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**СИМВОЛ КАК ОДНА ИЗ ОСОБЕННОСТЕЙ ХУДОЖЕСТВЕННОГО ДИСКУРСА (НА ПРИМЕРЕ
 СОВРЕМЕННЫХ ПРОИЗВЕДЕНИЙ АНГЛОЯЗЫЧНЫХ И РУССКОЯЗЫЧНЫХ АВТОРОВ)**

Аннотация

В статье рассмотрен символ как одна из особенностей художественного дискурса. Традиционные символы присутствуют в художественном произведении так же часто, как и в обыденной речи. Их легко понять и интерпретировать. Писатели используют авторские символы для раскрытия художественных образов и описания событий. Исследователи данной области утверждают, что, с одной стороны, символы могут обогащать художественное произведение, придавая ему особые смыслы, с другой стороны, например, для заурядного читателя, символ отягощает текст и делает его недоступным для восприятия всей полноты художественного произведения. Традиционные символы обращаются к произведениям из культурного наследия, таким как Библия, древняя история и литература, к произведениям англоязычных и русскоязычных писателей. Иногда, для того, чтобы понять художественное произведение, необходимо знание истории, политики, текущих событий в современном мире. Значения авторских символов не устанавливаются заранее, они появляются в контексте. Писатель сам придаёт то или иное символическое значение предмету, событию или цвету. Цель исследования заключается в выявлении и анализе авторских символов и их интерпретации в художественном дискурсе. Практическая значимость заключается в возможности применения результатов исследования в разработке лекционных курсов и семинарских занятий по современной британской и американской литературе, стилистике.

Ключевые слова: художественный дискурс, символизм, традиционные и авторские символы.

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**SYMBOL AS ONE OF THE PECULIARITIES OF FICTION DISCOURSE (BY WAY OF EXAMPLE OF THE
 WORKS BY THE ENGLISH SPEAKING AND RUSSIAN SPEAKING WRITERS)**

Abstract

The paper analyses symbol as one of the peculiarities of fiction discourse. Conventional symbols appear in fiction just as often as they appear in daily speech. They can be easily understood and interpreted. Writers employ authorial symbols for revealing artistic images and describing events. The researchers of this sphere affirm that symbols can both enrich a work of literature giving it additional meanings and, at the same time, especially for a non-expert, they can burden it and make the work of literature beyond one's full comprehension. Conventional symbols often allude to other works from our cultural heritage, such as the Bible, ancient history and literature, and works written by the English speaking and Russian speaking authors. Sometimes understanding a story may require knowledge of history, politics and current events in the modern world. Private symbols do not have pre-established associations: the meanings that are attached to them emerge from the context of the work in which they occur. A writer gives his own personal symbolic significance to an object, event or color. The aim of the research consists in revealing and analysing the authorial symbols and examining them in fiction discourse. Practical value of the research consists in the possibility of applying its results in preparing for lecture courses and seminars on modern British and American literature and stylistics.

Keywords: fiction discourse, symbolism, conventional and authorial symbols.

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Introduction

The study discusses the importance of understanding symbol as an integral part of a literary discourse. Symbols can both enrich fiction for an expert in modernism, for example, and at the same time burden it for a non-expert.

The end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries brought on the European scene fundamental political, social and economic changes, contradictions, conflicts and confrontations which led to small and large scale wars. Great triumphs went along with dire catastrophes.

In this turn-of-the-century world tensions were surfacing in virtually all areas of human endeavor and behavior: in science, in arts, in literature, in fashion, between generations. The Victorian era with its strict social codes and ethical values, with its attempts to compartmentalize experience into the categories of good and bad, right and wrong, was over.

At the turn of the century world there appeared new schools, trends, mainstreams in science, art and literature [1, P. 27-28]. We cannot possibly draw straight lines between mainstreams, sometimes the border is blurred. At one and the

same time a writer can be both a symbolist and an impressionist, for example.

Consequently, the paper deals with the analysis of a literary symbol. Symbol is something that means more than what it is. It is one of the resources for gaining compression. It is an object, a person, a situation, an action, or some other item that has a literal meaning in the story but suggests or represents other meanings as well. All readers recognize the power of language in fiction, and its ability to move us both to laughter and to tears. That language, a system of abstract sounds and signs, should affect us so powerfully remains one of the mysteries of human nature. Language gains its emotional power from the fact that it is symbolic [2, P. 278].

