

Vol 5 Issue 1 Julyg 2015

ISSN No :2231-5063

International Multidisciplinary Research Journal

Golden Research Thoughts

Chief Editor
Dr.Tukaram Narayan Shinde

Publisher
Mrs.Laxmi Ashok Yakkaldevi

Associate Editor
Dr.Rajani Dalvi

Honorary
Mr.Ashok Yakkaldevi

Welcome to GRT

RNI MAHMUL/2011/38595

ISSN No.2231-5063

Golden Research Thoughts Journal is a multidisciplinary research journal, published monthly in English, Hindi & Marathi Language. All research papers submitted to the journal will be double - blind peer reviewed referred by members of the editorial board. Readers will include investigator in universities, research institutes government and industry with research interest in the general subjects.

International Advisory Board

Flávio de São Pedro Filho Federal University of Rondonia, Brazil	Mohammad Hailat Dept. of Mathematical Sciences, University of South Carolina Aiken	Hasan Baktir English Language and Literature Department, Kayseri
Kamani Perera Regional Center For Strategic Studies, Sri Lanka	Abdullah Sabbagh Engineering Studies, Sydney	Ghayoor Abbas Chotana Dept of Chemistry, Lahore University of Management Sciences[PK]
Janaki Sinnasamy Librarian, University of Malaya	Ecaterina Patrascu Spiru Haret University, Bucharest	Anna Maria Constantinovici AL. I. Cuza University, Romania
Romona Mihaila Spiru Haret University, Romania	Loredana Bosca Spiru Haret University, Romania	Ilie Pintea, Spiru Haret University, Romania
Delia Serbescu Spiru Haret University, Bucharest, Romania	Fabricio Moraes de Almeida Federal University of Rondonia, Brazil	Xiaohua Yang PhD, USA
Anurag Misra DBS College, Kanpur	George - Calin SERITAN Faculty of Philosophy and Socio-Political Sciences AL. I. Cuza University, IasiMore
Titus PopPhD, Partium Christian University, Oradea,Romania		

Editorial Board

Pratap Vyamktrao Naikwade ASP College Devrukh,Ratnagiri,MS India	Iresh Swami Ex - VC. Solapur University, Solapur	Rajendra Shendge Director, B.C.U.D. Solapur University, Solapur
R. R. Patil Head Geology Department Solapur University,Solapur	N.S. Dhaygude Ex. Prin. Dayanand College, Solapur	R. R. Yaliker Director Managment Institute, Solapur
Rama Bhosale Prin. and Jt. Director Higher Education, Panvel	Narendra Kadu Jt. Director Higher Education, Pune	Umesh Rajderkar Head Humanities & Social Science YCMOU,Nashik
Salve R. N. Department of Sociology, Shivaji University,Kolhapur	K. M. Bhandarkar Praful Patel College of Education, Gondia	S. R. Pandya Head Education Dept. Mumbai University, Mumbai
Govind P. Shinde Bharati Vidyapeeth School of Distance Education Center, Navi Mumbai	Sonal Singh Vikram University, Ujjain	Alka Darshan Shrivastava Shaskiya Snatkottar Mahavidyalaya, Dhar
Chakane Sanjay Dnyaneshwar Arts, Science & Commerce College, Indapur, Pune	G. P. Patankar S. D. M. Degree College, Honavar, Karnataka	Rahul Shriram Sudke Devi Ahilya Vishwavidyalaya, Indore
Awadhesh Kumar Shirotriya Secretary,Play India Play,Meerut(U.P.)	Maj. S. Bakhtiar Choudhary Director,Hyderabad AP India.	S.KANNAN Annamalai University,TN
	S.Parvathi Devi Ph.D.-University of Allahabad	Satish Kumar Kalhotra Maulana Azad National Urdu University
	Sonal Singh, Vikram University, Ujjain	

Address:-Ashok Yakkaldevi 258/34, Raviwar Peth, Solapur - 413 005 Maharashtra, India
Cell : 9595 359 435, Ph No: 02172372010 Email: ayisrj@yahoo.in Website: www.aygrt.isrj.net

THE DARK HUMOUR IN THE PORTER-SCENE



S K Mishra

INTRODUCTION:

It would be sad if the audience does not laugh in the 'Porter – Scene' but it would be pathetic if the audience only laughs. Few critics would agree with Coleridge that the soliloquy with which the porter-scene begins was, apart from one obviously Shakespearean phrase, "that go the primrose way to the everlasting bonfire, interpolated by the players. Before going to see the deep relation of this scene with the entire pattern of the play, we find without this scene Macbeth's dress cannot be shifted nor his hands be washed. To quote Capell, "To give a rational space for the discharge of these actions was this scene thought of". Apart from the theatrical necessity, the porter-scene also serves as a comic-relief to some extent. The tension and horror of the situation is increased when we hear the knocking, suddenly our expectations are turned down by the sight of a drunken-porter. This results in laughter. Thomas De Quincey in his perceptive-study of the sound effect in the porter scene shows that the

