WHAT ABOUT FAMILY? TESS ONWUEME'S *SHAKARA: DANCE-HALL QUEEN* AND THE CHALLENGES OF CONTEMPORARY PARENTING

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Abstract

In contemporary Nigeria, there has been a remarkable shift in the balance of power to children as Western family models and parenting suffuse the Internet and cable reality programmes lapped up by hypersensitive youth increasingly incentivized by anxious parents goading them on to achieve egocentric goals. Parenting challenges appear to have gained much traction in the wake of the 21st century as modernist forces proliferate, and the civic frontiers of traditional values shrink further. There is need to evolve sustainable cultural approaches towards parenting in a modern Nigerian society facing extraneous influences on the younger impressionable generation. Government and policy framers, educators and parents, need to reassess their engagement with children and adolescents to ensure that traditional values are imparted. Using Tess Onwueme's SHAKARA: DANCE-HALL QUEEN, the article engages the conservative notions of single motherhood as being oppressive in nature. The research advances the need to redirect our social development dialogue towards family-based gender agenda that confront existing paternalistic parenting models.

Introduction

Parenting challenges appear to have gained much traction in the wake of the 21st century as modernist forces proliferate and the civic frontiers of traditional values shrink further. In a contemporary world, where the 'survival of the fittest' philosophy has become more practical than theoretical, parents and guardians have braced up to the challenges of training the next generation in the face of constantly evolving social attitudes and behavioural ideals. When compared to parenting a few decades ago, it is obvious that nurturing children today has become more tasking. This trend could be traceable to factors which have melded into the realities of contemporary social life: globalism, the Internet, social media et al. Maris A. Vinovskis observes that "throughout most of Western development, parents exercised considerable control over children as long as they remained in the home. Children were expected to be obedient to their parents, and to contribute to the well-being of the family" (531). Vinovskis informs that during much of this time, parents arranged the marriages of their children and greatly influenced their choice of careers. In the medieval period, the interests of the lineage and kin were more important than those of the individual. Children were not only expected to acquiesce to the requests of parents, but also to the interests of the larger kinship network (Vinovskis, 531). The underlying interest was based on the recognition that society is the product of the family. However, this pre-colonial social attitude has increasingly become at variance with the behaviour of youths born at the turn of the twenty-first century: a group largely defined as the 'me generation' owing to their self-centered lifestyle.

Emily Martin (1987), explains that social historians, looking at the family in contemporary societies, have identified,

> Some sharp separations that emerge with particular intensity in the development of capitalist societies, most centrally the separation of the world of family life, of the public sphere outside the home from the private sphere inside the home. Our lives have come to be organised around two realms: a private realm where women are most in evidence, where 'natural' functions like sex and the bodily functions related to procreation take place, where the affective content of relationships is primary, and a public realm where men are most in evidence (915-916).

Under the Nigerian parenting model, children largely serve as extensions of their parents' inadequate egotistic aspirations, lacking agency in a patriarchal society that highly commoditises women and children; a pre-colonial relic that treated them as slaves and economic assets. In contemporary Nigeria, there has been a remarkable shift in the balance of power to children as Western family models and parenting suffuse the Internet and cable networks gobbled up by more self-conscious youth increasingly incentivised by anxious parents goading them on to achieve egocentric goals. Incentivisation, a process of rewarding these children with certain benefits for achieving certain objectives, is just part of a wider problem afflicting social ethics and civics.

As the world becomes more globalised and diverse communities and cultures share ideas worlds apart, thanks to the World Wide Web, the contribution of this particular factor is, undoubted innumerable as contemporary youths have become exposed to the avalanche of positive and negative values widely available on the platform as well as other tributaries. Unfortunately, certain Nigerian parents and guardians have abdicated the inculcation of morals in their children and wards, in a fast paced world mainly focused on economic survival and parenting for the sake of old age economics. A writer with an active conscience, Tess Onwueme in her provocative play, *Shakara: Dance-hall Queen*, interrogates the controversial subject of prostitution, economic survival, and the role of the family in behavioural modeling. Her work clearly reveals the untold stories of young women and the vulnerable, caught up in various intersections of family, tradition, race, class, gender, culture, and the politics of living in challenging, postcolonial societies. Onwueme's drama reflects a pragmatic attitude that is progressive, yet grounded in the civic norms of traditional Nigerian society. The plot reveals the potential danger of self-determinism by youths and the inevitable blowback of lost moral compass in contemporary Nigerian society. A critical issue raised in the analysis of parenting approaches is the paradox of whether parent's openness and accessibility to children translates to a more meaningful relationship between both parties.

