

The Symbolic Significance of the 'Ring-Plot' in Shakespeare's The Merchant of Venice.

A Research by

Kawa Osman Omar

Asst. Lecture

University of Sulaimani

College of Languages- Department of Translation.

Dr. Shirin Saadullah Rasheed

Asst. Professor

University of Salahaddin

Department of English

Abstract:

Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* is a complex play. The play's complexity, to a certain extent, is due to its multiple plots. Critics have mainly concentrated on the main plot, while a minor plot, especially the 'Ring-Plot' has not received so much attention. Overall, the research investigates the significance of the 'Ring Plot' in the play: first, the extent such minor plot, structurally, interconnects two other plots, namely, 'the Trial' and 'Casket- Choosing' plots, and second; the extent such minor plot is thematically significant with regard to overall moral message of the play, and third; the extent the female protagonist's verbal skill and her 'role- playing' contribute in changing and reforming male lover's personality, and finally; the extent the play's minor plot reaffirms the female protagonist's sense of individuality and her quest for selfhood.

Key Words:

Ring Plot, Thematic, Structural, Interconnect, Test, Rhetoric, Wit, Scheme, Protagonist, the Trial, Selfhood, Individuality, Feminism, Verbal Power, Role-Playing, Disguise, Reform, Change, Personality.

Introduction:

Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* (c. 1596–1597) is a complex play. Many critics disagreed on whether or not the play is anti-Semitic. For instance, Harold Bloom had labeled the play as «a profoundly anti-Semitic work». Other critics, however, viewed the play differently. Some believe the play, through the victimized character of Shylock, offers a more sympathetic image of Jews during the Elizabethan era. Recent criticism, nevertheless, searched for the tenets of feminism in the play. The play's villain, Shylock, is probably one of the most ambivalent figures in Shakespearean comedies. Such figure, "seen in a complex and ambiguous social context, is always likely to elicit more audience sympathy than an unalloyedly wicked one". (Mahon, 2002: 387-388). There is also confusion whether to consider the play a comedy, tragedy or even tragic-comedy. This is mostly due to the way the play is structured around various plots. Unlike other Shakespearean romantic comedies,

there are to two or more “complex plots” intertwined within the play’s main plot. (Lester, 1988:21) Ironically, critics have mainly concentrated on the dramatic function of the ‘Trial plot’ while other plots such as ‘ the Ring- plot’ and ‘ Casket- Choosing’ plot have not received such attention. Noticeably, there is a thematic and structural interrelationship among various plots in the play. As we will explain in the following research, the minor plot in The Merchant of Venice is as important as the main plot with regard to its dramatic function, as well as, its thematic and structural significance.

The ‹Ring Plot› is part of multiple plots in the play aimed at changing and reforming the male lover’s personality. The plot’s story line centres on a trick by Portia, the female protagonist, to test the loyalty of the male lover. “ Like the trial, the ring plot is orchestrated by Portia; but while the former takes place in the male domains of law and finance and revolves around Portia’s disguise than her forensic ability, the latter shifts the field to the female realm of marriage and family”. (Grady, 2000:35). Throughout the play, Portia displays strong wit and cunning rhetorical style. During the Casket Scheme, for instance, she successfully guides Bassano in selecting the right casket without breaking the strict rules imposed by her deceased father. Through witty and manipulative linguistic tricks, the heroin provides some basic clues about the right casket. For example, the type of music she orders to be played during the act of choosing contains riddles and puzzles which ultimately guides Bassano to choose the right casket. During the trial, similarly, Portia wittingly manipulates and reverses Shylock’s legal trick he had hatched against Antonio. Her logical reasoning and strong wit eventually saves Antonio’s life.

As romantic lover, Bassano is a complex character. His strong wit enables him to pass successfully the ‘Casket-choosing’ scheme.. “Whereas the first two suitors Morocco and Aragon choose by “fleshy” standards—material and social status—Bassano realizes that choosing according to Portia’s inner worth must entail risking the loss of all he owns.” (Martin , 2001 : 12) Bassano’s correct choosing eventually earns him both love and fortune. Despite strong wit, he nevertheless, displays some weakness of character. His spendthrift habit and lavish life style caused Antonio to seal a dangerous bond with Shylock. Portia feels insecure about Bassano’s close relationship with his close friend Antonio. The developing romance between the two lovers, accordingly, “places Bassano in a situation of conflicting loyalties, which Portia must correct through the ring-test”. (ibid. P. 12).

