



METAPHOR AND SYMBOL IN MODERNIST PORTRAIT DESCRIPTIONS: FROM EPIPHANY TO MORTALITY

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ABSTRACT

While the modernist literary movement experiences layers of meanings rather than surfaces of meaning, in contrast a modernist literary movement develops characters by experience of layers of suffocation of the individual subjectivity in perceiving the formation of what it means to exist, rather than the more immediate experience of what is simply the present. James Joyce and Virginia Woolf create portraiture as the habitual form of not only accurate, descriptive accounts of details of appearance and the multiplicity of repeated images with similarly inferred meanings, but cultural, philosophical, and psychological meaning as well. Symbol representation, like birds, flowers, clocks, and light contain progress through its meanings of liberty in the character based networks of images attached to it that allowed characters and by extension audience to move beyond likeness to lived experience in the existence of who they could be.

KEYWORDS

Symbol, metaphor, modernism, Joyce, Woolf, portrait.

INTRODUCTION

In Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as Young Man*, the epiphanic moment about the "bird-girl" is significant to the establishment of Steven's character is when he sees a girl standing in the sea, who is described as, "like a strange and graceful seabird." Joyce is certainly not representing corporeal sight as a metaphor that has significant conceptual meanings as symbolic constructions of meaning relevant to Steven's imaginative vocation in art and identity. The "bird-girl" contains meanings of beauty, flight, and transcendence from constraint to liberty; where emergence is a transition from passive being to awakening of imagination/creativity through the metaphor of the bird makes the "bird-girl" as significant and distinct as its significance in a represented symbolic location as portrait of the artist as bird-girl.

In Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*, the world of portraiture is framed with a set of symbolic/metaphorical conditions. Clarissa Dalloway is driven to flowers that are alive where matters both of beauty, flow, transience; where the image of roses and carnations as carrying beauty, emptiness, fragility, and mortality. Big Ben another symbolic reminder, where it recasts original rhythm and routines of time, life, and death. Septimus Smith carries symbolic trees, light, and fire; as in ruin, trauma, fragmentation, and a non-doer of his unassisted psychological condition; where the metaphor of flowers and other objects, in different beginning and endings kept powerful and descriptive were articulated the constellation of her characters conditions where each character metonymically deconstructed in relation to the abstract physical character.

For this reason, relationships among metaphors and symbols in modernist portraiture, establish that characters construct/reconstructions are not observable possibilities of corporeal written body descriptions of characters but possible locations of semiological layering available over- construction made visible available detail description corporeal descriptions. The signifier enables practice between localized consciousness in its meta-general human condition in vocation of artist, memory, death and trauma. Again the vector is depth of all semiotic density in modernist writing, which could not be called realism.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

To summarize, the metaphors and symbols in modernist portraits represent a meaningful concept of hyper spaces; where the metaphors and symbols of the image are implying at least something else is happening; to contain the metaphors and symbols is to choose a position of image experience, for the act of articulation of identity is not a disgusting decoration. For Joyce, he uses metaphorized symbols of excitement allegorizing awakening as artist; and for Woolf, she dramatizes the tensions of life and death, love and decay. To only to be conscious symbols symbolic desired indecipherable with the only implication of symbol in literacy practice encourages a process of symbolic analysis of which offering subject to counter pedagogical violence ordering symbolically in translation in only what is possible as compartmentalize and retain symbolic depths of study of modernist character construction.

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