

Article Arrival Date

20.08.2021

Article Type

Research Article

Article Published Date

22.09.2021

Doi Number: <http://dx.doi.org/10.51296/newera.120>**FATHER-SON RELATIONSHIP IN *FATHERLAND*****FATHERLAND Oyununda BABA-OĞUL İLİŞKİSİ****Belgin BAĞIRLAR**

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to probe, in depth, the father-son dynamic between the characters of contemporary English playwright Simon Stephens's, Karl Hyde's and Scott Graham's *Fatherland* (2017). Since the nineteenth century, British literature and drama have handled the father-son relationship multiple times. This study in particular will be framed within psychologist Sigmund Freud's Oedipus complex on the role of the father in a child's development. The characters of *Fatherland* are all male adults: Scott, Karl, and Simon. While preparing for a television show on fatherhood, they set out to find inspiration in real stories and ultimately decide upon incorporating those stories into their programme. They interview with their friends, and ask them to reminisce about their fathers and fatherhood. Each character has different experiences, and reveals pieces of themselves as they talk about them. Some act towards their children as their own fathers had acted towards them; others find themselves acting to the contrary. In this sense, Stephens, Hyde, and Graham awaken their audience's sense of awareness towards this [father-son] interrelationship by looking at it from various vantage points.

Keywords: Simon Stephens, Karl Hyde, Scott Graham, *Fatherland*, father-son relationship, Oedipus complex

ÖZET

Bu araştırmanın amacı, baba-oğul dinamiğini, çağdaş İngiliz yazarlarından Simon Stephens, Karl Hyde ve Scott Graham'ın *Fatherland* (2017) isimli oyununda incelemektir. 19. Yüzyıldan itibaren, İngiliz edebiyatı ve tiyatrosunda baba ve oğul ilişkisi bir çok defa ele alınmıştır. Bu makale özellikle, babanın çocuğun gelişimi üzerinde ki rolünü ele alan Sigmund Freud'un Odiopus kompleksi teorisinden yararlanır. *Fatherland* oyununda ki karakterlerin hepsi yetişkin erkeklerdir. Scott, Karl, and Simon. Babalık konusu ile ilgili bir televizyon programı hazırlarlarken, gerçek hikayelerden ilham alır ve bu hikayeleri kullanmaya karar verirler. Arkadaşlarıyla röportaj yaparlar ve onlardan babalarını ve babalıklarını hatırlamalarını isterler. Her karakter farklı deneyimlerini anlatır ve konuşurlarken deneyimlerini ortaya koyarlar. Bazıları çocuklarına, kendi babalarının onlara davrandığı gibi davranır; diğerleri ise kendilerini tam tersine hareket ederken bulurlar. Bu anlamda Stephen, Hyde ve Graham izleyicilerinin bu [baba-oğul] karşılıklı ilişkisine çeşitli bakış açılarından bakarak farkındalık duygusunu uyandırır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Simon Stephens, Karl Hyde, Scott Graham, *Fatherland*, baba- oğul ilişkisi, Odiopus kompleksi

The purpose of the theatre is not to provide the solutions but to state the problems more clearly”

~ Anton Chekhov

In the twenty-first century, many a contemporary play shows elements of Britain's economic crisis and how culture has changed in experimental ways. “The plays do not operate on the binary of the aesthetic versus the political: rather, they exist in the space between the two to create a new form of theatre responsive to the complexities of our time” (Vicky, p. 3). In this sense, the 21st century British playwrights reflect all uncertainties, controversies, and dilemmas in their works. Adiseshiah and Le Page (2016) especially purport that “the twenty-first century

continues to develop beyond 9/11, the Afghanistan and Iraq wars, and subsequent war on terror markers, to include the Arab Spring, the 2008 credit crunch, and the associated global financial crisis and austerity measures” (p. 3). Thus, the reason of the complexities that the playwrights reflect on their plays is the unforgettable social and political disasters they have experienced. In *Escaped Alone* (2016) Caryl Churchill, in *Wastwater* (2011) Simon Stephens reconsider climate change and environmental problems agonizing that these are the permanent problems in the twenty-first century. The social transformation with fluid identities is told in Rob Drummond’s *Bullet Catch* (2009) and Lucy Prebble’s *Enron* (2009). Verbatim theatre also becomes popular in this century in virtue of “a contemporary desire for real life” (Adiseshiah & Le Page, p.4) and Simon Stephens’s *Fatherland* (2018), Mark Ravenhill’s *A Life in Three Acts* (2009), David Hare’s *The Permanent Way* (2003) are just some of them. Among those to leave an overwhelming impression on this new-found era includes Caryl Churchill, Martin Crimp, Mike Bartlett, and Simon Stephens.

