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A SHORT JOURNEY INTO THE MINDS OF SOME LEGENDARY SHAKESPEAREAN
CHARACTERS

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ABSTRACT

In this paper we shall try to analyze some of the most powerful psychological factors which drive the action in these plays to a great extent and which lie hidden to the readers after a general, ordinary reading. Realizing these underlying aspects will definitely help us to discover new motives and dimensions to the actions of the characters.

KEYWORDS: William Shakespeare; Elizabethan Age; Renaissance Literature; Freudian Analysis; Psychoanalysis; Language, Figure and Narrative; Tragedy.

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INTRODUCTION

"The mind is its own place", says John Milton, "and in itself can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven" (Paradise Lost, Book I, 255). He was talking about "A mind not to be chang'd by Place or Time" (Paradise Lost, Book I, 252). The mind really is an amazing thing and can recreate its world of fantasies by tapping the power of its hidden desires in the most mysterious and perplexing ways. The world of mind differs from the material world in many ways as the former is mostly dark, abstract and incomprehensible while the latter is concrete, tangible, bright and often predictable on at least macroscopic scale. The darkness of mind and its suppressed desires can often come into contact with the world of matter and objective reality and with its power can drive the agent to attain its long-cherished goal with an irresistible dynamicity. But the world is often afraid to recognize the fulfillment of such violent ambitions and so stand in stark opposition to their final realization which in turn creates unbearable stress and tension in the psyche of the aspirants ultimately resulting in the dissolution of the boundary between the world of mind and matter. This forms the crux of some of the greatest actions in Shakespearean plays. So to really fathom the mysteries of those plays we have to look at them "not with the eyes but with the mind." (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, I, i, 234).

DISCUSSION

While analyzing Shakespeare's works from a psychoanalytical point-of-view one cannot simply ignore the influence of Freud under the influence which since the publication of '*The Interpretation of Dreams*' in

1900 different branches of literary practices have taken shape. Of all Shakespeare's plays it is 'Hamlet' that enjoys the status of a most perfect and complete specimen of psychoanalytical analysis which can go beyond the interplay of mere allegories and symbolism. In Freud's publications there are at least three works where there is one Shakespearean reference - Mourning and Melancholia, Five Lectures on Psycho-Analysis, and New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis. According to Freud there is a deep connection between Oedipal problem and Hamletian revenge tragedy and that Shakespeare very brilliantly has shifted the libidinal conflict in various ways. In 'The Interpretation of Dreams' Freud says: "Shakespeare's Hamlet has its roots in the same soil as Oedipus Rex. But the changed treatment of the same material reveals the whole difference in the mental life of these two widely separated epochs of civilization: the secular advance of repression in the emotional life of mankind". (366) Freud emphasizes upon exploring and analyzing the plays as an articulated expression of neurosis and melancholy that defines the modern day life and from within the bounds of which lies the difficulty for an individual to believe in realities against the wishes of a mnemonic culture, society and history. Brutus, Hamlet and Henry all are introspective characters and their tragedies ensue as a result of their helplessness when they are forced to act against their wishes by some outside power. Hamlet wants to acquire and apply the figurative power of language by deciding to adhere to Polonius's "words, words, words" (II.2.192), and when he is unable to use the spoken language figuratively it marks the arrival of madness upon him. Hamlet even attempts to forcefully reconstruct and reinterpret Gertrude, his mother's language into a figure which she does not intend to create. Hamlet on being asked by Gertrude as to why he is so sad Hamlet never comes out of his self-imposed exile and isolation, rather he quibbles on the words "seems" and engages in forty-five lines long speech before finally expressing his hatred for his mother's act which has turned the entire Denmark into a rotten and "unweeded garden". With Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Hamlet's psychological topology goes through a paradigm shift because he can speak figuratively which is evident in these expressions - "Denmark's a prison" (243), "A dream itself is but a shadow" (260) etc. To Hamlet the presence of figure or a metaphor becomes synonymous with the existence of God in the world and when metaphor vanishes the things seem to be out of order and utterly chaotic. The world, like some grammatical framework Hamlet believes is planned and programmed by some divine authority where each single element is placed to serve some specific end. He believes that there "*There's a divinity that shapes our ends, Rough-hew them how we will*" (V.2.10). The play 'Hamlet' is as if made of so many mirrors which reflects some things of past while pointing to certain things which are yet to take shape from the dark, unforeseeable womb of the future. The action is constantly put in series of cyclical repetitions or orders of re-enactment. The murder of Polonius reflects the murder of King Hamlet, Hamlet's rejection of Ophelia is the result of or echoes the act of Gertrude's rejection of Hamlet's father King Hamlet; the play-within-play reflects the events that led to the murder of King Hamlet by Claudius where the players perform the murder of the Old King by pouring poison into his ear; Laertes's revenge mirrors or reflects that of Hamlet's own. The rivalry between Claudius and Hamlet when analyzed psycho-analytically is also a fraternal rivalry by which Hamlet sees himself as a substitute for his father King Hamlet. Claudius murders King Hamlet only to have Prince Hamlet taking his place and fantasizing about himself not just as the rightful heir to the kingdom but also a brother accepting the challenge of Claudius to overthrow and terminate him. The problem of both Hamlet and Henry, thus bears a similarity in that they both reflect certain type of existential crisis in which they find themselves and which is not of their own making. The solution in both these plays to their problem is never mentioned, and revenge killing rather than solving it will only prolong their pain. Thus ending their lives seem to be the only option available to them which echo Schopenhauer's view that life is something that should not have been.

