

Nagore Rumi's Solutions for the Maladies of Shakespeare's Tragic Heroes

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Abstract

This article explores the maladies of four great tragic heroes of Shakespeare who devastated their life due to their adamant behaviour of following the sinister activities and the causes for their deeds were their negative introvert personality for that a modern writer and psychologist Nagore Rumi offers solutions. Shakespeare's four great heroes Macbeth, Othello, King Lear and Hamlet possess the negative characters which led them to behave arrogantly in the society and at last they died very horribly. Their deeds were bad and due to their ill thoughts and ill ambitions that had devastated their life. Nagore Rumi, HRD consultant, psychologist and Alpha Meditation Instructor gives suggestions and solutions for these types of behaviours in a man. He says that one should follow certain patterns of breathing and also protect his thoughts from mental diseases like jealousy, pride, ill-ambition and inferiority complex etc. to lead a happy, peaceful, contented and serene life. His Alpha Meditation is a cure-all and helps to remove all mental disorders and converts the tragic life into the happiest and peaceful. Breath is health and breath is malady. Breath is the problem and breath is the solution. Breath is anger, breath is lust. Breath is piety and breath is power. Breath is poverty and breath is prosperity. Breath is failure and breath is success. By changing the pattern of breathing we can convert poverty into prosperity, anger into peace, fear into daring and failure into success and thus breathing is a wonder to lead a very blissful and peaceful life. (Nagore Rumi, *You Are Your Future* 9, 10).

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1. Introduction

Macbeth and Lear were Kings, Othello was a Moor and Hamlet was a Prince but these positions did not help them to get peace and they realised their mistakes only in their later part of lives. They were adamant in their inordinate and unreasonable sins and they suffered in confusion without knowing the solutions to their problems. These tragic heroes had devastated their minds with ill thoughts and the mental diseases like greediness, ill ambition, pride, jealousy and settling of scores dominated their mind. At the last stage of their life they realized their blunders and often considered they would be better with the dead people who were killed by them as they got peace. Macbeth said that he would be better if he was also killed like his dead victims. Better be with the dead Whom we, to gain our peace, have sent to peace Than on the fortune of the mind to lie In restless ecstasy (*Macbeth* 3.2.20-22) The tragic heroes wanted to die rather than face the turmoil of life as their lives brought more devastation to them. They wished death as they were restless in their life. They did not like to live their tragic life and often suffered as these were the consequences of their ill thoughts and defective personalities. All tragic heroes died very pathetically at the end of the plays. They did not understand their goal properly and their minds were occupied with the bloody thoughts and even failed to understand their behaviours. Modern man possesses many of the traits of tragic heroes.

2. Bloody Macbeth

Macbeth, the tragic hero of Shakespeare, suffered in his life due to his greedy and ill ambitious thoughts and actions. The ill-ambition would never bring fair results as we can study in the life of Macbeth. Thomas Middleton says: It is Macbeth's

neurotic self-absorption, his fear, his anger, and his despair, along with his wife's sleepy determination, her invoking of the power of evil and her eventual revelation in sleep of her depressed humanity, that have given the play its long proven power to fascinate readers and to challenge performers. (Stanley 1307) *Macbeth* is the great tragedy on vaulting ambition and greed. It shows clearly that human reason fails when ambition or greed grips a man. Macbeth had all the characteristics which all the major religions of the world condemn and he faced many tribulations in his life. He understood his wrong deeds and contemplated those deeds in utter confusion: Stars, hide your fires; Let not light see my black and deep desires: The eye wink at the hand; yet let that be which the eye fears, when it is done, to see. (*Macbeth* 1.4.51-54) Macbeth understood his foul actions and was also fearful of the outcomes. Macbeth believes at the beginning of play that fair and foul are same and expects that foul actions will bring fair results to him and he says: "So foul and fair a day I have not seen" (*Macbeth* 1.3.39). He considered that foul actions would bring him fair results which would never happen in his life as his foul actions brought him more unrest and failures in his life. He lived a blissful and peaceful life as a military general of Scottish army, thane of Glamis and thane of Cawdor but as a King of Scotland, he suffered a lot and died a very horrible and ghastly death and the whole Scotland considered him as a devil as Macduff said about him: Not in the legions Of horrid hell can come a devil more damn'd In evils to top Macbeth (*Macbeth* 4.3.55-56) A. C. Bradley said that "it is Macbeth's fault because he has free will and responsibility" (293). In his over-ambition he broke the moral and divine laws and his pride and ambition brought him fall like Satan. He fought tooth and nail to satisfy his

