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Suffering Of Sibling in the Ancient Literature

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Abstract

When human is born sees some eyes watching inside self, trying to take care with affection and love. Inside of parents, the most closed kindred and consanguinity, is brother and sister; that life finds meaning with them. The unconscious love between them, that has its roots in consanguinity; having the same parents, growing up together and being matured in the same family, while it has carried the unwanted suffering; the suffer of loving and being loved. According to study literary texts throughout the centuries and beyond geography, the sibling relationship seems to be either white or black. Surprisingly, in these texts there is not a moderate trend, neither in this relationship seems a sweet suffering as to love, forgiveness and sacrifice, nor the bitter suffering that triggers suffer. Moreover, to be suffered that eventually ends in grudge, jealousy, bloodshed and revenge. This subject has an old long background in the arena of literature. The most ancient stories involving the above is about Abel and Cain appears in Bereshit, the first of the 54 Torah portions.

. According to the Book of Genesis, Joseph's story tells about the action of the father-Jacob loving his youngest son more than the others that the growing jealousy and finally the grudge of brothers to the small son, leading to murder of the brother. The relationship of sibling demonstrates a world of difference. The Iliad, the Homer's major work, shows the contrast between morality and immorality in sibling relations. There are two kinds of siblings in *King Lear*; a tragedy written by William Shakespeare in 1606. According to Shahnameh there are some stories about sibling primarily has a common message. In all stories the roll of parents, especially father, is very important resulting to aggravate jealousy and grudge.

Keywords: sibling, Jealousy, grudge, love, parents

When human finds being and sees some eyes watching inside self, tries to take care with affection and love. Inside of parents, the most closed kindred and consanguinity, is brother and sister; that life finds meaning with them; the unconscious love between them, that has its roots in consanguinity, having the same parents, and growing up together and being matured in the same family, while it has carried the unwanted suffering; the suffer of loving and being loved that triggers sense of jealousy and competition.

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This subject has an old long background in the arena of literature. This article aims at investigating some stories correspondingly.

Methodology: The purpose of the study is to consider a series of relationships between people based on kinship relationships in ancient texts. The method is library –documentation.

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The data collection method is done by referring to the texts. The research has considered applying content analysis technic as a research instrument and the analysis measurement on the basis of sentence whereby the research has spotted the contributions to the suffering of sibling.

Ancient stories

The most ancient stories involving the above is about Abel and Cain. In Abrahamic religions, Abel and Cain are the name of the first two sons of Adam and Eve. It appears in Bereshit, the first of the 54 Torah portions.

“Cain, in the Bible (*Hebrew Bible, or Old Testament*), firstborn son of Adam and Eve, who murdered his brother Abel (*Genesis 4:1-16*). Cain, a farmer, became enraged when the Lord accepted the offering of his brother Abel, a shepherd, in preference to his own. He murdered Abel and was banished by the Lord from the settled country. Cain feared that in his exile he could be killed by anyone, so the Lord gave him a sign for his protection and a promise that if he were killed, he would be avenged sevenfold. (*Encyclopedia Britannica, britannica.com*)

This story also has shortly been mentioned in Quran, the holly book of Islam, in Sura of Maedeh, 27-31. There is a difference between, that in Quran Cain saw two crows fighting and one was killed. The killer-crow –tipped and dug the ground and buried the dead crow. By seeing this, Cain found his idiotism regretted.

Crow is a symbol by some different meanings in different cultures. In Torah (*Genesis 8:7*) crow is symbol of foresight and consciousness. Shamans believe crow is the first-hero-god that makes the world, more accurately, and organizes the world. Mayas know it as the messenger of god of lightening, and originally it overlaps with some myths of wind and thunder in North America. In china and Japan, crow is the symbol of gratitude to parents. Crow is also known as the symbol of loneliness or shows some one’s intentional isolation deciding to leave for a higher place. In other side crow is symbol of desire. (*Dictionaries Des Symbols, Gheerbrant, 2006. P.580-584*)

In this story that is seemingly the first fratricide on the ground, can find some reasons that push Cain to kill his brother. The first is the attitude of his parents toward their sons, raising jealousy toward Abel; the small brother, for to be the bigger one has the credit and respect and some advantages, and their parents ignored those.