The words symbol and symbolism are derived from the Greek word meaning "to throw together". A symbol [1] [(of)] something which represents or suggests something else, such as an idea or quality: In the picture the tree is the symbol of life and the snake is the symbol of evil [6, P. 1343]. A symbol is a sign, something that stands for more than itself. The letters f l a g form a word that stands for a particular

objective reality. A flag, in turn, is a colored cloth that represents a nation. But a flag is more than an identifying sign. Our lives are filled with such conventional symbols, and we are largely in agreement as to their meaning, for example, the rose stands for love, the diamond ring for betrothal, the wedding ring for marriage.

Conventional symbols appear in fiction just as they appear in daily speech. But in fiction, writers also employ symbols in a more specialized way and for a particular purpose. When a writer sets out to tell a story, he uses language to describe the world of everyday experience he shares with his readers.

At the same time, a writer recognizes that the words and phrases he selects for his tale will have implications that go well beyond the immediate action or character being described. In fact, a writer selects a word or phrase precisely because of its implications, because it enables him to transcend the action or character he is describing and give his story the greatest possible meaning.

When we first encounter a symbol in a story or poem or play, it may seem to carry no more weight than its surface or obvious meaning. It can be a description of a character, an object, a place, an action, or a situation, and it may function perfectly well in this capacity.

A symbol may suggest a cluster of meanings. "This is not to say that it can mean anything we want it to: the area of possible meanings is always controlled by the context. Nevertheless, this possibility of complex meaning, plus concreteness and emotional power, gives the symbol its peculiar compressive value [2, P. 278]". The study has been based on investigating two types of symbols: cultural (universal) and contextual (private, or authorial). Contextual symbols are of prior interest for us in this article. Thus, the study has posed the following research question: How does symbol as one of the peculiarities of fiction discourse function in a particular context?

Method

In compliance with the aim of the research, the following methods have been undertaken: the analysis of the publications concerning the studied problem, contextual, descriptive, cultural-historic and comparative analyses and the analysis of the word definitions taken from various dictionaries. Authorial symbols need thorough and deliberate analysis and interpretation.

Discussion

The theoretical background of the present stage of the study is established considering selected theoretical contributions on investigation of symbol as an integral part of literary discourse. Most of the symbols are generally or universally recognized and are therefore cultural. They embody ideas and emotions that writers and readers share as heirs of the same historical and cultural tradition. When using cultural symbols, a writer assumes that readers already know what this or that symbol represents. Cultural or universal symbols are widely known and recognized, for example, the association of white color with innocence, red – with passion, etc.

Cultural Symbols often allude to other works from our cultural heritage, such as the Bible, ancient history and literature, and works of the British and American traditions. Sometimes understanding a story may require knowledge of politics and current events.

Cultural symbols are drawn from history and custom, such as many Christian religious symbols. References to the lamb, Eden, shepherd, exile, the Temple, blood, wine, bread,

the cross, and water – are all Jewish and/or Christian symbols.

"Sometimes these symbols are prominent in a purely devotional context. In other contexts, however, they maybe contrasted with symbols of warfare and corruption to show how extensively people neglect their moral and religious obligations [8, p. 938]". Longman Dictionary of English Language and Culture (1992) and the Wordsworth Dictionary of Phrase and Fable (1993), for example, give the following definitions of the universally recognized or conventional symbols:

Creation can be explained according to the Bible story: God made the Universe, the earth, and all the animals. He then made Adam, the first man, out of dust, and Eve, the first woman, from one of Adam's ribs. This took God six days, and on the seventh day he rested.

Eden is a paradise, the country and garden in which Adam was placed by God. Adam and Eve, the first human beings, lived there before their disobedience to God. The word means delight and pleasure. It is thought of as a place or state of complete happiness.

Snake in the Bible (also called a serpent) is the creature that persuades Eve, the first woman, to take a bite of an apple that God has forbidden Adam and Eve to eat. So that is why they have to leave the perfect world of the Garden of Eden. Because of the snake's evil action, God punishes it by making it crawl on its belly forever. This is why in Christianity the snake has a strong association with evil.