Nietzsche finds the Shakespearean texts as sublime forms of art where by virtue of their intense and passionately true presentation of conflicting impetuses they help us go beyond our own problems and to equate ourselves with something more lasting, more universal and more powerful. Another critic Laurie Johnson believes that the driving force which acts to intensify the tension between action and inaction in 'Hamlet' rely for deriving its power primarily on the formulation of vengeance against the backdrop of some sort of illusion. The psychological practices in literary criticism on Shakespeare can also be traditionally categorized into different categories e.g., in comic category Shakespeare's plays always comes to a conclusion

after effecting a harmonious reconciliation among various contradictory elements whereas in problematic mode he desists from pointing to any definite solution but enables us to appreciate the enigmas of human heart and passion and the tragic mode where Shakespeare depicts the heroes as engaging with their inner enemies in a battle where they are destined to lose. Freud most especially has always been preoccupied with Hamlet and his problems and uses '*Oedipus Rex*' as a drama to be interpreted in a parallel plane to it though he leaves '*Othello*' out which is quite surprising. While the problems in '*Macbeth*' can be categorized into three areas namely paranoia, narcissism and hysteria the problems of '*Three Cascades*' in '*The Merchant of Venice*' and in '*King Lear*' the problems of choosing among three daughter who loves Lear most present some most perplexing problems of making a choice and the objects chosen. The lead cascade that Portia chooses and Cordelia in '*King Lear*' both are marked by silence and 'dumbness'. This is what that sets them apart from the rest and presents the eternal dilemma of man choosing the one woman from three manifestation namely the woman as a mother figure, the woman of love being chosen after her pattern and the Mother Earth herself into whose womb one gets mingled for one final time the three sisters in '*King Lear*' also bears parallel to three sinister sisters or witches in '*Macbeth*' for both of these trios possess power to change fate and decide outcomes of any event in an unforeseen and incredible way. Cordelia thus also symbolic of Goddess of Fate exhorting Lear, the old hero to renounce royalty and regimes and choose death as his closest friend for it is death in whose cradle Lear is destined to rest very soon. Portia's preference for lead also reflects the very characteristics that her feminine self wants to see in her soul mate. In '*Macbeth*' after committing the murder Macbeth fears he will lose sleep, but it is Lady Macbeth who later loses her sleep and Macbeth never sleeps or stops anywhere. Lady Macbeth becomes a living, breathing symbol of remorse while Macbeth's 'milk of human kindness' gives way to murderous and bloody thoughts and becomes bridegroom of total defiance. In '*Coriolanus*' the struggle of Coriolanus to fulfill his ambitious drive of attaining self-sufficiency by breaking free from his obsession with his mother forms a very interesting topic to be explored further. Psycho-analysts generally hold Volumnia responsible for Coriolanus' aggressive and violent personality. In fact Volumnia herself admits her role in raising Coriolanus as a bloodthirsty and hyper aggressive warrior and she later relishes and takes pride in her role in raising and eventually bringing Coriolanus' downfall. When Virgilia, Coriolanus' wife expresses her concern about her wounded husband's well-being Volumnia belittles her concerns and expresses glory at the fact that her son has been wounded in the battlefield like a true man. Volumnia tells her, "Away, you fool! It more becomes a man Than gilt his trophy. The breasts of Hecuba, When she did suckle Hector, look'd not lovelier Than Hector's forehead when it spit forth blood At Grecian sword, contemning" (1.3.39-43). Volumnia is so controlling and domineering that she protects Coriolanus as if he were her sexual partner like how Lear wanted to control and have Cordelia all to himself. This play is often seen as Shakespeare's farewell to the tragic genre and the character of Coriolanus is an amalgam of various complex emotions as well as some commendable heroic qualities like his military ambition, martial prowess and integrity of character. This play as Richard C. Crowley (1974) opines has fused the elements of Epic and Drama in a unique manner and also the character of Coriolanus has qualities of true epic heroes.

