



THE PURPOSE OF MARRIAGE IN *SURAH AL-QASAS* AND *THE TAMING OF THE SHREW*

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Abstract:

This study aims to examine the purpose of marriage in both *The Taming of the Shrew* and *Surah Al-Qasas* through an Islamic lens. By analyzing these texts, it becomes clear that their depictions of marriage reflect the cultural and societal norms present in their respective contexts. In *The Taming of the Shrew*, marriage is portrayed as primarily serving as a means for women's economic and social development while men hold power within relationships; meanwhile, *Surah Al-Qasas* presents marriage as a natural outcome resulting from religious devotion alongside mutual respect and kindness without any emphasis on financial or social status. Additionally, marriage in *The Taming of The Shrew* is based on money and lust, while marriage in *Surat al-Qasas* is based on religion. Moreover, while *The Taming of The Shrew* depicts marriages largely being arranged between families with transactional elements involved; *Surah Al-Qasas* offers up an egalitarian view where couples ultimately make decisions together regarding their union. Overall, this analysis highlights how different societies have varying perspectives on what constitutes successful marriages along with differing roles for women within them depending upon whether they are patriarchal or egalitarian cultures respectively - all themes which are explored throughout Shakespeare's comedies and problem plays.

Keywords: marriage, purpose, *Surah Al-Qasas*, Shakespeare, *The Taming of The Shrew*

1. Introduction

Marriage is one of the most important contracts in life. It is a legal and sacred bond between a man and a woman by which the human race is preserved, and happiness is achieved. It is also the Sunnah of all the prophets and messengers. Allah legalized marriage to build a close relationship between spouses, to satisfy the primitive desires of man and woman in a legitimate way, and to protect society from adultery and immorality. Thus, marriage is a significant social event in human life, and without marriage, people can't lead healthy or decent lives. However, the human race can

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continue through illegal relationships between people, but such illegal relationships will destroy social life and lead to corrupt and disintegrated societies. By maintaining this sacred relationship, people live happy and healthy lives, as the Almighty Allah is destined for them. Thus, this article aims to examine the purpose of marriage in both *The Taming of the Shrew* and *Surah Al-Qasas* through an Islamic lens. New Historicism was introduced by Harold Aram Veerer in 1989, (Veerer 1989, xi). This theory attempts to "understand intellectual history through literature and literature through its cultural context. It was first developed in the 1980s, primarily through the work of the critic Stephen Greenblatt, and gained widespread influence in the 1990s", (Veerer 1989, xi). The theory concentrates on the historical background and setting as time and place are very important to stories. Accordingly, the actions and events that are acceptable in certain times and cultures but unacceptable in other times and places are exactly like what occurs in these two stories, especially when these two old stories are compared to modern life.

2. Discussion

Marriage is an agreement that represents the association between a male and a female and regulates their obligations, rights, and mutual assistance (Darmawan, 2017). Essentially, marriage is an issue recommended and ordered by the Holy Qur'an and Sunnah. Moreover, marriage in Islam is more than just a relationship or a legal contract; it also has a religious and philosophical meaning. Marriage, according to the Islamic Law Collection, is meant to provide domestic life (mawaddah, sakinah, and rahmah) as in the following verse:

"And among His signs is, He created for you wives of your kind alone, that you tend to be and feel at ease to him, and serve among you a sense of love and affection. Verily in this truly there are signs for people who reflect." (Al-Rum: 21).

Unlike other religions, Islam strongly supports marriage. Celibacy, such as that which Roman Catholic nuns and priests practice, has no place. "There is no celibacy in Islam". Marriage is a religious requirement as well as a social and moral demand. Celibacy is not equivalent to high "Iman" or "taqwa" in Islam. The prophet (p.b.u.h) also said that "Marriage is my tradition, and whoever keeps away from it is not from amongst me". Marriage serves as access to sexual demands and controls them so that one avoids being a slave to their desires. Thus, marriage is the only legal or halal choice for a man and a woman to engage in sexual relations. Islam adopts a middle-of-the-road position toward sexual relationships, neither condemning them as other religions do nor allowing them to be freely practiced. Islam encourages us to regulate and control our desires, no matter what they are.

The Taming of the Shrew is a play by William Shakespeare that was written in 1590. It portrays the volatile relationship between the shrewd Katharina and Petruchio, who is keen to tame and control Katharina's frequently blamed temper and gain the dowry. This play commences in Padua, where many young men have assembled to court Bianca.

