



SHAKESPEARE'S OTHELLO: "AN ANTI-FEMINIST MISOGYNY AND THE DEGRADATION OF FEMALE CHARACTER'S"

Ajendra Singh

MA, English Sem.02& 04 (Honors with research) Elphinstone College, Mumbai, Maharashtra (INDIA).

Beauty Agarwal

MA, English Sem.02& 04 (Honors with research) Elphinstone College, Mumbai, Maharashtra (INDIA).

ABSTRACT

From the 16th century (Elizabethan period) to the 21st century (Modern literary period), Shakespeare is known for his golden-literary-compositions. In his major tragedies composed by Shakespeare, he portrays the social and political dimensions of the 16th century in a moral and dramatic way, emphasizing the existence of feminism. Some modern authors analyze his works in different critical ways. **According to Charlotte, "Shakespeare is a proto-feminist"**. However, the term 'feminism' emerged in the 1890s, but its presence was established from the early stages of human society. Shakespeare's plays have surpassed his time, highlighting the society's discriminatory and misogynistic ideology as a modern perspective, which still exists in our contemporary society, liberating it from the roots of a female-dominated, misogynistic society of the 16th century.

KEYWORDS : Golden-tragedies, Political-dimensions, Feminism, Proto-feminist, Discriminatory, Misogynistic-Ideology, Female-domination.

INTRODUCTION:

Shakespeare wrote a tragic play Othello in a dramatic performance, which consist of tragic-romance. Which have been distorted critically in modern thoughts and reason. An American socialist feminist **Charlotte Gilman** talk about Shakespeare **"He is also known for writing about complicated and three-dimensional women-awareness of the system made against them."**

The entire story revolves around Othello. In which there are seven male characters and three female characters in the play. Whose role releases the spirit of anger of the 16th century society. whereas Othello is known for being a soldier is a man of action like Hamlet. Says **A.C. Bardley, "the sources of Danger"**. Being provoked by Iago, Othello fell in "perplexed in the extreme". He does not think precisely on any things, nor does he betray any poetic sensibility of Macbeth. Desdemona told him she has no idea of the truth, how Cassio caught her handkerchief, but Othello didn't trust her; and didn't delay his action to kill Desdemona.

"Kill me tomorrow, Let me live tonight."

Misogyny Element And Tragic Flaw Of Desdemona:

According to Bardsley, "we must understand, was the emergence of Desdemona, as she passed from girlhood to womanhood, of an individuality and strength...". Desdemona was very docile, obedient and humble. Brabantio tells the Duke that Desdemona has declined numerous advances from charming Venetian men. He explains that her reserved and modest nature can be attributed to this.

*"A maiden never old,
Of spirit so still and quiet, that her motion
Blush'd at herself"*

But she falls in love with Othello who is a black moor and Venetian army General. Brabantio dismissed Desdemona's love for Othello as inappropriate, citing their contrasting ages, nationalities, cultures, religions, colors, and temperaments. This racist and racial hatred-filled mentality of Brabantio reflects the spirit of the mentality not only of the 16th century but of the modern society.

As same as things are applies to **Iago character's** also. Whose characteristic mentality is full of discrimination and jealousy. Who have a lower rank in Venetian army, he is a main villain of this Tragic-Drama, and also known as 'Flag bearer'. **Iago** is a misogynist, who exploits his wife and doubt her character. He

did everything for 'his sport and profit'. Coleridge says, he is "motive hunting".

*"For that I do suspect the lusty Moor
Hath leaped into my seat; thought where of
Doth, like a poisonous mineral, gnaw my in words."*

A.C. Bradley rightly remarks, "Iago stands supreme among Shakespeare's evil characters because the greatest intensity and subtlety of imagination have gone to his making....."

Conscious view of discrimination and segregation against women in Shakespeare's "Othello," the portrayal of gender-based bias and female marginalization is epitomized through Desdemona and Emilia's characters, who confronts entrenched societal biases and patriarchal dominance. Desdemona's tragic demise underscores the repercussions of gender discrimination and the constraining frameworks that curtail women's self-determination and empowerment.

Research Method:

The research methodology utilized is qualitative and descriptive, emphasizing exploration. It encompasses both data collection and analysis, with a primary focus on extracting insights from Shakespeare's play "Othello." Specifically, attention is given to the dynamics of gender, race, and class, which shape the roles and status of male and female characters in the storyline. The gathered data are then scrutinized through the interdisciplinary perspective of gender, class, and race intersectionality, aiming to uncover the nuanced social positioning of women within the narrative context. To delve into the themes of anti-feminism, misogyny, and the degradation of female characters in Shakespeare's "Othello," a thorough qualitative analysis of the text is essential. This involves closely examining how female characters such as Desdemona, Emilia, and Bianca are depicted and treated throughout the play.

Data collection involves identifying specific passages, scenes, and character interactions that showcase instances of misogyny, gender-based discrimination, and the objectification of women. This could entail analyzing Othello's mistreatment of Desdemona, Iago's manipulation of Emilia, or the societal norms that confine women to particular roles. Following data collection, the analysis focuses on identifying recurring patterns, themes, and underlying messages related to gender dynamics and the portrayal of women. It considers how factors like gender, race, and class intersect and influence the depiction of female characters. The research

aims to uncover how Shakespeare's portrayal of women reflects the societal attitudes and norms prevalent during his time, as well as exploring the consequences of such portrayals. Additionally, it may explore the motives driving characters' behaviors and attitudes towards women, shedding light on broader themes such as power dynamics, jealousy, and manipulation. Ultimately, applying the research method in "Othello" to examine anti-feminist themes involves a comprehensive exploration of the text from a critical feminist standpoint. This approach seeks to unravel the complex gender dynamics and the representation of women in Shakespeare's works.

CONCLUSION:

The play Othello is written by Shakespeare; depicts the human consciousness and psychological situations from the 16th century to modern times. It portrays the emergence of mutual opposition towards a specific community, gender, and religion within society and the impact it leaves on all generations, transformed by social evils. According to **John Todd**, "obsession is considered to be intoxicating," which is reflected in the two main characters (Othello and Iago) of Othello's tragedy, driven by feelings of disloyalty and jealousy. The progression of their narrative gives rise to misanthropic attitudes and a consistent portrayal of racial and color differences. According to **Freud**, "one who suffers from psychotic disorder characterized by delusion of infidelity or jealousy is called Othello Syndrome," meaning when a person gets trapped in these psychoanalytic fusions, their real thoughts are destroyed, and feelings of conflict and aversion give birth to separation within them, corrupting the mindset of youth in society.

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