

## PRÁCTICA 6. WILLIAM BLAKE

### *The Sick Rose*

O Rose thou art sick!  
The invisible worm,  
That flies in the night  
In the howling storm:

Has found out thy bed  
Of crimson joy:  
And his dark secret love  
Does thy life destroy.

#### **6.1. Answer the following questions about this poem:**

1. How difficult do you find this poem?
2. How many characters are there in the poem?
3. What do you think is the role of the speaker?
4. What do you think the rose and the worm stand for?
5. What could the rose stand for metaphorically? And the worm?
6. What do you make of the colours that are mentioned in the poem?
7. Have a look at Blake's plate for *The Sick Rose*. Is this the kind of rose you had imagined? What strikes you about this image?
8. This poem was published in *The Songs of Experience*. How relevant do you think this is in relation to Blake's poetical production?
9. Consider the following chart of possible interpretations for *The Sick Rose*. Which do you agree with? Why? Which do you reject? Why?

<b>ROSE</b>	<b>WORM</b>	<b>INTERPRETATION</b>
England	Industrial Revolution	Dangers of technology
Eve	The Serpent	Original Sin
Beauty	Decay	Fleetness of beauty, unavoidable destruction (Art)
A girl	Lover	Corruption of lust; Unwanted child; Unholy love
Female organ	Sexual illness	Dangers of promiscuity
Life	Death	Good/Evil; Joy/Pain; Dual nature
Love	Sickness	Shame and secrecy destroy love
Innocence	Experience	State of man
Rose	Worm	Garden an allegory of human relationships

**10.** Write your own commentary of this poem and be ready to defend your interpretation. Write your main arguments here: