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PSYCHOANALYSIS OF THE TWO PROTAGONISTS: "OTHELLO" IN THE SHAKESPEAREAN TRAGEDY OTHELLO AND "SHER ALAM" IN THE PASHTO FOLK TALE SHER ALAM MEMUNAI

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ABSTRACT

This study has psychoanalytically analyzed themes of jealousy and suspicion in the characters of the two protagonists, Othello, from Shakespearean tragedy Othello, and Sher Alam, from the Pashto folk tale, Sher Alam Memunai. For the purpose of psychoanalysis of the two protagonists, Freud's pathological jealousy and other psychoanalytical approaches that are closely related to the Freudian theory have also been applied to them. While taken in the Freudian perspective of psychoanalysis, both the protagonists under discussion are termed as neurotic and narcissistic individuals who are predisposed to pathological jealousy and suspicion. This pathological jealousy leads them in a fit of fury in which they kill their chaste and innocent wives impulsively without confirming their guilt. Soon after their cruel act they realized that their wives were innocent, and that they were guilty of a heinous and inhuman act, which was a guiltless murder. The painful realization became the cause of Othello's commission of suicide and Sher Alam's end was more or less in a similar way, very painful.

INTRODUCTION

This study is about the psychoanalytical analysis of the two protagonists from two works of literature from two different cultures and languages and belonging to two different periods in history. The two works in hand and their protagonists are Othello, from Shakespearean tragedy Othello and Sher Alam from the Pashto folk tale of Sher Alam Memunai. It is a fact known to many that Shakespeare is one of the most celebrated author of English literature. To add to it more, bulk of researches have been conducted on his works and specifically

his tragedies. The Pashto work under discussion and its protagonist are the least celebrated and are only locally known. It is important to provide some information about this work and its protagonist so as to develop familiarity about him. Sher Alam Memunai is a Popular Pashto folk tale. This tragic incident occurred in 1920, in the village Ghiljo, of Tehsil Nawagai. Nawagai is still a Tehsil in the present day district of Bajaur, in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. The story due to its fame and the tragic death of its heroine Memunai, has been narrated by different folk poets in verse. These poets include Mian Jan, a folk poet of village Mamazo of Tehsil Nawagai, Hassan Peshawari, Fida Mutahhir, Jamal of Sangar, Talib Wali Muhammad, Amir Ghulam Sadiq and some others (Abid, 2011:368). Hassan Peshawari has described this tale in the form of charbeta. Jamal Sangar has also composed the story in verse form. (Patang, 1978: 78). The third folk poet who has composed this story in verse is Talib Wali Mohammad. The composition is 64 pages and has been published in Peshawar. He begins the story like this:

اے سامعہ ورورہ واورہ پہ قرارہ
 دا قیصہ د شبر عالم میمونی یارہ
 زہ پخپلہ باجور تہ وومہ تلے
 دا قیصہ می ناوگی کبئی اور بدلی (Patang 1978: 78).

Translation: O listener, O brother listen to this story with patience as this is about Sher Alam and Memunai. I myself had gone to Bajaur and have heard it in Nawagai.

The story says that there were two brothers, Syed Muhammad and Khair Muhammad. According to Ashna Bajauray (Gulyar, 2022) they had migrated to Ghiljo, a village of Nawagai tehsil, located in district Bajaur, from another village Doda, where their ancestors had lived. They belonged to Dinar Khel, a clan of Pashtuns. Syed Muhammad had a son, Sher Alam, while the other brother, Khair Muhammad, had a daughter by the name of Memunai. Memunai and Sher Alam had been playmates since childhood. Sher Alam was tall and dark complexioned but he was famous for his hospitality and bravery. His first marriage, which had been arranged by his parents, took place with Ajaba, a girl of Nasar Khel tribe. Later on, Sher Alam fell in love with his cousin, Memunai and married her with the consent of parents. He ran a small shop near his house, where he sold tobacco along with other articles of daily use. There has been a common custom of smoking tobacco through a traditional pipe in this region, known as chillum. Sher Alam would sell tobacco in his shop to fulfill the need of the villagers. Guests in hujra would also be entertained by providing them with chillum. Memunai was Sher Alam's younger wife and the stories of her beauty were spread everywhere. Ajaba, Sher Alam's first wife, was not happy with the whole situation and felt strong jealousy towards Memunai. Memunai had a three years old daughter, while Ajaba was issueless. Memunai was the beloved wife of her husband, therefore, Ajaba, felt neglected and her jealousy against her rival wife knew no bounds. Ajaba hit upon a diabolic plan against Memunai and started waiting for a suitable opportunity. Shopkeepers from the nearby villages would go to Shabqadar Deri, which was a whole sale market. One day sher Alam also left for the nearby town of Shabqadar Deri to bring different articles for his shop. He stayed there for three days. Memunai and