Contrary to shylock’s villainous scheme, Portia’s ‘ Ring Test’ is devised to strengthen the bond of love and friendship between lovers and friends alike. Throughout the play, aspects of ‘love and friendship’ are contrasted against ‘hatred and division’. Portia’s genuine and noble attitudes are in clear contrast with shylock’s cruel and vengeful character. She had balanced her genuine passions with rational judgment. This is evident during the very beginning of the play in which she cunningly delivers her strict marital condition over her future husband:

PORTIA

Myself, and what is mine, to you and yours
 Is now converted. But now I was the lord
 Of this fair mansion, master of my servants,
 Queen o'er myself; and even now, but now,
 This house, these servants, and this same myself
 Are yours, my lord's. I give them with this ring,
 Which when you part from, lose, or give away,
 Let it presage the ruin of your love, (Act 3, Scene 2,167-175).

Through verbal conditions, the heroin displays her symbolic authority as ' the lord Of this fair mansion, master of (her) servants, Queen o'er (her)self' (Act 3, Scene 2. 168-170).). Here, " the irony of her self-bestowal to Bassano in the lines quoted above is that while they sound like a speech-act by which she gives herself away, her words merely trace the compulsory effect of the lottery by which her deceased father has disposed of her, as property, to a "lord". (Shannon, 2002: 54). Form a feminist Perspective, Portia's verbal strict conditions during the delivery of the ring represent a symbolic transfer of power from a patriarchal father figure to empowered female figure. Within the Elizabethan context, the heroine's dominant role during the delivery of the ring, symbolically, would represent a subversive challenge of the norms and conventions of the time. During that period, "A married woman was legally subject to her husband in all things; she could not sue, make contracts, or go to court for any reason without his approval"(Wiesner, 2000:37). Through the 'Ring Scheme', the heroin could reverse power relationship and bring a change in social roles between the married couple. Ironically, the delivery of heroine's fortune is conditioned by Bassano's display of true marital commitments. She "does give everything to Bassano here, but she gives it conditionally with the ring"(Callaghan, 2016:370). Bassano faces a difficult choice between his love for Portia and his friendship with Antonio. Overall, the 'Ring-Scheme' is solely devised to rectify Bassano's hasty and irresponsible attitude in decision making by setting a dividing line between two different types of commitments.

Portia's witty and deceitful rhetorical style during the 'Ring-Plot':

After the trial, the Balthazar/Portia uses a sly and manipulative scheme to test Bassano's loyalty. To Bassano's amazement, She "request(s) the ring as a token of gratitude." (Bellioti, 2012: 72) for saving Antonio. Through witty and cunning use of rhetoric, Balthazar/Portia lures Bassano to deliver the ring :

I'll take this ring from you.

Do not draw back your hand. I'll take no more.

And you in love shall not deny me this (Act 4, Scene 1. 428-431).

Notably, Balthazar/ Portia's sly and manipulative speech resembles a kind of witty linguistic trick she has used during the trial. Her request puts Bassano in a very difficult situation "where he will have to measure his love for Balthazar/Portia against his friendship with Antonio." (Avraham Oz, 1995:146). In a desperate move, Bassano tries to dissuade Balthazar / Portia from his request. He tells her that she deserves to be offered worthier gifts than a worthless ring: 'This ring, good sir—alas, it is a trifle. / I will not shame myself to give you this.' (Act 4, Scene 1. 449-50).The speech ironically makes Portia more persistent in her demand. To further press Bassano, Balthazar/ Portia cunningly reiterates her demand: 'I will have nothing else but only this. And now methinks I have a mind to it'. (Act 4, Scene 1, 434-435). The lawyer's sly rhetorical manoeuvring causes a rift between the two close friends. Antonio, on the other hand, keeps pressing Bassano to offer the ring to the lawyer as a token of gratitude: 'let him have the ring. /Let his deservings and my love withal / Be valued against your wife's commandment. (Act 4, Scene 1, 451-453). Bassano faces the dilemma of keeping a precious gift from his wife or giving it away for a dear friend. He finally concedes to the jurist's demand and offers him the ring. The ring, ironically, is delivered through Gratiano whose ring has been taken by Nerissa through another cunning trick.

