



SIGNS OF SYMBOLISM IN NOVEL “THE SOUND AND THE FURY” BY W. FAULKNER

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ABSTRACT

The current article is devoted to symbolism and analysis of some symbols in the novel by a prominent American writer William Faulkner “The Sound and The Fury”. The article is about the development of symbolism in the literature as well its influence on Faulkner’s works. Famous scholars’ sayings about symbolism genre were also introduced in the article. Moreover, signs of symbolism are explained in his famous work “The Sound and The Fury” by the characters of the novel. This novel is divided into four parts and each prototype has their own symbols to express their outlook, behavior and mindset. The examples from the novel help to analyze the symbolic image of the characters, events or situation happened in the work. These features and other characteristics of the symbolism are also described in this article.

KEYWORDS

Symbol, direction, novel, modernism, Southern literature, character, image, symbolism, style, genre, meaning

INTRODUCTION

Symbolism is the first literary and artistic direction of European modernism, which appeared at the

end of the 19th century. In connection with the crisis of the positivist artistic ideology of naturalism in France, it is developed as an



opposition to naturalists and their philosophical basis - positivism. The basis of symbolism aesthetics was laid by Paul-Marie (1844-1896), Jean Nicolas Arthur Rimbaud, (1854-1891), Stephane Mallarmé (1842-1898). Symbolism is associated with modern idealistic philosophical currents, the basis of which was the idea of two worlds - the apparent world of everyday reality and the transcendent world of real values, according to which symbolism deals with the search for a higher reality beyond the limits of sensory perception. Here, the most effective tool of creativity is a poetic image, which breaks through the veil of everyday life and allows to achieve beauty. The most general doctrine of Symbolism is that art is an intuitive understanding of the unity of the world through the discovery of symbolic parallels between the earthly and transcendent worlds.

In many ways, symbolism develops and revises the aesthetic positions of romanticism in a new way, that is, the idea of two worlds, attention to the inner world of man and, in particular, the unconscious one. The word "symbol" in symbolism is from Greek symbolon - a word from the same root as the verb "to connect", "to push", "to knock" and it is used in the following meanings - conditional symbol - the meaning closest to symbolism as a literary direction: a symbol is an object that conditionally expresses the essence of an event or as a word; or a signal ("the key to the secret of secrets"). According to A.F.Losev, "every symbol is a living reflection of reality, subject to one or another mental processing, it can become

the sharpest weapon for the reconstruction of reality itself.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Among the Symbolists, the symbol was understood, first of all, as "the mysterious reflection of another world in every object and creature of this world." [1:13]

According to M. L. Gasparov, the term "symbol" has at least two meanings: "secular" - a simple rhetorical device and "spiritual" - a symbol as an earthly sign of unpredictable heavenly realities, connected with religious themes. [2:5-44] Furthermore, Mallarmé says a symbol is not an allegory or a myth, a symbol reveals something obscure. "A symbol appears when an image enables us to anticipate an idea, to discover it as if it were born within us". [3:124-142]

American modernist writer William Faulkner, whose works contain symbolism, read many works of French symbolist writers, which inspired him in the future to write in this genre. Although Faulkner never wrote or said anything about his contribution to the symbolist genre, Richardson called Faulkner "a wide-ranging regional writer", and we can consider these ideas as proof of his creation his prose as in symbolist so in other styles of Modernistic literature [4:188]

Literary criticism takes the assessment that "in addition to the author singing poetically about the world, most of them seem to be written in imitation of Symbolists" [5:229] In the next ten months, Faulkner published thirteen poems in "The Mississippian"; these included a revised



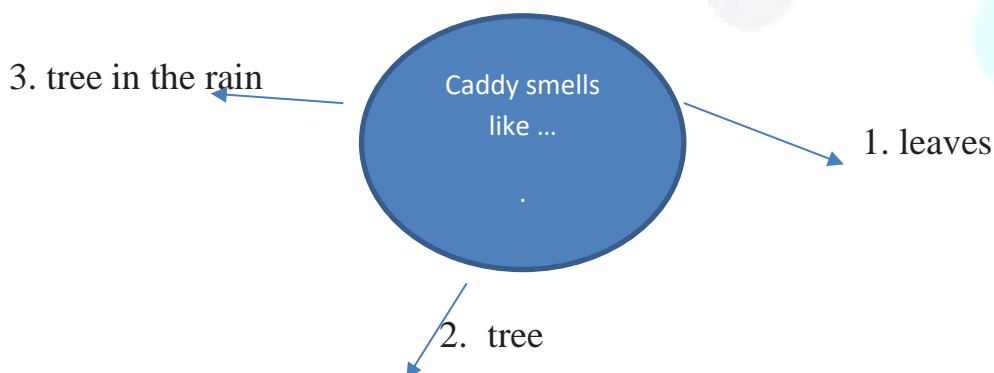
version of Mallarmé's poem, four translations from Paul Verlaine, and eight original poems in a symbolist style. It was during his intense literary apprenticeship, encouraged by his friend and mentor Phil Stone, as well as French researchers. [6:296]

