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Emily Bronte's Use of Symbolic Seasonal Imagery in Poetry

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Abstract:

Poetry is renowned for its sophisticated and nuanced language which is often meant to evoke emotions and convey messages implicitly. To achieve this, poets frequently employ various techniques, styles and symbols. Some of the symbols may create ambiguity for inexperienced readers. For instance, a highly reoccurring theme in poetry is the use of seasonal imagery. Emily Bronte deploys it extensively in her works. This paper examines Bronte's use of seasonal symbolism, providing definitions and examples of various forms of symbolism. The analysis focuses on selected poems by Bronte, scrutinizing the types, meanings, and reasons for the use of symbols. The findings show that Bronte employs seasonal imagery to create vivid and aesthetically engaging images in her work. The paper concludes by recommending further exploration of symbolism in poetry as a means to deepen appreciation for the genre and its intricacies.

Keywords: Seasonal Imagery, Emily Bronte, Poetry.

توظيف إيميلي برونتي لرمزية فصول السنة في شعرها

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المخلص

تتسم اللغة الشعرية في بعض الأحيان بطبيعة معقدة. وغالبا ما ينبع هذا التعقيد من فكرة أن الغرض من الشعر هو مخاطبة المشاعر من خلال ارسال رسائل غير مباشرة الى القراء. وعلى سبيل المثال فان من المواضيع المتواترة في الشعر استخدام الرمزية. وقد تضيف هذه الرمزية نوعا من الغموض على العمل الشعري لدى بعض القراء الغير المتمرسين. ومن بين الموضوعات الشائعة في الشعر استخدام صورة فصلية كالتي تستخدمها إيميلي برونتي بشكل متكرر في أعمالها. لهذا، يحاول الباحث من خلال هذه الورقة تعريف الرموز وتوضيح رمزية الفصول لأهميتها من خلال استعراض عينة من قصائد متنوعة من شعر إيميلي برونتي، كما يستعرض الباحث أهم أنواع ومعنى واستخدام هذه الرموز في الشعر. خلصت الدراسة الى أن الكاتبة وظفت الجانب الرمزي لفصول السنة لرسم صورة جمالية حية في ذهن القراء. يقترح الباحث ان تجري دراسات على جوانب أخرى للرمزية لتعميق فهم الرمزية ودورها في اضعاف جانب وعمق جمالي للشعر وأساليبه.

الكلمات المفتاحية: رمزية فصول السنة، إيميلي برونتي، الشعر.

1.1 Introduction

The language of poetry differs from ordinary language in that poets use it to elicit specific emotional responses from their readers. Poet's exercise great care in selecting their words and styles in order to create a particular mood or tone in their work. They may employ figurative language, such as metaphor, simile, and symbolism, to convey deeper meanings through images and associations that resonate with readers on an emotional level. These literary devices enable poets to create a highly condensed form of communication that can evoke powerful emotional responses.

The use of imagery and symbolism in poetry is particularly vital because it allows the poet to establish connections between the reader and their own experiences and emotions. By drawing on universal themes and

symbols, the poet can create a shared understanding and empathy with the reader. The connection that poetry can create between the reader and the poet's experiences and emotions is what makes it a special art form that can transcend time and place.

In summary, poetry's language is carefully crafted to elicit specific emotional responses from readers. Poets use various literary devices, including imagery and symbolism, to create a rich and layered experience that resonates with the reader on an emotional level. These devices allow poets to establish connections between the reader and their own experiences and emotions, making poetry a powerful and enduring form of artistic expression.

1.2 Statement of The Problem

Symbolic language and imagery are tools that are very often utilized by authors to enhance the aesthetic appeal of their work. However, for some readers, the challenge lies in associating the meanings of words to that of their literal use. This difficulty arises from the fact that poetic language is concise and cannot be interpreted in isolation. It rather requires a discussion of the poem both within and beyond the sentence.

Unfamiliarity with various types of symbols and their use may further complicate the reading experience for inexperienced readers, potentially resulting in a misunderstanding of the intended message. Symbolic imagery is used to connect non-literal meanings to their literal use, and a lack of full comprehension of these symbols may lead to a distorted understanding of the poet's deep intended message.

To fully appreciate and understand the use of symbolic language and imagery in poetry, readers must be attentive to the context and the overall theme of the poem. Symbolic language and imagery are often used to convey complex emotions and ideas, and their interpretation requires a deep understanding of the cultural and historical context through which they were written.

