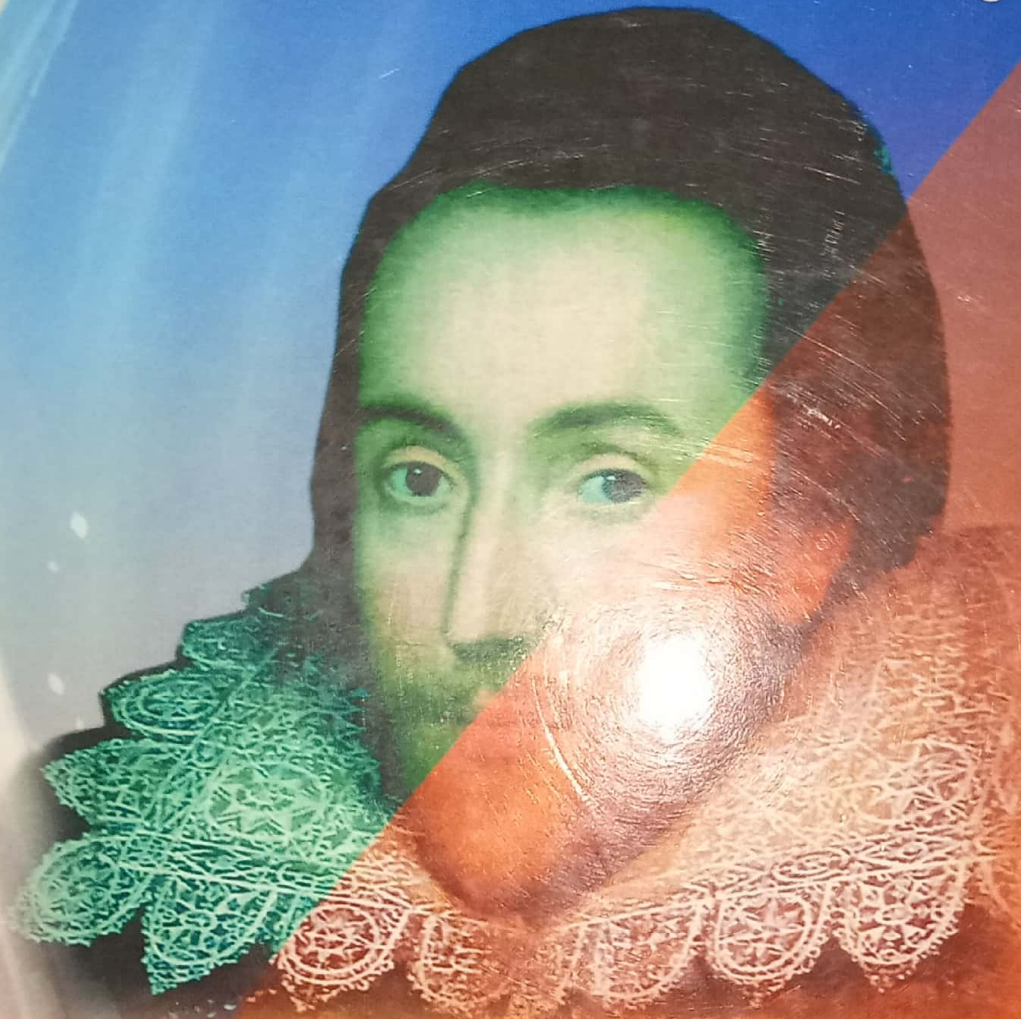


Shakespeare and Culture: Politics and Society



Selected Papers Presented in the National Seminar

on

22nd October 2016

Dr. A. Joycilin Shermila

Dr. V. Chanthiramathi

First Published :2017

ISBN: 978-81-923842-3-8

Price: ₹850

Published by

ELT@I Thoothukudi Chapter

Disclaimer: The authors are solely responsible for the contents
of the papers compiled in this volume. The
publishers or editors do not take any responsibility
for the same in any manner.


© English Language Teachers' Association of India

ELT@I Thoothukudi Chapter,

Thoothukudi.