In The Merchant of Venice, themes of self-sacrifice and loyalty recur through different dramatic situations. Antonio had risked his own life for the sake of saving Bassano's marriage. Bassano, too, gives away the most valuable gift from his bride to Balthazar / Portia 'as a token of gratitude' for saving his dear friend. The exchange of the ring recalls the lending process between Shylock and Antonio. Here, the Portia's ring plot can be viewed as a parody of Shylock's lending scheme. In both dramatic situations, however, the two friends, Bassano and Antonio, have followed their passion than reason. Antonio's naivety is exploited by Shylock during the trial scene. Bassano, too, followed his passion than reason when he gave away the ring after the trial. Both friends took action without taking into consideration the legal and moral consequences of their actions. Antonio trusted Shylock's words even though there was a long history of enmity between them. Bassano is equally naive because he was easily deceived by Balthazar/Portia's witty language. Nonetheless, Balthazar/Portia's 'Ring scheme', unlike Shylock's villainous scheme, is meant to deliver an important moral message. It clarifies the confusing link between friendship and romance. It will also regulate the future relationship between the two young lovers.

The structural and thematic significance of 'the Ring' in the play:

In Shakespearean's romantic comedies, 'Fate' and 'Individuality' are recurring motifs. The dramatist in his plays draws on philosophical ideas and concepts prevalent during that era. «Providence,» «fortune,» and «chance» were important concepts to the Elizabethan people. (Patenaude, Law, Roy. 1988:24). These aspects in comedies, unlike tragedies, do not contradict each others. "In comedy, if fate is to appear comic, it must be arbitrary and appear to behave like a person, and the people who are subject to fate should not be responsible for what occurs." (Auden, 2002 :124) In *The Merchant of Venice*, the heroine's fate or Fortuna is somehow influenced by the conflicting forces that operate within and outside her domestic world. Ironically, the same conflicting forces, through multiple twisting events, will eventually assist the heroin in gaining her selfhood. "Fortune has been said to be the mistress of comedy, as opposed to Destiny, the mistress of tragedy» (Muir, 1986:177). During the Casket choosing, Portia's fortune will be affected by each suitor's choosing of a specific casket. Ironically, the fate of each suitor is also affected by choosing a specific casket. " Portia must serve the will of her dead father, a servitude made concrete by the caskets that determine her fate" p.(Teague, 1991 :75). The casket scenes may be viewed as a scheme which tests suitors' destines. "Destiny is not fickle fortune in the play but an intentional force, and, as Nerissa tells Portia, this assures that Portia will love the man who chooses properly» (Watkins, Perry, 2009:36). Fate, ironically, serves Bassano among all other suitors. His wit may guide him at some stage, but the whole process depends on luck or fate. The heroine's quest for selfhood in the play seems to be in accord with the "capricious forces of Fate". There are multiple references to ' Fate' and ' Chance' in the play. " In response to Portia's despair over the terms of the will, Nerissa assures her that, since Portia's father was 'virtuous', the lottery of her hand will give Portia what she wants." (Watkins, Perry, 2009:36). Antonio's misfortune at the very beginning of the play is another dramatic incident which can be attributed to the force of 'Fortuna' or providence. The fate of Antonio's ships will only be clarified by Portia at the final Act when she reports to Antonio: " three of your argosies / Are richly come to harbor suddenly" (5.1.276-77) The incident can be attributed to " divine intervention or even Portia's own association with divinity." (Jordan , Cunningham. 2007:136).

