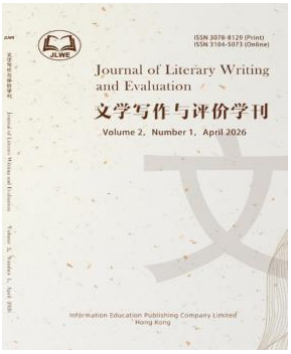


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# A Poetic "Mundo" Constructed by Fragmented Seasons and Imagination: Wallace Stevens' Poetic Meditation in *Harmonium*

**Lei Yanni, Li Shiyuan**

**Abstract:** Wallace Stevens incessantly employs the seasonal motif in his poetry, which has become a focus of critics. Through the analysis of seasonal poems from his inaugural anthology *Harmonium*, this paper examines how he fragments and omits seasons and ultimately transcends mere seasonal reference to reflect on postwar disillusionment and the destabilization of religious and scientific certainties. Additionally, it investigates how Stevens forges an alternative "mundo" through imagination. Through the subversion of seasons and privilege of imaginative perception, *Harmonium* establishes a self-contained poetic "mundo", an aesthetic realm. While avoiding overt engagement with World War I, his works encode historical fractures, mediating between personal introspection as a poet and epochal disorientation. In this way, Stevens redefines the poet's role as architect of an aesthetic "mundo", resisting "violence without", and thus transcends the historical constraints and progresses towards a poetic dwelling of permanence.

**Keywords:** Wallace Stevens; *Harmonium*; season; poetic imagination; self-preservation

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**题目：**碎片化季节与想象构建的诗学“世界”：论《簧风琴》中华莱士·史蒂文斯的诗学沉思

**摘要：**华莱士·史蒂文斯在其诗歌创作中持续运用季节主题，这一特点已成为评论界关注的焦点。本文通过分析其首部诗集《簧风琴》中的季节诗作，探讨诗人如何对季节进行碎片化处理与省略，最终超越单纯季节指涉，进而反思战后幻灭情绪与宗教科学确定性的瓦解。研究同时揭示了史蒂文斯如何通过想象力构建替代性的“世界”——通过颠覆季节秩序，同时赋予想象感知以优先地位，《簧风琴》建立起一个自足的诗意“世界”，即一美学领域。尽管史蒂文斯的作品刻意避免了对一战的直接涉及，却仍将历史断裂编码其中，在诗人个体的内省与时代性迷失之间进行调和。藉此，史蒂文斯重新定义了诗人作为美学“世界”建筑师的角色，通过抵抗“外部暴力”，最终超越历史局限，走向永恒的诗意栖居。

**关键词：**华莱士·史蒂文斯；《簧风琴》；季节；诗意想象；自我保存

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Wallace Stevens (1879-1955) enjoys the reputation of poet's poet as one of the preeminent figures of Modernist poetry. His first anthology, *Harmonium* (1923), initially garnered little critical attention, except for remarks from some of his contemporaries, like William Carlos Williams. However, following his receipt of the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry in 1955, Stevens' oeuvre attracted broader critical engagement, giving rise to diverse interpretative frameworks that encompassed philosophical and biographical inquiries, artistic and poetic experimentation, Romanticist studies and more. The renowned critic Harold Bloom (1977) later published *Wallace Stevens: The Poems of Our Climate*, asserting that Stevens represents the most potent voice of our time. Given that *Harmonium* was compiled during a period of global turmoil, this paper argues that the anthology serves, at least in part, as Stevens' introspective engagement with his own poetic identity. In the special context of historical turbulence, it is a dimension that warrants further scholarly investigation. Specifically, this study will focus on the seasons in *Harmonium*.

Seasons or seasonal changes are a motif that Stevens frequently employs in his poetic corpus. These seasonal poems constitute part of Stevens' poetic "mundo", for instance, "Credences of Summer", "Depression before Spring" and "Sunday Morning". Notably, he even names two collections after the seasons, namely, *Transport to Summer* (1947) and *The Auroras of Autumn*(1950). Within *Harmonium*, numerous poems incorporate conspicuous seasonal elements, like "The Snow Man", "The Emperor of Ice-Cream", "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird", "Sunday Morning" and so on.

