



Journal Homepage: - www.journalijar.com
**INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF
 ADVANCED RESEARCH (IJAR)**

Article DOI: 10.21474/IJAR01/4700
 DOI URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.21474/IJAR01/4700>



RESEARCH ARTICLE

THE HUMAN FRAILTY IN WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S KING LEAR.

Mahmood Hasan Al-khazaali.

Iraqi, Research Scholar, Acharya Nagarjuna University, Nagarjuna Nagar. Guntur, A.P.

Manuscript Info

Manuscript History

Received: 2 May 2017

Final Accepted: 4 June 2017

Published: July 2017

Key words: -

Frailty, Weakness.

Abstract

Human frailty is concerned with the new aspirations that appeared during the Renaissance that often showed how an individual was shaped by his weakness such as uncontrolled ambition, passion and a limitless need to know, to rule, to have revenge and to love. Such ideas occupied the minds of many playwrights at that time. This paper is mainly concerned with the treatment of these ideas in William Shakespeare's *King Lear*, chosen because this play represents the emergence of human weakness during that conflicting period leading man to his downfall, the embodiment of tyrannical power, *King Lear*, is a tragedy of a protagonist who falls because of his weakness. In *King Lear*, the main idea is how a man of a royal position foolishly wastes. And the tragedy of a king who over trusted his daughters as he divides his own kingdom. He has doomed accordingly.

Copy Right, IJAR, 2017.. All rights reserved.

Introduction: -

Frailty vocabulary in Shakespearean words which are familiar to us seems strange to the Elizabethan audience as they were his own invention or unique usage. In his creation of poetic pictures, he is influenced by things more than simplicity, things as iambic pentameter particular rhythmical effects, a need for emphasis, and questions of variety. "Shakespeare's vocabulary is characterized by the mixture of old and new word, the Anglo-Saxon and the Latin words. The language is enriched due to the borrowing from Greek and Latin" (Hulme,1977:155).

Anglo -Saxony compound words were found in insults as they seemed to reflect a more colloquial register. Latinisms are applied to the high style; *King Lear* has words such: germen, pomp, expose and so on. He combines compounds with new thoughts:"all-shaking"," thought- executing" "rose -checked" and so on (McDonald,2002:34). Shakespearean drama is often studies of human frailty. Hence, we find different meanings the more words through literary works of William Shakespeare display the synonymy of weak is frailty, in meaning and behavior of characters is clear in Hamlet:

Frailty thy name is woman (Hamlet: I. ii): -

Shakespeare focuses primarily on the relationship between Lear, and aged king and his daughters. Lear's wish is to split his kingdom between his three daughters – after being assured of how much they love him. Shakespeare wanted to show the struggle between goodness and evil, inside of human and how evil changed man to behave bestially. Shakespeare's *King Lear*, at the end, fulfil revenge, indeed, Lear divided his realm between two daughters instead three daughters because he followed flattery his two daughters. In order to get a portion of the kingdom, Goneril and Regan must profess their love to Lear.

Corresponding Author: - Mahmood Hasan Al-khazaali.

Address: - Iraqi, Research Scholar, Acharya Nagarjuna University, Nagarjuna Nagar. Guntur, A.P.

They succeed and Lear rewards them according to their flattery. But later on, they rebel against their father's wishes for their own benefits and act in a very hostile manner toward their father. Unlike his innocent daughters Cordelia who sacrifices everything in her life for her father. (Yedla & Al-Khazaali, 2016:604).

Before his division of the kingdom, he asked them to express their love for him. The eldest daughters (Goneril and Regan) gave an excessive declaration of love and devotion to their father. Their words were full of flattery. "They were villains who could conceal their true identities under masks of obliging friendliness". (Shakespeare, 1966:122).

Goneril: Sir, I love you more than words can wield the matter, clearer than eyesight, space, and liberty, Beyond what can be valu'd, rich or rare, No less than life, with grace, health, beauty, honor.

Regan: I am made of that self- metal as my sister, and prize me at her worth. In my true heart I find she names my very deed of love;(I. i. 68- 70)

The wicked older daughters told him exactly what he loved; that they love him alone beyond anything also on earth, (Shakespeare, 1966:122). While Cordelia's honest love to her father was beyond words; therefore, she answered "Nothing my lord". Her love cannot be considered by word. She was true in every word she had said but King Lear wanted to hear what he wishes:

Lear: Nothing will come of nothing. Speak again.

Cordelia: I cannot heave my heart into my mouth. I love your majesty according to my bond; nor more nor less. (I.i.1-4)

King Lear has become annoyed and decided to divide his Kingdom between Goneril and Regan only. Cordelia was dispossessed of having a share, because she did not express her love by using glorification words, like the way of her sisters. This reflected his failure as a King and a father. He was foolishly interested in his self-satisfaction rather than being interested in his responsibilities as a King in one hand and as a father in the other. He also divided his realm subjectively without thinking of his people's fate and how they will be ruled. Some critics have seen views according to Cordelia's behavior, when she said nothing and does not try to discover the conspiracy against her father, therefore; she is considered as a weak in her personality as Ophelia in *Hamlet*.

