

Women's Writing in English
(15 UEL 64)
Edith Sitwell's Still Falls the
Rain

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STILL FALLS THE RAIN

TEXT




Still falls the Rain---
Dark as the world of man, black as our loss---
Blind as the nineteen hundred and forty nails
Upon the Cross.

Still falls the Rain
With a sound like the pulse of the heart that is changed to the hammer-
beat
In the Potter's Field, and the sound of the impious feet

On the Tomb:
Still falls the Rain

In the Field of Blood where the small hopes breed and the human brain
Nurtures its greed, that worm with the brow of Cain.



Still falls the Rain

At the feet of the Starved Man hung upon the Cross.

Christ that each day, each night, nails there, have mercy on us---

On Dives and on Lazarus:

Under the Rain the sore and the gold are as one.

Still falls the Rain---

Still falls the Blood from the Starved Man's wounded Side:

He bears in His Heart all wounds,---

those of the light that died,

The last faint spark In the self-murdered heart,

the wounds of the sad uncomprehending dark,

The wounds of the baited bear---

The blind and weeping bear whom the keepers beat

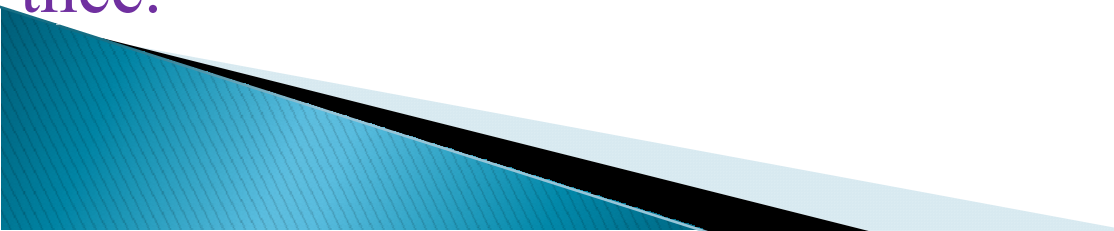
On his helpless flesh... the tears of the hunted hare.

Still falls the Rain---

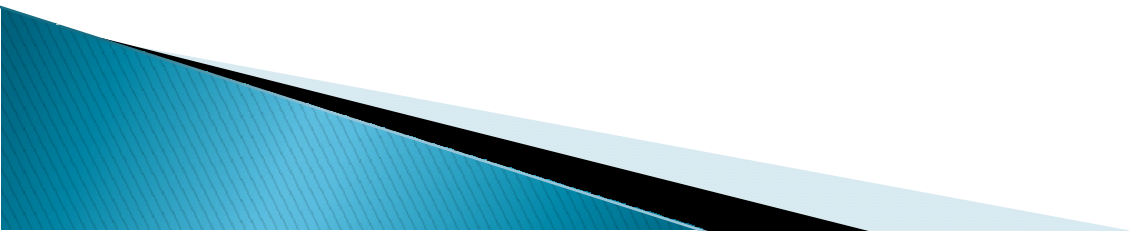
Then--- O Ile leape up to my God: who pulles me doune---
See, see where Christ's blood streames in the firmament:
It flows from the Brow we nailed upon the tree

Deep to the dying, to the thirsting heart
That holds the fires of the world,---dark-smirched with pain
As Caesar's laurel crown.

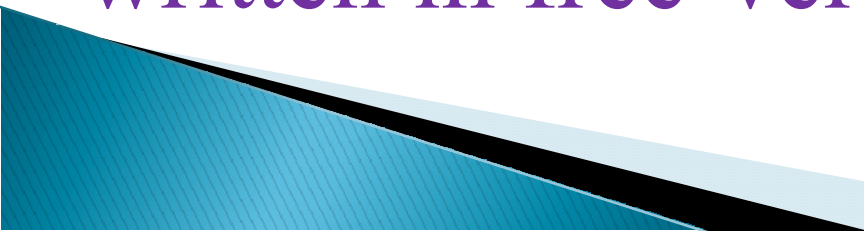
Then sounds the voice of One who like the heart of man
Was once a child who among beasts has lain---
"Still do I love, still shed my innocent light, my Blood, for
thee."



