

1. Back ground of the study :-

The Elizabethan Age witnessed a revolution in all aspects of British life. This era, later known as the “golden age” was named for the reign of Queen Elizabeth I who reigned from (1558 – 1603). Her age was characterized by being the age of adventure and discovery that resulted in flowering in many aspects of Art, but most significantly Literature. The theatre was a major part of this revolutionary cultural advance which attracted an avid following among all classes of society from nobles to beggars.

William Shakespeare (26th April 1564 -23rd April 1616), England’s national poet who has become to known as the Bard of Avon, is widely regarded as pre-eminent dramatist, and actor. He was born and brought up in Stratford-upon-Avon, England. Despite his educational level, attending only grammar in school, he wrote great plays that catapulted to the top of the literary pyramid of his days. Shakespeare has risen to the position of patron saint of English Literature and drama.

Shakespeare highlights the spirit of the golden age by revolutionizing the focus of themes from religious concern to political discourse, by creating timeless characters and the greatest poetry in the history of the English Language, plots, structures and genres, as well as by adding countless words, phrases and images to the English language by creating almost 1,700 words; for example, in the tragedy of Romeo and Juliet, Shakespeare had mixed romance with tragedy. Indeed, Shakespeare was the master literary inventor of this time and ever after. His creations influenced almost all other literatures around the world. In his own time, he was highly praised by two of his closest contemporaries and friends, the playwright Ben Johnson and the poet Hugh Holland, when they stated in the prefaces to the first Folio 1623. He was not of an age, but for all time! And the life yet of his lines hall never out.

For centuries Shakespeare has been considered the writer who contributed most greatly in promoting English language and literature in the world beyond Great Britain. As already noted, many hundred words and expressions in common English usage such as

“Addiction”, “Multitudinous”, and “uncomfortable”, made their first printed appearance in his plays. Countless readers and audiences, regardless of their language and culture, were, and still are, admirers of Bard due to the aesthetic pleasure his works evoke.

Prominent writers, artists of every generation, whatever their origins, have been influenced by the literary works of the English national poet and playwright William Shakespeare. Thus, the bard’s effect is not confined only to his homeland but rather managed to reach the whole world where the English language is learned or spoken. His works, particularly his plays in both original and translated versions, are dominant in the theatrical repertoire, and thus, are performed at almost everywhere in the world. Literary works mirror contemporary society, but few persist and gain universality and timelessness. Some of these are Shakespeare’s works.

Little is known about Shakespeare’s personal life. He is still a major subject matter of current research and studies. In fact, no other writer in the World of Literature has been written about as much as the Elizabethan dramatist William Shakespeare. In

today's world, the word "Shakespeare" has many signifiers that differ from one person to another across globe. Despite the fact Shakespeare did not travel outside of the south of England his literary masterpieces such as Hamlet, Othello, King Lear, Macbeth, Julius Caesar, Romeo and Juliet, The Tempest, The Merchant of Venice, Richard III, and Titus Andronicus are considered to be among the greatest tragedies in the world of literature and were his passport to different countries around the globe, influencing and entertaining the inhabitants of new times and cultures.

Diverse countries around the globe of different cultures take Shakespeare works as their source of inspiration and insight to produce other works that tell current up to date, stories similar to that of William Shakespeare. Thus they adapted Shakespeare to produce their own "Shakespeare" that encompasses their cultural, psychological, and personal outlooks and traditions. In other words, Shakespeare as Indian, Chinese, Russian, German, French, or Arab Shakespeare. They also appropriated characters as their own as a French Hamlet, Russian Macbeth, Egyptian Lear, German Richard, Japanese Hamlet. Thus, different performances are done each year in various countries

across the world, possibly more than that in Shakespeare's homeland. Shakespeare's literary works will offer profound insights into the contemporary world, which help explain why Shakespeare is immortal and still resonate in the 21st Century.

2. AIMS OF THE STUDY

The present study aims at investigating Shakespeare's influence, timelessness, popularity, university appeal and his status in today's literary world.

