Elizabethan Culture In As You Like It By William Shakespeare

As You Like It is a pastoral comedy by William Shakespeare written in 1599. where we find the theme of love, which is love at first sight also we find political stability, the life of poor people, crossdressing, bonding between two cousins, also brothers, the flowering of poetry, etc. Also, we find here the concept of dramatic elements, pastoral elements, the content of song and music.

The Elizabethan era started in 1558-1603 also known as the Golden age in the history of England where writers were highly influenced. English Theatre also became popular at that time, people also enjoy luxuries lifelike fine clothes where their attire that was quite different, fine food. Also, their culture during that time where gossiping is one the best way of passing time. Furthermore the richness of poetry, the drama where the comic role of clown to entertain other people was highly noticed during that time, furthermore the significance of the ruler and their lordship towards general people, power over one another like the power over daughter to father, brother to brother, master to their servant not only that but also the life of ordinary people like the life of peasants, etc. At that time people were highly influenced by games and sports like a scuffle, cards, etc.

As You Like It is a type of pastoral comedy where there is a superiority of Elizabethan culture that was showing by William Shakespeare in every part of the play. There were so many interesting games that were played in the Elizabethan era. At the very beginning of the play, there is a theme of the game that presented the great Elizabethan culture in this play. Where there is an interesting wrestling match that takes place between the protagonist Orlando and the man from duke's named Charles. which represents one of the Elizabethan cultures that people perform to give enjoyment to other peoples especially to give pleasure to people from the royal state or specific region. For example:

"OLIVER Call him in.

Exit DENNIS

'Twill is a good way, and to-morrow the wrestling is."(1.1)

In the Elizabethan era, there is a difficult sense of social classes that portray in this play. Social classes were elastic and have four categories the nobility, the gentry, the yeomen, the poor. And shows the lifestyle of the noble duke. About their great power over others also colorful and luxury life, through the life of Duke Frederick, though he snatched it from Duke Senior. The moody, suspicious duke who has greediness to achieve fame and power. Like so many dukes from the Elizabethan period have this type of cruel nature who rules their states by fear. The cruelty of dukes action over general people or peasants that has present here in some cases. As Duke Frederick said_

'Send to his brother; fetch that gallant hither;

If he is absent, bring his brother to me;

I'll make him find him: do this suddenly,

And let not search and inquisition quail

To bring again these foolish runaways."(2.2)

'Not see him since? Sir, sir, that cannot be:

But were I not the better part made mercy,

I should not seek an absent argument

Of my revenge, thou present. But look to it.....

.....

.....

Thy lands and all things that thou dost call thine

Worth seizure do we seize into our hands,

Till thou canst quit thee by thy brothers mouth

Of what we think against thee."(3.1)

Not only the life of duke also Shakespeare shows the life of general people or peasants life through this paly. The life of shepherds, Corin and Silvius also about their poor condition how they lead their life furthermore the importance of immediate money rather than wealth. The simplest life of shepherds portrayed in this play through the old shepherd Corin.As he said _

' CORIN:

No more but that I know the more one sickens the

worse at ease, he is; and that he that wants money,

.....

.....

he that hath learned no wit by nature nor art may

complain of good breeding or comes off a very dull kindred."

In the Elizabethan era, music was one of the important from entertainment. Shakespeare also shows in this play that how people often used to sing a song during their work or to entertain

other people.

AMIENS:

Under the greenwood tree

Who loves to lie with me,

.....

Here shall he see No enemy

But winter and rough weather. (2.5)

AMIENS:

Blow, blow, thou winter wind.

Thou art not so unkind

As man's ingratitude;

.....

.....

.Thy sting is not so sharp

As friend remembered not.

Heigh-ho! sing, & c.(2.7)

The attraction towards literature also, the high influence of poetry that people from the Elizabethan era were often used to do in their leisure time to get pleasure or to give massages or to confess something like love. That William Shakespeare shows in this play, as Orlando confesses his love to Rosalind by writing poetry.The poetry of love that, Orlando hangs on the tree in the forest.

"ORLANDO:

Hang there, my verse, in witness of my love:

And thou, thrice-crowned queen of the night, survey

With thy chaste eye, from thy pale sphere above

.....

.....

Run, run, Orlando; carve on every tree

The fair, the chaste and unexpressive she. (3.2)"

During the Elizabethan era, fashion was as so classy. Where upper-class people wore more luxuriant also high spirited clothing. Shakespeare also portraits the view of Elizabethan culture in the attire. Through the attire of some characters in this play. Especially women who wore various types or different layers of items of clothing. Rosalind, the protagonist of this play, who wore the formal dress at the beginning of the play . Also, the typical dress that she wore when she disguises herself as Ganymede presents the typical view of man at that Elizabethen era. Also when she gets married she again dressed in a different costume, a white flowing gown of this time that presents the view of wedding culture at that Elizabethan era.

There are so many things in this play As you like it where William Shakespeare portrait the view of Elizabethan culture so that people could be able to understand easily that in which era this play should take place throughout the play.

References

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