Such a recurrence has inevitably drawn significant scholarly attention, prompting diverse

critical interpretations. Scholars at home and abroad have argued that Stevens' engagement with seasonal motifs transcends mere aesthetic embellishment, evolving instead into a profound symbolic framework integral to his poetic worldview. They have been discussing it from various perspectives concerning his biographical experience and life philosophy. Lensing (2007), for instance, contends that Stevens' use of seasonal imagery progresses from a simple backdrop to a complex trope and ultimately crystallizes into a mythopoetic structure that unifies his "grand poetry". Furthermore, he suggests that Stevens' seasonal meditations render a deeply personal psychodrama, even functioning as a mode of survival for a poet grappling with estranged familial bonds, fractured friendships, and religious disillusionment. Moreover, Lensing (2017, p.70) further claims that "it was in the world of nature revealed through the seasons that he found his compensations, one could almost say, substitutions." Correspondingly, Huang Xiaoyan (2007, p.20) underscores the correlation between Stevens' poetic philosophy and his profound appreciation for the shifts of the seasons, stating, "Stevens qualified himself as a real poet: in..., the very seasonal changes that never failed to fascinate him". Li Yongyi (2008) examines Stevens' conceptualization of nature, asserting that it embodies an inherent paradox. This, in turn, generates both the thematic and artistic momentum of his poetic inquiry.

More recent research into Stevens' seasonal poems naturally takes ecocriticism into account because of his intimate contact with and personal affection for nature. Wolfe (2021, p.104), for example, claims that Stevens' poetry can be understood as reflecting the same "operating program" inherent in autopoietic living systems. However, Stevens himself once claimed that these seasonal poems had nothing to do with seasons themselves, but with the "drift of one's ideas" (1966, p.637). This suggests that instead of ecological concerns, Stevens may intend to express his own thoughts on life and poetry in his seasonal poems. Nevertheless, current critical approaches to Stevens' seasonal poetry fail to give sufficient and systematic consideration to the significance of these texts within his poetic framework. Therefore, this paper returns to this perspective in the analysis of his seasonal poems concerning his poetics.

Moreover, given the specific historical moment at which *Harmonium* was published, it is imperative to take its history into account. Most poems compiled in *Harmonium* were published in magazines between 1914 and 1923, a period that coincided with the global upheaval of World War I and its immediate aftermath. This era of relentless uncertainty and disruption inevitably leaves an imprint on the cultural and artistic landscape, rendering it a focal point for Stevens' critics. These critics arrive at opposite corollaries. While some critics argue that the collection engages directly with its socio-historical context, others maintain that it aspires to a form of poetic transcendence, constructing a space of aesthetic autonomy beyond historical contingencies. This paper posits that while Stevens deliberately avoids overtly mirroring contemporary reality, he does not entirely detach himself from it. Instead, he navigates a middle ground, crafting a poetic "mundo" in which seasonal motifs mediate the fractures of history.

A close examination of seasonal elements in his first anthology, *Harmonium*, mainly "The Snow Man", "The Emperor of Ice-Cream", "The Paltry Nude Starts on a Spring Voyage", "Sunday Morning" and "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird", reveals that these poems do not serve as direct commentaries on contemporary historical realities. However, Stevens persistently interrogates the role of the poet in a fractured world, reconfiguring a "mundo", a poetic space to reflect the predicament of religion and science from different angles. Stevens offers no prescriptive solution to the aches of the modern world. Instead, through his unique treatment of seasons and resort to imagination, he constructs a self-contained "mundo", which hints at the cruelties and paradoxes of real-world existence. His writing then becomes an act of resistance, an assertion of poetic selfhood against external pressures. Stevens not only preserves a space for poetic contemplation but also goes beyond the limitations of history.

## 1. Stevens' Special Treatment of Seasons

The era in which Stevens lived witnessed the rise of modern technology alongside the collapse of traditional religious frameworks. As Richardson (2018, p.13) notes, Stevens matured "as a poet in the years just after Einstein's discoveries", a period that fundamentally reshaped human conceptions of life. Stevens (1997, p.878) himself resonated with this predicament, stating, "he lives in the world of Darwin and not in the world of Plato". Stevens (2018, p.155) also described the experience of the fall of religion as follows: "To see the gods dispelled in mid-air and dissolve like clouds is one of the great human experiences. … It is simply that they came to nothing. … we shared likewise this experience of annihilation. It was their annihilation, not ours, and yet it left us feeling that in a measure we, too, had been annihilated". The erosion of religion and the "annihilation" of gods stripped the world of transcendent meaning, leaving a vacuum, where divine prophecy once provided existential anchoring. These terrifying discoveries of the modern world profoundly shaped Wallace Stevens' worldview and his conception of the poet's role in a disillusioned age. As a poet, Stevens (1997, p.841-842) came to position his own role as a secular "priest" responsible for forging new "satisfactions of belief". In his view, poetry became the only true source of fulfillment, for "there is no true satisfaction for the poet but poetry itself" (1997, p. 878). He sought to construct a poetic "mundo", a self-contained world, offering a response to the disenchanted modern age.

