

The analysis and criticism of characters in the story of Fereydoon and King Lear with regard to Jung theory

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ABSTRACT

The present study aims at analyzing the main characters of the story of Fereydoon composed by Ferdowsi (940-1020) and the play of King Lear written by Shakespeare (1564-1616). Two reasons for selecting these two characters are their similar behavior and acts, so in this study with regard to Jung theory, the psychologist and analyst of ancient archetypes, the main characters are analyzed. Lear and Fereydoon as a king, are the main characters of their stories. Lear in comparison with Fereydoon has some different roles and at the end of the play, he found wisdom and consciousness. Tor and Salm are the grand sons of Fereydoon and Goneril and Regan are the grand girls of Lear that they are the other important characters of the stories and based on Jung theory, they are caught in shadow and affect others around themselves in negative way. Iraj and Cordelia are the little children of Fereydoon and Lear respectively that have positive roles and are the good characters of the two stories. In general, Lear play, its characters and varied scenes can be compared with the story of Fereydoon. The message of Fereydoon's story that is explained with little details is the king's materialism and its bad consequences and effects, while in Shakespeare story the same concepts are explained with more details.

Keywords: Fereydoon, Lear, Tor and Salm, Goneril and Regan, Iraj and Cordelia, Jung.

Introduction

The story of Fereydoon starts and finished with simple plot and few characters. In the story of King Lear, the characters are dynamic and varied and they are more complex than characters in Fereydoon's story. Maybe that's because some say: 'shakespeare's greatness does not lie in plot or originality; his plots are generally borrowed, often ill-constructed; and he has no really original ideas; but as a creator of characters who seem to live like real human beings, provoke discussion, and linger in our memories, he has no rival' (Boulton, 2014: 91). Many questions and ambiguities are raised in the minds of readers. For example, why the criteria of Lear for dividing his world is his girls' passion and love and by this question, so many years of his dignity, policy and masters in being a king is in question. On the other hand, Goneril and Regan, Lear's two granddaughters, and Tor and Salm, Fereydoon's sons, are the key characters that what they have done, have important roles in making the tragedy of stories. Indeed, it should be said that Lear and Fereydoon has important roles in creating tragedy of the stories. Although the grand children of king have devil souls but it can be said that in both stories, because mother is not existing, so fathers 'veiling has the main effect on forming the behavior of children. Strictness with levity and anger, fathers' disregarding justice make the background for growing up the children with abnormal behaviors. In general, Fereydoon and Lear make a family conflict to a national and international myths and the stories show that Fereydoon and Lear (main characters) are symbol of human being that in their whole lives cannot recognize traitors from loyal servants. This lack of recognition is revealed when they lost their king power. So in present article, we use Jung theory, the Swiss psychologist and psychiatrist, to analyze the characters in these two stories.

Fereydoon and King Lear

Fereydoon has statistic and fixed character that by dividing his world and discriminating among his children makes a disaster in the story and there is no compensation for it. The only way to reduce his feeling of guilty a little, is to take revenge. On the opposite site, is Lear who from the beginning of the story makes a big revolution in his soul. After dividing world, Lear retreated in a way that he doubts that is he the same Lear in past years? After dividing world, he lost his dignity and power of a real king. Because of lack of enough experience and policy, Lear confronts with lots of problems. The clown, makes Lear think about this bitter truth. The clown can be the sense Lear's guilty or in terms of Jung theory, is his shadow. Shadow is one of the popular topic of Jung theory. Jung believes that: "in contrast to the persona, the archetype of the shadow designates that side of an individual that he or she prefers not to reveal. It consisted of the dark, unadapted or repressed parts of oneself, or, in Jung's words, of everything that the subject refuses to acknowledge about himself and yet is always thrusting itself upon him directly or indirectly- for instance, inferior traits of character and other incompatible tendencies" (Palmer, 2003: 119). Shadow comes along with a person all the times and makes some dark parts of person's soul. It is a series of characteristics that don't incline to be shown. Shakespeare like a professional psychologist by using clown says something to Lear and makes his soul to be unstable in order to be punished and be considered to his bad behaviors. When Lear is wandering in desert, finds this chance of judging himself. In this journey (wandering in the desert), he goes to his unconscious self and fights with shadow (all the things that Lear doesn't want to know about them and blame himself) that is the most important stage to consciousness. When he understands the truth, he finds big revolution in himself. This revolution, makes him to be relaxed. Actually, in this journey, Lear finds his individuality. Based on Jung's theory individuality means '... individuation is a psychological growing up the process of discovering those aspects of one's self that make one an individual different from other members of the species. It is essentially a process of recognition-that is, as one matures, the individual must consciously recognize the various aspects, unfavorable as well as favorable, of one's total self. The self-recognition requires extraordinary courage and honesty but is absolutely essential of one is to become a wellbalanced individual' (Guerin, 2005: 204).

After Lear reached to conscious and wisdom in desert (inside journey), in this stage, he born again and says Gloucester: 'I want to give advice to you, listen' 'when we are born, we cry that we are come to the this great stage of fools' (act IV, scene VI).

When Cordelia sympathizes with Lear, he says: 'I'm an old child'. This sentence is the rebirth of Lear and his start of wisdom and understanding that leads to reaching the stage of 'self'. In fact, it appears in a new symbolic form, representing the self, the innermost nucleus of the psyche (Jung, 1964: 196). The archetype of 'self' or 'me' is one of the important issue in Jung's theory and Jung believes that: 'Lear in his difficult journey faces with natural disaster. Storm increases the horror of scene'. He finds himself. A series of contrasts happens frequently with Lear's character.

