

Does Father – Daughter Relationship Determine The End In A Shakespearean Play?

(*Romeo & Juliet, and The Tempest*)

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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses Shakespeare's works, while examining the way in which he portrays the relationship between fathers and daughters. The paper examines the plays "*Romeo and Juliet*" and "*The Tempest*," in which the daughters pursue certain courses in life due to their fathers' patriarchal actions. Further, the paper discusses the play "*The Tempest*," in which the character Miranda follows, although somewhat rebelliously, the eventually advantageous path set out by her father. The paper also examines "*Romeo and Juliet*" in which the bonds between Juliet and her father appear to be much more loyalty bound than love oriented and patriarchy constraints are to the extreme. Using references from literature discussing Shakespeare's writings, the paper presents this view of the roles of fathers and daughters relation in Shakespeare's works.

Key Words:- The Tempest, Romeo and Juliet, Father-Daughter- Relationship

المستخلص:

تقدم الدراسة تحليلاً نقدياً لمسرحيتين مهمتين من مسرحيات الكاتب الإنكليزي الشهير وليام شكسبير وهما *العاصفة* و *روميرو وجوليت* باعتبارهما نموذجين لما يمكن إن تشكله العلاقة بين الأب وابنته من تأثير على شكل نهاية المسرحية. تتعرض الدراسة للعلاقة من زاويتين مختلفتين حيث العلاقة الإيجابية بين الأب وابنته متمثلة في مسرحية *العاصفة* من جهة والعلاقة السلبية بين الأب وابنته متمثلة في مسرحية *روميرو وجوليت* حيث تتحول العلاقة إلى إستراتيجية للمسرحية الشكسبيرية. كما تقدم الدراسة في ختامها نتائج يمكن تعميمها على البناء المسرحي الشكسبيرى والحصول على نفس النتائج في المسرحيات المشابهة.

Introduction

Michel Foucault once said: "if you knew when you began a book what you would say at the end, do you think that you would have the courage to write it? The game is worthwhile in so far as we don't know what will be the end". This is of course a very correct statement but it is hardly applicable in the case of the theatre-goers who like to attend the performance of *Romeo and Juliet*. The theatre-goers, among them the researcher- though familiar with its end, they wish inside themselves to find a different end for the play each time they go to watch it. Scholars are divided on the role of fate in the play. No consensus exists on whether the characters are truly fated to die together or whether the events take place by a series of unlucky chances. Arguments in favour of fate often refer to the description of the lovers as "star-cross'd". (*Romeo and Juliet*, I.0.6. 142) defines "star-cross'd" as "thwarted by a malign star". This phrase seems to hint that the stars have predetermined the lovers' future. (Evans 1950: 841–865) But it can be other

reasons behind their tragedy more avoidable than bad luck. This paper concerns with answering the question of what would happen had lord Capulet treated Juliet's feelings in a different way." The answer to this question perhaps is the core of this paper because it deals with the relation of father –daughter in Shakespearean plays exemplified by *Romeo and Juliet* and *The tempest*.

To start with Shakespeare's statement in "*The Merchant of Venice*", (1979, II, ii, 70) "It was a wise father that knows his own child", is an expressive beginning. This is due to the fact that Shakespeare has always appreciated the father– child relation. For this reason, most if not all of his plays transmit a theme where the relationship of the main father and daughter has an important role in the climax and outcome of the stories. Thus, by examining the relationship between Lord Capulet and Juliet in *Romeo & Juliet*, and Prospero and Miranda in *The Tempest*, the paper searches an answer for the question of the title, does the nature of father-daughter relationship determine the plays' end? The paper highlights the Shakespearean plays *Romeo & Juliet* and *The Tempest* because they contain the perfect examples of such a relationship, in the way Capulet loves Juliet and Prospero loves Miranda.