### 1.1 Fragmented Seasons

This vision is particularly evident in Stevens' special treatment of seasons, where the passage of time is not linear but reversed, fragmented, or recombined. By deliberately dissolving seasonal boundaries, Stevens crafts a poetic "mundo" that resists the rigidity of chronological time, mirroring the impermanence and instability of existence in the modern world. For instance, "The Emperor of Ice-Cream" collapses seasonal distinctions between summer and winter to subvert the religious notion of resurrection. Instead, it advocates an alternative belief rooted in earthly

pleasures. Similarly, "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird" reinforces a poetic reality that defies fixed temporal structures. Its rejection of linear time, fragmentation, and persistent engagement with transience reflect Stevens' effort to construct meaning beyond traditional metaphysical frameworks. By dismantling conventional structures of time, Stevens reconfigures poetic reality as a dynamic and evolving space, thus countering the disorientation of the modern age.

Specifically, Stevens employs this technique in "The Emperor of Ice-cream", rejecting the conventional progression of the seasons and instead intertwining summer and winter. The first stanza brims with the vibrancy of summer, while the second shifts abruptly to the stillness of winter. The first stanza describes a scene in which men and women all indulge in sexual lust and earthly delights. The vehemence of summer is fully shown with descriptions of "ice cream", "cigars", "whip" and "concupiscent curds" and three repeated imperative sentences beginning with "let".

*Call the roller of big cigars,*
*The muscular one, and bid him whip*
*In kitchen cups concupiscent curds.*
*Let the wenches dawdle in such dress*
*As they are used to wear,and let the boys*
*Bring flowers in last month's newspapers.*
*Let be be finale of seem.*
*The only emperor is the emperor of ice-cream.*

(*Collected Poetry and Prose*, 50)

However, the second stanza shifts abruptly to the image of a dumb corpse with cold feet, and a lifeless space, capturing the essence of winter. This poem disrupts traditional time cycles. In turn, by juxtaposing these two opposite seasons together without transition, it suggests that life represented by summer and death represented by winter do not exist in neat, separate phases but incorporate incessant change. This deconstructs the religious belief in concepts like permanence and regeneration and instead advocates the importance of sensory perception and secular life.

*If her horny feet protrude, they come*
*To show how cold she is, and dumb.*
*Let the lamp affix its beam.*
*The only emperor is the emperor of ice-cream.*

(*Collected Poetry and Prose*, 50)

"Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird" further reveals an incomplete, reversed seasonal cycle. It commences with a stark, wintry landscape, where snow dominates.

*Among twenty snowy mountains,*
*The only moving thing*
*Was the eye of the blackbird*

(*Collected Poetry and Prose*, 74)

This lifeless, frozen setting establishes a world of stillness. As the autumn wind rustles, the blackbird is entangled and the external world is no longer static but in flux. It then shifts to a vibrant, dynamic scene with its "green light," a possible reference to the returning vitality of spring.

*At the sight of blackbirds*
*Flying in a green light,*
*Even the bawds of euphony*
*Would cry out sharply.*

(*Collected Poetry and Prose*, 76)

A sense of regeneration and revitalization follows the return of spring after the turbulence of autumn. Through such meditative and reflective moments, self is preserved to embrace renewal and growth. The final stanza once again returns to winter.

*It was evening all afternoon.*
*It was snowing*
*And it was going to snow*

(*Collected Poetry and Prose*, 76)

This cyclical return to snow reinforces the idea that life remains in perpetual motion, resisting final closure or resolution. However, unlike the passive stillness of the first winter scene, this return to snow follows a journey through transformation and renewal. The poet acknowledges that winter will always come again, but through meditation and perception, one can endure it.

Notably, in contrast to other seasons, which are explicitly referenced, summer is omitted from the poem. As Lensing (2007, p.119) notes, "Summer is culmination and consummation, the end for which the previous seasons have been prelude. Self and world attain perfect harmony and accord." Summer is often associated with fulfillment and completion. This deliberate absence of it reinforces Stevens' rejection of resolution or final definiteness. Instead of embracing a fixed, harmonious state, the poem thrives on fragmentation and change. By resisting the completeness of seasons, Stevens aligns with his belief that life is never static, but always exists in a state of flux.