Ajaba were alone at home. Late at night guests in the hujra needed tobacco, so, they sent a man to Sher Alam's home for tobacco. The man came and knocked at the door. It was Saida Khan, an unmarried man with a reputation for being a sleaze and with no sense of honor. Ajaba, the person behind the whole wicked scheme, gave the key to Memunai, told her to go and open the shop and give the man, whatever he wanted and that she would be right behind her. Being the younger wife, Memunai felt compelled to obey the words of Ajaba. She went out in the dark, opened the shop and gave the man tobacco, in the pouch, which she had woven for Sher Alam. The other day Ajaba spread the false news that she had caught Memunai red-handed, talking to Saida Khan, during the dark of night. When Sher Alam came back to the village, the fake news about Memunai's affair with Saida Khan had spread like the jungle fire. The poetic version of the story by Fida Muthahir reveals that Sher Alam was clear about her chastity, but he was compelled by the code of the Pashtun culture. He, in his book "Da oor Lambe" (Flames of fire) has added this tale. He begins the tale in this manner (Patang, 1978:78):

خلقه واورى عجيبه بنكلے داستان دے
ميمونى حلالوي زور سوران دے

Translation: Listen! O people, the story of Sher Alam Memunai is beautiful but will fill you with gloom as it is about the innocent murder of Memunai.

مطهر د ميمونى صداقت سنائي
شبر عالم تحقيق و نه کر دبر نادان دے. (Patang 1978: 78)

Translation: Muthahir knows that Memunai was not guilty but Sher Alam did not make proper inquiry into the affair.

According to Muthahir, Sher Alam is to be blamed for his hasty action, but he was actually bound by the Pashtun code of honor. The only code he knew was the code of honor and only blood could wash away his shame. He grabbed a knife in one hand. He was blind in rage and did not see the truth in Memunai's eyes and innocence on her face and slashed at her throat. When Sher Alam slaughtered her he fled away. He was chased by a lashkar of the tribe because all people knew that she was innocent. Chasing him by lashkar also confirms her chastity. It is among the top seven Pashto romantic tales (Gulyar, 2022). A pool in Ghaljo village from where Memunai took water still exists. She was buried in the graveyard of Ghaljo village. The place is known but the grave has disappeared as it was of raw mud. Sher Alam later on, tried to kill that person, but could not find him rather he found his father, Syed Jan, in a mosque and killed him. Sher Alam fled to Swabi and stayed there with tobacco businessmen for the rest of his life. He died in 1940. His enemy died in 1970 (Tribal News Network, 2022). At that time Sher Alam and Memunai had one daughter, Khubani. She was three years old. It is said that Khubani died twenty years ago, probably in 2000 AD. She had one son by the name of Shah Jehan Sahibzada, who is still alive. The remnants of Sher Alam such as his shop, the stone on which he used to grind tobacco, the remnants of Memunai, like the pool in Ghiljo village, from where she would take water and the stone on which

she was slaughtered are still there and known to people. A woman lost her life at the altar of honor and due to the misogynist views that also exist in Pashto discourses against her. The larger number of proverbs also spread negativity about her as a proverb here expresses the idea about woman's subservience by saying that "Keep a woman well-fed and subservient through a slap" بنځه په (Farid et al, 2023a: 189). So much so that woman cannot take the independent decision of talking to a stranger and to give him something in time of need as tobacco from the shop in this case, which Memunai has been held guilty and the guilt took her life. There are different verses by different folk poets, which stand witness to this tragedy, an inhuman and savage incident in the name of false honor (Jhawak, 1955: 277):

ميمونى شنه شوه په خدا شوه
د كاكا خوړې دے ما به نه حلالوينه

Tranaslato: Memunai could not stop herself from laughing in disbelief as she thought how could her first cousin who is also her husband, kill her.

ميمونى گور كښي ارمان وكړو
د كټ غوتى كښي مي اوگى ده زنگ به شينه

Translation: The young Memunai longed in the grave for her necklace in a small pouch hanging by the bed side. She feared it will get rusted.

The current study has made psychoanalytical analysis of the two protagonists from two literary works, belonging to different cultures and periods and in two different languages, one in English, a language of international renown and the second one, Pashto, which is a regional language. The first protagonist is the Shakespearean Othello, from his tragedy Othello, and the second is Sher Alam, from the Pashto folk tale, Sher Alam Memunai.

Othello, the Shakespearean tragedy was written somewhere between 1604 and 1605 (1983: 657). Literature asserts that main source of the tragedy comes from Cinthio's Othello (Draper, 1931: pp. 724-37). It is one out of the four great tragedies of Shakespeare, including Hamlet, Macbeth and King Lear. All these tragedies are read and appreciated all over the world. In Shakespearean tragedies the protagonists suffer from a flaw in their character which brings their tragic downfall but the role of fate in this context cannot be ignored. Compared to other tragedies of Shakespeare, there is a strong and very well organized villain in Othello who skillfully plays upon the tragic flaw of Othello, which is the killing of his wife Desdemona at his hands and thereafter, his own suicide. As human nature and basic human instincts are the same everywhere and literature is about the depiction of human nature, feelings and emotions. A person with a jealous, suspicious and credulous nature will remain so in every age and culture and his reactions and responses will probably remain the same everywhere. The protagonist of the Pashto folk tale, Sher Alam Memunai, by the name of Sher Alam suffers from the same tragic flaw, which brought the downfall of Othello.

This study has mainly centered on the psychoanalytical analysis of the two protagonists from the works of two different cultures and ages. For that matter, Freud's psychoanalytical approaches and other relevant approaches have been applied to it. Freud's idea of pathological jealousy has also been applied to the two protagonists under discussion. There is limitation of this study. There have been bulk of researches on Othello from different perspective as it is a celebrated work of literature at global level but there is no such study on Sher Alam as the Pashto folk tale is not a celebrated one and is regionally known and that too at a small scale. All the relevant material which has been applied to Othello, was also applied by me to Sher Alam as both the tragic characters suffer from the same flaw in their character and commit a similar act of murder in a fit of fury due to intense jealousy.