'*The Tempest*' is another such play which can be analyzed under the X-Ray vision of Freudian psychoanalysis by interpreting the progress of Prospero from the immature state resembling that of a hedonist infant to one of maturity where he comes to terms with the actual realities of concrete world. But the image of Prospero accepting the norms of material world as they are which we are tempted to imagine by reading the episode when he gives up both his magical power and the desire to impose upon others his idealistic vision and criteria of categorization between good and the evil upon others is merely an illusion. For actually the island provides Prospero with transitional object or a place of relief where he can indulge in exercise of his magical power and create a world of virtual realities or dreamy fantasies which keeps him miles away from the realm of reality. Thus this play is different from '*The Winter's Tale*' where by accepting Hermione as an independent new woman in the end Leontes successfully establishes a more realistic relationship with the world based on mutuality and a healthy acceptance of life as it is. In '*The Tempest*' there is no female figure like Hermione from '*The Winter's Tale*' to accompany Prospero to a more mature and healthy acceptance of life in its true color; rather it is Earth herself whom we can imagine as a mystical mother figure with whom

Prospero concludes his quest after resigning from his role as an omnipotent magician wielding godlike authority. However it cannot be denied that Prospero fails to achieve the desired transformation to a man of world. He relapses and retracts into his original state of self-imposed sequestration from real life and solitary isolation. Prospero's actions vacillate between harmonious and chaotic. That is how the entire play should be appreciated either as an artistic work harmoniously blending all contradictions and confusion in a magical way or as a work which ends with the lesson that no final solution can be reached in a logical and coherent manner in a world where forces beyond the control of man play a great part in determining the outcomes. The *Tempest* is thus both psychological and real.

Besides just tragedies Shakespeare's comedies, problem plays, histories, and romances are all worthy enough to be analyzed and rediscovered by intense psycho analytic reading. Libidinal impulses, neurosis, phallic aggression, jealousy, sexual desires all at some time or other form the driving forces behind many of his great plays namely 'Macbeth', 'Romeo And Juliet', 'Hamlet', 'Othello', 'Coriolanus', 'Tempest' etc .

In many of his plays, like for example in 'All's Well That Ends Well' there is some sort of breaking of an impasse and gradual but noticeable ascent of Shakespeare's works from the nadir of despair resulting from the descents of the characters into psychoses in 'Macbeth' and 'King Lear' where life ceased to signify anything substantial. The conflict which took place in his early historical plays and tragedies as a result of a conflict between suppressed Oedipal impulses and daughterly divisions within patriarchal codification of laws in a society, are later resolved by daughterly fertility as a redeeming quality. There are instances when some central myth or motif runs through and connects a series of diverse incidents and narratives in many of Shakespeare's works. As we can see in his poem 'Venus and Adonis' the protagonist Venus dies as a result of his disobedience to Nature's orders in his refusal to requite to Venus' love. As a result Adonis dies from a vicious attack by a boar and Venus transforms the blood drops that falls from Adonis's wounds into red wildflowers. Thus the transformed wild rose becomes a symbol of destructiveness which we find getting enacted on a massive scale in War of Roses in 'Henry VI' tetra logy. The boar becomes a symbol of tyrant which again finds expression in 'Richard III' through his heraldic emblem which bears the image of a boar. Similarly Tarquin in 'The Rape of Lucrece' becomes the symbol of destructive wantonness when he destroys the moral order, innocence and natural beauty by seducing chaste Lucrece. Thus in 'Macbeth' Macbeth goes through the passage to murder Duncan "With Tarquin's ravishing strides" (II.i.55). In his later plays Shakespeare attempts to rescue and regenerate the virtuous, chaste idealism which gets symbolized in the image of Lucrece from the burning cauldron of sexual wantonness and moral bankruptcy of the dominant patriarchal order. Thus in 'Pericles', 'The Winter's Tale', 'Cymbeline' and 'The Tempest' he emphasizes on the theme of feminine grace and survival of young, chaste and innocent daughters rather than their death. Marina in 'Pericles' successfully brings her future husband who meets her in a brothel to the right path of morality. Marina convinces the men who want to buy her that it would be a grave sin if they try to take her honor.