Additionally, the reader's own experiences and perspectives can influence their interpretation of the poem's symbols. Thus, a successful interpretation of symbolic language and imagery requires a combination of literary analysis, historical knowledge, and personal insight. By engaging with the poem on multiple levels, readers can gain a deeper appreciation of the poet's craft and the ways in which symbolic language and imagery contribute to the overall broad meaning of the work.

1.3 Research Question

-To what extent is the symbolic utilization of seasonal imagery prevalent in the poetry of Emily Bronte, - How far did the poet utilize seasonal imagery in her poetry to deliver and imply various meanings?

1.4 Purpose of the Study

The current study aims at examining the recurrent use of seasonal symbolism in the poetry of Emily Bronte. The investigation involves a detailed analysis of several extracts of the poet's works in order to uncover the depth of the symbols' application in the literary work. Additionally, the study explores various types of symbols and their use by presenting diverse examples from the author's works, along with their potential interpretations.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The significance of this study lies in its focus on a prevalent feature of Emily Bronte's poetry, namely the recurrent use of seasonal imagery. Inexperienced readers may struggle to interpret the deeper meanings embedded within the literal use of language, making this study valuable in expanding their understanding of the poet's work. By presenting examples of the author's poetry that employ symbolism, the study serves to guide readers in their interpretation of the text. Moreover, the study is important in its ability to facilitate an understanding of the poet's true intentions and the profound meaning behind the words, rather than a shallow and superficial interpretation that fails to capture the full range of the poet's artistic vision.

1.6 Limits of the study

The use of poetic symbols is a ubiquitous feature throughout various eras of English poetry. Many poets employ symbolism in their works, but for the sake of concision, this paper focuses solely on the poetry of Emily Bronte. Although Bronte is also a well-known novelist, most research efforts have centered on her novel "Wuthering Heights." However, this study is limited to the use of seasonal imagery in her poetry.

To gain a general understanding of how and why Bronte employs such symbolism in her work, the researcher has selected specific excerpts from different parts of the author's poetry and analyzed the use of symbolism therein. In doing so, the study sheds the light on the significance of seasonal symbolism in Bronte's poetry and its contribution to the overall meaning and impact of her work.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction:

The use of symbols in poetry has been the subject of numerous studies throughout the history of English literature. This current study seeks to contribute to this body of literature by examining the use of symbolism in the poetry of Emily Bronte. To achieve this objective, this section is structured in a developmental order, aimed at providing readers with an understanding of the concept of symbolism.

The first part of this section establishes the general and specific definitions of symbolism. The second part provides an overview of the different types of symbols that can be found in poetry. Finally, the section concludes by emphasizing the importance of using symbolism in poetry as a means of conveying complex themes and ideas that cannot be expressed through literal language alone.

2.1.1 Symbolism

The abundance of studies on symbolism in literature suggests that poetry is fertile ground for the use of symbols. To fully explore this terrain, it is essential to have a clear understanding of the concept of symbolism through exhibiting several definitions of the term itself. Webster (2003:119) defines a symbol as "a word derived from the Greek 'symbolon' and Latin 'symbolum', denoting a token or sign." [1] Similarly, the online Encyclopedia Britannica characterizes a symbol as "a communication element intended to represent a complex person, object, group, or idea that has both literal and figurative meaning." [2]

In the context of poetry, Abram (2009:358) refines this definition further, explaining that symbols are "applied only to a word or phrase that signifies an object or event, which in turn signifies something beyond itself." [3] Morrison (2002) highlights the transformative power of symbols in poetry, as they transcend the boundaries of language and turn phenomena into ideas and ideas into images with infinite repercussions that remain intangible even when expressed in every language. [4]

The use of symbols in poetry is not only a means of conveying complex ideas and emotions, but also a way of enhancing the aesthetic experience of the reader. Symbols add depth and richness to the language of poetry, creating a layered and multi-dimensional work that engages the reader on many levels. By drawing upon familiar objects, images, and experiences, symbols create a bridge between the reader's own experience and the world of the poem, allowing the reader to connect with the text in a deeply personal way. In this sense, symbols serve as a kind of universal language, capable of transcending cultural and linguistic barriers to communicate meaning and emotion in a way that is both immediate and profound.

2.1.2 Types

Symbolism is a crucial aspect of poetry that can deepen readers' understanding of a text. Many writers looked at symbolism differently. Some have given it a wide territory and great significance such as Thorne (2006:77) who suggested that symbolism represents "a historical, cultural, or mythical background that exists outside the context of a poem". [5] Which in this case, it is inseparable means for the appreciation of the work. Fadaee (2011), suggested only four types of symbolism: Significant, Metaphoric, Commemorative, and Sacramental. [6] For him, through utilizing these different types of symbolism, poets can create elaborate and engaging meanings that captivate readers.