Structurally, the ring has a symbolic significance in the play. "Like the circles they trace, rings are potential symbols of enclosure as well as cycles of commitment and exchange" (Bunker , 2014:151). The absence of the ring in the play symbolizes division or even betrayal, while its presence indicates connection and commitment. The plot's structure, too, is built around a neatly organized cycle of events which might be viewed as a metaphor of "life's cycle". The cycle of love story in the play begins when Portia delivers the ring to Bassano in Belmont; retrieves it in Venice; and offers it again to Bassano in Belmont through a cyclical ritual. Thematically, the ring's cycle is associated with Bassano's character development, and by implication, the development of love relationship between the two young lovers. Both Portia and Bassano are destined to take two separate journeys back and forth between Belmont and Venice. Portia's change of Fortune takes a dramatic turn when

she leaves Belmont to Venice to save Bassano's close friend. Bassano's change of fate, however, 'happens when he travels from Venice to Belmont to try his luck in courting Portia. During the 'Casket- Choosing', "Bassano's successful selection of the casket and Portia's agreement ensure their marriage; yet his development as a man worthy of so desirable a bride is still unproven". (Janik, 2003:92). Remarkably, Portia's final deceptive scheme in Belmont will bring the play into yet another tense dramatic climax. The play's happy ending, as in other Shakespearean comedies, is not achievable unless the male lover undergoes a radical change of character. Portia's cunning role-playing in the final act, nevertheless, will bring such a change in Bassano's personality.

The significance of Portia's 'Role-playing' during the 'Ring-Plot':

Role-playing and disguise are two important motifs in Shakespearean comedy. By using the dramatic technique of role playing, Shakespeare problematizes the complex relationship between truth and falsehood. In *Much Ado About Nothing* (1598 - 1599) and *Twelfth Night* (1601-1602), for instance, the female protagonist's role playing enables the male protagonist to undergo radical change of personality. Portia's role playing in *The Merchant of Venice*, similarly, brings a similar outcome. The easiness through which the heroin shifts her personality back and forth between Belmont and Venice affirms feminists' assumption about the artificiality and constructiveness of female identity. As some critics had suggested, the subversiveness of the heroines' role-playing in Shakespearean comedies "lies not in an attempt to usurp male power or identity, but in the de-naturalizing of gender identity itself." (Grady, 2000: 36).

Moreover, Portia's cunning role-playing, together with her manipulative rhetoric, can be viewed as effective subversive strategy against the existing patriarchal system. Judith Butler in her ground breaking book *Gender Trouble* identifies the concept of "role play as exemplary sites of gender subversion." (Miriam, 1998:238). Similar to Viola in *Twelfth Night* (1601-1602) and Rosalind in *As You Like It* (1623), Portia's subversive rhetoric in the *Merchant of Venice* is as much as effective as her constant role-playing. There is also a strong connection between Portia's quest for selfhood and her witty use of rhetoric. Remarkably, the 'Ring Test' doesn't achieve its end without the heroine's stunning linguistic style and her deceptive role playing. From a feminist perspective, the heroine's role playing in the play is subversive, for it brings to the stage a new model of female character whose body representation challenges the common perception about female's gender identity during that era .

Similar to 'Casket-Choosing' scheme, The ' Ring -" Test is necessary, for at the time of Portia's conversion, Bassano is less than ready to assume his part as her husband: his worth and identity still being qualified by Antonio's purse and person, he has to shake off first his shadow image before he can come to his own" (Avraham Oz, 1995:146). Portia's trick on Bassano can be regarded as a play within a play. As instructed by her lady, Nerissa wittingly performs the role assigned to her. In a cunningly staged scene, she interrogates Gratiano about

the missing ring she had given him before the trial. As the two women had anticipated, Gratiano can't produce the ring. Nerissa expresses anger and frustration over her lover's irresponsible act. She claims "that Gratiano has broken its oath to her: he had promised to wear it until his death and scolds Gratiano." (Billiotti, 2012:72). The young lover finds himself in a very difficult situation. Portia cunningly exploits his weakness and begins interrogating him about the missing ring:

Now in faith, Gratiano,

You give your wife too unkind a cause of grief.

An 'twere to me, I should be mad at it (Act 5, Scene 1. 174-176).

To force Bassano to acknowledge his own mistake, Portia slyly criticizes his irresponsible act for losing the ring. She «expresses her conviction that» her lover «would not part with his ring for all the money in the world» (ibid, p.72). Her next witty speech ultimately forces Bassano to confess his guilt over losing the ring.

I gave my love a ring, and made him swear

Never to part with it. And here he stands.