Bianca is the youngest daughter of a wealthy and rich character named Baptista. However, Baptista decided that his daughter Bianca would not get married until her sister, Katharina, got married.

The Taming of the Shrew starts when Petruchio comes to Padua looking for a wealthy wife. Hortensio, a close friend, recommends Petruchio marry Katharina. Although Katharina behaves angrily toward Petruchio, he attracts and subdues her with the sheer power of his masculine determination and wit. After their strange wedding ritual, in which Petruchio gets dressed in wild clothes and behaves rudely to the priest, Katharina's taming continues. When he is legally married to Katherina, Petruchio starts to tame her by rejecting her food and clothes and rejecting anything she says, until she eventually accepts everything that he says, including the most absurd assertions. Finally, she is entirely submissive and obedient to him. Petruchio follows different ways to make Katherina a submissive wife. In the end, Katherina reflects on being the most obedient woman in a contest as in the following quotation:

*"Then God be blest, it is the blessèd sun. / But sun it is not, when you say it is not,
And the moon changes even as your mind. / What you will have it named, even that it is,
And so it shall be so for Katharine"* (4.5.18-22).

In a society lacking justice, women are reduced to becoming objects that men use for their financial gain. The money that women inherit from their "prior owners," their parents, determines their worth. Their beauty and personalities are merely used as possessions by their owners to benefit from them, and they are humiliated and treated inhumanely. Throughout the Shakespearean comedy *The Taming of the Shrew*, marriages were organized like selling property; women get married off without any rights and are obliged to stay submissive to their masters. Obviously, because of the prejudice towards women, they are obliged to become men's possessions. *The Taming of the Shrew*, which was written during the Renaissance, shows the marital beliefs of the sixteenth century. In early eras, the Catholic church considers marriage, also known as matrimony, an essential rite of passage into maturity. The man and woman enter into a formal relationship that will last their whole lives, and the partnership is committed to the benefit of the couple as well as the propagation and education of their children. *The Taming of the Shrew* is an intriguing comedy that portrays patriarchal beliefs regarding the way marriage should be according to the community.

The play revolves around two sisters, Katherine and Bianca. Lucentio, Bianca's suitor, desires to marry her, but he will be unable to do so unless her elder sister marries first. When Petruccio comes to Padua, he decides to woo and marry Katherine since she will bring a great dowry. *The Taming of the Shrew*, since its release, has received harsh criticism that reveals Shakespeare as the enemy of women, and this play is cited as the greatest evidence of that. Shakespeare treats the woman (Katarina) here as a wild animal. He says that Katarina can only be controlled by forbidding eating and resting, and this is what Petruchio does to her to secure her submissiveness, but he does it in such a roundabout way that it seems as if he is doing it to help her.

Over time, the notion of marriage has changed from a woman not having a voice in the connection to one where, in modern-day culture, both parties are free to express their views. Committing to someone entails more than just a formal contract that joins both spouses for life; it also involves love in the sense that love shows a relationship that both partners may claim remains until their deaths. Marriage is portrayed in *The Taming of the Shrew* in an elaborate way, permitting readers and audiences to take the work as a harsh taming or humorously with an insurgent undertone. However, the author prefers to represent the theme of marriage as one of mutual attraction, in which neither man nor woman is dominant but complements one another as they survive together in a love-filled association. The depiction of a profound comprehension that emerges in an analogical association and the slow metamorphosis that happens in marriage clearly depict a marriage in the comedy as an occasion for a mutual and sincere love partnership under the patriarchal norms of the community.

In contrast, *Surah Al-Qasas* presents marriage as a sacred bond between two individuals who should support and care for each other. The story focuses on Moses, who arrives in a new town and helps Shu'ayb's daughters water their flocks. One of the daughters marries Moses after he impresses her father with his wisdom and integrity. The story highlights the importance of finding a compatible partner and treating them with respect and kindness.

The different attitudes towards marriage in these two texts reflect broader social and cultural values. *The Taming of The Shrew* is a play that was written in the 16th century when patriarchy and male dominance were the norms, while *Surah Al-Qasas* presents a more egalitarian and compassionate view of marriage that reflects Islamic values. Both texts offer insights into the moral and historical frameworks surrounding marriage and invite readers to reflect on how these frameworks continue to shape our perceptions of marriage today.

