
WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE THE DRAMATIST OF FULL-TIME

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ABSTRACT

The peoples and societies that lived in Europe, America, Africa and Australia had their own religions before adopting the Asian religions. However, they have either disappeared or become ineffective in the face of strong Asian confidence movements. It is important to remember the aforementioned history when thinking about the relation of the great artists in the West with the East, or the influence of Oriental science and literature. Because, until the West has strengthened its philosophical processes, mental theories, and scientific activities, it has approached the East with specific needs and expectations. When comparative literature begins to explore the root of the problem, the East or West narrows downward. From this point of view, the role of the Orient is also important in Shakespeare's creation, and we can observe many Oriental similarities.

Key words : world literature, world dramaturgy, Shakespeare humanism

INTRODUCTION

Ben Jonson, Shakespeare's well known contemporary playwright, poet and actor calls Shakespeare "not of an age but for all time." Shakespeare therefore is the dramatist for all seasons and arguably the most timeless and placeless dramatist, the world of literature has ever produced. He produced 37 plays during his time and penned 154 sonnets with two epic poems. Shakespeare is the mostly quoted (person) next to Bible and his works have been produced in almost all the languages with diverse sort of modifications; his characters have continued to be not just theatrical realities but social realities over four centuries as the characters like Romeo, Juliet, Hamlet, Othello, Macbeth, Julius Cesar, Shylock etc. are still very much alive irrespective of socio- cultural, political and geographical differences. Thus, Ben Jonson further adds in a familiar tribute to Shakespeare: "Thou art alive still while thy Booke doth live, and we have wits to read, and praise to give".

Shakespeare is also famous in Uzbekistan, and his works are well-known and popular, deeply rooted in the hearts of readers and viewers. To be honest, it is hard to imagine the Uzbek drama and theatrical art without Shakespeare's legacy. The famous Hamlet tragedy of the literary pen was first translated into Uzbek in 1934 by our famous poet Cholpon. Among those who introduced Shakespeare to the world are his countrymen S. Johnson, S. Colridge, A. Bradley, John Dover Wilson, and many writers, poets and historians.

Review and Discussion

Shakespeare was born and raised at Stratford-upon-Avon, the eldest son of a Glover and a member of the local gentry. Contrary to those who claim such an ignorant country bumpkin could not write the plays attributed to him, he likely had a good education for his time, attending a local grammar school giving him a grounding in the Latin classics and in British literature and history, from which many of his dramatic plots are taken.

At eighteen, he married Anne Hathaway, with whom he had three children: Susanna (born 1583) and the twins Hamnet and Judith (born 1585). He may have worked as a schoolmaster until moving to London in the late 1580s on his own under unknown circumstances, possibly to flee poaching charges, according to one legend—or possibly running off with a travelling theatrical troupe to escape the confines of

small-town, domestic life.

Nothing is known about how he became involved in the theatre and became a writer, but he apparently was becoming known as an actor and playwright by 1592, judging by a comment from a rival then about an "upstart crow". From the early 1590s until 1611, Shakespeare wrote at least 36 plays—more if you count collaborations and plays that may have been lost—plus at least two long poems and one collection of poetry

The plays are traditionally divided into three categories: histories, comedies and tragedies. These groupings are rough approximations however. Several of the so-called comedies are dark enough to be considered tragicomedies. The "tragedies" taking place in the ancient world are thematically similar to "histories", but the latter term is reserved for British subject matter. And some of the "histories" are quite comical.

His earliest plays to be produced in London to some acclaim are thought to be the last two or all three parts of Henry VI around 1590–1592. It is not certain whether he wrote all or just parts of these inferior histories. The lighter Comedy of Errors and Two Gentlemen of Verona were also very early plays. These first efforts may have been followed by the first part of Henry VI, written as a prequel to the other two parts, and several more early plays, including the Roman tragedy Titus Andronicus, the still-controversial comedy The Taming of the Shrew, and the durable history Richard III

In 1599 the troupe moved to a new venue, the Globe Theatre, south of the Thames River in London, likely opening with Henry V. Over the next nine years were performed the renowned tragedies Julius Caesar, Hamlet (the similarity of the name to that of Shakespeare's has been noted), Othello, King Lear, Macbeth, Antony and Cleopatra, and Coriolanus, as well as the everpopular light comedy Twelfth Night; and several of his ambiguously dark comedies like Measure for Measure.