This paper tries to prove, on one hand, that the Elizabethan playwright's works are immortal, and on the other hand, that Shakespeare is the most read, performed and adapted foreign writer in the world.

The purpose of this study is an attempt to provide a satisfactory explanation on how Shakespeare became the most influential playwright all over the globe, reasons behind his presence in the 21st century and how he is viewed around the world, and reasons behind the frequent need to turn his works.

3. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

William Shakespeare has received countless praise for being the most read, translated, adapted and performed playwright around the world more than any other writer, modern or ancient. Many studies have revealed that Shakespeare's literary works have profound insights into today's world. That is why study under investigation tends to identify cause of their universal acceptance and appeal in the 21st century.

4. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

How does William Shakespeare still resonate in and influence today's literary world?

To get an Exhaustive answer to this question, sub-questions must be answered:

- Why is Shakespeare the most adapted, translated and performed playwright in the world?
- Why does Shakespeare have a universal appeal?
- different cultures to appropriate
- Shakespeare in particular? And do countries, with

- different cultural backgrounds, receive the Bard in the same way?
- Is Shakespeare still relevant today?
- Is Shakespeare an immortal writer?
- Why do prominent writers around the world still refer to Shakespeare in their works?

5. HYPOTHESES

Shakespeare succeeded to be a universal writer mainly due to the flexibility of his works and the illumination of human experience which happens to change little over time, this is what makes his plays have a universal appeal. Different cultures appropriated Shakespeare differently because of the similarities between Shakespeare's works and their cultural aspects as history and drama, as well as the valuable life lessons they address. The Bard cannot be obsolete because he is still adapted, studied and performed. He is an immortal writer because he transcends time and Culture barriers people keep turning to Shakespeare

because he is a better story teller of their own stories.

Prominent writers around the world refer to Shakespeare in their works due to their affection for his great masterpieces.

6. PREVIOUS WORKS:-

And the best proof of what has just been said is the amount of books and academic works devoted to Shakespeare and his works we came across while preparing for the research and which are all cited in Bibliography at the end of the research, among these -

(i)The Cambridge companion to Shakespeare by Margreta De Grazia and Stanley Wells 2001 (a book)

(ii)Shakespeare: The invention of Human by Harold Bloom 1998 (a book)

(iii)Performing Shakespeare in contemporary Taiwan by Ya-hui Huang. PhD thesis

(iv)Adaptations of Hamlet in different cultural contexts; Globalizations, postmodernism, and Alter-modernism by Parviz Partovi Tazeh Kand 2013. Ph.D thesis.

7.RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To conduct this study, we opted for a descriptive and

analytical method in order to investigate Shakespeare's status and influence in today's literary world. We used the descriptive method to obtain information about the current status of Shakespeare's works, with the purpose of describing what exists with respect to cultural and linguistic variables. Whereas analytical method was used in order to carry with respect to cultural and linguistic variables. Whereas analytical method was used in order to carry out deep analysis on the works done about Shakespeare by giving a Critical accounts and reviews about the literature. Therefore, in trying to do so, the material we found imposed that the research paper would take the following shape:

Chapter one entitled, 'How Shakespeare is viewed around the world' will be concerned with Shakespeare's popularity in the world, timelessness of his works and characters and themes, reasons behind his universalism, and how he has been received around the Globe. Chapter two, with the title " influences and Readings," will be devoted as the titles to show to both he influences and re-readings of Shakespeare's works in different parts of the globe in addition to his relevance in the 21st century.

Finally we close the research with a general

conclusion where we set forth formally our dissertation and give a concise summary of the main and most important points of evidence, besides some of our impressions and personal views.

Since no research is scientifically plausible unless it is supported with previous and contemporary books research and listed at the end of this latter.

This is how we tackled Shakespeare, his works and person.

BETTER

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8. PREFACE TO SHAKESPEARE POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE FEATURES OF SHAKESPEARE'S WRITING.