I dare be sworn for him he would not leave it

Nor pluck it from his finger for the wealth

That the world masters. (Act 5, Scene 1. 170-174).

Portia's cunning speech forces Gratiano to acknowledge Bassano's role in breaking the oath: 'My Lord Bassano gave his ring away / Unto the judge that begged it and indeed / Deserved it too'. (Act 5, Scene 1, 179-181). As it is expected, the shocking revelation forces Bassano to acknowledge his own mistake: 'If I could add a lie unto a fault/ I would deny it./but you see my finger/ Hath not the ring upon it'. (Act 5, Scene 1, 187-189). Such confession, however, gives Portia a good reason to accuse Bassano of dishonesty.

PORTIA

If you had known the virtue of the ring,

Or half her worthiness that gave the ring,

Or your own honor to contain the ring,

You would not then have parted with the ring.

What man is there so much unreasonable, (Act 5, Scene 1. 100-105).

Eventually, Portia's strong rhetorical style forces Bassano express regret for his grave mistake in giving away the precious ring. To justify himself, "Bassano explains that he did not bestow the ring on another woman, but on the distinguished judge who saved Antonio's life"(ibid, p.72). In a highly emotional speech, he pleads for forgiveness. Portia's next trick is to force Bassano to make a crucial concession. Through maneuvering rhetoric, she extracts a painful confession from him. This will ultimately grant Portia more power and authority over

the weakened and powerless male lover. The scene in which Portia extracts confession from Bassano is quite similar to the trial scene in which she forced Shylock to plead guilty and ask forgiveness. Bassano, similar to Shylock, finds no other way to defend himself except asking for mercy from his witty interrogator. To further torment him, Portia cunningly suggests that "should the jurist travel near her home she would mimic Bassano and refuse him nothing" (ibid, p.72). As a sign of female solidarity, "Merissa follows suit and suggests the same to Gratiano should the law clerk who has her ring wander to Belmont." (ibid, p.72) In the meantime, Antonio feels obliged to assist his friend Bassano. He offers his soul as forfeit for Bassano as he had previously offered his body as forfeit during the Trial:

ANTONIO

I once did lend my body for his wealth,
Which but for him that had your husband's ring
Had quite miscarried. I dare be bound again,
My soul upon the forfeit, that your lord
Will never more break faith advisedly (Act 5, Scene 1. 252-257).

The above passionate speech by Antonio reiterates themes of self-sacrifice and loyalty in the play. "By acting as Bassano's «surety,» Antonio figuratively takes out a bond once again for Bassano" (Ranson, Merrix. 1992:32) In a surprising move, Portia produces the missing ring and delivers it to Antonio. He then hands it to Bassano. The Shocking revelation of the missing ring by Portia recalls previous dramatic situation in which she intentionally delayed the revelation of the legal item in the written bond demanding "that Shylock exact no more nor less than one pound of flesh".(Ruoff, 1975 :282). In both dramatic situations, Portia intentionally delayed revealing something for a period of time. Her rhetorical manoeuvring technique proved to be very effective in forcing either Shylock, as in the trial scene, or Bassano during the ring plot, to acknowledge their wrongdoings. In the trial scene, Shylock admits his defeat after finding Portia's last minute judicial revelation too difficult to be challenged. Bassano, too, is getting amazed by Portia's last minute revelation of the missing ring. Ironically, Bassano has become the subject of two different types of commitments from both his lover and his friend.

Ultimately, Portia has succeeded in changing Bassano's attitude towards love and marriage. Through her tricky schemes, she could regulate her love relationship with Bassano. So, the main purpose of the ' Ring' Scheme was to rectify " Bassano's earlier mistake in choosing friendship over marriage". (Dreher, 1986:135). After extracting a sincere confession from her future husband, Portia has symbolically gained more power and authority. The cyclical exchange of the ring, from Portia to Antonio, and then from Antonio to Bassano symbolizes an emerging new relationship among two friends and two lovers. "Since Portia especially acknowledges the relationship between her husband and his friend, she must steer that relationship in a direction that best suits her." (John, Mahon , 2002:347). The final result of the 'Ring scheme' marks a symbolic victory for Portia against his remorseful lover. Bassano's emotional confession provides a parody of Shylock's declaration of de-

feat after a long legal battle during the trial. In both dramatic scenes, Portia has emerged victorious from both emotional and judicial conflicts. After the trial, she laid down strict conditions on Shylock upon which he ought to give away a large sum of his fortune. Similarly, Bassano must accept Portia's conditions otherwise he won't be forgiven. The test, in fact, has taught Bassano very important moral message about loyalty and marital commitment. It forces him to value Portia's love over Antonio's friendship.