The tragedy of Lear and Cordelia in 'King Lear' has its roots in the flawed ideals of patriarchy where a woman is expected to duly observe her duties and share her love equally between her father and her husband which is impossible to achieve in real life. When Lear demands from their daughters a grandiose declaration of their love towards him Regan easily outdoes her elder sister Goneril by saying these words: "She comes too short...I profess/Myself enemy to all other joys/ Which the most precious square of senses possesses, /And find I am alone felicitate/ In your dear Highness' love" (I.i.71-75). Cordelia, the only unmarried daughter of Lear asks rightly, "Why have my sisters husbands, if they say/ They love you all? Happily, when I shall wed, /That lord whose hand must take my plight shall carry/ Half my love with him, half my care and duty. / Sure I shall never marry like my sisters, / To love my father all" (I.i.99-103). Cordelia's words echo Desdemona's declaration before Venetian Senate. Her father Brabantio's question "Do you perceive in all this noble company/Where most you own obedience?" meets with the following reply from Desdemona, "I do perceive here a divided duty: ...so much duty as my mother show'd/To you, preferring you before her father, /So much I challenge that I may profess/Due to the Moor" (I.iii. 179-189). This father-daughter conflict gets a romantic-comic turn in 'All's Well' where Helena is portrayed not only as a father's daughter but also as a preserver of phallic potency, a heir of her father's therapeutic skills and knowledge and she applies them skillfully to attain

her aim. She is virtuous, virgin and even virile in her pursuing of her object of passion whose children she wants to have. Helena's raising the king to his potency suggests an erotic encounter between her and the king and for both the bereaved children Bertram and Helena all ends well only because the daughter figure rejuvenates with her life force and fertility a diseased generation and plants the seeds for the advent of a new one.

PSYCHOLOGICAL ELEMENTS IN SHAKESPEARE'S ART OF CHARACTERIZATION

Shakespeare's characterization thus is always marked by that 'subtle economy of art' which never permits the protagonists to give full vent to their secret motives and purposes, rather they evolve out of and express themselves through the soliloquies, asides, monologues and solitary actions of the characters themselves. The 'split' in personality that Shakespeare subtly employs often goes unnoticed where he divides a character into two as in portrayal of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth. Shakespeare can only be partly analyzed by adopting purely Freudian approaches for Freud maps and X-rays the mind while Shakespeare dramatizes it and develops its conflicts organically from within. Othello on the other hand depends for his own identity and realization of his self upon Desdemona and her unconditional purity of love. The feeling of inadequacies that surface in the mind of Othello when he considers his differences in age, race, complexion from that of Desdemona's he gets insecure and in order to keep his own ego and self intact while vindicating the absoluteness of Desdemona's approval and acceptance of his in her heart of hearts he searches for evidences, interrogates repeatedly, constantly ponders upon and occasionally speaks about infidelity, and demands tests of fidelity and takes recourse to secretive measures like eavesdropping and stalking. Othello's tragedy ensues from what he as a patient wants to be and what his cure actually is, it results in his forceful and violent yoking together of his imagined idealized self and his real self. Anything which Othello feels as a threat to his projected image of idealized self he attempts to control and curb it. Thus he avoids narcissistic injuries and even by means of death he wants to re-establish and re-affirm his inseparable bond with his love Desdemona. He is a man getting consumed in the flames of his own desire. In 'Othello' if we delve deeper into the play we may find attempting a psycho-analysis of Iago to be much more puzzling and difficult to do than the character of Othello himself. After rising like burning, blazing a meteor through the skies to fame Othello brings with him his trusted lieutenant Iago and since then the entire play is built upon exploring and elaborating the consequences of misplaced trust of Othello while providing almost no space to give us a peek into the possible motives of Iago for obsessively going after the destruction of Othello. Iago is both a prototypical, mechanical villain and a complex character with multi-layered structure of peculiar obsessive-compulsive disorder. In his essay "Concerning the Stupidity of Evil," Donald Meltzer fuses together the concept of envy as postulated by Melanie Klein and his own ideas on aesthetic conflict. Meltzer maintains that envy arises out of a character's incapacity to participate in and appreciate the other character's ability to derive passionate experiences and from his own resultant obsession to interfere in the process of that passionate experience. Iago sees the "daily beauty" in Othello's life (V,1) and envies it for he is highly in need of it. Meltzer opines that the conflict gathers pace by intensifying the tension which results from the growing differences in the external and internal states of mind. The primal ideas of affection and innocence which lurk in the images of innocence and beauty incite in Iago a state of heightened jealousy. Iago is both envious and jealous of Othello and his motive behind these actions is meaningful on more than one level. Envy can be a dark passion over which we try to attain control while jealousy is almost uncontrollable and it feeds upon our fantasies to gain strength and keeps thriving by projecting its identity upon others. In the world order presented in 'Othello' the times are changing, there are examples of men like Othello rising to their status not by virtue of someone else's preferment or gift or inheritance rather by dint of his power and capability. Iago senses that and though in the play there never is any suggestion of his being a contender for the post of lieutenant he fantasizes it and starts telling Roderigo that he hates the Moor for giving preferment to Cassio for the post of lieutenant and repeatedly tells him that Roderigo himself deserves lot more. Foolish Roderigo also expresses his love for Desdemona and then in an extremely maneuvering way Iago belittles Roderigo by saying that he has "never found a man who knew how to love himself," who knows how to live life according to his own free will instead of following some prescribed set of rules or moral codes of conduct. Iago says, "Virtue? A fig! 'Tis in ourselves that we are thus or thus. Our