Synopsis of Shakara: Dance-hall Queen

Anthony Quinton (1988), states that "the principle of utility is the crucial element in an account of the meaning of moral judgments or, it might be less abrupt to say, an account of the rational method of arriving at moral judgments; it provides an ultimate criterion of truth for such judgments" (54). Shakara, a beautiful young teenage girl, rebels against her mother,

Omesiete, on account of her personal conviction that she is culpable for Shakara's poor status, having refused to undertake illicit enterprises like the sort indulged in by Madam Kofo. To this end, Shakara refuses to go back to school, and takes to alternate lifestyle, clubbing, drinking, smoking, and bleaching her skin with harmful cosmetic products. Her body is for offer to the highest bidder as she changes her name to 'Shakara, the dance-hall queen', a business name more suited for her new jet setting lifestyle. Shakara despises her sister, Kechi, just like her mother, for her conservative religious ways. All efforts by her mother and sister to redeem her prove abortive as she is caught up in the Bohemian swirl, drinking and smoking all night long in bars and clubs.

Shakara idolises Dupe's mother, Madam Kofo, allured by her demeanor and affluent social position; everything her mother is not. Shakara represents teenage girls in modern Nigerian society who appear grown up and knowledgeable beyond their peers but are, in reality, conflicted, gullible and insecure, albeit delusional to think they know what they want and have the singular item needed to get it: sex. This group, represented by Shakara, prefers to be treated as adults, engaging in numerous commercial sexual encounters which, as abusive as they are, serve as their gateways into adulthood and mature society. In the bid to achieve the stated aim of independence, the heroine is destined to run the risk of an unhinged association, at once exploitative and calamitous. It is understandable that Shakara is driven by needs, an existential drive that pushes her to Madam Kofo, and makes her to accept the proposal to assist in exporting hard drugs to a foreign country, after her mother refuses the same proposition. John Perkin (2001) notes that there are three inherent needs that are universal: the first being the need to belong, the second need pertaining to being seen as significant and important and, thirdly, the need for a reasonable amount of security (20). Driven by these needs, Shakara resolves to take charge of her destiny and undertakes the risky venture culminating in her capture by enforcement agents.

Gender Concerns

Every parent has a responsibility to his or her ward which consists of providing, nurturing and grooming them to maturity. Proverbs 22:6 of the Christian writ underscores the importance of parenting in the life of a child where it states "teach children how they should live, and they will remember it all their lives." This admonition suggests that parental responsibilities are not only limited to the provision of food, nurture, and

shelter for the child but civic and moral education. Parental responsibilities extend to emotional support for the child, especially in the area of mentorship. In a country like Nigeria, where hard work and merit are often unrewarded, this psychological need is largely unmet, especially for the girl child. There are staunch calls to challenge the social values that hamper progress towards achieving gender needs of women in Nigeria. Women are crucial to society because, they not only provide domestic stability and nurture to families, they also imperil their lives in order to enhance the economic state of their individual homes.

In contemporary times, parents no longer wield as much control over their children as they earlier did. Vinovskis observes this when he states that

> over time, parental control of children has been significantly diminished. Whereas in the medieval and early modern period, parents had almost unlimited control over the behaviour of their children in their own households, such is no longer the case (532).

To Vinovskis this does not imply that parents have completely lost control of their wards. They can still influence their children's choice of a career or mate, but cannot determine them, as was the case earlier (532). The family system is the primary focus in Tess Onwueme's presentation of two parallel worlds. These extremes are prominent in Omesiete's and Madam Kofo's lived realities. Omesiete, Shakara's mother, is humble, modest and honest, despite her poor financial state. She exemplifies the paradoxical cliché of working like an elephant and feeding like an ant: an expression that finds explanation in her family's continued abject poverty, despite all her efforts. Madam Kofo and Dupe, her daughter, on the other hand, live in affluence and flamboyance, thanks to a dishonest lifestyle.

