

Sailing to Byzantium by Yeats

It is a symbolic poem which includes a stretched symbol that is repeated again and again in other poems.

The poem is a Modernist one.

It presents a Modernist concern regarding the spiritual struggle and the condition of modern age. It presents an alternative imagined world towards which the poet is learning. It is a Modernist method which is used as a reaction against the modern situation.

The poem is an imaginary journey to the city of Byzantium which is the symbol of culture and religion. The poet seems to be disappointed with the modern age. The poem highlights some ideas and themes like:

Ageing

Estrangement and Alienation

Certainty of death

Stanza 1

The poet is disappointed with his old age and with the young generation who are void of morals and full of love for sensual things. The poet also here refers to the cycle of life " begotten, born, and dies". This refers to the inevitability of death.

Stanza 2

The poet again shows a passive attitude toward ageing. The old man is like a tattered coat which is useless and invaluable.

Stanza 3

He gives a magnificent image of the religious men. He asks them to burn his heart in the sacred fire as an act of purification. He is tired of sensuality and his heart is imprisoned in his body which is going to perish.

Stanza 4

The poet asserts that when he gets rid of his body, he will not take any other perishing physical form. He will be a work of art, namely a golden bird to sing to the people of Byzantium

The Ship of Death by D. H. Lawrence

Summary

Section 1 describes the time of death as Autumn, when apples fall and their seeds are dropped into the earth through the rotting fruit. Each person undergoes such a separation of self from self.

Section 2 calls upon all readers to build a ship of death because the season of frost has arrived and apples are ready to fall.

Section 3 questions the success of suicide refusing to believe that the murder of one's self could be rewarded with the desired tranquillity of death.

Section 4 one should rely on one's experience of the peace that comes from a strong heart. This can't be had through suicide.

The meaning of the poem is religious. It draws upon traditional beliefs to shape its expression. He puts the religious question of suicide. Christianity rejects suicide.

The poem also alludes to Noah's ark .

The poem is not only about religious hope for eternal life, but it is about the stern necessity of psychological renewal in every person's natural life. It produces a meaning of self-discovery through self-renewal. There is an exploration of the progression between the three phases of death (beginning, abyss, rebirth)

The poem presents a Modernist theme which is inevitability of death (certainty of death) encouraging people to prepare themselves for death and the eventual new life