Simon Stephens has left a lasting impression on the British Theatre with *Bluebird*, which was performed at the Royal Court Theatre in 1998. Gülşen Sayın depicts him as “one of the most productive playwright among Contemporary British playwrights”¹ (Bozer, 2016, p.115). Upon creating *Fatherland*, he collaborated with Karl Hide (British artist, director, and founding member of both Underworld and Tomato), and Scott Graham (director and a founder of the Frantic Assembly). *Fatherland* has been drawing considerable attention to itself ever since it first took to the stage in 2017 at the Royal Exchange Theatre. It has moved audiences with its audio-visual arrangements. Many a critic has, moreover, given it much praise. Theatre director Andrew Lukowski exclaims, “*Fatherland* is a startling and exhilarating show. It maps out the man’s odyssey with a text called from their conversations and interviews enlivened with music, dance and a huge amateur chorus” (New York Times). Cyrielle Garson points out “[the] choreographic reconstruction of scenes from the real life and musical/sound reconstruction from objects evoking the memories of childhood and the father figure” (p. 54). Michael Billington praises the play’s technique and contemporary plot: “this thrilling play about three sons who go home to their dads and their childhoods shows verbatim theatre’s power to heed the forgotten” (The Guardian). *Fatherland* handles the father-son issue in the twenty-first century in a realistic manner and has most definitely left behind its imprint on modern British drama.

Stephens, Graham, and Hyde do not want their play to be limited to just their own personal experience and creativity. Therefore, they draw upon more experience and appeal to more people using the verbatim technique. All three writers visited “Corby, Mr. Graham’s hometown, then Stockport where Mr. Stephens grow up and Bewarley where Hyde is from” (Lukowski, New York Times) to interview their neighbourhood. These interviews enabled *Fatherland* to become “a vital and necessary show about what we were, who we are and what we’d like to become” (liftfestival.com). In this context, this study aims to find out father-son dynamic in *Fatherland*, one of the outstanding examples of verbatim theatre, within the frame of Sigmund Freud’s Oedipus complex.

Verbatim Theatre and *Fatherland*

While verbatim theatre emerged in the twentieth century, it has taken its place more so in 21st century British theatre. Derek Paget’s research on documentary drama is the first to make mention of the new technique: “Verbatim theatre, which makes fascinating use of taped actuality recording as its primary source material, is the latest manifestation of documentary theatre” (p. 317). Paget claims that documentary and verbatim theatre are similar to one another.

¹ Translated by Belgin Bağlılar

In contrast, Stephen Bottoms advocates that there is a clear-cut difference between documentary and verbatim theatre, considering that “documentary theatre might be said to imply the foregrounding of documents, of texts, the term “verbatim theatre” tends to fetishize the notion that we are getting things ‘word for word’, straight from the mouths of those ‘involved’” (p. 59). For instance, we initially come across Peter Cheeman’s *Fight for Shelton Bar* (1974) as a realistic British verbatim theatre. David Hare’s *The Permanent Way* (2003) and *The Power of Yes* (2009), Robin Soans’s *Talking to Terrorists* (2005), Philip Ralph’s *Deep Cut* (2008) and Simon Stephens’s, Karl Hyde’s, and Scott Graham’s *Fatherland* (2017) constitute other impressive examples of verbatim theatre. According to Will Hammond and Dan Steward, “verbatim is now being studied as a theatre genre” (p. II). Better still, more and more plays are being written using this technique.