The nuclear family, the smallest unit of a society, serves as the first support institution of growth and informal learning for a child, and Onwueme highlights the conundrum of a failed system when families falter in nurturing child components through an inclusive transitional rite. Omesiete, aware of this expectation, strives to raise her children, Kechi and Shakara, as best as she can. However, she is unable to break the jinx of abject poverty in addition to the challenge of a rebellious opinionated daughter, Shakara. Madam Kofo, on the other hand, does not see the matronly task of raising her child as a serious one since she has

economic tools to influence her society, viewing child rearing primarily from the provision of material needs. This is a niche which the family system ought to fully complement. Barbara Coloroso (1995), describes "three different kinds of families: brick-wall, jellyfish, and backbone" (38), basically distinguished by "the kind of structure that holds them together" (38). She submits that "this structure affects all the relationships of the family: child to parent, parent to child, parent to parent, child to child, and even the way the family as a whole relates to the outside world" (38). Differentiating between these kinds of families, Coloroso opines that:

> In brick-wall families, the structure is rigid and is used for control and power, both of which are in the hands of the parents. A jellyfish has no firm parts at all and reacts to every eddy and current that comes along. In jellyfish families, structure is almost nonexistent; the need for it may not even be acknowledged or understood. A backbone is a living, supple spine that gives form and movement to the whole body. In backbone families, structure is present and firm and flexible and functional. The backbone family provides the support and structure necessary for children to realise their uniqueness and to come to know their true selves (38).

From the above categorisation, Madam Kofo's family clearly falls into the brick-wall group since her daughter, Dupe, is confined from the outside world.

Emily Martins (1987), argues that women "suffer the alienation of parts of the self, much more acutely than men. For one thing, becoming sexually female entails inner fragmentation of the self. A woman must become only a physical body in order to be sexual"(21). Madam Kofo is a middle aged woman who has made a fortune from the sale of contraband drugs. She owns a weed farm where Omesiete, Shakara's mother, toils to sustain her family. While Shakara admires her as a powerful woman with social influence, Dupe, her daughter, contrarily idolises Shakara's mother, Omesiete, for her diligent and assiduous approach to life on account of her nurturing role as her nanny who was there for her in the absence of her busy drug dealing mother. Referring to Shakara's misguided sense of value, Dupe parodies people who do not know the worth of what they have until they lose it.

Unperturbed, Shakara threatens to leave home when her mother's complaints about her spiraling behaviour persists. With her sense of adventure, she believes as a grown-up, she should take charge of her life and grasp every bone life throws at her. Her identification of Madam Kofo as a strong woman connects to Shakara's inner sense of confidence which, in reality, is at variance with her vulnerable persona on the outside.

Image Consciousness

Hendrix's (2008) persona theory maintains that "an important factor in mate selection is the way a potential suitor enhances our self-esteem. Each of us has a mask, a persona, which is the face that we show to other people. The persona theory suggests that we select a mate who will enhance this image"(6). "Shakara" is not the name given to Nwaebuni at birth; rather it is one which she earned at night clubs and bars when she thought that her original name was too local for a glamorous chic like herself. Shakara has a high level of image consciousness quite similar to the outlook of female teenagers in contemporary society. This consciousness is made visible in the huge cosmetics altar she has set up, a make-up kit of different body creams to tone her skin and enhance her appeal for her numerous male clients. The excerpt below reveals the damage already exerted on her skin in her desperation to "look sexy":

> SHAKARA: (*Scrubbing, applying bleaching cream*). Amen. I need it. I need every charm I can get.
> DUPE: Like your face? Pink. Mixed Coke, Fanta, Orange, Sprite. Girl, you can't bleach out fate, you know! (3-4).

As Schapiro (1993) hints, Shakara wasn't taught to negotiate at all, other than the way women negotiate with men when they want something. She uses her sexuality (39).

