



Research Article

WATER IN ENGLISH CLASSICAL LITERATURE

Submission Date: Sep 25, 2024, **Accepted Date:** Sep 20, 2024,

Published Date: Sep 30, 2024

Crossref doi: <https://doi.org/10.37547/philological-crijps-05-09-05>

Journal Website:
<https://masterjournals.com/index.php/crijps>

Copyright: Original content from this work may be used under the terms of the creative commons attributes 4.0 licence.

Haydarova Umida

Applied English department, Fergana state university, Uzbekistan

ABSTRACT

This article is written about that utilizing of water and water metaphors in English classical works such as, King Lear, Lost Paradise and so on. Water is a symbol of life, death and the unconscious.

KEYWORDS

English classical literature, water, life and death, metaphor.

INTRODUCTION

Water, a vital element of life, has long held a profound symbolic significance in literature. In English classical works, water often serves as a multifaceted metaphor, representing life, death, the unconscious, and the journey of the soul. One of the most common themes in English literature is the connection between water and life.

METHOD

Water is often depicted as a source of sustenance, renewal, and vitality. In Shakespeare's King Lear, for example, the Fool compares the world to a "cracked pitcher" that needs to be "mended" with water. This imagery suggests that water is essential for

maintaining the fragile balance of life. Moreover, John Milton's Paradise Lost: The Garden of Eden, a symbol of paradise and life, is watered by the river Lethe.

Conversely, water can also symbolize death and purification. In Hamlet, Ophelia drowns herself in a stream, a tragic event that marks the climax of her descent into madness. Her death by water suggests a cleansing, a release from the burdens of life.

In psychoanalytic theory, water is often associated with the unconscious mind. This connection is reflected in many English classical works. In Coleridge's Rime of the Ancient Mariner, the mariner is haunted by the albatross, a symbol of his guilt. The albatross is



eventually cast into the sea, suggesting a purging of the mariner's subconscious. Samuel Taylor Coleridge's *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*: The mariner's guilt is associated with the albatross, which is eventually cast into the sea, suggesting a purging of his sins.

Water is also a common metaphor for the journey of the soul. In *The Waste Land*, T.S. Eliot uses the imagery of a river to represent the cyclical nature of life and death. The river flows through the underworld, carrying the souls of the dead.

In addition to the common themes discussed earlier, water is often used as a mirror of the soul. It reflects the character's inner state, their emotions, and their journey through life:

- Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*: The stormy moors, often associated with water, reflect the tumultuous emotions of the characters, particularly Heathcliff and Catherine.
 - William Wordsworth's *Tintern Abbey*: The poet uses the imagery of a river to symbolize the passage of time and the changes in his own soul.
- Water can also represent the power and unpredictability of nature.
- Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*: The creature is created from parts of a human body and brought to life by electricity, which is often associated with lightning and rain.
 - Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick*: The sea, a vast and powerful force of nature, is a central character in the novel.

Water has inspired many poets and writers to create beautiful and evocative imagery.

- Percy Bysshe Shelley's *Ode to the West Wind*: The poem celebrates the power and beauty of the wind, which is often associated with water.
- John Keats's *To Autumn*: The poem describes the beauty and abundance of autumn, which is often associated with harvest and rain.

In some cases, water can represent hope and renewal, particularly after a period of hardship or suffering.

- Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*: The poet often uses the imagery of a river or stream to symbolize the flow of life and the possibility of rebirth.
- Christina Rossetti's *Remember*: The poem suggests that after death, the soul will be reunited with the beloved in a place of peace and tranquility, often associated with water.

By exploring these various themes, we can gain a deeper understanding of the symbolic significance of water in English classical literature.

Water, as a versatile and essential element, has long been used as a powerful metaphor in English classical literature. Its fluid nature, ability to change form, and its association with life, death, and the unconscious make it a rich source of symbolic meaning.

Here are some common water metaphors and their interpretations:

Table 1.

No	The Flow of Time and Life



1	River of Time	This metaphor represents the continuous passage of time and the inevitability of change.
2	Stream of Consciousness:	This literary technique mirrors the fluid nature of thought and the unconscious mind.
Emotional States		
3	Tears of Joy or Sorrow:	Water is often used to symbolize strong emotions, particularly sadness and happiness.
4	Drowning in Grief	This metaphor implies being overwhelmed by sorrow or despair.
Purification and Renewal		
5	Baptism	This religious ritual symbolizes spiritual cleansing and rebirth.
6	Washing Away Sins:	Water is often associated with the idea of cleansing oneself of wrongdoing.
The Unconscious Mind		
7	Deep Waters of the Soul:	This metaphor suggests that the unconscious mind is vast, mysterious, and difficult to fully understand.



8	Submerged Memories:	Water can represent the hidden depths of the mind where memories and emotions are stored.
Nature and the Environment		
9	Ocean of Life:	This metaphor symbolizes the vastness and interconnectedness of all living things.
10	Water Cycle:	The natural process of evaporation, condensation, and precipitation can represent the cyclical nature of life and death.
Spiritual and Philosophical Concepts		
11	Fountain of Youth	This mythical concept represents eternal life and renewal.
12	Holy Water	In many religions, water is considered sacred and has healing or purifying properties

By understanding these water metaphors, readers can gain a deeper appreciation for the rich symbolism and complexity of English classical literature.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, water is a powerful symbol in English classical literature. It can represent life, death, the unconscious, and the journey of the soul. By understanding the symbolic significance of water,

readers can gain a deeper appreciation for the complexities of these works.

REFERENCES

Primary Sources:

1. Shakespeare, William. King Lear.
2. Shakespeare, William. Hamlet.
3. Coleridge, Samuel Taylor. The Rime of the Ancient Mariner.



4. Eliot, T.S. The Waste Land.
5. Brontë, Emily. Wuthering Heights.
6. Wordsworth, William. Tintern Abbey.
7. Shelley, Mary. Frankenstein.
8. Melville, Herman. Moby-Dick.
9. Shelley, Percy Bysshe. Ode to the West Wind.
10. Keats, John. To Autumn.
11. Whitman, Walt. Leaves of Grass.

12. Rossetti, Christina. Remember.

Secondary Sources:

1. Bloom, Harold, ed. Shakespeare: The Invention of the Human. – New York: 1998. – P.29
2. Freud, Sigmund. The Interpretation of Dreams. – New York: 1908. – P. 65
3. Jung, Carl Gustav. The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious. – Princeton: 1953. – P. 159.