One of the pioneers of this technique, Rony Robinson, delineates that verbatim “is a form of theatre firmly predicted upon the taping and subsequent transcription of interviews with ordinary people, done in the context of research into a particular region, subject area, issue, event, or combination of these things” (p. 317). The techniques used in verbatim theatre are directly proportional to advances in technology—considering that a playwright precisely conveys to audiences the real experiences of people in their own words instead of creating a character. Moreover, while tools such as video recorders or cameras are used, it is not their function to either change or exaggerate the stories. In a sense, verbatim theatre goes beyond being theatre towards becoming the bare truth. In *Fatherland*, Stephens, Graham and Hyde reflect this by returning to their places of origin to interview (and record) their neighbours and friends.

Verbatim theatre, moreover, does not follow a certain sequence as traditional theatre does. Alecky Blythe views this as a challenge, uttering that, “There is a danger that you only ever get the character’s thoughts and opinions, which lack emotional colour” (Hammond & Steward, p. 92). Stephens confesses that trying not to lose the emotional colour was one of the biggest challenges he faced while creating *Fatherland*. He adds that: “You’ve got to be ferocious with your editing... So, searching for absolute linguistic precision, you need to just carve away massive bodies of material. The printed transcripts of all the interviews must have been about 500 pages. To get a 50-page play out of that, your radar has to be really alert” (Graham, p.14). Thus, the authors organize their interviews instead of choosing characters for integrity.

Visuality is another important feature that sets verbatim theatre apart from other genres. “Verbatim theatre lacks the flexibility of fictional drama, often tied to the act of telling rather than showing” (Lane, 2010:78). What performers wear or how they do their make-up matters little. However, although verbatim theatre is realistic, that does not mean that it merely reflects events as they are. In Carol Martin’s view, it also reflects “systems of belief, and political affiliations precisely through the creation of their own versions of events, beliefs, and politics by exploiting technology” (2010: 17). In this sense, it is a thoroughly political theatre. Mary Luckhurst (*A Concise Companion to Contemporary British and Irish Drama*) cites that verbatim theatre is “a distrust of the media and a desire to uncover stories which may be being suppressed” (p. 200). Those who write in the light of this genre address issues that impact people. One example of this is Gina Shmukler’s *The Line*, in which she discusses the difficulties and painful memories that many [black] Africans have had to overcome. In *Fatherland* Stephens, Graham and Hyde “are attempting to dramatize the capacity for compassion, humanity, brutality and inarticulacy of masculinity throughout England” (Graham, p. 14). In this regard, *Fatherland* is a political reflection of how fathers and sons inter-relate. Graham states that they did not explicitly set out to write *Fatherland* in the verbatim genre. He adds that “our own interviews were only a test but the more we delved into this world the more we were

implicated, the more the desire to make this show was interrogated and the more our own stories became entwined in the narrative” (Graham, p. 21). In retrospect, verbatim theatre has profoundly influenced *Fatherland*'s creators.

Father-son Relationship

Ever since the nineteenth century, psychologists have focused rather intensely on the relationship between father and son. Within the patriarchal system, the paternal figure represents authority. In *Interpretation of Dreams* (1899), psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud puts forward the theory of the Oedipus complex, in which he emphasizes the value of castration anxiety in establishing a bond between father and son during the phallic period. Similarly, Lacan accentuates the priority of the father for both boys and girls. He, too, refers to the Oedipus complex, and draws attention to the mirror stage. British psychologist, John Bowlby cites attachment theory, which is based on the relationship between father and son (*A Secure Base*, 1988). He asserts that unstable contact between both can cause the son to experience behavioural and emotional problems. Towards the end of the twentieth century, researchers have focused more on the relation between father and son in general, for economic, religious, political and cultural changes have led to a shift in paradigm when it comes to father and son dynamic. American psychologist and researcher Michael Lamb, puts forth that,

In contrast to earlier conceptualizations of fathers' roles, often focused quite narrowly on breadwinning, and later discussions focused narrowly on “involvement,” researchers, theorists, and practitioners no longer cling to the simplistic belief that fathers ideally fill a unidimensional and universal role in their families and in their children's eyes (p. 3).