vaulting ambitions and never hesitated to adopt the unethical and immoral means. Macbeth was afraid of the blood on his hand and also on his conscience. Ram Bilas Sharma says that "he is afraid of contemplating what he has done" (15). He cried in chaos "To know my deed 't' were best not know myself" (*Macbeth* 2.2.58).

3. Jealous Othello

Othello, the jealous and envious Moor, tortured his life and that of his dear wife, due to jealousy which is also counted as a major sin. He also had inferiority complex which he failed to understand but tried to compensate for it and found solace in taking revenge on others. Iago would not have succeeded if Othello had not developed inferiority complex and jealousy. Othello was a jealous hero and showed utter foolishness in believing Iago and rejecting the true and faithful love of his consort and good services of his lieutenant Cassio. He became cynic and doubts had dominated his mind and heart and irrational actions became his fate. In spite of Desdemona's protests of innocence backed up by Iago's wife, Emilia, Othello was convinced of her infidelity with Cassio. A.C. Bradley remarks at this point "no subject is more exciting than sexual jealousy, rising to the pitch of passion. The crime is the hideous blunder, sexual jealousy brings with it a sense of shame and humiliation" (144). He converted his human nature in to utter chaos and strangled his wife with utter madness. Bradley believes that "a noble barbarian who has become Christian and has imbibed the civilization but retains beneath the surface the savage of passions of his Moorish blood and also the suspiciousness regarding female chastity among oriental people, thus these original feelings outburst through the thin crust of venetian culture" (51). Othello is the great tragedy on jealousy and the great moor of Venice who is called *all in all sufficient* faced disaster in his life. He demolished Desdemona's fame and even considered Cassio as an immoral man. A chivalrous Moorish chief not only had a begrimed and black face but a begrimed and black heart also. A noble Moor coincided himself as justice embodied and avenging all manhood betrayed by the lust of women. He says: Yet she must die, also she'll betray more men (*Othello* 5.2.6). In his fury and ravings he carried out his nefarious wish to satisfy himself with wild and brutal revenge. He cried: O balmy breath, the dost almost persuade

Justice to break her sword! One more, one more be thus when thou art dead. I will kill thee and love thee after (*Othello* 5.2.16-19)

4. Proud Lear

King Lear is a play which demonstrates evil and its retribution. Lear suffered mental torment for his unbalanced selfishness and vanity and he was utterly selfish and soulless to the extent of being bestial. He wanted to give away the burden of the state but retained the title of the king. He declares: "... only we still retain / the name and all addition to a King (1.1.135). By casting off the burden of the government he hoped to enjoy a comfortable old age but in the process he exposed himself to the extreme mental and physical discomfort due to his unwanted pride and adamant behaviour. Lear decided to divide his kingdom among his three daughters: Goneril and Regan, the wives of the Duke of Albany and the Duke of Cornwall, and Cordelia, his youngest and favourite. In an attempt to give the *largest bounty* to the one who loved him most, the King

asked for his daughters' expression of affection. Lear, due to his egregious vanity, asked his daughters: Tell me, my daughters, since now we will divest us both of rule, Interest of territory, cares of state

