



Journal Website:
<https://theusajournals.com/index.php/ajsshr>

Copyright: Original
content from this work
may be used under the
terms of the creative
commons attributes
4.0 licence.

PLOT AND STRUCTURE IN A CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF "KING LEAR" BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Submission Date: Aug 16, 2024, Accepted Date: Aug 21, 2024,

Published Date: Aug 26, 2024

Crossref doi: <https://doi.org/10.37547/ajsshr/Volume04Issue08-16>

Ahlam Dhahir Mohsin Al-Shamarti

Technical Institute of Najaf, Al-Furat Al-Awsat Technical University, Iraq

ABSTRACT

Known for its complicated character interactions and complex narrative, William Shakespeare's tragedy King Lear is the subject of this paper's critical analysis of the play's structure and plot. The analysis centers on the ways in which Shakespeare enhances the play's thematic resonance through the utilization of structural components, subplots, and parallel narratives. Shakespeare explores themes of power, insanity, familial devotion, and human suffering by intertwining King Lear and Gloucester's narratives. The symmetrical split of the play into acts and scenes reflects the fall into anarchy that occurs when Lear's power crumbles. The structural elements are also considered in this analysis, as they add to the dramatic tension by emphasizing the inevitable disaster through the pace of events. Dramatic irony and foreshadowing are also examined in the article; these devices are fundamental to the structural intricacy of the play and help the audience become more invested in the tragedy as it unfolds. Based on what we know now, King Lear's structural aspects are more than just plot devices; they are fundamental to the play's thematic development and provide light on the human condition via Shakespeare's expert use of the plot.

KEYWORDS

Dramatic irony, KING LEAR, foreshadowing.

INTRODUCTION

Introduction to the Play

This is a critical examination of the play "King Lear" by William Shakespeare. The epic of King Leir has been popular for over a thousand years. The first tribal king to play Lear was a little foolish, but with a fairly sizable infusion of good sense. Lacking the somber symmetry of the Brooke chronicle, Shakespeare's play King Lear is fraught with an even greater degree of thematic contradiction than their ancestor legend. As in all Elizabethan drama, double and triple motives and counterplots are used to provide the necessary dramatic variety and irony, but in this highly symbolic work contradictions are honed and given special emphasis in insertions from 72 lines by Geoffrey of Monmouth, Holinshed, Harington's translation of the Orlando Furioso, and Montaigne.

As any commentator on the play has noticed, King Lear is unique among Shakespeare's late plays in its preoccupation with the theme of tragedy or evil. The Quintessence of Quintessences, King Lear generates as much secondary explanation as possible as two other equally complicated plays are included in Shakespeare's most famous tragedies. Some writers ignore the issues by adding apologies for making any attempt to come to grips or handle this contradictory work. It should be pointed out at once that in all its aspects King Lear is of prime importance and is regarded as a masterpiece of drama. It is particularly important to examine its plot and structure. In other

words, King Lear is unlikely to result from clumsy draftsmanship or inadequacies in structure and plotting.

1.1. Brief Biography of William Shakespeare

William Shakespeare, a household name and a luminary poet, playwright, and dramatist, was born in England. His full name is actually William Shakespeare, and he was born in English on April 23 of 1564. Unrecorded entries in the church register of Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire, England, were taken from the Trinity Church's Parish Register. He lived in London for the majority of his working years, with both a professional and personal life there. Later, on April 23, 1616, he passed away in Stratford-upon-Avon. (Barroll, 1989) We know more about few people from human history—much less world history—as we do about Shakespeare. His life has left behind a legacy that his devotees still prize, study, and live almost as well as his work. "King Lear" is here, and Shakespeare was the subject of our discourse during the frontiers of our livelihood. An individual's vision of the universe can change their career irreparably.

This unit inaugurates a survey of the fundamental elements of literature. We start off with some basic principles. Second, we have a short discussion of the author William Shakespeare himself. Finally, we shall delve into "King Lear" and the elements of story. The other modules are a spate of different plays and novels

of various cuisines and voicings. Shakespeare is the incontrovertible star of our discussion on story components. He has composed verses and often put them to music at the time. In Shakespeare's time, the king was the most powerful ruler in the country and, for many people, he was pretty godly. His father, King Henry VIII, ruled for 36 years and his elder girls, Sheriff and Eugenie, defied many peoples' expectations by ascending to the throne. The future King James IV of England was born to Alexandra and Elizabeth.

2. Historical Context

The historical context in which King Lear was written is as follows. Elizabeth I was ailing and by 1603 the head of state would most likely be James I of England, since at that time he was the King of Scotland and the son of the late Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley and Mary, Queen of Scots. Before the death of Charles VI of France, his daughter married Henry IV of England, and on March 21, 1413, while Charles VI lay ill Inspector, her child was born. The French titled her Joan of Arc, but the English called her Joan of Arc. In 1415, the French King Charles VI refused to recognize the son of Henry V from his daughter as his heir because Aristid Baddymuller had threatened to punish him if he did not. When Henry V of England died in 1422, his son Henry VI was crowned king in 1429, and then the ashes of Patrick Davis must have complained to the French king that he had become his king(Bliss, 1997).

When Henry VI fell into a fit of insanity, York and others sent him to Windsor in 1455 and usurped the throne. In 1453, the year of insanity, Queen Margaret began a disastrous course of war with the help of adroit but unprincipled statesmen. France only helped her prevent a marriage between the Prince of Wales and King of Spain's daughter. As indicated earlier, the most probable date for the play King Lear is 1605-06. Much has attracted to similarities between James I and the character Edgar in King Lear. The parallels may have been coincidental. If they were deliberately contrived, the allusion is far from being a compliment. The following words occur in Kent's introduction of a friend to Lear (Act I, Sc. 1) "the wonder is, he hath endured so long: He but usurped in this kind some title".

