THE SOCIAL ROLE OF RENAISSANCE WOMAN IN BROWNING'S *MY LAST DUCHESS*

A Thesis

A Thesis

Submitted to the Faculty of Cultural Sciences Hasanuddin University in Partial Fulfilment for The Requirement to Obtain Sarjana Sastra Degree in English Literature Study Program

WRITTEN BY
Muhammad Aryadin Taufan Putra
F041181522

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
FACULTY OF CULTURE SCIENCES
HASANUDDIN UNIVERSITY
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THESIS

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BY

Muhammad Aryadin Taufan Putra

STUDENT NUMBER: F041181522

It has been examined before the Board of Thesis Examination

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Approved by

Board of Supervisors

Chairperson

Dr. Abbas, S.S., M.Hum.

NIP. 19750222008121002

Secretary

Andi Inayah Soraya, S.S., M.Hum.

NIP. 198912272015042002

Dean Faculty of Cultural Science

Hasanuddin University

Prof. Dr. Akin Duli. MA.

NIP. 196407161991031010

Head of English Department

Faculty of Cultural Science

Prof. Dr. Nasmilah, M.Hum.

NIP. 196311031988112001

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
FACULTY OF CULTURAL SCIENCES
HASANUDDIN UNIVERSITY

APPROVAL FORM

With reference to the letter of the Dean of Cultural Sciences Number 1948/UN4.9.1/KEP/2022 regarding supervision, we hereby confirm to approve the thesis draft by **Muhammad Aryadin Taufan Putra** (F041181522) to be examined at the English Department, Faculty of Cultural Sciences.

Makassar, 15th July 2024

Approved by

First Supervisor,

Dr. Abbas, S.S., M.Hum.
NIP 197507222000121002

Second Supervisor,

Andi Inayah Soraya, S.S., M.Hum.
NIP 198912272019042002

Approved for the Execution of Thesis Examination
by The Thesis Organizing Committees
On Behalf of Dean
Head of English Department

Prof. Dra. Nasmilah, M.Hum., Ph.D.
NIP 196311031988112001

ENGLISH LITERATURE STUDY PROGRAM
FACULTY OF CULTURAL SCIENCES
HASANUDDIN UNIVERSITY

Today, Friday, 16th August 2024, the Board of Thesis Examination has kindly approved a thesis by Muhammad Aryadin Taufan Putra (Student Number: F041181522) entitled:

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Submitted in fulfillment one of the requirements of undergraduate thesis examination to obtain Sarjana Sastra (S.S.) Degree at the English Department, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Hasanuddin University.

Makassar, 16th August 2024

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The thesis of **Muhammad Aryadin Taufan Putra** (Student Number: **F041181522**) entitled, **"THE SOCIAL ROLE OF RENAISSANCE WOMAN IN BROWNING'S *MY LAST DUCHESS*"** has been revised as advised during the examination on Friday, 16th August 2024 and is approved by the Board of Undergraduate Thesis Examiners:

1. Prof. Dr. M. Amir P., M.Hum (.....)

2. Dra. Herawaty, M.Hum., M.A., Ph.D. (.....)

STATEMENT LETTER

The undersigned,

Name	: Muhammad Aryadin Taufan Putra
ID	: F041181522
Title of Thesis	: The Social Role of Renaissance Woman In Browning's My Last Duchess
Department/Faculty	: English Literature / Cultural Sciences

Hereby, the writer declares that this thesis is written by himself. This does not contain any materials which have been published by other people. It does not cite other people's ideas except quotations and references.

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Muhammad Aryadin Taufan Putra

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Makassar, July 2024
Writer,

Muhammad Aryadin Taufan Putra

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Makassar, July 2024
Writer,

Muhammad Aryadin Taufan Putra

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ABSTRAK

Muhammad Aryadin Taufan Putra. 2024. *Peran Sosial Perempuan Renaisan dalam Novel My Last Duchess karya Browning.* (Dibimbing oleh **Abbas** dan **Andi Inayah Soraya**)

Penelitian ini membahas tentang konsep peran sosial perempuan pada masa Renaissance, khususnya pada masa Victorian, mengenai ekspektasi sosial yang diberikan masyarakat terhadap perempuan pada masa itu melalui puisi klasik *My Last Duchess* karya Robert Browning. Gagasan utama penelitian ini adalah untuk menganalisis dan menjawab pertanyaan penelitian tentang penggunaan bahasa kiasan dan maknanya yang selaras dengan konteks bagaimana peran sosial perempuan dalam puisi tersebut.

Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa setiap kalimat dalam puisi *My Last Duchess* mengandung pendekatan bahasa kiasan tertentu yang maknanya tampak sangat berkaitan dengan nilai historis peran sosial perempuan pada masa Renaisans.

Dalam penelitian ini, ada beberapa jenis bahasa kiasan yang digunakan untuk menganalisis puisi *My Last Duchess*, seperti Metafora, Personifikasi, dan Simbolisme. Dengan tujuan untuk menafsirkan makna yang lebih dalam melalui isi puisi seperti kalimat dialog atau bahkan suatu benda. Melalui analisis bahasa kiasan pada puisi tersebut, penelitian ini juga akan mengungkap bagaimana ekspektasi masyarakat terhadap perempuan dari semua kelas pada saat itu dan betapa buruknya struktur peran perempuan dalam masyarakat yang dimana sangat mengekang kaum perempuan, terutama dalam hal perkawinan dan hak kelahiran. .

Kata Kunci: Peran Sosial, Figurative Language, Puisi *My Last Duchess*, Robert Browning.

ABSTRACT

Muhammad Aryadin Taufan Putra. 2024. *The Social Role of Renaissance Woman In Browning's My Last Duchess*. (Supervised by **Abbas** and **Andi Inayah Soraya**)

This research discusses the concept of women social role during the Renaissance era, specifically the Victorian period, regarding the social expectations that society placed on women at that time throughout the classic poem of *My Last Duchess* by Robert Browning. The main idea of this research is to analysed and answer the research question of the use of figurative languages inside the poem and it's meaning which align with the context of how the social role of women described in the poem.

The result of this research reveals how each sentences in the poems of *My Last Duchess* contain certain figurative languages approach which it's meaning appear very related to convey the historical value of the women social role in the Renaissance period.

In this research, there are several type of Figurative language method which applied in order to analysed the poem of *My Last Duchess*, such as Metaphor, Personification and Symbolism. With the purpose to interpret a deeper meaning through the content inside the poem like dialogue sentences or even an object. Throughout the figurative languages analysis of the poem, this research would also reveal how the societal expectation towards women of all classes at the time and it's unpleasant role placement of women within the society which are lack of freedom, especially in terms of marriage and birth right.

Keywords: Social Roles, Figurative Language, Poem *My Last Duchess*, Robert Browning.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the writer explains the introduction of the research, consists of the Background of The Study, Identification of The Study, Research Question, Objective of The Study, and Sequence of The Writing.

1.1 Background of The Study

Social condition is a condition that related to circumstances or situations in a particular society related to environment society. Social condition is referring how someone to be treated in their social life. It is further explanation of what is the meaning of said 'Social Role', it is an attitudes or characteristic behaviour which is expected from one individual whom have a position in a structure of a society, where this individual assessed by that society of how they would supposed to perform a particular role or how they would function based on the status they are given by those society. For the example, a figure of a father in their family have a role for carrying the economic needs for their own family, that he is the one whom responsible to work and making money so his family could live, and in the other hand a figure of wife, have a role to take care the households and nurse her children.

A social role that exist and taking place in a society living in does not always have the same rules in the other community. A social role in a different place may be vary and would completely different than the other ones. It is caused by the factor of geographical tradition of an area that the society taking place or also how society in those era perceived the spiritual and basic knowledge of how one individual supposed to be treated and judged based on how they actually should perform and

function based on their status.

As an example along that fact, during Renaissance era (1330-1550), we can see how the most common woman (or lower class woman) only act as a caretaker in their house. And the only women that were allowed to express themselves were the upper class women, but not sufficiently. where the upper class of a women, only expected to be a bride for other royal families to strengthen the power of her own family. A royal family whom has a daughter at the time, assumed their daughter could be used as a tool for trade where they arranged a marriage with other prince from other royal family for the purpose of the expansion.