Psychoanalytical Analysis Of The Two Protagonists

This study has analyzed themes of suspicion and jealousy in the two tragic protagonists, Othello, from Shakespeare's Othello and Sher Alam from the Pashto folk tale, Sher Alam Memunai. For the psychoanalytical analysis, Freud's psychoanalysis has been applied to them as theoretical framework. Freud's pathological jealousy and other psychoanalytical approaches, which are closely related to his theory, have also been applied to the two protagonists. If viewed through Freudian context, both protagonists suffer from neurosis and narcissism and such individuals are prone to pathological jealousy and suspicion. It has been in the fit of pathological jealousy that both protagonists commit the murder off their chaste and innocent wives and bring destruction upon themselves in more or less the same way.

Psychoanalysis, according to Encyclopedia Americana, is "a theory of personality and human development, a method for investigating the unconscious and conscious forces governing human behavior, and a technique for treating neurotic disorders" (1983, 720). Psychoanalysis has been applied by several researchers to different works of Shakespeare, such as Othello, to which different psychoanalytical tools have been applied in the modern age. Psychoanalytical approaches to Shakespeare have proved very effective from the feminist and especially cultural and racial point of view, as has been in the case of Othello. These different theoretical approaches and criticism on Othello continued throughout the 20th century and continue till the present, the origin of which can be traced back to the racist, gender and misogynistic ideologies and theories.

The Encyclopedia Americana defines jealousy as "an emotional attitude which is directed towards another person (or persons) who is seen as usurping possessions or privileges felt to be a property of one's own" (1983, 860). The Encyclopedia Americana traces the roots of jealousy to these feelings and says that "it derives from a sense of personal insecurity and is characterized by feelings of anger, depression and self-pity" (1983, 860). For the present study the instinct of jealousy will be analyzed in the context of the two protagonists, so, it is necessary to understand this term in the same relevant context. In short, it can be said that for the purpose of the psychoanalytical analysis of Othello and Sher Alam, the instinct of jealousy will be taken and understood from the same perspective. According to Sabrina Adams (2012, 13), jealousy is complex

human instinct and reveals itself in rather more complex experiences and has been defined in various ways. One century ago, Freud described jealousy as:

"It is easy to see that essentially it is compounded of grief, the pain caused by the thought of losing the loved object, and of the narcissistic wound, in so far as this is distinguishable from the other wound; further, of feelings of enmity against the successful rival, and of greater or lesser amount of self-criticism, which tries to hold the subject's own ego accountable for his loss" (1922:223). The phenomenon of jealousy has most of the time been defined as an emotion or amalgam of emotions. The definition of jealousy which has been provided by Freud consists of feelings of sadness and strong resentment. However, there are some other theorists who do not limit the concept of jealousy to the boundaries which have been provided by Freud. According to White et al (1989) and as has been cited by Adams (2012) Jealousy includes themes like "anger," "aggression," "hatred," "rage," "envy," "revenge," "fear," "apprehension," "anxiety," "panic," "suspicion," "mistrust," "Expectancy," "distress," "depression," "self-pity," "guilt," "love," and "sexual arousal" towards the phenomenon of jealousy. Having reviewed the previous definitions of jealousy, White et al (1989, 9) have divided them into the ones that emphasize "threat to self-esteem; threat to the relationship; exclusivity, possessiveness and rivalry; and instinctual reactions." These two researchers have also criticized those definitions of jealousy which restrict it only to emotion or a mix of emotions. White and Mullen have (1989, 9) have conceptualized jealousy in the following way:

"Romantic jealousy is a complex of thoughts, emotions and actions that follow loss of or threat to self-esteem and/or the existence or equality of the romantic relationship. The perceived loss or threat is generated by the perception of a real or potential romantic attraction between one's partner and a rival."

Now if the definition of White and Mullen (1989) is applied to the protagonists in the two works of literature under discussion, it can be appropriately applied to them. The two heroines in both the tragedies are true and faithful to their husbands and are not having adulterous affairs, but both the protagonists on the goading of the villains become sure that their wives are involved in illicit relationships. Their jealousy is aroused to the climax through the diabolic conspiracy of the villains. The climax of jealousy brings them to such a disastrous state of mind that in their romantic relationship the imaginary partner of their beloveds (in this specific case wives) becomes real to them. It can be concluded from the discussion about the imaginary rival as real that the protagonists commit the murder of their wives.