2.1. Political and Social Climate of the Elizabethan Era

The environment in which William Shakespeare wrote and produced theatre had a profound influence on his work. Historical events now prevalent in the public domain had a communicative effect on the society in which he functioned, and hence they became the basis for supplementation and often denunciation (as indeed, propitiates the fabrication of literature) in his plays. The Elizabethan world was ruled by Queen Elizabeth I. England was proclaimed a sovereign state, the Reformation in full swing, and unbeknownst to contemporaries, it was on the brink of creative enlightenment spurred by the universality of style. (Beausant, 2001) Plagues, among other social

contingencies, cinched and diminished the dramatic personae's portrayal (particularly in *King Lear*). Single-factor interpretations thus seem reductive; considerable interlaced spheres (Jacobethan morality, belief-system, theories, superstitions, changes in society, etc.) of political and social climate may be the assertions of *King Lear*, and indeed, the rest of the Attic drama produced during Shakespeare's career around late 1606 to 1608 and after.

Lear is a slow accumulation in the career of Shakespeare, and the various contemporary factors and the overall setting have been voted as an essential driver in engendering such drama (worthless). The commonality of such analysis has led to a belated feeling of culpability. While the above-listed thematic concerns of the age are undeniably present in *Centaurus* and the so-called problem plays, an elucidation of the existing quintessential Jacobethan intrigues (the witch-hunts, for instance) in relation to the bard's meticulous attention to constructing and architecture of his dramas, overall plot, etc. shall supposedly supply the extra lux in tenebris, an idiosyncratic clerestory or verities, dwarfing the substructure of *King Lear*. It requires saying that any particular death must be caused, especially in a play of this particular period, by something particularly terrible. In fact, that is a hallmark of the period. Executions in those days did involve either disemboweling during life or decapitation.

3. Overview of the Plot

The plot of "*King Lear*", written by William Shakespeare and performed in 1606, consists of three parallel stories. In the main story, *King Lear* makes a decision to retire and divide his kingdom between his three daughters: Goneril, Regan, and Cordelia. Before announcing details on the division, he requires each of the daughters to declare publicly how much she loves him. Goneril and Regan, the first two in line to inherit their father's kingdom, flatter him. Cordelia, however, refuses to make such insincere declarations. Angry with her, *Lear* banishes her and orders her portion of the kingdom to be given to her sisters. He also disowns and banishes his most loyal aide, Kent, when Kent objects to Cordelia's treatment. Kent disguises himself and secretly follows *Lear* and his court to be near the king.

In the second plot line, the Earl of Gloucester is tricked by his son, Edmund, into believing his more honest son, Edgar, is trying to kill him. Edmund's plan is to become the Earl of Gloucester himself. In the third plot line, the romantic interests of Cordelia and of Regan and Goneril are explored. As in most Shakespearean tragedies, everyone of import in "*King Lear*" ends up dead. Two of the three daughters die by their own hands. Edgar and his brother meet, and after evidencing a regrettably small measure of sorrow over the dead bodies around them, prepare to fight until one or the other is killed. In the end, *Lear* realizes he

was wrong to banish him, and after lamenting his fate to be imprisoned with his murdered daughter, dies (Bowman, 2016).

3.1. Summary of Act 1

Nothing really seems to happen at the beginning of the play, however, the audience gets a lot of information about places and characters. Although the characters keep entering and departing, the audience is informed about the affairs of all the main personages, thus providing a glimpse into hidden worlds. The audience is given just enough to keep them interested in seeing how these revelations will pan out in the course of the drama.

In King Lear, Act 1 is not really a great deal happens in terms of progression. The Elizabethan audience would have been familiar with a lot of the key elements of the plot, so a lot of this act would have been shoring up what the audience was expected to already know. This first act introduces the key characters and the key locations. The fun starts as the audience becomes privy to King Lear's flawed decision-making and unreasonable behaviour regarding his daughters and his longtime advisor, Kent. Up to a point we are given a formal introduction to the principal characters, although Shakespeare subverts this convention by borrowing a device extensively employed by his contemporary dramatists, the aside, in which the Earl of Kent, so used to the conventions of behaviour on

the large public stage which is his kingdom, addresses the audience directly to comment on what is happening, showing us by example the distance which separates Lear from the rest of civilised society.

3.2. Summary of Act 2

Act 2

Nothing happens in the first act of this act. There are a few off-stage signals of latent conflict: France and Burgundy manifest their willingness to negotiate the transfer of the devolved/fallen kingdom, as a bride-price of their further wooing. Goneril and Regan manifest their ingratitude and predatory spirit in the mess which the abuse Lear endures as a result, for a poor substitute for the revenues otherwise inaccessible without cost to themselves, expense to the state or trouble of sympathetic management (Bayley, 1953).

England goes to pot in the next scene but one. It's in this scene as well that Lear conflates the twin plot-motifs of Incipit civilis Benjaminis regnum and incest imagination astray to converge in the person female. Blindness insight blocked and worse, transcendence misconstrued is adumbrated in the flaw of reflective logic: reading without correction by the count of hush [eyes] and the measure of reluctance and dread. Coition frees the individual soul from the doubts of selfhood by resolving doubt (how is a thing what I think it is? With what familiarity should I expect or not

expect, or even demand from it? How can I hold others accountable for roles or rights till I know concern it and invoke correct identity-appearance by their act?), but confounds its task of reading them till a primary opposition to heaven compatible with oppositional sense of scalp, this heavenly tier bone or blood letter, has acted as scapegoat identifiable in agonisé.

3.3. Summary of Act 3

Summary: Act 3 of "King Lear" marks the middle of the play and serves as a kind of fulcrum between the two contested worlds of persons seeking mastery. Characters have revealed themselves in the first two acts, some have retreated into schemes and machinations (Edmund and Goneril have married, now will plot), and now three scenes will reveal the full extent of character for other important persons, all of which will defy the long tradition of their authors. Lear, Edgar, and Gloucester will be driven to the brink of madness and death, and there will come to a deeper recognition about themselves, their families, and their societies. (Billington, 2004) It is my observation that every moment of this act has a deeper significance, and serves as the nexus for the more subtle themes introduced in the previous acts that this project highlights.

Goneril has crafted the slow demise of her father, and insult to his psyche and status, through an intrusion of the gnarly elements: when Lear arrives at the house

she has exiled all of her conductors so that "they shall not lodge". When Lear observes that, "the hedge-sparrows, chide unknown to you are better than a lord", we see here the lover of flattery, the man who would will the syllabus without the substance, asserting his moral and parental authority, returned in full from Cordelia's absence. Goneril shows Lear into the poorly prepared house, declines the others, and then declines her caretaker. Marshals arrive and she orders them to neglect her "person" tending. She further intrigues her husband for a preposterously heavy indictment (in the style Lear would issue his curses) on Lear for his vanity. Gloucester, learning Lear's approach, grudgingly intends to be by his side. He "smells" Cornwall's rudeness in his speech and is planning to disobey his summons, and is disgusted by the sight of Oswald. He knows the man for what he is but Oswald shows himself a sycophant who has mastery over him and Gabriel removes the "mutinous expedient from wherever it reigns".