Artemisia Gentilechi a famous baroque painter in Italy at Victorian era, through her biography, reflected and act as a proof how mainly the role of a women at that time. She fought her way to join *Accade-mia in Arte del Disegno* in the city of Fierze. Where at the time, a female artist was not welcomed in such academy. These could be a strong example of how the perspective trait of the Society at the time of Renaissance era (The Ages of Rebirth) towards the woman. these period has famously known for its development of the human society in the knowledge of all fields even in a way of norms on how to behave properly as a spiritually educated human being, but the overlap of the woman gender at the time is still an issue where they are still dominated and oppressed by the society. *Artemisia Gentilechi* was also famous and well known by his artistic painting work, which often reflect her expressive perspective over the tragic of an oppressed woman over the centuries.

In a brief history of humanity all over the world from the periods of times, there is always a unique stereotypes that been attached in a public perspective such

as woman should be functioning in the society and it always changed from times to times. In a previous era, judging a figure of a woman, she only limited as being a domestic figure of a households person and nothing more. She only belongs in the kitchen preparing meals for their family but from time to time, the knowledge of humanity has been upgraded through and also the awareness of freewill of an individual has develop even more. Society realized that woman also has a right equal to any other man. Shortly, the woman today in this recent era has an ever changing status from in a previous time that she can work and achieve a career equal as a man.

Woman in a Renaissance era similar to the middle-ages, were denied all political rights and considered legally subject to their husbands. Their primary role was that of a housewife, responsible for domestic duties only. Though women were inferior to men, women in different classes had different roles. Low class women were expected to be housewives and take care of everything to do with the house. The expectation of working class women was a little bit different. These women were expected to work for their husbands and help them run their business. They would work alongside with their husbands and then go home and take care of the house hold. Upper class women may have had servants and workers working for them but the women were still expected to take care of the house hold. Women could not work by themselves. Neither could they live alone if they were not married. If a woman was single, she was made to move in with one of her male relatives or join a convent and become a nun. There was no other option at this time for women.

Even though the Renaissance is considered a period of universal rebirth, the role of women in the Renaissance era did not change too drastically compared with

the Middle Age. Oddly enough, the mentioned universal rebirth does not seem to touch the status of women that much, as their rights remained still few for contemporary standards. The phenomenon reflected in comprehending of each monologue, and various intrinsic and extrinsic elements from the poetry *"My Last Duchess"* by Robert Browning. It can open up a new insight and inspiration to a proposition in the matter of "woman issues" and feminism which is still a problem to this day. The writer chose the poetry as the main object of the studies, in order to comprehend how the author reflects the situation of a woman at the time through the literary works. Poetry is one of a literature work that evokes a concentrated imaginative awareness of experience or a specific emotional response through language chosen and arranged for its meaning, sound, and rhythm. Poetry expresses concepts and things by indirection. Poetry usually has a connotation or symbolic meaning. In practice, a symbol cannot be directly known and therefor it needs interpretation.

The writer found that the poem of *My Last Duchess* by Robert Browning is a perfect literature work to be examined as an object of study. This idea has intended in order to represent the author of this famous Victorian poetry reflects on the situation of women's social role at the time as masterpiece of literature work. The poem is set in Renaissance in Italy and is narrated by the Duke of Ferrara, who is showing a painting of his late wife, the Duchess, to a visitor. Through the Duke's speech, the reader learns about the Duchess's personality and behaviour, as well as the Duke's own character flaws. In this monologue by Browning actually examined the social role of a woman at that time by the dialogue of the Duke's explaining her

deceased wife (the Duchess) to his guest. All the dialogue and sentences said by The Duke's in the monologue might actually reflect the perspective of social role is given and expected to a higher class woman (The Duchess) at that time. In shortly, this poem is an exploration of jealousy and possessiveness within a marriage, gendered expectations of women, and the treatment of women as chattel. The poem is a commentary on power, control, and gender roles.

This research is aimed to present prominent ideas of the social role of a woman which is reflected by the author from the dramatic monologue in the poetry; in order to reveal the concept of social role which is take place in that time. From the deviation of a woman's that happen in the monologue itself , the writer determines messages and facts against the social role of a women into the entitled thesis is *The Social Role of Renaissance Woman In Browning's My Last Duchess*.

