A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF OTHELLO & SILAPPATIKARAM: A CRITICAL REVIEW

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Abstract: The purpose of this paper is to contribute to the literature on the leadership, emotion and organization by examining Shakespeare’s Othello and Illango’s Silappatikaram. Othello and Kovalan are the primary figures in the plays – represents the inner character within their minds as well as an external character. Iago and Goldsmith represent the inner characters. Both the characters fill other minds with powerful felling of jealous and envy, as the result they ruined their life. Especially, the male characters have not analysis the reality of life and so as the result they ruined their own life. All of the violence in these stories revolves around the deception of Iago and Goldsmith. These both plays conveys the cycle from mental violence to physical violence.

This paper focus on symbolism involved in both the plays, the fall of men, suspicious characters, the effects of wrong judgments on innocent character, analyzing of friendship, talents of the hero’s and the role of female characters

Keywords: chastity, suspicious, insanity, destruction, marital fidelity.

I. INTRODUCTION

Literature occupies a superior place in the society. Literature has an ample number of definitions. Each definition has its own meaning as far as the understanding of the literary legends. Literary works differs from each country and it has its own identity. Every literature aims at something specific as its outcome. Hence, how comparative literature goes to take its own place and identity in the world of literature. Silappatikaram is described in the context of the Composition of the Epic. It was written by a great ‘Writer-Prince’ Illango Adigal. It was divided into Kantam(Book) like Puhar, Madurai, The Book of Vanji and it is subdivided into 30 cantos. The major characters in the play are Kovalan, Kannagi, Goldsmith, King Nenduncheliyan, Kopperundevi, Madhavi. The play Othello was written by William Shakespeare. It has Five Acts and each Acts has three Scenes. The major characters in this play are Othello, Desdemona, Iago, Cassio, Roderigo, Emilia.

Symbolism involved in both plays:
In Othello, the handkerchief was the first gift Desdemona received from Othello. She kept it with her as symbol of Othello’s love. The handkerchief is considered as a token of love. The handkerchief symbolizes marital fidelity. The handkerchief is powerful metaphor within the play’s turning point.

In Silappatikaram, Kannagi wore Anklet Kannagi lost all other jewels because of her husband’s affair with Madhavi. When he returned to Kannagi they moved to Madurai. The only jewel Kannagi had was her anklet. She thought selling it she wanted her husband to set up a new business. But this completed the life of both. Anklet is turning point of play.

In Othello handkerchief ruins the life of Desdemona and Othello where as in Silappatikaram ‘Silambu’ ruins the life of Kannagi and Kovalan. This Handkerchief and Silambu symbolize destruction.

The fall of men in Othello and Silappatikaram:
Kovalan spends time with Madhavi, as the result he loose all his property and then returns to Kannagi but tragic around his life by the under plan of Goldsmith. When Kovalan goes to the Smith to try and sell one of Kannagi’s anklets the smith thinks Kovalan stole the piece of jewelers from the queen the king not enquired deeply as the result, the soldiers killed Kovalan.

Othello is very brave man he deeply loves Desdemona. Othello promoted Cassio, as his lieutenant. So Iago hates both Othello and Cassio. Iago took revenge against them. Iago poisoned Othello’s mind for suspicious as
the result. He does not believe her wife and kills her. Both plays denoted the fall of man. The male characters have not analysis the reality of life and so as the result, they ruined their own life.

A man’s nature is but perceived in pururiaotenisse, for there is no affection. In passion, for that putted a man out of his precepts, and in a new case or experiment for these customs leagued him. (Bacon, 238)

**Suspicious characters have in both plays:**

In *Othello* Iago is a suspicious character, because he creates the many ill ideas against Cassio and slowly poisoned Othello’s mind. Iago creates the break up between Othello and Desdemona with tool of handkerchief. Desdemona is a chaste wife of Othello. But Iago tells many false things against Desdemona to Othello. Othello fully doubts his wife. He does not believe her wife.