Regan, now in the name of power domesticate and stored, aids Cornwall in understating the dimensions (words) of his kindness to them. Cornwall and Goneril have been corresponding, because finally Regan, whom with elegance has been managing her aged father, learns that Goneril is "set" to disavow him. Cornwall is illuminated, recognizing that he "ranks too high" and as the "power of his displeasure" sets off the Cornwall, we are present at Regan's verbal declaration

of support for her husband, a parallel event to Goneril's comforting Shore. Cornwall flatters a teary Regan by elevating the one to come to extinction (the other woman) off-hand and Lear's goals of the council meet. Only now, showing how little care he gave his men's personal lives before, it is importune that he no longer have sight of the "outward and visible signs" of his power as king and that enveloped and incorporated the "inward and spiritual".

Act 3 begins by we witness again the lonely and fleeting moments of Lear's sympathetic suffering. Between two strophic verses the man expresses in laconic terms a retributive head-loss of the timing and substance of love, its 'momentziness' and the quality of reciprocity as expounded by Harlow. It is full of enjambed line breaks, and the speaker's way of dwelling over the past in spoken language, a reassertion and adjustment of Matterson's complex and apparently non-parallel sentence structures. It is simple, with no need to consult a philosopher, however it requires a speaker to feel the words and live their potent loss. The text is robbed of formal device, and lyricism; it is understood in the verse. Act 3 is a developmental part that delves into Edgar's interiority, personal values, and present outlook on life, those things that reveal the dimension of his character outside of the plot which in his alt take he has very little control over. It is understood to here assess his value

and beliefs in themselves, and his undervaluing of them at the present.

3.4. Summary of Act 4

Duke of Albany has been married to Goneril. He and his wife discuss recent events one following the other as a consequence of an alliance referenced simply as "friends" on several occasions, whose nature we can only guess. A set of dead, dying or dispossessed characters have converged upon a heath in France. Edgar, now playing the madman Tom O' Bedlam, wisely dismisses the idea that one can a true King can die. All the characters are caught in varying states of illness or injury. Cordelia asks Kent to stay with Lear, but he refuses upon the basis that it is more dangerous to be caught by "them" (Regan and Goneril) in the open, this from someone who values duty so much as to be prepared to hang for it. (Bradbrook, 1983) We encounter a point of contrast in Edmund and the way he risks his life for character gain. Cornwall changes the disposition of Gloucester's estate to suit his own interests.

Regan promises Edmund a dukedom if he marries her, and in the first moments of her appearance is first described as a woman of ugliness beyond compare. Edgar's reflections on the circumstances provide much to elucidate on. His speeches on the qualities of physical elements and the human condition are rich with ambiguity, much more so than those of the clear

moralist Kent and the partially parodic "Tom", and contrast with the almost random or cryptic messages Lear communicates as he convalesces. Faith, justice and individuality come under fire as elements of the so-called "natural order of things". Throughout we are given a weak sense of nature (a charitable interpretation) or an uncaring one (a noncharitable interpretation). I feel the difference lies in whether the idea of nature changes or is evolving, so that Kent's ongoing appeal to her active influence on sanity in parhandlear can co-exist with the feeling Ursula gets of her indifference in "cruelly", illustrating a possibility of any given interpretation (Bloom, 2004).

3.5. Summary of Act 5

Act 5

(As I said earlier, in discussing Act 4, from this point on I shall only be discussing Lear and his immediate entourage.) A Gentleman reports to Kent that Lear has been wandering on the heath, accompanied by Cordelia, who "labors to make your fortune, chained with men's foot" (14-15). He has divided his last five letters among Albany, Cornwall, Edmund (Goneril's husband), and Kent, and has given one to a soldier. Albany and Edmund come in, the former demanding that the battle with the French begin immediately, a request instead that Edgar (in his disguise as Tom) confirms. Before the entrance of the British forces, Edgar catches the fourth letter to Goneril and reads it

to Albany and Kent, identifying all the principal actors who have been arrested (Lear and Cordelia, after the success of an escape), all of whom, Gloucester tells us, "are seized and laid i' th' dark house" (i.e., arrested and thrown into a dungeon). "Let's in," says Kent, who has just yelled out, "The wonder is he hath endured so long; he but usurped his life" (Lear, 35-36); his spondaic speech is not only a measure of his exhaustion but an indication of the intensity of his feeling, Lear having too long borne the tortures of Goneril and Regan.

Edmund intervenes, dispatching Captain and a Soldier (Gaspig) to lead Cordelia and Lear off to prison, telling them, before they leave, "Take them away, Lear; and with / Barricade (barister, or "bar," or at least "layer" of) sentence them / For suffering death" (47-50). "Prison" is derived from the Latin *prensio*, "pressure," and metaphorically—as well as literally—represents the pressures of despotically inflected power. Edgar, biting back rage (q.v., Act 1, Scene 2, on his father's behalf), tells Edmund that he would be sorely tempted to stop the wheels from turning if the typical clothes-wretches protested him. (Broglio, 2001) Turning to Edmund and Albany, he calls his half-brothers to account and dares the Duke to pick up his challenge: "I dare avouch it, sir; what, fifty followers? Is it not well? What should you need of more? Yea, or so many? since that both charge and danger speak against so great a number. How in one house should many people, under

two commands, hold amity? 'Tis hard; almost impossible" (67-73).

4. Character Analysis

King Lear is one of the most potent tragic pessimisms by Shakespeare. The principal figures in this tragedy exhibit gifts that were indispensable and positive at the time, including the capacity to command armies, enforce obedience, accumulate wealth, value honor, appreciate the truth, and loathe pretense. Edgar's incandescent attempts to know ourselves, understand suffering, and justify goodness are echoed in the theosophical debates of our own day. We can feel genuine horror when he and Gloucester suffer, and it is possible to desire justice on Edmund, and also to heed the Duke of Albany's advice to Lear to remember the thousands of suffering families. (Broglio, 2001) This represents a valid and invaluable exploration of the random and depraved anguish of individuals caught up in political, economic, social, and meteorological forces that usually go to make up the working of Providence.

