

SYMBOLISM IN POE'S "THE HAUNTED PALACE"

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ABSTRACT

Poetry always has a unique charm that captivates and draws the reader into its figurative world. One of the most interesting charm is symbolism used by the poet, in one single word lays a deeper explanation beyond what is perceptible by the eyes. Therefore, the aim of this research was to reveal the symbolism in "The Haunted Palace", a gothic-themed poetry written by a well-known poet Sir Edgar Allan Poe. Having analyzed this poetry, the writer later found that Poe's "The Haunted Palace" has some unique symbols used by the poet himself. Despite of writing long and descriptive lines, the poet chose appropriate symbols that lead the readers to think and conjecturing more deeply. Every symbol used in "The Haunted Palace" represents simplicity, authenticity and brilliancy of Poe himself. Thus, a symbolism holds a very important role of poetry. It is not only pleasantly presented but also elucidating things beyond its literal substance. It proves that Poe's "The Haunted Palace" is pleasant to be read but difficult to be interpreted.

Keywords: *poetry, symbolism, The Haunted Palace, Edgar Allan Poe*

INTRODUCTION

Poetry is a reflection of life. It represents an authenticity of human real emotions, feelings and thoughts. It delivers what is felt and thought by human in a pleasant and aesthetic way that it captivates the readers because it is relatable. Poetry is also written recording of history. Through the arrangements of the words and the lines, the readers might be able to see what happened to an object, when and where a certain event occurred and how it went by. In Peck and Coyle, Wordsworth stated, "poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feeling, expression of emotion, and it is always concerned with ordinary human concerns, with the daily matters of

one's life. It may say that poetry is words which are arranged in a regular pattern of rhymed and accented lines or the art of writing of literary words in metrical form (1984: 11).

However, in most writing, the poet usually used some words that might represent something beyond the words itself. Thus, the poetry might look pleasantly written but difficult to be understood. It cannot be denied that one of many factors that make poetry so captivating is the symbolism used by the poets. Edward Quinn once stated about symbolism that it is "Referring to the process by which a person, place, object, or event comes to

stand for some abstract idea or condition. As normally used in literary study, symbol suggests a connection between the ordinary sense of reality and a moral or spiritual order (2006:408).” Thus, a symbol is often interpreted as word or an object that stands for something else beyond the literal meaning. A rose for example, it often represents a beautiful woman or beauty of nature. Hence, there are two major types of symbolism we encounter in analyzing literature, dreams, or even our life experiences are conventional and personal symbolism (Smily, 2010). A conventional symbol carries similar meanings can be understood or interpret by people with the same cultural background i.e. are those symbols we encounter that have different interpretations depending on the cultural context. For example, the ankh, which in Egypt was a cross with an oval on top of it, was sacred to the mother goddess Isis. In Greece and Rome a similar symbol in which the oval had become a circle was used as a symbol for Aphrodite and Venus. Meanwhile, personal symbols are given symbolic significance by an author in context of particular literary work. It's obvious that, having made the distinction between the two types of symbols, it does not necessary mean that the writer should limit himself in using only one type (Amraoui & Chiekh Salah, 2009).

Therefore, poetry might contain both type of symbolism.

Edgar Allan Poe is known as one of many poets who loved to use symbolism in his works and one of them is in “The Haunted Palace.” In this poetry, the readers can find many words that actually represent other things which deeper, more meaningful and valuable than what they seem literally. Therefore, this paper was to reveal what is beyond the word by word of Poe’s “The Haunted Palace”.

METHODOLOGY

In conducting this research, the writer used a qualitative research. Therefore, all the data were taken in form of words rather than numbers and it did not deal with numbers, diagram and formulas.

The writer collected the data from relevant books, articles and documents. In addition, the writer divided the source into two parts; those are the primary sources and the secondary sources. The primary source is Edgar Allan Poe’s *The Haunted Palace* which was published in *Classic Poetry Series* (2012:78). Moreover, the secondary sources that the writer used consist of supporting books about poetry and symbolism, related articles about poetry and Edgar Allan Poe’s biography.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In poetry the author usually uses some objects that stand for something else. Symbolism in poetry is often used as a way to convey a deeper meaning than what the words, when taken in their literal form, can do.

“Poets frequently use symbolism because, among other reasons, symbols are highly suggestive yet can be established in just a few words. (Griffith, 1989: 110)

The first symbol that was found in the first stanza is a palace. Based in the title of this poetry, this palace is haunted.

*‘In the greenest of our valleys
By good angels tenanted...’(line 1-2.*

First stanza)

*‘Once a fair and stately palace-
Radiant palace- reared its
head...’(line 3-4)*

These lines then mention about a stately palace; that radiate and glowing. It lives in a very prosperous and beautiful land as stated in the first line. Actually, the palace is not virtually a palace because this palace is only a symbol of a person. Perhaps, it is quite difficult to understand it as a person, but after read the next lines in the first stanza; we can find the supporting ideas that strengthen this statement.

*‘In the monarch Thought’s
dominion-*

It stood there!...’(line 5-6)

From both these lines, it can be seen that these lines portray the person’s mind and the person himself is actually a king. It is concluded so, because the poet uses the word ‘monarch’ which has the meaning of ‘king’. Therefore, it states the existence of the king that rules.

*‘Never seraph spread a pinion
Over fabric half so fair! (line 7-8.*

First stanza)

*Banners yellow, glorious, golden,
On its roof did float and
flow...’(line 9-10 Second stanza))*

The next symbol is banner that is described as yellow, glorious and golden made with a fair fabric on the top of the palace. These four lines give a description about the king’s hair. It declares the glorious time and great appearance of the king himself since ‘golden’ also can represents as a glorious and fancy colour.