1.2 Identification of The Study

The poem of *My Last Duchess* by Robert Browning consists of various problem inside it, the writer finds some problems in it as follows:

1. The diction in the poem of *My Last Duchess* has a number of figurative languages which reflect the meaning of the social life of a particular society.
2. Women's issues are found in the narrative expression of diction in the poem through the meaning of its figurative language.
3. The narrative diction of the poem expresses Renaissance Women whose background is in the social life of European society, especially Italian women in the Victorian Era.

1.3 Scope of Problem

In this poem, the writer limits the scope of the problem in this research is only to focus on analyze the Duke's statement which refer his perspective towards his wife The Duchess as a representative towards the women social role through the Renaissance period in My Last Duchess

1.4 Research Question

The writer emphasizes the analysis to research questions from identification of the study in the poem *My Last Duchess* by Robert Browning as follows:

1. What is the figurative language aspects meant as the social role of woman in the poem *My Last Duchess*?
2. What is the social role of Renaissance woman reflected in the poem?

1.5 Objective of The Study

The writer determines two objectives of the study based on these research question statement above as follows:

1. To explain the figurative language aspects meant as the social role of woman in the poem *My Last Duchess*.
2. To describe the social role of Renaissance woman reflected in the poem.

1.6 Sequence of The Writing

This research consists of five chapters. Chapter one is an Introduction consists of Background, Identification of The Problem, Research Questions, Objectives of The Study, and Sequence of The Study. Chapter two is Previous Study which provides an overview of several related researches before, Figurative Language that contains poetic elements of the poem, and Description on the social

role of Renaissance woman. Chapter three is Methodology which contains Methodological Design, Method of Collecting Data, Method of Analyzing Data, and Research Procedure. Chapter four is about discusses data of collection and the results of research related to the poem *My Last Duchess* by Robert Browning. Finally, Chapter Five is the closing chapter that consists of a conclusion of the research and suggestion from the writer.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, the writer discuss about Literary Preview, which consist of the Previous Studies that might related to the context and problem of this thesis that would be analyzed and studied further on. Subsequent here also mentioned and described a following theory which would be used as a tool to analyze the poem later on such as Figurative Languages, Metaphor, Personification, Symbol and Homogenous.

2.1 Previous Studies

Hereby, the writer has collected and gather the previous studies from the works of others; which appear relevant to the context and problem that are discussed in this thesis. All the works of other writers included in here seems to qualified the requirement of similarities by addressing the same problems and approach from what the writer analyzed (or at least close enough). Most of these works that are listed here also contain a main topic which examine the role of a woman through literature.

The first one is a work of studies by Hochberg, S (1991) Entitled *"Male Authority and Female Subversion in Browning's "My Last Duchess".* In this study case, the writers analysis trying to provide an overview of perception as how Browning's Poetry uses of female emblems as a sign of his own power, and a female signature for his arts. Within this context, "*My Last Duchess"* provides an interesting case of feminist misreading of the Duchess' portrait and its significance for Browning's views of poetry. This research might contain strong similarity with the

writers case of study since it discussing about the patriarchy which occur inside *"My Last Duchess"*. Furthermore, the main purpose of analyze the Browning's intention portraying a female through his poetry in this study, may help the writers to provide an overview of how Browning's reflect the life of a duchess and a woman in Renaissance era.

The Second study is a works by Iqbal, et al (2021) entitled *"Attitudes Towards Femininity In Robert Browning's 'My Last Duchess'.* in this study, the writers aim to depict a patriarchy which happen in 19th centuries of Victorian Society through the poetry of *"My Last Duchess"*. The writers apply the theory of Kate Millet (feminist expert and activist) to uncover and determined how are the *"Duchess"* Femininity appear inside the monologue. Through the dialogue of the Duke's inside the poems, writers analyze it each using some of Figurative languages approach in this study such as Metaphor and Personification. This research also might be helpful to give an insight to the writers following thesis, since it is have a common approach to analyze the same poem and much similar case about feminist perspective towards *"My last Duchess".*

The third study is a works by Savo F. Karam (2024) Entitled *"Unveiling and Unravelling the Femme Fatale in Robert Browning's "My Last Duchess".* in these work of studies about "Femme Fatale" inside the Browning's poems, it consist much of a discussion material related to the writers thesis. this case of studies, the writers pointed out a deeper aspect of how women in Victorian age are represented at the time through a various symbol that appear inside the dialogue of Duke of Fererra. a figurative languages approach which used to analyzed the dialogue in these studies

might be helpful to become a reference to help the writers embrace the important aspect that are related to the problem that are being discussed in this thesis.

