

An Analysis of Friendship in William Shakespeare's The Merchant of Venice

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to analyze the types of friendship between Antonio and Bosanio in Shakespeare's play, *The Merchant of Venice*. The core theme of this drama is friendship. This theme of friendship expresses the relationship between Antonio and Basanio. A true friend is consistently willing to put your happiness before your friendship. Friendships are relationships that can last throughout the life span, serving an important role in maintaining social connectedness at the end of life as well as with other relationships, such as with co-workers and members of organizations. While making new relatives is common in the early years, making new friends is more likely in later years than expanding kinship, at least within a generation. The data is taken from the drama using a psychoanalytic approach. The method used is a qualitative method. The results show that there are three types of friendship found in the novel, namely utility friendship, pleasure friendship, and benevolent friendship.

Keywords: *Friendship, friendship of utility, friendship of pleasure, kinds of friendship*

1. Introduction

Due to the bond and relationship that exists between Brigadier J, Bharada Eliezer, and the two-star general Ferdy Sambo, Bharada Eliezer is the newest and lowest ranking police officer in the case against Ferdy Sambo. Brigadier J was shot by Ferdy Sambo, who was acting as Bharada E order-giver. Brigadier J knowledge of Ferdy Sambo's black business and having an affair was the driving force behind this murder investigation. Brigadier J and Bharada E were best friends, as is also known. Because the National Police Chief personally revealed the suspect's identification along with other senior National Police officials, this case even made history for the Republic of Indonesia Police Agency. This was stated in William Shakespeare's most recent play, *The Merchant of Venice*, which depicts the tale of a 16th-century merchant who borrows money from a Jewish moneylender for his buddy. This friend's narrative is complex and involves elements of greed, religion, and anger. It's been categorized as either a tragedy, a comedy, or both. Though many things influence reasoning, the play's

features, characters, and conclusion are crucial for categorizing it. In this instance, a cordial relationship between Antonio and Basanio developed.

Friendship is a type of relationship that can last a lifetime, playing a crucial role in maintaining social connectedness in later life when other relationships, including those with coworkers and other organization members, may be discarded. Even though meeting new relatives is common when one is younger, at least within one's generation, the likelihood of meeting new friends grows over time. According to Francis & Hester (2004: 2) in Dewan Septian (2022), humans are complicated beings. People are social beings, which implies that the social reality we are aware of profoundly shapes the way we live. It implies that a person requires other people to overcome difficult challenges in life. Humans are therefore social beings. People will gather together in ways that are related to and reflect their particular personalities to function inside the group. The closest groups of people in our lives include, for instance, family and friends. Additionally, there are several levels of friendship, including casual, close, and best friends. With others, this form of relationship will provide us with something as important as our personality. Every human being values friendship. A friendship will typically be built on the straightforward principles of trust and being honest with one another when they are having trouble.

There have been several studies that have raised the values of friendship by William Shakespeare, for example, those conducted by S. Kaviya [2019: 120], Qi sun [2022: 77], and Kristi Rene Sexton [2016: 19-43]. Studies from research -The research revolves around friendship crisis, friendship structure, friendship interpretation, and values. McFaul [2009] in Kristi (2016) summarizes his argument as follows: "Most of Shakespeare's plays and much of the writing of his period were shaped by the humanist ideal of true friendship, even when they were aware that it was a desire, but its primary effect was to create a self-tinged assertive individuality and limited by failure".

This tends to view what friendship is like and what kind it is. Moreover, Shakespeare's work has complexity and has a broad view of the phenomenon of friendship relations. While it is clear that friendships have long been an important part of social life and important for well-being, these close relationships have not received as much attention historically as family ties. In fact, in the 1950s and 1960s when sociologists and family scientists studied close relationships, they tended to investigate marital and kinship bonds but usually excluded friends from their studies. It was not until the 1970s and 1980s that scholars began to investigate friendship as a social role in its own right, separate from ties with colleagues, neighbors, acquaintances, and other non-relatives, and to study friendship as a relationship rather than friendliness as an individual attribute. They uncover a variety of forms and functions of friendship and identify both unique aspects of friendship that differ from other bonds as well as similarities between friendships and other informal and close relationships (Blieszner & Adams, 1992) in Chen & Feeley, (2014) at all.

Since there are several views on friendship that are universal and broad, this raises a new problem, namely the problem of friendship bonds and the types of friendship that exist between Antonio and Basanio. Even though there have been several other studies or previous studies, this

provides a new gap to be discussed regarding Shakespeare's work because there are several stages of friendship not discussed specifically so of course, they have not been resolved.