In *Silappatikaram* Goldsmith is a suspicious character, because he creates a false plan against Kovalan. So, Kovalan gets punishment under the Pandya King. Goldsmith misinforms to the king that he has found the culprit along the loss of queen’s anklet. He poisons King Neduncheliyan’s mind by his information. The Great Pandya King does not enquire him and order killed him. King says that Should you find, in the hands of a most clever thief, an ankle ornament resembling a wreath of Flowers, Which belongs to my consort, put the Man to death and bring me the bracelet. (Alain Danielou, 109)

Goldsmith not only poisons the king’s mind but also tempts soldiers, because the soldiers are unwilling to kill him. But Goldsmith continuously speech a drunken soldiers kill Kovalan with his sword. Both plays a villainy character makes a suspicious as the result play become a tragedy.

**The Effects of wrong Judgments on innocent character in both plays:**

In *Silappatikaram* King Pandiyam does not enquire the case of Kovalan properly. Kovalan and Kannagi’s life becomes dark. Kannagi argues with Pandya King. She breaks open her anklet king Neduncheliani understand that it is filled with Rubies whereas Koperundevi’s anklets are filled with Pearls. He stares against and falls down immediately and with him the Queen also dies. Before the death of king he said: I am the thief. For the first time I have failed in my duty as protector of southern kingdom. No way is left open to me save to give up my life. (Alain Danielou,129)

In *Othello* a black moor Othello does not enquire Desdemona and Cassio because of this mistake Desdemona dies. In both plays make character easily believes other words without the analysis deeply. In *Silappatikaram* king’s attitude is the cause for the problem. But in *Othello* his character is the reason. The effect of wrong judgment makes very big problem a ruined in both plays. In *Silappatikaram* Kannagi proves how pure and true she is through her husband’s betrayal. She stays faithful and chaste. But in *Othello* Desdemona does not prove how pure and true. Kannagi represents violence in the plays, but Desdemona represents absence of violence in the play.

**Analyzing of friendship in both plays:**

In *Silappatikaram* hero and heroine have friend likewise a play *Othello*. In *Silappatikaram* kannagi has a friend named Vasvadaththai. In *Othello* Desdemona has a friend named Emilia. Both plays have the role of friendship. Kovalan’s friend named Modalan. Othello has friend named a Cassio. Shakespeare and Ilango Adigal give important for a friendship.

**Talents of the Heroes:**

Talents of the heroes indicate heroes’ proficiency. Othello is a black Brave Moor. He is a good warrior and has more physical strength. Othello becomes the governor of Cyprus. In *Silappatikaram* Kovalan also have some talents. Kovalan in an expert in playing yal(fiddle). Likewise he knows to sing a song. Once, Kovalan controls an insanity elephant. The uses of sword involved in both plays. Finally, Othello uses knife to stab himself. Pandya King’s soldiers use to knife to kill Kovalan. The using of sword is used only to kill others.

**Role of female characters in both plays:**

In both the plays female characters deeply love their husbands. In *Silappatikaram* kannagi loves her husband Kovalan very deeply. Kannagi got married at the age of twelve and she knows that Kovalan’s parents look her to maintain the tradition and honour of the family. Colorful cloths, jewelry, all these are meant to by symbols of happiness. But Kannagi does not wear flowers or jewelry. On having known of her husband’s is disloyal behavior with Madhavi, she never reacts and gets anger against her husband. She fully believes her husband. She also proves kovalan innocence and her chastity.

For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the Church [Ephesians, 5:22-3]

Love’s chameleon, and would live on air physic for agues; starving is his food [Aglawra, 23]

In *Othello*, Desdemona is an adventurous spirit. Because of the beginning of the play, her new husband in called away for military duty in Cyprus. She begs to go with him. She does not like to stay at home, but Kannagi remains at home. Desdemona is quite set on exacting her punishment on constancy before even being sure of the truth of the situation. She is able to sacrifice everything for her love of her husband. Kannagi and Desdemona are feminine characters they are sacrificed many things to their husband. In *Silappatikaram* and Othello a female character is center of play.
II. CONCLUSION

This paper brings out the concept of chastity. It also represents the husband’s words and activities. It compares the past and present people’s life and their status or position held in the society. There are many similarities found here. These tragic plays show how jealousy leads to tragic and everyone and every one can overpower a person’s mind and lead them for destruction.

These two plays denote the tragic flaw. In Othello, tragic flaw is suspicious. In Silappatikaram denote themes also taught of injustice. Othello and Kovalan is the tragic hero. They destroy by their surroundings and their own actions and their fate. In Othello a great injustice is done to the main character Othello. Othello is manipulated by the villain Iago. These two plays gave a way of life how to live in the world.

References