Cain, by killing Abel, in fact killed his parents, and became wanderer on the ground, and bereaved man kind of having the wise Abel. He is the symbol of roaming; of unfaithful human roaming on the ground and faraway of love, affection and overcome the darkness of grudge, hatred and jealousy in heart.

Joseph story:

Joseph ('dʒoʊzəf, -səf; Hebrew: יוסֵף meaning

"Increase" Standard Yosef Tiberian יוֹסֵף; Arabic: يوسف *ū uf* or *ū if*; Ancient

Greek: Ἰωσήφ *Iō h*) is the son of Jacob. "According to the Book of Genesis, Jacob was the third Hebrew progenitor with whom God made a covenant. He is the son Of Isaac and Rebecca, the grandson of Abraham, Sarah and Bethuel, the nephew of Ishmael, and the younger twin brother of Esau. Jacob had twelve sons and at least one daughter, by his two wives, Lea and Rachel, and by their handmaidens Bilhah and Zilpah. (*Wikipedia/Jacob*)

When Joseph was 9th, had a dream that 11 stars, sun and moon prostrated on his feet. He told about the dream to his father. Jacob knew the meaning of his dream and forbidden him to

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say about to his brother, for was afraid his brothers jealousies to him. Jacob cleared his son that he would be the prophet in future and could see a bright future for him and expressed his high interest to him that raised the other sons' jealousy and grudge.

His brothers gathered secretly to plan to kill Joseph and the younger brother Benjamin. They found these two brothers were more favored than the other ones.

One day the brothers went to flock the sheep, Jacob sent Joseph to accompany them. The brothers had planned to kill Joseph, but one of them prudently suggested to put him into a well, maybe a caravan would find him. They agreed and put him in a well and took his coat off and shed blood of an animal and showed the coat to their father and told that a wolf had killed Joseph.

An Egyptian caravan found him and took him as slave to Egypt. The Vizier of Egyptian(Aziz)-Potiphar- Emperor bought him and told his wife to be kind with him, but later she fell in love with him and because Joseph ignored her, she lied to his husband that Joseph wished to sleep with her. Joseph was imprisoned for 7 years. One night the Emperor had a dream and asked all astronomers and interpreters to tell him about the meaning of his dream, but nobody could. So they found Joseph could make it. Joseph interpreted the dream so well that, he became Aziz after the death of the Vizier.

"In the second year of famine, Joseph's half-brothers were sent to Egypt to buy goods. When they came to Egypt, they stood before the Vizier but did not recognize him as their brother Joseph, who was now in his late 30s; but Joseph did recognize them and did not speak at all to them in his native tongue of Hebrew." (*Wikipedia/Joseph*)

"The remaining brothers returned to their father in Canaan, and told him all that had transpired in Egypt. They also discovered that all of their money sacks still had money in them, and they were dismayed. Then they informed their father that the Vizier demanded that Benjamin be brought before him to demonstrate that they were honest men. Jacob became greatly distressed feeling that they treated him badly. After they had consumed all of the grain that they had brought from Egypt, Jacob told his sons to go back to Egypt for more grain. With Reuben and Judah's persistence, they persuaded their father to let Benjamin join them for fear of Egyptian retribution." (*Genesis 42:29-43:15*)

"Jacob (also known as Israel) and his entire house of seventy gathered up with all their livestock and began their journey to Egypt. As they approached Egyptian territory, Judah went ahead to ask Joseph where the caravan should unload. They were directed into the province of Goshen and Joseph readied his chariot to meet his father there. It had been over twenty years since Joseph had last seen his father. When they met, they embraced each other and wept together for quite a while. His father then remarked, "Now let me die, since I have seen your face, because you are still alive." (*Genesis 46:1-34*)

According to the story, the action of the father, Jacob, loving his small son more than the others, grew jealousy and finally the grudge of brothers to the small son, leading to the murder of the brother. On the other side there is the sweet sufferance that Joseph tasted for loving his family and having no grudge to them. Also this story indicates when the sons found their father's discriminatory behavior; they fell in to the dark well of grudge and went along to kill their little brother.