According to Islamic morality, a woman should work at home and avoid engaging in public issues and life. Islam established that women's jobs and occupations are supposed to be done within the limits of the household unless there are certain and inevitable conditions and circumstances. Because their father was a very elderly man, Shu'ayb's daughters were now forced to water their flocks. This is an illustration of the necessity to work, yet the two females' purity was that they kept the flocks away till other shepherds were finished, "avoiding joining the men in their work".

"And when he arrived at the water (a well) of Madyan (Midian) he found there a group of men watering (their flocks), and beside them, he found two women who were keeping back (their flocks). He said: "What is the matter with you?" They said: "We cannot water (our flocks) until the shepherds take (their flocks). And our father is a very old man." (Surah Al-Qasas:23).

This Qur'anic narrative, therefore, offers scripturalist evidence that women's jobs outside their house are permitted only if they are absolutely inevitable and do not demand engagement with foreigners and nonrelated males. Moses' piety motivated him

to fulfill the task for the females in order to release them from what current conservatism asserts was a moral hardship. According to this interpretation, what Moses accomplished for Shu'ayb's daughters is actually the duty of the whole Muslim community.

Once a Muslim woman finds herself forced out of her normal realm to work in another location, either her neighborhood or the Muslim community as a whole has the duty to assist her until she can safely return to her house. The female's responsibility must be to take precautions for the worst immediately. The two females fulfilled this by suggesting that their father employed Moses because he appeared "strong and honest." Thus, they had not worked outdoors merely because they desired to, but because they needed to, and they ended this obligation immediately. Hence, this offers an example to any faithful Muslim woman contemporary conservative doctrine proceeds to identify another context in the current story: the elderly shepherd's daughter's modest action, indicating why the young female proceeded as an honest woman rather than a male. Another important lesson for the modern Muslim female is in the following quotation: "*We can't water our sheep by confronting the shepherds since we're females*". Our father (Shu'ayb) is too old to fulfill these difficult duties. Moreover, there are no other males in the house. Thus, we, the females, should come out to fulfill those duties, and we are forced to wait till all of the men have watered the flocks and gone away. The females displayed the whole notion in a short sentence that reveals their shyness. They do not desire to have a long dialogue with a stranger; however, they also didn't intend for him to get incorrect viewpoints of the family, reflecting how sluggish the men are, who sit indoors in their houses and leave the females outperforming tasks.

"Soon thereafter, one of the two women came to him, walking bashfully, and said: "My father invites you that he may reward you for your having watered our flocks for us". When Moses came to him and narrated to him the whole of his story, he said, Have no fear. You are now safe from the iniquitous people. / One of the two women said: Father, employ this man in your service. The best whom you might employ is he who is strong and trustworthy." (Surah Al-Qasas:25-28)

The above-mentioned verse shows how Shu'ayb's daughter came walking with modesty, covering her face with outer clothes, not like females who do as they like and go into any place they prefer. Moses's willingness to help the daughters of Shu'ayb, and his honesty and integrity, earn him the trust and respect of Shu'ayb, which leads to him being offered refuge and marriage to one of his daughters. This indicates that the Islamic belief in decency that the Prophet's (p.b.u.h.) companions grasped from the Holy Quran and the Prophet's (p.b.u.h.) instruction and guidance was clearly in contrast to exposing one's face to the public and working immodestly outdoors. Omar (may Allah have mercy on him) has stated it plainly that he considers covering the female face as an indication of shyness and showing it to other males as shamelessness and impolite.

From a broad Quranic perspective, the Quran provides guidance on the purpose and importance of marriage in Islamic society. Here are some quotations that illustrate the moral and historical discussion pertaining to marriage in the Quran:

"And among His signs is that He created for you mates from among yourselves, that you may dwell in tranquility with them, and He has put love and mercy between your hearts. Verily in that are signs for those who reflect." (Al-Rum: 21)

This Quranic verse confirms that one of Allah's signs is the creation of marriage as a means for humans to find tranquility and love with their couples or spouses. It also stresses the importance of mutual love and mercy in healthy marital relationships.