Which of you shall we say doth love us most? That we, our largest bounty may extend Where nature doth with merit challenge (*King Lear* 1.1.49-52) Lear became the slave of the natural wrath and his major flaw was that he failed to distinguish the flattery from real love. Plutarch says that "a flatterer is inconstant, breeds self-love, says what gives pleasure, bustles about and excessive in his promise" (Campbell 183). He expected flattery and also wanted that he should be respected by his inferiors. He did not get what he needed, so he decided to hiss his wrath on those who were responsible. King Lear, the proud and egoistic king, did not like when his honest and loving daughter Cordelia called a spade a spade but liked to hear only sweet words from his dishonest, fraudulent, insincere, sycophant and toady daughters. His suffering came as a result of refusing to see truth as it was. King Lear showed pride when he asked his daughters to express their love to him. He was near to insanity and cried in his old age. I am even the natural fool of fortune – use me well; You shall have ransom. Let me have surgeons. I am cut to the brains (4.6.196-199) King Lear is the great tragedy on pride and ego which deals the story of an egoistic king to face humiliation and defeat in his life. Lear took the thorns and threw away the rose to appease his pride and became immoral and unethical man. His agony, chaos and austere impassivity made him an unwanted creature in the universe. His foolish and rash judgements, due to his violent and uncontrollable temper brought him nothing but damnation. He cursed his beloved daughter who was saintly in her behaviour but that curse boomeranged. No other Shakespearean tragic hero seems to have suffered more than Lear. As Aristotle believes "anger hurts him who feels it, even more than it hurts the one whom seeks revenge" (Campbell 182). King Lear in utter chaos cries: I am a man/More sinned against than sinning (*King Lear* 3.2.62-63).

5. Vengeful Hamlet

Hamlet is the first modern play because of its multi-faceted main character and unprecedented depiction of the human psyche. It is the study of inaction and wrong action that made the hero to suffer a lot in his life. Schucking says "*Hamlet* resembles other great Shakespearean tragedies in that it cannot be comprehended except as a study of passion" (Jump 43). Hamlet has probably been discussed more than any other Shakespearean character, especially for his famous soliloquy which begins *to be or not to be; that is the question*. "*Hamlet* seems to lie closer to the illogical logic of life than Shakespeare's other tragedies" (Jump 88). Shakespeare's *Hamlet* is one of those rich and complex works of art that convey different meanings in different generations and to different individuals. "To Kitto, Shakespeare's theme is the corroding influence of sin, the insidious power with which evil, once started on its course, so works to attack and overthrow impartially the good and the bad" (Jump 16). It is the study of evil and it differs from other three great tragedies, Macbeth, Othello and King Lear, where the action takes place very fast. Unlike the negatively introverted Hamlet, whose fatal flaw is procrastination, the heroes of the tragedies that followed, Macbeth, Othello and King Lear, are undone by

hasty errors of judgement. Maynard Mack says “We have a character who is not only mad in himself but a cause that madness is in the rest of us” (Jump 88). Hamlet suffered due to inaction when he failed to murder King Claudius but his wrong actions led him to murder his lover’s father Polonius and fought with his lady love’s brother Laertes and killed him also. Hamlet got up and stabbed King Claudius. After killing his mother and the king of the country, he was confused and wanted to kill himself and also developed a type of fear about his future life. Hamlet ended his life due to his confusion that prevailed in his mind. *Hamlet* is the great play on procrastination and ill judgement and due to these traits; the great prince of Denmark ruined his life. The commission of suicide is a much provoked act and man thinks about suicide when he is in utter terrific mood. He cries in utter fear and chaos: As a thou’rt a man, Give me the cup: let go; by heaven, I’ll have’t O good Horatio, what a wounded name, Things standing this unknown, shall live behind me! If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart absent thee from felicity a while, and in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain, To tell my story (*Hamlet*5.2.330-336)

6. Maladies of Tragic Heroes

The four tragic heroes had many flaws and their negative, unconstructive, depressing and harmful causes had the very worst consequences that led them to commit more terrible sins in their lives. They had devastated their lives by themselves and failed to extract the fruits of life. They did not care for justice and their behaviours and attitudes ruined their lives. Macbeth and Othello shed innocent blood and also devised wicked ways to kill their kith and kin. Lear showed unwanted pride, arrogance and failed to understand the real world. Hamlet failed to enjoy the life as always he thought of taking revenge on others. He was responsible for more murders and deaths in the play. As they misbehaved, they failed to enjoy the pleasures of life and the consequences of their erroneous thoughts and behaviours were more grievous and dreadful. Their sins are coming under the seven deadly sins as per the teachings of Christianity. Bible says: These six things doth the lord hate; yea, seven are an abomination unto him A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, A heart that diveseth wicked imaginations, feel that be swift in running to mischief. A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren. (Proverb 4:16-19)