Much has been written about the period of development of Faulkner's work, about his decadent, dilettantish personality and the widespread influence of the Symbolists on all his later poems. It is interesting to see how their aesthetic flourishes and develops when transplanted from the exotic world of French poetry to Faulkner's "motherland's stamp." Faulkner invented a county and called it Yoknapatawpha. The name of the country, invented by the writer, Yoknapatawpha means "water flows slow through flat land." "quiet flowing water along the plain" in the language of the Indian Chickasaw tribe. Its symbolic meaning is the symbol of life, a river that has neither beginning nor end, absorbing good and bad.

Faulkner's "The Hill" (1922) showed how he would use the genre of symbolism in future works. In his extensive biography, Joseph Blotner calls the short passage "an important transition between the poetry of the past and the fiction of the future." This experiment in prose, a description of his nature, "reveals in elementary form the basic truth about his style as a writer of fiction: he thought and wrote in poetic terms within a realistic framework, a style sufficient for a symbolist-writer." [7:332]

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

We can see these cases in the example of Faulkner's works. First of all, there is his apotheosis in "The Sound and The Fury", that is Caddy's association with the trees serving as a barometer of her maturation in the mind of her foolish brother Benjy.





We can see that "leaves" presented in this table actually represent the character's infancy, youth, "tree" - her adolescence, adulthood, and "tree in the rain" symbolizes the situations that happened during maturity. Below the examples of the appearance of the tree from Caddy, as they relate to symbolism. For example, Caddy smelled like trees..., the fact that Caddy smelled like a tree indicates that she is still a virgin (The Sound and the Fury, p42) but in the following example I couldn't smell trees anymore and I began to cry... it shows that she is no longer has previous scent and Benjy is dissatisfied with this situation, where expression the tree is considered a symbol of virginity and the example where no such odour is emitted from her is shown that Caddy ran away from home . (SF, p40)

.....Caddy smelled like leaves..(SF, p6)- which means that she is innocent like a new leaf in the spring, the writer emphasizes her youth.

.....Caddy smelled like trees in the rain. (SF, p19) , Caddy smelled like a tree caught in the rain. The "tree" in this sentence is compared to the stages of human life, that is, the first stage is a leaf, the next stage is a seedling, and the tree's connection with various natural phenomena after reaching adulthood describes the life of Caddy, in this example, the tree under the rain, that is, Caddy is no longer a young girl, but the image of a young woman is given as deluded one. Division of Caddy's life into stages through the "tree" is considered as a poetic skill of the writer.

In his chapter Benjy pointed out as Caddy smells like trees or leaves several times. For Benjy, Caddy is the image of his mother and source of affection

in his youth, providing the basis of comfort and order in his mind. Benjy is very dependent on his sister, and her absence makes him angry, he does not feel well. In his earliest memories of Caddy, Benjy sweetly associates her youthful innocence with the scent of the trees where they played. As Caddy reaches adulthood, Benjy notices a change in her. An anxious understanding destroys the sense of order in his mind. Caddy knows that Benjy is upset and starts avoiding him. Benjy regrets about the distance between him and his sister, and as Caddy suddenly stops smelling like trees, the likeness of the leaves is another symbol of his sister's pregnancy. Caddy is hard to describe; it can only be limited to representation through metaphor and metonymy. This is precisely the symbolic method.

Another symbolic image that develops in "The Sound and the Fury" is the pear tree that grows near the Compson house. In the novel, Benjy relates the incident at his grandmother's funeral to this tree. Caddy climbing the pear tree to look in the window at her grandmother's funeral while Quentin and Jason and Benjy and the negroes looked up at the muddy seat of her drawers. (SF,396et). Under the tree, her daughter Miss Quentin will also have a place to meet her many lovers - "We sees her doin hit ev'y night," Luster said. "Clam right down dat pear tree." (SF, page 286).

