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Abstract

Of all the writers of the world, William Shakespeare has had the most Universal recognition and acceptance, Shakespeare is considered as the most popular playwright of the English Literature. His philosophical ideas lead the readers to find out the human nature from his literary works in our day to day life. His surviving works consist of 38 plays, 154 sonnets, two long narrative poems, and several shorter poems. Shakespeare himself can be understood as the ultimate product of the philosophy of Renaissance humanism. The cited material in the article consistently continues to refer back to Shakespeare; how most of his work embodies the humanist thought process. For a Humanist the purpose of cultivating reason was to lead a better understanding of how to act. Many of the reasons cited throughout the article focus on two subjects, divine providence and human free will. In his writings, we find optimism, truth, pragmatism, straightforwardness, morals and didacticism, mingling of tragic and comic elements. Some of his plays are concerned with the external behavior of men. Shakespeare himself can be understood as the ultimate product of the philosophy of Renaissance humanism. He was an artist with a deep understanding of humanity and an uncanny ability for self-expression who openly practiced and celebrated the ideals of intellectual freedom. In this paper, I will start with the source of the word Humanism. Then I will focus on views of different people and era son Humanism e.g. Renaissance influenced literature, politics, education, scientific and rational outlook while Greeks glorified human body, human nature and human virtues influencing literature, politics, education, scientific and rational outlook in sixteenth century. He successfully exposes the problems of human relationships, meaninglessness of man's life, socio-economic condition and solution for those problems of all ages through the versatile utilitarianism in his plays and poems. His education was clearly grounded in the principles of Renaissance humanism. The decidedly humanistic ideals Shakespeare often represents in his plays—particularly within Hamlet and Julius Caesar—are grounded in the principles of Renaissance humanism. He brought a new psychological realism and depth to drama, and created hundreds of living, believable characters, all of them different individuals showing the rich diversity of humanity. Thus, I have focused my paper on the reflection of Humanism in Renaissance and different works of Shakespeare.

Key Words: William Shakespeare, human nature, Renaissance humanism, psychological.

1. Introduction

William Shakespeare is the most notable and influential author of the Elizabethan period of the English Literature who is recognized as a philosophical playwright to all the critics. His plays are dealt with the universal thoughts and ideas which are mostly needed in almost all spheres of life. He also reflects love in many of his plays. He is poet of human nature. He presented all these themes with the use of a great number of versatile utility which are a bit upper than the general level of normal writing condition. Shakespeare has given morals with aphorism and impersonality. It is this truth to human experience that gives rise to comments like that of actress Janet Suzman: "Shakespeare was a humanist in everything he wrote." In an era preoccupied with religion, Shakespeare's plays and poetry are remarkably secular in subject matter and outlook, and Shakespeare seems to have been influenced by classical and Renaissance ideas about the importance of reason and of mankind and human individualism. Renaissance humanists believed that if you want to build a just society you must begin with the facts of human nature. This book argues that the idea of a universal



human nature was as important to Shakespeare as it was to every other Renaissance writer. In doing so it questions the central principle of post-modern Shakespeare criticism. Humanist ideas are about the uniqueness and extraordinary abilities of the human mind.

His plays reflect an inquiry into human character with emphasis on human dignity and human emotions. In Hamlet, the Protagonist eulogizes the dignity and beauty of human life. He says,

What a piece of work is man!
How noble in reason!
How infinite in faculty!
In form and moving and how express and
admirable!
How like an angel!
In apprehension how like a god!
The beauty of the world!
The paragon of animals!

Of course, Hamlet's attitude being cynical, he calls human life "the quintessence of dust". In plays, Shakespeare shows progression from tragedies to romances. The message becomes clearly humanistic in nature.

2. Literature Review

Pragati Das, (2012), Shakespeare's representation of women, and the ways in which his female roles are interpreted and enacted, have become topics of scholarly interest. Shakespeare's heroines encompass a wide range of characterizations and types. Within the gallery of female characters, Shakespeare's women characters display great intelligence, vitality, and a strong sense of personal independence. These qualities have led some critics to consider Shakespeare a champion of womankind and an innovator who departed sharply from flat, stereotyped characterizations of women common to his contemporaries and earlier dramatists. Contrastingly, other commentators note that even Shakespeare's most favorably portrayed women possess characters that are tempered by negative qualities. They suggest that this indicates that Shakespeare was not free of misogynistic tendencies that were deep-seated in the culture of his country and era. William Shakespeare lived during the Elizabethan era and wrote all his works based on the society of that time. The Elizabethan era was a time when women were portrayed to be weaker than men. During that time it was said that "women are to be seen, and not heard." In this article an attempt has been taken to explore Shakespeare's presentation of women in his tragedies demonstrating his feelings about women and their roles in society.

