**Лекция по дисциплине «Зарубежная литература» для студентов факультета иностранных языков (специальность «Английский язык»), 3 курс**

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**Lecture 3 The Renaissance**

Following the introduction of a printing press into England by William Caxton in 1476, vernacular literature flourished. The Reformation inspired the production of vernacular liturgy which led to the Book of Common Prayer, a lasting influence on literary English language. The poetry, drama, and prose produced under both Queen Elizabeth I and King James I constitute what is today labeled as Early Modern (or Renaissance). This is noted for its interest in the human being as a worthy subject (due in large part to the importation of humanism from Italy). Unlike the literature of Medieval England, which was almost entirely religious in nature, Early Modern literature offered readers a more secular literature; though it should be noted, Early modern literature does appear overtly religious in many ways when compared with modern secularism.

Th'e Elizabethan era saw a great flourishing of literature, especially in the field of drama. The Italian Renaissance had rediscovered the ancient Greek and Roman theatre, which was then beginning to evolve apart from the old mystery and miracle plays of the Middle Ages. The Italians were particularly inspired by Seneca (a major tragic playwright and philosopher, the tutor of Nero) and Plautus (its comic clichés especially that of the boasting soldier had a powerful influence on the Renaissance and after). However, the Italian tragedies embraced a principle contrary to Seneca's ethics: showing blood and violence on the stage. In Seneca's plays such scenes were only acted by the characters. But the English playwrights were intrigued by Italian model: a conspicuous community of Italian actors had settled in London and Giovanni Florio had brought much of the Italian language and culture to England. It is also true that the Elizabethan Era was a very violent age and that the high incidence of political assassinations in Renaissance Italy (embodied by Niccolò Machiavelli's The Prince) did little to calm fears of popish plots. As a result, representing that kind of violence on the stage was probably more cathartic for the Elizabethan spectator. Following earlier Elizabethan plays such as Gorboduc by Sackville & Norton and The Spanish Tragedy by Kyd that was to provide much material for Hamlet, William Shakespeare stands out in this period as a poet and playwright as yet unsurpassed. Shakespeare was not a man of letters by profession, and probably had only some grammar school education. He was neither a lawyer, nor an aristocrat as the "university wits" that had monopolised the English stage when he started writing. But he was very gifted and incredibly versatile, and he surpassed "professionals" as Greene who mocked this "shake-scene" of low origins. Though most dramas met with great success, it is in his later years (marked by the early reign of James I) that he wrote what have been considered his greatest plays: Hamlet,Romeo and Juliet, Othello, King Lear, Macbeth, Antony and Cleopatra, and The Tempest, a tragicomedy that inscribes within the main drama a brilliant pageant to the new king. This 'play within a play' takes the form of a masque, an interlude with music and dance colored by the novel special effects of the new indoor theaters. Critics have shown that this masterpiece, which can be considered a dramatic work in its own right, was written for James's court, if not for the monarch himself. The magic arts of Prospero, on which depend the outcome of the plot, hint at the fine relationship between art and nature in poetry. Significantly for those times (the arrival of the first colonists in America), The Tempest is (though not apparently) set on a Bermudan island, as research on the Bermuda Pamphlets (1609) has shown, linking Shakespeare to the Virginia Company itself. The "News from the New World", as Frank Kermode points out, were already out and Shakespeare's interest in this respect is remarkable. Shakespeare also popularized the English sonnet which made significant changes to Petrarch's model.

The sonnet was introduced into English by Thomas Wyatt in the early 16th century. Poems intended to be set to music as songs, such as by Thomas Campion, became popular as printed literature was disseminated more widely in households. Other important figures in Elizabethan theatre include Christopher Marlowe, Thomas Dekker, John Fletcher and Francis Beaumont. Had Marlowe (1564-1593) not been stabbed at twenty-nine in a tavern brawl, says Anthony Burgess, he might have rivalled, if not equalled Shakespeare himself for his poetic gifts. Remarkably, he was born only a few weeks before Shakespeare and must have known him well. Marlowe's subject matter, though, is different: it focuses more on the moral drama of the Renaissance man than any other thing. Marlowe was fascinated and terrified by the new frontiers opened by modern science. Drawing on German lore, he introduced Dr. Faustus to England, a scientist and magician who is obsessed by the thirst of knowledge and the desire to push man's technological power to its limits. He acquires supernatural gifts that even allow him to go back in time and wed Helen of Troy, but at the end of his twenty-four years' covenant with the devil he has to surrender his soul to him. His dark heroes may have something of Marlowe himself, whose untimely death remains a mystery. He was known for being an atheist, leading a lawless life, keeping many mistresses, consorting with ruffians: living the 'high life' of London's underworld. But many suspect that this might have been a cover-up for his activities as a secret agent for Elizabeth I, hinting that the 'accidental stabbing' might have been a premeditated assassination by the enemies of The Crown. Beaumont and Fletcher are less-known, but it is almost sure that they helped Shakespeare write some of his best dramas, and were quite popular at the time. It is also at this time that the city comedy genre develops. In the later 16th century English poetry was characterised by elaboration of language and extensive allusion to classical myths. The most important poets of this era include Edmund Spenser and Sir Philip Sidney.

