

STANDARD
EXAMINATION
BLUE BOOKS

A
2

NAME Joale, Jk.
SUBJECT English 102B
INSTRUCTOR Mr. A. Foote
DATE May 18, 1955
EXAMINER'S GRADE _____



I I pledge that all work done
on this examination is my own.
I have received help from no
one.

J. K. Toole

II The themes of these two
poems (The Tiger by William Blake
and The Force That Through the
Green Fuse Drives the Flower
by Dylan Thomas) can be logically
compared and, strangely enough,
can be contrasted, too.

In both of these poems, the
idea of some omnipotent force
of creation seems to loom as
the central theme. But, there
is a variation of the same theme
in both. The two poets have
interpreted the ruling power,

whatever it is, in different manners.

In comparing these two, the first thing noticed is the poets' almost complete submission to the "force," although neither admits the existence of God, as we know him. Blake, in referring to this power, personifies it to an extent, but he doesn't employ the standard form by not capitalizing the word "he". Therefore, I only take that to mean that he doesn't want to give his poem the "religious" tone that persuaded many English works of his time.

Thomas, being of a more modern era that enjoys almost complete intellectual freedom in some areas, lets his "power" be known only

as the "force."

Both poets respect the guiding power in the universe, but Blake seems not so submissive as Thomas. He asks the tiger if the one who made him were the same one who made the lamb, and, so, demonstrates a mildly questioning attitude.

Thomas, on the other hand, realizes that the mystery of creation is too involved and obscure a one for him to try to fathom, so he readily admits that he is unable to give any explanation to the "force" about him. Thomas seems to echo the pessimism of a modern age that believes existentialistically that the

only sure and explainable element
in life is death.

Both poets admit their
perplexity over the "force" that
has created the universe, but
neither tries to explain it in
terms of God and theology.

It is amazing that two
such accepted poets should
undertake the task of trying
to explain creation. And it
is interesting to see the results.

It is reflected in Blake that
he has not lost complete faith -
mainly by the slight degree to
which he personifies the "force."
In his era, the world had been
subjected to only one of what
Freud calls the "three wounds."
That was the cosmological wound

in which the Christian world
learned that the earth was not
the center of the universe.

But Thomas writes in an
era when all three "wounds"
have been inflicted upon society.
One was the biological, through
Darwin's theory of evolution.
The third and final wound
has been the psychological
wound inflicted by Freud
himself. He has shown

that man is not only
a subordinate in the universe
and on earth, but that he is
a subordinate to himself.

We may compare the
attitudes of submission and
unconscious shared by the themes
of these two poems.

But in contrasting them, we

note the reflection of the intellectual conditions of the times in which they were written.

While Blake emphasizes the positive power of creation to make such seemingly unrelated creatures as the tiger and the lamb, Thomas emphasizes what might be called the negative power of creation, or the power to destroy. He reflects an attitude that feels that positive creation only leads, sooner or later, to negative creation, or destruction.