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Symbolism as a Literary Style of Understanding the Novel Analysis with reference to Great Gatsby and Waiting for Godot

Dr. Ibrahim Adam Said Daier ^{a*}, Dr. Muhammad Ali Abbakar Suleiman Al
Tinawi ^b

Taif University. Turaba Branch Faculty of Education and Arts. English Language Department

^aemail: ibrahimdaier@yahoo.com

^bemail: dr.tinawi01@yahoo.com

Abstract

This paper focuses on Symbolism as a Literary Style of Understanding the Novel Analysis. Man seems to be consciously or unconsciously attached to some potent logo centric authorities, which resist against new changes and focuses on which this sense of attachment is along with fanaticism and igotry, it may lead to some irretrievable repercussions. The overall objective of this paper is to provide readers of Beckett's Waiting for Godot and Great Gatsby with a Symbolism as a Literary Style of understanding the Novel Analysis. This study tries to analyze the different situational moods of the characters by pushing them within a Symbolism arena. The significance of this study is in symbolizing the content of these novels, which keep the characters of this play as well as the characters of this chaotic world shackled within messianically inherited whims. The results are highlighting the Symbolism which may help one to practice quitting the addiction of the stupor of the world of the metaphysics of presence, which forcefully struggles to impose its presumed authoritarian centers. Indeed it may be within such a Symbolism atmosphere that one can witness his free mental flow towards a world free from the reality and covered by the illusion.

* Corresponding author.

E-mail address: ibrahimdaier@yahoo.com.

KeyWords: Symbolism as a Literary Style

1. Introduction

There are symbols galore in the play but the point is that it does not want to fix any symbolic interpretation on itself. It rather vaguely opens up multiple symbolic layers to seduce the reader into one or the other. None of these, on its own is a substantial one, however. The greatest seductive symbol in the play is the figure of Godot which is seen to represent God, existence, meaning, the gaze of the other, a social big-brother figure, an absent centre of authority and so on. Waiting as a condition of being is yet another symbolic act in the play. There is a symbolic import in the repetitive circularity of action in the two acts. The boots, the hats, especially Lucky's thinking hat which produces his great speech are all symbolic objects. The tree, the country road, the leaves that appear on the second day, the way the two tramps and Lucky and Pozzo fall in the shape of crucifixion in the second act, the social category of the tramp--all these are symbolic in the play-text. In literature, symbols are used to add deeper meaning to the story or hint at an emotion or attitude towards something without directly stating it. Sometimes they are obvious while other times sometimes they are hidden, regardless; they are used to enhance the story. In *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald, Fitzgerald uses symbolism to create a more realistic story for the reader. Although, many symbols are present throughout the story, Gatsby's house represents something more than just a luxurious building; his house reveals Gatsby's true character, love for Daisy and his struggle to maintain it. Gatsby's lavish mansion is described early on in the story which illustrates Gatsby's personality. Within the first several pages of the book, Gatsby's house is expressed as "a colossal affair by any standard..." [1:5]. It can be inferred that his house is exceptionally larger than the other houses of West Egg, therefore wealthier than the average persons'. Nick, the narrator, also mentions that his house is "squeezed between two huge places" . The imagery added here, creates a more detailed picture in the reader's mind of Gatsby's house compared to Nick's. After Gatsby's death, his empty house symbolizes his unimportance in the community. Although, his parties were not actually meant for the people, he had always welcomed them. In return, only three people attend his funeral: Nick, his father, and Owl Eyes. Earlier, Nick called some of Gatsby's friends, at least he thought they were, but they rejected his request and claimed that they had other priorities. During the funeral, Nick even "... asked him [minister] to wait for half an hour. But it wasn't any use. Nobody came" . Gatsby and his money were taken advantage of by the people which reveals that he is oblivious; Not giving back to the community shows that he is selfish- only caring about Daisy.

2. Discussions

Gatsby's quest was that Daisy was completely incapable of playing the role assigned to her" . Money and material possessions prove to be a small portion of what constitutes the American dream: Money by itself cannot buy happiness, and therefore Daisy cannot bring happiness to Gatsby. In this sense, *The Great Gatsby* becomes a study of the consequences of that generation's mindless devotion to false or at least incomplete values: Whereas the American Dream was once equated with certain principles of freedom, it is now equated with things. The American Dream has undergone a metamorphosis from principles to materialism. ... When people are concerned more with the attainment of things than with the maintenance of principles, it is a sign of 64 Educ. Res. J. moral decay. And it is through such decay that loss of freedom occurs.[9: 593-597] The central

character of the novel, Gatsby, who perfectly can stand for America itself, is certain that he can reach his dream by wealth and influence. All he can show for himself is his wealth. He always brags about his big house, car and material possessions as though they can account for his every need. Gatsby's dream proves to be "a naïve dream based on the fallacious assumption that material possessions are synonymous with happiness, harmony, and beauty". To further the argument, Gatsby's love for Daisy can be taken as his love for what Daisy represents. He is in love with idea of Daisy and what she embodies not herself as an individual. The green light at the end of Daisy's dock symbolizes what Gatsby longs for: American Dream. The color green, apart from being the symbol of Gatsby's optimism, can be taken as the green color of dollar bills. Daisy becomes an appealing ideal, the 1920s' American Dream which is capital: Her voice is full of money...It was full of money—that was the inexhaustible charm that rose and fell in it, the jingle of it, the cymbals' song of it.... High in a white palace the king's daughter, the golden girl [1 :76] In her character, we can see all that went wrong with the original American Dream. In Gatsby's mind Daisy is the perfect woman: "Gatsby seems committed to an idea of Daisy that he has created than to the real woman she is" . Although she is beautiful and charming, she can be selfish, shallow and hurtful. In addition, the two critical and important components of Franklin's ideal version of American Dream are missing in the distorted adaptation of the characters of the novel. They totally disregard morality and work ethics in their pursuit of happiness. Franklin believes that morality and hard work are the two integral parts of what one needs to achieve the promised success. But, Roaring Twenties, in this novel, is depicted as a time of moral and social decay. Fitzgerald's world characterizes "a sterile, immoral society" . The parties, which Gatsby holds, are the epitome of the corruption of the age and its ideal as the American Dream. Dishonesty prevails in the whole world of the novel: Tom and Daisy engage themselves in adulterous affairs, the partygoers consume alcohol illegally, and Daisy runs over and kills a woman without taking any responsibility. In fact, the search for a character that can be taken as a perfect example of a morally upright citizen can prove to be futile as even Nick Carraway, the narrator, has his own instances of indiscretion. To further the argument, Gatsby's love for Daisy can be taken as his love for what Daisy represents. He is in love with idea of Daisy and what she embodies not herself as an individual. The green light at the end of Daisy's dock symbolizes what Gatsby longs for: American Dream. The color green, apart from being the symbol of Gatsby's optimism, can be taken as the green color of dollar bills. Daisy becomes an appealing ideal, the 1920s' American Dream which is capital: Her voice is full of money...It was full of money—that was the inexhaustible charm that rose and fell in it, the jingle of it, the cymbals' song of it.... High in a white palace the king's daughter, the golden girl [1: 76] In her character, we can see all that went wrong with the original American Dream. In Gatsby's mind Daisy is the perfect woman: "Gatsby seems committed to an idea of Daisy that he has created than to the real woman she is" . Although she is beautiful and charming, she can be selfish, shallow and hurtful. She cheats on her husband, lies and even murders a woman without showing any remorse. His devotion to her is misplaced because the object of his quest is not worthy of pursuing. In this sense, Gatsby's pursuit is doomed to failure: "The trouble with Gatsby's quest was that Daisy was completely incapable of playing the role assigned to her". Money and material possessions prove to be a small portion of what constitutes the American dream: Money by itself cannot buy happiness, and therefore Daisy cannot bring happiness to Gatsby. In this sense, The Great Gatsby becomes a study of the consequences of that generation's mindless devotion to false, or at least incomplete values: Whereas the American Dream was once equated with certain principles of freedom, it is now equated with things. The Great Gatsby is a novel which is thematically based on the concept

of the American Dream in general, and the degenerated 1920's version of it in particular. All the characters, one way or another, are trying to achieve a state of happiness in their lives following their own understanding of the dream. Like other chapters of the American history, the 1920s has its own recipe of how to lead a perfect life. The Jazz Age version of this dream included having an excess of money and material possessions, such as an expensive car and an extravagant house with no regard for how the wealth is obtained. The characters in the novel have, to a great extent, lost touch with morality. Adulterous affairs, murder, illegal alcohol use, bootlegging and organized crimes permeate the whole novel. The notion of hard work and ethics are abandoned by the characters in their pursuit of happiness. In fact, what really destroys the American Dream is this decadence and corruption. Furthermore, the fundamental presupposition of the American ideology, equality of all men, is questioned as the reader is faced with a highly class-conscious society in which bigotry is a norm. The promise of the American Dream was to give people happiness and fulfillment in life, but this corrupt version fell short of the pledge it formerly made. Illegally-obtained wealth overnight cannot bring happiness to Gatsby's life. He really comes close to have it all, but the goal is never obtained. Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* has been the research ingredient of the different curious and cautious world scholars and researchers. Everyone has tried to extract a new concept out of this challenging play. There are numerous researchers who have enjoyed poring over the different layers of this play, but the researcher has simply selected a few of them. The researcher wants to show that in spite of the multifarious outlooks on the play, there has hardly been any detailed deconstructive look on this play, which this study seeks to challenge. Basaninyenzi [4 : 63-73] believes that *Waiting for Godot* is an anti-Christian text is evident from the very beginning of the play. Vladimir, the more reflective and philosophical of the pair, has closely read and rigorously analysed the gospel on the subject of salvation, probably to see if he and Estragon have any chance of being saved from the drudgery of their lives by the coming of Godot. Worthington avers Godot has become, not an essential expression of human purpose or being as was Adam, nor humanity's friend and savior as was Prometheus, but the very thoughts and significations by which humanity constitutes itself. The self, or the subjective side of meaning, can be recognized as a procedure of becoming but a horizon of meaning has now established limits within which a self can be contained. Salvatore [17: 38-45] argues that Beckett's lyrical passages also act as structural aids in the dialogue, demonstrating humankind's search for an adequate mode of expression. For example, Pozzo indecisively bounces back and forth among several means of delivery and never really becomes satisfied with any one mode, illustrating that language is a limited mode of expression inhibiting humans from being able to communicate clearly and accurately even a single concept or thought. The concept of language as confining or restricting is also seen in Act II, when Vladimir and Estragon appear to find themselves linguistically incapable of breaking from a ritualized poetic/lyrical structure and, as a result, become confined to its limitations of style and communication. Ghanbari states [4: 376] that "*Waiting for Godot* denotes the end of the world, so, it's time for the second coming. The savior simply postpones his appointment and keeps man waiting for tomorrow". Valentine [17: 136-147]. comments on *Waiting for Godot* as follows: Vladimir and Estragon conclude from the fact of their existence that there must be something for which they are waiting; they are champions of the doctrine that life must have meaning even in a manifestly meaningless situation...What Beckett presents is not nihilism, but the inability of man to be a nihilist even in a situation of utter hopelessness. Shams [13: 174-179] opines: Man is struggling with the jest of humanity and is constantly trying to make sense of his own existence as a human being. Estragon in addressing Vladimir says: "We always find something, eh Didi, to give us the

impression that we exist?" . It seems as if human beings cannot go beyond this mere "impression" of existence. Human existence, when delved into, proves to be a matter of high absurdity. Existence is absurd because being human and existing are mutually contradictory. The paradoxes of existence are as endless as its absurdity. According to Pham [10 :176] The truth of the matter is that the Beckettian world is one other than objective reality. It is a projection of discord which the tormented individual has vomited. His upset emerges from the pit in his stomach, which has augmented from the contention between his moralizing mind and demanding body, and from a broken heart, which covets a desire so great but whose object lays cruelly and perpetually out of reach. This, Samuel Beckett noted, is most devastating to the individual, because the individual cannot comprehend the ailment from which he suffers and so cannot seek the appropriate remedy. Left untreated, it begins to fester inside until it reaches culmination, causing the individual to expel the fragments of his psyche into the room before him, and it is in this room where Beckett's works reflect its aftermath.

3. Conclusion

Two homeless men, Vladimir and Estragon are stuck near a tree and keep chatting on different topics. Indeed, the main theme of their topics is waiting for a seemingly superpower called Godot. As they are drowned in the world of waiting, they are joined by Pozzo and his slave Lucky. The unlucky Lucky amuses them by dancing and thinking and then both Pozzo and Lucky leave the arena. Soon after, the boy who is the messenger and seems to link them to Godot comes and tells them that Godot is not coming tonight, but he will definitely come tomorrow. They decide to leave but it never happens. The next day, Vladimir and Estragon are joined by Pozzo and Lucky, but this time they are faced with a blind Pozzo and a dumb Lucky. Pozzo is not only blind but seems to have lost his sense of memory, when he says that he does not remember to have met Vladimir and Estragon the night before. The boy enters again and reports that Godot is not coming; Vladimir and Estragon decide to leave but as usual do not move and again keep on waiting.

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