

The English Renaissance brought many changes to European cultures including advances in medicine, navigation, weaponry, and architecture. There was also a significant improvement in the arts too, such as sculpting, painting, drawing, writing, and language developments. With these cultural changes, alterations in popular ideologies were inevitable. One such alteration was the idea of individualism. Renaissance idealised Individualism and Subjectivity bounded by reason and knowledge. Providing a challenging and original point of view on Shakespeare, there is an argument that states that Shakespeare is an author friendly to such essentially modern and unruly concept as individuality, freedom, self-realization and purity. These expressive values refresh Shakespeare's own writing; they also form a continuous, and a central, part of the Shakespearean tradition.

The first clear reference to what we know as William Shakespeare's hamlet appears in 1602 as a play called "The revenge of hamlet prince of Denmark". English playwrights in the late 16th and early 17th centuries freely borrowed material from one another and shared criticisms and edits. Hamlet, like the other great works attributed to Shakespeare, definitely presents Shakespeare's work, but also showcases many contributions by actors, managers, prompters, and so forth, who all knew what parts of a play to leave in or take out. The play of hamlet seems to oscillate between medieval responses and renaissance individualism and humanism, exemplified in human's scepticism.

Apart from being a normal tragic play, the play also figures out superstitions of the 16th century such mysteries and ghostly figures, etc. distinguishing between the truth and illusion is the focal dilemma of the play when logics can questions whether it was really a ghost of the dead king or a devil assuming king's regal shape and garments and compelling hamlet to do all the foretold acts. Question may also arise that what if the conclusion of tragedy was due to a devil's mischief that compelled not only hamlet but also other characters to follow according to its plans. Possibility is that a modern reader can find flaws in the play but for the audience of the 16th century, the play was much of the thing of entertainment and not an argumentative thing. They never bothered about how flawed was the play on the stage. They worried less, entertained more. They needed such brilliant tragic plays staged with mystics and illusions. They had no interest or brain to put effort to logics.

Shakespeare presents Ophelia much in the manner that Renaissance writers frequently saw prophets. Ophelia was the symbol of love, patience, generosity, innocence and purity just like the prophets. She defends Hamlet and loves him, despite his brutality. She is incapable of defending herself, and through her timid responses, it is evident that she is suffering inside. She is unable to cope with the unfolding of one traumatic event after another and as a result she becomes insane after hearing about her father's death and eventually drowns.

Of all the pivotal characters in Hamlet, Ophelia is the most static and one-dimensional. She has the potential to become a tragic heroine -- to overcome the adversities inflicted upon her -- but she instead crumbles into insanity, becoming merely tragic. It appears that Ophelia herself is not as important as her representation of the dual nature of women in the play. The extent to which Hamlet feels betrayed by Gertrude is far more apparent because of Ophelia's presence. Hamlet's feelings of rage against his mother can be directed toward Ophelia, who is, in his estimation, hiding her base nature behind a guise of impeccability, just as is Gertrude.

But having challenged an appetite for certainty by interrogating its psychological origins in Polonius and Hamlet, the play designates reason male, simultaneously to criticize such gendered constructions. Not knowing intensifies the drive to contain doubtful figures within explanatory structures. When not knowing is figured as an excess of signifiers, also gendered female, logic works so hard that it begins to exhaust its own usefulness as an element which can precisely define give

boundaries to - an individual's subjectivity. Nevertheless, people at court try to ignore Ophelia's mad, linguistically open railing, but they also attempt to shape it into something closed and circumscribed, identified by the play as male. 25 Their commitment to this process indicates the threats to their own sense of psychological intactness people feel when confronted by in definition - and thus Shakespeare's opposition between having a bounded subjectivity and one defined by epistemological uncertainty.

Shakespeare's iterated parallels between the psychological dynamics of Hamlet and Ophelia, the deliberative orations made by Hamlet, Ophelia and Gertrude, together open the play to more than one means of defining subjectivity. They show the play engaged with the continual historical project of defining identity itself. Because Hamlet's view so occupies the play, subjectivity initially seems a space rooted in knowledge, certainty, and concepts of agency. It shows itself in resolution of internal conflict, consistent and useful identification with others, and action springing from a coherent internal identity. However, the play also challenges both the usefulness of these formulations and their very possibility. Still, Shakespeare does not necessarily bury subjectivity itself while interrogating paradigms through which the idea of it circulates. By using Ophelia to expose origins and display the erotic economies of family, gender, and politics, the play interrogates its own longings, and its participation in defining subjectivity. But like Ophelia, the tragedy never rejects the assumptions or tools provided by the cultural economy it represents, even if this means occasionally aligning Hamlet with Claudius or Polonius, as we have seen.

Bibliography

There are no sources in the current document.

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