The Iliad

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Western literature begins with Homer. (Homer, Griffin, p7)The Greeks looked on two long epics, Iliad and Odyssey as Homer's major work. (Homer, The Iliad, E.V.R, P.vii) These epics are about Events of the Trojan War. It has been written about 1184B.C (Homer, Griffin, 1996, p9). The Trojan War broke out because of that the prince of troy, Paris, seduced and kidnapped beautiful Helen; the wife of Menelaus; the king of Sparta. Agamemnon, the brother of Menelaus, was the great king of Greek. He gathered a large army to cross the Aegean Sea, brought the Trojans to justice to bring Helen back. The Iliad started from where Achaeans arrived in Troy. (Same, p10) Hector is the greatest Trojan warrior, brother to Paris, and the eldest son of Priam and Hecuba, who was the chief warrior of the Trojan army.

At the beginning of this epic war, Homer speaks clearly about the relationship between brothers; a brother that caused war, a brother who was killed in the war while his brother started irresponsibly.

Homer's Iliad casts Paris as unskilled and coward. Hector, unlike Paris who refuses to take responsibility for his actions, completely redeems himself by refusing to hide behind the walls of Troy. He cannot content himself to show cowardice after seeing the deaths caused by his unwise instructions to camp outside the city's fortifications. Hector is angry with Paris because men are fighting for him and he is not out fighting among them. Paris says he will go fight when he has on his armor, and tells Hector to go on ahead. Hector loves his family, but he isn't very happy with his brother; Paris's actions. Paris bringing Helen to Troy is what spurred the entire war, and yet he doesn't fight in the battle. Hector and his family could have given back Helen, and even sacrificed Paris' life, but instead, they fight for him. Helen tries to seduce Hector after he killed Ajax. Hector rejected Helen's advances and remained faithful to his wife Andromache.

It seems Hector, the pride and honor of Priam's city of Troy, is the hero of this poem. Hector is the true hero because he is daringly courageous, solely devoted to his family and people, and selfless to others around him.

Paris was killed by Philoctetes in the end of the Trojan War.(Taken from the book Homer, Griffin,1996)

The relationship of sibling demonstrates a world of difference. According to Iliad, Hector is brave, selfless, self-sacrifice, moral, kind and a family lover, while the other, Paris, is entirely different as he is selfish, opportunistic, immoral, coward, and he sacrifices his brother and more than this, his people for his whims. It seems hector has to endure an unbearable sufferance to save his tribe nonetheless Paris is the one who has to pay for the inconvenience.

King Lear:

King Lear is a tragedy written by William Shakespeare in 1606. King Lear of Britain, having turned old and wanting to retire from the duties of the monarchy, decides to divide his realm among his three daughters, and declares he will offer the largest share to the one who loves him most.

Goneril and Regan -his eldest daughters- seeking power, express their love to their father. Unlike her sisters, Cordelia- the youngest one- with real love refuses to say anything. Lear Infuriatingly disinherits Cordelia and divides her share between the elder sisters.

At first Goneril gets all her father's power. She becomes the ruler of the half of the territory. She with complicity of Regan, reveal that their declarations of love are fake and view Lear as a foolish old man. Meanwhile the clown appears, and King Lear notices his wrong decision about Cordelia.

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Edmund -the illegitimate son of the Earl of Gloucester- appears with wickedness, vulgarity and betrays Gloucester sending a letter to Cornwall, Regan and Goneril. He reveals evidence that his father knows of an impending French invasion designed to reinstate Lear to the throne; and in fact a French army has landed in Britain. Also he shows off Edgar -his brother's conspirator -the legitimate son. Once Edmund leaves with Goneril to warn Albany about the invasion, Gloucester is arrested, and Regan and Cornwall gouge out Gloucester's eyes.