"And those who say, 'Our Lord, grant us from among our wives and offspring comfort to our eyes and make us an example for the righteous.'" (Surah al-Furqan:74)

This verse emphasizes the importance of having a harmonious family life for believers, where spouses and children provide comfort and happiness. It also highlights the role of families as models for righteousness and virtuous behavior, reflecting broader Islamic perspectives on family values and social responsibility. Essentially, this passage underscores how important family life is according to the Quran, both in shaping individuals' lives as well as communities at large.

"And live with them in kindness. For if you dislike them - perhaps you dislike a thing and Allah makes therein much good." (Surah An-Nisa Ayat:19)

This verse emphasizes treating one's spouse with kindness and respect, even when facing disagreements or dislikes. It suggests that challenges within a marriage can lead to personal growth and spiritual benefits. This verse is just one example among many in the Quran and hadiths attributed to Prophet Muhammad that highlight mutual respect, compassion, and consideration towards one's partner as well as guidance on fulfilling financial responsibilities within marriages.

"And give to the women (whom you marry) their Mahr (obligatory bridal money given by the husband to his wife at the time of marriage) with a good heart, but if they, of their own good pleasure, remit any part of it to you, take it, and enjoy it without fear of any harm (as Allah has made it lawful)." (Surah An-Nisa Ayat:4)

The above-mentioned verse highlights the importance of fulfilling one's financial obligations to one's spouse, particularly with regard to the Mahr. It also acknowledges the possibility of a wife choosing to forgo a portion of her Mahr, indicating that the Quran encourages mutual generosity and consideration in marriage. Thus, these verses and others in the Quran stress the importance of marriage as a means for humans to find love, tranquility, and companionship in life. They furthermore offer guidance on the significance of mutual respect, compassion, kindness, and financial responsibilities toward one's partner.

However, and from a more specific Islamic perspective, the discussion about the purpose of marriage was also referred to in the hadiths attributed to the Prophet

Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, when he mentioned the purpose of marriage by indicating:

"A woman is married for four reasons: her property, her status, her beauty, and her religion; therefore, choose based on religion." (Ibn Majah, n.d, Book 9, Hadith 1873)

This quotation addresses the moral and historical discussion regarding the purpose of marriage in the Islamic community. With some of the following significant points, we will extract an Islamic social interpretation from another angle:

The statement *"religion is the most essential aspect"* indicates that a woman's religious commitment and adherence must be the major consideration in choosing a partner. This shows the Quranic focus on religion, piety, and good character as the most significant characteristics of a believer. The statement recommends Muslims find spouses that can assist them in achieving their faith and living a decent life by considering religion above material possessions like money or beauty. Since religion is highlighted as the most important factor, the quotation points out that a woman's possessions, property, and status may also be considerations in marriage. This reflects the historical and cultural context in which the quote was given, where social status and wealth were significant factors in marriage. Nevertheless, the quotation also indicates that these characteristics should not be the sole criteria for choosing a spouse and that a person's religious commitment should take precedence. The quotation also acknowledges that physical attractiveness and appearance can be factors in marriage. Though the Holy Quran focuses on inner beauty and characteristics over outward appearance, beauty or physical attraction is still considered a natural and valid consideration in choosing a spouse. Hence, the quotation emphasizes that beauty alone should not be the sole criterion or consideration for choosing a spouse and that religious commitment is more valuable.

Imam Nawawi's commentary on *"Al-Minhaj bi Sharh Sahih Ibn Majah,"* emphasizes the importance of prioritizing religious commitment over material considerations when selecting a partner in Islamic society. While wealth, lineage, and beauty may be desirable qualities in a spouse, they should not be the sole basis for making such an important decision. Instead, seeking Allah's guidance and considering mutual respect and kindness should be given priority to building a relationship that leads to marriage as its natural outcome (Nawawi, Y., 2017). This quotation addresses both moral and historical arguments concerning the purpose of marriage in Islamic society by recommending Muslims prioritize religious commitment over material considerations when choosing their life partner.

Surah Al-Qasas (Chapter 28) of the Quran recounts how Moses (Musa) sought refuge and found it in the land of Madyan. The recounting in this chapter focuses on the Quranic story of Moses and Shu'ayb's daughters, touching upon the theme of marriage. In this account, Moses supports the daughters of Shu'ayb, who are encountering harassment from the local men whilst trying to hydrate their flock. Moses offers help to them and waters their flock, resulting in his invitation to Shu'ayb's home. At that place, Moses reveals his story to Shu'ayb and is provided asylum in his dwelling along with the

offer of marrying one of his daughters. Moses agrees to the proposal and weds one of Shu'ayb's daughters.

