

The history of rasselas by samuel johnson essay sample



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Samuel Johnson wrote “Rasselas” (1749) during the end of the most active decade in his writing career and. “Rasselas” is considered as an analytical truism because it characterized the moral concepts Johnson had demonstrated in most of his periodical essays. Similar to majority of truisms, this one includes a considerable piece of truth. In this essay, a component of Johnson’s moral point was summarized in his argument regarding the role of setting, landscape, place, and nature in human life, and the manner in which Johnson focuses his concepts on this theme in Rasselas is my topic in this paper.

I think that several structural divisions of “Rasselas” have been proposed by many authors; however, I believe that the most significant part from the perspective that I will discuss is chapters 19-22, which reduce delusions regarding place, landscape, and nature and their connection to human happiness. I think that these chapters function as a unit, with the assertions being done for the pleasures connected to place rising from the aesthetic to the sensate, from the sensate to the mental, and from the mental to the divine. Upon reading the essay, I can say that Johnson deals with these delusions regarding place with growing determination and mockery, in relation to the rising danger of the mistake being done in the choice of life.

Meanwhile, in chapter 20 and in the Happy Valley chapters, Samuel Johnson created an outline of argument, which somehow states that all that nature can offer to the senses is present, and yet the inhabitants are dissatisfied. I believe that the reason of these descriptions is to demonstrate that humans are not basically sensate, but cognate, and cannot be content where the mind is offered no stimulus.

<https://assignbuster.com/the-history-of-rasselas-by-samuel-johnson-essay-sample/>

In my opinion, the author's attitude in "Rasselas" to the connection between place and mind is, nevertheless, a balanced one. For instance, if place could not palliate mental restlessness, the curiosity symbolized by our interest and wanderlust in the natural world is a role of that mental ability which differentiates us from animals.

In the essay, shifting from the individual to the social, it is this interest regarding the human and natural world which differentiates Europeans from Africans and Asiatics (p. 47). I think that the relationship or association of Europeans to the people of other continents is similar to that of Pekuah to the Arab's seraglio, which states in page 47 of the book that: "They are more powerful . . . because they are wiser; knowledge will always predominate over ignorance, as man governs the other animal". Then Johnson said in the book that Europeans, by means of their curiosity about the natural world, have a greater power over it. Furthermore, Johnson takes part in the view of modern geographers "that the Orient was being outdated and outstripped by Western science (Said, 1991). However, Johnson attributed this to European inquisitiveness, not to any advantages bestowed by climate.

In summary, what is evident in his work Johnson's dismissal of the "choice of nature." Johnson believes that a true faith should be scripturally grounded that is why an excess dependence on nature brought about heterodoxy.

Therefore, it could be concluded that "Rasselas" demonstrate an intradenominational Anglican debate regarding the role or part of the natural world in the proof of God. I think that Johnson's stance on the themes of nature and landscape was an Anglican one instead of blindness to the <https://assignbuster.com/the-history-of-rasselas-by-samuel-johnson-essay-sample/>

natural world. Lastly, Johnson's opinion was a righteous uncertainty which declined to permit nature and landscape to become more essential in our lives than was normal for a voluntaristic agent whose major endeavor was salvation. I believe that it is such an outlook that "Rasselas" characterized.

#

References

Johnson, Samuel. *Rasselas*, in *Rasselas and Other Tales*, ed. Kolb (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1990).

Said, Edward. *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient* (London: Routledge, 1978; rpt. New York: Penguin, 1991).