Michael R. Olsson, (2013), The works of William Shakespeare are more popular in the 21st century than ever before. Why are theatre and audiences around the globe still drawn to his work? How do they make sense of these texts in ways that resonate with their cosmopolitan, contemporary audiences? This article uses the findings of a study interviewing 35 theatre professionals in Canada, Finland and the United Kingdom to explore these issues. Theoretically and methodologically, it is a bricolage, drawing on a range of approaches including Foucault's discourse analysis, and Hobsbawm's invented traditions to understand participants' sense-making as a social practice. It argues that attempting to understand the



significance of a major cultural icon such as Shakespeare in contemporary cosmopolitan civil society needs to recognize the many meanings, roles and significances that surround him and that this complexity makes it unlikely that any one theoretical lens will prove adequate on its own.

Fenghua Ma, (2014), The present paper probes into the concept of love revealed in the Dark Lady group in Shakespeare's Sonnets. In these poems, the poet depicts a kind of obsession, bitter, hopeless and degenerating, which is totally different from that sweet and ennobling love Shakespeare always pursues in his early works. It is argued that the conflict between the ideal of love and the sensual obsession with the Dark Lady may well be a manifestation of the change in the poet's mood, namely, from optimism to pessimism.

Mohammad Ehsanul Islam Khan, (2014), Shakespeare is considered as the most popular playwright of the English Literature. His philosophical ideas lead the readers to find out the human nature from his literary works in our day to day life. Shakespeare is the author of Elizabethan period. In his writings, we find optimism, truth, pragmatism, straightforwardness, morals and didacticism, mingling of tragic and comic elements. Some of his plays are concerned with the external behavior of men. Indeed he has universal appeal and his own distinctive features to attract the readers. Shakespeare himself can be understood as the ultimate product of the philosophy of Renaissance humanism. He was an artist with a deep understanding of humanity and an uncanny ability for self-expression who openly practiced and celebrated the ideals of intellectual freedom. Shakespeare expressed his philosophy through his characters in his plays. He has been called an early existentialist. The study will present the vividness and luminosity of Shakespeare's writings.

Sandeep Purewal, (2017), This paper explores the arguments surrounding Shakespeare's place in the classroom amid recent changes to the National Curriculum. First, it will explore arguments suggesting that the works of William Shakespeare are not relevant to the lives of young people today: as a result, the compulsory study of Shakespeare in schools risks alienating students, many of whom come from different ethnic backgrounds. Once acknowledging these arguments, however, the paper will propose that the themes and ideas that run through Shakespeare's works are universal, surpassing barriers such as race and class. In this way, the plays are as relevant today as on the day they were written. The paper will argue that rather than Shakespeare being irrelevant, it is outdated teaching practices that limit the benefits of Shakespeare. Finally, the paper will explore a range of creative approaches to the teaching and learning of Shakespeare which possess the potential to significantly increase student engagement.

3. Significance of the work:

The following advances that took place during the Renaissance are significant for the development of Western philosophy:

The five subjects known as humanities (grammar, rhetoric, poetry, history and moral philosophy) began to be studied for their own sake and not as a preparation for theology. The Renaissance yielded some of the most significant works of painting, sculpture, architecture and music. Hence the Renaissance became an age of humanism, dominated by humanists such as Erasmus. The humanists also prepared the ground for the Reformation which affected the religious sphere. The Renaissance began in Italy with the revival of interest in Greek learning and Greek philosophy. All this was funded by rich banking families and several



Popes who were patrons of art and architecture. In this Unit we have portrayed the basic features of Renaissance culture. We began by providing 11 basic understanding and overview of the 'Renaissance,' by highlighting the most significant and defining moments during this period. We then focused on key aspects of the culture and philosophy of the times, and some prominent thinkers and personalities who contributed to the development of this culture. Finally, we reflected over the significance this culture had in terms of the development of the history of Western Philosophy. 'Renaissance' means 'rebirth'. This period (from the 14th to the 16th centuries) saw the rebirth of classical patterns in art, architecture and literature in Europe. It is sometimes called the 'Early Modern' period.

4. Objectives:

English Elizabethan playwright Shakespeare is versatile in his philosophical ideas of his writings to present the universal needs and attitude of people not only of his contemporary era but also of all periods. The present paper finds out some philosophical ideas of Shakespeare especially about the human nature in his writings.

1. To study on the William Shakespeare of human nature.
2. To study on the Western Philosophy of Renaissance humanism.
3. To study on the Shakespeare's plays and poetry.
4. To study on Renaissance influenced literature, politics, and education, scientific.
5. To study on the work of painting, sculpture, architecture and music.

5. Shakespeare's Definition of Love:

William Shakespeare puts forth his definition of what makes love true in his untitled sonnet beginning with "Let me not to the marriage of true minds." Shakespeare does not deny other views of love, but instead insists on a certain characteristic of love: love is rigid and crucial to endure life.