The four tragic heroes committed all the seven abominable condemned by the Bible. They considered life as *a tale told by an idiot* which signified nothing. Their high positions, healthy and well off life did not bring any solace to their hearts and minds. They became most useless in their places as due to their own problems they could not concentrate on the welfare of their nations. These characteristics can be found in the modern man who, as a result of negative introverted personality, faces the same fate of the tragic heroes. Man became adamant in his approach in modern times and a psychological approach to the tragic heroes of Shakespeare would be very useful to understand the problems of the people. If anybody thinks rightly, he will act rightly in his life with an unpolluted and uncorrupted mind. If he does the opposite, thinks erroneously, mistakenly and behaves strangely, then his life collapses and he also devastates and ruins the lives of others.

7. Nagore Rumi’s Solutions

Nagore Rumi, a psychologist, HRD consultant and Alpha Meditation Instructor has offered many solutions to the problems described to be present in Shakespearean tragic heroes. He wrote 50 books and most of his books are in Tamil that offered solutions to the problems that prevailed in today’s world. His three English books “*You Are Your Future*”, “*Alpha Meditation*” and “*Value Education*” offer solutions to the problems of the tragic heroes of the great dramatist. He says that Breath has innumerable, invisible powers and treasures which shapes our character and controls our body. Our whole body works properly only with the help of our breath. It is improper breathing which is the cause of all problems. All the negative traits can be converted in to positive ones with the help of proper and deep breathing. As all personality traits are neutral and we make them positive or negative by our actions and thoughts. Nagore Rumi has offered very simple solutions like controlling breath, observing thoughts and simple meditation techniques in order to control emotions and passions and as a result our behaviour and emotions would come under our control and make our personality positive and our life stress-free. Behaviour Control and Emotional Intelligence are needed in order to understand the root cause of a problem and solve them. His solutions and explanations make the problems of personality easy to understand and solve properly. A very talented Alpha Meditation practitioner, he has offered very simple and practical solutions to the everlasting universal problems of humanity which the great dramatist has presented in his famous dramas.

8. Alpha Meditation

There are hundreds of meditation techniques available in this world. However Nagore Rumi’s, Alpha Meditation Technique is unique as it does not require Master and Initiation and also it has no side effects as it happens in some complex Yogic Meditation Techniques. It is safe and any one can practise it by following the instructions explained in his books. “Meditation is a state of mind or brain that brings us peace, alertness, clarity, success, health and bliss. It is born with us” (*Alpha Meditation* 22). Nagore Rumi talks about two important things: breath control and witnessing of thoughts which are believed to lead one to a very happy and contented life. Thoughts play a very vital role in the life of persons so it is necessary to have good thoughts. All bad thoughts breed many mental diseases like ill-ambition, greed, jealousy, pride and fear which ultimately ruin the humanity. The heroes of Shakespeare developed worst types of thoughts and due to this; their mental diseases increased which led them towards devastations. Wayner Dyer in his book *there is a Spiritual Solution to Every Problem* says that the spirit is nothing but the “fastest frequency”. Thought is the fastest and most subtle of these energy waves. That is why we *think* before doing any action. And it is thought that manifests our dreams. (*You Are Your Future* 108 Thoughts can be controlled through proper meditation and breathing techniques. God has given us a very good treasure in our life and that is breath and changing it we can change our attitude and behaviour and thus control our ill thoughts and ill passions. Alpha is a stage which is more suitable for any good and successful activity. It is a stage (alpha) more suitable for goal setting and dreaming in the sense which the former president Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam recommended. Agni and Prithvis were made possible only by

