Jixiang Shangguan

Prof. Robertson

ENG 1102(18T5) – Essay 5

20 July 2018

A Doll's House and Othello

Baseer, Abdul., SofiaDildar Alvi.,& Fareha Zafran. “The Use of Symbolic language in Ibsen’s A Doll’s House: A feministic Perspective.” Language in India. 13.3. (2013). Retrieved from: <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&profile=ehost&scope=site&authtype=crawler&jrnl=19302940&AN=88797349&h=NZxTvCvCZbsa%2BnikhxTxzwfmY08Nx14O62%2FCiLBq2pMxHCUJMxHdpchGYOV%2Frz6Yfk5xtawcP5XdjHjZly4Acg%3D%3D&crl=c>

In analyzing the actions of Nora and Othello, it would be appropriate to study the symbolic language used in the play in relation to these two characters. Language analysis in literature has been used by many people to review and criticize author's work. Abdul and his fellow authors studies the possibility of patriarchy and cruel exploitation of women in the A Doll’s House Play. They have analyzed the semiotic language modes such as phrases, sentence clauses used in the play to express the status of a woman in society.

I will borrow from their work the techniques of symbolic language analysis and apply in evaluating Nora and Othello's actions and determine whether they were justified or not. The main idea in analyzing the symbolic language used in both plays is to help us understand the author's real intention when writing the play. Many authors conceal their real motive in writing plays and poetry by using dramatic language which is rather rhetoric and differs much from the standard language. It is essential to pay closer attention to the various forms of symbolic language used in both plays to understand the motives of two characters that influenced their actions.

Curtin Jeffrey T. “From Narcissism to Empathy: Ibsen’s Plays in the Digital Age.” (2015). Retrieved from: <https://digitalcommons.brockport.edu/surc/2015/schedule/58/>

The A Doll’s House play is presented in a setting that sympathizes with people’s attitude towards marriage customs in the olden days. The play revolves around the family of the main character, Nora who depicts an egocentric personality by abandoning her marriage and family to pursue her interests. This play was influenced by the notion that the society is dominated by the males. The notion may be true, but I am less convinced that Nora's actions portrayed what many would say was a woman's quest to be herself. This article helps the reader analyze the perception people had in regards to marriage norms in the 19th century.

This article will assist examining the connection of Ibsen and Shakespear with that of other cognitive theorists such as Patrick Hogan and Keith Oatley in order to understand what the authors had in mind when using the two characters in their respective roles. Jeffery has given an interesting comparison of the Ibsen's work with the Hogan and Oatley’s work which helps us understand how writers place empathy in their literature influencing the audiences’ judgment hence sympathize with the characters.

Fischer-Lichte, Erika., Gronau, Barbara., & Weiler, Christel. Global Ibsen: Performing Multiple Modernities. Routledge, New York. 2011. 78-80. Retrieved from: <https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=q5ctCgAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PP1&dq=Fischer-Lichte,+Erika.,+Gronau,+Barbara.,+%26+Weiler,+Christel.+Global+Ibsen:+Performing+Multiple+Modernities.+Routledge,+New+York.+2011.+78-80.&ots=3Bq0tuRiKH&sig=V1Zp3xJlrfr3tpuGBkHFKPOWs_I>

Both plays are filled with deception, jealousy, and destruction concealed in love, and both Nora and Othello have shown their prowess in exploiting other people using love for their interests. Understanding the actions preceding the acts preceding Nora and Othello's behaviors will be essential in concealing this behavior and explain why their actions were not right. Nora reveals that she is not contented with her current situation which leads her to become independent and to stand for herself. Her behaviors may have depicted her boldness, but they were also scandalous and controversial.

I disapprove with her deceptive actions that reveal her egotism and which I would disagree reflects her protective motherly nature as some would argue. Othello, on the other hand, falls prey of Lagos's who manipulates and controls other people secretly with a revenge motive and manages to turn him into an atrocious character. The information in this literature will be essential in proving this point since the author also shares the same notion that Nora and Othello’s action were self-centered.

Iliff, Eric, Othello as an Enigma to himself: A Jungian Approach to character analysis. EWU Masters Thesis Collection. (2013). 138. Retrieved from: <http://dc.ewu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1137&context=theses>

Throughout the play, Othello refers to Lago as “honest Iago.” Lago is a character who manifests his goals in seeking revenge on Othello’s choice to appoint Cassio as his Lieutenant over him. He is angry, and he has no remorse when hurting people around him as long as he gets what he wants. Lago in Act 1 wants to be powerful and recognizable in the society, and therefore he uses his manipulative behavior to destroy Othello. Othello, on the other hand, is a noble and respectable person in the society and his character is put into test by Lago’s quest for revenge which drives him to become prey to the power of jealousy. He turns from a kind and faithful husband and his insecurities results in jealousy and consequently his downfall. The main reason I condemn his actions is that he allows the villainous personality of Lago drive jealousy into him portryaing his weakness in dealing with tense situations. The information in this article will be helpful in showing that as much as Othello felt his need to defend himself from Lago’s deception and cruelty; at the end, he portrayed himself as selfish and imprudent.

Smith, Ian. D. “Othello’s Black Handkerchief.” Lafayette Digital Respiratory. (2013). Web. 20 July 2018. Accessed from <https://dspace.lafayette.edu/handle/10385/1224>

There are substantial evidence in the plays showing fault in the actions of both Nora and Othello which supports idea of condemning their actions. For example, all along the play A Doll’s House, Nora is has portrayed deceptive behaviors which have been misleading his husband. Some people may argue that the deceptions were a display of the protective motherly nature, but the fact remains that they were lies that deceived his husband and showed her selfishness and disregard for her family's emotions. Ian highlights several cases of Nora's deceptive behaviors and therefore his literature will be essential in showing the narcissism in Nora.

Many people have also tried to portray Othello as a victim of Lago’s manipulative actions, but Shakespeare's depiction of him as earnest among all other characters exonerates him all the sympathy and describes him as a person who could not control his envy. He let the actions of another person influence his judgment by becoming jealous and eventually the play ends with his downfall. The information provided by Professor Ian in this literature will be useful in showing why Nora and Othello’s actions were not right.

Works Cited

Baseer, Abdul., SofiaDildar Alvi.,& Fareha Zafran. “The Use of Symbolic language in Ibsen’s A Doll’s House: A feministic Perspective.” Language in India. 13.3. (2013). Retrieved from: <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&profile=ehost&scope=site&authtype=crawler&jrnl=19302940&AN=88797349&h=NZxTvCvCZbsa%2BnikhxTxzwfmY08Nx14O62%2FCiLBq2pMxHCUJMxHdpchGYOV%2Frz6Yfk5xtawcP5XdjHjZly4Acg%3D%3D&crl=c>

Curtin Jeffrey T. “From Narcissism to Empathy: Ibsen’s Plays in the Digital Age.” (2015). Retrieved from: <https://digitalcommons.brockport.edu/surc/2015/schedule/58/>

Fischer-Lichte, Erika., Gronau, Barbara., & Weiler, Christel. Global Ibsen: Performing Multiple Modernities. Routledge, New York. 2011. 78-80. Retrieved from: <https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=q5ctCgAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PP1&dq=Fischer-Lichte,+Erika.,+Gronau,+Barbara.,+%26+Weiler,+Christel.+Global+Ibsen:+Performing+Multiple+Modernities.+Routledge,+New+York.+2011.+78-80.&ots=3Bq0tuRiKH&sig=V1Zp3xJlrfr3tpuGBkHFKPOWs_I>

Iliff, Eric, Othello as an Enigma to himself: A Jungian Approach to character analysis. EWU Masters Thesis Collection. (2013). 138. Retrieved from: <http://dc.ewu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1137&context=theses>

Smith, Ian. D. “Othello’s Black Handkerchief.” Lafayette Digital Respiratory. (2013). Web. 20 July 2018. Accessed from <https://dspace.lafayette.edu/handle/10385/1224>