Parrot (1991, 19) points out the different cognitive symptoms that illustrate the jealous person. These cognitive symptoms include "suspiciousness, inability to concentrate on other matters, ruminations and preoccupations, fantasies of the partner and rival enjoying a wonderful relationship, more than that oversensitivity to slights or hints of dissatisfaction by the partners." If looked at into from the perspective of the definition of jealousy by Parrot, it is quite natural that jealousy arouses suspicion about love partner in a love relationship with a rival. Moreover, in the extreme state of jealousy which does not signify

"normal jealousy," in their fantasies a person sees the love partner enjoying a wonderful relationship with the rival. If viewed with a profound perception, the protagonists in the two tragedies are suspicious and jealous of their love partners' imaginary lovers to an extent, which benumb their ability to reason and result in loss of interest in other activities. Othello, is a general in the Venetian army and the fate of the state depends on his valiance. He as a general of the army, has been sent by the state on a mission against the Turks. His great qualities as an army general are highly appreciated, but once he is trapped in the net of jealousy and suspicion, he becomes unable to focus himself on other very important matters. He thinks about Desdemona and her imaginary (because Desdemona has no lover in reality) love partner Cassio, who are enjoying a wonderful relationship. The same view proves true in case of Sher Alam. He was also busy in his routine activities of life and all of a sudden he heard that during the mid of night his wife had been seen talking to a stranger. He also takes the imaginary as real, and his attention from every other activity gets detracted, and only this one point becomes the focus of his attraction, the imaginary lover of the beloved which becomes real to him. Oversensitivity in love relationships is natural but to take the imaginary rival as real in love relationship is pathological and bring disasters to the jealous person.

According to Freud (1922, 228), the concept of psychoanalysis finds the origin of jealousy in the triangulation of the Oedipus Complex or Electra Complex. According to this concept, children channelize their sexual desires to the parent of the opposite sex, and are eventually subjugated by the parent of the same sex. This clash is suppressed and the child identifies with the parent of the same sex to resolve it. In Freud's view, adults unintentionally relive the emotions associated with the loss of the parent of the opposite sex, in moments of "competitive" or "normal" jealousy. This view lives on in the contemporary psychoanalytical theory, and accounts for the vast complexity and intensity of the emotion of jealousy, tied to the childhood desire and disappointment. It is perhaps for this reason, that Freud suggests that jealousy is not completely rational, proportionate to the real situation, or under our conscious control. Freud thought that a certain amount of jealousy is normal and that a complete lack of it in inferred defensive processes such as repression of childhood conflicts, would then be even more in the unconscious. Individuals who are frequently jealous in relationships are seen in psychoanalytical terms to have had difficulties in resolving the Oedipus Complex; and moreover, these individuals unconsciously attempt to work through these difficulties. The difficulty which they face in the resolution of this complex is because of the compulsion, which these individuals go through in relating to those very early patterns.

In addition to the normal jealousy, Freud has also described "projection" jealousy, in individuals very interestingly project their own unfaithfulness, or impulses towards it, onto their own partner. He has also described "delusional" or abnormally intense jealousy, which includes the predominance of projections and delusions. A description extended by Ellis (1972, 31) emphasizes upon the presence of irrational beliefs in pathological jealousy. In this conceptualization, guilt and particularly harsh superego falls out in the presence of resistances like projection, denial and repression. In this unusual state of confusion and

psychological turmoil, such individuals instead of recognizing their own impulses, while using projection may attack their partner. To take it a step further, such individuals may identify with their own partner and focus more on his or her attraction towards others, which may become the cause of any disastrous act on their part.

If viewed in the light of projection jealousy, both the protagonists in the two works of literature under discussion may have repressed their own faithfulness due to the harsh superego and guilt, which results in the utilization of defenses such as projection. Such individuals, if unable to recognize or identify their own impulses, project them on others. Both the protagonists so quickly accept the charges of infidelity against their spouses and do not give them the chance to defend themselves against the false charges. They do not discuss anything with them against the charges which the villains have brought upon them as it is through discussion and arguments that reality is unveiled and trust can also be restored. It can be assumed that the suspicion of both the protagonists is irrational as they fail to recognize their own impulses, but instead of that use projection by attacking their own partners through the focus of their attention on others.

According to Clanton (1989, pp. 179-93), culture also influences the method, whereby jealousy works in society. According to his study, after the sexual revolution of the of the 1970s in the United States, "Jealousy was no longer seen as protective for the lover or proof of love, but rather as a personality defect that was linked to low self-esteem, insecurity and paranoia. The fact that basic human nature, passions and emotions are universal, but the factor of culture as the molder and determiner of individual responses and actions cannot be denied. Most significantly, societal norms and cultural values have certain effect on the attitude of individuals, while responding to different situations which are brought forth by emotions, besides the commonness and universality of human nature. Cultural values and societal norms are not something permanent but change with the passage of time and all cultures and societies go through this transition. We can make an assumption on the basis of this view that the response of the two protagonists may not have remained the same, had they been in the present era. On the contrary, their response to the issue, which they faced in their own contemporary eras, may have been considered as normal in the name of honor but the same may not be considered as a humane act in the current age, as the norms of societies have changed to a great extent. In the present age, the most modern of all the eras throughout the historical periods, such acts would have been condemned.

The psychiatrist Bhugra (1993, 277-80) says that "jealousy is the result of capitalist society." This criticism portrays that capitalist social order put a higher degree of possessiveness on personal belongings and property. This possessiveness is so high that sometimes it is extended to possessing other people. Capitalist society encourages "treating the love object in a literal object manner, taking the partner to be the individual's personal possession or property. Bhugra's (1993) opinion about jealousy is relevant to a certain extent, if taken from the perspective of systems; but if seen pragmatically, the systems, and cultures may affect an individual's basic instincts and tendencies to some

extent but cannot control them completely. There is no doubt about this bitter reality that in some cultures and societies, women are considered as personal property. It is evident from the play that Othello is a North African moor, who has come from a place where this system of considering women as personal property may have been in vogue in those days (Bhugra, 1993: pp. 277-80). In the case of Sher Alam, it is known that he also came from a tribal society where women used to be considered as personal property, hundred years ago when this tragic story took place. Though their attitude towards their partners, may also have been influenced by their societal values, to which they belong. There is another element of significance and which is human weakness and the flaw in the character of both the protagonists, which cannot be altogether ignored and it is their pathological jealousy. It is the same pathological jealousy that filled them with fury to an extent which led towards the unnatural act of committing the murder of their chaste wives. Roy and Haque (2018, pp. 26-35), in 'The Mad Othello' conclude that the villain in Othello is evil by nature, who appears extra shrewd, compared to the Satan in the Garden of Eden. "As Satan convinces Eve to commit sin by eating the fruit from the forbidden tree, similarly, Iago persuades Othello and makes him commit sin as the Moor doubts and murders the virtuous Desdemona." Iago, very skillfully sows the seeds of suspicion and jealousy in the heart of Othello and is confident of his success, in taking his pernicious plan to the end. The villain in the Pashto folk tale may also have been diabolic to the same extreme and she may also have used such poisonous language to create doubt and jealousy in the heart of Sher Alam. This assumption does not get a clear indication from the literature as to whether the villain in the Pashto folk tale was an evil genius of the same degree as Iago, or otherwise, but the reaction of Sher Alam confirms the degree of intelligence of the villain in the Pashto folk tale. It is an interesting and worth mentioning point that compared to the hero of Othello, the villain of this Shakespearean tragedy has been investigated at a higher scale in research studies. The villain of this work, Iago is considered as the strongest amongst all Shakespearean villains. Compared to Othello, psychoanalytical approaches have been applied to Iago by different critics. It does not mean that there are no such research studies on Othello as all modern approaches and theoretical frameworks have also been applied to him. As Othello's tragic flaw, jealousy, is of immense significance from psychoanalytical perspective and many modern critics have studied this Shakespearean protagonist from the same angle.

Kellogg (1866, 184) argues that Othello was not suspicious of Desdemona in the beginning and trusted her, but when Iago started working on his jealousy, he asked him for the proof, upon which he (Iago) played a deadly game with the handkerchief. The argument and decision seem convincing when viewed through his outlook, but as a tragic hero he allows it to be influenced more by the deep passions kindled in him by his evil genius subordinate, Iago, who tells him:

"Such a handkerchief
Did I today
See Cassio wipe his beard with" (Ridley, 1928, 120).

According to Roy and Haque (2018), the interpretation of the object (handkerchief), gives the idea in different way before Desdemona's cognizance. The senseless response of Othello compels her to think of the handkerchief as approximately similar to marvels, and therefore, she really feels disheartened due to its loss. Othello gives the handkerchief another equivalent expression when he imagines that "the piece of cloth has committed an unspeakable act, as if the handkerchief is an animistic object capable of sexual desires and moral outrage, contrition and confession after the act" (2018, 35). Othello calls Desdemona:

"This is a subtle whore
A closet lock-and-key of villainous secrets;
And yet she will kneel and pray; I have seen her do it" (Ridley, 1928, 151).

Chun (2006, 101) states that "to be jealous is to be in a state of *misconnaissance*, that is to say, using Lacanian word, of *misrecognition*. To be jealous is to misread the signifiers given from the other. What Othello needs is not just an ocular proof but a sign or a signifier, like the handkerchief. To take the discussion further, in terms of the Lacanian signifier, it can be applied to both the protagonists, Othello and Sher Alam. It seems relevant that both of them would not have believed in the words of the villains, if they had not provided the signifiers as an ocular proof to them. When Iago tells Othello about the infidelity of his wife for the first time, he gets furious at this very idea and tells him: "Villain, be sure thou provest my wife a whore" (Ridley, 1928, 115). He had never thought that he would be betrayed by his wife, but the signifier, in the form of the handkerchief, compelled him to believe in the words of Iago. The biggest mistake committed by Othello, is that he does not talk to his wife about the matter of the handkerchief, like the Duke in Robert Browning's dramatic monologue "My Last Duchess," who is a strong egoist and does not discuss with his wife what he dislikes about her. If he had asked Desdemona about what she had done with the handkerchief, the tragedy would have been avoided, but Shakespearean tragedy occurs because of the same flaw in the character of his protagonists. Similarly, Sher Alam, after he has been told about by the villain that Memunai has given the tobacco pouch to another man, in his absence and that too in the mid of night, he does not feel the need for the reconfirmation of the words of the villain, and takes it as disloyalty on the part of his innocent and pure wife. A couplet of the Pashto folk poetry expresses Sher Alam's mistaken feelings:

راشه رومال منږز دي واخله
نه دي ياري كړم نه دي نخښي گرځومه

Translation: Come and take away your gifts of handkerchief and comb which had presented as valuable gifts. I do not love you anymore, so what use is these gifts.

From the above arguments, it is quite clear that the handkerchief for Othello, and tobacco pouch for Sher Alam, play the role of signifiers, through which they establish the guilt of their wives. Both the protagonists actually misrecognize the signifiers as their wives have been guilty of the charges brought against them.

