

Analysis of the rime of the ancient mariner

Literature



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Full Analysis of the Rime of the Ancient Mariner Samuel Coleridge's The Rime of the Ancient Mariner is a story in poetic form, with the ancient mariner as the narrator and the wedding guest as his audience. It takes a loose form of literature varying its number of stanzas in the seven parts and the stanzas themselves have different numbers of lines. For instance, the first part consists of twenty stanzas with four lines each while the second part has fourteen stanzas with four or six lines each. On the third part, there are sixteen stanzas with the first stanza having six lines, the second and third stanzas have four lines, the fourth and fifth, five lines and the fourteenth stanza with nine lines. This form enables the writer to concentrate more on the effective narration of the story rather than the rigid counting of number of lines and syllables which could be easily spotted in the first part.

Comparing the first and second stanzas, a reader can notice that the syllabifications of each line do not take the same number so that with the differences already mentioned earlier, it could be concluded that the lines in the succeeding parts take the same nature.

With the story presented as a long poem, it allows a variety of literary devices to be shown in addition to the form it takes, mentioned earlier.

Alliteration or the repetition of consonants is scattered all over the poem like " He holds him with his skinny hands" and " Down dropped the breeze, the sails dropped down" in the third stanza of the first part and the sixth stanza of the second part, respectively. Sibilance, a form of alliteration that specifically takes the s/sh sounds are also evident in the poem like stanza three of the first part with the line " He holds him with his skinny hand".

Assonance or the repetition of vowel sounds can also be seen in the sixth, tenth, fourteenth, sixteenth, seventeenth and nineteenth stanzas of part one

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and other parts of the poem, making a melody in an oral reading of the text. For instance, “ The ship was cheered, the harbor cleared” repeats the long ‘ e’ sound for the words ‘ cheered’ and ‘ cleared’. Personification is also used in the poem like for the description of the rising and setting of the sun as if it was pictured as a person in its coming and going, in the seventh stanza of the first part and in the line “ It cracked and growled, and roared and howled” referring to the ice that was forming all around. Simile is also used in lines like “ Red as a rose is she”, “ As it had been a Christian soul, we hailed it in God’s name” and “ as idle as a painted ship”, creating a more interesting and capturing atmosphere for one to pay attention to the story. Exaggeration or hyperbole is seen in lines like “ And every tongue, through utter drought, was withered at the root”.

A foreshadowing of the climax of the story is usually interrupted by the wedding guest and this adds to climactic impact on the audience, preparing an expectant mood to whatever surprise the story brings. For instance, after telling about the two hundred men dead who were with the mariner, the wedding guest speaks his fear of the narrator wherein he calms the listener saying he did not die with his men and assured him that he was not a ghost. A universal truth that could be drawn in the poem is the concluding word of the mariner that whether humans or animals, we have to respect each life because the God who created all loves all.