As mentioned earlier, Caddy is often associated with the smell of trees in Benjy's thoughts. And finally, the pear tree is also a means of escape when Miss Quentin (Caddy's daughter) steals Uncle Jason's money and runs away with the



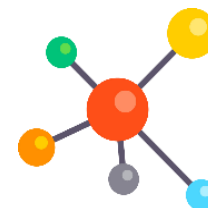
carnival man- a man with red tie; to the locked window of his own locked and empty bedroom and broke a pane and entered the window and with the uncle's firepoker burst open the locked bureau drawer and took the money (it was not \$2840. 50 either, it was almost seven thousand dollars (SF, p. 302) i.e she entered the empty bedroom through the closed window, opened the drawer and took the money. After the robbery, when Jason enters his room, the window is open and a pear tree appears covered in fragrant flowers.

Faulkner's portrayal of the innocent and the foolish is unique. A character like Benjy Compson feels direct experience without the mediating influence of the superego or social consciousness, Benjy can hear "I could smell the bright cold" (SF, page 10) and "...and hear trees and grass "buzzing", SF, page 45).

The most prominent synecdochic image and analogical symbol of imagination in Western literature is Jesus Christ. We know that Faulkner connects the novel with the Christian holiday Easter, that is, three parts of the novel take place in the days before and after Easter, thereby inviting readers to make a direct connection between the characters and the figures of Christian legend in the novel.

References to Jesus Christ appear in all chapters of "The Sound and the Fury", especially in the second, Quentin's chapter. But the allusions to Christ in the Quentin's chapter do not constitute synecdoche; their mission is to cover the central theme of Quentin's downfall. For example, in Quentin's part, we can see his comparison to

Christ in the following example: "Maybe a pattern of blood he could call that the one Christ was wearing"(SF p 172): Maybe this blood is from the clothes that Jesus Christ was wearing. In this example, the bloodstain on Quentin's clothes is likened to Jesus Christ, the writer makes a metaphorical comparison of Quentin with Adam expelled from paradise and Jesus Christ crucified, his reference to Christianity, his character and theme. On this basis, Quentin can be considered a unique Christ-like figure, who, like Christ, suffered for a crime he did not commit, and, like Jesus Christ, said nothing in his defense. However, unlike Jesus Christ, he kills himself because he cannot save his sister from gossip and face the world. Because of Quentin's association with the shadow, he can be seen as a victim of the Compson family's problem, which is the shadow of non-existent light or fire. The terrifying nature of this symbol can be shown in Quentin's mind in the following sequence: "... outside the gray light the shadows of things like dead things in stagnant water, I wish you were dead; trampling my shadow's bones into the concrete with hard heels". He added the following to his desire to drown in his shadow: Niggers say a drowned man's shadow was watching for him in the water all the time. (SF, p 96) . Therefore, the shadow serves to represent death that wants to destroy himself by drowning because of the loss of his sister's virginity. Later, when he lamented that "all the stable things I had done about the shadows turned out to be absurd," the symbolic references became redundant and crude in what was stable in his ideal, but suddenly an ambiguous paradox in



Caddy's impressions. Here, as mentioned above, while water is a symbol of purification and renewal, for Quentin the sea is a symbol of peaceful escape from the world, that is, death.

Moreover, in some cases of a symbol or metaphor, such as the "clock", becomes the "hero" or central image of the entire work, we speak of "motif" and "motif of symbolism". Clocks and time are also symbols of the past and future in this novel, and examples of this are mainly seen in Quentin's chapter. It was his realization of the connection between time and change that prompted him to return to his former state of innocence with Caddy and either destroy the clock hands and the crystal to stop time, or that he might not have been wrong to be intimate with her. In a way, as an example "Then I could hear the watch again." (SF, p78), this may also give some meaning to the novel's backsliding in the past and the future. "I broke it this morning." -I showed them my watch. They examined it gravely. -"It's still running," the second said. "What does a watch like that cost?" -"It was a present," I said. (SF, p119) Quentin liked the watch that his grandfather gave him when he entered Harvard, but because the watch is a symbol of time, it reminded him of the past, which he did not like he broke the watch. Even so, even if the clock is broken, its shafts still worked, and this affected his psyche. "While I was eating I heard a clock strike the hour." (SF, p83) "The bells were still ringing the half hour. I got on and it went on again, blotting the half hour. No: the three quarters. Then it would be ten minutes anyway. To leave Harvard your mother's dream for sold Benjy's pasture for what have I..." (SF, p102)