Other writers such as Shamisa (2004:214), categorized symbols into two vague types: arbitrary symbols, which are commonly known and recognizable to readers, such as "spring" as a symbol of youth and freshness, and personal symbols, which are newly created and less accessible to readers due to their private contents. [7] Whatever territory symbols were assigned or reserved, their significance enables poets to convey complex emotions and ideas in a way that transcends the limitations of literal language. Symbols create a rich and layered world of meaning that invites readers to engage with the text on multiple levels. Through symbols, poets can create a universal language that communicates across cultural and linguistic barriers, inviting readers to connect with the text in a deeply personal way.

2.1.3 Significance of symbols:

Symbols enrich poetry and make it closer to readers real world. Thorne (2006:77) explains that duality is inherent in the use of symbols in poetry. [5] This duality allows the reader to distinguish a symbol, particularly when the literal interpretation is not sufficient. Symbols assist in interpreting the context in which they occur by establishing an association between the context and the symbol utilized to both empower and enrich the language, imbuing it with deeper meaning and creating multi-dimensional works that engage the reader on many levels.

Symbols enable poets to convey complex emotions and ideas in a way that transcends the boundaries of literal language, creating a universal language that communicates across cultures and time. The use of symbolism

in poetry allows poets to transform mundane objects and experiences into something meaningful and significant. Through the use of symbols, poets can create a world of meaning that invites the reader to engage with the text in a deeply personal way.

The symbolic significance of objects, people, places, events, and ideas in poetry helps to create a resonance that echoes throughout the poem, creating a rich and multi-layered experience for the reader. In this way, the use of symbols in poetry is essential to the creation of a rich and meaningful literary experience.

3. Methods:

3.1 Research Paradigm

Research paradigms according to (Creswell, 2014) refers to the set of assumptions, beliefs, and philosophical orientations that guide the research process.[8] Furthermore, (Nassaji, 2015) argues that descriptive qualitative research is a paradigm that seeks to provide a comprehensive description of a phenomenon and its characteristics. [9] This paradigm is particularly useful when the researcher seeks to explore a complex, multifaceted phenomenon and understand its various dimensions. By providing a detailed and nuanced description of the phenomenon, descriptive qualitative research can help researchers gain a deeper understanding of the underlying processes and mechanisms that drive it.

3.2 Data collection:

The present study collected data by surveying the primary data represented in the poetry of the author, specifically symbolism found in various extracts of Bronte's poetry. The data was analyzed through interpretation and analysis of Bronte's work, which was informed by a review of past scholarship in the field. By collecting and analyzing data in this way, the study aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the symbolism used by Bronte in her poetry.

3.2 Data Analysis:

Data analysis is an essential process in various fields, ranging from scientific research to literary interpretation. By breaking down complex information into smaller, more manageable components, analysts can gain insights into patterns, relationships, and trends that might not be visible at first glance. In the context of literary analysis, data analysis can help readers understand the themes, motifs, and symbols that underlie a poem or other literary work.

Johnson and Smith (2010:23) have identified three primary data analysis methods commonly utilized in literary studies, namely "classification, examination of symbolic elements, and drawing conclusions".[10] The classification method involves grouping data into distinct categories based on specific criteria, enabling researchers to uncover patterns and trends that may not be immediately apparent when analyzing the data as a whole.

The examination of symbolic elements involves scrutinizing symbols, images, and metaphors found in the text" to comprehend their meanings and significance. Lastly, the drawing of conclusions involves synthesizing findings from previous analysis steps" to arrive at an overall interpretation of the data.

In summary, data analysis is an influential tool for literary analysis that can reveal hidden meanings and insights. By employing these methods, researchers can uncover patterns, identify themes, and arrive at new interpretations of literary works, thereby enriching the understanding of literature and uncovering hidden meanings and insights that might otherwise go unnoticed.

3.3 Results and Discussion:

Table 1. below illustrates how Emily Bronte frequently depicts seasonal imagery throughout her poetry. This recurring theme of seasonal imagery plays a significant role in conveying the emotions and ideas that Bronte seeks to express in her works. By consistently using this imagery to evoke different moods and messages, Bronte demonstrates her skill at creating powerful and evocative poetry that resonates with readers.

Table (1): Imagery Symbols Used in Emily Bronte's Poetry.