In this regard, fathers play a crucial role in their child's development considering the distinct roles that they [often] assume. According to Freud (1975), the gravity of the id, ego, and superego within human mind cannot be discussed. Id symbolizes the most basic desires of personality and exists subconsciously. Ego is our self that balances those demands and is driven from the outside world. Accordingly, “The identification with the father makes a permanent place for itself in the ego” (Freud, p. 242). Superego represents social taboo and rules and is “the inheritor of the parental influence” (Freud, p. 242). Freud states that one's libido develops over a series of five stages: oral (ages 0-1), anal (ages 1-2), phallic (ages 3-6), latency (ages 6-12), and genital. He asserts as soon as we complete the stage, we advance in our adaption to our socio-cultural environment. Libido is satisfied orally during the oral period. Defecation plays a crucial role in the anal period. However, during the phallic period, the Oedipus complex (which gets its name from a play by Sophocles) develops differently in boys than it does in girls.

A boy sees his father as an opponent and is jealous of him due to his immense love for his mother. He fears that his father will punish him— that is, he is castrated by the virtue of his own feelings. At the same time, he sees his father as powerful and desires to be just like him. A child successfully transitions through this phase, only develops a positive attitude towards both his father and his mother.

In contrast, girls are disappointed that they lack the penis. They both compete with their mothers as well as hate them. Children who remain stuck within the phallic period [often] feel guilty throughout their lives and/or display abnormal sexual preferences. Freud, moreover, argues that boys often want to kill their fathers because of their sentiments towards as well as experiences with them that they were unable to overcome during the phallic period. In Freud's view, the relationship between father and son takes shape during childhood and gradually improves overtime. Thus, "fathers indeed had a role to play in child development, were often salient in

their children's lives, and affected the course of their children's development, for good as well as for ill "(Lamb article: 2). Freud admits that the root of a successful father and son bond start in the phallic stage, however, he asserts mental breakdown is also a negative effect of the phallic stage.

Fatherland

Fatherland is a single act play with ten male characters; Simon, Scott, and Karl interview Luke, Craig, Alan, Daniel, Steven, Graham, and Mel. The interviews have been told to answer the questions asked to them in detail in order to reveal the real picture behind their relationships with their fathers [and sons]. Simon prepares a questionnaire, "adding more fatherhood focused questions aiming to explore the experiences of having and being a father" (Graham, p.19). The questions are:

Simon: What's your name? / How old are you? / Where are you from? / What did your father look like? / What kind of clothes do you remember? / What pastimes did he have? / What type of music did you like? (Stephens, p. 6).

After their responses it is explicit that most of the characters in the play have similar features to their fathers. According to Freud this is something usual because "the boy is afraid of his father's anger at discovering that his son covets his wife. He escapes this anxiety by identifying with his father and becoming a man like him" (Pines, p.49). That's the reason why the characters in the play choose their father's job or have similar characteristics with their fathers like being aggressive. The first character they interview is Craig, a 35 years old man with two daughters, Daisy and Lottie. He himself never meets his father. As soon as his father learns that his 16-year-old mother is pregnant with him, he abandons her. Instead, his grandparents had raised him. His grandfather takes over the role of Craig's father. He recalls sleeping on his lap while watching old TV shows like *Frank Cannon* and *Day Match of the Day*. Craig states that his grandfather used to head the pub after receiving his weekly pay and spending all of his money there. More often than not, candles illuminated their house at night by virtue of unpaid electric bills. Every once in a while, he would go to the pub with his granddad:

CRAIG I'd go to the local pub with him, which was the Phoenix, at the age of four. We'd sit in the corner and I'd be the only child in there. I remember people always sending drinks over. He'd never have to get out of his seat to get a beer because I think when it kicked off, he was, he was abit handy. We all hurt people sometimes, don't we? (p. 13)

Craig has no complaints about his grandfather. In his eyes, he is a hero inasmuch as everyone orders his grandfather a beer. Moreover, his grandfather is not afraid of putting up a fight. As Craig grows up into an adult, he himself begins to become more aggressive. Simon and Scott notice this and confess:

Scott He's very nervous. CRAIG He rang me at about 11 o'clock last night.

Simon Nervous?

Scott I think he'd been drinking. He said he'd not slept for a few days thinking about it.

Simon Fuck.

Scott I know.

Simon Why?