Love is the most commonly worked theme Shakespeare knew that love was only one of the many passions and that it has little effect over life. He made use of other passions since he was influenced by the living world. His characters cannot be easily categorised. However they are different from each other. The speeches of characters cannot be transferred from one another. Other writers create characters and dialogue which we will never come across in the real world. On the contrary Shakespeare created men and not heroes and represented human nature in the most natural manner.

The mind can be fooled for a while by fanciful invention but in the end it has to rely on truth. The truth, Johnson declares, is that Shakespeare, above all writers, in the poet of nature, He has created characters who are the genuine product of common humanity. They are least affected by the temporary fashions and customs of the world. Other writers may create a character who is an individual but Shakespeare creates a character who is Hence we learn so much from Shakespeare. The works

of Shakespeare can be called a system of civil and economic prudence .But cannot find Shakespeare's power in isolated passages, but in the story and the dialogue.

The character and dialogue of other dramatists seem to be out of touch with the common man. Shakespeare on the other hand, writes dialogues which appear to be taken from common conversation.

Dr.Johnson first planned to edit the plays of Shakespeare in 1745.He published his observations, on Macbeth, as a specimen of the edition he hoped to produce. For a number of reasons, mostly legal the edition was abandoned shortly thereafter. But with the Dictionary complete in 1755, Johnson once again turned his attention to Shakespeare. His work was irregular, but finally appeared in an eight-volume edition in1765.

Johnson's preface to the Shakespeare is one of the most famous pieces of writing, and has long dominated discussions of the entire edition. It is indeed one of his most interesting works, but a number of Critics have reminded readers that much of what appears in the preface thoroughly conventional, and have insisted that Johnson's really interesting work appear in his notes.

Johnson first examines the complaint made by certain critics that praises and honours are given to the authors of the past (dead authors).He feels that these critics are hopeful of posthumous honours .This does not mean that everything from the past is good. He generally feels, we judge a dead author by his best performance and a living author by his worst. However Johnson calls the test of time as the best method of rating works.

Man has liked his old possessions. He has constantly confirmed his choice by constant comparisons. We compare the height of mountains and the depths of the rivers. A work of art has to be compared with similar works for a proper assessment of its excellence. Works of art have to be estimated against the collective ability of man. Johnson gives the example of Homer's poems, whose greatness was established after comparison with literature for many countries over many centuries. So an old work is respected and considered great, based on the fact that the more older a work, the more it has been tested and Criticised.

Johnson now introduces us to the poet whom he is going to take up for discussion. He describes this poet as

one who is now considered an ancient and has lost all advantages that he once enjoyed. His works are no longer debated but read only for pleasure. His works have received fresh praise from every age that has read them. Johnson however does not call human judgement perfect and feels that an inquiry is necessary into the reason for the excellence of the poet. The poet he has chosen for inquiry is Shakespeare.

Johnson calls Shakespeare drama in a mirror of life in which one can see human sentiments in human language. Of course, there are critics like Dennis and Rhymer think that Menenius should not have been Potrayed as a Baffoon Roman Senator. Voltaire too criticises the Potrayal of Claudius as a drunkard in the play Hamlet. Johnson however feels that Shakespeare wanted to portray men. Thus he wanted to show a buffoon and found Menenius suitable. In the same manner, Claudius was an usurper and murderer rolled into one and by showing him as a drunkard Shakespeare only adds to his wicked nature.

There is also the feeling that Shakespeare mixes comic and the tragic in the plays. Johnson says that his plays cannot be strictly divided into tragedies or comedies. His plays are unique works which show the

Chaos of paradoxical actions and emotions into tragedy and comedy. No Greek or Roman dramatist attempted to write in both forms. Shakespeare broke his preference for specialization and combined the tragic and comic elements in a single play. This is most representative of what happens in the real world, some feel that this mix of passion in a play does not arouse the right response in the audience. Johnson however reminds us that pleasure lies in variety and not in the presentation of a single emotion. Heminge and Condell, the actors who collected Shakespeare's plays were not clear in their division of the plays into comedies, tragedies and histories. A comedy had a happy ending, a tragedy a sad one and a history no end at all.

