

Candidate 1

How significant is symbolism in the play 'Bodas de Sangre' by Federico García Lorca and in the film 'La Novia'?

The use of symbolism in the play "Bodas de Sangre" is very significant and is used very effectively by Lorca to highlight the main themes and to underline the significance of these.

Federico García Lorca was an iconic Spanish playwright and poet, born in the 19th century he grew up in Andalucía and his early life and experience in this country influenced many of his future works. Lorca's works are known for their untraditional ways, as his characters do not follow the 'normal' path of life that was popular at the time. In Lorca's short career he produced many plays that mirror the same aspects of "Bodas de Sangre".

"Bodas de Sangre" is a tragic love story which uses symbolism to emphasise various themes through its three acts. The play follows a young couple about to be married, on the lead up to their wedding there are suspicions of the bride backing out to be with her former love Leonardo who has since married and had a child. To the reader's surprise, the bride goes through with the wedding but during the post-wedding celebrations she disappears along with Leonardo. Lorca intelligently uses symbolism to emphasise the novia's inner conflict and the build up to the ultimate tragic ending of the play, where the novia who was once puzzled with endless decisions is left with nothing. The various symbols used in the play all highlight and underline the importance in showing the audience the tragedy of the story and help in aiding the audience to follow along with the storyline.

A prominent symbol in the play is the image of a knife, it is first introduced when the Novio asks the Madre for a knife to cut grapes. The Madre is shocked at his request and begins to ramble to him about the dangers of knives and weapons revealing to the audience that her husband and eldest son were murdered using a knife. The Madre believes that weapons can only bring bad luck.

"La navaja, la navaja... Malditas sean todas y el bribón que las inventó."

Here we see the Madre's passionate hatred for knives. Throughout the play we continue to see this fear develop, the knife clearly symbolises the death and destruction in her life and has caused her to develop this irrational phobia. As the story progresses the knife is continually used as a symbol, ultimately foreshadowing the tragic ending of the play where a knife becomes the cause of pain and loss in the Madre's life once again.

"La luna deja un cuchillo abandonado en el aire"

, once again the knife is used in one of the moon's many monologues, showing that the knife is a constant symbol in the play, the moon continues the symbolism of the knife. Demonstrating that many characters embrace this symbol.

A symbol which appears in both the play and in the movie 'La Novia' is the symbol of fire. Lorca uses this in the play to demonstrate the passion between Leonardo and the novia, this could also be used to symbolise the pain that their passion will cause as fire will hurt if it burns you. In the play during act two scene one Leonardo and the Novia are having a lovers quarrel when Leonardo uses fire as a symbol for the punishment he feels he is enduring by being apart from the Novia.

"Callar y quemarse es el castigo más grande que nos podemos echar encima"

Fire is also used in the movie 'La Novia', again symbolising the heat between the two protagonists. During the wedding party Leonardo and the novia can be seen dancing amongst other guests including the Novio. They dance around the flames and slowly move closer together, the camera focuses in on Leonardo and the Novia and the other guests can no longer be seen in the shot, obviously representing that the pair are solely focused on each other and their love in that moment. They continue to move in towards each other and as they approach the flames even closer the novia faints. This represents how overwhelming the passion between the two is, and the fire scene perfectly encapsulates this.

Another recurring symbol in the play is the symbol of the horse, Leonardo is most associated with this horse as we see the horse with him in the play when he goes to visit the novia in the middle of the night. The horse portrays masculinity and bravery and so is an appropriate figure to associate with Leonardo.

"Nana, niño, nana del caballo grande que no quiso el agua."

At the beginning of scene 2 act 1 we see the Suegro singing about the horse saying that he does not want to drink the water that is given to him. This shows that the horse is not traditional and does not represent the life and liveliness that water usually symbolises.

"Duérmete, clavel, que el caballo no quiere beber."

The idea that the horse will not drink any water is continued when the mujer repeats it over again, this refusal to drink water shows that the horse and Leonardo will not follow the traditional way of life as Leonardo is leaving his wife and child for another woman.

This symbol is very obvious from the beginning of the play.

Blood is an obvious symbol in the play, it is used to help the reader understand the passion in the play as blood is rich and divine like the passion seen in 'bodas de sangre' between Leonardo and the Novia.

"Se estaban engañando uno a otro y al fin la sangre pudo más."

Here the "blood" refers to the couples passion and love and demonstrates how they were lying to themselves about the prospect of their relationship working out because the passion and flame between them was so powerful. The passion between the novia and Leonardo acts as a distraction to them both causing them to ignore their morals and leave their partners. In this context blood could also be used to symbolise impending fate and death, as the novia and Leonardo are lying to themselves if they believe that what they have done will not result in blood-shed. Blood is unavoidable in this play much like death.

The moon is one of the main and most consistent symbols within the play, it is symbolic of bringing light upon a dark subject in this play. The moon lights up the dark forest at night and allows the Novio to find the novia and Leonardo after they have run off together after the wedding and ultimately leads to the Novio and Leonardo killing each other. The idea that the moon makes death visible is apparent through the whole play as it foreshadows the tragic ending of the play from early on.

"¡no podrán escaparse!"

In act 3 scene 1 after the Novia and Leonardo have run away together the moon talks about how they cannot escape it. They both cannot escape the moon's light and the fate of Leonardo at the end of the play, this is an example of the moon's foreshadowing abilities in the play and how it continues to focus on and symbolise death.

Lorca uses symbolism in all of his plays but “Bodas de Sangre” is an excellent example of how he had mastered the ability to allow his readers to appreciate the play through his symbolic figures. The symbolism in this play makes it what it is, and without it the play would not be as dramatic and tragic as it is because the symbolism allows Lorca to build suspense with his audience.

Word Count (including quotations): 1279 words

Word Count (excluding quotations): 1209 words

Bibliography

Lorca, Federico García, 1984, *Bodas de Sangre*, Manchester: Manchester University Press

La Novia, Ortiz, Paula, España, Betta Pictures 2015

To be completed by the candidate

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Portfolio option (please tick (✓) <u>one</u> option only)		
Literature	✓	
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Language in Work		
Portfolio title	How significant is symbolism in the play 'Bodas de sangre' by Federico Garcia Lorca and in the film 'La Novia'?	
Bibliography enclosed (please tick) (✓)	✓	
Word count (excluding quotations and bibliography)	1209	

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