Scott I don't know (p. 8)

Much like an apple that never falls far from the tree, Craig treads in his grandfather's footsteps. He turns into a nervous alcoholic, just like him. He learns that he himself will become a father

after visiting his grandfather's grave. When he takes his little daughter onto his lap, he identifies himself with his daughter and decides to quit doing drugs. "CRAIG: If my kids did drugs I'd be heartbroken and I'm gonna try and take them to where they don't do drugs .." (p. 34). From that moment forward, Craig feels himself ready to protect his daughter. Towards the end of the play, he narrates one of his memories with his daughter. During a barbecue, Daisy states that she wants to eat hotdogs instead of sausages. His father peels off the wrapper to show her that it is a hotdog. However, Daisy thinks otherwise; Craig in response gets annoyed at her, and tells her "Daisy, fuck off " (p. 46). Later, he regrets his actions, calls Daisy over and tells her not to let anyone yell her. Daisy eagerly accepts her father's apology. In a sense, Craig, at that point, becomes an impressive father figure for his daughter.

The second character to be interviewed is Alan, 54 years old man with a daughter named Lois. Scott, while giving information to Simon about Alan, confesses that Alan is a "violent bastard" and a "a psychopath." The first thing that we learn about Alan is that he scares everyone and that he is always playing football (soccer). When he is asked what he remembers about his father, he states that his father was profoundly good at football and they always went to football matches together when he was young. When Simon asks Alan about what position his father played on, Alan reveals much more:

ALAN: He was away all the time. I never saw him. It never bothered me. I respected it. He was working. He was in the same industry as me. He was always away in them days, you know, so (p. 11).

Alan was never bothered by his father's absence, and even approves of and respects his father's strength. Like his father, he eventually chooses to work in construction. When Alan was 16, he and his father lived in Saudi Arabia for a while. During that stay there, he recalls witnessing someone stoned to death before his very eyes, and that his father did not prevent him from watching that. Unlike his father, Alan is very protective of his family. One day, he and his family get caught in a traffic jam. The driver of the bus behind them approaches his car and blames him for causing the jam. Lois begins to cry, and Alan reacts by brutally beating the man. Alan instinctively takes action to protect his daughter and uses that to justify his violent behaviour. This protective nature—something his own father never displayed—leads him to even want paedophiles and spongers to be hung on behalf of the safety of all children. In this regard, he unwittingly imitates his father in terms of brutality.

After Alan learns that his father has a brain tumour, with his all good intentions, he stays by his side at the hospital to take care of him. His father, however, unabashedly molests the nurses looking after him, which in turn irritates him. At the same time, he wonders why his father never tells his son that he loves him. There comes a point where his father yells at him for being unable to push the button on his electric wheelchair, saying; "Alan... Fucking typical, what a fucking cunt. Just let your old man smash into the fucking wall you fucking wanker" (p. 30). Alan confesses that he knows what it is like to be disliked by his father and feel unprotected. In turn, he develops an overprotective attitude to protect his daughter and is ready to spend the rest of his life in prison if anyone harms her. Thus, the root of his excessive sense of self-sacrifice is his own father's stolid, self-centred attitude towards his own son.

Daniel, Simon's old friend, is the third interviewee. He confesses being a father is burdensome, and that he does not want to be one. When he is asked about his first memory with his father, he gives a gut-wrenching reply. He recalls he and his parents going out somewhere, and that all he remembers is that his dad getting in the car and leaves him behind. Daniel never forgets the feeling of abandonment and cries behind his father's car. As an adult, he still blames his father for that. Apart from this, he confesses that his father behaves as though he were James Bond because of the long black coat and suits he used to wear, and because of the fact that he

would continuously watch action films to the point that learned how to fight from them. Nevertheless, Daniel refuses to follow in his footsteps and instead prefers to listen to music. Later, he studies art at university but eventually has to take a break due to mental illness.

