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Beowulf- Literary analysis

*Introduction*: Beowulf has both the characteristics of history and literature. It has gone far in both perspectives to provide the readers with a thorough literary analysis. The most evident literary aspect of the poem is its epic literary nature. The poem reflects the epic nature of the literature in several ways. The historical incidents mentioned in the poem about Sweden and Denmark reveals its historical nature. It would be a totally wrong interpretation if this poem is just considered as a document about history- as many literary analysts have opined so*. This analysis of the poem is based on the epic nature of its literature. It has also been taken into account in the preceding paragraphs that how the history and literature has a connection, and how it can be presented in an epic manner.*

*Literary Analysis*: In the poem, the author has based the characters on fiction. The usage of such characters show that it is also a fictional story. These characters also depicts that the epic sense in a literature is dependent upon its delivery by some character. This is the most viable way of substantiating the epic nature of a literature. Since the literature has been published, there are many epic collection of the stories. Similarly, there are many stories that revolve around the characters such as the courageous leaders and the public. In such stories normally the King brings peace for his people and remains one of the most loved one. The Beowulf is also similar to such stories. The time when this poem was written, it was well tailored to that situations. The authors have related almost every aspect of the story to that time situations. It is much related to the stories of the epic battles that normally took place between any monster and the only survivor. The Beowulf also represent the same era.

The authors have used many symbols, themes and interesting characters to build the interests of the readers. The author has also tried to connect the story with the today's society when it relates the character of the King with that of today's rulers. The author has maintain the aspect of courage in an epic manner, but it still remains very relevant in relation with the aspects of a true leader. Beowulf has been presented in the story as the most sincere leader of his pee. The author mentions that people under his rule always believed on his words, and moreover he was a God to them. This was the reason that his people believed on the words, and he was like a hope for everyone.

Other important themes in the poem are the wealth, honor and some more themes like the Man vs. the wild themes. The author has also amalgamated the epic sense of different aspects of the story with that to the Anglo- Saxon culture. The Anglo- Saxon culture is important as in the Anglo- Saxon culture the things are just not viewed in the manner of the wealth and status but are also viewed in the sense of repute and honor. The monetary sums in that culture were just not important. The people prefer other things such as the honor and prestige over wealth. They also viewed the epic nature of a human being as of much importance, as for them the life is not that much valuable if the human do not have a good interaction among them. This is the reason that the author while describing about the relation between Beowulf and the people, have employed an epic sense to amuse the readers.

In doing so, the character of Hrothgar who is the King of Danes have been presented by the author as an example of the Anglo- Saxon measurement of character. The author has described his wealth, as not the measurement of his wealth but as the measurement of the love of people to him. Since he had been characterized as the King, therefore the people have associated with him the qualities of being humble towards his people. He has been loved by the people in the Anglo- Saxon settings because he has taken Danes too much glory. The people have been witnessing now the best of time in Danes was under his rule. His love towards humanity and nature can be depicted, when he quotes “Leave the pastures untouched, and do not take the lives of those without weapons(Tolkien)”. This dialogue is important also to view that Hrothgar has also remained humble towards the animals and other humans who had no weaponry.

The author has also presented the character of Hrothgar by associating a sense of humor with him. As when he talks to the unarmed persons during a battle, it present another aspect of humor in the story. For example, the unarmed first becomes afraid of his presence and think that there must be something much cruel happening to them. Hrothgar comes close and let all those people to move and talk freely. This turn makes the readers please and give them a feeling of affection and love. The epic sense associated with the Kings is much important in the story. It helps in bringing the relation of the rulers and the people on a lighter node in a true sense. It also helps in thinking that every relation can have a lighter aspect also, which remains much workable when things are becoming hard to sort out. By displaying the sense of love and compassion for the common man, Hrothgar has been presented as making full use of his honor and wealth. This is how the honor and wealth have been presented as source and notes a material value.

This same sense of prestige and honor has also been displayed by the hero- prince Beowulf. He has also remained true to his wealth and honor by being honest towards the people of Danes. The author has mentioned that every time when he is among his people, he shared good times with them. He also provides his people with the pleasures of life. Beowulf has always associated his wealth and honor with the happy life of his people. In the poem, when Beowulf is finally successful in defatting Grendel, he becomes a survivor for his people. They viewed him as a reflection of God, as he is able to defeat the monster who was a threat to the life of his people. Grendel was a totally opposite character to Beowulf. Beowulf had no wealth and no honor, therefore he was not concerned about losing anything. This was the reason of him being a serial killer (Niles). The author has very beautifully defended corruption as the absence of wealth, by portraying the charter of Grender, which is always hungry for wealth and fame.

The other perspective that has also been defined in an epic way is about the difference of the good deeds and the bad deeds of a human being. The author has presented first the good deeds as the possession of wealth, honor and prestige. He then goes on to elaborate the bad deeds as by being cruel, dishonest, corrupt and hard in the life. The harshness is attributed as the absence of a soft nature, the soft nature is sometimes the compassion towards others and some time it is the humor in the humans. The author has also added Biblical motifs in the poem just to show that the rulers or whatever the highest position in the society is, it all is subjected to the will of an unimagined creature- the God. For example, as Beowulf has been mentioned as saying "My hands alone shall fight for me, struggle for life against the monster(Earl)”.

As the original piece of the poem was much more relevant to the epic nature of the kings and the people. For example, how they interacted and what the kind of a beautiful relation they shared. But with time the original text of the Beowulf was amended. The things were made different to the original text of the poem. As it was written in a time that dates back to centuries and that time the people had a different sense about everything, therefore the humor was there. But as the time passed, the things changed in many aspects. This impacted the writings of the Beowulf poem as well. The writers in the coming times added more biblical reference to it and changed the essence of the poem. But some also made efforts to keep the humor nature intact to the text. This addition also served in the manner, that people maintained a relationship with that to the Anglo- Saxon culture.

*Conclusion:* In the whole poem Beowulf there are many things which are important to analyze. Some of them are the relation of the King and his people, the qualities of a king, how the religious teachings are important in the life of any individual, what the wealth and honor must be for anyone and most importantly what the absence of wealth is. The author has presented the absence of wealth as the force which then leads to corruption and malpractices. Since this analysis was based on the epic nature of the text, therefore it has been observed that the author has used minor dialogues of humor just to elaborate the relation of the King and his people in a more pleasant manner.

It is also important to note that how the author has mentioned the biblical references in order to substantiate the understandings of the people. He has attributed the biblical references to the people when they deal with sensitive nature of things in their possession. The author has talked about religion and its teachings as the guiding tool for the rulers. It has presented in a much thorough manner that how things get relevant when any human attaches with them a special feeling. The author has mentioned about this relation this in many ways. For example, the humor aspect has remained much important for all that. He has depicted that there are some harsh time- as like Grendel, but if the King is just and has a relation with his people, he can take out his people from that difficult times. Such times according to the author remains temporary, and the people must focus on creating good memories every time. The time when there is a strong bond between the people and their leaders, they can get to the highest places in the world. They can achieve the dignity as Beowulf brought to his people. The epic nature of the literature is just how the big things in life could be achieved just by creating good memories and by being compassionate towards the people.

Works Cited:

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