

Peer gynt



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Peer Gynt Response Paper The story of " Peer Gynt" helps explore the state of mind of the self throughout the adventures of Peer Gynt, it also projects the human soul beyond the limits of time. In Peer's words " I don't know what I'm looking for" (Ibsen) show that he is a young man experimenting with life by taking on various roles and disguises. In this respect, the story of Peer Gynt can be read as a psychological drama. However, the presence of figures such as the trolls, the Boyg and sphinx illustrates that the play is also mythological. " Peer Gynt" is as well characterized by religious concerns and it is also metaphysical to some extent.

This is pointed out through the way Peer lives through his dreams and attains salvation through Solveig. The first part of the play is Peer in his own society, an outcast, who needs to escape from a society that is restricting him. Weaving of tales is very important in this play since it is through his dreams that Peer will become emperor of the world. Only Peer knows how to create an imaginative world. To get out of his present state of poverty, Peer Gynt resorts to tale-telling to uplift himself and his mother from the cruelty of society. People become what they are because of society and the way it functions.

The international travels of Peer shows a man who yearns for freedom from home, and pursues his dreams of power, sexual fulfilment, never growing old. These are the dreams of most people. Peer Gynt's physical journey is also his mental journey through which he enters a process of discovering the human self. Peer's quest is not so specific and in his pursuit he ultimately comes face-to-face with the search for identity. Peer steals away Ingrid

during her wedding ceremony, only to abuse her and discard her. After this pitiful act he is forced to flee the village.

This leads Peer to descend into the world of the trolls, where he finds the Green Woman, the Troll King's Daughter. Descent in the world of the trolls, for Peer Gynt is the descent into an irrational world where only desires matter. The fact that Peer Gynt tries to love the troll maidens so as to enter the troll kingdom shows that he is losing his bearings. There is a kind of beast or not civilized feeling which is represented through the trolls. Their world is the exact opposite of the world of morality. In act 2, we find Peer is simultaneously in the human world and the supernatural world (Solveig and the trolls).

Ibsen's dramatic psychology also centers upon the figure of the troll who are extremely self-centred. In most humans there is a troll, and that Ibsen's play masterly shows this. This quote from the Boyg, "He was too strong; women have saved him!" (Ibsen) represents the better part of Peer's nature takes up to him when Solveig comes to him. Peer Gynt as a self can only trust his own goodness when that goodness is reflected in someone else. The fact that he goes to help his mom through death shows the positive aspect of his nature. As his mother dies, Peer, across language, takes her through an imaginative world by weaving a tale of beauty.

The complex bond between mother and son is there through imagination. The bonds with his past are severed with the death of his mother. Solveig and Ase are symbolical of human ties which make Peer Gynt and they save his soul many a time. However, Peer enters the lowest pits of mental, physical and spiritual degeneration when he takes up the sea journey. Peer

fills the air with exaggerated stories and complete untruths. The fourth act which opens in Morocco is dramatically highly entertaining and it introduces themes which have to do with international problems.

It makes visible the gradual want of Peer Gynt to become the emperor of the world. He comes out as a cynical businessman. From the peak of success, he encounters opposition, greed and treachery. He falls to the depth of the materialistic business man (slave trade) which makes him lose his soul. Peer Gynt simultaneously enters the world of pyramids and the netherworld he has created by entering the asylum. It represents the irrational uniqueness he wanted to attain. The beauty and sanity of the world he left behind now become more apparent. As Peer journeys through a landscape of his own disordered and crazy imagination.

Peer's, progress through the world becomes a spiritual regression. Spiritual exhaustion becomes a manifest as paralyzed moral will, non-commitment to a set of values, as self-alienation, depersonalization. Duplication and regression are the conditions the spirit is doomed to if it accepts the troll condition of " to thyself be enough" instead of the human " to thyself be true. " (Ibsen) The shock to see mental isolation of individuals, of death propels Peer Gynt to move upwards. They put him back on the route to return. Being true to yourself is to seek for autonomy.

We must note the fact that when he is robbed of all his property, Peer prays to God for help and his yacht mysteriously blows up with all on board. This evokes a feeling of mysticism. Through the quote " My world is ugly and happiness over," (Ibsen) Peer looks back upon his wasted life and peels an onion, he lets each layer represent a different role he has played but finds

no core. Peer finally discovers that his 'true self' dissolved due to his self-seeking and ruinous lifestyle. By deserting families, Peer Gynt entered the worst stages of moral and physical decline.

It is well known that it is relationships which make the identity, the self. Peer Gynt existed more genuinely in Solveig's imagination and it is because of her faith, hope and love that he does not go to hell. Redemption comes through the love of Solveig which has endured and remained pure and untainted. Around Peer Gynt, who is a mythical figure in Norway, is a world and its people and also native myths, politics and religion. The play is a huge journey which has psychology but it also explores other edges of life. Bibliography Ibsen , Henrik. Peer Gynt. Mineola : Dover publications, 2003. eBook.