Abstract

It would be sad if the audience does not laugh in the 'Porter – Scene' but it would be pathetic if the audience only laughs. Few critics would agree with Coleridge that the soliloquy with which the porter-scene begins was, apart from one obviously Shakespearean phrase, "that go the primrose way to the everlasting bonfire, interpolated by the players. The Porter – scene is an integral part of the play in all the aspects, theatrical, dramatic, thematic and linguistic. The words are written in the antithetical style, provokes, - unprovokes, desire-performance, which is the predominant characteristic in the general style of the play like fair-foul, foul-fair, lessen than Macbeth yet greater etc.

Keywords : S K Mishra is working as Associate Professor , Satyawati College, University of Delhi, Delhi.

Short Profile

S K Mishra working as a Assistant Professor.

knocking has effect on the heart of the audience. The coming of the porter on the stage, like the noise of the wheels, after the –death – procession of some important person in the market, is the "recommencement of suspended life". In the play "The world of darkness passes away like pageantry in the clouds", and the knocking at the gate "makes known audibly that the reaction has commenced". And "the human has made its reflex upon the fiendish". This is true not only for the audience as De Quincey suggested, but also for Macbeth himself. Before the murder of Duncan Macbeth feels, this thought "make my seated heart knock against my ribs". This may be a knocking of his conscience which after the murder turns into remorse and a yearning to undo his actions, "to know my deed, 'twere best not know myself (Knock). Wake Duncan with thy knocking: I would thou couldst". It is at this moment the porter comes on the stage identifying himself with the porter of the [hell] gate similar to that

Associate Professor , Satyawati College, University of Delhi, Delhi.

THE DARK HUMOUR IN THE PORTER-SCENE

of miracle plays, “who was expected to make jests, but who was something more than a jester” remarks Kenneth Muir. Ironically, Macbeth’s castle is no more “a pleasant seat” with the nimble and sweet “air” but a place where owl shrieks like “the fatal bellman”, where the sleep is murdered, where the people like Macbeth don’t have the power to say “amen”. This atmosphere of castle is a state of mind or the [Hell] in the real sense as Mephistophilis says “where I am is Hell” in Dr Faustus. Here porter’s imagination intensifies the situation all the more and Shakespeare without violating the unity of time transports us from Inverness to the gate of Hell. Shakespeare’s second reason for recalling the miracle-plays was that it enabled him to make Macbeth’s tragedy both universal and concrete. It appeared as a second Fall, with lady Macbeth as a second Eve; or it could appear as terrifyingly contemporary. The equivocators, for example, had conspired to kill the king, as Macbeth was doing: and Macbeth’s own regicide involves him in a life of equivocation, who is heading towards his doom for the ambition to grab the future. The former who “hang’d himself on the expectation of plenty” is analogous to Macbeth whose “vaulting ambition” will spur him to his doom. The unnaturalness of the avaricious farmer is parallel to Macbeth’s who does not have patience, in contrast to Banquo, to wait for the growth of the “seeds of time”. Similarly the tailor is also coming to Hell for his overwhelming desire. The clothes imagery is so much spread in the play that it provides a parallel between him and Macbeth. The tailor is guilty of stealing clothes as Macbeth will be also seen as a “dwarf” in “giant’s robes”. Wilson suggests, that the phrase “roast your goose” used for the tailor, may be a reference to killing the goose that laid the golden eggs which is not different from Macbeth’s impatient killing of Duncan when he was being bestowed by him the honours of “Thane of Cowder” and “Glamis”.

Towards the end of the soliloquy Porter feels cold and awakes. But his saying “this place is

too cold for Hell” may imply, as Roy Walker points out, the Ninth or frozen circle or Dante’s inferno where people like Macbeth who were traitors to their kins, to their country, to their friends and guests, and to their lords and benefactors are tortured together.

At this moment Macduff’s entry into this imaginary Hell is like the harrowing of Hell by Christ since Macduff also, being untimely ripped off from mother’s womb, is in a way immaculately conceived. Now Porter’s waking up from his dream results in his realization of the effect of drink which is not different from Macbeth’s realization of the futility of his ambition drunk life, “full of sound and fury / signifying nothing”. Drink also infuriates for a while, but in both the cases the outcome is utter disappointment which is implicit in “Urine” in porter’s case while Macbeth will say,

“And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
They way to dusty death”

In both the cases man is isolated from his conscious self which porter suggests in sleep, and begins to roam in fantasies and dreams.

