

An Analysis of Allan Poe's "Negative Resistance" with the Theme of Plague

Haoxing Wu

Sichuan University, Sichuan, China

Abstract

In "The Masque of the Red Dead" and "Shadow", We can see that Allan Poe has a clear "resistance" tendency when dealing with the subject of plague: People achieve the purpose of resisting plague through closing themselves. But "The Plague King" is unique, Placing two drunk sailors in a free field, even let them directly contact the "plague nobles". Acting in an open field, such background treatment makes Allen Poe return to the era of "MS. Found in a Bottle". But just like the ending of "MS. Found in a Bottle", "The Plague King" is not an optimistic work, it is still a continuation of Allan Poe's "negative resistance" complex.

Keywords

Allan Poe, Negative Resistance, Plague.

1. Introduction

In the Gothic castle, feudal aristocracy, pale girl, and stormy waves. In the ending of being pushed into the abyss by the hand of fate, we can easily find that Allan Poe's novels have the unretouched cruel, savage and fable-like practical disciplinary functions. Whether in "The Oval Portrait" the painter, who wanted to retain his wife's beautiful face and make his wife died after overwork; And in "Black Cat", a man who killed his wife and cat because of alcoholic; Also in "Legeia", the oriental beauty who was extremely longing for alive, finally reborn as her husband's nightmare. Poe warns the world with pages full of death that, DON'T OVERDO EVERYTHING. "Moderate" becomes Poe's only claim. But unbiasedness still contains the subjective initiative of human choice and norms. On Poe, the appliment of "Moderate" is more objective and negative, we can name it as "Nature".

And this thought penetrates into the novels, often imaged as the sharp plot and harsh life background. The most obvious expressions of the latter, smallset as a lady's disease, largest as a nationwide plague. "The Masque of the Red Death" is the most famous and typical plague background writing in Poe's work. The plague broke the pathological rules and evolved into a deadly virus. At the same time, it further transformd into human body as a god of death wearing a mask. But the men and women in the novel were not blindly succumbing to the doomed endgame. At the end of "The Masque of the Red Death", the expected expanding of the atmosphere when the crowd facing the Red Death were not happen. Immediately after Poe's objective description of the Red Death, they condensed into a scattered group of stars notwithstanding, surrounding the Red Death, forming a harmonious proportion of narration and lyrical. Even when the conflict was at its height, the absolute status of the Red Devil was not highlighted. Allan Poe found a matching opponent for his speechlessness, the king's anger. The bluff of the secular king out of arrogance and ignorance broke the silence of death. The mask, against the scepter, the power of the two worlds represents a balanced game, expanding the end of the fluctuations to infinity. Till the king finally went to the arranged ending, The bipolar force were out of control, both narrative and lyrical stopped abruptly. Just like water about to boil returned to calm. Does it feel same like "Ms. Found in a Bottle", the sea

which controlled by a violent wind went silent at the moment of men's death. Even when it comes to the end, it seems that this looming struggle continues under the current of history.

2. The Reasons of "Resistance"

Why is there such a confrontation? Cruel reality and inevitable consequences always inspire regret or nostalgic desire. While focusing on development and facing the future, backing into the old order, since human have been expelled from the Garden of Eden, it has become a "homesickness" complex that humans cannot forget. The impulse is not diminished since the Babel Tower, the "returning home" plan, and resurrected in Allan Poe's novels.

Unlike the murders and salvation carried out by individuals in other chapters for return to the past life relationship, "The Masque of the Red Death" raises individual autonomy to the concentration on the social order. For the king closed the entire castle and drunk with the nobles. Or someone suggested that addiction to pleasure is not a means of distracting attention? Why cannot the locked city express the evasion psychology? If these behaviors are understood as above, that one side has lost the battle, so where is the bipolar confrontation? Before the king died, he still pointed at the Red Devil with his scepter, scolded his existence, questioned his identity, and even sentenced him to death, attempting to use power to confront natural destiny. His way is completely different from the seventh person in "Shadow". In terms of character relations, Unlike the six people who were silent, the nobles did not lose their last reason under the threat of natural disaster, the seemingly chaotic crowd still maintained the etiquette of the feudal society and embraced the supreme king. It would be too unfair to reduce this group of orderly and rational "Dionysian traitors" to the defeated soldiers who were begging for mercy. Whether intentionally or self-defeating, their consciousness of restoring the old order, the fangs of resistance were still glooming. Even with the double attacks from the plague and the dommed ending, people's apparent pleasure still reveals their determination to restore the "old order". But can this resistance be equal to "positive"?