bodies are our gardens, to the which our wills are gardeners. So that if we will plant nettles or sow lettuce, set hyssop and weed up thyme, supply it with one gender of herbs or distract it with many—either to have it sterile with idleness, or manured with industry—why, the power and corrigible authority of this lies in our wills.”

Othello here, we can see is clearly the harbinger of a new world-order which has not yet emerged out of the wombs of time upto that point of time. He had gone through harrowing adventures, faced unimaginable circumstances, battled against cannibalistic beings and other forces, became military leader of Venice and then married the daughter of a senator who got attracted to Othello after listening to his tales of hardship, endurance and valiance. The marriage signals the arrival of a new order when the offices of high rank and eminence are no longer being allotted based on personal favor or preferences rather they are open to all and can be earned by dint of one’s ability. Othello even though has earned for himself all that he can he is not yet secure of his victory and his acquired position in the emerging world order. Othello for so long has garnered victories by virtue of his physical strength but when he is forced to face a different type of evil - the evil of cunning, he is presented as perhaps the most vulnerable of all invulnerable characters. Iago follows several steps for gradually and successfully planting the seeds of jealousy in Othello’s mind in a systematic way – first he obliquely hints at Desdemona’s favorable attitude towards Cassio, then he makes Othello hear out the fact that Desdemona has left her father to be with Othello thereby slyly implying that Desdemona is very much capable to betray the ones who love her most. Othello once compares Desdemona to a wild hawk which needs to be tamed because it is by very nature defiant, powerful and irreclaimable but on a closer reading we find that while saying these words he is referring to his own sense of inadequacy as a soldier, as a commander, as a chief in the courtly life of Venice. Iago’s innuendos only serve to deepen his sense of inadequacy to a much deeper level and the handkerchief becomes the object which lays bare the highly vulnerable, highly fragile and highly insecure core of Othello. Othello simply has not gone through those necessary stages of psycho-sexual development which would enable him to look beyond the implications that a lost handkerchief possibly carries with it and which he can safely ignore.

Psycho-analytically we can say that there hardly is any work which offers us so much scope yet leaves so many gaps to fill like the play ‘Hamlet’ does. Hamlet’s character reveals to us the strain that a son has to go through when he is forced to deal with not just two father figures but also an indiscriminately sexual mother figure. Thus we confront the problems of keeping masculine identity intact in face of an adulterous female figure. The mother figure becomes for Hamlet a symbol of lost paradise from whose body or soil poisonous weeds grow to engulf not just Hamlet but the entire Denmark in its grasp. In ‘Hamlet’ the primal bond between mother and her son gets corrupted and the loss of the image of Virgin Mother in Gertrude takes away from Hamlet the scope to configure any natural paternal bond. Through Gertrude’s actions and Hamlet’s vacillation we also come to face some deeper psychological crises. In Denmark’s patriarchal order the role of women as medium for transference of power from one hand to another has been implied. When Gertrude substitutes her mourning rituals for marriage ceremony Hamlet feels that no transfer of power or authority can be possible and it is to ensure the smooth flow of phallogocentric tradition of power politics that the Ghost of Hamlet’s father appears and urges the son to do what his mother has failed to do, i.e. legitimize the process. Hamlet has to kill Claudius but he cannot do that for Gertrude is there and she confers legitimacy upon Claudius’ actions. Gertrude has to accept her traditionally prescribed role of a silent and passive mourner. Otherwise no final solution would be possible. When Ophelia dies it is shown that neither Hamlet nor Laertes is unable to lament or mourn because these are the ‘social acts’ which a woman is supposed to do. It is only with the death of Gertrude that Hamlet is free to do what he was supposed to do all the time. With Gertrude’s death, Denmark feels the absence of queen, absence of a woman and thus comes under the rule of its enemy Fortinbras. Within Hamlet the constant clash between Ego and Eros fails to generate that mutually reinforcing influence and neither is able to regulate the other and thus his entire being suffers a thorough disorganization. Hamlet suffers severely often self-willingly under the smarts of his self-abusive Superego as when he fails to murder Claudius and accidentally causes the deaths of Polonius and Ophelia and it is his conflict between his Ego and Superego that provides the play with an almost Epic momentum. It is the battle of not two nations for