King Lear seeing Regan's bad behavior toward Kent leaves her house and falls into storm. Goneril discovers that she finds Edmund more attractive than her honest husband Albany. Two sisters throughout their pick of pride and avarice, they jealously betray each other. They fall in love with Edmund.

According to this story, there are two kinds of siblings; one deals with three daughters of King Lear feigning love to their father as much as possible.

Regan is killed with the poison Gabriel gives her and Gabriel suicides by a dagger. Cordelia – the youngest sister-was killed in prison.

The next sibling, are Edmund - the illegitimate son of Gloucester- and Edgar the legitimate one. The Duke of Albany after finding Betrayal and dignity with Edmund and his wife invites Edmund to the tone of war; meanwhile Edgar arrives and kills his illegitimate brother.

Shakespeare mentioned in Othello about jealousy that is highlighted. There is a part in the scene III. (The garden of the castle) that shows how jealousy described:

IAGO says: "O, beware, my lord, of jealousy;
It is the green-eyed monster which doth mock
The meat it feeds on; that cuckold lives in bliss
Who, certain of his fate, loves not his wronger;
But, O, what damned minutes tells he o'er
Who dotes, yet doubts, suspects, yet strongly loves!" (*Othello, the Moor of Venice*)

Shahnameh of Ferdowsi

One of the literary masterpieces with persistent and profound concepts that demonstrated pain and suffering in human being, is Shahnameh written by Abu'l-Qasim Ferdowsi Tusi (c.940-1020).Shahnameh comprises an in-depth life and history of thousands years of Iran and Iranian, Iran's civilization, evolution, from the creation of the first human, the emergence and evolution of human civilization, the heroic tales and the fights with evil, historical eras and formation of governments and overthrown of the last ancient Iranian government, in an exquisite way mixed with advice. Shahnameh is all utterance about human eternal pains and sufferings that appears bitter to any noble and aware spirits at any time and place.(Ferdowsi, rationale and his poem,P.245) The theme of stories in Shahnameh is fortune and destiny and all oppressions related to sphere, cycle, and time.(Same) . The validity of Ferdowsi's speech is since as that he had gathered and recited the history, culture and the values of Iran and ancient Iranians.[4] (Ferdowsi, rationale and his poem, Riahi ,1996)

Shahnameh is about the history of Iran from ancient times to Arab's attack. There are some stories about sibling in Shahnameh.

The first one is in the mythic parts: Fareidun- the king of Pishdadian dynasty-had three sons; and divided the world between them. So he gave Byzantine and the other eastern regions to Salm, Turkmenistan and China to Tur and Iran and Arab's land with his throne and his great crown to Iraj.(Shahnameh,Ferdowsi,2001,P:72-73)

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When wise Fareidun got old, the great chose impudent, refractory and impertinent, so his two sons-Salm and Tur- changed their nature and manner to grudge and hatred. Salm was not satisfied with the inheritance he was given by his father, because he gave the best part of his kingdom and wealth to Iraj. He angrily sent a messenger toward Tur and said “we were three worthy brothers, but our father gave his throne and seal of honor to Iraj; the youngest son. I believe I am oldest son, the seal of throne must be mine”. First they decided to send a messenger to their father and reproved him for unfair and unjust division. They asked him either he took the throne from Iraj or we gather some brave fighters and attack to Iran and kill Iraj. (*Same, P: 74-75*)

Fareidun sworn to God, then his throne that he did not discriminate between them, and he gathered wises and the greats to consult.

Two brothers plotted out to kill their brother; Iraj, and by this way got revenge from their father and possessed Iran.

When Iraj found his father upset, asked about it, and his father told him what his brothers impudently wanted. Iraj decided to meet his brothers without any army and invite them to peace and thanksgiving.

When Iraj entered into their camp, after some conversations, Tur to whom truth and integrity was meaningless, beat the gold throne on Iraj’s head while he begged grace. Tur tore his chest by a poisoned dagger. Then cut his head and smeared with ambergris and musk and sent to his father.