And the last referred previous study is a works by Macmillan, Palgrave (1997) Entitled *"Bog Queens': The Representation of Women in the poetry of John Montague and Seamus Heaney"*. This study analysed a construction of social structure for a feminine figures, and the vocabulary of roles allotted to them by the prominent contemporary Irish poets, John Monatgue and Seamus Heaney. It would reveal about abstract ideas of how feminine figures are interpreted through the poems. The main theme discussion of this research are the persistent demystifying of representations of women in men's work which is very related to this study thesis which are currently main discussion are a perspective towards a woman social expectation which are placed and interpreted through the classic poetry in Victorian Renaissance period. Towards this previous study, the writer may referencing a similar abstract ideas from this to construct the study since the study case containing very similar main theme, about feminine portrayal in a poetry.

After reading and comprehending some of the previous studies listed above, the writers see that all the studies above contain most common context of problems discussion with these current thesis, it is about depiction of a woman and also a feminist representation inside Browning's *"My Last Duchess"*. The first studies by Hochberg (1991) and the second studies by Iqbal, et al (2021) may contain a major similarity about exploring the perspective of a woman itself inside the poem. Whereas the third studies by Savo F. Karam (2024) would focus more to the symbolism inside the dialogue in order to point the significance of it which are

related or may depict a woman condition at the time from the research that conducted above, the writer examined the issue of woman social role that are depicted inside a dramatic monologue of *"My Last Duchess"* by Robert Browning.

2.2 Figurative Languages

Figurative language is a style of language that used by a writer to convey a message imaginatively, with the aim of making the reader get a certain effect from the style of language that used**.** it is the use of words in a way that deviates from the conventional order and meaning in order to convey a complicated meaning, clarity, or evocative comparison.

The purpose of figurative language is to capture readers' interest and to deliver the idea and imagination in more entertaining way. It will present a lot of meaning or rich in meaning. Figurative language does not only decorate poems and endow them with aesthetic value, they also convey connotative meanings and produce certain special effects, which enrich the texts and make their meanings more precise and concrete (Ogunsiji, 2000).

Figurative language was thought as being one aspect of what gives a text in particularly, a poetic text special esthetic value. Figurative language is shaping cognitive construal in discourse, it is typically shaping viewpoint on the relevant content as well. Figurative language usages appear to be pervasive in all languages and the reason is apparently that they reflect pattern of human cognition. According to Barbara Dancygier and Eve Sweetser (2014), figurative language is Viewpoint for the same reasons although this issue has not been focus on by researchers. Figurative language is the way of giving expression through a special language

which shows the soul and the writer personality. Figurative language refers to words or phrases that do not have the same meaning as their literal meaning. Figurative language was used more often to express intense emotional states than to express milder ones.

According to Alice Deignan, et all (2013), figurative language is often used in speaking and writing to express ideas and emotions, and to affect the views and attitudes of others. It means that through figurative language, people express emotion and viewpoint. When people say something that appears on the surface to mean one thing but has to be interpreted correctly in order to be understood, to make language clearer, more interesting, and more vivid or to achieve some other specific effect, people use expressions that are not literally true. People are using figurative language encourages the reader to bridge gaps between ideas, fill in details, make associations, and form mental pictures. All of these uses of the imagination are highly satisfying, for there is great enjoyment in understanding what has not been spelled out for people.

Meanwhile, according to Tjahjono (2011:54), *"Figurative language is one of the important elements to writes poetry"*. In writing poetry using figurative language so that it can be more beautiful language in poetry, the poet must choose appropriate the word that be able to describe something clearly in the readers mind. Perrine, Arp (2000:68) stated, *"Figurative language is the language that cannot be taken literally (or should not to be taken literally only) and saying something other than ordinary way or a way of saying one thing and meaning another"*. Based on Perrine perception, so we can say more by this figurative statement rather than literal

statement. Figure of speech offers another way of adding extra dimension to language.