The narrative illustrates marriage as a natural outcome of a relationship established on mutual respect and kindness. By demonstrating his willingness to assist the daughters of Shu'ayb, along with his honesty and integrity, Moses gains the trust and respect of Shu'ayb. Hence, he is offered refuge and marriage to one of his daughters. Marriage is not shown as a transaction or a means of achieving social and economic advancement. Instead, it is illustrated as a natural consequence of a relationship formed on mutual respect and kindness. More precisely, the story also illustrates the significance of seeking the father or guardian's approval in marriage. Shu'ayb is shown as a wise and righteous father who grants Moses sanctuary and proposes marriage to his daughter. After getting acquainted with him and listening to his story, he performs this action. Seeking the approval and blessing of the family or guardian in marriage holds great importance, as emphasized by this. The consent of the father or guardian is considered important in marriage, particularly in Islamic culture. The narration concerning Moses and Shu'ayb's daughters in *Surah Al-Qasas* showcases marriage as an organic result of a relationship fostered with mutual respect and kindness. Seeking the approval and blessing of the family or guardian in marriage is emphasized as important.

In contrast, *The Taming of The Shrew* explores the themes of love, marriage, and gender roles. The purpose of marriage in the play is to establish social and economic stability, as well as to cement familial ties and create alliances between families. The play's main plot revolves around the courtship and marriage of Petruchio and Katherina, two characters with vastly different personalities. Petruchio aims to "tame" Katherina, who is known for her sharp tongue and bad temper, and turn her into a submissive and obedient wife. Several times, Katherina also suffers from dehumanization. Gremio calls Bianca a "*wild cat*" (1.2.196), indicating that she is brutal and untamed but also maybe that he is afraid of her in some respects. Petruchio says:

*"She is my good, my chattels, she is my house,
My household stuff, my field, my barn,
My horse, my ox, my ass, my anything."* (3.2.230–32)

By calling her in this manner, Petruchio intentionally places her as an animal and inanimate domestic object, whether he is joking or insane. This shows that he is attempting to endow her with all the preferable characteristics: obedience, submission, and voicelessness.

Furthermore, in the play, marriage is portrayed as a means of social and economic advancement for women. Women were expected to marry for financial stability and to secure their social status. Marriage was not necessarily a union of love or companionship, but rather a transaction between families. In the play, Katherina's father is keen to marry her off to anyone who can afford her dowry, regardless of her feelings or compatibility with the suitor.

"Business asketh haste, / And every day I cannot come to woo / Then tell me, if I get your daughter's love, What dowry shall I have with her to wife?" (2.1.110-1)

"After my death the one-half of my lands, / And in possession twenty thousand crowns." (2.1.117-8)

Shakespeare depicts marriages in *The Taming of the Shrew* as a transaction between families heavily influenced by patriarchal values and social conventions. The father of the bride (Baptista) holds significant power in deciding whom his daughters will marry and sets certain conditions for potential suitors to meet. Financial arrangements such as dowries also play a crucial role in this depiction of marriage, with Petruchio being attracted to Katherina partly due to her sizable dowry, which he intends to use for personal financial gain.

While the formal and legal procedures surrounding marriage during Elizabethan times are reflected in the play through vows and a signed contract, it also highlights power dynamics and gender roles within marriages. Specifically, Petruchio uses various methods to assert dominance over Katherina, reinforcing traditional gender norms as in the following quotation:

*"Say she be mute and will not speak a word,
Then I'll commend her volubility
And say she uttereth piercing eloquence." (2.1.170-172)*

The concept and nature of marriage are also explored in the play through the relationships of its characters. Katherina challenges societal expectations by not conforming as a submissive wife and ultimately discovers love with Petruchio despite their initial power struggles. The examination of their attitudes towards marriage offers valuable insight into societal norms and expectations during Elizabethan times. Furthermore, the play highlights power dynamics and gender roles within marriages while also exemplifying possibilities for defying or opposing these traditional standards.

In Act I, Scene II, Petruchio, the main male character, declares, *"I come to wive it wealthily in Padua; / If wealthily, then happily in Padua"* (Lines 75-76). This quotation reveals Petruchio's intention to marry for financial security and social status, emphasizing that marriage is often viewed as a transaction or business deal in the play.

