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ISSUE OF THE AESTHETICS OF HORROR**

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An Analysis on Shakespeare's Titus Andronicus: Interpretation on the Issue of the Aesthetics of Horror

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Abstract – Shakespeare's plays have been universally praised for centuries. However, Titus Andronicus was not included in this positive evaluation until the second half of the 20th century, when mainly feminist criticism contributed to an academically kinder re-assessment of this generally gory play. This paper, focusing on the issues of aesthetic value and the deletion of empathy, proposes a defamiliarized, a different reading of this Shakespearean play, from the perspective of the Japanese people, 'famous' for aesthetically enjoying the cathartic showing of gratuitous violence.

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INTRODUCTION

In the event that Shakespeare were alive today he'd be hosting the 'Late audit' and leading a warmed open deliberation about who was better, Keats or Dylan. In his civil argument, Shakespeare would egotistically remind his visitors that Shakespeare gives the standard by which all cultural assessment is measured. On the off chance that Shakespeare were alive today he'd be what he is: an obstructed skyline shielding the Anglo-American world from anything looking like society. He's the support zone ensuring the Anglo-American world from the cases of any written work that battles to produce another method of discernment on the other hand another picture of thought (everything is dependably as of now in Shakespeare), generally as he gives the purpose of outline that delegitimizes any type of well-known cultural expression (nothing is more prominent both in deals and in the affections of the groundlings than Shakespeare). Shakespeare subsequently maintains the oppositional couplet, high-low culture, by being both and neither in the meantime. Basic and cultural allotments of Shakespeare, his name, work and myth, articulate various opposing and clashing positions inside of a given skyline. In that capacity his fiction supports an outskirt that remaining parts temperamental, additionally adaptable inside of his expansive compass, site of the arrangement, inversion and disintegration of cultural qualities.

Taking after the line of theoretical Shakespearean desires and self-assessments communicated by Botting and Wilson in their Gothic Shakespeares, this study proposes yet another methodology of observation for one specific play. In this way, it proposes that if Shakespeare were alive today, he

would most likely be wiped out also, tired of hundreds of years of applause concentrated on his oeuvre all in all yet not on his first-conceived, Titus Andronicus. The Elizabethan dramatist would most likely smoke about the trashed benefits of the bloodiest of all his Roman tragedies and attempt to compel us to see the precisely ascertained impacts of style above desolation, excellence past blood, and moxy covering butchery. On the off chance that Shakespeare were alive today, he would request a new recognition and perhaps urge us to perform the excursion toward the East, to the Other, and see things through Japanese eyes.

In seeing the cycle of savagery which is one of the staples of Japanese high and low culture and in addition the pivotal component of Titus Andronicus, the present paper proposes a "Japanese" perusing of this Shakespearean play. To this reason, Titus Andronicus won't be perused nearly nearby a specific Japanese work/s. Maybe, this study proposes setting the emphasis of understanding on the issue of the feel of horror, which, as will be contended beneath, is imaginatively accomplished through a cognizant eradication of compassion and a usage of the alienation impact, forms that can likewise be perceived in Japanese culture at large.

ABOUT GOTHIC AESTHETICS AND ITS RELEVANCE

Before continuing with the content examination, I might want to characterize the primary hypothetical system, which is included in the subtitle of my paper,

in particular Gothic aesthetics. Adorno, in his surely understood Aesthetics Theory, has composed that:

Magnificence is not the dispassionately immaculate starting but instead something that began in the renunciation of what was once dreaded, which just as an aftereffect of this renunciation – reflectively, in a manner of speaking, as indicated by its own particular telos – turned into the appalling. Magnificence is the spell over the spell, which regresses upon it. The ambiguousness of the appalling results from the way that the subject subsumes under the conceptual and the formal class of offensiveness everything denounced by workmanship: polymorphous sexuality and in addition the fiercely ravaged and deadly.

Additionally, Adorno states, workmanship can't bear to "deny recognition of collected horror; generally its structure would be minor" (Adorno:324, accentuation included). On the off chance that the negative and the terrible are to be kept as constitutive of feel, it takes after that style alludes to a way of seeing which, keeping in mind the end goal to experience its announced points – those of not only setting up guidelines for assessing craftsmanship, additionally pushing the limits of pre-set up reactions – needs to end up an experience, "one which alarms and aggravates".

The present study takes its prompt from Adorno's vision of what constitutes style; in this manner, it is intended to be perused as the consequence of an motivating force to appreciate what shapes the aesthetic reaction when we approach a connected arrangement of horrors joyfully related, similar to the ones in this Shakespearean catastrophe. To re-figure, I am occupied with the stylish worth of the literary content and in the method for accomplishing it. Firmly identified with noting these conditional inquiries is likewise my recommendation that *Titus Andronicus* is a content educated by Gothic aesthetics. As indicated by Ng, Gothic aesthetics is a composite of literary feel (talking about the Gothic-ness of a content from the perspective of particular topics and themes) also, the hypothetical measurement (i.e. utilizing contemporary hypotheses, such as Marxist, women's activist, poststructuralist and psychoanalytical ones) (Ng:15).