Exile can be explained in the following way: God tells Adam and Eve that they must not eat apples from the Tree of Knowledge, but a serpent persuades Eve to take one and share it with Adam. As a punishment God makes them leave the Garden of Eden.

Shepherd in the Christian religion Jesus is often called "the good shepherd" because he looks after his people in the same way that a shepherd looks after his sheep. The good shepherd is a name used for Jesus in the Bible.

The Temple is mentioned many times in the New Testament. Jesus prays there and chases away merchants from the courtyard, turning over their tables and accusing them of desecrating a sacred place with secular ways.

Bread and Wine in Christianity, wine is used in a sacred rite called the Eucharist, which originates in the Gospel account of the Last Supper describing Jesus sharing bread and wine with his disciples and commanding them to "do this in remembrance of me".

The cross is a Christian symbol originating with the crucifixion of the Redeemer. The cross is one of the most ancient human symbols, and has been used by many religions, most notably Christianity. It may also be seen as a division of the world into four elements or cardinal points (air, soil, fire and water) and alternately as the union of the concepts of divinity – the vertical line, and the world, the secular life – the horizontal line. Thus, the aforesaid symbols are considered to be cultural or universal symbols.

Moreover, many cultural or universal symbols are drawn directly from nature. Natural universal symbols are springtime and morning, which signify beginning, growth, hope, optimism, and love. While speaking about cultural or universal symbols we can also come across animals and birds in symbolism. Let us consider some examples:

Unicorn is "a mythical and heraldic animal represented by medieval writers as having legs of a buck, the tail of a lion, the head and body of a horse, and a single horn, white at the base, in the middle of its forehead. The body is white, the head is red, and eyes are blue [10, P. 1115]". One of the

popular believes was that the unicorn by dipping its horn into a liquid could detect whether or not it contained poison. The supporters of the old royal arms of Scotland are the two Unicorns.

Lion is thought as brave and frightening, and as the king of the jungle. It symbolizes noble courage. A lion is also used to represent England. Sometimes the idea from the Bible is mentioned that one day the lion will lie down with the lamb, that is there will be peace and happiness. The animosity which existed between the lion (England) and the unicorn (Scotland) is allegorical of that which once existed between England and Scotland.

With general and universal symbols, a single word is often sufficient. It can be easily interpreted and understood by readers.

Eagle commonly represents the Sun in mythology. It is also emblematic of courage and immortality as well as majesty and inspiration. In Christian art, it is the symbol of St. John the Evangelist. In heraldry, the eagle is a charge of great honor.

Results

At this stage of the research only a few symbols have been revealed and analyzed. The results have shown that authorial symbols can be many-layered and multifunctional. They can be found in works of such great writers as W. B. Yeats, Th. S. Eliot, E. Pound, H. Melville, E. Hemingway F. S. Fitzgerald, J. Steinbeck, W. Faulkner, C. Ozick, I. McEwan; F. I. Tyutchev, B. Pasternak, etc., to name but a few.

Contextual, private, or authorial symbols gain meaning mainly within individual works. A reader needs some background knowledge for interpreting and analyzing them. Private symbols do not have pre-established associations: the meaning that is attached to them emerges from the context of the work in which they occur. A writer gives his own personal symbolic significance to an object, event or color.

For example, William Butler Yeats elaborated his own symbolic system of ideas which became an integral part of his poetry. His poem "Easter 1916" is a commentary on the tragic event, the Easter rebellion, which transcends mere personal opinion to achieve pure tragic symbolism that is relevant to all such events in human history [4, P. 107-108].

Thomas Stearns Eliot in the poem "The Waste Land" (1922) refers to "snow", which is cold and white and covers everything when it falls, as a symbol of retreat from life, a withdrawal into an intellectual and moral hibernation. The poem includes a parade of images, characters and situations symbolizing the spiritual aridity of a godless society.

Ezra Pound, "the highly controversial and influential poet" [3, P. 340], founded the imagist movement. He emphasized the importance of the language of common speech, rather than of new poetic rhythms, and freedom of choice of subject matter and symbols.

If we refer to American literature, we cannot but consider some bright and colorful examples of contextual, private, or authorial symbols.