dreaming in the alpha stage. Creative state of mind will reach its peak in alpha. Writers could and did produce their master pieces in this stage. (*Alpha Meditation* 42) Nagore Rumi guides us in his immortal writings to control our breath through meditation. Breath has innumerable, invisible powers and treasures which shapes our character and controls our body and emotions. Through proper breathing we get good thoughts and do good deeds. “Our whole body works properly only with the help of our breath. It is improper breathing which is the cause of all problems” (*You Are Your Future* 8, 9). All negative traits can be converted in to positive ones with the help of proper and deep breathing. If the breathing is controlled then one’s thoughts would be controlled and one can find happiness around and this happiness he spreads to others also. This simple technique is needed to lead a happy life. The thoughts can be controlled by learning proper breathing technique. By changing the pattern of breathing we can convert poverty into prosperity, anger into peace, fear into daring and failure into success and thus breathing is a wonder to lead a very blissful and peaceful life (*You Are Your Future* 9, 10). We also know how the body controls the mind and the body is ready to help us in many ways and goes on giving us signals every now and then. The first thing is to control our attitude. If you can bring the movements of your body under your control, your emotions also will be automatically controlled. There are like food items that have gone bad, rotten and toxic. We should never allow toxic emotions and thoughts inside us. They are anger, vengeance, jealousy, fear, guilt and the like. When we make room for them in our mind, they affect our body. We can study a person by observing his body clearly. We can find such negative traits were developed in the tragic heroes and they did not understand the consequences of their sufferings and could not understand how to solve their problems and they led a devastative and destructive life. Their thoughts and actions guided them wrongly and they failed to enjoy the blissful life.

Nagore Rumi gives the explanation in his books that all tragic problems could be solved through relaxation, visualization and control of breath. If we think bad and do bad then bad will come to us. If we do good and think good then good will come to us as what we sow, we will reap, in our lives. “When selfishness and anger are removed from heart, love stays in it completely. It is such love which raises the status of man to that of the divine” (*Value Education* 21). Nagore Rumi says: Whatever we think of often, whatever we trust in strongly, whatever we expect with hope will certainly come to us. It may be good or bad. This is a universal law and it is also known as Law of Attraction. The great Tamil poet Thiruvalluvar sang beautifully that if you do harm to others in the forenoon consciously, you will be harmed in the afternoon automatically: If, ere the noontide, you to others evil do, Before the eventide will evil visit you (319). If you are angry with someone always, someone else will be angry with you. If you hate someone, someone else will hate you. If you try to love all, even your enemy become your friend. That is what Jesus also meant when he said, “Judge not, no eye be judged”. 1. (*You Are Your Future* 109,110). Nagore Rumi makes it clear that good people will reap the benefits of good in their lives and bad people will reap bad things in their lives and that happens to the tragic heroes of Shakespeare as due to their desolate thoughts and actions they led disastrous lives and died very horribly. They failed to control their thoughts and actions

as they do not know the consequences of bad breathing.

9. Conclusion

The mental disorders and maladies of the tragic heroes are universal and can be found in any man less or more in today’s world. Hence solutions to these problems are very much necessary to lead a contented life. Nagore Rumi offers the solutions as such people must do meditation and bring their mind to Alpha state to avoid these diseases. Nagore Rumi says “Breath is our health and it is our disease. It is our boon and it is our bane. Even the Yogasutras written thousands of years before were based on breath”. (*Alpha Meditation*98) Breath is a treasure and the king of all and by controlling the breath we can control our body and can control our mind and actions. Every breath of ours is more valuable than gold or platinum. If these solutions are offered to the heroes of Shakespeare the problems would never have been happened.

Nagore Rumi concludes that emotions like fear, anger, jealousy, pride can be controlled by proper breathing techniques and visualization. These emotions occur in the body first and then they occupy the mind. But according to Nagore Rumi, the body is the visible mind and the mind is the invisible body. If body is controlled properly we can control our emotion also. Bodily movements are very important as every bodily movement is meaningful and powerful.

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