As in other Shakespearean comedies, the plot in the Merchant of Venice is neatly structured where every action is interconnected with other actions. Portia's trick will be following by a series of unexpected dramatic revelations. After the 'Ring Test', Portia discloses the true identities of Balthazar and her legal companion to Bassano and Antonio. Unexpected news is also revealed to Lorenzo and Jessica about a large sum of money they inherited from the disgraced Shylock. Moreover, the return of Antonio's lost ships will bring the cycle of events into the happy ending.

Conclusion:

So, the 'Ring Plot' constitutes a significant part of the play's story line. Structurally, the ring plot represents the final phase of multiple tests aimed at changing male lover's personality. Such minor plot is built around a neatly organized cycle of events which might be viewed as a metaphor of "life's cycle". The play's love story, for instance, begins when the heroin delivers the ring to her lover in Belmont; retrieves it in Venice; and offers it again to the male lover in Belmont through a cyclical ritual. Moreover, the ring plot structurally interconnects two major plots in the play, such as the 'Trial Plot' and 'Casket-Choosing Plot'. These interrelated plots share similar themes and events. For instance, the exchange of the ring between the two lovers parodies the lending process between Shylock and Antonio in the 'Trial Plot'. Here, the heroine's ring plot can be viewed as a parody of Shylock's lending scheme in which he lured Antonio to sign a dangerous bond. Portia's 'Ring scheme', unlike Shylock's villainous scheme, is devised for a noble cause. Similarly, a parallel can be drawn between the 'Casket -Choosing' plot and the 'Ring Plot'. During the 'Casket -Choosing' plot, the heroin successfully tested the male lover's loyalty and secured his commitment towards future marital bond. Similar testing recurs during the ring plot. Unlike shylock's villainous scheme, the heroine's 'testing schemes are devised to strengthen the bonds of love and friendship between lovers and friends alike. Thematically, the heroine's ring scheme is associated with male protagonist's personality growth, and by implication, the development of love relationship between the two young lovers. As a result of such scheme, the heroin could reverse power relationship and cause a change in social roles between the married couple. The easiness through which the female protagonist shifts her identity, through role-playing and disguise, reiterates basic assumptions by feminists with regard to performativity and constructiveness of woman's gender identity. Moreover, the play's final deceptive scheme would eventually enhance the female protagonist's sense of individuality and selfhood.

References:

- Avraham Oz, William. The Yoke of Love: Prophetic Riddles in The Merchant of Venice. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1995.
- Auden, W.H. Lectures on Shakespeare. Princeton University Press, 2002.
- Bunker, Nancy Mohrlock. Marriage and Land Law in Shakespeare and Middleton. UK: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2014.
- Belliotti, Raymond Angelo. Shakespeare and Philosophy: Lust, Love, and Law. Amsterdam & NewYork: Rodopi, 2012.
- Cunningham, Karen & Jordan, Constance. The Law in Shakespeare. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.
- Callaghan, Dymna. A Feminist Companion to Shakespeare. Blackwell Publishers Ltd, 20016.
- Cross, William Shakespeare . William Shakespeare: The Complete Works. MetroBooks: The Edition of The Shakespeare Head Press Oxford, 1989.
- Dreher, Diane Elizabeth. Domination and Defiance: Fathers and Daughters in Shakespeare. The University Press of Kentucky, 1986.
- Grady, Hugh. Shakespeare and Modernity: Early Modern to Millennium. US: Routledge, 2000
- Mahon , John W.& Mahon, Ellen Macleod EDIT. The Merchant of Venice: Critical Essays. New York And London : Routledge, 2002.
- Martin, Randall. The Merchant of Venice. Europe -Norham: Roundhouse Publishing Ltd, 2001
- Miriam, Kathy. Re-thinking Radical Feminism: Opposition, Utopianism and the Moral Imagination of Feminist Theory, Volume 2. University of California, 1998.
- Ruoff, James E. Macmillan's Handbook of Elizabethan & Stuart Literature. US : The Macmillan Press Ltd, 1975.
- Shannon, Laurie. Sovereign Amity: Figures of Friendship in Shakespearean Contexts. Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 2002.
- Muir , Kenneth. Interpretations of Shakespeare: British Academy Shakespeare Lectures. Clarendon Press, 1986
- Janik, Vicki K. The Merchant of Venice: A Guide to the Play. US :Greenwood Press, 2003.
- Ranson, Nicholas .& Merrix,, Robert P. Ideological Approaches to Shakespeare: The Practice of Theory . New York: The Edwin Mellen Press. 1992.
- Patenaude, Allan & Roy, Kenneth& Law, Harriet. Julius Caesar: Teacher's Guide. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Canada, 1988.
- Teague, Frances N. Shakespeare's Speaking Properties. London and Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1991.
- Watkins, John & Perry, Curtis. Shakespeare and the Middle Ages. United states: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Wiesner, Merry E. Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe. UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

