Symbolism in Poetry

Student’s Name

Institution

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**Part 1: Masque of the Red Death**

Edgar Allen Poe makes an effort to arrange the rooms in the story from east to west in addition to having them painted differently. The last room in the house is painted red, as is also the color used in the title of the poem. Consequently, it becomes clear to the audience that the last room has its color painted according to the finality of human life. Notably, it is also the room which the visitors at the house avoid and fear the most in addition to being one in which they all meet their deaths. Consequently, the colors used in the story move from neutral to the extreme, an indicator of one’s life cycle from birth to life. Notably, irrespective of the fear they all had for the room, they all finally go into it, just as much as one must ultimately face death irrespective of how much fear he or she has for the same. Therefore, the colors within the different rooms are all representatives of the different stages in life culminating in death.

The story’s narrator is a third party privy to the incidences at the ball and in the society at large, but who managed to escape the red death. Consequently, he managed to get some information about what happened at the party, which informs his extensive knowledge that everyone who attended it died. It could be a servant of the prince, as such an individual would be involved in planning the party, but would also be privy to the events outside the prince’s household.

**Part 2**

Poets often draw their inspiration from an array of objects and experiences, and the fireside poets such as Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and Oliver Wendell Holmes were keen on using history and nature in their compositions. In *My Lost Youth,* one can easily identify the potential that Longfellow drew inspiration on the story from his experiences as a young man. On the other hand, constant references to aspects of nature such as the air, caves, and how the lights shine on the earth surface indicates significant inspiration from nature in Holmes’ *The Living Temple.* Essentially, it is always possible to identify the source of inspiration in a poem by observing the imagery used therein and the message the author in question intends to pass to his or her audience. With the fireside poets, nature and history were often consistent themes in their compositions.

References

Holmes, O. W. (n.d). The living temple. Retrieved from www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/44384/the-living-temple

Longfellow, H. W. (n.d). My lost youth. Retrieved from www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/44640/my-lost-youth

Poe, E. A. The masque of the red death.