What is the aim of Shakespeare to create this black tragedy for Lear who sees the death of members of his family and loyal servants? Maybe Shakespeare's emphasis is on humanity and the value of being together. As, at the end of the play when Lear hears that he becomes king, he doesn't have any interest for it because he understands this important issue that being a king and having power is pleasant when your relatives and people around you lives in comfort and peace.

Tor and Salm, Goneril and Regan

In the play, the girls' flattery is like a mask that hides betray more than others. Hypocrisy of girls hinders the unclean double face for Lear because. Mask is another Jung's archetypes that the person doesn't show his real face.' In Fact, Jung believes that a mask does not represent the person wearing it rather it is the image imagined by the individual and others" (Jung, 1964)' the combination of double face and hypocrisy masks has the biggest harness to the souls of Tor and Salm, Goneril and Regan that stopped them to grow their personalities and individualities. As it mentioned before about shadow, they draw the negative and unpleasant aspects of shadow that although these characteristics are in their personalities, the effect of environmental factors, non-presence of mother and aggressive and bossy behavior of father make this negative characteristic to be intensified and unable them to make a balance between 'I' and outside world and they are not successful in controlling their negative characteristics and in terms of Jung's theory, they are caught by shadow. Jung believes: 'a man who is possessed by his shadow is always standing in his own light and falling into his own traps. Whenever possible, he prefers to make an unfavourable impression on others. In the long run luck is always against him, because he is living blow his own level and at best only attains what does not suit him' (Jung, 2014: 66).

By considering these explanations, Tor and Salm. Goneril and Regan are caught by shadow and cannot overcome devil and destructive forces in their souls and try in any way to find their superiority. Because they are not successful in achieving this important issue, they try to destroy people who are in the opposite side of them.

Iraj and Cordelia

Iraj and Cordelia have similar behavior and destiny. Both of them have calm, patient and non-revengeful characters. Her sixth` sense predicts result of blindly trust and her father's hasty decision and when she exists the palace, she says to Lear: time shall unfold what plaited cunning hides:

'Who cover faults, at last shame them derides. Well may you prosper' (act I, Scene I).

From Jung's theory, unconscious self and spiritual character of human is full of inside forces and inspirations if the self is cleared from bad behaviors. So: 'these inner motives spring from a deep source that is not made by consciousness and is not under its control. In the mythology of earlier times, these forces were called mana, or spirits, demons, and gods. They are as active today as they ever were' (Jung, 1964: 82).

This force in Cordelia`s soul is because of her good thoughts and consciousness and Iraj by this force lowers the value of world`s properties and when Fereydoon receives complain letter of Salm and Tor, Iraj gives advice to his father with his mystical words:

'Then, the famous Iraj looked at that kind clean and blessed father'

'He answered that O' the sovereign look at this rotation of the time'

'That is passing by us like a wind and the wise persons should not feel grief'

'It withers the visage of the judas tree and darkens the face of the brilliant psyches'

'It is treasure in the beginning and pain in the end; then, after suffering, it is going from this transient house'

‘For the bed is made of soil and the pillow is made of adobe; why should one sow a tree now’ (Volume 1, 115, 408-413)

Conclusion

Ferdowsi, in the story of Fereydoon, and, centuries later, Shakespeare, in King Lear drama, have succeeded in globally registering their artworks with national identities through proposing familial and challenging subjects in them and such testimonies confirm these authors’ skillfulness and sophistication. In these artworks, the major concern and the common subject with which these authors have dealt with as versatile psychologists and philosophers form the excitement and distress of the audience since the past centuries up to the contemporary time. In fact, Fereydoon and Lear make uncalculated and incorrect decisions and inflame the sparkle of enmity between their children. Lack of proper decision and unwise interventions cause the occurrence of unpleasant incidents in the stories. Lear and Fereydoon, as king and father, cannot make proper and timely decisions with the difference being that Fereydoon features a static characteristic from the beginning till the end of the story but Lear is first an authoritative king and becomes a desert-wandering indigent due to his lack of astuteness and, finally, he figures out what he has done and reaches the stage of an internal insight achievement. Ferdowsi and Shakespeare showcase the doings of the good and bad deeds in the lands of Salm and Tur and Gonreil and Regan, respectively, and, contrarily, Iraj and Cordelia represent the good and chaste individuals who are clean of any unpleasant properties. Iraj and Cordelia’s brilliant and insightful psyches are, in other words, the collective psyches and wisdoms of Ferdowsi and Shakespeare as well as other heedful persons who struggle to save the audience from going astray and falling in darkness. Although Iraj and Cordelia are amongst the ones who lose their lives on the path of the fight between the right and the wrong, it is actually in the heart of this loss that freedom accompanies the hidden triumph. The gist of these authors’ words in their creation of these artworks is the elaboration of the human values that show up with the deviation from the goodness and falling in the badness and deviation followed by the death of the humanity and decline of the morality. Although the theme of the artworks is tragedy but it is from inside this tragedy that the human ethics and values are born. In fact, the mental blossoming and the human spirituality sublimation are obtained when the veneration of the ethical values, in the first place, and observance of the justice and fairness, in the second place, are considered as well-calculated scales.

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