securing the glory of a generation rather it is the intense inner struggle of an individual to maintain equilibrium between his ruptured psyche. If Hamlet's disaster and downfall can be attributed to his parentlessness or some distorted paternal or maternal identities, in Macbeth it is the childlessness which can be said to have contributed to the momentum in the first part of the dramatic action. Macbeth desires Lady Macbeth to "Bring forth men-children only" (1.7.73) so that he can crush all hopes of Banquo's sons becoming future monarchs of Scotland. But later from Macduff's comment we come to know that "He has no children!" (4.3.216) and it is based on this premise that Freud thinks Lady Macbeth collapses. Macbeth being unable to become father to children commits murders of other children's father while Lady Macbeth realizes the futility of her unsexing by the spirits of the murder. She is punished with barrenness for her guilt and she gets transformed from a callous, cruel, cold figure to one filled with acute penitence.

In 'King Lear' Lear's downfall ensues mostly because of his extreme dependence on the love of his daughters as substitute for the love of a wife. Lear wants her daughters to give verbal proof of their love to him even while knowing very well that after marriage the daughters will have to love their husbands too. Lear wants her daughters especially Cordelia all to herself. Cordelia is at the same time a mother-figure, a solace, and a balm to Lear and something much more. Lear knows he can never have her all to herself but still for the last time he wants to hear from Cordelia's own mouth few words of assurance and unconditional and absolute love. Lear wants the love of both his late wife and that of his mother from Cordelia's and his banishing her out of foolhardy arrogance can be said to be an expression of Oedipal Complex in a disguised form. Both Lear's and Edmund's negative actions can be said to have their roots back in their childhood days when they both were deprived of maternal love and legitimate parenthood respectively. In Lear the actions of the main characters derive their impetus from three fundamental drives – 'Thanatos' or death drive, 'Eros' or drive to unite oneself with other and Oedipal Complex. Gloucester, Edmund, Lear and even Cordelia towards the latter half of the play are unconsciously driven by Thanatos to their end.

In 'Richard III' too Shakespeare has shown how people suffering from disabilities or deformities tend to rise above their limitations by forcefully proclaiming their specialty and uniqueness from the others and demand privileges. Richard claims himself to be an 'exception' because of his deformities.

'WAR BEGINS IN THE MINDS OF MEN'

In 'Macbeth' we begin our journey by forming the initial impressions that Lady Macbeth is more ruthless, more aggressive, more violent and manipulating than her husband. But as the play progresses we find how wrong our impressions are. Lady Macbeth suffers from post-traumatic disorders and paranoia schizophrenia in several occasions and she stays hyper active, restless, haunted by recurring nightmares and always suffers from acute depression. We come to know of her somnambulance or sleep-walking from the words of a gentlewoman when the latter says: "I have seen her rise from her bed, throw on her nightgown . . . yet all this while in a most fast sleep." (Act V Scene 1) On her sleepwalking she repeatedly feels haunted by the gory, blood-splattered images of Duncan and her husband's inhuman atrocities. Lady Macbeth feels the burden of her crime weighing her down and says: "Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him?" (Act V Scene 1) The symptoms of her suffering from posttraumatic stress disorder are also quite clear. She at first impelled her husband to commit the regicide by deluding herself and his husband into believing that "a little water will clear us of this deed", only to find out later that no ritual in the world can clear her of these sinful stains of stubborn blood that Duncan's murder has cast upon her hands. She becomes a symbol of one of the most primal imageries of connection between purity and cleanliness on one hand and sinfulness and filth on the other. Lady Macbeth's involvement in the criminal acts only leads her to contaminate the original purity of human soul and thus she becomes a victim of Obsessive Compulsive Disorder. She says repeatedly "Out, damned spot! Out, I say!" and wonders "will my hands never be clean?" Also she feels the gravity of her crime in the smell of blood and comes to believe that "All the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand." (Act V, Scene 1). In Act 2, Scene 2 it was Macbeth who used to wonder whether "all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood/ Clean from" his hand and believed that the blood in his hands would make "the multitudinous seas incarnadine,/ Making the green one red". It was Lady Macbeth then who used to console her by urging Macbeth not to think deeply on those lethal acts and assured him