Moby Dick is the name of the whale in the story by Herman Melville. The book tells us the exciting story of a captain's search for a great *white whale*. Numerous symbolic associations have been made with the figure of the whale itself.

It has variously been interpreted as 1) the personification of evil in the world 2) the mirror image of Captain Ahab's soul and 3) the representation of the hidden and powerful forces of nature. The story symbolizes the prophetic journey of American industry to conquer the natural world with

devastating results. In "Moby Dick" Herman Melville warns people that if a man does not respect nature and the environment, the end could be calamitous for man, especially if society continues to strive to dominate and subjugate nature oblivious of the cost [4, P. 78].

E. Hemingway's symbol-building is remarkable. In his writings *rain*, for example, symbolizes disaster, hopelessness and despair. In the novel "A Farewell to Arms" it is a symbol of tragedy and omen of misfortune.

In his short story "Cat in the Rain", Ernest Hemingway uses imagery and subtlety to convey to the reader that the relationship between the American couple is in its crisis and is quite clearly dysfunctional. What seems to be a simple tale of an American couple spending a rainy afternoon inside their hotel room in Italy serves as a great metaphor for their relationship [9]. The symbolic imagery, hidden behind common objects, gives the story all its significance. The cat itself is so essential that Hemingway used the word in the title, thus stating the theme of the story. "The cat" is symbolic of an American wife's emotional state and it also epitomizes a baby the woman wishes she had. "The rain" symbolizes sadness, loneliness, melancholy, despair, coldness and dreariness whereas "the cat" stands for warmth, comfort, cosiness and home, a desperate desire to have a baby. "A cat in the rain" symbolizes isolation, sorrow, its lack of protection, and also the hostility of its surroundings.

Another example of a powerfully described authorial symbol can be extracted from the story "The Ice Palace" by F. Scott Fitzgerald. The ice palace is the main symbol in it. The story's climax occurs when Sally Carrol and Harry visit the ice palace. Constructed of blocks of solid ice, the palace is the highlight of the winter carnival. Eventually, Sally Carrol gets separated and lost in the labyrinthine ice castle. Delirious with cold, she is both frightened and comforted by hallucinations and phantoms [5]. Seeking for adventures she gets locked up in this fairy place. The girl is jailed into the ice cage as a frozen bird and there is no fairy, no happiness, and no cheerfulness in her life anymore.

It is a contrast and confrontation that F. Scott Fitzgerald explores throughout the story as he examines the cultural and social differences between the North and the South. We learn that Sally is engaged to a Northerner, a fact that her friends view with a sense of betrayal and alarm. Her friend Clark worries that Sally's fiancé would "be a lot different from us, every way." Sally, however, worries that her ambitions are incompatible with the sleepy pace of Tarleton, Georgia. She wants to "go places and see people" and to live where "things happen on a big scale [5]." She describes herself as having two sides, and this duality is a major theme of "The Ice Palace".

It is not only the act of writing that is creative, but the act of reading as well and the ability to recognize and interpret the author's use of symbols requires alert and imaginative participation by the reader.

We can see Elisa's chrysanthemums in J. Steinbeck's "The Chrysanthemums" seem at first nothing more than prized flowers. As the story progresses, however, they gain symbolic significance. The travelling tinsmith's apparent interest in them is the wedge he uses to get a small mending job from Elisa. Her description of the care needed in planting and tending them suggests that chrysanthemums signify her kindness, love, orderliness, femininity, and motherliness [8, P. 427-428].

In "A Rose for Emily" William Faulkner traces the career of Miss Emily Grierson through three generations of the American South. Miss Emily has her virtues and her

defects. She is independent, uncompromising, and loyal; she is also proud, provincial, and vain. She despises the townsfolk, and they know it. And yet, these same townsfolk admire Miss Emily and even revere her. To them, she is an idol, an angel a light house-keeper. Such images are repeated throughout the story until the reader comes to see that the townsfolk admire not only Miss Emily's life but also what that life represents, what it symbolizes. Part of the significance and enduring value of Faulkner's tale is that his heroine is the embodiment of a vanished way of life with all its virtues and defects. As such, Miss Emily becomes a symbol of the Old South.