We find histories extending over many plays. Johnson also points out the thin line dividing a history and a tragedy. Antony and Cleopatra is a tragedy while Richard III is a history play, although their categories are interchangeable. Johnson gives examples from Shakespeare's plays which went contrary to rules of drama and yet are handled with mastery. To Shakespeare came naturally. We find evidence of hard work in his tragedies. Johnson concludes that Shakespeare's tragedy is a skill, while his comedy is

instinct. Hence we find that his comedy maintain its freshness. His compositions are enduring like a rock which can never be washed away by any flood.

In the matter of style, Shakespeare shunned both refinement and the vulgar. He adopted the style of common life which he used for his comedy. He is thus more relevant than any other writer and can be considered as one of the original masters of the English language.

Shakespeare also has his faults. His dialogue is smooth but not without difficulty. His characters are natural but they sometimes display forced sentiments. He also does not show any moral purpose in his writing. He does not distinguish much between good and evil. His plots are loosely constructed and his efforts flag when he nears the end of his play. Shakespeare confuses the Customs and Traditions of different nations. The results of this confusion are pointed out in detail by Dr. Johnson. However even a learned man like Sir Phillip Sidney was guilty of such confusions.

Shakespeare's comic scenes are unpleasant and immoral. He refined characters, in their manners, are no better than his clowns. As already mentioned, he works hard to produce a tragedy and when he works too hard

he makes it dull and obscure. Shakespeare shows pomposity in his speeches and never prefer brevity. He forgets that dramatic poetry needs frequent breaks in narration.

Shakespeare's speeches are weak and he makes unsuccessful attempts at handling sentiments. His promises of excellence remain Un-fulfilled. Johnson also strongly criticises Shakespeare's love for the quibble or the pun. He calls it Shakespeare's biggest weakness which he was willing to lose the world. Johnson now wants to defend Shakespeare's avoidance of the unities. Shakespeare's play have a beginning, middle and an end. He maintains unity of action by linking one event to another and the end is arrived at naturally. The unities of time and place have always been a restriction on a dramatist and Shakespeare avoided them. Critics however hold these unities in great regard. They feel that it is inappropriate to show action spanning several months or years in three hours (Unity of Action) Similarly they feel that it is equally inappropriate to show the places shifting from scene to scene (Unity of Place). Johnson's shows Shakespeare's example and says that these critics are mistaking representation to be reality. He points out that the

audience comes to the theatre believing it to be a visit to Egypt. It follows that they have no problem in believing that the scenes shift from one place to another. Johnson argues that while watching a play, the mind of the audience elevates itself above truth or reason does not mind about time and place.

The spectators know that the stage is a stage and the actor only actors. They know that there must be a shift of time and place for the progress and the completion of a story. They are also clear that the duration shown on stage is the same as the real duration of time. They know that when the first scene is an imitation, the second scene may be an imitation of an event occurring several years after the first. Moreover, we can imagine time as we please. Johnson further explains that an audience looks at a tragic play fully knowing that the action represented is not real. The spectators are moved because the action on stage reminds them realities. A reader reading the history of Henry V does not mistake the book to be the Battlefield of Agincourt. Similarly a play enacted on the stage will never be mistaken as real by the spectators.

We do not know whether Shakespeare's avoidance of the unities was deliberate or a matter of

accident. Johnson is also willing to defend a poet who defies the unities of time and place while writing plays. It would indeed be commendable if a playwright were to produce a play following the three unities and at the same time make it interesting. However he reminds us that a play should copy nature and teach what is life is. Johnson now fears that he has earned the anger of critics by defending Shakespeare's defiance of the unities too strongly. He therefore shifts their attention to Shakespeare's time which might explain his ignorance concerning certain aspects of playwriting.