

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: A MATCHLESS WRESTLER

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ABSTRACT

When a subject is as “large” as Shakespeare, adventuring into its domain is like the attempt to explore the riches of an ocean. It seems so easy, so tempting, at first. You may begin at any point of the hither shore and press forward, bravely, enthusiastically. But soon you are out of your depth, you are out of your depth, You are out caught and tossed by the waves, You are nearly lost. If we try to learn Shakespeare, it strikes us increasingly as the ocean or all the oceans; the quintessential Shakespeare is very Everest who lures us all only to battle us all. Even when happily endowed climbers like Hunt and Tensing touch Everest, they must almost immediately withdraw, and the experience of the “conquest” is no more than a memory, a dream, - an emotion recollected and relived in the Tranquility of after hours of after years. In a couple of lines, it can be summed up:

KEYWORDS: “Large” as Shakespeare

INTRODUCTION

She Sat Like Patience on a Monument, Smiling At Grief-

The web of Shakespeare drama is of a mingled yarn, not only good and ill together but also laughter and tears, romance and realism, comedy and tragedy. It is a subtly woven web too, at once intricate and strength sustaining the visible flux and confusion. As in Jean Paris’s words:

“No division here interrupts the thread of existence. The most hilarious interlude links the crime to the punishment laments are seasoned with puns. There is no tragedy without a smile and vice versa, no pleasure without sorrow if the differences among all his plays are not so great as we tend to believe, it is because there is a basic unity underlying every circumstance, every expression

Thus the most varied theatre becomes, paradoxically, the site of supreme identity which is another way of saying that, beneath their trappings, comedy, history, and tragedy all reveal a single secret, a single pupose”

Now it is permissible to survey Shakespeare’s works chronologically, it is convenient to know facet by facet. Only let us not claim too much for our critical survey or analytical appraisals, the integral vision, the total view, is alone the consummation devoutly to be wished for. The rest is a means to that end, and must therefore, serve to further that end. It is seen that purely “external” evidence gives only a lower limit: thus a date shown on the page cannot confirm the real date. The glittering pieces in the Kaleidoscope are the same; yet, each time we shake it, a somewhat different pattern seems to emerge. The following table too is no more than strictly tentative:

- Henry VI (1588-90), 2. Henry VI (1589-90), 3. Henry VI (1590-91), Richard III Shrew (1593), Venus and Adonis (1593), The Two Gentlemen of Verona (1593), Sonnets (1593), Love’s Labour’s Lost (1594), Romeo and Juliet

(1594-95), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1594), *The Merchant of Venice* (1595), *Richard II* (1595), 1. *Henry IV* (1597), 2. *Henry IV* (1597), *Much Ado About Nothing*, (1598), *As you like It* (1598), *Julius Caesar* (1599), *Twelfth Night* (1600), *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (1600), *Hamlet* (1600-01), *Troilus and Cressida* (1601), *All's well that Ends Well* (1602-03), *Measure for Measure* (1603-04), *King Lear* (1605-06), *Macbeth* (1600-06), *Antony and Cleopatra* (1600-07), *Cymbeline* (1609), *The Winter's Tale* (1610-11), *The Tempest* (1611), *Henry VIII* (1612-13).

Although there is still lack of absolute unanimity among scholars regarding the chronology of the plays and the poems, one thing at least is clear: the grouping of the plays under Comedies, Histories, and Tragedies, Hence, the justification of the attempts to fix, however halting and tentatively the chronological order of the composition of the plays and the poems.

Edward Dowden, *Shakespeare: 'His Mind and Art'* divided his career into four periods, corresponding to four stages of his development as an artist parallel stage in the development of his mind. These periods he called respectively 'In the Workshop', 'In the World', 'Out of the Depths' and 'On the Heights'. The key phrases are: The comedy of the World; Revaluation of life in history and Tragic-comedy; the superlative balance of the tragedies; and wisdom and comprehension. Again Nicoll observes about four periods, 'the young Shakespearian at Work, "Man and Society; 'Man and the Universe' and 'The Inner life'.

Shakespeare's plays are great images of supreme artistic strength and brilliance, amongst the most complex and wonderful artifacts in the history of the world; but their substance is the human character.

Shakespeare, was a dramatist, a poet, and a player and able to peak so much achievements into little more than a couple of decades partly because his work, as a player, while it made, calls on his strength, also gave him that inside knowledge of the theatres that came most hard to him as a dramatist: and partly because he was shrewd enough not to fritter away his energies in pamphlets, prose, romances Lampoons or even letter-writing. Besides, he seems to have avoided in his dealing with the fellow – men all displays of fret or bad temper, and all involvement in unseemly controversy. He was the gentle Shakespeare, My Shakespeare: he was the dear loved, he was of a free and open nature' and he wore a 'daily beauty in the life' he known to be affable, modest, brave friendly, civil sociable tolerant, sweet and always ready to accept handsome apology as in the following lines:

"I am as sorry as if the original fault had been my fault, because my selfe have seen his demeanor no less civil than he excellent in quality he professes:

Besides, divers of worship have reported his rightness of dealing, which argues his honesty and his facetious grace in writing that approves his art."

Thus Shakespeare, a matchless wrestles in the arena of English literature became immortal eternal. He had complete study of human problems as he says "Soul of human being is nothing but a batter field struggling between good and evil. " No writer ancient or modern can be for the people what Valmiki and Vyasa are to Indian humanity, Yet simply as a poet and creator, Shakespeare must rank with Hommer-and with Valmiki Vyasa.

In 1840 Carlyle already visualized the end of Britain's Indian Empire, but of Shakespeare he said:

"This Shakespeare does not go, he lasts forever with us; we cannot give up our Shakespeare! ... This king

Shakespeare, does not he shine, in crowned sovereignty, over us all, as the Noblest, Gentlest, yet Strongest of rallying-signs”

Now Shakespeare is no more but he will be cordially remembered till the moon, The Sun and the Stars will be shining in the sky. We have nothing for him but pay our heartiest to him and pray to God for the peace of his departed soul.

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