4. W. SHAKESPEARE. THE COMEDIES.

William Shakespeare (baptised 26 April 1564 - died 23 April 1616) was an English poet and playwright. He is widely regarded as the greatest writer of the English language and as the world's preeminent dramatist. He wrote approximately 38 plays and 154 sonnets, as well as a variety of other poems. Already great in his lifetime, his fame grew considerably after his death. His work has been adulated by eminent figures through the centuries. He is often called England's national poet, and sometimes the "Bard of Avon" (or simply "The Bard") or the "Swan of Avon".

Shakespeare produced most of his known work between 1589 and 1613, although the exact dates and chronology of the plays attributed to him are uncertain. He is one of the few playwrights considered to have excelled in both tragedy and comedy; his plays combine popular appeal with complex characterisation, and poetic grandeur with philosophical depth.

Shakespeare's works have been translated into every major living language, and his plays are continually performed all over the world. Shakespeare is the most quoted writer in the history of the English-speaking world; many of his quotations and neologisms have passed into everyday usage in English and other languages. Many have speculated about his sexuality, religious affiliation, and the authorship of his works.

Traditionally, the plays of William Shakespeare have been grouped into three categories: tragedies, comedies, and histories. Some critics have argued for a fourth category, the romance. "Comedy" in its Elizabethan usage had a very different meaning from modern comedy. A Shakespearean comedy is one that has a happy ending, usually involving marriage for all the unmarried characters, and a tone and style that is more lighthearted than Shakespeare's other plays.

Patterns in the comedies include movement to a "green world," both internal and external conflicts, and a tension between Apollonian and Dionysian values.

Shakespearean comedies also tend to have:

A struggle of young lovers to overcome difficulty that is often presented by elders

Separation and unification

Mistaken identities

A clever servant

Heightened tensions, often within a family

Multiple, intertwining plots

Frequent use of puns

Several of Shakespeare's comedies such as Measure for Measure and All's Well That Ends Well, have an unusual tone with a difficult mix of humour and tragedy which has led them to be classified as problem plays or tragicomedies. It is not clear whether the uneven nature of these dramas is due to an imperfect understanding of Elizabethan humour and society, a fault on Shakespeare's part, or a deliberate attempt by him to blend styles and confound expectations.

List of Shakespearean comedies:

All's Well That Ends Well

As You Like It

Cardenio (lost)

The Comedy of Errors

Cymbeline

Love's Labour's Lost

Love's Labour's Won (lost)

Measure for Measure

The Merchant of Venice

The Merry Wives of Windsor

A Midsummer Night's Dream

Much Ado About Nothing

Pericles Prince of Tyre

Taming of the Shrew

The Tempest

Twelfth Night

The Two Gentlemen of Verona

The Winter's Tale

Some scholars of Shakespeare break the category of "Comedies" into "Comedies" and "Romances." The plays included in the latter category would be Cymbeline, The Winter's Tale, Pericles Prince of Tyre, and The Tempest.

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Traditionally, the plays of William Shakespeare have been grouped into three categories: tragedies, comedies, and histories. Shakespeare wrote tragedies from the beginning of his career: one of his earliest plays was the Roman tragedy Titus Andronicus, and he followed it a few years later with Romeo and Juliet. However, his most admired tragedies were written in a seven-year period between 1601 and 1608: Hamlet, Othello, King Lear, Macbeth (his four major tragedies), and Antony & Cleopatra, along with the lesser-known Timon of Athens and Troilus and Cressida.

Many have linked these plays to Aristotle's precept about tragedy: that the protagonist must be an admirable but flawed character, with the audience able to understand and sympathize with the character. Certainly, each of Shakespeare's tragic protagonists is capable of both good and evil. The playwright insists always on the operation of the doctrine of free will; always, the (anti)hero is able to back out, to redeem himself. But, the author dictates, they must move unheedingly to their doom.