Freud advocates that “in my experience, which is already very extensive, parents play main parts in the inner life of all children who later become psychoneurotic” (p. 201). Daniel is unable to successfully complete the phallic period, and hence ends up seeking psychological treatment. He claims that his father is ashamed of him over his mental illness. When Simon asks what his father does, Daniel proudly answers, “working in the car” (p. 25). Moreover, he used to feel excited whenever his father would come home with different cars. In this regard, despite his father’s open shame, he nevertheless is Daniel’s childhood hero. Daniel never establishes a strong bond with his father. His first memory signifies a lack of a father model. In this case, Daniel cannot complete the phallic period favourably and steers down a different path, preferring silence and calm in light of his father's aggressive character.

In the play, Mel, Karl's old friend, is a firefighter. Similar to Daniel, Mel too cannot shake his father abandoning him, albeit this time because he dies. Mel's father was abruptly taken to the hospital at the age of 46 and died on Christmas Eve. Mel likens his father's funeral to a splendid ceremony. This shows us how much value Mel had placed on his father. Every Christmas Eve, Mel initially goes to visit his father's grave and then he has dinner with his family. “MEL: I dream about him. He's just there. It is just a presence” (2018: 32). Moreover, Mel is proud of being a firefighter just like his hero father. He follows in his footsteps through the phallic period, and identifies himself with him.

Steven Leight also lives in Corbs. His father used to drive “three-wheeled trucks” at a factory (p. 25). His father would later fall ill on Boxing Day, right around the time Steven’s younger brother gets married, which also happens to fall on Boxing Day. Steven recalls everyone is gathered together that day, and at point finding his father in the bathroom. Before long, he took him to the hospital, and, alongside his mother, waited with him. When Steven goes home to bring him clean clothes, he learns twenty minutes later that his father has died. The fact that he was not at the hospital when his father passed makes him upset. Steven's story differs from the others because his father had a self-sacrificing nature about him. When he was a child, he would take long walks with his sister. Whenever the sky would open up, their father would rush home to fetch them their raincoats. To Steven, his father was a hero who was also talented. He could play the piano like Winifred Atwell despite never having had any formal training. In fact, Steven states how important and how much of a hero his father is to him. When he becomes an adult, like his father he also devotes himself to his family. Nevertheless, his wife eventually abandons both him and their two boys and a girl. He raises their children by himself with great sacrifice, in turn becoming like his father.

Simon keeps quiet during the interview until he suddenly breaks his silence about his stepfather, Steve. Although the time he actually spent with his father was limited, he is Simon’s hero. He joyfully confesses how used to take pleasure in going on holiday with Steve. He recalls riding a donkey with him, pretending that they were riding a horse. The two had a close and powerful relationship, which is Simon never shy of glorifying. His father takes him to watch Manchester City like; he becomes instantly hooked. Through that, he discovers that French football player Eric Cantona is like “first of those father figures.” When Simon's father realized that he was going to die at the age of 58, he gives his son a t-shirt with Eric Canton’s signature on it. Here, you can infer that Simon and Steve’s relationship was one full of love and respect—most of the time. For example, Simon brought up the story of his father being mad at him for waiting too much time in the bathroom or tying up his shoelaces. In fact, like Steve, Simon confesses that he too gets impatient when his child wastes time on the same things—mimicking his father’s positive and negative values.

Eighty-one-year-old Graham does not want to reveal his best memory of his father. Then he states that his mother, a bar worker, and father were alcoholics. He had no normal family life until he is 14 years old. He spent his childhood alone. He admits during the Second World War, that he enjoyed watching bombs drop from the sky rather than stay at home. When the gas lamp in the house runs dry, he would his eyes in fear and has nightmares. Graham was never able to acquire a role model to follow. Moreover, he cannot remember how his father died, assuming that he might have died of a heart attack. Graham eventually married Sandra, a woman he had met when two were 9 years of age. He confesses to not screaming with joy upon learning that he was to become a father. He furthermore states that his son was ugly. In fact, he likens his son to a cartoon character. Given Graham's background, it took him time to accept own son, Karl. It was not until one day, upon being left home alone with his child, that he felt proud of him for the first time. It is at that point that he rescues himself and his son from loneliness. He manages to maintain that feeling whenever Karl is awarded at school or goes on stage.

