetrameter simply means the line has four feet and trimeter three feet. Line 1 is written in iambic tetrameter. The first foot is “to mer-” with “mer-” taking the stress. The other three feet in line 1 is “-cy, Pi-” “-ty, Peace,” and “and Love.” The second line is written in iambic trimeter. The third line is written again in iambic tetrameter. Finally, line 4 is written in iambic trimeter. The four other stanzas of the poem follow this same pattern of iambic tetrameter and iambic trimeter. Blake used a simple metric line in this poem so it doesn’t divert the reader’s attention from its message.

3.1.6 On Rhyme Scheme

To Mercy, Pity, Peace, and **Love** (Line 1)
 All pray in their **distress**; (Line 2)
 And to these virtues of **delight** (Line 3)
 Return their thankfulness. (Line 4)
 For Mercy, Pity, Peace, and **Love** (Line 5)
 Is God, our father **dear**, (Line 6)
 And Mercy, Pity, Peace, and **Love** (Line 7)
 Is Man, his child and **care**. (Line 8)
 For Mercy has a human **heart**, (Line 9)
 Pity a human **face**, (Line 10)
 And Love, the human form **divine**, (Line 11)
 And Peace, the human **dress**. (Line 12)
 Then every man, of every **clime**, (Line 13)

That prays in his **distress**, (Line 14)
 Prays to the human form **divine**, (Line 15)
 Love, Mercy, Pity, **Peace**. (Line 16)
 And all must love the human **form**, (Line 17)
 In heathen, Turk, or **Jew**; (Line 18)
 Where Mercy, Love, and Pity **dwell** (Line 19)
 There God is dwelling **too**. (Line 20)

The pattern of rhyming words at the end of the lines of a poem is called rhyme scheme (*What is rhyme scheme?: Definition, types & poem examples*, n.d.). The poem follows the ABCB rhyme scheme where the second line of a quatrain rhymes with the fourth, and the first and third lines don’t rhyme at all. This rhyme scheme plus the alternation of the lines between iambic tetrameter and trimeter makes this poem a ballad (*Ballad*, n.d.). Stanza 1 perfectly illustrates its rhyme scheme. Line 1 ends with “love” while line 3 ends with “-light.” On the other hand, line 2 rhymes with line 4 with the syllables “-stress” and “-ness” respectively. In one instance, however, Blake deviates from the rhyme scheme with the first (line 5) and third (line 7) of stanza two both ending with “love,” hence the lines end with perfectly identical sounds. Additionally, Blake employed slant rhyme in the second and fourth lines of stanzas 2, 3, and 4. Slant rhymes are rhymes with “similar but not identical” sounds (*Slant Rhyme*, n.d.). In stanza 2, line 6 ends with “dear” which sounds similar but not identical to “care” of line 8. In stanza 3, line 10 ends with “face” and line 10 with “dress.” As with stanza 4, line 14 ends with “-stress” and line 16 with “peace.” It is possible that Blake resorted to slant rhymes because writing his lines in perfect rhyme would mean tweaking parts of the poem which could compromise its intended meaning.

3.1.7 Summary of Findings on the Phonological Level

At the phonological level, William Blake employed musical devices such as alliteration, assonance, and consonance to add a musical quality to the piece. He also made use of repetition with the words or phrases he wanted to highlight. In terms of rhythm and rhyme scheme, Blake followed the form of a ballad – alternating between iambic tetrameter and iambic trimeter, and ABCB rhyme scheme. Slant rhymes were also utilized alongside perfect rhymes. Ultimately, although Blake made use of phonological techniques, he did not commit any phonological choices outside of these techniques’ conventional use.

3.2 On Morphological Level

3.2.1 On Affixation

Affixation is the process of adding affixes to a word (Lieber, 2009). An affix added to the beginning of a word is called a prefix. An affix added to the middle of a word is called an infix. Lastly, an affix added to the end of a word is called a suffix. All affixes used in the poem are suffixes.

3.2.1.1 Inflectional

3.2.1.1.1 On Nouns

Plural Form

And to these **virtues** of delight (Line 3)

3.2.1.1.2 On Verbs**3.2.1.1.2.1 Present Participle**

There God is dwelling too. (Line 20)

3.2.1.1.2.2 Third Person Singular

That **prays** in his distress, (Line 14)

Prays to the human form divine, (Line 15)

Inflection is the process of adding affixes to change the number and possessive form of nouns, the tense of verbs, and the case of adjectives (Lieber, 2009). William Blake uses the noun “virtues” which is the plural form of “virtue,” suffixed with the inflection -s. On verbs, “dwelling” is used which is the present participle of the word “dwell,” suffixed with the inflection -ing. He also used “prays,” the third person singular form of the verb “pray” with an -s inflection.

3.2.2 On Derivational**3.2.2.1. Changes in Meaning****Size-Marking**

Return their thankfulness. (Line 4)

3.2.2.2 Changes in Form Class**3.2.2.2.1 Noun-Marking**

Return their thankfulness. (Line 4)

3.2.2.2.2 Adjective Marking

Return their thankfulness. (Line 4)

When an affix is added to a certain word to change its grammatical category or meaning, the process is called derivation (Lieber, 2009). The word “thankfulness” is a derivation with both changes in meaning and category. The suffix -ful which is a size marking is added to the word “thank” to make it an adjective. Now, the suffix -ness is added to the adjective “thankful” resulting in the word “thankfulness” which is now a noun.

3.2.3 On Internal Vowel Change

And to **these** virtues of delight (Line 3)

Internal vowel change is one of the morphological processes employed to certain words that don't take inflections (Larsen-Freeman and Celce-Murcia, 2015). The word “this” is pluralized by changing the “-i-” into “-e-” and adding another -e at the end, hence the word “these.”

3.2.4 Summary of Findings on the Morphological Level

The affixed words William Blake chose are all suffixed. Under the inflectional, he used one noun in the plural, one verb in the present participle, and two verbs in the third-person singular. Under derivational, he used the word

“thankfulness,” which has a size marking, and a noun and adjective marking, derived from the word “thank.” He also used the word “these” which required internal vowel change. Overall, Blake did not commit any deviation or utilize a special technique that involved the formation or structure of the words he used in the poem.

3.3 On Graphological Level**3.3.1 On Punctuation****3.3.1.1 Period**

Return their thankfulness. (Line 4)
Is Man, his child and care. (Line 8)
And Peace, the human dress. (Line 12)
Love, Mercy, Pity, Peace. (Line 16)
There God is dwelling too. (Line 20)

Periods are punctuation marks in the form of a dot that marks the end of a declarative sentence (*Period Punctuation: Rules And Example, n.d.*). A period marks the end of every stanza in the poem. While stanzas 1, 4, and 5 are syntactically qualified to be considered complete sentences, stanzas 2 and 3 are not because they are one dependent clause given that they begin with the word “for” which functions as a subordinating conjunction similar to “because.” Perhaps Blake decided to punctuate stanzas 2 and 3 with periods because although they are dependent clauses, the message each of the stanzas is trying to convey is itself complete and discrete.

3.3.1.2 Comma

To Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love (Line 1)
For Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love (Line 5)
Is God, our father dear, (Line 6)
And Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love (Line 7)
Is Man, his child and care. (Line 8)
For Mercy has a human heart, (Line 9)
Pity a human face, (Line 10)
And Love, the human form divine, (Line 11)
And Peace, the human dress. (Line 12)
Then every man, of every clime, (Line 13)
That prays in his distress, (Line 14)
Prays to the human form divine, (Line 15)
Love, Mercy, Pity, Peace. (Line 16)

And all must love the human form, (Line 17)
In heathen, Turk, or Jew; (Line 18)
Where Mercy, Love, and Pity dwell (Line 19)

Commas are multifunctional punctuations used ubiquitously in various texts (*Comma, n.d.*). Sixteen out of the twenty lines of the poem use commas. Blake used commas to separate items in a list and even used the Oxford comma which is a comma placed before “and” in a list. An example of this is found in line 1: To Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love. The comma is also used to separate non-essential appositive

phrases. Appositive phrases are phrases that add information or rename a noun (*Appositives*, n.d.) When an appositive is non-essential, it means it is not necessary information and it may be removed, hence it is separated by a comma. In line 6 the appositive phrase (Is God, **our father dear**,) and line 8 (Is Man, **his child and care**).

3.3.1.3 Semi-colon

All pray in their distress; (Line 2)
In heathen, Turk, or Jew; (Line 18)

A semi-colon is a punctuation that joins independent clauses or phrases that are related and equal in structure (*Semicolon: Effective writing practices tutorial*, n.d.). When using a semi-colon to join independent clauses, coordinating conjunctions are not necessary. However, Blake uses a conjunctive adverb although using a semi-colon. Lines 1 and 2 comprise an independent clause, and line 2 ends in a semi-colon to mark the clause's end. Line 3 begins with the conjunction "and," and together with line 4, makes up an independent clause similar in grammatical structure to lines 1 and 2. The same case is observed in lines 17, 18, 19, and 20 with line 18 carrying the semicolon.

3.3.2 On Typography

Capitalization

To Mercy, **Pity, Peace, and Love** (Line 1)
All pray in their distress; (Line 2)
And to these virtues of delight (Line 3)
Return their thankfulness. (Line 4)

For **Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love** (Line 5)
Is **God, our father dear**, (Line 6)
And **Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love** (Line 7)
Is **Man, his child and care**. (Line 8)

For **Mercy** has a human heart, (Line 9)
Pity a human face, (Line 10)
And **Love**, the human form divine, (Line 11)
And **Peace**, the human dress. (Line 12)

Then every man, of every clime, (Line 13)
That prays in his distress, (Line 14)
Prays to the human form divine, (Line 15)
Love, **Mercy, Pity, Peace**. (Line 16)

And all must love the human form, (Line 17)
In heathen, **Turk, or Jew**; (Line 18)
Where **Mercy, Love, and Pity** dwell (Line 19)
There **God** is dwelling too. (Line 20)

The writing of big or capital letters is called capitalization (*Capitalization rules*, n.d.). In the poem, William Blake capitalized the first letter of each line. He also capitalized the first letters "Turks" and "Jews" in line 20 since they are proper nouns. The words "Mercy," "Pity," "Peace," and "Love," which are the subject matters of the poem are also capitalized. The g in "God" is also capitalized, and this is in keeping with the Christian notion that there is only one God. Lastly, Blake

capitalized the first letter of "Man." This is to create a parallelism between the idea of God and Man.

3.3.3 On Layout



Fig. 1. Original image of "The Divine Image" from "Songs of Innocence" (<https://www.tweetspeakpoetry.com/the-divine-image-by-william-blake/>)

Layout is the arrangement of visual elements such as text and graphics on a page (Corrigan, n.d.) William Blake used a conventional layout for the poem where the stanzas are aligned on the left. The title is placed slightly more to the left so it doesn't align with the stanzas. Stanzas 1, 2, 3 and separated from stanzas 4 and 5 by an elongated shape. The first three stanzas are grouped because this is where William Blake presents the idea of the poem. Stanzas 4 and 5 are where he makes his argument, the result of the ideas he presented in the first three.

3.3.4 Summary of Findings on the Graphological Level

William Blake used only three punctuations, namely the period, comma, and semicolon. He placed the period at the end of every stanza, and the comma to separate appositive phrases and items on a list. Blake used the semi-colon two independent clauses without indicating a full stop like a period does. Out of the three, the comma is the most frequently used. Capitalization is where William Blake made a graphological deviation. Aside from the first letters of each line, proper nouns, and the Christian "God," he also capitalized the first letter of "Man" which is not normally capitalized. This is intended to show a comparison between God and man. On the layout of the original copy of the poem, stanzas 1, 2, and 3 are separated from stanzas 4 and 5 to cluster

his ideas. To sum up, Blake made graphological deviations to further deliver the ideas he presented in the poem.

3.4 On Lexico-Syntactical Level

3.4.1 On Parts of Speech

Parts of speech are grammatical categories of words that denote their function in a sentence (*The eight parts of speech - tip sheets*, n.d.).

3.4.1.1 On Nouns

Nouns are names of people, places, animals, tangible things, and ideas (*The eight parts of speech - tip sheets*, n.d.). Forty-three nouns are used in the poem. "Mercy," "Pity," "Peace," and "Love," are the most frequently used. "Mercy," "Pity," and "Love" appeared six times while "Peace" appeared five times. These words are prominent in the poem because of the repetition that William Blake employed.

3.4.1.2 On Verbs

Verbs are words that denote action or being (*The eight parts of speech - tip sheets*, n.d.). Eleven verbs appear in the poem. "Prays" is the most frequent, appearing thrice.

3.4.1.3 On Adjectives

Adjectives are words that describe a noun or a pronoun (*The eight parts of speech - tip sheets*, n.d.). Nine adjectives are found in the poem. The word "human," which is typically used as a noun, functioned in the poem as an adjective. The word was used to stress how the four virtues – mercy, pity, peace, and love – take the form of humans.

3.4.1.4 On Adverbs

Adverbs are words that describe the action in a sentence (*The eight parts of speech - tip sheets*, n.d.). They are also used to describe adjectives and other adverbs. Only three adverbs appear in the poem. "Where" and "there" are adverbs of place that provide information where the verb "dwell" and "dwelling" in lines 19 and 20 respectively occur. "Too" is an adverb which means "also."

