

A Comparative Study of Tulasidas's Vibhishana and Shakespeare's Horatio In Eastern and Western Literature

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ABSTRACT

The works of Goswami Tulasidas in Indian literature and William Shakespeare in British literature are full of humanitarian ideas. From the writings of different texts, they try to avoid making people suffer and they help people who are suffering. So, their works act as preceptor for the human beings. Both the poets have sketched the human behaviour with great dexterity. In their works we find all types of human characters we encounter in this modern era. The present paper entitled "A Comparative Study of Tulasidas's Vibhishana and Shakespeare's Horatio in Eastern and Western Literature" talks of the different traits that the both characters of the two contemporary poets contain. Being the younger brother of the Demon-King and tyrannous emperor Ravana, Vibhishana hardly follows his elder brother's principles and he sticks to his own generous ideas and owns the friendship of Ram. On the other hand, Horatio who is the bosom friend of Hamlet continues to cooperate with him in all adversities and preserves his sincerity towards him till the drama ends. In this way both the characters have many common features like fearlessness, bravery, balanced will, frankness etc.

1. Introduction

John Donne has said in "Devotions upon Emergent Occasions", a 1624 prose work that "No man is an island", through the statement he expresses his views about the need of society in the life of human beings. Society is part and parcel for our life. We fulfil our requirements with the help of various people that reside in our society. It infers different relationships that function like a chain to connect us with one another. Thus, the entire world is connected with the texture of relationships. The moment we take birth on the earth, relationships also start. The time our lives go ahead, we construct multiple relations, i.e. family relations, social relations political relations, economical relations commercial relations, friendly relations etc. Among these all relations the relationship of friendship is by far the most important. It is like a fragrant flower which spreads its good smell in the beautiful garden of our life. Everyone aspires for good and truthful friend, and that is lucky who really gets a person having aforementioned qualities. No one can deny of the advantages we get from a faithful and helpful friend. If we have such a friend in our life, the journey of our life becomes easier and more comfortable.

The great epic Mahabharata announces that friendship sustains between the persons consisting similar attributes;

ययोरेवसमं वित्तं ययोरेवसमं श्रुतम् ।

तयोर्विवाहः सख्यं च न तु पुष्टविपुष्टयोः ॥

One who has equal property or wealth, even knowledge, only those can have marriage and friendship mutually. Friendship between strong and weak persons can never be sustained. (The Mahabharata prathamkhand p.456)

But there are many exceptions also, which proclaim that friendship has no limitation of wealth, power and knowledge. It is a relationship of true and pious hearts which trespasses the threshold of cast, creed, colour and culture. Our history and

literature abound with many instances that affirm this fact. The amiable relationship between Lord Krishna and Sudama, Ram and Nishadraj Guha, and Prithviraj Chauhan and Chandvardai, Prince Hamlet and Horatio, Julius Caesar and Brutus etc. may be categorised in this context. Modern era is witnessing majority of self-interested, cunning and deceptive people. We often get hunted of these types of persons now a day. In this concern, the present paper may assist to decipher the fraud and fake people, as it aims at making a comparative study of Goswami Tulasidas's Vibhishana and that of William Shakespeare's Horatio. Both the characters of the respective texts possess much praiseworthy quality that is acceptable for all human beings.

2. Vibhishana and Horatio Compared:

Vibhishana is the sincere and faithful friend of Ram. He is placed in the rank of seeker. He has the semblance with Horatio of Hamlet, a great Shakespearean tragedy of Elizabethan Age. The following features are commonly found in both the characters:

i) **Bravery and Fearlessness:** Vibhishana and Horatio, both are brave and courageous. They have strength to encounter any circumstance. Vibhishana is the younger brother of the demon-king Ravana who is a cruel monarch. He governs the whole world and all the elements of nature obey him but it is Vibhishana who defies his command and proves to be a great devotee of Ram. He even tries to bring his elder brother on the right path. He advises him in the assembly of Lanka to hand over Sita to Ram and save himself and his people from the fury of Ram;

तातचरनगहिमागउँराखहुमोरदुलार ।

सीतादेहुँरामकहुँअहितनहोइतुम्हार ॥

"Clasping your feet I beseech you: grant this prayer of mine as a token of affection for me. Restore Sita to

Rama so that no harm may come to you.” (G.P.G, Sundara-kanda, 559-60)