With the very first line of the Sonnet, Shakespeare indirectly acknowledges there may be obstacles in true love: "Let me not to the marriage of true minds / Admit impediments," (lines 1-2). By recognizing it is possible to have "impediments" in a sound relationship, Shakespeare may be seeking to grab the attention of the audience by bringing forth a realistic love that is attainable. Additionally, marrying true "minds" rather than merely two people suggest Shakespeare carefully picked "minds" for a deeper meaning. It is possible the word "minds" was used to illustrate the thought that goes behind true love. Without thought, a person would be more primitive, and with primal instincts come physical urges and desires. Shakespeare's word selection proposes love is more than physical, it is reasoned through.

6. Definition of Human Nature:

Human nature refers to the distinguishing characteristics— including ways of thinking, feeling and acting—which humans tend to have naturally, independently of the influence of culture. Human nature is in fact the psychological and social qualities that characterize humankind, especially in contrast with other living things.

7. Renaissance Humanism and Shakespeare:

Renaissance humanism refers to the ideals of the cultural, social, and educational reforms undertaken by scholars, artists, and political leaders in Europe during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Renaissance humanism developed in response to the increasingly outdated and limited ideals of medieval scholasticism that had pervaded Europe throughout the previous several centuries. Instead of merely equipping professional such as doctors, lawyers,



and theologians with the strict rules of practice for their professions, humanists sought to instill within the educated a strong sense of virtue and prudence through the close study of the humanities and particularly the arts of rhetoric, history, poetry, and philosophy. Humanism originated in Florence and Naples, Italy in the fourteenth century but began to spread throughout Europe in the early 16th century due to the large-scale printing and publication of classical and modern poetic, historic, rhetorical and philosophical texts.

Renaissance humanism: which was practiced, in particular, by members of the clergy—was credited during the Renaissance with allowing for a greater emancipation of the individual (at least the educated individual) because many of the humanistic texts used within scholastic settings preached and argued on behalf of intellectual freedom and self-expression and served to expose individuals to customs and ideas from foreign cultures and past civilizations. A humanist was understood not merely as someone in possession of a great love for humanity, but rather as one who had mastered the humane arts in order to attain a superior level of knowledge, wit, written and spoken eloquence, and deeper understanding of the world and history. Throughout his plays, Shakespeare regularly demonstrates and celebrates the ideas and ideals of Renaissance humanism, often—even in his tragic plays—presenting characters that embody the principles and ideals of Renaissance humanism, or people of tremendous selfknowledge and wit that are capable of self-expression and the practice of individual freedom.

8. Shakespeare Psychological:

Shakespeare was clearly enthralled by the functioning of the human mind. His dramas are innermost plays which mean 'psychodramas' with much of the momentous action stirring within the souls of the characters. And he looks at the human mind in the round; not merely ordinary rational waking consciousness, but also reverie, insanity, apparition, convulsions, and intensity of passion. He is concerned in nonstandard psychology (so-called) as much as the normal kind and he sees how one can pour or transform into the other. His importance on the theatrical aspects of personality is part of this more general interest in the mind's operations. It is often said that Shakespeare was a radiant psychologist, meaning that he had a deep understanding of human nature; in particular, his grasp of psychological types is unparalleled. All forms of human aggression, weakness, dishonesty, and folly are ruthlessly laid bare. Yet both acknowledge, and are sensitive to, the existence of human virtue; they do not fall for the romance of total darkness. Shakespeare gives us a panoramic perspective on the human mind, an all-inclusive accounting, as if he were aiming for a kind of completeness. No one could accuse Shakespeare of blinkeredness, of narrowness of vision. All human life appears to be there.

9. Conclusion:

In my thesis I have attempted to show how a reading of William Shakespeare's plays maybe enhanced through the works of the humanist literary tradition, and also that the plays themselves reveal a conscious effort by the playwright to employ major literary modes of the renaissance for the same ends as humanists. Shakespeare was face to face with the acme of Renaissance Humanism. There is the same desire to make human beings the focus of attention and to write about universal moral and philosophical problems; the same superficial absence of moral preaching combined with deep moral concerns; the same belief in balance or moderation in the claims of self and others; and the same emphasis on reason mixed with



compassion and love of humanity. Shakespeare was a Renaissance writer and therefore shared a special interest in the classical languages and literatures but also in modern languages like Italian, French, Spanish and Portuguese. This identity of moral thinking might even lead to the conclusion that wrote Shakespeare. An essential feature of kindness is the capacity for fellow-feeling, and clearly Shakespeare's good characters have this quality in common. It is also this quality that shines through the entire works and causes commentators to refer to Shakespeare's great compassion. Indeed, love of humanity. Shakespeare created human nature, as it now exists, at least in some measure. So enveloping has his influence on the culture been so ingrained are his words and his characters that we cannot help but be shaped by his work. We are all, to some indefinite degree, Shakespeare's progeny. And, if he is right that we are naturally theatrical creatures, it is entirely possible that his theatrical constructions should become the basis of the theatrical selves we project in daily life. Shakespeare's very fidelity to human nature, as he observed it, has come to modify human nature. But this is not to rescind the point that Shakespeare's genius is of the mimetic kind that he represented what he found to be already there.

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