Objectives

The cause behind choosing *Romeo & Juliet* and *The Tempest* lies in the fact that they are the plays in which Shakespeare has created unforgettable father-daughter pairs at the beginning and at the end of his career, as if he has a message to convey and that he had reach a conclusion.

Of the great variety of relations that Shakespeare dramatized throughout his plays, one of the richest was between fathers and daughters. Critics have long accredited the topic of family relationships as a central topic in Shakespeare's drama, but the changing affections of fathers and daughters has fascinated a great deal of scholarly consideration only in recent decades. It is "rare, to see any analytical discussion of fathers and daughters."(Boose and Flowers, ed., 1989, pp. 1-2.) The father- daughter relationship is one of the most beautiful tie that Nature has created and is very distinctive that is to say, it endows with the both concerned parties a kind of relieve that is missing from father-son relationship. Why does this happen is probably unknown. But the answer to this question is certainly grounded in psychology, which deeply cares about the relation of opposite sexes.

Diane Elizabeth Dreher says that " As always, Shakespeare was far ahead of his time ,anticipating the theories of Sigmund Freud, Carl Gustav Yung, Erik Erikson, and others on the drama of human development and our enduring quest for love and meaning".(Dreher, 2004, p.32) In correspondence to her opinion, it was in recent times only that we came to learn and appreciate the significance of this bond, Shakespeare was genius to have felt, detected and illustrated it in 16th century when he used his plays to highlight the beauty and worth of this important connection. This relation was central to twenty-one of his plays from the early *Two Gentlemen of Verona* to his late play *The Tempest*. The father of two daughters himself, he has explored this relationship throughout his comedies, tragedies, and romances. Shakespeare represented a profound assessment of the extent of male-father influence upon female-daughter development.

As one of the Elizabethan age writers, Shakespeare shows in a legal term how the male parents have almost a complete authority over their children especially their daughters. Yet, many of these daughters try to exercise their own wills to get the tension which is intensified by the struggle that is always there between generations. This tension comes with the everlasting male prejudice that obliges fathers to shield their daughters from worldly matters, including emotional and sexual attachment. (Cahn, 2001, p.78-9)

In his plays, Shakespeare endlessly depicts the fathers at middle life, unwilling to liberate their daughters as they stand at the threshold of adult commitment in marriage. The obsessive conflicts, fears, and insecurities, as each faces a vital challenge of adulthood, cast new light on questions of moral development, male and female sex roles, and traditional and progressive social norms. It is a fact that the father is the most important man in his daughter's life because he is the first man she knows in her life. Hence, disclosing this very multifaceted relation needs to demonstrate how each father-daughter pair undergoes an inescapable drama of supremacy and disobedience.

Materials and Methodology

It is very important in this position to mention that V. Michael Santoro in his article, "*Father-Daughter Relationship*" suggests that there are ten rules that create a dictator father and a bad father-daughter relationship, and they are as follows: 1. they do not define what trust meant to each of them. They do not agree that there would be no games or hidden agendas—just honesty between them — to build the trust. 2. They do not agree that mutual trust is earned by exhibiting consistent behavior. The amount of trust that they developed would be proportionate to the amount of freedom that she would enjoy. 3. Anything that she discussed with her father was not kept in the strictest of confidence. This helped not to reinforce the trust. 4. He does not talk to her as an adult. This allowed no flexibility during her late years. 5. He does not become an attentive listener.

6. He does not ask the right questions without appearing to interrogate her. It was important that the daughter feels no fear coming to her father to discuss what was important to her. It was equally important that she felt that her father took the time to understand what she was trying to communicate. 7. He always judged her for her actions or ever says, "I told you so!" This helped in having her avoid to come to her father to discuss topics. 8. When helping her with problem solving, he does not discuss the desired outcomes first, and what she needed to do to resolve her problem. Then she was not allowed to proactively make her own decisions based upon the facts rather than reacting to her emotions. 9. Her father gives her rules to follow rather than setting guidelines. 10. He does not spend enough time with his daughter. (Michael, 2008)

In fact, these vital points are very important in reaching the goal of determining the result of the analysis of father-daughter relationship, therefore, these points will be considered in examining the cases of Juliet and Miranda.