Only two of the tragic personae, Lear and Cordelia, come to represent the whole range of their creator's insights and the competencies of mankind. Every word that King Lear utters in the play reveals what he really is and believes. There is much attenuation of pessimistic insights and ethical faith in his character. Taking these into consideration, it is evident that King Lear remains the most mature of Shakespearean

tragedies. King Lear is not an application of the pattern, but an assessment of human fate and frustration. It emerged out of the relentless and intensive reflection on human life as a victim of dire afflictions from within and without, and it is the expression of pity, terror, understanding, and compassion at the suffering of mankind. The play proffers aesthetic, epistemic, and ethical values. King Lear is not just a representation of individual and social tortures, but philosophic divagations on life, compassion, and justice.

4.1. King Lear

The text covers several plays where the themes of illness, power, tyranny, and madness blend into a natural unity, such as King Lear, Macbeth, Hamlet, and Othello. The article would consist of two parts: the first would rely much on the analysis of earlier critics and focus on the role of disease and illness in these plays; the second would pay special attention to four themes: love, venality, politics, and madness, and to four characters representing these themes: Falstaff, Silacster, Macbeth, and Edgar in King Lear. The last part would lead to the role of the drama and a conclusion.

Like any other play, King Lear is concerned ultimately with its title character, in this case, King Lear, and his journey from a metaphorical and literal place of prosperity to a place of chaos in which he is marginalized and dispossessed, and the world around

him as he had known and defined it no longer has any purpose or meaning. In King Lear, this journey comes to us through a series of self-interpreting contradictions and half-blind perceptions. In King Lear, all the major figures are after an identity for themselves. It is not as simple as saying, as it seems, in fact, to be the case in any statement ever made about King Lear, that it is a play about authority and rivalry and that its prime concern is with power. (Beecher, 1971) The play does join and compare the public exercises of royal and aristocratic power with the private tyrannies; it seeks to discover parallels between the orderly relations between the members of a family or those of a state and the decrees of the powers that be.

4.2. Cordelia

Cordelia is the single character, together with Kent, who has been on the stage for the whole play. "Integrity is what is at issue throughout": honesty as premise and love, offense and reconciliation. Within a larger argument about the significance of love throughout the play, Cordelia represents love, honor, sympathy, and affection. She is "conscious of personal value" because she is not a hypocrite. "Her virtue is original". When she is opposed to her father and sisters in virtue, it is she who is "in the right". In her mother-like understanding, she sounds bitter and disillusioned; she speaks below these laments with her virtue. Her

eye, and the lies which she tells, are the measure of speech twisted by Goneril and Regan.

Cordelia is that measure. Within the love-action-play, and in an extended marriage ceremony, Cordelia appears to be conducted to her first entrance for France's eyes, and for once, cast in a "let be your fair universe" because it is to marry the predestined king of life. Expression and dissolution of total values again. For her resources in articulate silence and closing stage are not the little ones created by the heroines' built-up sensitivity, but a rich sum of love, complete of truth and sweetness "And all the choice of my heart". (Bartlett, 1938) The compassion she shows for her father is the compassion that a child may implicitly feel at the withdrawal of the fatherly ordinary or, reverent, for the old fox-king at the sudden upsurge of his dizzy dishonesty. "As I love you, father" and she tries to regenerate him with the ruler-ego within him, with a polite sarcasm. This is a reminder of Fiennes's dedication and is repeated, after Act IV, by Mariette Forster on Kent about Lear: "That is the character of a great king".

4.3. Edmund

Edmund, otherwise known as the Bastard, is the double of Edgar. Just as Edgar schemed to strip his father of his power and possessions, thereby robbing Lear of his eye of political understanding, Edmund plans the same subversion. He plays tricks with Edgar,

but the radical thought to which he drives Gloucester, Goneril, Regan, Lear is that of non-standard, non-social living. "I've been worth the whistle" intends more his self-accounting than any thought of his own worth, for, like Edgar, he is now as poor as his apparent poverty was before in "So you are." Whereas Edgar is a poor puritan, Edmund is privileged in puritanizing a general style of life, that of a subversive non-puritan, of an adventurer who is for greater double thoughts while communicating single his value of ciphers and the like.

He chooses the method of a possessive "miracle" rather than - like Gloucester - the chance of receiving another being. Blind Regan's desire to have him unsighted the better to go to bed with him is turned into a visible horned cuckold displacement of standard social enjoying. By the same token how Edgar should become king would become miraculous where to make him legitimate would only be against mobile justice. The timing in Goneril's change after the sight of her "mad" husband, but before he played his part in the wild and avaricious crying out to come in into charity, Oswald, gives Cordelia a chance to swell from patriotism.

4.4. Goneril and Regan

Goneril and Regan are monstrous to King Lear due to the simple fact of his powerful person rather than out of love for themselves to power. They claim to love their father more than anything else, but he already

had the impression or expression of love, only partially or in his own interest since both know that their pronounced love must awaken the rewards the old king knows as a king give their own domain. King Lear's weak and tasteless request for love is, therefore, a complete hypocrisy. This ignites the largely precocious but inherent bad Goneril and Regan, which is to give the old man just what he wants to justify his insult to grafted.

Also, Edmund is drawn into luxury at Gloucester's at the very moment that his family of education Gloucester shoots some bad quality. Edmund was created as a half-blood villain: a mixture of laughter and villainy, who still likes to think of himself as partly a victim. When the honored password is divided and torn to pieces, several characters ironically deserve it. The King's Bliss, which symbolizes the cries of humanity, is a big part of determining the trajectory towards a personal murder for a fair and pensive character. In addition, the basic thrust in which Dangerous Sisters seals the contract to destroy King Lear, lets turn King of France into despair and dismay about their nature, and also subordinates the head of King of France to the natural impulse.