Additionally, it is likewise "a method of engagement with a work of art that includes emotional, evaluative and intellectual thankfulness" (Ng:12). For this specific case, as my examination will endeavor to contend, the classification of emotional engagement is practically void and is intentionally uprooted by those of evaluative and intellectual gratefulness – unless, obviously, one were keen on how much emotional exertion and contribution it takes not to turned out to be emotionally involved.

TITUS ANDRONICUS

Titus Andronicus, Shakespeare's first tragedy, is set during the latter days of the Roman Empire, although

unlike the other Roman plays its sources are entirely fictional ones. It draws its substance from a cycle of revenge and a spectacle of endless mutilations, its protagonists being Titus, a Roman general, and Tamora, the dispossessed Queen of the Goths. Due to its overtly gory flavor, *Titus Andronicus* was for centuries marginal in the Shakespearean canon. The Restoration playwright Edward Ravenscroft suggested that Shakespeare's authorial contribution could only have included "some Mastertouches to one or two of the Principal Parts of Characters" and that the raw quality of the language made it "the most incorrect and indigested piece in all his Works [...] rather a Heap of Rubbish than a Structure". Richard Farmer comments in his *Essay on the Learning of Shakespeare* that:

Indeed, from every internal mark, I have not the least doubt but this horrible Piece was originally written by the Author of the Lines thrown into the mouth of the Player in Hamlet, and of the Tragedy of Locrine: which likewise, from some assistance perhaps given to his Friend, hath been unjustly and ignorantly charged upon Shakespeare.

In 1765, Samuel Johnson remarked that "the barbarity of the spectacles, and the general massacre which are here exhibited, can scarcely be conceived tolerable to any audience". In the 19th century William Hazlitt and Coleridge both doubted Shakespeare's authorship, while in the 20th century even such a Shakespeare aficionado as Harold Bloom expressed his negative view of the play, calling it "a howler", "a poetic atrocity", "an exploitative parody, with the inner purpose of destroying the ghost of Christopher Marlowe", "a blowup, an explosion of rancid irony" and concluding that "I can concede no intrinsic value to *Titus Andronicus*".

Nevertheless, along with those who, disgusted by the goriness of the play, either doubted Shakespeare's 'paternity' of *Titus Andronicus* or remarked on its sub-standard literary features, there were also critical voices that sustained the very opposite, in emphasizing precisely the *barbarous* and/or the *Gothic* qualities of the play as indisputable proof of authorship. In 1762, Bishop Hurd, in his *Letters of Chivalry and Romance*, noticed an association between the 'Gothic' and the 'Shakespearean' which made Shakespeare an authentic inheritor of 'the Gothic system of prodigy and enchantment'.

In the 20th century, prompted by the advent of contemporary literary theories which inspired a re-appraisal of canonical texts from new perspectives, the reputation of *Titus Andronicus* began to improve, especially for the reason that spectacles of violent and gruesome death and torture are now unanimously acknowledged as staples, albeit problematical ones, of the Shakespearean corpus as a whole. As stated by Kott:

Titus Andronicus is by no means the most brutal of Shakespeare's plays. More people die in Richard III.

King Lear is a much more cruel play. In the whole Shakespearean repertory I can find no scene so revolting as Cordelia's death. In reading, the cruelties of Titus can seem ridiculous. But I have seen it on the stage and found it a moving experience [...] In watching Titus Andronicus we come to understand – perhaps more than by looking at any other Shakespeare play – the nature of his genius: he gave an inner awareness to passions; cruelty ceased to be merely physical. Shakespeare discovered the moral hell. He discovered heaven as well. But he remained on earth.

Moreover, *Titus Andronicus* is Shakespeare, before the genius of Shakespeare reached its pinnacle; many if not all of the characters of this gory play are mere sketches for their sublime descendants. Thus, Titus' parental agonies foreshadow Lear's, Lucius – if only he had decided to enroll at the university at Wittenberg instead of fraternizing with the Goths in their camp – could have returned metamorphosed as Hamlet, Tamora – she most definitely is the precursor of the highly efficient Lady Macbeth, and as for Lavinia – her unawareness "of suffering" renders her a sister to Ophelia (Kott 1974:282).

CONCLUSION

The present study has gone for an alternate perusing of *Titus Andronicus*, by contending that the great chain of savagery and blood that assigns its plot also, characters can be drawn nearer regarding Gothic aesthetics. As proposed at the beginning of this investigation, Gothic style in this specific play depends on the formalization of horror – accomplished through different literary gadgets, for example, parallelisms, redundancies, reflected characters and occasions, as well as on the alienation impact – which keeps the perusers from encountering compassion and recognizable proof with the characters' predicament. In backing of the above contention, the paper has proposed a deliberately distancing perusing of this Shakespearean play – a "Japanese" one, taking into account the amazingly solid accentuation on different demonstrations of brutality, torment, and evisceration which, as kept up by Buruma in his investigation of contemporary Japanese culture, are among its most strong attributes.

My perusing, normally, does not advocate an undifferentiated appraisal of savagery when present as a general rule or in fiction.

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