3.4.1.5 On Pronouns

Pronouns are words that take the place of nouns to avoid excessive repetition (*The eight parts of speech - tip sheets*, n.d.). The noun a pronoun represents is called an antecedent. Pronouns were used five times in the poem. The pronouns are "their," "our," and "his" which are all possessive pronouns. Possessive pronouns are used to indicate that something belongs to the noun the pronoun is standing in for.

3.4.2 On Personification

To Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love (Line 1)
 All pray in their distress; (Line 2)
 And to these virtues of delight (Line 3)
 Return their thankfulness. (Line 4)
 For Mercy has a human heart, (Line 9)

Pity a human face, (Line 10)
 And Love, the human form divine, (Line 11)
 And Peace, the human dress. (Line 12)

Prays to the human form divine, (Line 15)
 Love, Mercy, Pity, Peace. (Line 16)

Where Mercy, Love, and Pity dwell (Line 19)

Personification is a figure of speech that is used to add human qualities to non-human objects or ideas (Kramer, 2021). In stanza 1 (lines 1-4), the virtues mercy, pity, peace, and love, which are abstract ideas, become the entity that "all" pray to. In stanza 3, the virtues are given physical human features: "For Mercy has a human heart, (Line 9); Pity a human face, (Line 10); And Love, the human form divine, (Line 11); And Peace, the human dress. (Line 12)." In lines 15 and 16, the four virtues are once again prayed to. Lastly, in line 19, mercy, love, and pity are the subjects of the verb "dwell" which is often performed by sentient beings like humans.

3.4.3 On Metaphor

For Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love (Line 5)
 Is God, our father dear, (Line 6)
 And Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love (Line 7)
 Is Man, his child and care. (Line 8)

Metaphors are figures of speech that compare a thing to another thing implicitly (Underwood, 2021). Metaphors state that one thing is another, and this comparison is impossible to be taken literally. In lines 5 and 6, mercy, pity, peace, and love are compared to God by stating that these virtues *are* God. In lines 7 and 8 on the other hand, the virtues are stated to be God's child which is Man. Blake makes use of metaphor to suggest that God and Man are connected through the four virtues.

3.4.4 On Allusion

For Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love (Line 5)
 Is God, our father dear, (Line 6)
 And Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love (Line 7)
 Is Man, his child and care. (Line 8)

Allusion is a literary technique where something presumably familiar is referenced (*Allusion - examples and definition of allusion as a literary device*, 2022). In stanza 2 (lines 5-8), the poet is asserting that mercy, pity, peace, and love are both God and Man. This comparison of God to Man alludes to the story in the Book of Genesis in the bible where God fashioned Man in his image.

3.4.5 On Anastrophe

All pray in their distress; (Line 2)
 And to these virtues of delight (Line 3)
 Return their thankfulness. (Line 4)
 For Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love (Line 5)
 Is God, our father dear, (Line 6)

And Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love (Line 7)

Is Man, his child and care. (Line 8)

And Love, the human form divine, (Line 11)

Prays to the human form divine, (Line 15)

There God is dwelling too. (Line 20)

In the conventional use of the English language, the common structure of sentences is subject-verb-object/subject complement. William Blake takes the liberty of deviating from this structure. He employs a technique called anastrophe that rearranges the words or phrases in a sentence or clauses (Nordquist, 2018). The adverbial “To Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love” (line 1) is placed before the independent clause “All pray” and the other adverbial “in their distress” (line 2). The conventional structure would go: All pray to Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love in their distress. Lines 3 and 4 are written in similar anastrophe. A different kind of anastrophe is employed in lines 5 and 6. Line 5 contains “for,” a subordinating conjunction, and “Mercy, Pity, Peace and Love,” which is a subject complement (nouns, pronouns, or adjectives that add information about the subject). Line 6 begins with the verb “is” followed by the noun “God” and the appositive phrase “our father dear.” If the sentence was rearranged in the conventional structure it would go: For God, our father dear, is Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love. Lines 7 and 8 are written in similar anastrophe. In line 20, the adverbial “there” is found at the beginning of the clause; it is normally found after the verb. In the conventional structure, the clause would be: God is dwelling there too. A third kind of anastrophe is observed in the poem. Normally, adjectives are placed before nouns. Blake, however, placed it after the noun. In line 6, the noun “father” precedes the adjective “dear.” In Lines 11 and 15, the noun phrase “human form” precedes the adjective “divine.”

