

## The use of symbols in A Portrait<sup>(11)</sup> = James Joyce.

A Portrait of a young man as an artist is a master piece of James Joyce's fictional writings. Joyce is a pioneer of modern English novel and occupies an important position in the 20th Century fictional world. He has the personal experiences of all the vicissitudes of human life. His novels reveal his creative art and techniques and, at the same time, paint a true picture of Irish Society. 'A Portrait' is an autobiographical novel that demonstrates his rebellious attitude towards the existing condition in his fatherland, which is not conducive to the growth of an artist. Here, Joyce has elaborately used the stream of consciousness technique, symbols, images, myths and motifs that have enabled him to move freely into the past and the present to depict the actual thoughts and actions of his hero. This novel records the growth of Stephen, the hero, from creature to creator. Let us see how successfully he has used symbols in this novel.

In fact, symbols and images are used by a writer to suggest various ideas which he does not want to write in words again and again. The use of symbols, as a matter of fact, is a potent literary device that enables him to depict even those delicate and subtle thoughts and feelings that cannot be presented in bare words. Instead of giving a full description, he only mentions the symbols and the whole pictures come before the readers' mind. The narrative also becomes richer and more artistic. Symbols and images play important roles in the structure and the theme of 'A Portrait'. Stephen's feelings and reactions at different stages of his development as an artist are beautifully suggested by different symbols.

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James Joyce has effectively used, in this Portrait, the symbols of roses to suggest varied meanings to the growing mind of Stephen, the hero. As rose is a delicate and beautiful flower, it attracts everyone, from children to grey-haired. Stephen is also greatly charmed and takes it as a symbol of ideal beauty. As beauty to him implies the beauty of women that attracts the men and creates love in their heart, rose stands for love, both holy and profane. Stephen is fascinated to roses from his very childhood. As a child he sings songs about roses of various colours that suggest various meanings in course of his mental growth.

We see that the green rose stands for Stephen for he is wild and rebellious by nature. It also implies that he is tender and immature but is endowed with the potentiality for development as an artist. The white rose stands for Virgin Mary, the begetter of the deliverer of human soul. Stephen also associates it with Mercedes, the beloved of Edmond Dante, who is embodiment beauty and virtues. It also symbolises the Catholic purity while the red rose suggests human passion and physical desire. The conflict between the white and red roses in his Matheonaire class stands for the conflict between Stephen's flesh and spirit, when he is doing penance for the sins that he has committed, he is inspired by the white rose and he prays to Mary to pardon his sins. Stephen also associates the rose with the beauty of art. It inspires him for artistic creation.

Similarly, the flowing water suggests the disorderly life of Stephen's home. At Clongowes he is pushed into dirty water that causes him illness. The sluggish turf-coloured water of Clongowes bath is associated with the ordered and passionless life

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The wealth and the artist. A critic opines that Pozzo and Lucky are the body and intellect, capitalist and the proletarian, coloniser and colonised. They create the metaphor of society, not as it is, but as the tramps see it, <sup>as</sup> with a social structure reduced to an essential disintegration between master and slave. Pozzo appears all powerful, dominated by his gesture and inflated language. He is like an emperor and absolute monarch. It has also been pointed out that they represent the quality of body and mind and the relationship between the material and the spiritual sides of man, with the intellect subordinate to the appetites of the body. They are also described as representing mankind, the sufferer, and Christ, the deliverer.

The leafless and dried tree, standing in the middle of the stage is also symbolically significant. It is willow tree that weeps. It suggests the actual condition of the tramps who are devoid of knowledge as the tree is divested of its leaves. As leaves are the obvious feature of a live and growing tree, so the knowledge is the quality that makes a man real man and active one. The tramp's shoes, being unyielding and ill-fitting, are symbolic of the essential inability of human construct. Similarly, Lucky's dance of net suggests the net of modern materialism, in which modern people are making all pret and fury.

Thus we see that *Waiting for Godot* is a richly symbolic play. Its title, its characters, its setting are all symbolic. Its beauty lies in the fact that the dramatist has minimised the use of the words and yet has conveyed a great deal of meaning through his subtle and delicate symbols.