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Realism in the plays of Shakespeare: A Midsummer Night's Dream and G. B. Shaw: Arms and the Man

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Abstract:

The present research paper aimed to examine the concept of reality in William Shakespeare and George Bernard Shaw's play writing. This is a study of comparison between the realism in play writing of 16th century and 20th century writers. William Shakespeare is a famous playwright known over the world. Because Shakespeare have versatility in his play writing, Tragedies, Comedies, Tragi-Comedies and History plays. In few plays Shakespeare used his imagination and realism like, The Tempest, A Midsummer Night's Dream. On The contrary the other famous playwright of 20th century, George Bernard Shaw has popularity in the realistic play writing. The realism is about social, psychological, political, relationships, love and economy. Apart from writing imaginary elements, G. B. Shaw has presented the reality of society and relationship of love as it is without using any imaginative devices. He had presented love realistically rather than using Romance. Example, Arms and The Man. Show is well known as a man of ideas. This research paper will present the realistic approach of characters, plots, themes, elements of reality, devices used in the plays. The differences and similarities of the two famous playwrights William Shakespeare and George Bernard Shaw with reference to their plays, A Midsummer Night's Dream and Arms And The Man respectively.

Keywords: William Shakespeare, A Midsummer Night's Dream, George Bernard Shaw, Arms And The Man, Realism.

1. Introduction:

George Bernard Shaw is the writer who has won the Nobel Prize and Academy Award together. He is an Irish writer. He is a critic, playwright and social reformer. He has written more than 60 plays. Shaw is a realist. He had put the fact of the society in a straight and simple way. Shaw has written many plays based on reality such as Man and Superman, Pygmalion, Major Barbara, Arms and the Man, Saint Joan etc. In which he had described the social conditions of that time. He has presented the reality the way it was. There is no mixture of romantic elements. On the contrary, discussing about William Shakespeare, He was the Legend in playwriting and Shakespeare is famous due to his imagination till present date. In some of his plays, William Shakespeare tried to present

the society's reality through his plays blending his own imaginative devices into them. For example, The Tempest, the history plays of William Shakespeare. Mostly he has used stage properties and ideas in presentation of reality instead of direct presentation for making his play more entertaining. The present research paper will focus on the comparative study of the realism between William Shakespeare and George Bernard Shaw.

2. Review of Literature:

Overlooking of various research papers, essays, articles, journals, websites, published books by authors. Researcher finds out the concept of realism in Shakespeare and George Bernard Shaw plays. Peter L. Rudnytsky in his book 'Hidden realities' examples of humanistic and literary psychoanalysis, explores the roots of creativity and critics.

In the Glimpse of reality, George Bernard Shaw covers the truth about society G B Shaw and self-awareness and ordinary man is unable to face the cruel reality is surrounded by un reality. A .D. Nuttal writes in his book Shakespeare and the Representation of Reality about neo classical concepts of realism. Lots of literary works have been brought forward on the realism will become helpful for the research study.

3. Objectives:

- a) To study the realism of William Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream and G B Shaw's Arms and the Man.
- b) To find similarities and differences between play writing of Shakespeare and Shaw.
- c) To find out the useful outcomes from the realistic literature of the famous playwrights for social wellbeing.
- d) To examine the realistic approach of the play writing.

4. Methodology:

The primary source for data is obtained from the English writings of Shakespeare and G B Shaw, criticisms by critics and syllabus of master levels.

The method which is helpful to complete this research paper is only observation method. By using this method the researcher has gone through different literature, articles, journals, essays, research papers, critical works, and websites to find out related study materials. Selected plays of Shakespeare and G B Shaw. Few books written by various authors have been overlooked to collect the authentic data for research paper to make study more reliable.

5. Discussion:

- **The concept of reality in Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream and George Bernard Shaw's Arms and the Man.**

A common thing in both the plays is that, the exchange of the relationships while in Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream, reality of that time is mixed with fairies and magic

flower juice and its impact. While in *Arms and the Man* it is clearly shown that the thoughts unmatched and hence both Siergius Saranoff and Raina Petcoff refused their relationship on the base of real reason.

- **The expression of the realism in Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and G B Shaw's *Arms and the Man*.**

A Midsummer Night's Dream Is 5 acts play in which magical and imaginative devices are used. But the reality is that, Hermia likes Lysander but Lysander and Demetrius both liked Hermia. Here, it seems a love triangle. Which is realistic while the use of Magic flower juice and the mess happens because of it is the extra imagination added in the play by William Shakespeare in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The play was written according to the situation of the 16th century and expectations of the spectators that may be appreciable in that era.

Egeus, the character in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* wants his daughter Hermia should not marry with Lysander. He pleaded the These us, Duke of Athens that he wanted his daughter marry with Demetrius who was wealthier than Lysander. Every father thinks that his daughter should marry with the wealthy person. This realistic approach of society in the role of father has presented. But on the other hand his daughter Hermia refuses to marry with Demetrius and tells that she couldn't survive if she did not marry with Lysander. These us, Duke of Athens refuses Hermia's wish and ordered that she has to follow her father's wish or she have to die or be a Nun.

Hermia and Lysander decide to leave their places and run off from the state and settle elsewhere. Hermia tells this thing to her friend Helena who liked Demetrius. So she informs the plan of hernia and Lysanderto Demetrius to seek his attention. Demetrius started following both to stop them and Helena also started to follow Demetrius. Hence in this act total social and family reality is shown. This situation of the play suites today's reality too.