Discussion

The case is that there are two sides for the same problem and each one of them looks to the matter from his-her point of view in the sense that, in one side, the father demands that his daughter remains dutiful child to verify his own illusions of masculine power and

control. In the other side, the daughter blossomed out into a romantic young woman. Her adult promises create a powerful contrast to her father's demands. Hence, taking on the challenge of romantic love, the daughter casts aside childhood obedience and leaves her father behind her. Consequently, the confrontation between the two opposed sides are inevitable. Above all, the Elizabethan Age gave daughters certain merit in the society which is linked firmly to the fathers'. It is simply noticed that from the very beginning in the plays, *Romeo and Juliet* & *The Tempest*, the heroines are named in the list of characters as (daughter to Capulet and daughter to Prospero) i.e they are identified through their relation to their fathers.

It is through this naming that the commitment lies. Because their fathers' names are not simply families names but they are sets of loyalties and implies system of performance. This identification gives the reader a clear vision that these daughters are but objects to their fathers.

Shakespearean fathers have dealt with their daughters in certain way conditioned by the traditional norms of the time. But, Shakespeare realized a truth that "Without respect for knowledge of the beloved person, love deteriorates into domination and possessiveness". (Hamilton, 2003, p.82) Possessive parental love, far from preserving the love of the daughter, produces a recurrent drama of domination and defiance.

Unlike *The Tempest*, *Romeo & Juliet* is the only tragedy which Shakespeare has written entirely about a love-story. (Hazlitt, 1915, p.106) In this play, Lord Capulet has all the qualities of a loving father and patriarch of a noble family, but has a bad side that makes him an ambivalent character. He demonstrates a proud yet ugly side early in Act I, scene i; upon encountering the Montagues he requests his weapon, while Lady Capulet suggests that he would do better with a crutch than a sword. Given the choice of fight versus flight, he immediately chooses the former – despite his status as a lord, who might be expected to take the high road. He acts differently in Act I, scene ii, when meeting with Paris he makes a dignified admission that he and Lord Montague are bound by their long-lived quarrel. He demonstrates dignity again at the masquerade ball. Upon realizing that Romeo is present, Tybalt is determined to cause a scene and throw out the Montague. Lord Capulet chooses to ignore Romeo's presence and convinces Tybalt to do the same: "Content thee, gentle coz, let him alone. A bears him like a portly gentleman. And, to say truth, Verona brags of him to be a virtuous and well governed youth" (I.v.66).

As a good father in Act I, scene ii, while meeting with Paris he suggested that they should wait for Juliet to mature "She hath not seen the change of fourteen years. Let two more summers wither in their pride Ere we may think her ripe to be a bride" (1.2.9). At Paris' insistence that there are younger brides than her, Lord Capulet again is quick to point out that is not best, "And too soon married are those so early made" (1.2.13). Lord Capulet is convinced that Paris is a perfect son-in-law but wishes to respect Juliet's youth. Eventually, he has a change of heart. He assures Paris that he will be able to sway Juliet's decision and they set a wedding date. When Juliet protests, Lord Capulet no longer acts the adoring father; he does not listen to her desire, and in anger, he calls Juliet a "disobedient wretch" (3.5.160) and claims that she is ungrateful to reject "a gentleman of noble parentage" (3.5.181). by doing so, he committed another mistake, ie. He judged her

negatively. The once loving father fights the temptation to strike her and insists that she will be at the church.

Hence ,far we have considered father- daughter relationships only in the comedies. The presentations of this bond differ in the tragedies and romances, where the emphasis is more on the moral lessons to be drawn from the daughter's striving for individuality. e.g. in *Romeo and Juliet*, after Tybalt, Juliet's cousin, has slain Mercutio, and Romeo has foolishly avenged his friend's death by killing Tybalt, her father still insists that she marries the County Paris. When Juliet begs to be free from that relationship, he responds brutally:

Hang thee, young baggage! Disobedient wretch!