In the end, Lear begins his descent into madness. Lear says: "I fear I am not in my perfect mind" he declares; this is particularly evident when he marches into the storm. It has come as a result of Lear's mind leaped from the theme of rightful authority to his own need to counter Goneril and Regan's attack on his kingship. When he heard Gloucester speaks of the cruelty of his son Edmund, he remembered his ingratitude daughters and exclaimed "Ha! Goneril with a white beard". He recalled how they used to agree with everything he said before he divided his kingdom. He remembered how his disrespectful daughters used loyalty, flattery and empty promises to deceive him:

Lear: they flattered me like a dog and told me I had the white hairs in my beard ere the black ones were there. (IV. vi. 95- 96)

The weakness begins at Lear after he discovers the conspiracy against him from both elder's daughters, he tries to revenge against them but the weakness is obviously caused his old age for that he asks the God to take revenge for him, and again, he has weakness when Lear asked forgiveness from Goneril. Lear says:

Ask her forgiveness?
Do you but mark how this becomes the house:
"Dear daughter, I confess that I am old.
Age is unnecessary. On my knees I beg
That you'll vouchsafe me raiment, bed, and food. (II.v.170-175).

But the weakness is more dazzling in the scene of the storm seems Lear's mind is tortured when Fool asks him to

enter the hut but he refused, Lear prepared himself to face the storm and begin to tear his mind, soul in torture and feel the remorse of conscience. While he discovers Goneril and Regan both are rebel against him, Lear feeling's is not to have the mind for realizing all the enemies around him.

In fact, the psychological conflict at Lear is the result of weakness and lack of awareness of what he does because he was selfish and arrogant and does not listen to the advice of those close to his Kingdom as a result, he banishes Kent out of the kingdom because he stands against his incorrect decisions. which is against his daughter and the right division of the Kingdom in addition to the foolish tried bitterness and reluctance to ignorance avoid sin but he was stubborn, proud, selfishness, and insensitive. He does not know what to do because of his foolishness and weak personality as a result, I think, Lear reached to the mad case because he was inflicted by the conflict between the reason and passion that led him to sense of guilt of conscience toward Cordelia and his wrongful decision of the dividing the Kingdom. Lear says:

O, reason not the need! Our basest beggars
Are in the poorest thing superfluous
Allow not nature more than nature needs,
Man's life is cheap as beast's. Thou art a lady:
If only to go warm were gorgeous,
Why, nature needs not what thou gorgeous wear'st. (II, iv, 305-310).

In subplot, the matter does not different from Gloucester and his sons when he hears from one of them and banishes another when he is believing the illegitimate son's words to destroy his brother and his father and reveals the content of the secret letter as a result of causing his father's blindness when Edmund informs both Cornwall and Ragan about Gloucester's treachery and the conspiracy on the Kingdom. Gloucester appears blind from the beginning and did not see the truth around him but when he punishes by the way of puncture of his eyes, after that Gloucester revolves the corruption around him, due to Gloucester's torture mind, and the body, Gloucester tried to commit suicide repeatedly but, his son Edgar disguised as "Poor Tom" saved his life. Gloucester appears a weak personal and torn mind and suffers from a conflict within his mind and heart committed a grave mistake toward his son Edgar, especially, when Gloucester says:

“Oh! Dear son Edgar, / . . . Might I but live to see thee in my touch,
I'd say I had eyes again.” If Edgar live, O, bless him!
Now, fellow, fare thee well. (IV.I.22-25).

Conclusion: -

Shakespeare's concentrated on the moral flaws and errors that changed these heroic figures into tragic heroes. The royal figure as "a hero was confronted by the situation in which the organization of his being was unable to cope. Shakespearean in *King Lear* is showing all weakness points of human frailty like is ambition, flattery, greed, disobedience, discord, treachery, jealousy and envy. All these things were the motivations which led a person to seek revenge on others even on his dearest and nearest relatives. Lear's exile of his couple wicked older daughters for this shows the ego to be a considerable human frailty. In other words, Shakespeare displays all the cases that lead the human to weakness and fall down in mastics by wrong thinking for that the human should be the distinction between good and evil and give up of these cases. As a result, the human frailty that power induces – corruption and loss of sight of what is truly important is a sentiment that Shakespeare carries throughout *King Lear*. In other words, Shakespearean's *King Lear* tragedy. It showed how man of a royal position foolishly wasted his position and all its privileges. The play also dealt with ambition, flattery, greediness, disobedience, discord, treachery, jealousy and envy. All these things were the motivations which lead a person to seek revenge on others even on his dearest and nearest relatives. Which eventually lead to his doom.

References:-

1. Bloom, Harold. *Bloom's Shakespeare Through the Ages: King Lear*. Edited and with an introduction by Harold Bloom. New York: InfoBase Publishing, 2008. Print.
2. Campbell, Lily. B. *Shakespeare's Tragic Heroes*. London: University paper backs, 1961. Print.
3. Shakespeare, William. *king Lear*. Introduction by Bertrand Evans. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1966. Print.

4. *The Tragedy of King Lear*. eds. Barbara Mowat and Paul Werstine. New York: Folger Shakespeare Library, 1993. Print. The most quotations of these plays are taken for reference.
5. *Hamlet*, ed. Bernard Lott. London: Longman, New Swan Shakespeare. Advanced Series, 1972. Print. Print
6. Mc Donald, Russ. *The Language of Tragedy. Shakespearean Tragedy*. ed. Claire Meacham. Cambridge University Press. 2002. Print .
7. Hulme, Hilda. *Explorations in Shakespeare s Language*, 2nd London :Longman, 1977. Print
8. Yedla.S& Al-khazaali, Hasan. *Filial Relationships in Shakespeare's King*. *Int. J.Eng. Lang. Lit&Trans. Studies*, Vol. 3. Issue.3., 2016.July-Sept.<http://www.ijel>. Retrieved 10 December. 2016. Article of nine pages. Prin.