Madam Kofo visits Omesiete, Shakara's mother, on a sour note as her rent is almost expired. The poor woman who can barely feed herself and her two children is helpless in the hands of such a wealthy and powerful landlady. All her pleas fall on deaf ears as Madam Kofo threatens to throw her family out upon her next visit. Madam Kofo's home is also negatively impacted as Dupe, her daughter, influenced by her friend, Shakara, starts living dangerously on a diet of alcohol, cigarettes, and sex. Madam Kofo's lack of motherly attention propels

Dupe to leave her home not minding her comfortable status. Dupe finds her mother's accusation of immorality ludicrous as she is a prime example of her asocial tendencies. She implicates Madam Kofo by informing the drug law enforcement agents about her mother's drug deals and her latest move to ship drugs abroad for business. Madam Kofo, on the other hand, tries to co-opt Omesiete into trafficking drugs internationally on the wings of a better life. Shakara buys this plan, but is intercepted at the point of her departure by anti-narcotic agents, who arrest both of them at Madam Kofo's mansion. Dupe, full of pity for her mother at the sad turn of events, shows up, accompanied by Omesiete and Kechi. The remorseful Madam Kofo implores Omesiete to take care of Dupe and pleads for Shakara's release; a request that is granted to her, based on Shakara's negligible level of complicity. Having reconciled with her daughter, Dupe, Madam Kofo dies, a victim of poetic justice.

Tess Onwueme creates two sets of characters on opposing sides of the divide. The good bracket, into which Omesiete and Kechi fall, represents the virtues of diligence, hard work, honesty and courage. Omesiete leads this small group, whereas the larger group of characters, comprising Madam Kofo, Chief Chairman, DPO, City Hoodlums and Shakara etc., is a vicious group decadently led by Madam Kofo, who lives in the highbrow area where people like Omesiete can only dream about. Omesiete is portrayed in the play as a virtuous woman who works in Madam Kofo's weed farm to earn a living, a contentious inconsistency, as her uprightness should keep her uninvolved with criminality, no matter how much she appears removed from the core of the wheeler dealing. The playwright appears to suggest the incongruity of living a saintly life in a tainted economic space. As earlier stated, Madam Kofo provides all that money can buy for her daughter, barring motherly attention and care which should be the most essential needs. Teenage Dupe feels confined in Madam Kofo's mansion as she consorts with her numerous lovers and business partners. She is resigned to her fate as captured in her statement below:

> DUPE: …Run! Or you will be eaten like everything and everybody else around them. I tell you, I was born by a ghost.
> SHAKARA: Your mother? (12).

Madam Kofo fails as a model parent and, as a result, Dupe transfers her love to Shakara's mother, Omesiete, her nanny and role model, in spite of her poverty.

On the other hand, Omesiete's family is an example of a backbone family which provides the necessary support for child growth and development. Coloroso avers that "backbone families help children develop inner discipline, and even in the face of adversity and peer pressure; they retain faith in themselves and in their own potential" (38). This discipline in the face of adversity is what Omesiete tries to maintain at all costs, having taken the wrong path herself at a point. In this kind of family structure, certain things are also expected of the children. This is why Melba Sanchez-Ayendez (1991), believes that

> the centrality that motherhood has in the lives of the older women contributes to creating great expectations among them of reciprocity from children. More elderly women than men verbalise disappointment when one of their children does not participate in the expected interdependence ties (630)

This explains why Omesiete frets about Shakara's lack of reciprocity, despite her struggle to provide for both children. It is very difficult for Shakara to appreciate Omesiete's intangible efforts as she believes her mother is not proactive enough in changing their economic situation. Lori Holyfield (2002) captures this mentality of the poor and its underlying implications when she affirms that:

> It seems that discussions of poverty and inequality always and necessarily intersect with our understanding of culture. The implication of this way of thinking about the poor is that the culture of poverty will prevent them from taking advantage of any opportunities that might come their way. Further, a sense of obligation to community or a thirst for self-improvement, are believed to be outside the range of values held by poor people. Accordingly, "low" culture is stubborn and resistant to change (52).

This is the primary reason Omesiete's poverty stands between her and Shakara, who perceives her as weak in comparison to a more risk-disposed character like Madam Kofo.

Although early family experiences and parental upbringing are major influences on a child's behaviour, there are other factors that could contribute to social deviance in children, regardless of how they were raised by their families. Arlene and Jerome Skolnick (1992) concur that "although the belief that early family experience is the most powerful influence in a child's life is widely shared by social scientists and the public, there are serious flaws in two of its underlying assumptions" (9). These are:

> the assumption of the passive child and the assumption that parents independently exert influence in a virtual vacuum. The model of the passive child is no longer tenable. Recent empirical work in human development shows that children come into the world with unique temperamental and other characteristics, so that children shape parents as much as parents shape children (9).