Quin (2008, pp. 3-4) has elaborated upon the seeds of gender ideology of the then times, which Iago sows into Othello's mind and to some extent, by Brabantio as well in the very beginning of the play. In the beginning of the play, certain ideologies about race and gender are offered, and likewise, some ideologies specifically related to femininity. The arguments of Iago and Brabantio, both portray women to be obviously deceiving. In addition to it, their arguments are reflective of the then times, where woman was construed to be the property and ownership and property of man. The presentation of woman as deceptive and weak is common with Shakespeare. The most prominent instance of this gender and misogynistic ideology is clearly visible in Hamlet, where he is seen expressing hatred for his mother and applying it to women in general: "Frailty thy name is woman." The same ideology is very prominent in Othello. It is formed on the basis of Desdemona's elopement from her home and her secret marriage with the Moor, where Brabantio laments the disgraceful act of his daughter:

"O Heaven! How got she out?
Treason of the blood!
Fathers, from hence not trust
Your daughter's minds" (Ridley, 1928, 14).

Brabantio further warns Othello of the faithfulness of the woman, who has betrayed her father: "Look to her, Moor, if thou hast eyes to see/ She has deceived her father and may thee" (Ridley, 1928, 39).

The seeds of misogyny which are sown by Brabantio in the mind of Othello, are further watered by Iago. He also works on the gender ideology by telling Othello that the seeming and apparent virtue of Venetian women may not be the genuine one. He generalizes the statement of Brabantio for his daughter into gender ideology. Although, Sher Alam's response to the unfaithfulness of his wife is the same but in the Pashto folk tale things have not been planned by the villain in the similar manner, as what the protagonist says to Memunai, establishes his faith in the weak and deceptive nature of women, revealing the reality that misogynistic views exist in cultures:

ځان مې په غټ درياب لاهو کړو
چې مې باور د زنانه په خوله کوونه
تا وئېل واک اختيار مې ستا دے
د نکاح په وخت کښې دې بار بار وئېلي وونه
د مخامخ سترگو بازي وه
چې پشې شا شوم و دې کرل څنگه کارونه
زما د غر په شانتي نوم وه
ميمونۍ ستا په سر بڼه شو باد مې ورينه

Translation: I have drowned myself by trusting the words of woman. You had assured me of your trust at the time of nikah, but in my absence you did not keep regard for your own words. You have brought dishonor to my honorable name.

When Sher Alam came to know about his public disgrace, he without thinking for a single moment about the falsehood of the news, held his wife Memunai responsible for it. He started cursing himself and admitted that the actual fault was his, for having believed in the words of a woman, who had assured him of her loyalty. He considered it a great humiliation that in his absence, his wife through her adulterous act brought dishonor to his honorable name. Sher Alam lamented his lost honor and that how will he face people. All these lines convey the same misogynist feelings and gender ideology which is highly visible in the lines by Brabantio and Iago in Othello. Misogynist feelings also exist in Pashto proverbs about woman, which further convey an idea about the Pashtuns' ideas about the inferiority of woman in wisdom, due to which they can be led astray by anyone any time. For instance, a Pashto proverb establishes the traditional inferiority of woman "If she is woman, she is wrong" (Che awrata wee no ghalata wee) (Farid et al, 2023b: 22).

Racial hatred against Othello exists since the commencement of the play, when Iago sends Roderigo for awakening Brabantio from sleep and tells him:

"Even now, now, very now, an old black ram
Is tupping your white ewe" (Ridley, 1928, 9).

These lines by Iago in the very beginning of the play create a picture of Othello as a savage and thus a despicable character. Although Othello is a great general and the Venetian state depends on his qualities of generalship for the protection of its boundaries but the bias against him on the basis of color (race) exists. As has been cited by Cockin (2003) from Jack D'Amicomost, who was a 16th century tourist, portrayed the Moor as someone, who came from an alien world and improved by the impression of great riches. In addition to other connotations, like physique with some other specific features: dark complexion, curly hair, thick lips, flat nose, pinch belly, broad chest and thin legs. The dark complexion was by default linked to coarseness and ugliness, and there was also a hateful concept of Moors, who were considered to be frightening and sexually uncontrolled. Rocha (1980, 68) also confirms this idea, and says that "to the Elizabethan, the Moor or Negro was black, ugly, cruel, evil, pagan, sexually rampant and barely human. The picture which Iago and Roderigo paint of Othello in the first scene of the play exactly coincides with this stereotype."

These racial and color inferiorities may have worked at the back of the mind of Othello and led him to fall in complex. This complex may also have played a strong role in provoking his intrinsic jealousy towards his wife (who was a white woman), partly prompting the idea of her murder. Though the protagonist in the Pashto folk tale, Sher Alam, has not been described as a low raced person but different versions of the tale describe him as a black and coarse person physically. Contrary to Othello, Sher Alam, belonged to the same race as Memunai, but on the analogy of color he may also have suffered from personality complex that further motivated him to become jealous of the beauty of his wife and provoked him towards her murder on incitation of the villain.

Like Desdemona, Othello himself also loved her with sincerity and honesty. On the assessment of his character, it can be assumed that he was person of noble

disposition. Furthermore, he had no feelings of ill-will against anybody, which also included Iago. The same quality of Othello was honored by Iago:

"...is of a constant, loving, noble nature
And I dare think he will prove to Desdemona
A most dear husband" (Ridley, 1928, 66).