Karl, likewise indicates his father is as normal as the other fathers at first, and that he was proud of his father for making him wagons out of cartons, and for going on drives together. At one point, the two get into a car accident. Alas, Karl does not evacuate through the window. Moreover, he does not get injured because his father's powerful arms had apparently protected him. Unfortunately, a child in the colliding vehicle had flung out and was hurt badly. Therefore, Karl's father is both a strong and heroic figure, albeit not enough of one to satisfy his child's feelings. Karl admits to not having had a very happy family life. He claims that he used to hide in a rubbish bin and watch his parents fight from a distance. As an adult, he further explains how much of a negative impact this had on him; "KARL: And years and years and years later as a drunk, you know, I would walk around the streets of Soho looking out through these pinholes going you can't fucking see me... (p. 44)". During his childhood, Karl developed a habit of hiding to avoid problems—something that has continued well into his adulthood. Thus, Karl's experience reveals how much the relationship between one's parents can affect them. One interviewer, Scott, remembers his memories of his father and blames his father. On Saturday afternoons, he recalls looking forward to his father's coming home and watching football together. Scott would wait in anticipation for the athlete's score because that was the only time his father would embrace him. Beyond that, Scott emphasizes that his father was cruel and that he never embraced or kissed his grandchildren. "SCOTT ... I said this to my brother and he says, "Well why would they? They never did it with us" (p. 41)".

Scott confesses that he lacked any emotional intimacy with his father. Unlike the other interviewees, Scott does never once mention about his dad's heroism. He never feels that his father was a role model. Freud advocates "Children spend most of their time with family members. Consequently, family members are their most accessible objects of love and identification" (Pines, p.49). Nonetheless, Scott does not spend time with his family during his childhood, so he fails to identify himself with his father. One day, Scott's father is carried to the hospital upon suffering a heart attack. The doctors want the family to come and visit him for the last time. Upon going (with his mother and brother), Karl secretly wishes his father's death, this is the real desire underlies Freud's Oedipus complex, and is uncertain as to how to respond upon seeing him. His brother moves ahead of Scott to hug and kiss him. Karl, in contrast, admits to keep on walking, citing that he would never dare kiss or embrace his father. Here, we obviously understand that a child who lacks any relationship with their own father will seldom develop any sort of emotional bond with their own children.

Throughout the play, Luke is the only character who fails to what he remembered about his own father. The reason being is that as soon as he learns that the interview will be shortened, he feels that it will not reflect the truth in any way:

LUKE ... your dads are just made up of the stories you tell yourselves. Like kids' stories. To make you feel safe in the night and that. It's fine. But I think you're looking for something more truthful than that by going out and talking to people. There is no such thing. I'm having no part in it (p. 46).

According to Hyde, “it’s only when you take a step back from all the individual stories that you get an image of what fatherhood can be. The interviews were incredibly raw and revealing. They unearthed such conflicted and unresolved relationships. There was so much pride, love and anxiety” (Gardner, *The Guardian*: 2017). We must not deny that the interviews convey the plain truth regardless of whether or not they have been edited. The play ends with Luke and the others leaving. Craig, on the other hand, suddenly returns and asks for his daughter’s forgiveness for yelling at her; she accepts his apology—thereby revealing that the next generation is able to exonerate.

Conclusion

Verbatim theatre has made a strong comeback in British drama from the 1990s and onwards. Reflecting this, *Fatherland*, is a realistic, innovative and a well-known play for its many enchanting qualities. The combination of different talents—Stephens, Graham, and Hyde’s— is the reason why the play’s choreography, plot, and music are harmonious and impressive. Its creators return home to interview with their friends and neighbours about their father-son relationships. They, moreover, address this relationship in a twenty-first century light through psychology. Half of the characters, Karl, Simon, Steven and Mel establish a positive, satisfying, and sometimes very strong bond with their fathers. Daniel, Alan, Craig, Graham and Scott, on the other hand, experience heartbreak. Those with strong ties look up to their fathers as role models and follow in their footsteps; their fathers are strong and devoted heroes. In contrast, for the others, the father figures that should have enabled them to transition through the phallic period, are/were missing. Not one of them had a role model capable of teaching them about their gender roles and identity. It is perhaps for this reason that Daniel never becomes a father. Alan hones his interests, like painting and music in opposition to his father. