



THE SYMBOLISM AND PHILOSOPHY OF NATURE IN MARCELLE PROUST'S "IN SEARCH OF LOST TIME"

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Abstract:

The article analyzes the symbolic and philosophical aspects of images of nature in Marcel Proust's work "In Search of Lost Time". Nature in the work is not just a decorative background, but a philosophical concept closely related to human memory, the concept of time and the stream of consciousness. The author uses images of nature to connect the past and the present, as well as to express aesthetic and spiritual experiences. This article is devoted to highlighting the symbolism and philosophical aspects of nature.

Keywords: Memory, symbolism, love, beauty, childhood, conflict, natural phenomena, eternity, concept of time, stream of consciousness.

Introduction

Marcel Proust's epic novel "In Search of Lost Time" is one of the most famous works of French literature, in which time, memory, and the stream of consciousness are explored as important themes. The work uses images of nature not only as an aesthetic element, but also as a symbolic tool for expressing human experiences and mental processes. This article aims to study the symbolic and philosophical aspects of nature in Proust's work.

In the work, the images of nature express important philosophical and symbolic meanings, and in each chapter, the image of nature serves to reveal important themes of the work – time, memory, and emotions. Below are the images of nature taken from the chapters of the work, explained in terms of their symbolism and philosophy:

1. "Towards Swann" ("Du côté de chez Swann")

Image of nature: The gardens of Combray at dusk and the bonfire flowers. By describing the gardens of Combray, Proust returns to childhood memories. The bonfire flowers appear as a symbol of the innocence of childhood.

Symbolism: The pleasant smell and appearance of the fireflies make a person return to pure and direct childhood memories.

Philosophy: The idea of the transience of beauty over time and its rediscovery through memories is put forward.



2. “In the shadow of young girls in bloom” (“À l’ombre des jeunes filles en fleurs”).

Image of nature: Nature and sunlight by the sea. The bright rays of the sea and the sun are depicted in the hero’s meetings with Albertine.

Symbolism: The sea is a symbol of infinity and immersion in the world of inner memories, while the rays of the sun represent love and the vibrancy of life.

Philosophy: The beauty of nature encourages the hero to face himself. Love and emotions are combined with the beauty of nature.

3. “Towards the Guermantes” (“Le côté de Guermantes”)

Description of nature: Gardens and flowers in the Guermantes area. The hero observes the gardens in the Guermantes area with high spirits.

Symbolism: The gardens are presented as a symbol of aristocracy and tradition.

4. “Sodom and Gomorrah” (“Sodome et Gomorrhe”)

Image of nature: The evening sun and the color of the sky. The beautiful scene of the sunset depicts the sky entering various colors.

Symbolism: The sunset symbolizes the transience of life and the inevitability of human fate.

Philosophy: The natural feelings of a person come into conflict with the norms of society. The color of the sky harmonizes with the inner feelings of the hero.

5. “The Prisoner” (La Prisonnière)

Nature: Rain and damp weather. The hero is depicted guarding Albertine, while rain and dampness prevail.

Symbolism: Rain and dampness indicate the hero’s imprisoned state and the limitations of the bond of love.

Philosophy: The conflict between love and freedom is revealed by a natural phenomenon.

6. “Albertine Disappeared”

Nature: The sky and stars at night. With Albertine gone, the hero observes the starry sky.

Symbolism: The stars appear as a symbol of eternity and unattainable feelings.

Philosophy: The hero understands the need to accept love and memories.

7. “Time Found” (“Le Temps retrouvé”)

Image of nature: Spring flowers and light in the garden. At the end of the work, the garden and flowers are re-imaged.

Symbolism: Spring flowers symbolize the renewal of time and the beginning of a new life.

Philosophy: Through nature, the hero begins to perceive time and memories differently. Beauty and memories merge.

Conclusion

In Marcel Proust’s “In Search of Lost Time,” nature serves as a symbolic and philosophical tool. It appears inextricably linked to human memory, time, and the stream of consciousness. Through images of nature, the author illuminates the complexity of human experiences, the subtleties of memory, and



the relativity of time. Therefore, images of nature in Proust's work are not only artistic decoration, but also an important component of a philosophical concept.

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