3. "Negative Resistance"

Starting with "The Masque of the Red Death", Allan Poe seems to have a tendency to return to his early time. When it comes to "The Plague King", Although it is also a plague theme, Poe puts two lucky sailors in an open environment: The empty pockets couldn't stop the desire to guzzle, they escaped from the boss' pursuit and crossed the fence of the terrible plague zone, encountered plague king I and other nobles in a coffin shop. Two brave sailors called plague nobles brothers and sisters. But because they did not recognize the monarch of the world was the god of death, the sea god who blessed the sailors, notwithstanding, they were regarded as a traitor and almost be killed by plague king. They used the spirit of wine to fight, wiped out king and Barons, took the ladies' hands, ran to the ship named "Freedom".

In this novel, Poe finally pulled off the "coward" mask and stroke a drunken fist against the most real fear. But what we need to pay attention to is that the heros of "The Plague King" are "irrational" alcoholics, they would do unpredictable things like the husband in "Black Cat", who changed his temperament due to the alcohol addiction. Facing the pressure from "nature", Poe gives a rough solution: Since reason is no longer useful, why not just abandon it? If my actions are irrational and purposeless, I need not be directly responsible for my actions. Even this type of individual existence itself is not accommodated by the moral ethics system, "Fault" can also be a perfect excuse and shield against essential attacks. Whether through foreign objects or inner madness, irrational state gives the impression that superficially deformed and weak (We always feel that people with mental problems are a type of disabled people and are not "normal"), Does that mean that this negative response is, to some extent, self-depreciation and rebellion? In other words, they are evading passively. But

the timing of "escape" always happens as a mean to self-preservation after weighing the pros and cons to avoid unequal conflicts. But, to abandon reason means to lose all the effects brought by it, and the system established by it. Once entering this state, the human sensibility will expand infinitely, danger and bottom line will lose space in the ego world, Everything the individual does will no longer hit the rules, because there is no norm, no gains and losses. Whether you want it or not at first, Irrational people are "unconsciously" and consciously oppose everything in reality, therefore, "negative" is bound to "resistance". So how to reach to the irrational state? The empty wine bottle has given the answer. After all, madness is only the patent and happiness of a few people, and the quicker and more accessible way is undoubtedly, DRUNK.

These two sailors are the followers of Poe. If they wake up, how will they feel about their female partners in their arms? Will the women plague help the "freedom" to dominate the world, or destroy it? We can see a similar ending from "Black Cat": The drunk owner killed his wife and abused his cat, was finally avenged by the soul of the black cat, the wall which hid the corpse was found by the police. Even if people paralyze themselves, maximizing natural desires, Return to the state of "son of nature", this purest identity and most harmonious relationship with nature, Won a temporary victory. But it is too late to throw away the social attributes that have been soaked for so long. As a future enlightener, Instead of the end of Messiah, when facing the end that cannot be rewritten, Poe found, following the flow was the most reasonable lifestyle. And connected with Heidegger, this attitude also highlights the truest living conditions of life: It doesn't matter what you pursue or avoid. Living is the ultimate meaning of life.

4. Conclusion

Allan Poe's "Enlightenment", accepted as the most effective method, has been inherited and sought after by future generations. After two large-scale wars in human history, the world view and methodology of "negative resistance" were also divided into two parts. Faced with the hostile situation of "ego and the outside world", the "insomnia" writers were so distressed that they can't "get drunk all the time". They faced the predicament of an era, but couldn't wait for the "Gordo" they wanted, the new solutions have not yet been born. The most extreme people chose "fancy", game life, and "juggling" text, But the broken sounds of various fragments cannot cover the desperate and indifferent eyes behind the literature.

References

- [1] Allan Poe: Allan Poe Short Story Collection (China Contemporary Publishing House, China 2009).
- [2] T.S. Eliot: Ulysses: Order and myth. (People's Literature Publishing House, China 1989).
- [3] Brandeis: Mainstream of 19th Century Literature: Literature in Exile (People's Literature Publishing House, China 1989).
- [4] Lukacs: Lukacs Literature Essays (China Social Sciences Press, China 1981), p.1-33.
- [5] Sartre: Anthology of Sartre (People's Literature Publishing House, China 2009) p.52-176.
- [6] Isaiah Berlin: Roots of romanticism (Phoenix Publishing Media Group Yilin Publishing House, China 2000).
- [7] G.R. Thompson: The Selected Writings of Edgar Allen Poe (Norton Critical Edition, America 2004).
- [8] Mary Klages: Literary Theory: A Guide for the perplexed (Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, China 2009) p.27.
- [9] Edgar Allen Poe: The Raven with The Philosophy of Composition (Northeastern University Press, America 1986) p.19-33.