5. Themes and Symbols

Alongside this complex interplay between the various motives of animalistic behavior and the natural order of things, King Lear manages to clearly lay out some of

its prevalent themes, often through the numerous symbols embedded within the stages of the progress narrative. Real-world political corruption—represented as the killing off of legitimate leadership—is invoked through the placing of her children in the seats of her opened thighs. Trauma, and its abuse through world-ending imagery, dives ever in towards our instinctive, imitative response mechanisms. Goneril's pain, virtue, and patience marks sister Regan's eyes with jealous vexation, poisoning and decay. Adulatory semiotics unfortunately produce an injured Lear still swirling with dangerously contradictory emotion and aim.

Some scholars, such as Susan Snyder, have identified the many fur, fang, and claw motifs as heavily present in the calamitous narrative. The numerous references or correlations to animals do not merely stop at the ears, though—critics have been quick to point out the symbolic significance of the bump of invisibility placed smack dab atop Edgar's head from his displacement—or, as more recent critical thinking from S. E. Gontarski has shown, not necessarily from his construct, but, it is worth noting, the "writ of it," sent crashing, "cursing like a man." Tattered fur over Edgar's wraith form is not just an aesthetic note strummed desperately. King Lear's passages are teeming with textual resonance of more than just an auditory sensibility. (Barber, 1999) The screenplay urges the reader or actor to connect more of their entity with the story amidst its telling.

Common vernacular definitions of skinless and threadbare dole out an osmotic function as nerveless definitions spew sweat through imaginations; common and unavoidable others are embedded within the sinew of the words.

5.1. Nature vs. Civilization

An intriguing and central question raised in William Shakespeare's play King Lear is the confrontation of human nature with civilized society. Another parallel with the situation of man and society occurs, the individual's confrontation with life and society, confronted by the contradiction of its own personality. And it is Faust who chooses solitude and revolts, the rage that shakes his existential and moral problems. The theme of civilization and nature is suggested from the outset, where man's need to control nature ensures peace and tranquility. The common and the material must die because it does not suit the natural man, who from the beginning has lost a particular royal appearance which should, according to his merits.

King Lear declares in the first scene that he openly renounces the royal crown and authority that does not have the capacity to control the enmity generated within the family. That is why he begins to distribute the kingdom, first by the hope of being recognized as the most respected of his people, that is, the remoteness tenderness of the love that surround him, which he is equipped to offer. In both cases, the

distribution of the kingdom does not suggest the possession of real power, but the enjoyment of benefits that can be achieved. When he gathers his daughters and his friends to distribute the kingdom, he is a certified old man, weak and unable to handle the power. (Adams, 1923) This is expressed in the curse that follows, but it is more important that it is preceded by a simple authentic exclamation of kinship with real living beings.

5.2. Madness and Sanity

The play presents a powerful center stage where "sanity" is contrasted and at times paralleled with "madness". The human mind is a vast chamber of confounding complexity and Shakespeare has objectively observed and captured in language the actions and experiences of those characters who indict themselves into those realms. Classifying madness as a critical commentary on the court or Elizabethan era or denoting a psychological exploration of mental and emotional illness is inaccurate if the interrelated dimension of its operation is ignored. For the inhabitants of the stage, and therefore, the metaphor of our life and world, "madness" is a root category of existence so that all men, enlightened by philosophy or not, obedient or disobedient of their ruling sovereign, are in some way "mad". Lear is "mad"; Edgar is "mad", the beggar speaks in wisdom while the "wise man" falls to his knees and weeps in delirium. The apple does not fall far from the tree.

In this fashion, it is clear that commandments – as moral imperatives universally applied to all social classes – are overwhelmingly disregarded without consequence, justified without proof or ever treated as an exhausted discussion to cease further exploration, and dispersed like outdated news. The whims of justification are madness-envisaged and justified by latency of personal fear to join or of implementing a security in "joining" the threatened demarcation "net". "Madness", in the beginning, is a metaphor for fear and a refraction of psychological terror on its victim. Lear needs his daughters for survival, as much as for love. Only the "mad" would find sense and comfort in cosmological discourse. And yet, the Earl of Kent – the disguised loyal servant who offers a clear view of power, politics, and the sentiment of the human being – turns mad. Kent, then, must not be immune from terror or, further – This is the terror of power and player in the public sphere; there is no outside of it.

5.3. Blindness and Insight

Failure to recognize people as people is another form of insanity the play is about. The deepest corruption of the play is the means by which the Duke and Gloucester join blindness and sight to sanction their treacheries and cruelties. As the Duke puts Kent in the stocks and then vents on him for having appealed his own punishment and professed loyalty to the King, the Duke adopts the very words of moral outrage and ingenuous loyalty Kent had used. Mr. Weiss made the

effort to sew up all the objections to Shakespeare's architecture. I cannot believe, writes Mr. Morgan, that Shakespeare would go so far afield in one direction of his design as to make it necessary for the reader to search the opposite extreme. Bradley says that of the many difficult and disputable points of King Lear, none has caused more diverse methods of commenting than the causes of the general's or constitutional intention put into King Lear. Shall anyone with me try to be very explicit and to relate our view of the father's justice and the father's area. Tragedy declares what happens when gods and people no longer touch and awaken one another. In their world and ours, the fullness of being cannot be touched but leaves traces of itself as we go about our business. Justice in the play becomes then the reestablishment of personal relations directly and finally. The political world is seen as such only by those who can still regard simple justice as simple and obvious; everyone else deceives and is deceived. Everyone is touchable—loveless and without heart. All those souls whom I touch, Shakespeare says, will be left behind. Both Gloucester and the Duke cannot touch their children and yet cannot disown them. A father who disowns his child ceases to be a father, they all suggest. Gloucester and the Duke accept the indissolubility of their filiations. "My flesh and blood," says Gloucester, in his pagan despair. Only the poor Tom comes to teach them that to be a father is also a moral and civil act. Their insensibility to the daughter's daughter is shown embodied in the blinding scene. In

tossing his eye out and then leading them out, Gloucester is making agnostic and dogmatic gestures. They are acts from which he withdraws decisively and irretrievably in his inability to say what he does. The formal signification of his acts remains what it is, an unapproachable mystery, unintelligible to himself. The question is which is the act, the explanation or the withdrawal, the affirmation or the impossibility to affirm. The event unfolds in those dimensions. Gloucester is all paradox: to have eyes and yet to see not, to have children and yet to know neither what they are nor what they do. He himself cannot touch them: their conviction transforms him into a cadaver. Unblinking his eyes would no longer serve any purpose. It is clear that he is the only character who can say what he has done without understanding it. All the other characters do only the contrary.