Othello gets suspicious of his wife's chastity on the urgings of Iago but ironically enough he never once gets suspicious of the motives of the "honest" Iago. In fact, Iago is a skillful manipulator and does not let others see his reality, rather it is others who see through his vision. The more Othello sees through his vision, the more his jealousy and suspicion strengthens. The same black Othello, who is linked by other characters in the play with evil, is eventually devastated through the evil and wicked plans of a white man who is black at heart. This characteristic of the black and white go against the traditional racial ideology. This aspect of Othello does not comply with the theme of the Pashto folk tale and its protagonist.

Smith (2010, 3959) argues that "Othello's ego, which is representative of reason and common sense, is defeated by his –id, representing irrational and impulsive passions." Quin (2008, 3), further put forward the view that "the rapid succumbing of Othello to Iago's suggestions seem surprising, but is explicable if we see Othello as an insecure outsider." The same problem at the end becomes part of this tragedy. The recognition of the ideology of racial differences by Othello that was promoted by Iago and Brabantio is actually part of his tragic flaw, hamartia. Other problems like his succumbing to pernicious gender ideologies, one of which is acceptance of the belief that a white woman cannot love a black man. He believes that black color itself is identified with ugliness and so is similar to lack of appeal. In forming this superficial outlook about the women of an alien land, he forgets that Desdemona had fallen in love with his qualities of character, which is valiance and chivalry. The poison which Iago has cultivated in Othello's mind is that of racism. According to this perspective, Othello can be declared as the one suffering false consciousness.

According to Freud (1922), in adults, it is ego which controls –id, which stands for unrestrained feelings and emotions, and according to Smith (2010), human ego, which stands for rationality and logic, is in this situation beaten by Othello's –id. It means, he is a person with weak ego and a person of weak ego may take such faulty decisions and actions. If studied from this perspective, both Othello and Sher Alam took wrong decision due to weak ego, an ego badly defeated by –id. Quin (2008) is of the view that Othello succumbs to Iago's suggestions but this is due to his being an outsider in an alien culture. Sher Alam does not face an Othello like situation as he is not an alien in the Pashtun culture, but is a part of it. A striking contrast is found between the situations faced by Othello and the Pashtun protagonist. The ideology of race applies to Othello but Sher Alam does not go through the complex of race. Both the protagonists succumb to gender ideologies. The acceptance of the belief of Othello about racial complexes cannot be extended to Sher Alam as he only goes through color complex but not racial complexes. Sher Alam is also dark complexioned but if he goes through such feelings these are an individual personal feelings and have

no connection with racist ideology. Quin's (2008) opinion that Othello becomes the victim of false consciousness is also true because one's conscious stands for reason and common sense but he follows his –id (unrestrained emotions and passions) and acts on impulse. If the opinion of Quin is applied to Sher Alam, it is appropriate as the actions of both the protagonists have strong affinity in this regard as their rash and impulsive acts are the same.

Chun (2006, 102) believes that "because of this structure of jealousy, the green eye of the jealous man reads and misreads the sign. The cure of jealousy might be the ability to read the sign doubly, not to be restricted to one reading of the sign, so as not to be trapped by the signifiers. If taken in the context of Othello, the misreading of the sign falls true. This is the misreading of the sign by the others that leads to the tragic disaster. Othello lacks the ability to read the sign doubly, the inability which leads to destruction brought upon the heroines by the protagonists. Both the protagonists' inability to read the sign doubly leads them to misunderstanding of signifiers (the handkerchief in case of Othello and tobacco pouch in case of Sher Alam).

Robey (2012, 5) argues that the protagonist "Othello searches for the ultimate truth about Desdemona through Iago but there is no absolute truth to be found as has been said by Foucault (2001). Similar to Foucault, Jacques Derrida (1994, 5) also denies the existence of absolute truth. Truth and reality are formed by historical experiences." The historical constructs, reality and truth are yet again limited to the experiences that human beings go through and as such cannot be extended beyond humanity. The theories of Foucault and Derrida apply to both protagonists. Absolute truth is not what Othello heard from Iago. Truth is felt and experience by different people differently. It is Othello's and Sher Alam's dependence on taking the argument of the villain as an Absolute truth that leads to the tragedy. Every individual has his/her own approach towards truth based on their own experiences. Taking the truth of one person as absolute, that is the villains, is the biggest mistake of the protagonists, which lead them towards destruction.

Daly and Wilson (1988, 17) reveal that it is sexual jealousy that plays a primary role in sexual violence and homicide. The same appears in both the tragedies. Both the protagonists commit the murder of their wives as they are sure that they are in adulterous affair with other men.

Barelds and Dijkstra (2006, pp. 183-98) believe that "although jealousy has some positive connotations, but extreme jealousy can communicate to partners a lack of trust in the relationship." Similarly, Rusbult et al (1998, pp. 357-87) also confirm this idea. They argue that "long lasting relationships are built on trust, but when jealousy becomes a persistent pattern in a relationship, it erodes the foundations of trust that is essential to a successful, rewarding relationship." Both the views strongly apply to the protagonists of the two tragedies (Othello and Sher Alam). They do not trust their wives and the element of persistent jealousy in their nature erodes the foundation of trust which is essential to lasting relationship. Both of them on the basis of suspicion and jealousy kill their wives that ultimately result in their destruction. Since the motivational component, action, reaction and results of these factors are almost the same for

the protagonists of Shakespearean Othello, and the Pashto folk tale, Sher Alam Memunai, therefore, based on these semblances, the psychoanalytical analysis of Othello, which has been done by other critics, has thereafter, been extended to the protagonist of the Pashto folk tale.

