

“Male Superiority Projection in Shakespearean Tragedies”

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Far from the centuries women are supposed to be inferior to men from 16th to 21st century women are not able to seclude them from that doormat strength still the glass is half full women's are in same status as they were in beginning of the eras. Women do not have right to serve her own will she is moulded by men's will. She is following the same tradition even in modern era we find the glimpse of anti-feminism on some place in Shakespearean tragedies.

Not even in modern time even in Shakespearean age many of his female characters and the plot surrounding them were considered antifeminist because of the role that the women played or even just because of how they were referred to within the text by him or other characters, same conception that go along with the analysis of Hamlet. Through the feminist point of view it is clear that the women, like Gertrude and Ophelia are given invisibilized estimations and roles within the play, that the play is from a male cantered view point, and that is only focuses upon the male characters and their experiences rather than views and impacts of the women.

We can take the visual example of marginalization in play Hamlet Act III when Gertrude is told to leave the men to their plans even though they should make her the part of their plans and can know her opinions (Sweet Gertrude, leave us too – Act III page. 136) When this scene is read by any one through the feminist lens, it can be seen as her being dismissed due to an opinion of Claudius that she is unnecessary and that he knows what is best when it comes to important matters. So we can reach to conclusions that women do not have their own point of view they have to reconcile with the men in all ages. They depends upon men's will form childhood to old age. In prime of life she remain dependent on her father when she became adult she become depend on her husband and in old age on her son. Society characterizes women as ideally warm, gentle, dependent and submissive family life and the work Patten convey the idea that women should be subordinate and dependent on man she is the mother of man who subsequently rules over her and wants to protect her and keep her under his control. Manu as quoted by Hunter college women's studies collective, declared:

Day and night women must be kept in subordination to the males of the family: in childhood to the father, in youth to her husband, in old age to her sons...

Even though the husband destitute of virtues and seeks pleasure elsewhere, he must be worshipped as God”

When we read the play from feminist views readers may also find Gertrude's response to Claudius as being submissive and lacking forethought which brings to mind that this sort of dismissal is common between Gertrude and Ophelia. Gertrude is constantly undermined (Fienberg, Nora) not even in this scene but also we also find in another scene such kind of discrimination between Gertrude and Ophelia when Ophelia is mourning over the death of her father and song that she recited "Introduce the protesting voice of oppressed women in society through the veils of ballad culture."

Ophelia "is not understood by her male audience but her rebellion against the double standard and its oppression of women arouses fear in Gertrude, who understands." (Fienberg, Nora) when Ophelia mourns her father people quickly think that her weak mind must have "shattered" and her only escape from insanity is death. In Act V, after Ophelia's death the scene starts with Hamlet spying upon Laertes during his sister's burial.

When Laertes surprisingly speaks. Over his sister's death, he concluded that she must have killed herself in an attempt to escape the madness that some man must have caused. He believes that in her weak feminine state that a man must have taken advantage of her and destroyed her mind. (Oh, treble woe, fall ten times treble on that cursed head, who's wicked deed thy most ingenious sense deprived thee of!" Act V- 1 pg. 294) If we see from feminist point of view we find that men's mentality is shaped in such a way by society that his thought can't go beyond that thinking.

Hamlet and Laertes both lay claims to Ophelia's mind and then use the fact that she is female as a way to push her already frayed reputation over the edge of an inferior capacity and thoughtless innocent girl. An example of a female versus male role.

When it comes to Gertrude and her son Hamlet, the feminist lens gets clouded because he both treats her as a true being with thoughts opinion yet is constantly demoralizing her action.

In Act III we see how Hamlet is accusing his mother about her mistake with Claudius Hamlet insists desexualize his mother and goes as far as calling her a prostitute in a rude manner. In an attempt to force her into repenting. He thinks that his mother is responsible for all that what is happened. They can fight with situation if she able to resist being slave to sexual desires that he believes women must fall victim to. In other words, he simply saying that she is a weak female who could not think past her need for pleasure long enough to seek the possible consequences of the actions.

Through feminist lens, this can be seen as an attack on the female gender under the deceptive thought that all female are programmed by society to serve, be used for sex and bend to will of all men due to their innate need for a man by their side at all time. (Kusunaki, Akieko)

So we conclude that on some places how Shakespearean women characters was under the grip of men and was programmed by men even it is declared in play Hamlet "Frailty thou name is women" was the strong voice of men made society from 16th century to till than

women's status is same that they are trying to come out from that image but who knows now much time it will take to give them their own identity.

Notes and References

1. Hunter college women's studies collective: women's Realities choice: An introduction to women's studies (New York: Oxford University press 1983) Pg 68.
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4. Showalter E. (1992) Representing Ophelia: women, madness and the responsibilities of feminist criticism in Shakespearean Tragedy New York: Longman.