ملخص البحث

تتركز هذا البحث على تبيان اهمية مغذى الحيلة الدرامية في الكوميديا الرومانسية (تاجر فينيسيا) لوليم شكسبير. جدير بالذكر ان هناك ترابط موضوعي وبنوي بين الحكبات الدرامية المتعددة في المسرحية ، وان كل حبكة لها ميزتها الخاصة بها بما في ذلك تبيانها للدور المهم للبطلة وبالاخص حنكتها في استخدام الغة الدرامية ومهارتها في فن الخداع الدرامي. البحث بالاخص تتمعن في الدراسة النقدية للحبكة الثالثة لاهميتها في انعكاسها الدرامي وتبيانها للدور المهم للبطلة في تغيير مجرى الاحداث، او في تمكنها من تغيير نمطية سلوك شخصية البطل الدرامي مع ما يتلاءم مع بحثها عن الذات. ما يميز الحبكة الدرامية الثالثة ، بغض النظر عن تبيانها للدور المهم للبطلة وبالاخص حنكتها في استخدام الغة الدرامية ومهارتها في فن الخداع الدرامي، هي انها تتوفر للبطلة الوسيلة الفعالة لتغيير سلوكية البطل الرومانسي، والاهم من ذلك اثبات وجودها كامرأة حرة ذات ارادة.

پوختهى بابتهى توژينهوه

ئهه توژينهوه به ههول ئهدات به شيكي گرنه له ته كنيكي گرني درامي له كوميداي رومانسي ويليم شهكسبير (بازرگاني فينيسيا) بخاته ژير شيكاري ئهدهبي. ئهوهي جي سهرنجه په يوهنديه كي پتهوي بابتهى و بونيادي له نيوان چه ندين گرني درامي هه مه جور ههيه له دراماي شهكسبيردا، وهه ريه كه لهو گري دراميانهش تايببه تمه ندى خوئ ههيه له ديارى كردنى روي پالهوانى نافرته له كوميدياكه به تايبه تي تواناو ليهاتووي ئه و پالهوانه له به كارهيناني ئاخوتن و فيلي درامي. توژينهوه كه به تايبه تي شيكاري ئهدهبي بو گرني درامي سييهم دهكات له دراماكه، ئه وپيش به هوئ گرنه ئهه گرئدراميه له ديارى كردنى روي گرنه پالهوانه نافرته كه له گوريني ئاراسته ي روداوى سهره كي دراماكه، ههروهه ده رسته روي ئه و پالهوانه نافرته له گوريني كه سايه تيه سهره كيه كه ي دراماكه بو كه سايه تيه كي بيگه يشتووي خاوهن خود ، له هه مووي گرنه تر توژينهوه كه شيكاري ئهدهبي ئهكات بو ديارى كردنى په يوهندي له نيوان ته كنيكي ئاخوتنى تايبهت به پالهوانه نافرته كه و هه وئ به ده ستهيناني خودى خوئ له گرني درامي سييهمدا