

Cultural diversity in the play "Othello" essay

[Literature](#), [Russian Literature](#)



Cultural diversity in theater includes religion, class issues, gender roles, and ethnicity. Culture describes the way people of a certain community live, and what is right or wrong to them.

Many artists have been giving this topic close attention and a very profound presentation for a long period. In the recent past, these aspects have been major concerns in society, and this might be the reason for so much coverage in the literary world. This paper analyzes diversity in culture, and how culture is changing over time using a play by Shakespeare titled Othello. It uses characters and themes in the play to analyze issues in the contemporary world.

Othello is a play about a black soldier in a European set-up. The play is set in Venice, a town known for its unique trade and culture. Othello, a black person, is a skillful soldier who is admired by the people of Venice for his courage and achievements. However, there are people who despise him for he has a different culture, and people of higher ranks just use him for his military skills (Cartelli and Rowe 35). When he finds the woman he wants to marry, it is rumored that he has bewitched the girl, and there is no love between them.

Othello's different culture makes him a target for many people in the novel, except for his wife, for the reason that she loves him so much. The fact that he is not accepted in Venice gives us an insight into the diversity of culture (Xu 31). In addition, the fight between him and members of his community makes him act unethically by killing his wife without a good reason (Cartelli and Rowe 67).

His race is the cause of all the murder, given the fact that he cannot trust his wife because of the experience he has got by being fought by everyone due to his race (Cartelli and Rowe 78).

The case of Othello is not new in today's society, where people are recognized by what they achieve and not their culture or race. Tiger Woods, one of the world's best golfers, is a black person, but people know him for his achievement and not his race. The discussion clearly shows how culture is changing, making it easier for people that were discriminated against to be seen beyond their cultures.

Today, people can live with other persons from different cultural backgrounds without it being a big deal, which is a big step from what was observed several centuries ago. The community is changing, and literature is doing a good job through theater to bring about positive changes.

The play also presents issues that are based on gender and gender roles, whereby we see well-defined roles for both men and women. Just like in today's society, women are used by men to accomplish their desires (Xu 32). Iago uses Othello's wife to understand Othello better since he knows that he could harm him by learning more from his wife. However, Othello unearthed the plan, and he reacts so fast.

Othello listens to other people, especially men, but when the house tries to convince him of Desdemona's innocence, he does not listen to her. He uses his domineering role to silence his innocent wife, who protects him even on her deathbed, and he eventually kills her (Cartelli and Rowe 89). It is the role

of men to support women in this society, and that is why Desdemona's father goes to court immediately, he is convinced that his daughter was bewitched by Othello. Women are being viewed to be the weaker sex and have nothing to say to men.

This culture has gone on for a very long time, making it the norm of society. On the other hand, men have assumed the roles of protecting women even today since we see brothers and fathers protecting their sisters and daughters to the point that they can even kill someone. Feminist movements have started all over the world to change society's perspectives regarding women, and significant improvements have been made.

It is, however, worth noting that gender roles are not universal, but they entirely depend on the culture of the people being discussed. Some cultures tend to put women on top of the social ladder, while in some other cultures, they are nowhere on the scale, making it necessary for scholars to consider the cultural backgrounds of certain people before analyzing works about them. Class issues comprise another topic in literature, whereby people are divided into categories based on their social identities (Xu 34).

In conclusion, as it is well known that literature mirrors society, it is quite clear that literature does not only provide us with a picture of the way the community is but also interprets some issues for us. Gender, ethnicity, class, and culture have a great influence on our lives today, and the four are closely related to each other.

Cartelli, Thomas, and Katherine Rowe. *New Wave Shakespeare on Screen*. London, United Kingdom: Polity Press, 2007. Print.

Xu, Yuan-Yuan. "Othello: From Shakespeare." *Sino-US English Teaching* 6. 8 (2009): 31-34. Print.