Along with investigating the structural aspects of friendship, such as the role of friends and the frequency of interactions, there is a growing awareness of the need to examine friendship in the context of social networks; to see friendship as developing throughout life and continuing through phases over time; and to assess cognitive, affective, and behavioral processes as dynamic aspects of peer interactions. This again nuanced approach to friendship research emerged from moving beyond laboratory experiments and extensive surveys to using in-depth interviews, which foster a focus on the quality of peer interactions, not just quantity (Adams Blieszner, 1994; Blieszner & Adams, 1992) and recognizes that friends and interactions with friends involve individual characteristics that evoke different responses according to individual preferences (Adams & Blieszner, 1995). As a result, research on friendship has flourished in recent decades, including studies of friendship in middleage and beyond, yielding a wide-ranging literature on both traditional (e.g., emerging from face-to-face interactions) and innovative (e.g., formed via social media networking) aspects of friend ties in later life (Blieszner & Ogletree, 2018).

Shakespeare's works are being reviewed in this study in an effort to determine the forms of friendship that existed between Antonio and Basanio. This study is primarily concerned with determining the nature of the friendship between Antonio and Bosanio. These problems will be answered with a psychoanalytic approach. Several psychodynamic theoretical perspectives specifically discuss friendships outside the context of developmental phases. However, Freud's (1914) object choice and Fairbairn's (1944) object-seeking theories of motivation provide valuable perspectives that can be explored through the lens of friendship. Freud (1914) understood object choice in terms of object love to be from analytic and narcissistic origins. Freud (1914) showed that the objects of one's initial attachment and aspects of the present self that is valued or lost influence the choice of objects of love. It is interesting to consider that Freud's concept of identification with the initial object influences the choice of a love object in terms of friendship. It makes sense that experiences with the object of initial attachment as well as the current self influence not only romantic objects but friendships as well, Barth (2016).

2. Literature Review

Lickerman (2013) stated that the main reason why people are together as friends is that they share the same interests, history, values, and equality. Common interest means sharing ideas, and opinions to start a friendship. It provides a sense of emotional security and a sense of belonging between people. History means experiencing the same past life or the same experience again forming the basis of a bond e.g. childhood. Common values can be caused by the same society or religion. And, equality means mutual respect and social ownership, for example, the division of time and division of labor. Aristotle divides the types of friendship into three; utility, pleasure, and virtue (Ross & Brown, 2009).

Aristotle categorizes friendship into three categories: virtue, pleasure, and utility (Ross & Brown, 2009). Friendship of utility refers to the tendency for people to make friends because of their mutual utility. People are more enamored of the usefulness than the person in their eyes. It implies that for a friendship to last, it must benefit each party individually. This form of connection frequently develops between elderly individuals who have similar occupations. Friendship for fun is built on the enjoyment of a shared activity and each party's pursuit of transient joys and feelings. This form of friendship is frequently found among young people. Because they share enjoyment and affection for enjoyment rather than for the person, this friendship will develop into a good one (Sadler, 2013). As people search for virtue in the other person, friendship of virtue is challenging. According to Aristotle, this form of relationship develops between two morally upright individuals who have the time to devote to forging such a connection. According to a saying, one must be brave, temperate, giving, and just in addition to being able to be a friend in the truest meaning of the word. Additionally, he must be proud in the sense of understanding his own virtue and self-assurance. The higher our virtue, the better we are at friendship; the lower our virtue, the worse we are at being real friends with others. The highest moral condition is to be able to engage in genuine human friendship (Villones, 2017; Sokolowski, 2001).

3. Method

This study used a qualitative research methodology, according to Bogdan and Taylor (2012), a qualitative research method is a research technique that produces descriptive data from people's written words and behavior that can be observed in the form of written words. Thus, qualitative research is an interpretive field that employs a variety of techniques. Using William Shakespeare's classic "The Merchant of Venice" as a data source, this technique is used to describe many types of friendship.

Data Collection

The technique for collecting data for this research was as follows: Finding the transcript of a drama entitled "The Merchant of Venice" on the internet as well as listening, free, skilled, and note-taking techniques as primary sources. Next, the writer adds some information related to friendship that occurs in the drama *The Merchant of Venice*, which the writer gets from several books, ebooks, journals, articles, and the internet. All secondary sources are used to support the primary sources.

Data Analysis

After collecting data from several sources, researchers will analyze the data. At this stage, there are several steps that researchers will use. First, the writer is looking for a transcript of William Shakespeare's "The Merchant of Venice." After understanding the storyline in the drama,

the writer chooses the most interesting part of the drama that can be used as a research topic.

After finding a topic, the writer then begins to develop the research background and any problems related to the topic. As reference material in research, the author has looked for previous studies that can help the writer understand the research topic. The same is true for research theory and information. The approach that the writer will use in this study is the psychoanalytic approach. Barth (2016) explores the psychodynamic importance of "cyber" and "in the flesh" friendships in college-aged individuals with eating disorders. This view enhances one's understanding of friendship from a psychoanalytic perspective.