Again, in Lanka-kanda, when Lord Ram is fainted by the arrow of Ravana, Vibhisana has a severe fight with Ram which witnesses his daring and stalwart act;

उमाबिभीषणरावनहिसन्मुखचितवकिकाउ |
सोअबभिरतकालज्योश्रीरघुवीरप्रभाऊ ||

Uma, (continues Lord Siva,) Vibhisana would never have dared of himself to look Ravana in the face. Armed with the might of Sri Rama (the hero of Raghu's line) however, he now closed with his brother like Death himself. (G.P.G,Lanka-kanda,646)

Horatio is also a stout-hearted person. The most striking example of his fearlessness is presented in Act-I, Sc.-I, when he encounters the ghost of the King Hamlet. He follows him and tries to have a dialogue with the same;

**What are thou that usurp'st this time of night
Together with that fair and warlike form
In which majesty of buried Denmark
Did sometimes march? By heaven I charge thee,
speak,**

Horatio remains calm and resolute here, and thinks that the ghost will tell him about the coming future of Denmark but the ghost does not communicate with him;

ii) **Persons of Sound Judgement and Balanced Will:** Vibhisana and Horatio, both have sound judgement and balanced will. The former character of Ramcharitamanasa has once decided to leave the troops of Ravana and soon becomes an important part of Rama's army. He has sacrificed his comfortable life in and the golden palace of Lanka in which he has been spending days with all his family. Ravana himself has affirmed this;

करतराजलंकासठत्यागी |होइहिजवकरकीटअभागी ||

The fool left Lanka where he was ruling; the wretch will now be crushed as a weevil with barley-grains. (G.P.G,Sundara-kanda, 567)

He goes to Rama's camp and accepts his superiority and helps him in various ways. This shows his balanced will and sound-judgement.

On the other hand, Horatio's sound judgement is applauded by Hamlet himself;

**Aman that Fortune's buffets and rewards
Hast ta'en with equal thanks; and blest are those
Whose blood and judgement are so well
comeddled
That they are not a pipe for Fortune's finger
To sound what stop she please. (Act-iii, Sc.-ii, 268)**

Horatio has been the friend of Hamlet even from his schooling days and so he carries out his true friendship till the end of his life. This evinces his stout-judgement of his

friendship. He wants to sacrifice his life with the death of Hamlet as he tries to drink the poison but it is Hamlet who prevents him from doing so;

**As thou 'rt a man,
Give me the cup. Let go; by heaven, I'll have't.
Ogood Horatio, what a wounded name,
Things standing thus unknown shall leave behind
me.**

(Act-iv, Sc. - ii)

iii) **Stoic:** Stoic is a person who is able to suffer pain and trouble without complaining or showing what he is feeling. Vibhisana and Horatio, both may be kept in this line. Both of them have faced many adverse conditions but maintained their stoic nature. The former person has been banished from Lanka. Ravana has dishonoured and kicked him in the assembly but despite this ill-behaviour he does not move his thought of charity and respect for his elder brother;

तुमपितुसरिसभलेहिमोहिमारा | रामुभजेहितनाथतुम्हारा ||

“It is well you have beaten me, since you are like a father to me. But your welfare, my lord, lies in adoring Sri Rama.”

(G.P.G, Sundarkanda, 560)

As to Horatio, his strength of character is unwavering, and Hamlet longs for the peace of mind that such stoicism must bring to Horatio:

**Give me that man
That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him
In my heart's core, ay, in my heart of heart,
As I do thee. (Act-iii Sc.-ii)**

Thus, he has reached an apex that Hamlet recognizes which is the freedom from emotional upheaval. He loves Hamlet with all his heart, but he feels nothing to the extent that will overrule him. So, he is not a passion's slave'. His stability has made him an unmovable person like an Indian sage whose mind is calm and cool at all times.

3. Conclusion

GoswamiTulasidas and William Shakespeare, both the eminent poets of Elizabethan Age, have drawn their characters characterised by different human traits. Both the writers comparatively are on the same opinions in treating the human dealings with a slight difference in forms and patterns in their writings. In this way both have delineated their characters having similar personalities which put the writers on one platform. This shows that Tulasidas and Shakespeare, however, belonging to East and West reasons, take their characters on much similar outlook.

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