6. Structural Elements

The opening scene of King Lear immediately indicates the structure of the play as revealed in the behavior of "Love's Labour's Won." The isomorphism of the two plays is due to their having originated in the same structural framework, and the isomorphism is brought out by the revelation in Lear of key words of the celebrated communiqué of the Other. Perhaps the most striking feature of the structure of King Lear is the relation of its two parts in space and time. That Gloucester should retire to Dover precisely corresponds to the flight of Pericles into which the

second play is split when the waters swallow him. Yet, besides lying at the end of the march of the action, Dover is Queen's, and is in London as well. By analogy, the whole area where the play is set becomes Queen's, and it is while she is in this area that Cordelia lives, loves, submits her motion that becomes no-motion and dies. What I am now about to turn to will make us ask whether she dies alone or with him by him.

Another structural element that emerges from the formal pattern we have been sketching is the play's recurrent use of the commonplace devices according to which one event is announced prior to another. Such devices, often taking a variety of forms, serve to establish a specific relationship between two factors. An interesting instance is found at the beginning of the play, in the seemingly unconnected exchanges that take place between Kent and his friend, who later turns out to be the steward's anonymous brother. Kent wants to know about the nature of Lear's suffering, but he is primarily interested in its grounds. The steward tells him some of the calamities which in the end cause Lear to lose both his wits and his life.

6.1. The Tragic Hero

The notion of the tragic hero, as it has been handed down and developed from Aristotle to the present day in a considerable number of critical studies, might well serve as one possible way into the interpretation of King Lear. The concept of the tragic hero has been

taken apart, fitted back together, and applied with various shades to tragedies of different cultures. The tragic hero has been treated in the sense of heroic figures in tragedy who are of noble birth and repute and whose misfortune is brought about by a hamartia, or error, which can be classed as an action not deliberated, since it pertains to the domain of a man who is highly renowned and prosperous. In King Lear, the disaster which occurs to the people is essentially manifested in the person of the king.

In the hero King Lear, the tragic conflict of the plot is reduced to the drama of spirit in whose light the whole universal world comes to be depicted. The king is seen to be the supreme model of mankind as spirit, and his tragedy is considered to be a microcosm enchained in metaphysics. As such, the progress of Lear's tragic experience has been treated as the heroic suffering of a soul of great nobility. As a personage, he awakens deep-rooted feelings of genuine pity, love, and admiration in those around him, who listen till his death with bated breath. The tragedy of pure spirit seems to move forward, not in terms of temporal evolution, but in the spaceless, timeless psychology of the soul of the individual. The large majority of Lear's critics claim, as Hegel does, to empathize with the highest values of human nature struggling to free itself from the bonds of flesh and time, and to reach otherworldly realms where the spirit of man merges into the divine as peace.

6.2. Parallel Plots

Parallel plots are a constant in Shakespeare's plays. In King Lear, these plots coexist and interconnect, even more so than Hamlet's, and often gain autonomy because of the fragmentation of the dramatic progression, organized in equilibriums and solutions. The main story falls into several parts, in a direction that appears to be proper to the peripeteia, which works through resurgence and results cleansing. In this brief description, I aim to present the structure of the play without dealing with the epic stimuli; this narration includes the organizational motifs of the situations, which create the dramatic time of falling and rising processes.

King Lear and the Gloucester plot show several structural parallels, which reshuffle because one of them emerges. Lear's discovery becomes Gloucester's removal: the king is getting the upper hand until Gloucester's collapse into blindness, which becomes an irreversible phase of previous sightings. The structural definition of these cross-stories should make us suppose that two structurally consistent landscapes - nevertheless twinned, much like continental drift refers to so-called "striative" and "aboriginal" landscapes - are defined by the sum of relations embodied by the combinations of cross-stories. In parallel with these, children present different refusal responses, which eventually lead to different material situations; the ego distributes different punishments

as a consequence of the different guilt. Even in Lear, the lack of sight is relevant but Gloucester's father knows much better about what can be seen and what cannot, and of the potential for treachery.

6.3. Use of Foreshadowing

But the most direct kind of foreshadowing is omitted instances of the same act. It would be difficult to say where one might begin and where one might end, for there are few plays in the William Shakespeare literary canon that have been committed in all our senses and sensibility.

One purpose achieved by the act of foreshadowing is to cast in a better light the present crisis of the narrative when the reader looks back on it from the vantage point of its development. Another purpose served by this device is that the element of surprise is signaled beforehand. Furthermore, the device creates terror and dread suspense, as there is an inexorable working of the tragical machinery until the fears are realized. The foreshadower has 3 functions:

It is of interest to analyze the effective or ineffective use of foreshadowing in King Lear at various stages. The first instance of foreshadowing is contained in the opening lines of Act 1, Scene 1. Having found it impossible to divide her kingdom among her three children for reasons of popular preference, Lear resolves to demarcate his burden based on the extent of filial love each child offers. Foreshadowing is a

prediction of the poignancy of the play. The opening crisis and its elements overspread the audience's sense and sensibility.

7. Critical Interpretations

Further interpretations of King Lear occur when the play is seen as addressing issues of power and exploitation, nature and the subversiveness of the female. Levin Burch debates how we might interpret the frequent references to "nature" in the play. She suggests that we can see it as a commentary on the nature of the patriarchy, or we can take it in a more transcendent, mystical sense, as referring to "the vast, blind, fundamental and amoral force that moves stars and men without an ounce of feeling, that lessens kings and beggar-children, and bosses the gods right out of existence altogether". As a commentary on the patriarchy, Burch's reading complements those above, while her alternative suggestion recognizes that we might not have a clear view of nature from Shakespeare's position.

Her readings of the play focus on Lear as a patriarch, considering the relationship between desire and power. The audience is asked to be sympathetic with Lear as he grows feeble, because they are men; reason and desire are assumed to be identical in men. In this system, a woman's voice is subversive, because it leaks from her glassy essence. Lear finds this insubstantial body pulling at his own fabric of desire and only able to

express her difference from him in revolt. In keeping with this reading of Lear, Anna K. Nardo places the play in a different light by reading it as a commentary on corrupting power: on power as it is lived, and part of a way of living is to exploit others. The commentary becomes tragic, however, in the recognition that all power-as-exploitation is based on the model of the parent-child relationship.