Education

Although there is no supporting evidence, it seems likely that Shakespeare attended a "petty" school at the age of five and, at seven, entered the Stratford Grammar School, which according to contemporary accounts provided an education as good as any in England. The curriculum was heavily classical, concentrating on the Latin language and its literature and possibly including some Greek. Ben Jonson's statement that Shakespeare had "small Latin and less Greek" has been seized upon by those who wish to prove that Shakespeare had little formal education, pointing also to fact that he did not attend a university. Shakespeare was at least as literate as most of his contemporaries. Jonson's statement was not an attempt to belittle Shakespeare's achievement, as in the same way he compared Shakespeare to Aeschylus, Euripides, and Sophocles.

Marriage and Children

In 1582, at the age of eighteen, when his father was having financial difficulties, William Shakespeare married the twenty eight years old Anne Hathaway, who came from a modest land- owning family. Their daughter Susanna was baptized on May 26, 1583, six months after the marriage. Shakespeare's two other children, the twins Hamnet and Judith were christened on February 2, 1585.

Lost Years

The seven years between 1585 and 1592 have been called "the lost years" for there are no records of Shakespeare's activities after the twins' christening in 1585 and his employment during the lost years is a matter for conjecture. A suggestion that he was a soldier seems to be based on confusion about a man with a similar name; a man called William Shakeshafte (the names are so similar that some argue that they may have referred to the same man) was a provincial actor; and a late contemporary, William Beeston, states that Shakespeare was a schoolmaster.

Just as little is known of Shakespeare's private life during these lost years, it is almost certain that his wife and children remained in Stratford, and it has been suggested that since his wife's father and

brother received Puritan funerals, she too was a Puritan and disapproved of her husband's theatrical activities.

First Theatrical Activities in London

Recent investigation into the dates of his plays suggests that Shakespeare left Stratford for London between 1584 and 1586 and that, by chance or by evidence of his genius, he quickly established himself there as an actor-dramatist. Some four to nine of Shakespeare's extant plays seem to have been written by 1592. These include the three parts of Henry VI, Richard III and possibly Titus Andronicus, The Comedy of Errors, The two Gentlemen of Verona and The Taming of the Shrew. King John may also date from this early period.

The Poet – Narrative Poems and Sonnets

Between 1592 and 1594, when the plague closed London's theatres, he probably composed his narrative poems, Venus and Adonis (1593) and The Rape of Lucrece (1594), both authorized for publication by Shakespeare and dedicate to Henry Wriothesley, 3d Earl of Southampton, a young, brilliant, and wealthy member of the court. Both poems were extremely popular; their success and the probable patronage of Southampton suggest that Shakespeare need not have returned to the less distinguished task of writing for the theatre unless he chose to do so.

Scholars who seek information about Shakespeare as a poet, have done much research on the sonnets and on the identification of "Mr. W.H," to whom they are dedicated. While there is no evidence that Shakespeare authorized or was in any way involved in publishing the 1609 edition of the Sonnets, a variety of attempts have been made to identify the "Fair youth" and the "Dark lady" to whom he so frequently alluded. Various critical studies suggest that the "Dark lady" was Queen Elizabeth; a courtesan called Lady Negro; the wife of an Oxford innkeeper; or Marry Fitton, the mistress of the Earl of Pembroke. It has also been suggested that the sonnets were private hymns to Shakespeare's homosexual lover. Whatever these assumptions may be, they are conjectures, and the feelings of Shakespeare continue to remain an enigma.

The Full-time Dramatist

In 1594 Shakespeare joined the Lord Chamberlain's company as an actor and writer, and he remained with this troupe for at least sixteen years, in what appears to have been a harmonious and profitable artistic and business venture. The Chamberlain's Men under the patronage of Queen Elizabeth's Lord Chamberlain, was headed by the actor Richard Burbage and his brother Cuthbert, the son of the actor James Burbage, who had built the Theatre, London's first playhouse, in 1576. It was a joint stock company with ten shares, five owned by the Burbage and the rest divided among Shakespeare and four other actors. With Richard Burbage as its leading actor and Shakespeare as its principal dramatist, the company prospered, presenting a greater number of plays before Queen Elizabeth than any other London company. When it lost the lease of the land on which the Theatre stood, some of the members, including Shakespeare, formed in 1599 a syndicate to finance and build a new theatre, the Globe. In 1603, when James I became King, the Chamberlain's Men received royal patronage and became the King's Men, or King's Servants, London's leading theatrical company. In 1608 the syndicate owning the Globe took over another theatre, the Blackfriars, as well. Shakespeare appears, however, to have been truly dedicated to the theatre, for unlike most of his fellow dramatists, he wrote almost exclusively for the stage from then on, even though at that time popular drama was not considered seriously as literature.