Ferdowsi showed how they were misled and faced misfortune that threw them away from right pass, and how greed sealed their eyes and heart and aberration led them to kill their brother.

In the heroic part of Shahnameh are the other stories about sibling sufferance. One of them is the story of Rustam and shaghad. Their father Zal -the hero that was known to wise and prudent- married to Tahmineh., and Rustam became their son. Zal had an affair with a slave in hidden who played Roud and sang in his private. She had given a birth to a son with resemblance to his father and astronomers foretold when he grew, he would destroy the generation of Sam and he would cause sorrow and corruption. Shaghad grew to a young and became a brave rider. The army commander of Kabul believed he deserved the throne and gave his daughter to him with the hope that his brother; Rustam would not take tax. When the time of tribute arrived, he noticed Rustam did not break the role so he had to pay as usual. He complained to Shaghad and he angrily decided to get rid of him with a trick. He told his father in law arrange a party and tell me insolence and I leave to Zabolistan with fury. Then you dig some holes and put many swords and daggers into them and cover them with some herbs. They did their plan carefully and Shaghad returned to Kabul and accompanied Rustam. Unfortunately, Rakhsh – Rustam’s horse- fell into two holes and its chest torn. Also Rustam fell into the well and got wounded. When he opened his eyes, he found Shaghad above the well and realized his trick. Rustam asked his brother to give him his bow with two arrows to finish the life of Rakhsh and himself. Shaghad did this but being afraid of Rustam hid himself behind a tree. Rustam threw arrows toward the tree and tightened him to the tree. Two brothers were killed by each other. (*Same, P.1220-1227*)

Another story in Shahnameh is the story of Talkhand and Gav. There was a conscious king in India who had a sage talented wife. She gave birth to a son resembled his father and they named him Gav. Suddenly the king got sick and died, and because Gav was a child, the greats decided entrust the dynasty to the king’s brother-Māy. He got married to Gav’s mom and she

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gave birth to another son and named him Talkhand. When Gav was seven and Talkhand two, Māy-the king- died. And his wife became surrogate of the king. Two sons grew and both desired to become a king, and their mother tried to advise them for peace and justice. Two brothers' hearts became overwhelmed and they decided to fight and Talkhand was killed and Gav was throned.

There are some other stories in Shahnameh with the same theme; like Afrasyab and his brother Aghrirath the turanian heros. In Shahnameh Afrasyab is the symbol of darkness and wickedness and his brother is the half brightness with good character. Afrasyb killed his brother for helping Iranian.

The other sight of relationship among sibling is the correct lovely relationship. For example, the sisters of Esfandiyar- Beh Afarid and Hamay- that were captured by Turanian and Arjasp prisoned them in Ruin dej. Goshtasp sent his son Esfandiyar to rescue them. Esfandiyar in a merchant's dress went to Ruin dej and found his sister with tatters cloth, half naked and tearful. He asked them to wait for some days, and then he killed Arjasp and the other commanders and saved his sisters.

Conclusion

Sibling in Shahnameh primarily has a common message including Jealousy, grudge, hatred and other bad feelings occurred between siblings while one side is illegitimate or from another mother. In all stories the roll of parents, especially father, is very important resulting into aggravation, jealousy and grudge.

The feeling of rejection or lack of affection, mostly from parent side, and seeking for more attention, some kinds of competition are the other factors that raise jealousy, or grudge.

In view of morality and strong religious believes a child, who was born out of legitimate marriage, is supposed illegitimate that deserves tribulation and definitely has a black heart. King Lear and Shahnameh could be great instances regarding this subject.

Patriarchy is the other factor about sibling sufferance and in all above stories is highlighted. It seems patriarchy had a significant role to dismember with Relations between brothers also build their future.

This study shows there are many similarities between the heroes and anti-heroes of these stories in such a way that each of them represents the same ancient mythological vision which is supra- geographical and supra- national.

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