VISION OF DEATH IN EDGAR ALLAN POE'S SELECTED POEM

Kodirova Gulshan
Student
Termez State University
Uzbekistan
gulshankadirova.97@gmail.com
+998915879494

Abstract: Poetry is greatly influenced by the cultural background and personal experiences of the poets. In this paper I shall approach to personify of allegorical Death in art and literature. "The Conqueror Worm" poem tells the allegorical history of mankind. The work acts as a frame story, where the outside frame is that of a throng of angels watching a play, and the inside frame is that of the play itself. The narrative poem, also contains a typical plot construction. The first stanza serves as the exposition, placing the angels at night in the setting of a theatre, while the second and third stanzas provide the rising action. The climax comes with the entrance and triumph of the Conqueror Worm, and the last stanza returns to the outside frame for the falling action and denouement.

Key Words: Personify, allegorical, narrative, stanzas, denouement, agony, distress, literary journal, bards, and lyricist.

Poets demonstrably know nothing about death since it is, in Hamlet's phrase, "the undiscovered country from whose bourne no traveler returns." Yet from the Egyptian Book of the Dead some 4,500 years ago to the latest agony in the current issue of your favorite literary journal, bards and lyricists have persistently speculated about death, called it both soft and bitter names, and expressed distress at its coming to call. In view of the continuing popularity of that Unmentionable Topic, and for no particular reason, here is one of the best poem about death.

"The Conqueror Worm"

Lo! 't is a gala night
Within the lonesome latter years!
An angel throng, bewinged, bedight
In veils, and drowned in tears,
Sit in a theatre, to see
A play of hopes and fears,

While the orchestra breathes fitfully
The music of the spheres.
Mimes, in the form of God on high,
Mutter and mumble low,
And hither and thither fly—
Mere puppets they, who come and go
At bidding of vast formless things
That shift the scenery to and fro,
Flapping from out their Condor wings
Invisible Wo!
That motley drama—oh, be sure
It shall not be forgot!
With its Phantom chased for evermore
By a crowd that seize it not,
Through a circle that ever returneth in
To the self-same spot,
And much of Madness, and more of Sin,
And Horror the soul of the plot.
But see, amid the mimic rout,
A crawling shape intrude!
A blood-red thing that writhes from out
The scenic solitude!
It writhes!—it writhes!—with mortal pangs
The mimes become its food,
And seraphs sob at vermin fangs
In human gore imbued.
Out—out are the lights—out all!
And, over each quivering form,
The curtain, a funeral pall,
Comes down with the rush of a storm,
While the angels, all pallid and wan,
Uprising, unveiling, affirm
That the play is the tragedy, "Man,"
And its hero, the Conqueror Worm.

An audience of angels gathers to watch a play. Mimes fly around the stage, seemingly as puppets driven by invisible forces, and the plot describes sin, madness, and horror. The crawling Conqueror Worm then appears, writhing as it eats the mimes. The

curtain falls, and the distressed angels affirm that the play is a tragedy called "Man" and that the Conqueror Worm is the hero.

Poe believed strongly in the aesthetic benefits of ensuring a unified mood throughout a poetic work, and he establishes the tone of his poem in the first stanza, as he introduces the image of angels "bedight in veils, and drowned in tears." The angels are associated with goodness and with Heaven, and their sorrow provides an early indication that the play will be a tragedy, although the protagonist has yet to enter the stage. As the play progresses to its completion, we find that humanity is merely a mass of faceless puppets who are victims to the true protagonist, the Conqueror Worm. In this tragedy called "Man," the Worm acts both as a particularly bloody Grim Reaper and as an interpretation of the evil serpent from the Biblical Garden of Eden. Unlike in most tragedies, however, the hero does not die but instead achieves victory, and the angels cannot help but mourn. In Poe's understanding of humanity in "The Conqueror Worm," people are controlled by unseen and mysterious forces. Consequently, "Madness," "Sin," and "Horror" constitute the majority of the plot, a fact emphasized by the capitalization of these words within the poem. Curiously, for Poe, part of the tragedy of man is that the angels cannot help them but instead merely watch and witness as the Conqueror Worm devours. The last stanza turns the curtain into a metaphorical funeral pall, and the lines juxtapose the "rush of a storm" of the curtain with the "pallid and wan" exteriors of the angels. Death, as signaled by the curtain, has finality and a power that the angels lack.

After Poe authored "The Conqueror Worm," he chose to add it to his Gothic short story "Ligeia." In "Ligeia," the eponymous character writes the poem and shows it to her husband prior to her death. After he recites it for her, she screams at the injustice of the poem's suggestions about existence and quotes the epigraph of the story, which is supposedly written by Joseph Glanvill and which states that man only dies because of his lack of will. The sense of despair in the poem contrasts with Ligeia's resistance, and by the end of the story, Ligeia has seemingly found the will to return from the dead by taking over another woman's body. Nevertheless, Poe leaves open the question of whether her return is merely her husband's hallucination, and the inclusion of the poem complicates the truth of the visions of both the poem and the story. In terms of structure, the poem adheres to a strict rhyme scheme, where each eight-line stanza takes an ABABCBCB pattern. The rigidity of this construction proves a harsh framework for the internal rhymes and the irregular, albeit melodic, rhythms of the poem. Meanwhile, Poe uses exclamations to break the rhythm into cacophonous explosions of sound. For instance, the phrase "It writhes! - it writhes!" continues the iambic rhythm that predominates in the fourth stanza, but the hyphens and exclamation points

indicates pauses which disturb the poem's flow. Finally, the alliteration within phrases such as "lonesome latter years" and "mutter and mumble low" generally serves to emphasize the gloomy mood of the poem while adding to the lyrical effect.

References:

1. "Edgar Allan Poe Square". The City Record, and Boston News-letter. Archived from the original on July 10, 2010. Retrieved May 11, 2011.
2. "Edgar Allan Poe Square". Massachusetts Historical Markers on Waymarking.com. Groundspeak, Inc. Archived from the original on May 15, 2013. Retrieved May 11, 2012.
3. Fox, Jeremy C. (February 1, 2013). "Vision for an Edgar Allan Poe memorial in Boston comes closer to reality". boston.com (Boston Globe). Archived from the original on April 30, 2015. Retrieved April 9, 2013.
4. Kaiser, Johanna (April 23, 2012). "Boston chooses life-size Edgar Allan Poe statue to commemorate writer's ties to city". boston.com (Boston Globe). Archived from the original on May 29, 2013. Retrieved April 9, 2013.
5. "About the project". Edgar Allan Poe Square Public Art Project. Edgar Allan Poe Foundation of Boston, Inc. Archived from the original on April 23, 2013. Retrieved April 9, 2013.
6. Lee, M.G. (October 5, 2014). "Edgar Allan Poe immortalized in the city he loathed". The Boston Globe. Archived from the original on July 2, 2015. Retrieved July 2, 2015.
7. Lake 2006, p. 195
8. Deas, Michael J. (1989). The Portraits and Daguerreotypes of Edgar Allan Poe. University of Virginia. pp. 47–51. ISBN 978-0-8139-1180-9.
9. "Poe Toaster tribute is 'nevermore'". The Baltimore Sun. Tribune Company. January 19, 2010. Archived from the original on January 20, 2012. Retrieved January 19, 2012