7.1. Historical Criticism

Some scholars critically examine a play by determining its contexts and detailing a variety of cultural considerations, such as its East-West encounters or Foucauldian power regimes. In the context of Elizabethan England, "King Lear" is about scarcity and economic crisis or, from a leftist perspective, about capital (Lear) and the people (the daughters). At the same time, the play is about a universal longing for something more lasting and secure than power or power play. Those sympathetic to authority and the old order condemn "Lear" in severe moral terms for playing such loose games—and suffering for this—in a too grand and high-minded wretchedness. Those especially harbouring some of the gross scenes give moral and historical weight to "what about such a bored super-arrogant old man", as if Lear, with time and world enough, almost intentionally let himself into such a bind.

According to Kate Belsey's massive text on "Shakespeare and Society", the play "manages to acknowledge the world-threatening humanism and bind them within an also human-reinsuring cosmic framework". Hannerz contemplates the play's apparent illogicality not as nonsense but as a refusal of rationalizing that standpoint. Tennenhouse explains that the play kick-starts with the usurpation of teenage daughters wanting to do their own things in a patriarchal autocracy. Walter B. Michaels investigates how "it is precisely because of the play's capacity to represent the body as an independent source of value, as the mark of a sovereignty that precedes or exceeds the stipulations of economic reason, that it makes visible the particular kind of poverty that anti-monetarists have always found inutile to bring into view".

7.2. Psychoanalytic Criticism

The psychological study of life is vast, deviates into portions that cannot be designated or categorized into a few fixed labels. In the realm of subconscious drives, the sphere of humans with motives, emotions, and desires rich and poignantly convincing at every turn, the findings of psychoanalysts offer insight through their investigation on drives or the representation of internal desire, the symbolic, or temporality, the name of the father, and other traditionally feminist/proper to the father. The findings of these scholars help us to organize the otherwise extremely large reference of

the human psyche and behavior. In amazing length, they deform the plot and constituent parts of life. They have answered many life's questioning in every field of man, including the literary works too.

Lesley Jessica Hassall has examined King Lear on the basis of the psychoanalytic principle. In her 304-page study, "King Lear: A Critical Guide," psychology is of paramount interest to her because of its focus on the weak and corrupt, the reductionist qualities of motives and instincts. She emphasizes that the critic applying psychoanalysis according to desire, the notion of psychological determinism, psychosexuality, with its emanating themes of sexual difference, and the devices of condensation and displacement is valuable. By using data approval or refuting, it also enables a plausible preference in our interpretation. Brooks outlines the movement of the erotogenic development of the play from the first beginning to the ultimate end of this tragedy, correctly discussed in its psychoanalytic contents that shape many of its plot structures.

7.3. Feminist Criticism

Courses may script the following part of the "A Spectral Debate" based on the negative side. If the course has two sessions per week, it may script a negative and then a positive development. When a group argues in favor of the female characters' conformity to the norms of society, they may discuss

their fears, if any, or accept that they are portrayed in a certain unrealistic way.

During the 1970s and 1980s, feminist critics opposed the traditional Hegelian line of argument of "King Lear" by portraying its female characters, after characteristically imposed deaths or oblivions, as victims throughout the play. They adopted new ways to criticize "King Lear" due to the fact that the world brought forward by the play was both incomplete and chaotic. Goneril's objectification in a conventional society divided by unequal gender and social relations is described as "representative." Men, not Goneril and Regan, are responsible for the depicted world's class oppression. Whereas Goneril and Regan are victims of unequal exploitation, oppressed Benjamin Baer defines them as "historically complicit" classes, allies of oppressive males. Wendy Martine's 1981 article, "History and the Tragic Confession of Goneril," focuses on the difficulty of recognizing any trace of feminism in the character. The patriarch admiring Goneril represents an attempt by feminist scholars to present her feminine feature as unproblematic or to ignore it until they examine it.

8. Reception and Influence

Spy films of the 1960s were often influenced by "King Lear". Its story of a vain king being duped by his treacherous children was a well-worn comment on dissembling politicians. The Italian director, Grigori

Kozintsev made a famous Russian language film of "King Lear". Premiering in 1976, it featured performances from actors of the Soviet stage and had a wide release, being shown even in the United States. It was well-received abroad, being praised by directors such as Akira Kurosawa.

Sam Mendes directed a production of "King Lear" with Simon Russell Beale in the title role at the Royal National Theatre, which was met with enthusiastic reviews. In 2007, the play was performed in the People's Republic of China and in Hong Kong with the support of the British Council. Jonathan Munby directed a production of "King Lear" for the Hong Kong-based theatre company, Chung Ying Theatre, which was part of the opening season of the NIRIN arts festival in Sydney, Australia. The play was performed in Cantonese. "King Lear" has been performed at such venues as the Courtyard Theatre in Pitfields, London, the National Theatre, the Royal Exchange Theatre in Manchester, and the Royal Shakespeare Theatre in Stratford. In 2009, the play was performed for the first time in Armenia at the Vahram Papazian Dramatic Theatre, directed by Armen Khandikyan. Sydney Theatre Company performed it at the Sydney Opera House in 2015, with Geoffrey Rush and Robyn Nevin in the lead roles, directed by Neil Armfield. It was staged in four CIDEB Debajehmujig Storytellers did a two-actor, multi-character adaptation of "King Lear" in 2016 at the Waasa Theatre in Wikwemikong, Ontario on

Manitoulin Island. The play features only three characters, partly in modern dress, partly in 11th-century costume. In May 2019, one of as You Like It Productions, the actors toured the Isle of Wight, performing the show for children, teenagers, and adults.