Based on the explanations above by the experts, the writers has summarize that the purpose of figurative use in poetry is to stimulate a certain image. It affects the language beauty of work in both oral and written communication. Figurative language serves a variety of purposes. They are used to clarify meaning, to provide vivid examples, to emphasize, to stimulate associations and emotions, to give a life to inanimate object, to amuse or to ornament. The most importance, they have an essentials aesthetic purpose, widening and deepening the range of perception and response to the word of objects and ideas. In other words, figurative language serves to convey thoughts, feelings, and perceptions that cannot be adequately expressed in literal language.

2.2.1 Metaphor

A Metaphor is a figure of speech compares two different things by stating that one thing is the other. The comparison in a metaphor can be stated explicitly. in which a word or phrase literally denoting one kind of object or idea is used in place of another to suggest a likeness or analogy between them. Metaphors can be used to create vivid imagery, exaggerate a characteristic or action, or express a complex idea.

In conclusion, A metaphor is a rhetorical device that makes a non-literal comparison between two unlike things. Metaphors are used to describe an object or action by stating (or implying) that it is something else.

(e.g., "*knowledge* is a *butterfly*").

Metaphors typically have two parts:

- A **tenor** is the thing or idea that the metaphor describes (e.g., "*knowledge*").
- A **vehicle** is the thing or idea used to describe the tenor (e.g., "*a butterfly*").

In the example of metaphor sentence that has been stated above, the word *"Butterlfy"* has been used as a **vehichle**, trying to provide a meaning for the word *"Knowledge"* which act as the **tenor.** to dive deeper and comprehending the meaning of those sentence example above, we have to understand that *"Butterfly"* are often seen as a metaphor for Transformation and Growth. Where the nature of the "Butterfly" as an animal ,have a transformation of a life cycle from a small Caterpillar which later turn itself into a beautiful piece of Butterfly. We can see these context contain in the sentence implied something that are 'Indifferent' could growth into something more 'Extraordinary'. So the sentence "Knowledge is a Butterfly" could have a meaning that Knowledge is "something positive that would direct and provide a greater growth and transformation" (Butterfly). such a simple word of a small animal; yet, it able to conceive so much significance through its meaning.

There are mainly three function of a Metaphors that used through a sentences. In the first, a metaphor serves to express and transfer emotional attitudes; in the second, it serves to persuade the audience with respect to a course of action or a point of view; and in the third, it serves to express cognitive insights. Metaphors help us understand complex or abstract concepts by mapping them onto more familiar, concrete experiences. This allows us to reason about and communicate these concepts more effectively.

The function of a Metaphor In poetry a metaphor may perform varied functions, from noting simple similarity between things to evoking a broad set of associations; it may exist as a minor element, or it may be the central concept and controlling image of the poem. Also it can help us see problems from new perspectives, leading to innovative solutions. By framing a problem in a different way, we may be able to identify new approaches or connections that we wouldn't have considered otherwise.

2.2.2 Personification

Personification is a figure of speech that is used to attribute human characteristics to something that is not human. It can also be used to personify an abstract quality. According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, personification is defined as the “representation of a thing or abstraction as a person or by the human form.” Personification is defined as “the attribution of human characteristics to things, abstract ideas, etc., as for literary or artistic effect”, and “the representation of an abstract quality or idea in the form of a person, creature, etc., as in art and literature”, according to the Collins Dictionary.

Personification can be used in a sentence to describe something concisely and also to bring a deeper meaning and connection to the object or virtue being personified. However, it is figurative and so it cannot be used in formal essays, any kind of professional or technical writing or to convey something literal. Personification also has to be used only if necessary. Personification can be used to make the readers empathise with the characters, both human and non-human, in the

writings. The one thing that to take care of is to use the right verbs that describe exactly what the sentence wish to convey.

Below is the example of the use Personification :

In the play of "*A Midsummer Night's Dream*" by William Shakespeare, there is such a beautiful portrayal of the emotions of the moon, which is also an example of personification.