*(This- all this- was in the olden
Time long ago...) (line 11-12)*

From this eleventh and twelfth lines, the readers can find a twist of atmosphere although it is only a short implied between the second stanzas. After describes everything beautifully, the poet than inserts these lines which indicate a bad sign that leads the readers to think that all the beautiful description about the palace or the king is all exist in the past only.

‘Wanderers in that happy valley,

*Through two luminous windows,
saw*

*Spirits moving musically...’ (line
17-19. Third stanza))*

The ‘luminous windows’ here are the symbols of the eyes. It describes the king’s sparkling and beautiful eyes. In addition, the people who see through his eyes can find the spirit of the king that reflected through his eyes. The line that states ‘spirit moving musically’ portrays how lively the spirit or soul of the king was.

*To a lute’s well-tuned law...’ (line
20)*

While the line above is a depiction of the king’s govern style. It describes how wise the king is when it comes to his ruling style, thus from this line it can be concluded that the king was known as a wise and judicious man.

*‘Round about a throne where,
sitting*

(Porphyrogene!)

In state his glory well-befitting,

*The ruler of the realm was seen...’
(line 21-24)*

These lines substantiate the previous description about the king’s ruling style. From those lines above, the poet writes about how majestic and dashing the king was for being mentioned as ‘the ruler of the realm’. Moreover, it is strengthened by the word ‘porphyrogene’. This word relates with the royal issue since this poem

tells about a palace which actually a king. Moreover, this word is originally from Greek which means ‘purple’. As we know, purple is a symbol of a glory and royal colour that usually used as king’s royal robe.

*‘And all with pearl and ruby
glowing*

Was the fair palace door,

*Through which came flowing,
flowing, flowing,*

And sparkling evermore,

*A troop of Echoes, whose sweet
duty*

Was but to sing,

In voices of surpassing beauty,

*The wit and wisdom of their king...’
(Line 25-32. Fourth stanza))*

The ‘palace door’ is actually the king’s mouth that appears as captivating and pleasant as pearl and ruby. Thus, those lines above describe about how the king speaks really nicely. In addition, since the stanza before was mentioning about the ruling style of the king, it can be concluded that the words that come after the king’s mouth might be the regulation that is said wisely and politely by the king. Every word he said reflects the ingenious and knowledgeable the king is.

*‘But evil things, in robes of sorrow,
Assailed the monarch’s high
estate...’ (Line 33-34. Fifth stanza))*

The poet then uses the word 'evil things' in which gives a strong scary feeling into this poem. Even worse, that 'evil things' is described comes on a robe of sorrow. It is clearly a statement of a horrible thing. It can be a death or loss. Whatever the 'evil' things actually are, it has attacked the king and brings sorrow into the king's life.

'(Ah, let us mourn!—for never morrow

Shall dawn upon him desolate!)...'
(line 35-36)

These lines show how fearful the king is, that he mentioned 'never morrow' which indicates his fear of death that makes he thinks that there is no tomorrow for him and even though the dawn seems so gloomy for him. It can be caused by the fear of death that sways the king's soul or the he is having a severe disease that could cause him to dead.

'And round about his home the glory

That blushed and bloomed,

Is but a dim-remembered story

Of the old time entombed...' (line 37-40)

This stanza is closed with the lines that explains a tragic end for the king for it finally says that all those glorious and beautiful times was actually remain as past only. It means that now the king is not in a good condition both physically and

mentally for losing his possession that now turns into a memory buried by time.

'And travelers, now, within that valley,

Through the red-litten window see

Vast forms, that move fantastically

To a discordant melody...' (line 41-44. Sixth stanza))

Now, the king's eyes had turned red. The same symbol used before which is the 'windows' that were originally said as 'luminous windows', a pair of beautiful and sparkling eyes that reflect a joyful spirit are replaced with the 'red-litten windows' or red eyes. These red eyes can be an indicator of madness. Something that terrified him had caused him to be mad. And the people who see through the king's eyes can see something huge that moving in his eyes in a scary way. It can be depiction of an insane man whose soul has been taken or controlled by something bad that takes away all the joy and happiness once showed in his eyes. These are strong explanation in which shows how bad the 'evil things' that assailed the king's mind and soul.

'While, like a ghastly rapid river,

Through the pale door

A hideous throng rush out forever

And laugh—but smile no more...' (line 45-48)

The 'pale door' in the forty sixth lines indicates a pale lip that was once a fair lips. From this twist of condition, we can assume that the king has physically and mentally exhausting by the 'evil things' that haunt him all the time. Moreover, in the end, people can see the king is laughing, not a laughter of joy or happiness but he laughs in a scary way. It is a poor laugh that indicates that the king has become an insane person. However, it also can be a sarcastic laugh when a man laugh but deep inside there is a pain and hurt hidden behind his smile.

The last stanza shows a bigger, stronger and firmer scary feeling that gives a dark feeling and the presence of gothic atmosphere into this poem. With the red eyes, pale lips and scary laugh of the king, the poet successfully depicts a picture of an insane man whose mind and soul has been harassed by the fear.

CONCLUSION

Having conducted this research the writer later found that Poe's "The Haunted Palace" has some unique symbols used by the poet. Despite writing long and descriptive lines, the poet chose appropriate symbols that lead the readers to think and conjecturing deeply. It proves that Poe's "The Haunted Palace" is pleasant to be read but difficult to be interpreted.

The present study has attempted to give an overall survey on symbolism theory. A is usually defined as an object, character or an action that suggest meanings, notions or emotions beyond what is expected at first time from its meaning or function (Huch & Brown, 1995).

Every symbol used in "The Haunted Palace" represents simplicity, authenticity and brilliancy of the Poe. Thus, a symbolism holds a very important role of poetry. It is not only pleasantly presented but also elucidating things beyond its literal substance.

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