The symbol enables the writer to express one of the deepest truths about human life – its ambivalence. The symbol contains within itself and powerfully expresses the conflicting tendencies so typical of human experience.

If the scenes, materials and objects of setting are highlighted or emphasized, they also may be taken as symbols through which the author expresses his or her ideas.

Such an emphasis is made in Cynthia Ozick's (1928 –) "The Shawl", in which 1) the shawl has the ordinary function of providing cover and warmth for the baby. Because it is so prominent, however, 2) the shawl also suggests or symbolizes the attempt to preserve future generations, and because its loss also produces a human loss, 3) it symbolizes the helplessness of the Nazi extermination camp victims during the World War II [8, P. 289].

The story "Black Dogs" by one of the contemporary British writers Ian McEwan describes how June, the main character, got lost in a quiet part of rural France and was confronted by two ferocious black dogs that had been used by the Nazis to torture prisoners during the war. Miraculously, she manages to escape but the incident has a profound effect on her later life. When he wrote "Black Dogs" in 1992, Ian McEwan predicted that the evil which created Nazi Germany would return to haunt Europe. Can you think of any events in Europe in the years that followed which seem to confirm his predictions?

If we link up with the Russian Literature we are to name such greats as Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev, Vladimir Solovyov, Andrey Bely, Alexander Block, Boris Pasternak, etc.

At this stage of the research we have considered a few examples. Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev is one of the most memorized and quoted Russian poets. F. I. Tyutchev's world is bipolar. He commonly operates with such categories as "night" and "day", "north" and "south", "dream" and "reality", "cosmos" and "chaos", still world of "winter" and "spring" teeming with life.

Each of these images is imbued with specific meaning. Tyutchev's idea of "night", for example, was defined by critics as "the poetic image covering and simply and economically the vast notions of time and space as they affect man in his struggle through life" [11].

In the chaotic and fathomless world of "night", "winter", or "north" man feels tragically abandoned and lonely. Hence, a modernist sense of frightening anxiety permeates his poetry. Unsurprisingly, it was not until the late 19th and early 20th century that F. I. Tyutchev was rediscovered and hailed as a great poet by the Russian Symbolists.

"The home" symbol reaches beyond its topical context to embody the deepest religious insights in the novel "Doctor Zhivago" by B. Pasternak. "Home" is offered by Pasternak as the primary symbol of man's nature and of his destiny. It is a dear notion for every person. We learn from the philosophy of Zhivago's Uncle Nikolai that man, in a larger sense, is characterized by his ability to create a home in history. It is a view of man-in-history that is based on a "new" interpretation of Christianity. Given hope and dignity by Christ's redeeming presence in time, "man does not die in a ditch like a dog – but at home in history" [7].

The most mystifying of Zhivago's religious speculations are those which attempt to encompass the problems of death and immortality. Again the symbol of "home" seems to provide a key. The imponderable mystery of death is implicitly assimilated in the imagery of home: man is at home in the universe in death as in life, death being a return to the All – the final homecoming.

Sometimes Doctor Zhivago has to ask himself what it is that he finds so wonderful about his wife, and he finds he can only describe her in terms of the vast expanses of the Russian earth, the sounds and colors of his motherland. It is enough to be present in a room with her to know that there is light and air, fields, trees, children's voices. His wife is a symbol of his motherland, of Russia. He loves her with the same passionate love with which he is devoted to Russia [7]. These symbols are constantly reiterated and described under many aspects in B. Pasternak's novel.

At this stage of the research we have come to the conclusion that writers, most often, reconsider some natural universal symbols in the classical context and imply additional meanings as well, such as the rebirth of nature in spring, hibernation in winter, hopelessness and isolation during rain, abandonment and loneliness at night, death as the final homecoming and other related meanings are also woven into them.

Conclusion

Though the term "symbolism" has been used very often universally since the beginning of the twentieth century, its concepts and technical innovations are still exercising an immense influence upon various trends of the 21st century worldwide literature. Thus, English and Russian fiction discourse seems to be an inexhaustible source for researchers of conventional and authorial symbols. It is abundant in contextual symbols, which are open to interpretation and analysis. The results of the research are going to be the basis for writing of the articles and the forthcoming monograph connected with this topic.

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