The Actor

Although Shakespeare's reputation as an actor is unknown and few of the roles he played are recorded, his name appears on the cast lists as one of the "principal comedians" of Jonson's "Every Man in His

Humour” and as one of the “principle tragedians” in Jonson’s “Sejanus His Fall.” He is reputed by an early biographer to have played Adam in “As You Like It” and the ghost in “Hamlet.”

Retirement

Though Shakespeare retired to his native town in 1611 or 1612, he did not completely sever his ties with London. In 1612 he was summoned to London as a witness in a lawsuit between members of a family in whose house he had lodged years before. In 1613 he took part in the tournament held on the anniversary of the King’s accession, helping Richard Burbage design the emblem of the Earl of Rutland’s shield. What became of his relationship with his acting company and how and when he disposed of his shares in it are not known. Perhaps his connection with the theatre ended when the Globe burned down in June, 1613, during a performance of his Henry VIII.

From 1594 until his retirement in 1611 or 1612, Shakespeare seems to have been the most popular dramatist of his time and perhaps the most highly esteemed as well. Shakespeare did not become involved in controversies as his closest rival, the arrogant Ben Jonson did, for example, in the so called war of the theatres; he seems to have been well liked by his contemporaries, for all references to him, Emphasize his mildness, gentleness, and goodwill.

Prosperous Gentleman and Death

All the evidence seems to indicate that Shakespeare was careful in money matters, investing his savings wisely and cautiously so that in his later days he was a man of some substance (actors in Shakespeare’s day were well paid and even now compared to Sri Lankan standard). In 1597 he bought and paid £60 for New Place, the second largest house in Stratford, to which he later retired. He received his coat of arms

and title “gentlemen” after his father’s death in 1601. (It is probable that John Shakespeare’s coat of arms, granted in 1596, had been financed by his increasingly prominent son.) Purchases of land for £320 in 1602 and for a smaller amount in 1611 made him one of the largest landowners in the district. In 1605 he bought a lease for tithes that brought him an income of about £60 a year. In 1613 he bought a house for £140 of London, in the Blackfriars district.

It appears that Shakespeare enjoyed the life of a country gentlemen in Stratford and took some part in local affairs. The nature of his relationship with his wife is not known; she is mentioned only casually in his will, where she is left “his second- best bed.” However, this does not mean that they were estranged or that she was neglected, for the law automatically provided for widows. Their son Hamnet died in 1596, and by 1613 Shakespeare’s mother, brothers, and one sister were all dead. Shakespeare’s first daughter, Susanna had married a prominent Puritan physician, John Hall, in 1607; Judith, his other daughter, married in 1616, Shakespeare died soon after, on April 23th, 1616, and was buried in Stratford. His purchase of tithes entitled him to be buried inside the chancel rail of the parish church.

Theatre Experience

“Electricity” and “Curtains” are two of the handiest features of the modern theatre. These two features have made the present day theatre very rich in technique and audience-friendly in numerous ways. However Shakespeare’s Elizabethan theatre lacked the luxury of “Electricity” and “Curtains” making it too difficult for the dramatists to impart their messages in the way they do today. The other most note-worthy factor is that all the female roles were played by male actors; Desdemona, Portia, Lady Macbeth, Titania, Miranda etc. are all played by male actors who were trained to play them over the years.

Comedy

Comedy is a light-hearted play that ends happily for the protagonist / protagonists. Comedy is most often meant to amuse the audience with a happy ending where everything is put right at the end. In most

cases comedy ends with poetic justice in which the good is rewarded and the evil is punished.

CONCLUSION

Conclusion Shakespeare was versatile genius. He creates great tragedies and many other plays. He also wrote sonnets. I think that when he write drama he use his heart for drama. He was not for one age but for all ages. Shakespeare was universal poet and dramatist. He creates best characters in his plays. All kind of characters we find in his drama. I think almost his plays are best work of Shakespeare, that's why he was genius dramatist of all the time.

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