Moreover, this poem challenges the linear narrative not only through its incomplete seasonal structure but also through its reversed time order and its shifting perspectives. Each stanza

presents an imaginative way of observing the blackbird, without offering any single, definitive meaning. By beginning in winter, proceeding through autumn and spring, and ultimately returning to winter, the poem subverts chronological expectations and generates a series of distinct perspectives on the blackbird. This disruption of time and order reinforces Stevens' resistance to externally imposed interpretations and highlights the necessity of poems in navigating an ever-changing world.

Through fragmented, shifting perspectives and the unconventional treatment of seasons, Wallace Stevens' "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird" challenges linear structures. This deliberate structural choice underscores Stevens' philosophical stance that life is not a static, harmonious progression but an ever-changing, cyclical experience. Through the blackbird, a recurring figure, Stevens explores themes of transience and change rather than definiteness and thus asserts the power of poetic consciousness to withstand external turbulence and preserve an inner vitality in the face of external forces.

### 1.2 More than Seasons

Some of Stevens' other seasonal poems extend beyond mere references to the seasons, reflecting the decline of religion and providing a surrogate for belief systems. Specifically, the second stanza of "Sunday Morning" commences with two inquiries that cast doubt on the rationality of divine authority and the metaphysical promise of an afterlife within the context of religious disillusion.

> *Why should she give her bounty to the dead?*
> *What is divinity if it can come*
> *Only in silent shadows and in dreams?*
>
> (*Collected Poetry and Prose*, 53)

In contrast, the next lines swiftly turn to the consoling effect of earthly nature.

> *Shall she not find in comforts of the sun,*
> *In pungent fruit and bright, green wings, or else*
> *In any balm or beauty of the earth,*
> *Things to be cherished like the thought of heaven?*
>
> (*Collected Poetry and Prose*, 53)

Stevens subsequently posits that human existence should not be contingent upon divine intervention. He advocates a revolt from the transcendent realm to the earthly domain and an affirmation of human dignity.

> *Divinity must live within herself:*
> *Passions of rain, or moods in falling snow;*
> *Grievings in loneliness, or unsubdued*

*Elations when the forest blooms; gusty*
*Emotions on wet roads on autumn nights;*
*All pleasures and all pains, remembering*
*The bough of summer and the winter branch.*
*These are the measures destined for her soul.*

(*Collected Poetry and Prose*, 53-54)

These lines dismantle conventional religious belief by relocating the divine to the realm of human experience: the concept of "divinity must live within herself" emerges. This challenges the conventional belief in God and introduces a nascent belief in the self amidst the collapse of religion. Seasonal elements, such as "falling snow", "autumn nights", "the bough of summer" and "the winter branch", transcend their traditional symbolic roles as cyclical markers. Instead, they become intertwined metaphors displaying distinct human emotional states and form a secular belief system where meaning derives from engagement with ever-changing earthly existence rather than divine permanence.

Moreover, the same vision finds its starkest expression in another seasonal poem, "The Paltry Nude Starts on a Spring Voyage". It depicts a "paltry" protagonist who embarks on her voyage clinging to a "first-found weed" (1997, p.4). With detailed description, Stevens implies that the naked woman subverts the mythological archetype of Venus, who is traditionally depicted standing barefoot atop a seashell. Stripped off divine mandate or clear purpose, her journey originates in existential discontent.

*She too is discontent*
*And would have purple stuff upon her arms,*
*Tired of the salty harbors,*
*Eager for the brine and bellowing*
*Of the high interiors of the sea.*

(*Collected Poetry and Prose*, 4)

All these dismantle the grandeur of the voyage, transforming the so-called "spring voyage" into a secularized one. The "spring voyage," typically emblematic of rebirth, is reconfigured as an "irretrievable" trajectory into the oceanic abyss. It culminates in "the high interiors of the sea", which does not lead to redemption or fulfillment. That is to say, as "Scullion of fate", the girl is compelled to move forward "upon her irretrievable way" across "the spick torrent". She is dictated by the confrontation with a godless universe where individuals must navigate human existence devoid of transcendental guarantees. Stevens positions this voyage as a metaphor for the perpetual flux of human existence, where artistic creation becomes an act of self-preservation against historical despair.

