



Chapter IV

CONCLUSION

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The study of the imagery in the poetry of John Updike has helped the researcher to form some impressions which has enabled to frame three views of Updike's use of imagery.

Social Aspect

Updike has used imagery in his poems to deal with the social aspect. His maximum poems carry social aspect. Updike is aware of colour discrimination. He talks about the sufferings of British West Indies. His imagery becomes emotional one while describing the endless sufferings of the British West Indies. Updike uses following nature imagery in the poem '*B.W.I.*':

Copies of punch and Ebony.

Few flowers.

Just the many-petalled sun above

The endless hours. (52)

The tone of imagery is a pathetic one. Thus, whenever Updike uses imagery, he points out some social aspect. He uses apt imagery to bring out the intensity of social aspect. Updike's imagery becomes strong one when he carries out the social aspect. It shows his social outlook. There are other many poems such as '*Hoeing*', '*subway Love*', '*Marriage Counsel*', '*D'cor*' that deal with the social aspects .

- **Thematic Significance**

Sometimes, Updike employs imagery to deal with the theme. Thus, thematic significance is made possible through the use of apt imagery. For example, '*Movie House*'. The Imagery of the '*Movie-House*' carries 'the theme of absurdity' or 'theme of illusion' of life. The things appear in this movie-house have another shape and face. Updike shows the illusion of life through '*Movie-House*'.

This imagery is perfect to carry out the philosophy of life. The readers can not imagine the poem devoid of imagery. The imagery has become an indispensable part of the poem. Updike uses such type of imagery skillfully in other poems also. There are other poems namely '*My children At Dump*', '*Trees Eat Sunshine*' etc.

Thematic significance has successfully done by using apt imagery. It displays Updike's imaginative power and intellectual ability also.

- **Decorative**

Updike occasionally has used imagery for mere decoration. It implies that he was tempted to seek it. It's example is given in the poem '*Midpoint*'. The '*Midpoint*' carries an autobiographical sense. It is a personal poem. Updike goes on describing the childhood days, the adolescence, and the uncomfortable maturity. At every stage he uses imagery to make the poem decorative one. His purpose is only to shape the poem beautiful.

Apart from all these views, a researcher has got some other impressions of Updike's poems. They are as follows:

1. Updike has used the human imagery in his several poems. His use of images characterize some strong views. The images precise the features of characters and are reflected in the poems. It shows Updike's love for human-imagery. His pen gets inflamed while describing these

characters with a lot of interests. His human imagery carries some social outlook. These characters sometimes talk about themselves, some go in an allegorical sense or some adopt characteristic of legend, and some are great in themselves, possessing the quality of fine arts.

The poems like '*B.W.I.*', '*Subway Love*', '*D'cor*' carry the theme of colour discrimination. Updike discusses the racial discrimination and discloses the sufferings of the people. The human imagery has made these sufferings authentic and impressive one. In the poem like '*Die Neuen Heiligen*', Updike talks about the features of Kafka, Kierkegaard. He uses this imagery in the sense of respect. Thus, Updike's every Human Imagery possesses vivid purposes or attitudes.

2. Updike's frequent use of the 'Animal Imagery' brings out his love for animals. Most of the time, he has used the animal imagery to convey the message in soft manner. Updike feels the animal imagery as an apt media to get connect to human-being.

Sometimes, the poet adopts the animal image to illustrate the human nature and the attitude and it is appeared in the poem '*Seagulls*'. Updike compares the seagulls with the European people. He observes some similarities between both of them. He used the animal imagery to express other unknown side of the European people. It is said in following verse:

the gulls stand around in the dimpled sand
like those melancholy European crowds. (9)

Updike uses the animal image for an allegorical sense on the other hand, he becomes sensitive about them. This sentimentality is applied in the poem '*Dog's Death*'. The poem is full of emotions for dog. The whole poem carries theme of sentimentality. Updike feels sad for the death of the dog. The readers meet 'Sensitive Updike' through this poem.

Thus, his love for animal is displayed through his use of the animal imagery.

3. John Updike has great attraction for nature, so, his Nature Imagery appears vividly in the poems. Updike has noticed the superiority of nature over human being. He has employed the nature imagery to convey the same message. It is exposed in the poem '*Winter-Ocean*'. It goes in the following manner :

..... ,*tub*
of male whales, maker of worn wood, shrub
ruster, sky-mocker, rave !
portly pusher of waves, wind-slave. (65)

The nature always appears superior over human-being. Thus, by using the nature imagery Updike adores the nature at his own level.

