

Candide reaction essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Candide is a humorous, implausible account by Voltaire satirizing the optimism endorsed by the philosophers during the Age of Enlightenment. The story is of a young man's adventures around the world, where he witnesses malicious human behavior and calamity. Throughout his travels, he abides to the teachings of his lecturer, Pangloss, believing that "all is for the best in this world," even though he visited and experienced torture time and time again.

The Age of Enlightenment is a term applied to an eclectic variety of newly developed ideas in the fields of science, medicine, and philosophy. The conception of Enlightenment philosophy is the belief that people can vigorously work to change the world for the better. Although Voltaire's Candide is heavily characterized by the primary apprehensions of this era, it also criticizes certain aspects of the movement; such as subjecting the idea of optimism, which states that lucid thought can inhibit the evils committed by humans.

Voltaire was a firm believer that to have faith in the power of reason to overcome modern social conditions was strictly illogical. The dictionary definition of a satire is "use of wit to criticize behavior", which is represented in the tale Candide. Voltaire makes a stab at how ludicrous it is to trust reason to be an explanation for everything. He composes tragic hindrances that his characters go through, all of which are far-fetched to antagonize how "...everything is right", which was said by Pangloss when he and Candide are under disastrous circumstances.

The validity of Pangloss' quote, " all is for the best in this world" is entirely true because if evil didn't exist in the world, and didn't occur, then the good would never be seen and the result of the events in this book would be completely different. " It is clear, said he, that things cannot be otherwise than they are, for since everything is made to serve an end, everything necessarily serves the best end. Observe: noses were made to support spectacles, hence we have spectacles.

Legs, as anyone can plainly see, were made to be breeched, and so we have breeches. . . . Consequently, those who say everything is well are uttering mere stupidities; they should say everything is for the best" In this quote, Voltaire not only antagonizes the philosophical optimism but he points out the flaws that he found in the Enlightenment philosophy; he clearly symbolizes the idea of how the philosophy was unable to differentiate between cause and effect.

Voltaire sees this quote as backwards, or reversed; such as he believes that spectacles and breeches were made for noses and legs, and not the other way around. "...For private misfortunes make the general good, so that the more private misfortunes there are the greater is the general good". This quote demonstrates that even though there will be bad in every person's life; the evil eventually will lead to something good. So the more evil and cruelty that exists, the more good and morality comes out of it. The enormous riches which this rascal had stolen were sunk beside him in the sea, and nothing was saved but a single sheep. —' You see', said Candide to Martin, ' Crime is punished sometimes; this scoundrel of a Dutch merchant has met the fate he deserved'. ' Yes', said Martin, ' but did the passengers

aboard his ship have to perish too? God punished the scoundrel, the devil drowned the others. ” This quotation explains a theme covered in the book. When Vanderdendur’s ship sinks, Candide, by using Pangloss’ optimistic views, sees that it’s only fair if justice is served by disaster.

Yet even though Vanderdendur was deserving of his punishment and met his fate reasonably, Martin states that the others who had gone with him were not deserving of a destiny like that; he believes that it was the Devil’s work that decided to bring down innocent people and there was no reason as to why that could be explained. The quote suggests that the Devil exists just as much as God does in this world, and that the fate of people lies in the hands of not only one of them, but both of them. There is a concatenation of events in this best of all possible worlds: for if you had not been kicked out of a magnificent castle for love of Miss Cunegonde: if you had not been put into the Inquisition: if you had not walked over America: if you had not stabbed the Baron: if you had not lost all your sheep from the fine country of El Dorado: you would not be here eating preserved citrons and pistachio-nuts” This quotation is the highlight of Candide, the entire book summarized into small paragraph.

Pangloss explains his theory of how everything has a reason, by stating that if Candide had not gone through all the tragic events, all the blood, all the torturous experiences, been heartbroken, heart all the tearful, sorrowful stories, or met the people he did, he wouldn’t be where he was today. The claim that “ the best of possible worlds” is false can be proven wrong by recognizing the lifestyles of the characters and what they lived through.

Their horrible encounters with death and pain led them to a superior place in their lives.

I think that Voltaire wrote this book to prove that the Enlightenment philosophy had several flaws, and he poked fun at the fact that Candide's life was not at all pure, even though that's what the meaning of the word "Candide" is. It shows that there is greater hope in everything, and that to every bad, there is a good. Voltaire makes it seem as if Candide's life cannot be any unluckier, or any more miserable, and his sarcastic tone expresses it was all to show that things do get better in the end, even though Voltaire did not believe in this reasoning.

Candide proved that no matter how bad, how awful, how terrible, that there is still good, and better, and greater out there, to counteract for the evil that exists. Candide AP European Alyssa Durante ————— [1]. Voltaire, Candide, Pangloss (pp. 16) [2]. Pangloss; Chapter 1; page 11 [3]. (The one-eyed doctor; Chapter 5; page 22), [4]. Chapter 20; [5]. Pangloss; The Conclusion; page 82