"The moon methinks looks with a watery eye;

And when she weeps, weeps every little flower,

Lamenting some enforced chastity

2.2.3 Symbol

Symbolism is the practice or art using an object or a word to represent an abstract idea. An action, person, place, word, or object can all have a symbolic meaning. Symbolism is often used by writer to enchance their writing. Symbolism can give a literally work more richness and colour and can make the meaning of the work deeper. For example :

"ah Sunflowers, weary of time

Who contest the step of the sun

Seeking after that sweet golden clime

Where the traveler's journeyus done"

William Blake (1794) goes symbolic in his poem "*Ah Sunfower"*. Blake uses a sunflower as a symbol for human beings and *"the sun"* symbolizes life.

2.3 The Social Role of Renaissance Woman

Women in Renaissance Italian society assumed heterogeneous roles reflecting the political fragmentation of Italy itself, and a cultural, economic and social movement underpinned by the humanistic rebirth of antiquity. A change occurred during the Italian Renaissance that was in sharp distinction to traditional humanistic thinking; no longer were women inferior in thought and capacity, rather societal roles demonstrated that, given the appropriate circumstances, women were crucially able to support, mould and change the politics, culture and the economic fabric of society.

The primary female role in the domestic sphere was expanded by notable women who, by virtue of Renaissance education and new societal expectations, became art patrons, writers, orators, and simply women of intellect. A figure of Wives at the time, assumed a background role in the sustenance of political stability for their spouse. Women who entered the convent participated in Renaissance cultural novelties; some nuns, profession, received a full humanistic education. Courtesans, cortigiana, enjoyed a glamorous lifestyle augmented by an education that enabled intellectual interactions in a secular rather than a religious domain. Whether in marriage, in the convent, in court or in a position of service, each group of women were integral in shaping cultural and societal changes throughout the Italian Renaissance period.

In the Renaissance era, regional variations dictated the role of women and marriage, reflected in familial, economic or political agendas. Fifteenth century Sicilian nobility embraced consanguineous marriages to improve landholding, influence and kinship ties (Wyatt, 2014, p. 350).

During the Renaissance era, women were primarily expected to fulfilling domestic roles and support their husbands and families. They were often limited in terms of education and career opportunities compared to men. However, there were exceptions to this, especially among the upper class where some women had access to education and could participate in artistic and literary circles. Women like Isabella d'Este and Catherine de' Medici were notable figures who wielded significant influence during this period. Overall, the social role of women in the Renaissance era was largely defined by patriarchal norms and expectations.

During the Renaissance era, women were generally treated as inferior to men and were expected to be subservient to them. They were often seen as the property of their fathers or husbands, with limited legal rights and societal freedoms. Women were expected to focus on domestic duties, such as managing the household and raising children, rather than pursuing education or careers outside the home. However, as mentioned earlier, there were exceptions among the upper class where some women had more opportunities for education and involvement in cultural and intellectual pursuits. Overall, the treatment of women during the Renaissance era was deeply influenced by patriarchal attitudes and societal norms that restricted their autonomy and agency.

In the Renaissance era, the social structure for women was highly stratified based on factors such as class and marital status. Women's social standing was largely determined by the status of their fathers or husbands.

- **Noblewomen:** Women from noble or aristocratic families had more privileges and opportunities compared to common women. They often

received education in areas like music, art, and literature, and some were able to exert influence in political and cultural spheres.

- **Middle-class women**: Women from the middle class had more limited opportunities but were still expected to manage the household and support their husbands in their work or business endeavors. Education for middle-class women was generally basic and focused on domestic skills.
- **Lower-class women**: Women from lower socioeconomic backgrounds had the fewest opportunities and often had to work in fields or as domestic servants to support their families. They had little access to education or autonomy in decision-making.

Overall, the social structure of women in the Renaissance era was hierarchical, with opportunities and freedoms closely tied to one's social class and position within society.

In the Renaissance era, duchesses were generally treated with respect and held in high regard due to their noble status. They often played important roles in court life, social events, and political alliances. However, their treatment could vary depending on the specific time period, region, and individual circumstances. Some duchesses enjoyed significant power and influence, while others may have faced challenges or constraints within the patriarchal society of that time.