The another clue about the play’s pattern which porter’s speech gives is the association between drink, lust and violence which is not unusual as in all the three cases, reason is swayed away. Macbeth while going to murder Duncan, in hallucination, imagines his movement as “Tarquins” ravishing strides, towards his design, as porter also admits drink provokes lechery. Porter gives another significant clue deeply related to the entire play. He says Drink “provokes the desire but takes away the performance”. This gap between desire and action is dominant in the play. Macbeth is hesitating in his action, then lady Macbeth retorts.

Was thy hope drunk / ... Art thou afraid
/ to be the same in act and valour / As thou art in
desire!” This gap between desire and action in the play is related to some extent to the equivocation in life. As we see here Porter also compares the drink to an equivocator which,

THE DARK HUMOUR IN THE PORTER-SCENE

“persuades him, and disheartens him; makes him stand to and not stand to: in conclusion, equivocates him in a sleep, and giving him the lie, leaves him”. Later Lady Macbeth will also exclaim “our desire is got without content” while Macbeth is really disheartened in a equivocation of the witches. Persuaded by them, in his ambition for the crown, murders Duncan but this murder takes away his sleep and persuades him to commit more while Duncan after “life’s fitful fever” sleeps well in his grave. The witch also says, “security / is mortal’s chiefest enemy”. She asks the witches to “convince” Macbeth. While Macbeth is convinced by the equivocation of friends and his own self? which he will also say “lies like the truth”. Now he decides “to crown my thoughts with acts, be it thought and done”, and this results in only the speeding up of his doom. Like Porter he is not strong enough to cast off the effect” of drink of ambition. He goes on sinking both morally and mentally, ultimately he fails even to feel the death of his own wife, “she should have died hereafter/There would have been a time for such words”. This contrast between porter’s and Macbeth’s situation intensifies our feelings all the more.

Thus we see the Porter – scene is an integral part of the play in all the aspects, theatrical, dramatic, thematic and linguistic. The words are written in the antithetical style, provokes, - inprovokes, desire-performance, which is the predominant characteristic in the general style of the play like fair-foul, foul-fair, lessen than Macbeth yet greater etc. We may link this style with the thematic pattern of the play which Wilson Knight calls a “wrestling of destruction with creation”. The relation of this scene with the play as a whole is in no way far – fetched as in Shakespeare everything is deliberate. Those who still think this scene as an interpolation can be best answered by the poetic tribute of De Quincy to Shakespeare, “O mighty poet! Thy works are not as those of men, simply and merely great works of art, but are also like the phenomena of nature.... where the further we

press in our discoveries, the more we shall see the proofs of design and self – supporting – argument where the careless eye had seen nothing but accident!”

REFERENCES

- Edward Capell qtd in Schoenbaum. *Macbeth: Critical Essays*. New York: Garland, 1991. Print.
- Frye, Northrop. *Northrop Frye's Writings on Shakespeare and the Renaissance*. Ed. Troni Y. Grande & Garry Sherbert. Vol. 28. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010. Print.
- Knight, G. Wilson. *The Wheel of Fire*. London: Methuen, 1930. Print.
- Styan, J.L. *The Dark Comedy*. Cambridge Univ. Press, 1965.
- Thomas de Quincey excerpts in *Casebook series: Macbeth*. Ed. John Wain. Aurora Pub, 1970. Print
- Trevelyan, G.M. *English Social History Vol. 2: The Age of Shakespeare and the Stuart Period*. Peugin, Pelican, 1964.



S K Mishra
Associate Professor , Satyawati
College, University of Delhi,
Delhi.

Publish Research Article International Level Multidisciplinary Research Journal For All Subjects

Dear Sir/Mam,

We invite unpublished Research Paper, Summary of Research Project, Theses, Books and Book Review for publication, you will be pleased to know that our journals are

Associated and Indexed, India

- * International Scientific Journal Consortium
- * OPEN J-GATE

Associated and Indexed, USA

- EBSCO
- Index Copernicus
- Publication Index
- Academic Journal Database
- Contemporary Research Index
- Academic Paper Database
- Digital Journals Database
- Current Index to Scholarly Journals
- Elite Scientific Journal Archive
- Directory Of Academic Resources
- Scholar Journal Index
- Recent Science Index
- Scientific Resources Database
- Directory Of Research Journal Indexing

Golden Research Thoughts
258/34 Raviwar Peth Solapur-413005, Maharashtra
Contact-9595359435
E-Mail-ayisrj@yahoo.in/ayisrj2011@gmail.com
Website : www.aygrt.isrj.net