Through Shakara's perspective, Onwueme evaluates issues like self-image, drug use, alcohol abuse and prostitution etc., of concern to youths in contemporary Nigeria with an aim towards explaining how adequate parenting, or lack of it thereof, influences the evolution of parallel lifestyles amongst youths and interrupts their civic education. It is not coincidental that night clubs, pubs, and happening areas in town, serve as alternate homes for adolescents like Shakara who spend days in such spaces, smoking, drinking, and dancing, without being judged by anyone. In such environments, her freedom is at the maximum as she can engage in unhindered sexual activities with a clientele of younger or older men. She is proud of this lifestyle as an important emancipation step from the cocoon of poverty she and her sister, Kechi, were born into. In her sex-for-hire world, her favourite slogan is: 'money for hand, back for ground'.

Mentorship and Religion

Shakara's behaviour reflects a self-injurious pattern influenced by a misguided cultural sense. Her coping strategy derives from a broken social fabric, deprived of requisite mentorship and role model as evinced from Shakara's idolising of the worst adult character, Madam Kofo, to the detriment of her own mother, Omesiete. Hendrix (2008) states that

> in order to experience a strong and safe connection with a caregiver, children need what child psychologists call an 'attuned' parent. This is a caregiver who is present in both meanings of the word: available to you physically and with warm emotions most of the time. Ideally, this caregiver respects your individuality and turns to you for clues as to what you need in that moment (xx).

Mentorship, in Onwueme's play, takes the form of direct and indirect mentorship. Direct mentorship is seen in the relationship between Shakara and Dupe who, in her mother's absence, is hurt, not minding her comfortable surroundings, because her mother cares about her business than Dupe's wellbeing.

Lisa Wolff (1999), believes that most behavioural problems result from such mental situations where environment and nurture have roles to play. On environmental influences, Wolff maintains that "what happens to us early in life—especially the way we are treated by our parents and other adults—is a more important influence on our feelings and behavior" (23). This plays out, in this exact manner, in the life of Dupe, so much so that when Shakara's mother, Omesiete, comes into her life, she naturally starts bonding with her, while also learning clubbing and drinking habits from Shakara. In the absence of her ignorant mother, Madam Kofo, she learns to smoke, drink and club from Shakara a vulnerable victim receiving direct mentorship from another vulnerable peer.

Alternately, indirect mentorship is evident in Shakara's relationship with Madam Kofo as well as in Dupe's relationship with Shakara's mother, Omesiete. Shakara, unbeknown to Madam Kofo, idolises her from a distance, dreaming how Madam Kofo could be an ideal mother with all her strong work ethics, affluence and connections; a level Omesiete, her mother, could never attain owing to her so-called righteous lifestyle. In relation to Shakara, Lori Holyfield explains that:

> Because our culture values ambition and hard work, we see those who are struggling as somehow deficient while those who "make it" are held in great esteem. We hold tightly to the "rags to riches" stories in our culture, however rare they may be. Wealthy people are assumed to have succeeded because they simply tried harder than everyone else; thus they must possess a stronger work ethic (44).

Schapiro (1993) argues that "some daughters pattern their negotiating styles as mirror opposites of what their mothers did" (33). This description captures Shakara's animosity towards her mother in contrast to her admiration for Madam Kofo. The climax of Shakara's adulation is at the point she agrees to aid Madam Kofo in shipping some of her illegal drugs abroad. In her sullied intention, this move would raise her not only above the poverty line, but enhance her social profile and position in Madam Kofo's good books. Ironically, Dupe idolises Omesiete for her simple and honest lifestyle and wishes she could become her surrogate mother. These are two good instances of indirect mentorship in the play.

Evidently, Tess Onwueme identifies certain aspects plaguing 21st century parenting, but there remain grey areas in the play, like characterisation and plot, which deserve effective treatment to provide clear-cut answers. The themes of social justice and environmental influences could be further explicated to show how they link with care giving for vulnerable persons in society. Onwueme's sustenance of her advocacy for the global youth is obvious, but the lengthy plot intrigues deprive her play the agency to articulate the complex processes of identity-formation and image-consciousness. Shakara is a perfect example of an irreligious individual with warped moral virtues, resorting to prostitution and other vices. All her mother's remonstrations fall on deaf ears as even her elder sister, Kechi, who symbolises religion and moral social conscience, could not deter her. The playwright alludes to religion as an important aspect of social life that the young and vulnerable most often neglect due to its drab nature. Shakara mocks Kechi unrelentingly thus:

> SHAKARA: …With your goodie-goodie-ice cream manners! Get a life, you old maid! (*SHAKARA takes off a scarf, ties it like an old nun, and starts mocking KECHI, who is now busy sweeping the yard*).
> KECHI: Go behind me Satan! (*She sings a hymn*).
> SHAKARA: (*Taunting*). Yes, Holy of Holies! The virgin in a maternity ward. Yeah!... (31-32).