repeatedly of the futility of feeling the pangs of conscience or worrying too much after committing a crime. Her words were: "A little water clears us of this deed. / How easy is it, then!" (Act V, Scene 1). Macbeth himself is not a less complex figure than Lady Macbeth and in him we come to see an intense battle between Id, Ego and Superego. The three witches who reignite Macbeth's inner urge to go beyond the superimposed limits placed by the Superego represent Macbeth's Id. Macbeth's initial hesitation in committing the murder of Duncan lays bare the struggle going on between his Superego which was forbidding him to commit the act and the Id which was spurring him to fulfill his darkest desires. Macbeth shows several symptoms of paranoia, schizophrenia, delusions, anxiety and stress. He starts showing signs of mental breakdown while hallucinating about the dagger first "Is this a dagger which I see before me . . . art thou not, fatal vision, sensible," (Act II Scene 1) and then about Banquo's grizzly ghost: "Thou canst not say I did it. Never shake thy gory locks at me." (Act III Scene 4) Macbeth's anxiety about Banquo and the prophecy is reflected in his words: "to be thus is nothing, but to be safely thus. Our fears in Banquo stick deep," (Act III Scene 1) The characters of Banquo and Macbeth betray great contrast in placing faith. While Banquo never loses his faith on Macbeth even while suspecting that Macbeth is very much capable of playing foul, Macbeth starts suspecting everyone around him as when he suspects Macduff turning his back to him: "How say'st thou, that Macduff denies his person at our great bidding . . . I hear it by the way, but I will send: there's not a one of them but in his house, I keep a servant fee'd." (Act III Scene 4) Blinded by his own Id and Ego Macbeth constantly fails in deciphering even the simplest truths as in Macduff's case. Macduff at first leaves the country believing his wife and sons would be safe then only to return later upon hearing about Macbeth's butchering of his family. Many of Shakespeare's plays can be analyzed under the light of different psycho-analytical theories as for example the development of the character of Lear in 'King Lear' can be best analyzed with the light of object relations theory. According to this theory an infant starts by imagining himself to be the sole possessor of his mother and everything around him. The mother should guide the omnipotent infant discretely by helping him to distinguish between the objects of his fancy and those belonging to the real world. Thus the mother tries to form boundaries or walls of separations which also serve to protect the child from outside influences and if that stage faces failure in attaining its objectives the childhood becomes full of troubles and all the subsequent phases which lead the infant to develop as an adult being becomes full of troubles. That is what happens to Lear when he tries to cling to his daughter's affections most possessively even at the cost of their independence in married life. When Cordelia asserts her independence Lear becomes outraged because all thought of achievement of a fusion of his self with the caring, consoling, nourishing figure of Cordelia gets destroyed. Cordelia expresses the natural division of boundaries between her love for her husband and her father figure which Lear does not understand because he wants to have Cordelia spiritually, psychologically and sexually all to himself. Cordelia observes:

"You have begot me, bred me, loved me: I
Return those duties back as are right fit,
Obey you, love you, and most honor you.
Why have my sisters husbands, if they say
They love you all? Haply, when I shall wed,
That lord whose hand must take my plight shall
carry
Half my love with him, half my care and duty:
Sure, I shall never marry like my sisters,
To love my father all." (1.1 10)

Analyzing the issue from Freudian perspective Lear portrays the Oedipal struggle of infant's obsession to keep his connection intact with his mother figure which is sexual in nature though the infant gradually grows up recognizing that he cannot have what he has been desiring all the time. 'King Lear' is abound in sexual metaphors, images and allusions like for example the images of "daughters turn mothers", the image of love as "A love that makes breath poor"(1.1 8) etc. This play provides a reversal of the situation of Oedipal complex in which the father figure is sexually attracted to his own daughters for deriving the final, blissful fulfillment.