All rights reserved

Contents

1.	Shakespeare's Rosalind: A Delegate of Myriad Minded Women U. Anamica	1
2.	Decolonization in William Shakespeare's Play <i>The Tempest</i> Anushia. P	5
3.	Avenge seeks Revenge: Madness, an Offspring K. S. Anushya	10
4.	Shakespeare's Women under Mask: A Feminist Study S. Blessie	15
5.	Strategies used in Teaching Shakespeare Dr. V. Chanthiramathi & A. Antony Arockia Anufia Mel	22
6.	To Degenerate is Human: Moral Turpitude and Degeneration in Shakespeare's <i>Macbeth</i> and Arun Joshi's <i>The Last Labyrinth</i> Dr. V. Chanthiramathi & S. Karthikeyan	27
7.	The Wheels of Politics Spin to Crush Human Female: A Study of Shakespeare's <i>Antony and Cleopatra</i> and Margaret Atwood's <i>The Blind Assassin</i> Dr. V. Chanthiramathi & M. Mohanakannan	34
8.	The Concept of Love in Shakespeare's <i>Sonnets</i> Dr. V. Chanthiramathi & M. Rashmi	42
9.	Judeophobia in William Shakespeare's <i>The Merchant of Venice</i> Colette Sharmila	49
10.	Juliet: A Tragic Victim of Destiny in the Shakespearean Play <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> 	54
11.	A Feminist Analysis of Shakespearean Select Tragedies Dr. S. Geetha	60

Shakespeare's Rosalind: A Delegate of Myriad Minded Women

U. Anamica

Assistant Professor of English

Jayaraj Annapackiam College for Women, Periyakulam

Every literary heart will produce a work of art under the influence of the 'Muse' called Shakespeare, who lives for immemorial ages. This man of great fire managed in his life time to become enshrined in millions of hearts. "A Good Counsellor lack no clients: Though you change your place, you need not change your trade" (2).

Shakespeare our Good counselor of life lacks no clients: though he changed his place from transitory to the perennial world. His inscriptions on men, women, virtues, vices and life have been rendering counseling for his contemporaries and successors. As rightly pointed out by Ruskin that "Shakespeare has no heroes only heroines" (4), he glorifies women in a good number of his works and intertwines the maneuver around female protagonists. Shakespeare's plays are full of resourceful and self-confident women, who create their own space and achieve or represent a spirited independence. When examining the heroines, it becomes clear that they are the characters imbued with heroic qualities and who fulfill the heroic tasks and roles. Portia in *The Merchant of Venice* camouflages as Balthazar, the lawyer saves the life of Antonio from the clutches of cruel Shylock. She accomplishes the task with her wit which seems to be impossible for the men of the play Bassanio, Gratiano, and Salerio. Viola in *Twelfth Night* masquerades herself as a young boy takes the name of Cesario, and attains a position in Duke Orsino's household because of her wit and charm. Rosalind in *As you Like it* like Viola and Portia disguises herself as a shepherd boy helps her father in regaining the kingdom. Shakespeare's

Rosalind, a versatile personality bubbling with vivacity, is a semblance of her species.

Rosalind, the quick witted and cross-dressing heroine navigates her own personal traumas of exile, banishment and disguise with tenacity, patience and good humour. She brings her understanding of everyone's situation and interests to bear with patient preparation and negotiation, extracting commitments from all parties to an acceptable end game.

The heroine of the play, Rosalind ranks among Shakespeare's unforgettable characters and is definitely one of his most interesting female creations. Outspoken, quick-witted, bold creative and wildly gifted with language, Rosalind starts the play as a persecuted 'damsel in distress', but soon wrenches around the world of the story to create her own path of happiness. Rosalind as a loyal friend loves Celia and even after his uncle's betrayal hides her grief for the sake of Celia and lives in the palace until his uncle falsely charges her with treason. Her immediate repartee "Treason is not inherited" (1. 3. 58) startles her uncle. At the implied insult to her father, Rosalind is up in arms at once and she defends him. This is the first hint of her high spirit that carries her through all her trials, and lies behind her buoyant wit.

Rosalind's character could be seen through multifarious conversations with Celia, Orlando, Touchstone and Phoebe. It is in the Forest of Arden that the splendid character of Rosalind is fully brought out. All the care and weight of the ordinary world is removed from her and her real nature is shown when she is in disguise. Under the disguise of manly garments she gives a pungent remark on men that, "As many other mannish cowards have that do outface it with their semblance. . ." (1. 3. 118). Hence, one cannot come to the conclusion that Rosalind of the view that men are cowards. She has her own admiration towards his

like a slave. He addresses him as abhorred slave, hag-seed, tortoise and thing of darkness. He treats Caliban with contempt but he also understands that he needs him. All the menial tasks like fetching logs for the fire is relegated to Caliban. Often when he doesn't do the work properly, he is insulted and punished. Miranda calls him as a villain and despises his company. The reason for that is Caliban had attempted to molest Miranda. Shakespeare may have wanted to present a horrible picture of Caliban to the audience. We find the image of a savage or a monster complete with this added detail. It is as if Shakespeare justifies Prospero's horrible treatment of Caliban in this manner. We find this molestation a common theme in subsequent works of fiction. For instance, Raja Rao's *Kanthapura* has a similar episode of an Indian native molesting the white woman.

