

The Mourning Tennyson – „Break, Break, Break”

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Abstract: Alfred, Lord Tennyson was one of the greatest poets during the Victorian period, a period seen as a bridge between the Romantic era and modernist poetry. Victorian poetry was focused on themes like religion, reclaiming of the past, nature, romance, etc. Tennyson had a powerful physique but despite this fact he was an introvert and shy person. He made a friend, Arthur Hallam, the son of the historian Henry Hallam, who would mark his personality for his entire life and career. Alfred, Lord Tennyson became famous for his many elegies dedicated to his friendship with Arthur Hallam. Two of his best poems during the 19th century were „In Memoriam A.H.H” and “Break, break, break” in which Tennyson bemoans Hallam’s death and expresses his sorrow reclaiming the past as a main theme. With regard to “Break, break, break” the author created fantastic images through metaphors like the sea breaking on those gray stones which express his wish to break his inability to speak, to cry out his feelings. The fisherman’s boy that is playing with his sister and their happiness express maybe the same joy that Hallam and Tennyson used to have but now is gone. Regarding „In Memoriam A.H.H”, Alfred Lord Tennyson emphasized a religious theme by questioning God’s reasons. He tackled the problem of man’s role in the universe. At the end of the poem Tennyson emerges with his faith reaffirmed, making a progress from doubt to hope.

Key words: Victorian poetry, commemorative lyric, elegy, visual metaphor, poetic mood

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