No.	The Title of the Poem	The Symbol Used	Stanza/ Line Number
1	The old church tower and garden wall	Fall	The old church tower and garden wall Are black with Autumn rain And dreary winds foreboding call The darkness down again

2	Death	Spring	And, behold! with tenfold increase blessing, Spring adorned the beauty-burdened spray; Wind and rain and fervent heat, caressing, Lavished glory on that second May!
3	Mild The Mist Upon the Hill	Summer	I watch this cloudy evening fall After a day of rain; Blue mists, sweet mists of summer pall The horizon's mountain chain.
4	Love and Friendship	Spring Summer Winter	The wild rose-briar is sweet in spring, Its summer blossoms scent the air; Yet wait till winter comes again And who will call the wild-briar fair?
5	Moonlight, Summer Moonlight	Summer	'Tis moonlight, summer moonlight, All soft and still and fair; The solemn hour of midnight Breathes sweet thoughts everywhere,
6	Yes, Holy be Thy Resting Place	Summer	That summer's grass more green may grow, And summer's flowers more fair? Farewell, farewell, 'tis hard to part Yet, loved one, it must be:
7	Fall, leaves, fall	Fall	Fall, leaves, fall; die, flowers, away; Lengthen night and shorten day; Every leaf speaks bliss to me Fluttering from the autumn tree.

The above table shows that the use of symbolism is a common literary device used by the author to express complex themes and emotions in her works. Bronte's use of seasonal symbolism aimed at various ways to convey ideas and emotions related to love, loss, and the human condition.

The analysis of primary data represented in Bronte's poetry also reveals that the use of seasonal symbolism allowed Bronte to create a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the human experience, exploring complex emotions and ideas in a way that transcended the limitations of literal language.

Bronte employs the season of Autumn as a symbol of foreboding and impending darkness, while the season of Spring represents renewal, growth, and abundance. Summer is portrayed as a time of tranquility and peace, while Winter is a symbol of hardship and adversity. Through the use of these symbolic images, Bronte creates a rich understanding of the natural world and its relationship to the human experience.

This coincides what was reached by Harrison's (1994) who clarified that Bronte used Autumn as a symbol of impending darkness and bleakness [11], while Chen's (2020) analysis highlighted Bronte's use of Spring as a symbol of renewal, growth, and abundance [12]. Davidson's (2016) analysis emphasized Bronte's use of Summer as a symbol of tranquillity and peacefulness [13]. Additionally, Smith (2010) supported the idea that Bronte employs Summer as a symbol of beauty and tranquility [14].

Other scholars have also examined the use of symbolism in Bronte's poetry. For example, Ingham (1986) looked at the role of nature as a symbol in Bronte's poetry [15], while Cole (2009) examined the use of animal imagery [16]. Similarly, Frawley (1993) analyzed the use of color symbolism in Bronte's poetry [17]. These studies highlighted the diversity of symbolic elements in Bronte's work and demonstrated the complexity of her use of symbolism.

Through the use of symbolic imagery, Bronte invited readers to contemplate the natural world and the fleeting nature of life. This imagery allowed her to create a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the human experience, exploring complex emotions and ideas in a way that speaks to the universal human condition. By examining the symbolic elements of her work, readers can gain a deeper appreciation of the themes and ideas that Bronte explored, and can better understand the significance of her contribution to the literary canon.

In conclusion, Emily Bronte's use of seasonal symbolism in her poetry is a notable example of the effective use of symbolism in literature. The study of symbolism in literature is a growing field, and Bronte's work provides a rich source of material for scholars interested in exploring the use of symbolism in poetry. By examining the symbolic elements of her work, readers can gain a deeper understanding of the themes and ideas that Bronte explored, and can better appreciate the significance of her contribution to the literary canon.

4- Conclusion and Recommendations:

Based on the analysis of these extracts from Emily Bronte's poetry, it is clear that the seasons of the year are important symbols that the poet used to convey a range of meanings and themes. Bronte's use of symbolism is complex and multifaceted, with different seasons representing different aspects of the human experience.

In particular, Bronte employed the season of Autumn as a symbol of foreboding and impending darkness, while the season of Spring represented renewal, growth, and abundance. Summer was portrayed as a time of tranquility and peace, while Winter has frequently used as a symbol of hardship and adversity. Through the use of these symbolic images, Bronte could create a rich and nuanced understanding of the natural world and its relationship to the human experience.

Overall, these extracts demonstrated the power of symbolism in literature and its ability to convey complex emotions and ideas in a way that transcends the limitations of literal language. The use of symbolism allowed Bronte to create a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the human experience, exploring complex emotions and ideas of her world and the readers' world as well. And

by examining the symbolic elements of her work, readers can gain a deeper appreciation of the themes and ideas that Bronte intended, and can better understand the significance of her contribution to the literary canon.

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