

# Symbolism in "A Handful of Dust" & "The Remains of the Day"

In both A Handful of Dust by Evelyn Waugh and The Remains of the Day by Kazuo Ishiguro, symbolism is very well used in order to convey their ideas to the readers, which is the decaying of the English society and the English civilization.

In The Remains of the Day, the novelist's use of symbolism is very evident. The palace is a symbol of the whole England; Stevens is very much attached to it. It is a symbol of attachment to England. The downfall of Darlington Hall represents the downfall of England. Mr Farraday is a symbol of America and the new civilization that replaces the old one. So, Mr Farraday buys the palace. This also symbolizes how the Americans destroy the British civilization and traditions. The Americans have had money, but they have not had traditions, history or architecture. So they have gone to England in order to buy the English traditions, history and architecture.

At the end of the novel there is a cheerful crowd of people who is waiting at the pier for the night to fall and the electric light to be turned on. The night symbolizes the old civilization which has already come to its end. The electric light also symbolizes the new civilization which Stevens does not understand. Moreover, Stevens' father represents the English civilization and also the conference is the false of this civilization. So, the great butler is dying while the conference is dying as well. This also symbolizes the decaying of human civilization.

The bus station is a symbol of separation as well as being a symbol of wasting life for Stevens. At the bus station, strangers show the rebirth of civilization. The journey which Stevens makes in the car symbolizes life as a journey. It has a beginning and an end. It is always full of surprises. There are always stops and landmarks where we stop to judge ourselves. Moreover, the title of the novel represents the remains of life that the hero looks for life as if he has already gone. The novel begins and ends in the evening as a symbol of no hope for Britain to come to light.

In A Handful of Dust, Waugh uses symbolism in order to describe the disintegration of the English society. He uses Hetton as a symbol of the old tradition. Its architecture represents the grandeur of the past. It also represents Tony's root, so Tony is attached to it and feels as if it is his duty to preserve the past and its value. He loves and appreciates Hetton. In addition, Mrs. Beaver wants to plate Hetton with the white chromium which is ugly, otherwise people consider Hetton as a horrible place. The change of large London houses into ugly flats also reflects how this society no longer appreciates the beauty of the past

and that its morality is loose. This is also emphasised when Reggie tells Tony that the idea of giving up Hetton is not strange.

One important symbol is the story or the legend King Arthur and the round table. King Arthur who was a great man and a leader taught all his soldiers the principles of perfection that he wished them to follow. He used to meet with them around a table as a symbol of equality. His wife betrayed him with his chief officer. Thus, King Arthur is Tony, chief officer is Beaver, and the wife is Brenda.

The name of the novel is very symbolic as at the end Tony will not have anything in hand after he has thought that he has everything. Tony's name "Last" represents that he is the last member of traditional class.