In Act II, Scene I, the father of Katherina and Bianca (Baptista), defends his right to choose his daughters' husbands, stating, *"Why, gentlemen, you do me double wrong / To strive for that which resteth in my choice"* (Lines 321-322). This previous quotation highlights the limited agency that women have in marriage, with fathers or male family members controlling the process.

In Act II, Scene I, Petruchio states, *"I must and will have Katherine to my wife"* (Line 289). This quote shows Petruchio's resolve to wed Katherina despite her reputation as a shrew and the difficulties that accompany courting her. Marriage in the play is frequently

depicted as a conquest or challenge, where men compete for the most difficult or desirable women.

In Act III, Scene II, Petruchio asserts, "*To me she's married, not unto my clothes*" (Line 113). This quote implies that Petruchio regards Katherina based on her personality and not solely on her looks or social status. Therefore, his behavior towards her in the entire play indicates that he gives importance to her submission and compliance rather than her distinctiveness.

The above-mentioned quotes suggest that marriage in *The Taming of the Shrew* is viewed as a means of gaining wealth, social status, and control over women. This implies that obedience and conformity are prioritized over individuality and autonomy within this context. However, it should be noted that Shakespeare's play provides a complex exploration of marriage within his society by reflecting patriarchal values while also challenging some conventions through a critique of gender roles and expectations. Furthermore, when comparing *The Taming of the Shrew* to *Surah Al-Qasas* (The Quranic Story of Moses and Shu'ayb's Daughters), similarities, as well as differences, arise regarding their purpose and procedures for marriage, which are highlighted throughout both stories.

The Taming of the Shrew and *Surah al-Qasas* both stories recognize marriage as a means to achieve social stability and companionship, but they differ in their presentation of its purpose. In Shakespeare's play, marriage is portrayed as a way for women to advance socially and economically by marrying men who can provide financial security or elevate their social status. On the other hand, *Surah Al-Qasas* presents marriage as an outcome of mutual respect and kindness between partners without any emphasis on financial or social status. Additionally, both stories acknowledge that seeking approval from fathers or guardians is important when it comes to getting married. However, there are differences in how this process plays out within each work. In *The Taming of the Shrew*, Baptista eagerly marries off his daughter Katherina regardless of whether she has feelings for her suitor or not, while portraying gender conflict with men holding power over women within marriages, whereas *Surah Al-Qasas* is more egalitarian, where the father/guardian plays an important role in giving approval but the decision ultimately rests with the couple themselves. Both stories recognize the importance of seeking approval from a father or guardian, but they differ significantly in their emphasis on mutual respect and kindness versus financial or social status as factors leading to marriage. Specifically, *Surah Al-Qasas* presents marriage as a natural outcome of such qualities, whereas *The Taming of the Shrew* portrays it more as a transaction between families with little regard for the woman's feelings or agency within the relationship, reflecting Renaissance England's patriarchal society at large.

3. Conclusions

After analyzing the portrayal of marriage in *The Taming of The Shrew* and *Surah Al-Qasas*, it is evident that both stories reflect the cultural and societal norms of their respective contexts. While marriage is recognized as an institution that brings about social stability

and companionship in both stories, the purpose and procedures differ significantly. *The Taming of the Shrew* portrays a patriarchal society where women are expected to marry for financial stability and to secure their social status. Marriage is viewed as a transactional arrangement between families with men holding power over women. Additionally, marriage in *The Taming of The Shrew* is based on money and lust, while marriage in *Surat al-Qasas* is based on religion. In contrast, *Surah Al-Qasas* presents a more egalitarian view where mutual respect forms the foundation for successful relationships without any emphasis on financial or social status. Furthermore, while seeking approval from fathers or guardians plays an important role in both stories' marriages, it has different implications. In *The Taming of The Shrew's* context, compliance with wishes was mandatory regardless of personal feelings; however, *Surah Al-Qasas* reflects couples' decision-making autonomy despite parental consent being necessary. In conclusion, the comparison between these two stories highlights how historical background shapes literature's portrayal of social practices such as marriage. The analysis underscores how literary texts can provide insight into past societies by reflecting cultural values through the characters' actions. In modern times, girls can marry without the consent or advice of their fathers or families, which is a significant departure from past practices. This highlights how societal norms and values have evolved over time.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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