[Name of the Writer]

[Name of Instructor]

[Subject]

[Date]

**Week 3/Essay 2: Short Story**

**Introduction**

Change is a constant part of society. In the 1900s, the advent of the era of industrialization resulted in changing the old traditional societies into new modern societies. The change in the community is not measured through the increased use of commodities and manufactured goods, but a change in the attitude and practices of the people also signifies change and modernization. In the field of literature, many writers and poets have either criticized the change or have supported the concept of modernization or reform in society. In the early 1990s, there were some segments of the society who were resistant to change and hence by showing the real picture of the society to the readers, and authors have advocated a change in the community by rejecting traditional manner of living. One such example is of the short story by William Faulkner titled “A Rose for Emily." It is a story of a woman who belonged to a noble family and was highly respected in the town, but with the passage of time, she was neglected by the people and the town and lived alone in her grand house for many years. The prerogative to her like exemption from paying taxes was also taken back which represents a change in hierarchical society towards positivity. A profound analysis of the story by William Faulkner makes it evident that the author advocates the acceptance of modernization. Hence the thesis statement of this paper is that the theme and symbols in the story signify the acceptance of modernization by William Faulkner. The paper will discuss the theme and symbols which illustrates the embracing of modern future by the author.

**Discussion**

The story begins with the death of Emily, who lives in a substantial traditional house alone. The funeral of her was attended by a few people in the town and her cousins. It means that she had no nuclear family. The people of the town respected her because of the family she belonged but in the story, it is evident that the people were not close to her and when a foul smell was coming from her house, the people of the town complained to the authority. Throughout the story, there is a constant struggle by Emily to reject modern ways of living like she refused to use the modern mail service because she was comfortable with using the traditional method of communication. Another example of the rejection of modernization is the action of killing homer. The room in which Homer's dead body was present shows like the time was stuck. The grooms dress and everything in order makes it apparent that Emily tried to make the time stop and this was at the cost of human life. In addition to this the fact that Emily did not get married to Homer because he belonged to the working class and was not suitable for Emily also represents the struggles of the traditional people and the sacrifices they have to make for complying to the conventional way of life. Hence all these examples portray the inclination of the author towards the modern way of life by describing the negative consequences of following the traditional manner of living.

The symbols in the story also represent the notion that William Faulkner is glorifying the modernized practices of living. But it is essential to note here that the author has not criticized traditionalism. The title of the story “A Rose for Emily” justifies the notion that the author is aiming to give tribute to Emily who is the symbol of traditionalism. When Emily was in a relationship with Homer, the town’s people were worried about their relationship because they believed that Homer was not suitable for the daughter of a noble family. This shows that people had respect for their traditions. The House of Emily is also a symbol of traditionalism. Sura M. Khrais in the article “An Eyesore among Eyesores": The Significance of Physical Setting in Faulkner's "A Rose for Emily" has stated that the old, isolated and shaggy house of Emily is her refuge from the modernized world (Khrais, 124). In the beginning, the house was magnificent but latter the image of the house was changed to dusty, locked rooms and barren. In the story, the author tells that after Homer disappeared "people hardly saw her at all" (Faulkner et al., 629). Another most significant symbol illustrating acceptance to modernization by the author is the payment of taxes. In the beginning, Emily was exempted from paying the taxes because of her father, but later she was forced to pay the taxes because of the changed gender roles. The author established the idea that modernization allows women to have been equal to men who are capable of working and paying taxes as men do. Hence changed gender roles and changed the attitude of the people towards women and society means that the author is glorifying modern way of living. Henceforth the symbols in the story also symbolize the acceptance and glorification of modernization.

Prominent characters in the story like Emily’s Father, Mr. Grierson, her cousins, Homer and Emily by the author represents the darker side of traditionalism. Emily's father was a traditional man, and the people of the town remembered him as an inflexible, controlling and harsh man. Mr. Grierson turned away many suitors for Emily because he thought they were not suitable for Emily and the title she holds. Likewise, he dominated her even after his death because his name was attached to her and she had to comply with the traditions. The author through the character of Mr. Grierson is aiming to present the inflexibility of the traditional ways of life which makes life difficult for the followers. Another example is from the role of Homer. Homer is believed to be homosexual as it is stated “he liked men,” (pg 632). His acceptance of homosexuality. At the end of the story, Homer was found dead because he was poisoned by Emily the reason for her murdering him was not mentioned but creating a link between these two facts highlights the point that he must have refused to marry Emily and she killed him. Through the character of Homer and Emily, the author is trying to show the darker side of the traditionalism.

**Conclusion**

To cap it all, writers in the field of literature use different techniques to express their ideologies or to give the reader the real picture of the society. The image presented by artists create a profound impact on the minds of their audience and hence it is easier for them to alter the attitude of the people towards a specific idea or behavior. On such author was William Faulkner who wrote the story “A Rose for Emily" in the 1930s. It was the era of industrialization and modernization, and the author advocated leaving of traditionalism and adopting a new and modernized way of living. It was done by William Faulkner through the use of symbols, theme, and character. The idea of the story shows a constant struggle between modernization and traditionalism. Including this, the symbols in the story and the figures represent the harmful consequences of complying to the old rules and traditions blindly in the modern world.

**Works Cited**

Faulkner, William, et al. *A Rose for Emily*. Verlag F. Schöningh Paderborn, De, 1958.

Khrais, Sura M. “‘An Eyesore among Eyesores’ : The Significance of Physical Setting in Faulkner’s ‘A Rose for Emily.’” *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature*, vol. 6, no. 6, Sept. 2017, pp. 123–26. *journals.aiac.org.au*, doi:10.7575/aiac.ijalel.v.6n.6p.123.

**Annotated Bibliography**

**Faulkner, William, et al. A Rose for Emily. Verlag F. Schöningh Paderborn, De, 1958**

It is the primary source of the essay. The story is written by William Faulkner in 1930s.

**Khrais, Sura M. “‘An Eyesore among Eyesores’ : The Significance of Physical Setting in Faulkner’s ‘A Rose for Emily.’” International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature, vol. 6, no. 6, Sept. 2017, pp. 123–26. journals.aiac.org.au, doi:10.7575/aiac.ijalel.v.6n.6p.123.**

This research paper is based on the study of the story "A Rose for Emily" In this paper, the author has discussed the physical setting of the short story. Sura M. Khrais in the paper has discussed the two geographical settings of the story that is Jefferson Town and the Grierson's house in great detail. Each minor detail of the house in which Emily used to live was presented by the author for the better understanding of the live, actions and ideas of Emily. The article sufficiently proves the importance of the house in the story by creating an elegant link between the house and the mental condition of Emily. The article discussed the character of Emily meticulously and highlighted the shades of her personality. On the contrary, Jefferson Town is described as a symbol for the fall of traditionalism. (Sura M. Khrais)

This article is useful for the analysis of the story because in this article the house as a symbol of traditionalism is described precisely which supports the thesis statement of the essay excellently. Another reason for considering this article for the analysis is that the character of Emily is also explained in high precision, and it assists in creating a comparison between the modern world and the old traditions.

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