3.4.6 On Initial Coordinators

And all must love the human form, (Line 17)

In heathen, Turk, or Jew; (Line 18)

Initial coordinators are coordinating conjunctions that begin a sentence (Lieberman, 2009). Lines 17 and 18 combine to make one independent clause and are the first half of the last stanza which constitutes a complete sentence. Line 17 begins with the coordinating conjunction “and” which would mean it begins the entire stanza which, as has been mentioned, is a sentence.

3.4.7 On Ellipsis

For Mercy has a human heart, (Line 9)

Pity a human face, (Line 10)

And Love, the human form divine, (Line 11)

And Peace, the human dress. (Line 12)

Ellipsis is a device used where parts of a sentence or clause are omitted because it had already been established in a preceding sentence or clause (Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopedia, 1999). This deliberate omission does not alter

the meaning of the sentence. In line 9, the grammatical structure subject + “has” + object is established. Line 9 goes “For Mercy has a human heart.” Line 10 follows the same structure but carries a different subject – pity – and a different object – human face. However, instead of writing “has” a second time, it is omitted and is instead implied. “Pity a human face” still means “pity has a human face,” and this is due to the clause that it succeeded. Lines 11 and 12 also omit the “and.”

3.4.8 Summary of Findings on the Lexico-Syntactical Level

The lexico-syntactical level is where William Blake made most of his stylistic deviations. While he did not make much stylistic choices with his use of the parts of speech, he did employ a great deal of literary devices, the first of which is personification. Blake gave mercy, pity, peace, and love human qualities. This is consistent with the second device he used which is a metaphor. Using this literary device, Blake outright stated that mercy pity, peace, and love are both God and Man. This comparison he made is an allusion to the biblical story that Man is made in the image of God. Blake also used anastrophe which is the rearranging of words in a sentence from their conventional structure. Next, he used initial coordinator once. This means he began a sentence with a coordinating conjunction. Finally, he used ellipsis which is the omission of words because these words are already implied. These last three techniques that Blake employed are common features of religious language or the language of religious or holy texts. Blake used these techniques to deliver the message of the poem which concerns holy ideas.

4. CONCLUSION

“The Divine Image” is one of William Blake's most popular poems. It is simple in form yet dense and complex in the message it is trying to convey. Blake used musical devices like alliteration, assonance, and consonance to add a musical quality to the poem. In addition to this, he followed the form of a ballad where the lines alternate between 4-metrical feet and 3-metrical feet. It also follows the ABCB rhyme scheme, although many of them are slant rhymes also called imperfect lines. Slant rhymes are used because Blake did want to force his lines to conform to perfect rhymes which could lead to changing certain words or structure which could then compromise the message he was trying to say in the poem. Under the morphological level, Blake did not execute any stylistic deviations. Under the graphological, Blake used semi-colons to connect two independent clauses. He also took advantage of the layout of the poem to present his ideas. Many of the stylistic choices that William Blake made in the poem are found at the lexico-syntactical level. He used devices such as allusion, ellipsis, initial coordinators, and anastrophe to create a style that is reminiscent of the bible. This makes the poem more memorable because it suits the subject matter of the poem which involves God. The choices that William Blake made in the poem produce a religious connotation. It's as if Blake is suggesting that “That Divine Image” should not just be taken as a poem but as a religious text as well. Overall,

“The Divine Image” is a poem that creatively conveys its message in two different layers – in its content and its style.

5. RECOMMENDATION

This paper analyzed the stylistic features of “The Divine Image” by William Blake. The results revealed that Blake’s stylistic choices were motivated by the subject matter of the poem. Future researchers can look into other literary devices in the poem that were not mentioned in this paper. The subject of this paper, “The Divine Image,” can also be compared to the stylistic choices Blake made in his other poems to determine whether his style in this poem is similar to his style in his other poems or if the style he used here is unique to this poem.

6. APPENDIX

The Divine Image

By William Blake

To Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love
All pray in their distress;
And to these virtues of delight
Return their thankfulness.

For Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love
Is God, our father dear,
And Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love
Is Man, his child and care.

For Mercy has a human heart,
Pity a human face,
And Love, the human form divine,
And Peace, the human dress.

Then every man, of every clime,
That prays in his distress,
Prays to the human form divine,
Love, Mercy, Pity, Peace.

And all must love the human form,
In heathen, Turk, or Jew;
Where Mercy, Love, and Pity dwell
There God is dwelling too.

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