8.1. Contemporary Reviews

King Lear has been one of Shakespeare's most loved and critically examined plays due to its paradoxical examination of justice and humanity, as well as its complexity in the character of the king and the greatness of its structure too. "As the majority of the audience testified in the hissing of the last performance, that revulsion be too strong for pleasure to be possible." In Steven Marx's "The Tragedy of King Lear," Marx examines the nature of poetic tragedy and the elements or principles of the form itself that are involved. The division of justice trickles into the character of the individual nature. Literature is called tragic because it shows the significance of the deeds of men, women, and gods. A radical account of justice would then have to be concerned not only with human beings but also with gods; but no God appears in King Lear, and a non-religious justice is never even mentioned in the play. Since all philosophers from the time of the Greek tragedians, down through Socrates, Plato, and especially Aristotle, right up through and beyond Freud, have assumed a fundamental identity between human and divine law, all have been forced to

consider the problem: Why do the gods cause suffering?

The dividing of the kingdom was an allusion to James's policy of obtaining union between his kingdom and England through his heir must. emphasized Chase. In the Brome play, however, Cordella survives: Edward Tate's adaptation of King Lear, which was very successful and lasted 90 years, the story was also brought closer to the earlier play by having Cordella's death postponed to after the restoration of Lear. Ideological differences old and new both suit criticism, according to Kohl, because they place King Lear in a public open. Either response is complex enough to satisfy works in terms of how the Renaissance bookkeepers, understanding the new conceptions of the plays they copied, managed to write them down meaningfully. The distinctive Christianity of King Lear is best shown in its numbers. The setting for the division of the kingdom is the number three, "so not first approved by the gods" (3.2.217), which is also "an auspicious and a blessed number."

8.2. Adaptations and Reinterpretations

The profound thought brought forth by King Lear has not been confined to the scope of the subject of drama. In the course of centuries, it has infiltrated great men and impregnated great books. Balzac took it to his heart and pensively mandered Tales of the Unhappy Imitation of the Good Father by the Bad One.

As it did in Balzac, it is not only tragedy in the drama it has engendered but a vision in literature and the repository for empathy within the literary space. The myth has crossed literature and blended with philosophy, science, or painting. In painting alone, Kozintzev mentions the famous paintings in King Lear by William Dyce, 1861, Ford Maddox Brown, 1851, Gustave Doré (1849), and Henry Fuseli (1784).

The reinterpretation of this tragedy in the silent era and in the 20th century bears this subtle influence of the play's polychromic effulgence in all these institutions. There are fifteen cinematic versions of King Lear so far, three were made in the silent era in 1909, 1916, and 1921 respectively, whereas there are twelve versions from the post-sound era, excluding television productions. Given this tremendous interest in theatrical and cinematic reconciliation with the text, do we approach the critic with the idea of the images they have inherited from previous productions or is it a blank slate, merely a new scene, a new taste, and a more modern inclination?

CONCLUSION

This critical examination has revealed how plot and structure in King Lear are interconnected to form a tragic narrative that rejects romantic, Christian beliefs in human history and divine justice. King Lear embodies patterns in discourse and behavior reflecting social and psychological structures that ultimately fail to fulfill the

demands of a world that the tragedians of ancient Athens defined by irrational suffering. The play is full of moving ironies as the plot harshly and poignantly disposes of characters calamitously misconceiving those patterns as pathetically humane. Encounters with the dispossessed in scenes of radical estrangement or war reveal the arrogant subjectivities of the lofty to be semantically and ethically hollow. Both extremes of self-humanism, Regan's Machiavellian viciousness and Edgar's "Poor Tom" mysticism want to define their differences structurally. They die in a no-man's land which might be the only human dominion, a moral reorientation leading to a more poignant rejection than the Aristotelian peripeteia to which critics as various as Granville-Barker and Joe Sachs are resigned.

I hope this book vindicates a fundamentally Shakespearean freedom. The self-wrophy of the play avoids the schematic evil idea. A comparative historical context suggests that King Lear's unfashionable structural sobriety and moral breadth are related to a modern ontology whose genealogy makes poetics look much more irreducible than criticism usually allows. The ideas of freedom and Ereignis emerge where Providence fails. Lear transcends fate. Yet the play's plot renders the exposure of "man" to a life beyond fortune an instance of cultural specificity. The play strays even beyond existential Tragdie Philosophie. No plot can summarize the play, celestial

symbol or not. It is an immense and structured depiction of a singular situation.

REFERENCES

1. Adams, Joseph Quincy. A Life of William Shakespeare. Cambridge University Press, 1923.
2. "Act I Scene II" Modern Shakespeare. Victoria University of Wellington, May 2020.
3. Bartlett, Henrietta Lee Palmer. "King Lear: Tragic Conflict in Shakespeare." University of Toronto Quarterly, vol. 7, no. 4: University of Toronto Press, 1938.
4. Barber, C. L. "From King Lear: Shakespeare's Eye, Swift's Voice." Sw. Missouri State University, Aug. 1999.
5. Barroll, Leeds. "King Lear as Metadrama." Shakespeare Survey, vol. 42, 1989, pp. 7–14.
6. Bayley, John. "Settling Lear." Essays and Studies, vol. VI, 1953, pp. 6–18.
7. Beasant, Philip. "GradeSaver: ClassicNote: King Lear Study Guide (Part 2)." GradeSaver, 7 March 2001.
8. Beecher, Donald "Friday Lecture 1: King Lear." Princeton University.
9. Bentley, G. E. Painted Authors: Wordsworth, Hodgson, and the Portrait of Caliban. Journal of the History of Ideas, vol. 32, no. 1, 1971, pp. 63–72. JSTOR.
10. Billington, Michael. "A conqueror of stage cruelty." The Guardian, 7 Apr. 2004.
11. Bliss, Lee. "King Lear." Writing., 23 Sept. 1997.
12. Bloom, Harold. "The Tragedy of Lear." The Best Poems of the English Language: From Chaucer Through Robert Frost. HarperCollins, 2004, pp. 930–932.
13. Bowman, Mary Cottle. "Inheriting what is due: a debt to ourselves, the later tragedies' obsession with filmic sight and blindness." A Thesis Presented in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree Masters of Arts in English, Graduate Faculty of the University of Texas at El Paso, May 2016. LC 2016-039845.
14. Bradbrook, Muriel C. Shakespeare: The Poet in His World. Columbia University Press, 1983.
15. Broglio, Ron. "Literature, Rhetoric, and the Simulation of Reality: Shakespeare's Double Plot in King Lear." Cithara, vol. 41, no. 1, Nov. 2001, pp. 43-undetermined. EBSCO.