

## Synchronization of Spectrum Themes in Hawthorne's *Rappaccini's Daughter*

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Hawthorne's major works are widely discussed from various perspectives. Especially in the text *Literary History of the United States*, the editors keenly pay attention to his biography and critical approach towards his work. They incessantly deal with his puritan background and religious connections. Perhaps because of his religious background all his works are different from contemporaries. His translation of this work "Rappaccini's Daughter" is also based on a subtle theme related to the adverse effect that can be caused when the man goes against the nature (God).

His puritan sense not only gets reflected in his works but the translated work like "Rappaccini's Daughter" reflects the theme about religion. As everyone knew religion and science can never operate together, the question of man misusing the science against religion creates a science Vs religion theme. But the victory of either parties remains in a puzzle as the war is incessant. However in this context Rappaccini remains as a holistic representation of mankind who has a sense of triumph in case of using science for his convenience. In this short story, according to Rappaccini, science has won. His sense of pride reflects the voice of entire mankind. But as based on the religion, the loss of the life of Beatrice and the destruction of Giovanni is a lesson that unfolds a truth to the mankind about good and bad deeds.

Science always questions religion and therefore when science misused becomes the personification of evil. Therefore Beatrice is strictly forbidden to use the name of God. The moment she utters the name of God, Giovanni rages with anger.

"What has befallen me?" murmured Beatrice, with a low moan out of her heart. "Holy Virgin, pity me, a poor heart-broken child!"

"Thou,-dost thou pray?" cried Giovanni, still with same fiendish scorn.

"Thy very prayers, as they came from thy lips, taint the atmosphere with death". (*The Works of Hawthorne* 1063)

Nathaniel Hawthorne's translation of M.de l'Aubepine's "Beatrice; Ou la Belle Empoisonneuse" as "Rappaccini's Daughter" in English is a typical example of science story. It has the basic idea of how science can be destructive when it is used in a malicious way with wrong notion. In general the creator in science world turns to be a destructor and Rappaccini is not an exception. He sacrifices his daughter's life for his experiment and for him triumph is derived from science rather than love, feelings and emotion.

Dr. Giacomo Rappaccini apart from being a synecdoche of mankind also serves as a replica of Satan. Satan's character is analysed from three perspectives as hero, anti-hero and villain. Similarly, Rappaccini has these three qualities. Like a modern man he is also filled with follies and foibles. In short, he can be considered as a synecdoche of modern man. In the current scenario the modern man least cares for the fellow human being and the environment. He never bothers about the harm caused to the other fellows in society and destructions to the environment.

Though this selfish nature has prevailed before and as William Wordsworth in his poem "Written in Early Spring" points to the man's trivial quality and harmful nature through these following lines,

To her fair works did nature link

The human soul that through me ran;

And much it grieved my heart to think

What man had made of man. (*The Norton Anthology of English Literature* 5-8)

Still this kind of selfish tendency and narrow attitude dominates the character of modern mankind. Therefore the lines of Wordsworth more aptly fit for the modern man as well as Rappaccini who least cares for the human life for the sake of his experiments.

To explicit this same notion through the words of Pietro Baglioni (the catalyst of this short story who stimulates the climax),

I who knew the man well, can answer for its truth-that he cares infinitely more for science than for mankind. His patients are interesting to him only as subjects for some new experiment. He would sacrifice human life, his own among the rest, or whatever else was dearest to him, for the sake of adding so much as a grain of mustard seed to the great heap of his accumulated knowledge. (*The Works of Hawthorne* 1048)

The modern man sacrifices all his human tendencies and love in this fast moving world. He sacrifices everything including real pleasures. Rappaccini too for the sake of science sacrifices his dearest daughter Beatrice (beautiful damsel admired by all young men). Perhaps from the day of Satan's influence on mankind, the charm of Satan has befallen upon the man. Therefore, the mankind has transformed with the combination of hero, anti-hero and villain qualities.

Rappaccini also can be examined under the light of hero, anti-hero and villain qualities. As a hero he is very stubborn in pursuing his aim. He has a strong will and determination to pursue what he wants. He is destined to win his targets. As William Blake appreciates Satan to be the real hero of the epic, Rappaccini too wins the praise from Pietro Baglioni who exclaims with a horror and calls to the "thunderstricken man of science, as Rappaccini! Rappaccini! And is this the upshot of your experiment!" (*The Works of Hawthorne* 1065).