Caliban on the other hand, hates Prospero for snatching away his island. He hates Prospero for giving him a language that he only uses to curse. "You taught me language, and my profit on't/Is I know how to curse. The red plague rid you/For learning me your language!" (I. ii. 366-368). Caliban's accusation of that his education has served him no useful purpose is an echo of the education mission of the Britishers in colonized India. Several protests were raised against educating the tongue of the oppressors to the native Indians. Caliban is desperate enough to be willing to exchange masters in his drunken state. He participates in a conspiracy with the shipwrecked Stephano and Trinculo. This attempt is foiled by Ariel. At the end of the play, Prospero leaves Caliban his island. His treatment of Caliban is the worst. It brings out the dark nature of the character of Prospero.

Ariel is bound to Prospero. Caliban's mother Sycorax had imprisoned Ariel in a split pine tree. As Prospero releases Ariel, he is bound to Prospero to do his bidding. Prospero uses the spirit to do anything he desires. Ariel obeys

Prospero sincerely. Ariel brings out the intellectual side of Prospero. While he uses threats to make Caliban work, he uses promises to make Ariel work. Prospero looks lowly, when he keeps reminding Ariel of the help he did in the past. When he is angered, he curses Ariel and addresses him as malignant thing. "If thou more murmur'st, I will rend an oak/ And peg thee in his knotty entrails till/ Thou has howl'd away twelve winters" (Act I, S ii, 295-298).

Miranda is bound to Prospero by her birth. She is a gentle and innocent maiden, who is raised by her father. She is supposed to bring out the loving nature of Prospero. In contrast to that, we find Prospero extensively controlling Miranda. In Act I, Scene 2 of the play, we find Miranda repeatedly questioned by Prospero whether she is listening to the story he was narrating. Some critics have argued that Miranda is disciplined even when it is not required. But Prospero looks on her as a possession. He chooses to divulge the secret of their past only when he feels it is necessary. There is no room for the affectionate feelings of Miranda. He takes the liberty of deciding her live using his magical power. He scolds Miranda when she attempts to speak in favour of Ferdinand. "Silence! one word more/ Shall make me chide thee, if not hate thee. What, / An advocate for an impostor! hush!" (Act I, S ii, 267-269).

Through his treatment of all the people in the play, Prospero reveals the effect that decolonization had had on him. As a victim, Prospero suffered a bitter fate. In intellectual pursuit, he failed to recognise the conspiracy of his brother. When the tables were turned, he used his magical power over Caliban, Ariel and his enemies Alonso, the king of Naples and his brother, Antonio. He donned the role of the colonizer, when he took over Caliban's island and subjugated Caliban and Ariel. His domineering attitude is carried over to his parenting of Miranda. He disciplines her and orchestrates her love life extensively. In this treatment of the people who wronged him, he surpasses

all. He tries to exact his revenge by supernatural means. The mental torture triggered by the illusions created by Prospero confused and frightened the men. Of these, Antonio, Prospero's brother realises his mistake in ill-treating his brother. Alonso, the supporter of Antonio is repentant of his evil actions towards Prospero. Gonzalo, the loyal supporter of Prospero weeps freely. At the end of all this Prospero, has no reason to stay in the island. So he returns it to Caliban and goes back to claim his position as Duke. He realises then that taking revenge is of no use to him.

The effect of decolonization is perceived through Prospero and his treatment of the other characters in the play in four levels by its comparison with the colonized history of India. The urge to possess power transforms the colonized into a colonizer as seen in the play. The colonized if given a chance can be as aggressive as the colonizer himself.

Works Cited

- Compton-Rickett, Arthur. *A History of English Literature*. New Delhi: UBSPD, 2009. Print.
- Said, Edward W. *Culture and Imperialism*. London: Vintage, 1994. Print.
- Shakespeare, William. ed. W. Turner. *The Tempest*. New Delhi: S. Chand & Company Ltd, 1996. Print.
- Smith, Emma. *The Cambridge Shakespeare Guide*. New Delhi: Cambridge University Press, 2012. Print.