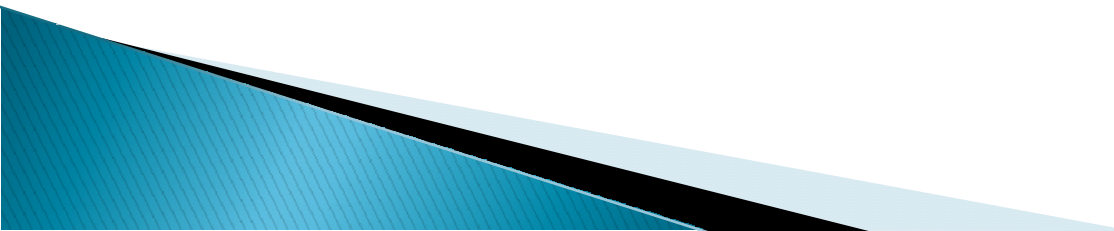
CRITICAL APPRECIATION



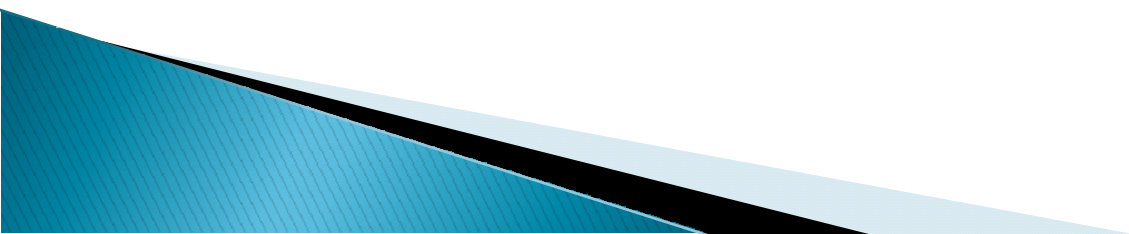
The central theme of this poem is centred around a hard topic: the bombing of London during War World II. Edith Sitwell presents a world in need of change. However, she deals with this theme from a Christian perspective. This viewpoint is portrayed in seven irregular stanzas and thirty five lines which are written in free-verse.



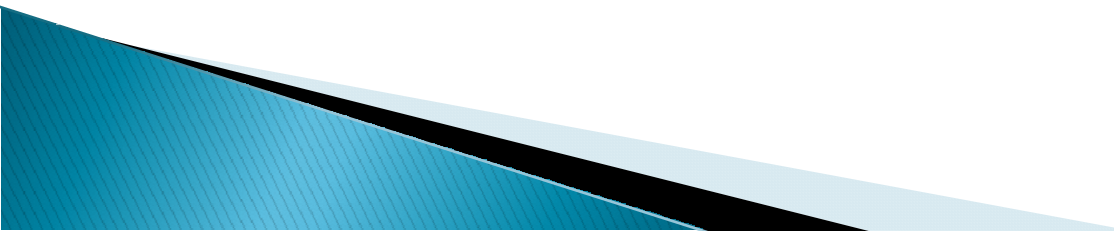
The structure or line divisions also create units of meaning. The seven stanzas of this poem may represent the seven days of the week, symbolizing how the suffering of Christ still persists. In the same way, six of these seven stanzas begin with the same statement: “Still Falls the Rain”. This number six can refer to humankind, which was born in the sixth day of creation in accordance with Genesis 1.




The language of poetry has the power to touch our emotions and affect our understanding of ourselves and the world. This means that language can make the reader perceive the world and the poem with a higher definition or, on the contrary, with ambiguity, providing this poem with different meanings



Sitwell creates these effects through rhetorical features such as imagery and simile. Imagery is the most popular device in this poem. For example, the rain may be understood as normal rain as well as the raining down of bombs during the air raids.



The rain may also symbolize the blood shed by Christ's side, which is a symbol of redemption for all sinners. Sitwell confirms this fact in line 19: "Still falls the Blood from the Starved Man's wounded Side". Christ shed His blood for everybody in the same way people are unified in their communities during times of bombing. Sitwell conveys that we all have a God to believe in, who will always help us without making any distinction between social classes.



Several images of the poem produce feelings of suffering in regards to the war. Thereby, “the hammer beat” in line 7 could be understood as an image of something which strongly beats this poem, emphasizing its hardness. Other words such as “Tomb” in line 9 and “that worm with the brow of Cain” in line 12 also stress this suffering. The latter refers to the mark made in Cain’s brow after killing his brother Abel.