As an Anti-hero like Satan who used Adam and Eve to win the war against God, Rappaccini uses Giovanni and Beatrice to win the war for science. When his daughter Beatrice is completely turned into a poisonous physique and meets her death through anti-dote, he justifies and feels proud of his action. Rappaccini approaches the destruction of his daughter in an optimistic way. He tells,

What mean you, foolish girl? Doest thou deem it misery to be endowed with marvellous gifts against which no power or strength could avail an enemy-misery, to be able to quell the mightiest with a breath-misery, to be as terrible as thou art beautiful? Wouldst thou, then, have preferred the condition of a weak woman, exposed to all evil and capable of none?. (*The Works of Hawthorne*, 1064)

It is surprising to see the views of Rappaccini who talks about the concept of a strong woman through the destruction of his daughter. His ideal to see his

daughter as a powerful woman is contrast to his malicious ways of poisoning her body leading to eternal death. He considers being beauty as terrible. He calls the energy or strength to destroy enemy by breath as more blessed.

Like a villain he plans properly. Even the physical description of Rappaccini falls in close line with the traditional description of a villain. The description says “Now, while he was speaking there came a man in black along the street, stooping and moving feebly like a person in inferior health” (1052). This man in black notion is the traditional notion about a villain. In contrast to the idea of villain in the first impression, Giovanni wonders Rappaccini to be Adam and the garden as Eden. Giovanni with admiration speaks, “Was this garden, then, the Eden of the present world? And this man, with such a perception of harm in what his own hands caused to grow, - was he the Adam?” (1046). True to his notion the garden brings him a great fall. However rather than being Adam, Rappaccini turns out be Satan.

The science that proves fatal for Giovanni and Beatrice serves the greatest pleasure for Rappaccini. A sense of selfishness and satisfaction sweeps the mind of Rappaccini. If Rappaccini is studied as the replica of Satan then naturally Giovanni turns out to be Adam and Beatrice as Eve. Beatrice (Eve) tempts Giovanni (Adam) with her beauty.

As Adam become ready to accept the sin of Eve, Giovanni admits to take part in sin. When he realises that he has fallen prey to her poison, though he shouts with anger yet at the end he tells, “Now if our breath be happily as fatal to ourselves as to all others, let us join our lips in one kiss of unutterable hatred , and so die”! (*The Works of Hawthorne* 1063). However Beatrice is a little different from Eve in case of love for Giovanni (Adam). Beatrice has no intention to involve Giovanni with her fate. When she realizes the horror that Giovanni too has been inflicted by poison, she trembles and declares her true love.

“No,no Giovanni, it was not I! Never! Never! I dreamed only to love thee and be with thee a little time, and so to let thee pass away, leaving out thine image in mine heart; for Giovanni, believe it, though my body be nourished with poison, my spirit is God’s creature, and craves love as its daily life” (*The Works of Hawthorne* 1063). Whereas as soon as when Eve realizes the trouble after consuming the fruit, she contemplates in the following way,

But what if God have seen,  
 And death ensue? Then I shall be no more,  
 And Adam, wedded to another Eve,  
 Shall live with her enjoying, I extinct!  
 A death to think confirmed then I resolve,  
 Adam shall share with me in bliss or woe;  
 So dear I love him, that with him all deaths  
 I could endure, without him live no life. (826-833)

Both Beatrice and Eve’s love are true. Beatrice does not want her lover to be dead while Eve does not want a separation from her lover even in death. Beatrice and Eve represents divine love while Eve’s love at times are interpreted with selfishness, Beatrice love proves to be selfless.

Adam is a readymade lover who had been blessed with Eve. However, Giovanni (Adam) like usual guys had to crave for his ladylove Beatrice (Eve) at first sight. The pinning of Giovanni echoes the lines of Robert Browning's poem "One Way of Love".

All June I bound the rose in sheaves.

Now, rose by rose, I strip the leaves

And strew them where Pauline may pass,

She will not turn aside? Alas!

Let them lie. Suppose they die?

The chance was they might take her eye. (*The Poems and Plays of Robert Browning* 71)

The Tree of Knowledge in Milton's *Paradise Lost* is replaced by the poisonous plant in "Rappaccini's daughter". The fruit from the Tree of knowledge brings the fatal end to the mankind and here the breath of the poisonous plant puts an end to a true love and brings the fatal end. Beatrice marks her closeness with the dooming plant through the following lines "I grew up and blossomed with the plant and was nourished with its breath" (*The Works of Hawthorne* 1062).

To conclude, Nathaniel Hawthorne's translated work "Rappaccini Daughter" also provides a large forum to study themes that are related to Science Vs Religion, Rappaccini as Synecdoche of modern mankind and a replica of Satan, and finally the re-reading of short story from Milton's *Paradise lost* background. This paper ventures to establish the richness of this translated work through the above examined prism perspectives.

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