*Will go, like the centre of sea-green pomp,*

*In an intenser calm,*
*Scullion of fate,*
*Across the spick torrent, ceaselessly,*
*Upon her irretrievable way.*

(*Collected Poetry and Prose*, 5)

These poems further reflect Stevens' own thought that his seasonal writing aims to explicate religious decline and forge secular meaning. "Sunday Morning" dismantles divine authority by relocating sacredness to human experience, which is perceived through different sentiments evoked by various seasons. This elevation of human existence forms a self-reliant belief system. "The Paltry Nude Starts on a Spring Voyage" extends this vision: the "paltry" protagonist's "irretrievable" spring voyage is compelled by fate's "spick torrent". This subverts the traditional spring image of revival and embodies the existential flux. Both poems reject transcendental consolation, asserting instead that meaning arises from engagement with earthly transience, where seasons serve as fragments of a secular belief system rooted in human perception and endurance.

## 2. Stevens' Resort to Imagination

In the face of the ruins of World War I and the disenchantment of scientific rationalism and religious systems, modernist poets like T.S. Eliot (1963, p.53) lamented "a heap of broken images" that defined modern society. Stevens, however, transformed this fragmentation into a generative force. He resorted to the supreme affirmation of "imagination" in a modern world where the gods turned to "nothing" and man abandoned faith. In his prose, Stevens defines "nobility" of a poet as "violence from within that protects us from violence from without" or "the imagination pressing back against the pressure of reality". "Nobility" in his concept specifically refers to a quality that imagination inherently possesses. Stevens further claims that "nobility" as a force of imagination has "something to do with self-preservation; and that, no doubt, is why the expression of it, the sound of the words, helps us to live our lives" (1997, p.665). These words emphasize the role of imagination in self-preservation while counteracting the pressure and harshness of reality. This also reveals Stevens' lifelong reflection on a poet's role. The sound of words and the artistic expression of nobility seem to provide a kind of existential sustenance, allowing him to persist despite the pressures of reality.

Stevens resists such external religious and scientific "pressures". Instead, he imagines an alternative poetic reality through the act of perception in his seasonal poems. His discourses concerning perception and reality provide a valuable lens to interpret his poetic "mundo". In *Harmonium*, for instance, through its shifting yet recurrent imagery, "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird" illustrates how imagination and perception reconstruct reality, aligning with Stevens' notion that poetry resists external pressures by forging its own imaginative world.

Whereas, "The Snow Man" serves more as a practical exploration into the relationship between perception and reality. It suggests a wintry mind that is free from subjective interpretation and that subsequently functions as an inner "violence", which protects and preserves the self from the outer world of "violence".

In "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird", the blackbird's presence across multiple scenarios challenges externally imposed meanings, reinforcing poetry as a medium for constructing reality through perception.

> *Among twenty snowy mountains,*
> *The only moving thing*
> *Was the eye of the blackbird*
>
> (*Collected Poetry and Prose*, 74)

The blackbird's eye is the sole dynamic element within this otherwise static landscape. With its movement, "the eye of the blackbird" represents a poetic consciousness that perceives beyond the apparent stagnation of external reality. This suggests a heightened awareness of perception. What matters is not the objective reality of the mountains, which may be vast and imposing, but the movement of vision, the act of seeing. Through the eye of the blackbird, Stevens asserts that poetic perception, rather than external reality, dictates meaning.

Moreover, throughout the seasonal flux over the poem, the blackbird recurs.

> *The blackbird whirled in the autumn winds.*
> *It was a small part of the pantomime.*
>
> (*Collected Poetry and Prose*, 75)

In such turbulence, the blackbird, once deliberate in its movement, is now caught in "the autumn winds". Even though it is reduced to merely a fragment of a greater, chaotic whole, it still exists. Even after linear time collapses ("evening all afternoon"), the blackbird sat "In the cedar-limbs". It remains a constant presence, anchoring the fluctuating landscape. This repeated emergence encapsulates Stevens' vision of poetic creation: an enduring act of perception that persists through time's transformations. The blackbird asserts presence through sustained perception. This represents the poem's ability to construct its own meaning, transcending temporal disintegration and external truth.

