

The Image of The Turk in Shakespeare's Plays

Alper Çakmak

Süleyman Şah University / Istanbul, Turkey

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ABSTRACT

The communality of the problem of 'adoption' of the ideas and the surrounding notions in a piece of literature can be solved by teaching 'discourse analysis' whose fundamentals can be delved into by teaching atmosphere in which a piece of literature was/is written. This paper is set out to examine the image of the Turk and Turkish material culture in Shakespeare's play in perspective of 'the historical background', 'Renaissance moulding the medium of the era', 'rediscovery of the ancient texts' and 'the history of emotions'. In order to appreciate the 'essentia' of what it means to be the Turk in Renaissance period, the image of the Turk is to be interrogated with the embodiment of historical background that is conflated with Ottoman Empire's expansion into the lands long owned by the Christians. The prominent factor dominating the Renaissance era and Reformation was the dichotomy of Catholic Church and Protestants. While unfolding the religious dichotomy, the reader should take cognition of not only the tensions within the Christianity but also the conflicts between what is known as Islam and its prophet and Christianity. It is not a coincidence that the history of emotions and religious difference are the profound motives. The play 'Othello' begins with the Ottomans' preparation for intervening in Cyprus, however it is also pointed out that the Ottoman fleet changes the route to Rhodus. The feature of 'changability' is always associated with what is 'negative' in Eurocentric literature. Changeability had been associated with the mood of alterity, femininity and african (Mediterranean). Renaissance is the period when the antique (conglomeration of ancient Greek texts) texts were reopened and translated. The association of wisdom and rationality with the God Apollo (West), and the association of emotional explosion, mood, and changeability with Dionysus (East) is what the classical texts reveal to the literate Renaissance men. All of these images and impressions can be delved into through a deep discourse analysis which should be the first aim while teaching a foreign piece of literature to the Muslim or other types of audience who do not have/have not had the chance to intervene and breath in within the milieu of Eurocentrism.