The depiction of a drug-riddled, licentious landscape lacking effective policing is one area that leaves much to be desired. First, there is a lack of proper portrayal of a local consumer base for these drugs produced by Madam Kofo and her cohorts, with emphasis on

international shipping, which Shakara later becomes part of. Does this imply there is lack of drug chain for marketing these illicit drugs considering its prominent position in the play's narrative? There is also a dearth of intimate characterisation to show the harmful effects of drugs on the youths who are major consumers of these drugs in most climes. The economic importance of these drugs is not clearly established by the playwright, in spite of the almost two-hundred-paged length of the play; rather, Onwueme proposes a fictive international market for this essential business. Secondly, Shakara blasts education as a non-profitable venture, an impression that could have been creatively managed through a counter claim. The excerpt below shows this:

> OMESIETE: School, no use? So you mean you're really dropping out of school?
>
> SHAKARA: Yes. I've said it! It has no use for me, at least not now. Go count the graduates. How many of them are out there hunting for jobs? Eh? (51).

Shakara: Dance Hall Queen, no doubt, tells a powerful story; but this is not sustained by new developments or revelations with the result that it unravels, with repeated dialogues and a stretched denouement. The resolution is largely contrived since Shakara's release by the drug law enforcement agents at the point of her arrest, before adequate investigation of her activities, is suspicious and questionable. Her release, at Madam Kofo's insistence, should ordinarily have gone through the court process for a capital offence like drug trafficking. At the close of the play, Madam Kofo dies after her arrest, having reconciled with her daughter, Dupe. Her abrupt passing denies the reader certain poetic justice and the playwright fails to pin her death on any known pre-existing condition, leaving a flat taste in the tongue of the reader.

Conclusion

There is need to evolve sustainable cultural approaches towards parenting in a modern Nigerian society, facing extraneous influences on the younger impressionable generation. Government and policy framers, educators and parents, need to reassess their engagement with children and adolescents to ensure that traditional values are imparted. Progressive ideas need to be encouraged as pertains to the issue of

women's inclusion, especially in an evolving society, sometimes lacking visible male house heads, and having disdain for such single mothers like poor Omesiete and wealthy Madam Kofo. The play engages conservative views of single motherhood as being oppressive in nature. The need to redirect our social development dialogue towards family-based gender agenda that confront existing paternalistic parenting models, is as urgent now as ever before.

John Storey (1997) describes the romantic fantasy as "…not a fantasy about discovering a uniquely interesting life partner, but a ritual wish to be cared for, loved, and validated in a particular way. It is a fantasy about reciprocation" (147). Tess Onwueme's play is a fantasy of sorts, reflecting vulnerable characters yearning to be loved and nurtured. Her focus on Omesiete's unrequited love for Shakara, whose warped standards are insensitive, reveals frustrations in a mother-daughter relationship where the opinionated ward decides her level of social compliance. In this unconscionable love triangle, Shakara, rather than love her mother in return and appreciate her efforts to raise both her and her sister, opts to love Madam Kofo, whose admirable attributes for her are only built on her wealth and social influence.

Shakara's adulation of illicit wealth is a common thread amongst Nigerian youths, who venerate yahoo boys and Marlians (a term made popular by the asocial Nigerian singer, Naira Marley, which has come to symbolise a disrespect for social order and civil behaviour, and adulation of money and sex), and deeply resent poverty. Indeed, Onwueme's play finds currency in today's world where the social phenomenon of baby mama, an erstwhile Afro American social phenomenon, has assumed a life of its own in Nigeria, especially in Metropolitan areas where young women come to terms with the consequences of unprotected sex and unwanted pregnancy. The play's moral goal rings true: youths' bid to assert an identity and self-image should derive from a deep reflection on what that identity truly demands. With the right application of poetic justice, good is rewarded and evil is punished.

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