

The Patterns of Father-Daughter Relationship in Shakespeare's *King Lear*, *The Tempest* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*: A Critical Study

By

Hadeel Mohammad Ahmad Abu Helweh

Supervisor

Prof. Ibrahim Abushihab

Al-Zaytoonah University of Jordan, 2021

Abstract

This paper explores the complexities of the relationship between fathers and their daughters in Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1595), *King Lear* (1608) and *The Tempest* (1611). Interestingly, in *A Midsummer Night's dream* and *King Lear*, the daughter is presented as a rebel who is ready to set out on her own ignoring and defying her father's authority; whereas, in *The Tempest*, the daughter is portrayed as an epitome of perfection who obeys and listens to her father. In the era of Shakespeare, when the daughter rebels against her father, she breaks the rules and norms of society. As a result, she may be destined to die because she is considered a rebellious woman who refuses to remain under male authority. Accordingly, this father-daughter relationship fails. Surprisingly, in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *King Lear*, Shakespeare depicts the daughters: Hermia and Cordelia, as winners and heroines because they rebel against their fathers. Moreover, they are rewarded by marrying men whom they love and support as a result of

disobedience to their fathers. In contrast, in *The Tempest*, the daughter wins not because she rebels against her father, but because she feels comfortable in his sphere of control. She is voiceless and passive and gives loyalty and obedience to her father. As a result, the daughter is depicted as a product of her father's upbringing winning his love, care, and contentment. It is also worth exploring that there is no decisive role of the mothers in *Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *King Lear*, and *The Tempest*. Given these considerations, Shakespeare's inclinations seem to lean toward considering the father as a figure of authority.

Keywords: Shakespeare, father-daughter relationship, rebellious woman