From Lacanian point of view the play exemplifies Lear's failure to come to terms with the Symbolic state of nature and life where the infant's sexual love for his mother is suppressed and he is distanced from maternal body by use of phallogocentric language. Cordelia stays above and beyond the physical, carnal, mundane state of materialistic life as she is always depicted as an idealized, and elevated type of character. There are many instances of languages overtly referring to sexual subjects like when Lear is robbed of his personal army he feels "...ashamed / That thou hast power to shake my manhood thus"(1.4.123). Lear's transformation to a feminized being is also evident when he breaks into tears after suffering tremendously in Goneril and Regan's hand which somehow opens him up towards attaining a deeper, purer and transcendental sort of vision in latter half of the play.

Othello like Hamlet for most of the times conceals the true motives of his actions even from himself and Iago acts as if being guided by a repressed homosexual love for Othello and sees Desdemona's a rival to his own love for Othello and becomes hell-bent in driving her away from Othello. This feeling of jealousy ensues from Iago's own defense mechanism which prevents him from expressing his homosexual desires before anyone and starts projecting them upon Othello and in a similar manner in which Macbeth's self can be interpreted to have divided itself into two parts, namely Macbeth himself and Lady Macbeth. Iago can be interpreted as a split character who is one half of Othello's own egoistic personality. Othello even feels Iago as a representative of his own suppressed desires and egotism and admits that Othello even notices that Iago 'echo'st me, / As if there were some monster in thy thought / Too hideous to be shown' (3.3.121-3). It may seem to common readers that Othello is driven to his action predominantly by the insinuating suggestions made to him by Iago when Iago constantly harps on the issues of Moor's coarseness, blackness and age to deepen Moor's feelings of self-doubt and insecurity about himself. Othello strives to become the free human soul but Iago is the agent which brings him down. Just when Othello is about to kill himself he demands Iago to provide him with a satisfactory answer to his question as to why had Iago 'ensnared' his 'soul and body' only to meet with an elusive and ambiguous reply from: 'Demand me nothing: what you know, you know: / From this time forth I never will speak a word' (5.2.341-2). Iago knows that his existence depends upon Othello's as he is the other half of the same him and with Othello's death not only his motive of malignity but his very existence would crumble to dust.

The main issues which make Hamlet a complex character have already been pointed out and we can say that Hamlet also exemplifies the strainful effects of a distorted unfulfilled transition from Oedipal stage to one higher. A child begins his journey by directing his sexual desires towards his mother and sees his father as a rival in path of his attainment of complete mastery over his mother. Hamlet also has that latent desire and finds it hard to murder Claudius as the latter objectifies his own desire of eliminating his father-figure and taking his father's place with mother. Hamlet even says that Claudius has more similarities with his own character than his own father. Hamlet's final development to a mature figure meets with several obstacles as when to cope with his psychological upheavals he regresses to a childhood stage of a trickster along with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern and in such a situation the latter duo's death becomes inevitable to facilitate Hamlet in playing his part successfully and for a more solid and successful transformation of Hamlet to his more mature self which is realized through the portrayal of the characters of Horatio and Fortinbras as men of determination, integrity and action. Applying a Lacanian analysis we can assume that the adoption of more symbolic, complex and allusive form of language makes it impossible for Hamlet to unify himself with his mother in a pre-linguistic state of symbiotic harmony. Hamlet delays because he feels that he cannot punish the one, i.e. Claudius who has realized his own repressed desire of childhood which was to get rid of the dominant, authoritative, dictating Herculean father-figure to secure his place beside mother.

CONCLUSION

Most of the Shakespearean plays appeal to us on more than one level and some do this in a more irresistible manner than others. A complete analysis of his plays from all possible perspectives in a single discussion is next to impossible. However, the psychoanalytical analysis of some of his major plays is a very interesting but demanding task which reveals to us some carefully constructed but securely implied meanings and aspects embedded beneath the surface of the plays. The characters are led to their downfall by some

psychological flaws or weakness lurking the deepest recesses of their soul and the action derives its momentum to a great extent by the inner struggle of characters against their own latent weakness which thrive upon their vulnerable and weak defense mechanism of psyche. The characters come to us prepared fully, forged on the anvils of physical world of actual battlefields but against their inner demons, against that one loose thread in their psychological texture they are prone to a great collapse or a complete unraveling which is what happens in all these tragedies.

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