"Under the window we could hear the car leaving for the station, the 8:10 train." (SF, p114) In such examples, Quentin was in a difficult situations such as, not only a wristwatch, but also a pendant clock, a clock on the wall, and even a church bell were ringing, being unable to get out of these situations, he eventually commits suicide.

Another character in the novel, Jason, can be considered a symbol of the environment in the American South, because we can see the writer's description of his character because of the economic hardships at that time. In terms of character, he is portrayed as very greedy. When we read the novel, he even took 50 dollars from his sister to show her niece once, however he only showed her through the window. After the death of his father and brother, Jason was left as the sole breadwinner of the house and finds it difficult to take care of the slaves in the house and even his mentally retarded brother Benjy. We can analyze these cases in the following examples:

We ate a while. I could hear Ben in the kitchen, where Luster was feeding him. Like I say, if we've got to feed another mouth and she wont take that money, why not send him down to Jackson. He'll be happier there, with people like him. (SF,p221) In this statement he says that Benjy should be sent to hospital for mentally ill people as he considers his as one extra mouth to be fed.

I had already lost thirteen points..., I went back to the store. Thirteen points. Dam if I believe anybody knows anything about the dam thing except the ones that sit back in those New York offices and watch the country suckers come up and beg them to take their money. (SF, p226) In



this example, we can see that Jason also gambles to increase his money and is angry that he lost this time.

"I know it," she says. "Jason," she says, looking at the grave, "if you'll fix it so I can see her a minute I'll give you fifty dollars."

"You haven't got fifty dollars," I says.

"Will you?" she says, not looking at me.

"Let's see it," I says. "I dont believe you've got fifty dollars."

"Give me the money," I says.

"I'll give it to you afterward," she says.

"dont you trust me?" I says.

"No," she says. "I know you. I grew up with you." (SF, p203-204)

As we mentioned earlier in the dialogue above, we can see that he even took money to show his niece to his sister. The last sentence reveals what kind of person he was.

Yes," I says. "I feed a whole dam kitchen full of niggers to follow around . "He had his hands in his pockets and a pencil behind his ear - (SF, p23) Also, this character always has his hands in his pocket, which is a symbol of his greed. In this example, we can see that he has his hands in his pockets even when he climbs the stairs: Jason was still climbing the stairs. He had his hands in his pockets(SF, p65)

Even as a young boy, we can see how Jason behaved in the following example:

"I'm hungry. " Jason said. He passed us and ran on up the walk. He had his hands in his pockets and he fell down. Versh went and picked him up.(SF,23 бет) –

For Jason, blood means nothing more than inheritance, kinship. He derives this meaning from Mrs. Compson, as he always knows his blood relatives to be of the damned, and thus refers to his lineage and the traits he inherits from them. But the question of heritage is important to Jason, and the question of kinship probably comes up in his conversation with the Jewish drummer, when he says: "Sure," he says. "I'm an American. My folks have some French blood, why I have a nose like this. I'm an American, all right." (SF, p. 238). For Jason, blood is synonymous with lineage, family, name and pride. These elaborate similes give the reader an effect, an impression, rather than a realistic image; and it must be remembered that symbolism seeks not to describe, but to suggest and evoke in the mind of the reader feelings comparable to direct experience.

CONCLUSION

The novel has symbolic images that identifies the peculiarities of the characters in it. As the story of the novel lies on the downfall of the Compsons' family all the members of the family are compared to different natural phenomena or items. Firstly, symbols as examples given in the article helps to comprehend a reader the plot of the novel. Secondly, symbolic image of tree reveals Caddy as she is not given a separate part in the work as her brothers and symbol of tree identifies the relationship between her and Benjy. Thus, at first the story, which was initially incomprehensible, begins to have a clear meaning: the house is devoid of love; in the process, the passions of love



are lost, and the results: "the senseless passions of the owner's daughter; the suicide of a man who failed to protect the honor of the family; the symbol seems to sum up the image of decay in a single image.

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