Now all four characters are running through the jungle. Demetrius and Helena are chasing Hermia and Lysander. Both tired and they slept under a tree while Demetrius and Helena are following them. Now the king of fairies Oberon and Queen Titania are having quarrel and for the revenge Oberon orders the Puck to bring a magical flower. Here, the reality of husband and wife quarrel and up to what extent it lasts had been defined through this act. The magic flower juice and its impact and the confusion happened is all imaginary part happened because of the mistake of the Puck. Because of the magical juice, Lysander falls in love with Helena and starts following her. Where after awaking, Hernia started searching Lysander and thinks that Demetrius may have killed him for the sake of her. Which things had been happening since centuries in real life. To kill someone's love for the possession of the person the killer likes. This is the reality of society which have been presented through plays.

Excluding the imaginary and magical part of the fairies the play focus on the realistic things of society over on think of making the mistakes clear with the other magical flower juice finally Duke Theseus comes in the Jungle for hunt. He found the four characters, Hermia, Lysander, Helena and Demetrius by the end, Hermia get Lysander back and Helena get Demetrius. At the time of wedding of Duke Theseus and Hippolyta, Queen of the Amazons, Egeus, father of Hermia still in oppose of the marriage of Hermia with Lysander but the Duke permits both to get married. Such realistic incidents had found in A Midsummer Night's Dream in William Shakespeare's play. Shakespeare presented the reality in such a good manner that sometimes it seems by analyzing the play we found the realistic aspect in it. That presented with a great mixture of imaginative and supernatural devices like magic and fairies.

While discussing about G. B. Shaw's Arms and the Man, it is a play about 19th century at the time of Serbo-Bulgarian War in 1885. It is 3 acts play. In the First Act, Catherine mother of heroine Raina is friendly with her daughter and Major Paul Petkoff, who is the father of Raina. Raina's parents fixed her marriage with Siergius Saranoff who is a brave soldier in the Army of Major Petkoff of Bulgaria. The army of Major Petkoff and Siergius wins the war. The other character of the play is Louca. Who is a beautiful maid of the Petkoff family having bigger ambitions in her mind about her future life.

When Raina heard the news of winning war, she found herself impressed on the war Hero, her would be husband, Siergius Saranoff and felt asleep talking to his portrait. After some while, the noise of gun fire broke her sleep and a new character, a soldier of Serbia enters her room with a gun. The army of Major Petkoff noticed his entry and come in Raina's room to search him. But Raina saves his life from the army. She calls her mother to help the soldier.

The soldier leaves a gun. That was noticed by the intelligent and beautiful servant Louca. Here the actuality of saving someone by observing the body language. If the two characters Raina and Catherine would not have given the opportunity to the soldier. He might have killed by the army. Both the ladies heard the soldier's story and gave him the coat of Major Petkoff to escape from there. They sent him off. Here both mother and daughter showed petty and saved his life.

In the second act, after the end of war Major Paul Petkoff and Siergius Saranoff both came back to home. Talking lovingly with Raina Siergius's bad character is shown here. He holds Louca's hand in the absence of Raina. He wanted to take an advantage of Louca but she was intelligent enough. She asked Siergius for marriage and he agreed. In this act, the practical behavior of characters of Army officer Siergius is expressed. He liked the beauty than that of Raina's romantic nature. This is practically happening in today's era. So many marriages are being broken due to such kind of behavior of people. This reality is expressed in the romantic comedy. Bernard Shaw is also a social reformer. He had tried to make such ugly things noticeable to society through his reality plays.

When Captain Bluntschli and Raina sitting in a library Siergius came and asked her, if she is having an affair with Captain Bluntschli they started quarrel. Louca told everything to Siergius and in reflection of this, Raina also scolded him and remind him that he is also cheating her by holding Louca's hand in her absence. Both are unhappy with the relation. They came to conclusion that Raina and Siergius don't have mutual understanding so they ended their relations. Raina decided to marry with Captain Bluntschli and Siergius decided to marry with Louca. Major Petkoff and Catherine accepted their decision because Captain Bluntschli was not only a soldier but also he was owner of many hotels. Such breaking and reformation of relations have shown that George Bernard Shaw is a realistic. Such incidents are generally happens around us. Shaw has presented the reality of family and relations in comic and realistic manner through this play.

By studying and analyzing both the plays. It is found that there is some similarities between the characters of A Midsummer Night's Dream and Siergius of Arms and the Man. Girls' romantic nature between Hermia and Helena and Louca, These us and Major Petkoff Heroes of the stories, Lysander and Captain Bluntschli and the realism is similar up to some extent of a midsummer Night's Dream and Arms and the Man of William Shakespeare and George Bernard Shaw respectively.

Both the plays having some differences as the Supernatural, fairies and magic are used in Shakespeare's play, A Midsummer Night's Dream. While no use of such devices found in Shaw's Arms and the Man. Both the play writers have used their talent in the playwriting that's why they are famous playwrights of their Era. Both the plays have happy ending.

6. Conclusion:

Both the playwrights have attracted the readers and audiences of theatre by presenting the realism. Both play having realistic happy Ending. William Shakespeare is an imaginative thinker and emotional person with the sense of comedy. He focused on the entertainment with the realistic approach blended with the imagination in his A Midsummer Night's Dream. Where George Bernard Shaw has ended his play Arms and the Man in a realistic manner without using any other devices. His originality tells that Shaw is a man of realistic ideas and he is not an emotional and sentimental person. He has a strong perception to put the reality in front of the audiences. Both the writers, William Shakespeare and George Bernard Shaw follow the mortality. They have represented the social facts through their play and provided the motivation to society through their ideas of realism to follow the mortality. They have shown the way to choose appropriate alternatives to live life happily and overcome the adverse situations in proper way. William Shakespeare and George Bernard Shaw had given message to audiences to accept the reality and act according to the situation that endeavors to live life happily.

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