

## **DISCUSS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MEDIEVAL DRAMA AND RENAISSANCE DRAMA**

These, period of drama are related in the sense that the death of one gave birth to the birth of one. The death of medieval drama gave life to renaissance drama. They were both popular during the days of their dominance all over the western world.

The medieval age is a period between the collapse of Rome (476 A.D) and the renaissance age. The medieval age witnessed a form of government called feudalism which is highly polarized. It is a highly stratified society (the born to pray, the born to fight, the born to work, the born to serve). Crusade is very significant in the medieval age. Crusade is a holy war for the cross, it was a very dark age due to the war over the holy land by the Muslims and Catholic and the forceful conversion of non-Christians and non-Catholics by the crusaders through the instruction of the pope. They saw the drama of the Romans has been immoral and fetish, the roman actors were seen as prostitutes, thieves and highly immoral individuals. Latin was the language of education every other language were regarded as vernacular

Medieval drama is a religious drama just like that of the Greek's not only because they act out the bible they do so in a particular period, during spring usually the celebration of the death and resurrection of Christ. There came a trope a religious group that tried to make the Latin mass less ambiguous. It was acted in the course of the holy Latin mass. During the 13<sup>th</sup> century the trope evolved to "quem queritus - whom do you seek" because they acted what surrounds on the death and birth of Christ. The mass was believed to be given strong spectacular and emotional characters. Still however a lack was strongly felt and accidentally the dramatizing of the holy mass started creeping in. the believed centre of Christian faith which is the resurrection of Christ. Plays about the birth of Christ(Christmas), the death( good Friday) and the resurrection of Christ( Easter Sunday), there were other added stories such

as the Anti-christ and lives of the saints, this composition are called liturgical plays. Because they formed in general, part of the church service (liturgy.) This plays were now transferred from a church to market place, the village green, court yard or any convenient field and as is it the people grew impatience with the incomprehensible Latin, the language of the play was first moved first to French and finally to English. Though, probably verse was retained as more appropriate than prose to the sacred subjects of the plays. The priests also lost control of the roles in the plays to laymen. Changes began to creep in one by one into the plays. The beginning of the fourteen century, in 1311 a new impetus was given to the whole ceremony by the establishment of the late spring, festival of the Corpus Christi. On one occasion the pope promised the remission of a thousand days of purgatory to all persons who would be present at Chester. The plays acted on that day, the fall of Lucifer: the creation of the world and fall of Adam, Noah and the flood, Abraham and Isaac.

The plays of the medieval age were grouped into three groups; the mystery plays, the miracle plays and the morality plays. This plays covers different aspects or types of the medieval drama. Mystery plays seem to have reached their greatest popularity in 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> century, they are based on biblical history, it originated from the liturgy of the word. Revolved around 3 segments; old testament (Fall of Adam and Eve. etc. ) new testament( annunciation, the wise men. Etc. ) and the death and resurrection stories. Mystery play in summary represents the important event in the biblical and sacred history from judgement day in order to bring out plan for salvation. Miracle plays were based on the life of a saint, the biblical story of the life of a saint or the miracle performed by saint e.g. Abraham, Noah and Isaac. The morality plays are more literary than other plays. It is an allegorical story. It represents the Christian life and humanity in quest for salvation. Abstract concepts like mercy, shame, beauty, strength and knowledge are personified for the struggle for the human soul. In the life of man in search for salvation, it's greatest

temptation, sin and confrontation with death. This is well described with the character "Everyman" in the play *Everyman*. The everyman represents mankind and humanity

During this age if the church finds out that you can read and write you are in big trouble. The medieval age met its downfall due to the dictatorial nature of the church; she suppresses objection and any form of revolt against the holy mother church and their refusal for the search of more knowledge apart from the one they preach. Despite their strictness and punishments attached to these activities they forbade, some knowledge hungry men still sort after it.

Renaissance came as a result of Christianity, the movement for search for knowledge in the medieval age. The rebirth is not just that of knowledge but the re-discovery of the ancient knowledge. Renaissance started in Italy. It is also the Elizabethan and Jacobean period.

Renaissance brought about revolution in thinking, religion was called dogma. Art written in this age was timeless. The defeat of the church by state reinstalled human potentiality in 1400. Man is at the middle of the world; he makes his choices and makes everything possible. Man is the greatest embodiment of proportion: order and reason. Quest sequence - the hunger and motive for higher knowledge and this individual ends in tragedy because they feel that where they are is not enough. Trying to move up, from his place, in the great chain of being (God, angels, spirits, ancestors, man, animals, plants, stones and invisible thing). E.g. Eve trying to have the knowledge of God and Dr, Faustus acquiring magic. This world features the spirit of possibilities, just like dr. Faustus he seeks magic which he achieves but pays dearly with his life. They make things possible by their own hands and wait for no gods. Revenge (the motif in all Shakespearean plays) is orchestrated by a renaissance man they do not wait for gods, man see the earth and universe following laws and principles of the great

chain of being and trying to go against the rules of the chain leads to displacement. In renaissance age when you displace yourself, you cause trouble, Macbeth fell below animals and was killed like a dog. Dr. Faustus in his own case was dismembered, because they were trying to climb to the wrong echelon. Aspiration to move up or come down you violate both the human and moral law, for them once you displace yourself you violate the order, vaulting ambition.

In renaissance ideology or philosophy it holds that in the chain of being and the Vitruvian man (drawn by Ronaldo Da Vinci) is not occupying that space for nothing he is somehow gaining from the higher and the lower ones. He shares desire and drives with the animal and with the higher being he shares: reason and logic faculty. The God, spirits and angels are rational being and animals and man are irrational beings, Macbeth allowed his animalistic features to override his rationality. In renaissance evil is external but in the classical world evil is internal. This external element is struggling to contaminate the good in man, spirits and gods are not specific as they confuse man the more which plunges him into grave mistakes in *Dr. Faustus* Mephistopheles has everything and before Dr. Faustus comes in contact with him everything was fine.

The relationship between the medieval and renaissance drama seems to be the continuity of the genre of drama, although represented in a different ways in the two periods and age. Renaissance wraps up the reign of the medieval drama and adopts new way of representing these in their play with the principle of the great chain of being.