I tell thee what: get thee to church a'Thursday,

Or never after look me in the face.

(Romeo and Juliet, III, v, 160-162)

Capulet is more concerned with imposing his wishes on his daughter than with ensuring her happiness. At the close of the play, he expresses grief over Juliet's body, but he does never articulate how his actions and attitudes contributed to her tragic end. (Cahn, 2001, p. 75)

Like any other tragic heroines, Juliet is not faultless. She is wrong when she got married without her family's permission and then kept her marriage a secret, because she has broken the trust between her and her father. But as R. B. Kennedy suggests that *Romeo and Juliet* are driven to behave in that way because "they know that there is no possibility of their feelings being understood by their parents" (Kennedy, 1979.p. 269). Their love is forbidden because of the quarrel between their families. Critics such as Julia Kristeva focus on the hatred between the families, arguing that this hatred is the cause of *Romeo and Juliet's* passion for each other. That hatred manifests itself directly in the lovers' language: Juliet, for example, speaks of "my only love sprung from my only hate" (*Romeo and Juliet* I.v.137) and often expresses her passion through an anticipation of Romeo's death. (Halio,1998, Pp.84-5)

When changes his mind, declaring that he accepts Paris's proposal, he says that he is making " a desperate tender \ Of his child's love". But he adds instantly "I think she will be ruled \ In all respects by me; nay more, I doubt it not". It is an order that will not be refused or commented on neither by Juliet nor by her mother. The order of marriage comes absolute that when the mother informs Juliet about it, Juliet tries to ask her to talk to her father telling him that she is not ready yet to marry.

Tell him so yourself

And see how he will take it at your hands

(Romeo and Juliet, II.125-6)

that was the mother's reaction for her daughter's request. Her sardonic pitch may imply that she has her own past experience with her husband's response to opposition. This is quite recurring in Shakespearean plays regarding mothers as Barret Buchholz claims in his essay " *Unholy Mothers: Mothers as Negative Characters in Richard III, Cymbeline, Hamlet, Macbeth and The Tempest*", that the mothers presented in Shakespeare's plays encompass a broad range of social positions, personalities, goals, and prominences in their respective plays. From young and powerful too old and vulnerable, but they have to do nothing regarding the fate of their sons and daughters. (Buchholz, 2005) And when Juliet finally announces her rejection for this marriage ,he names her, his beloved child," wretched pulling fool". A good observation to the text shows clearly that the qualifications of County Paris are socially admirable:

A gentleman of noble parentage,
Of fair demesnes, Youthful, and nobly trained,
Stuffed, as they say, with honorable parts...

(*Romeo and Juliet* II-181-83)

Unlike Juliet, Romeo is given confidence and self-determination, the bonus which never been given to Juliet by her parents. Juliet particularly suffers under an insensible mother and cruel father moreover an unusually compassionate nurse who deserts her when she most needs help; "O most wicked friend!" (III, v, 195) The Montagues, never show resentment towards Romeo and they never impede in his privacy. May be because a son in 16th century was given more liberty than a girl was, or because they are more sympathetic than The Capulets'.

"woo her"
"My will to her consent is but a part"

(*Romeo and Juliet* II.16-17)

As luck would have it, the above sketches of County Paris and Romeo are alike. Moreover, Romeo is having the advantage of ending the malicious quarrel between the fighting families if he is accepted as a suitor for Juliet. The outcome of this tragedy would be different if Lord Capulet could understand Juliet's feelings and deal with them correctly. In other words, had lord Capulet accepted the feelings of Juliet towards Romeo, the whole tragedy could have been changed into a comedy.