Romeo and Juliet, Antony & Cleopatra, and Othello could all be considered love tragedies. These tragedies differ from the other tragedies in that the lovers are not doomed through any fault of their own, but because of some barrier in the world around them. In these tragedies, death is almost a kind of consummation of their love -- as if love can not properly succeed in a tragic world.

List of tragedies by William Shakespeare:

Romeo and Juliet

Macbeth

King Lear

Hamlet

Othello

Titus Andronicus

The Tragedy of Julius Caesar

Antony and Cleopatra

Coriolanus

The History of Troilus and Cressida

The Life of Timon of Athens

Cymbeline was listed in the First Folio as a tragedy although most modern readers regard it as a romance.

6. W. SHAKESPEARE. THE HISTORICAL CHRONICLES AND ROMANTIC DRAMAS.

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Traditionally, the plays of William Shakespeare have been grouped into three categories: tragedies, comedies, and histories. Some critics have argued for a fourth category, the romance. Histories are normally described as those based on the lives of English kings. The plays that depict older historical figures such as Pericles, Prince of Tyre, Julius Caesar, and the legendary King Lear are not usually included in the classification. Macbeth, which is based on a Scottish king, is also normally regarded as a tragedy, not a history.

The source for most of these plays is the well known Raphael Holinshed's Chronicle of English history. Shakespeare's plays focus on only a small part of the characters' lives and frequently omit significant events for dramatic purposes.

Shakespeare was living under the reign of Elizabeth I, the last monarch of the house of Tudor, and his history plays are often regarded as Tudor propaganda because they show the dangers of civil war and celebrate the founders of the Tudor dynasty. In particular, Richard III depicts the last member of the rival house of York as an evil monster ("that bottled spider, that foul bunchback'd toad"), a depiction disputed by many modern historians, while portraying his usurper, Henry VII in glowing terms. Political bias is also clear in Henry VIII, which ends with an effusive celebration of the birth of Elizabeth. However, Shakespeare's celebration of Tudor order is less important in these plays than the spectacular decline of the medieval world. Moreover, some of Shakespeare's histories -- and notably Richard III - point out that this medieval world came to its end when opportunism and machiavelism infiltrated its politics. By nostalgically evoking the late Middle Ages, these plays described the political and social evolution that had led to the actual methods of Tudor rule, so that it is possible to consider history plays as a biased criticism of their own society.

List of Shakespeare's histories

King John

Edward III (attributed)

Richard II

Henry IV, Part 1

Henry IV, Part 2

Henry V

Henry VI, Part 1

Henry VI, Part 2

Henry VI, Part 3

Richard III

Henry VIII

Sir Thomas More (attributed)

The "Wars of the Roses" cycle

"The War(s) of the Roses" is a phrase used to describe the civil wars in England between the Lancastrian and Yorkist dynasties. Some of the events of these wars were dramatized by Shakespeare in the history plays Richard II; Henry IV, Part 1; Henry IV, Part 2; Henry V; Henry VI, Part 1; Henry VI, Part 2; Henry VI, Part 3; and Richard III.

There is no evidence that the plays were imagined as a play cycle in Shakespeare's day. However in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries there have been numerous stage performances of:

1. The first tetralogy (Henry VI parts 1 to 3 and Richard III) as a cycle;

2. The second tetralogy (Richard II, Henry IV parts 1 and 2 and Henry V) as a cycle (which has also been referred to as the Henriad); and

3. The entire eight plays in historical order (the second tetralogy followed by the first tetralogy) as a cycle. Where this full cycle is performed, the name The War[s] of the Roses has often been used for the cycle as a whole.

The cycle has been filmed three times:

1. for the 1960 UK miniseries "An Age of Kings" directed by Michael Hayes

2. for the 1965 UK miniseries "The Wars of the Roses" directed by John Barton and Peter Hall; and

3. for a straight-to-video filming, directly from the stage, of the English Shakespeare Company's "The Wars of the Roses" directed by Michael Bogdanov and Michael Pennington.

The second tetralogy is also the basis for the film Chimes at Midnight (also known as Falstaff) directed by and starring Orson Welles.

In The West Wing episode "Posse Comitatus," President Josiah Bartlet attends a play entiled "The War of the Roses", including scenes from Henry VI, parts 1 and 3.