4. Updike has always fascinated by the life itself. He knows the depth of life, the philosophy of life. Subsequently, he is very much passionate about the growth of the human-being. Updike's diction becomes effective while depicting all these with the visual imagery. It is his best skill while applying this imagery to the poems like '*Movie-House*', '*Summer: West Side*' and '*Home-Movies*'. His imagery pertains to the readers' eye and captures their mind. This imagery gets fit in such a way that the readers don't think of these poem devoid of the visual imagery. For example, the poem '*Home-Movies*', carries the theme of growth of human being from an infant to the grown-up man like movies. Movies become metaphor for the explanation. It pertains to the readers' eye, and they start to ponder over the philosophy of life.

5. Religious imagery reveals healthy attitude of Updike towards the religion. He looks at the religion as a weapon for social reformation. But he becomes reluctant after realizing an unhealthy practices implemented

on the name of religion. He attacks strongly on this view in the poem '*Comp. Religion*'. It is said in the following manner:

*Polyarmed and polyheaded,
Gods proliferate until
Puristic-minded sages edit
Their water into one sweet will. (43)*

When the 'religion' is taken conveniently Updike strongly protests it through the imagery. Updike uses the religion with lot care. So, he doesn't appear skeptic; even though strongly condemn the unhealthy practices of the religion.

6. Updike's use of sexual imagery reveals that he has an anti-romantic attitude towards sex. His attitude towards sex is pragmatic. It is strongly presented in the poem '*Fellatio*'.

*It is beautiful to think
that each of these clean secretaries
at night, to please her lover, takes
a fountain into her mouth. (70)*

Sometimes, Updike uses the sexual imagery to point out the different attitudes of the past generation and the new generation towards a true love. It is expressed in the poem '*Erotic Epigrams*':

The landscape of love
can only be seen
through a slim windowpane
one's own breath fogs. (60)

He uses the sexual imagery with proper precaution. It does not get at vulgar level .

7. Updike's imagery reveals him to be the sex-obsessed poet. When Updike goes on explaining past memories, he gets connected to the sexual imagery and its example is the poem '*The play of Memory*'. Updike has mostly connected to the sexual imagery in an unconventional manner. It is highly erotic, and much obscene. It appears indescribable in words and sometimes it appears disgusting.

8. Updike was a representative of the post-modernism. He knew the need of the scientific progress for the development of nation. Simultaneously, he realized the disadvantages of scientific progress. It is illustrated in the poem '*Air-Show*'. It reflects in following manner:

*Eggheaded, strapped, and sucking gas, he roars
To frozen heights all other life abhors,
Where, having left his dirty sound behind,
In pure blue he becomes pure will and mind. (74)*

Updike has employed the science imagery in an allegorical sense in this poem.

Nevertheless, Updike knew the superiority of science. He realized that the whole world revolves around the science. So the poems like '*In Praise (C₁₀ H₉ O₅)_x*' and '*The Dance of The Solids*' express superiority and features of the science.

Updike's intellect is displayed through the use of the scientific imagery. When Updike uses equation of science in his poems, a reader forgets that he is a man of literature. Moreover, Updike has given the literary dimension to the equation of science by using it in poetry.

The poem '*Conclusion*' reveals all the qualities of Updike. He has sought the human imagery to pay tribute to the celebrities. It displays his broad mindedness towards everyone. Not only this but he talks about the world politics through the metaphors and the similes and make the

readers to think over it. His attitude is cosmic when he talks about the war through the historical imagery. In this poem, imagery becomes messenger of Updike's mind to expose his views towards the minority. The imagery conveys Updike's thought in proper manner to the readers. The use of apt imagery has proved it impressive and bit didactic. Updike's formation of imagery is very notable. Updike is a great patron of his nation, America. It is presented in his poem '*Minority Report*' and '*Conclusion*'.

Updike employs imagery in his poems to make the readers see a new vision of things. He became successful in applying imagery in various poems. Updike possessed a sustained pressure of imaginative truth and intellectual control. Obviously, his imagery is very effective and impressive. His images animated and lighted-up the themes of poems.

The readers recognize Updike-as a novelist and short-story writer. However, Updike is ignored as a poet and his qualities as a poet are totally hidden.

A modest attempt has been made to probe deep into the poetic qualities of Updike which proves him as a great American poet