

NAME: EZE PERPEPUAL UGONNE

REG. NO: 2016/232589

DEPARTMENT: LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCES

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MEDIEVAL DRAMA AND RENAISSANCE

DRAMA

Drama is imaginative work of an art, that delineates human life and activity through the presentation of actions by means dialogue between groups of characters. The word drama originates from the Greek word, dran, which means to do or to act. It encompasses all written plays irrespective of form or genre. This essay will try to capture the relationship between Medieval and Renaissance.

Medieval period is also called the middle age. It lasted from 5th to 15th century. It started with the fall of Roman Empire and the eventual rising of the Christian church into power. With the fall of Rome, drama also fell for a long time. The Christian church abolished drama and categorized actors with prostitutes, thieves, and other unwanted elements in the society. There was no record of playwriting from the death of Seneca to the beginning of the middle ages. Medieval drama is preceded by Greek and Roman drama, and followed by Elizabethan drama. It arose from the ashes of Roman drama. At the last stage of

Roman drama, just before it evolved into medieval drama, there was element of infancy which entered it and which was vehemently opposed by the church. That was why some critics described it as degenerate theatre. This degenerate theatre was the product of the church, born out of the desire to suppress certain infamous elements of past dramatic traditions, and out of the desire to fashion drama, dramaturgy and service along ecclesiastical lines for the propagation of the Christian faith. The human impulse to indulge in mimesis, which received impetus from the religious tropes, gave birth to the drama prevalent during medieval era.

Renaissance Drama: The term renaissance is used to describe the period of intellectual and artistic achievements. Renaissance is a French word which means rebirth. Therefore renaissance period was rebirth of knowledge. It is a period of rediscovery of Greek and Roman civilization. It is marked with the members of inventions. The invention of printing, the establishment of universities and the fall of Constantinople which caused scholars of classical literature to spread all over Europe for dramatic literature, the year 1349 and the production of philologia by pertrach indicate the beginning of the Renaissance age. Renaissance period was a period of re-examination of life. There are many renaissances like French renaissance, Cornedia, Humanist drama and the English renaissance which gave rise to Elizabethan drama and Jacobian drama. The notable writers who wrote

during these periods are William Shakespeare and Christopher Marlow. Their books are Macbeth and Dr. Faustus respectively.

Medieval drama and renaissance drama are two distinct periods in history. There are distinct differences in time period, languages and themes. Medieval drama is the literature that belong to the middle ages (5th – 15th century), while Renaissance literature is the literature from 15th to the early 17th century. Medieval drama was written in old English and Middle English while the other was written in early modern English. Medieval drama was centered on concepts such as religion, chivalry and courtly lives, while Renaissance drama involved historical and social issues.