4. Findings and Discussion

Since Confucius and Aristotle praised the benefits of surrounding oneself with people who defend moral ideals, match one's own boundaries, and provide excellent companions, friendship has been valued as a significant relationship. According to Blieszner & Adams (1992), in Dunbar (2018) contemporary adults strongly emphasize affection, trust, commitment, respect, reciprocity, and other attributes when defining friendship.

Friendship of Utility

Friendship is a two-person relationship in which both parties successfully convey their appreciation for one another (Leibowitz, 2018). In order to be truly understood and capable of forgiving one another, friendship must be present. The foundation of a useful friendship is mutual trustworthiness. A friend is regarded as an excellent friend for their utility and affection towards two or more individuals. See the quotes after that.

“Say how I loved you, speak me fair in death; And, when the tale is told, bid her be judge a love. Whether Bassanio had not once a love. Repent but you that you shall lose your friend, And he repents not that he pays your debt; For if the Jew do cut but deep enough, I'll pay it presently with all my heart.” (Antonio, Act IV.SI.275-281)

The statement "Say how I loved you; speak me fair in death; and, when the tale is told, bid her judge love." in the quote above shows that one person is beneficial to another. He is Antonio. Antonio is used by Basanio to borrow money from Shylock for his own purposes. Antonio really loves Basanio as his best friend, but Basanio doesn't consider Antonio as his best friend and only views the relationship as a business relationship.

Friendship of Pleasure

When people come together for the pleasure it provides, they have formed a pleasure friendship. They typically make friends for fun, such as by hanging out together because they share interests in the same hobbies or going fishing together. People with similar enjoyable hobbies can form enjoyable friendships. This friendship develops between two people out of delight. the information

below.

“You know me well, and herein spend but time
To wind about my love with circumstance. And out
of doubt you do me now more wrong
In making question of my uttermost
Than if you had made
waste of all I have. Then do but say to me what I should do
That in your knowledge may by me be
done, And I am pressed unto it. Therefore speak.” (Antonio, Act I, SI)

Bassanio expresses anxiety to Antonio about his financial situation, and Antonio reassures him by outlining how he views their friendship. Bassanio won't have to worry about this money, Antonio exclaims, because their bond is greater than any debt. Antonio continued, saying that when Bassanio questioned the stability of their connection, he caused more anxiety and suffering than any amount of financial stress possibly could. Antonio exclaims, because their bond is greater than any debt. Antonio continued, saying that when Bassanio questioned the stability of their connection, he caused more anxiety and suffering than any amount of financial stress possibly could. The camaraderie that runs through the play is reflected in the bond between Antonio and Bassanio. It was obvious how much the two men cared for one another.

Friendship of Virtue

Since the attitude is to be with the friend and there are no incidental motives, the desire to do something "for the sake of a friend" is a true friend. The foundation of a perfect friendship is love for one's friends out of kindness, not for one's own gain or enjoyment. Mutual respect and affection for one another typically serve as the foundation of virtuous friendships. This indicates that although these friendships take longer to form, they are also significantly stronger and more durable. When two or more individuals recognize that they have similar values, aspirations, and worldviews, their relationship develops. The information below demonstrates how this kind of friendship is also portrayed in dramas.

“A kinder gentleman treads not the earth. I saw Bassanio and Antonio part: Bassanio told him he would make some speed
Of his return: he answer'd, 'Do not so; Slubber not business for my sake,
Bassanio
But stay the very riping of the time; And for the Jew's bond which he hath of me, Let it
not enter in your mind of love: Be merry, and employ your chiefest thoughts
To courtship and such
fair ostents of love
As shall conveniently become you there:' And even there, his eye being big with
tears, Turning his face, he put his hand behind him, And with affection wondrous sensible
He wrung
Bassanio's hand; and so they parted.” (Salarino, Act II, S VIII).

Salarino narrates the scenario of their farewell as Bassanio leaves to win Portia's love in order to explain Antonio and Bassanio's friendship to Solanio. As per the Salarino, Bassanio and Antonio had a very tight relationship. Since Antonio is proud of Bassanio and will stop at nothing to see that he succeeds in love and in life, their relationship appears to be similar to that of a father and son.

However, Antonio also finds saying goodbye to be bittersweet. This heartfelt exchange between Bassanio and Antonio, as played by Salarino, advances the play's theme of friendship.

5. Conclusion

It can be concluded that *The Merchant of Venice* contains three different types of friendship: ones that are utility, pleasure, and kind. When Basanio exclusively uses Antonio for his own benefit, they have a utility friendship. And, just as it did with Antonio and Basanio, the friendship of kindness can be seen in practically every aspect of the protagonist's life. But the play's portrayal of friendship demonstrates to us just how crucial it is to our lives. True friends will always support us in both happy and challenging circumstances. Because of this, building strong relationships with other people is one of the secrets to living a better life in the future

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