Lord, K. (2007, pp. 1-7) in his essay argues that through the famous example of Othello, Shakespeare has proved the idea of marriage for individual desires as disastrous. Othello is the only tragedy of Shakespeare, in which Othello and Desdemona marry in haste out of passion without any consideration of the people around them. Desdemona after having married tells her father:

"I do perceive here a divided duty,
I am hitherto your daughter: but here's my husband" (Ridley, 1928, 31).

She does not have any regrets about her secret marriage with Othello and proclaims in front of her father that her duty towards Othello (her husband), is of superior significance, compared to that towards her father. Brabantio, on hearing this, disowns her, and according to Keelin Lord, this rejection of Desdemona from her father's side makes her susceptible to be maltreated by her husband. As the support, which she enjoyed prior to the disownment from her father is no more available to her in time of need. Keelin Lord (2007, pp. 1-7) further argues that the secret marriage makes the protagonist open to destruction and becomes easily exploitable by his subordinates as it is the very intimate people whom one confides in during difficult times. It is these close people, who can exploit one's weaknesses and similarly, Othello is so easily swayed by Iago, whom he has confided in and this Keelin Lord considers the cause of the downfall of the romantic marriage of Othello and Desdemona.

On the other hand, the marriage of Sher Alam and Memunai, in the Pashto folk tale took place ceremoniously, with the consent of their parents. Therefore, the psychoanalytical approach applied by Keelin Lord to Othello cannot be extended to the protagonist in the Pashto folk tale. However, the role by the villains in both the works and response of the protagonists to the similar situation is the same. The conclusion which has been drawn by Keelin Lord, who exclusively considers the downfall of the relationship to be the secret marriage of Othello and Desdemona, cannot be considered for Sher Alam and Memunai. While applying the psychoanalytical approach to the character of Othello, for being overly credulous about the infidelity of his wife without authentic proof, Keelin Lord (2007, pp. 1-7) argues that strong and irresistible sentiments associated with romance are depicted through the character of Othello. It has been emotions which guided Othello's decisions in his love for Desdemona, Iago finds the chance to mold these irrepressible emotions into suspicion and anger, and gets away successfully in doing so with his evil genius. The protagonist who in the beginning believes that a jealous person is the personification of evil, loses his reason when he gets informed by the villain about his spouse's affair with Cassio. With the passage of time, the protagonist goes through mental distress and finally his rational faculty collapses, his emotions boil over and he kills his wife without searching for any solid proof to confirm her infidelity. While extending the approach of Keelin Lord to the Pashto folk tale, a huge amount of concordance can be seen between the mental

status of the two protagonists as Sher Alam also love Memunai dearly, which proves that he is also a highly emotional man like Othello. Sher Alam, also like Othello believes in the allegations levelled against Memunai and resultantly, commits the same error of judgment of not confirming the allegations against his chaste and innocent wife, by killing her in a fit of fury. For a moment one thinks that even if Sher Alam did not believe in the charges brought forward against his wife, he felt himself bound by the Pashtun code to kill her, otherwise would have to face public defamation and taunts as has been expressed by a couplet of Pashto folk poetry (Farid et al, 2023c: 708):

يو خواته ته بل خوا پښتو ده
کومه يو پرېږدم خدایه فکر واخستمه

Translation: I am faced with two extremes, what to choose? Your life or my honor?

CONCLUSION

The psychoanalytical analysis of the two protagonists from two different works confirm that Othello is one of the most celebrated tragedies of William Shakespeare and so does its tragic hero. The Pashto folk tale and its protagonist, on the contrary, are regionally known and have not been celebrated in literature at the global level. There has been plenty of research works available on Othello from different perspectives for the current study, but on the protagonist of the Pashto folk tale no research study from any angle has been conducted so far, so the psychoanalysis and other relevant theories, which have been applied to Othello, have been extended to the other protagonist. For the purpose of psychoanalysis of the two protagonist all those theories and different forms of criticism which have been applied to Othello have also been extended to Sher Alam. Along with extension of the theories to Sher Alam that have been applied to Othello an effort has been made to apply the psychoanalytical approaches, that have not been previously applied to Othello by critics and have extended the same. The psychoanalytical analysis of the two protagonists covers Shakespeare's misogynistic philosophy, which is rampant in his plays. Besides misogyny, the racial, cultural and gender ideologies by different theorists and different forms of criticism have been applied to Othello and then extended to Sher Alam. Freud's psychoanalysis also relevantly applies to the two protagonists as both of them have weak ego, which is defeated by their –id. Both the protagonists suffer from pathological jealousy and act on the basis of false ego, thus become victims of the malicious designs of the villains by committing the murder of their innocent wives in a fit of fury in the name of false honor. While doing so, they also destroy their own lives as Shakespearean Othello commits suicide after the realization of truth. The protagonist of the Pashto folk tale of Sher Alam and Memunai goes into exile after he commits the murder of his innocent wife and dies in devastated state.

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