The blackbird functions as a constant figure moving through these seasonal shifts and an embodiment of the poet himself, maintaining presence and awareness amid the fluctuations of time and reality. In doing so, the poem affirms that even if caught in external turbulence, poetry itself creates a "mundo" that can navigate the external world to some extent. In a sense, "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird" exemplifies Stevens' manifesto: poetry is not merely a vessel for truth but a performative act of self-definition. This resonates with Heidegger's (1971, p. 214-

215) concept of "man dwells poetically": poetry not only reflects the world but opens up space for spiritual existence.

In "The Snow Man", Wallace Stevens advocates the necessity of adopting a wintry mind, or a detached, objective perspective, to fully perceive the natural world without imposing human emotions on it.

> *One must have a mind of winter*
> *To regard the frost and the boughs*
> *Of the pine-trees crusted with snow;*
>
> (*Collected Poetry and Prose*, 8)

The frosty, snow-crusted boughs of the pine trees and the ice-laden junipers together construct an austere wintry scene, which naturally evokes subjective human emotions. However, as the poem suggests, one should hold a wintry mind so as to refrain from being emotionally engaged in natural landscapes. The latter lines emphasize this idea by cautioning against interpreting the sound of the wind and rustling leaves as suffering or melancholy, which is merely an element that exists as part of the natural world's continuous motion.

> *And have been cold a long time*
> *To behold the junipers shagged with ice,*
> *The spruces rough in the distant glitter*
>
> *Of the January sun; and not to think*
> *Of any misery in the sound of the wind,*
> *In the sound of a few leaves,*
>
> *Which is the sound of the land*
> *Full of the same wind*
> *That is blowing in the same bare place.*
>
> (*Collected Poetry and Prose*, 8)

In the last stanza, Stevens further advocates a mind of "nothingness". Here "Nothing" does not mean nihility but refers to another way of "being", an enrichment of imagination.

> *For the listener, who listens in the snow,*
> *And, nothing himself, beholds*
> *Nothing that is not there and the nothing that is.*
>
> (*Collected Poetry and Prose*, 8)

Stevens implies that true perception of this environment requires not only physical endurance of the cold, but also a mental transformation into a mind of winter, an acceptance of the landscape as it is. In other words, preconceived notions should be abandoned so as to reach an unbiased

perspective which is based on an alternative world constructed through perception.

## 3. Conclusion

Wallace Stevens' *Harmonium* emerges as a poetic response to the existential void left by the modern world's twin upheavals: the collapse of religious certainty and the destabilization of reality in scientific and technological advances. By subverting seasonal temporality and privileging imaginative perception, Stevens constructs a self-contained "mundo" that neither escapes nor directly mirrors the external world but reconfigures its chaos into aesthetic orders.

Central to this paper is Stevens' rejection of linear seasonal structures and transcendence of seasons. In "The Emperor of Ice-Cream" and "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird", seasons are fragmented, reversed, or omitted, with summer's absence being particularly telling, to underscore the instability and impermanence of modern existence. This temporal disruption mirrors the disorientation of an era influenced by Einstein's relativity and postwar disillusionment. Furthermore, in "Sunday Morning" and "The Paltry Nude Starts on a Spring Voyage", Stevens elevates seasonal images to reflect human emotions, asserting that meaning arises from interaction with earthly transience. In this way, he further dissolves the belief in God and advocates a secular belief system rooted in human perception and endurance. These seasonal poems constitute part of his seasonal "mundo". Noticeably, Stevens' "mundo" is not nihilistic; instead, it is a space of creative resistance. The "blackbird's persistent gaze" and the "wintry mind" exemplify a poetic consciousness that endures through detachment, transforming existential "nothingness" into a site of imagination.

Critics have long debated whether *Harmonium* transcends or engages with history. This paper argues that it navigates between the two. By avoiding direct reference to World War I while encoding its fractures through seasonal change, Stevens mediates between the personal and the epochal, or in other words, the poetic and the epochal. In this way, Stevens redefines his role as a poet: not as a prophet of divine truth but as an architect of provisional meaning, crafting language into a sanctuary against the modern world's "violence without".

Ultimately, Stevens' *Harmonium* offers no direct solutions to the modern world's predicaments but asserts poetry itself as a mode of dwelling. His seasonal "mundo" does not resolve contradictions but holds them in tension, inviting readers to experience the "momentary existence on an exquisite plane" of the imagination (Richardson, 2018, p.14). In an age of disbelief, Stevens' works suggest that the nobility of poetry lies not in answers but in its capacity to sustain the poet himself and readers amid uncertainty, a lesson as vital today as it was a century ago.

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