Psychologically speaking, the Shakespearean possessive fathers are driven by certain factors such as refusing the fact that their daughters are grown up fearing their own approaching the old age or what must be seen as sadistic urge to dominate. They usually prevent their daughters' marriage so that their rejecting to match them with men will cause a huge gap between them and their daughters. Reasonably, the daughter fail to accomplish

the father's prospects, she becomes a victim of his rage. So their relation definitely becomes severe, primitive, and volcanic.

Undoubtedly, Shakespeare has written his plays according to the Patriarchal norms which demand that the woman should be given only two choices either to be subjugated or to defy in order not to lose her love. By presenting these norms, of course Shakespeare does not find them healthy and accepted. He always tries to condemn them logically in his plays. In tragedy, the relation is burst out. The overprotective father refuses to let his daughter marry the man she loves. obliging the young lovers to endure a test by suffering. The daughters assert themselves, moving from the filial submission of obedient girls to more adult commitments. Consequently, he offers a closer view of the inharmonious elements in this relationship, focusing on the pain of the fathers as they lose their beloved daughters.

In the last of Shakespeare's romances, *The Tempest*, Prospero's daughter, Miranda, with her father was set drift from their kingdom by the usurper, Antonio, her uncle. They end up on the island where they lived for twelve years. She falls in love at the sight of Ferdinand, the son of her father's enemy, she begs of her father, Prospero:

O dear father,
 Make not too rash a trial of him, for
 He's gentle, and not fearful.

(*The Tempest*, I, ii, 467-469)

Prospero, however, nullifies her speaking so boldly:

What, I say
 My foot my tutor?

(*The Tempest*, I, ii, 469-470)

He insists on putting forth the rights of father and ruler. Still, the love between Ferdinand and Miranda cannot be suppressed, and Prospero is at last stirred by his daughter's capacity for affection. Although he sentences Ferdinand to hard labor to win Miranda's hand, Prospero reflects:

Poor worm; thou art infected!

(*The Tempest*, III, I, 32)

Later, at the sight of the two of them, he adds:

Fair encounter

Of two most rare affections! Heaven rain grace

On that which breeds between ém!

(The Tempest, III, I, 74-76)

The innocent love of Miranda gradually moves Prospero to give up his own antagonism toward those against whom he seeks revenge, but he is not perfectly changed. After reminding both Miranda and Ferdinand of his paternal authority by establishing rules for courtship:

But

If thou dost break her virgin-knot before

All sanctimonies may

With full and holy rite be minist'red

No sweet aspersion shall the heavens let fall

To make this contract grow...

(The Tempest IV,70-76)

He accepts their love to be ended with their marriage. He has warning them not to break his condition. Here is a father seemingly horrified by the thought of his daughter's sexuality. Later, when for the first time Miranda sees Ferdinand's father, Alonso, the king of Naples, and Antonio, along with his confederate, Sebastian, Alonso's brother, Miranda exclaims:

How many goodly creatures are there here!

How beauteous mankind is! O brave new world

That has such people in't!

(The Tempest V, I, 182-184)

Prospero retorts: "Tis new to thee" (*The Tempest, V, I, 184*). Even the innocent optimism of Miranda cannot erase Prospero's bitterness. Shakespeare, in presenting the father-daughter relation, has given the mother's character an absence in certain way. The mother in *Romeo and Juliet* is a woman with weak personality, and in *The Tempest* the mother is totally missed. (Cahn, 2001. p 78-9) Because a strong personality mother is a security source in the family. The daughter with such a mother needs not to have a bad experience with her father. Shakespeare perhaps wants to say that not to have a mother is better than having a weak one!

The Use of Language

Needless to mention that Shakespeare's manipulating for the language is very distinguished, he presents the language of the plays in two ways. The reader can notice easily that in *The Tempest*, Prospero seldom uses prose in his speech, while lord Capulet always uses prose and he uses poetry only when he is moved by the death of his beloved daughter. Of course, the usage of poetry and prose gives different meanings that it is through using poetry that the person is elevated. This reflects the fact that Shakespeare represents the negative view towards the Patriarchal norms throughout presenting lord Capulet as he always be talking in prose and Prospero is always talking in poetry. In correspondence to this point, Frank Kermode says that he does not know enough about the principles which lie beneath Shakespeare's choice between verse and prose to dogmatize, but this choice is certainly interrelated to the rhetorical issue of decorum- the style should be suitable to the speaker as well as to the context.(Kermode , 1970, xiv.)

Psychological forces may have contributed: a suitor represents the father's rival for his daughter's affections- the man who will win her and carry her off. By exploring the relation between the father and the daughter, Shakespeare could have presented the happy or unhappy outcome of the play and all depends upon the way the father understands the daughter's needs and thoughts. Sharon Hamilton declares that:

“The issue is control. If the father hampers or humiliates the daughter, she must circumvent him in order to assert her own identity. The results of her rebellion will be remorse, alienation, perhaps death. But if he honors her feelings and sanctions her decisions, the rewards will be mutual affection, hope, and fruitfulness.(Dreher, 2004, p 6)

Without any considerations neither to the good intentions of the father nor the appropriateness of the suitor, it is noteworthy for both that what is essential for the marriage to be valid is that the engagement of the girl's heart without which the whole matter will not work. This truth emerges in the comedies as well as in the tragedies. To lord Capulet in *Romeo and Juliet*, Paris is the perfect fiancé'. He becomes outraged when his daughter rejects his choice. In *The Tempest*, the daughter chooses the man , but the father rejects him. The result is equally unhappy. What distinguishes comedies from tragedies that in comedies the father does not value pride in his familial authority and social image over his daughter's feelings. The case in tragedy as Taylor states that “the father demands from his daughter to be good by being conveniently free of will”. (Taylor, 1982.p.91)

The results

Needless to mention that marriage is a communal as well as a privet act. The couple cannot succeed in isolation. for the love's resolution to be happy, it must be blessed by and bless the entire household or court or country. In Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, the lovers cannot get that matter, thus the heroine's ultimate gift to bring about public healing

has not been accomplished. Lord Capulet fails to put into practice the values he wants his daughter to follow. He is unlike Prospero in *The Tempest*, who prefers bigheartedness over egoism, truthfulness over affection, compassion over oppression.

Though Prospero has known betrayal and deprivation at a brother's hand, but that experience has not left him bitter and self pitying. He values loyalty and generosity, and he has a keen sense of other's worth.

Conclusion

The end in both plays are the same regarding the families because in both of them the old enemies are reconciled by their children's love, though in different ways, i.e. by contribution in sad burial in *Romeo and Juliet* and in wedding cheerfulness in *The Tempest*. Hence, depending on the fact that literature mirrors what happens in life, Shakespeare uses the father-daughter relationship as a device in his plays to show clearly the importance of this relation upon the outcome of the whole life exemplified by its correlative in literature.

In *Romeo and Juliet & The Tempest*, Father-daughter relationship shows the audience that it is very important to learn how to negotiate fairly and compromise appropriately. It discloses the case when a father exercises absolute authority, and rigidly sets rules, a daughter quickly learns to rebel. If a father is overly-critical and all-powerful, men become the enemy. If a father is fair and listens to his daughter's thoughts, she will gain self-confidence and pride in her own opinion. Another thing to be known, that women can be assertive without being aggressive. When daughters learn to communicate with their fathers, and trust that their opinion will count, they can develop self-assuredness which will allow them to be assertive and stand up for themselves, such as the case of Prospero-Miranda relation. This is very different from aggressive reactions which stem from a sense of powerlessness and combativeness such as Capulet- Juliet relation. It is important for fathers to listen to their daughters and appreciate their views, even if they don't agree. When fathers listen to their daughters, they are more apt to listen to them and trust them when they impose restrictions.

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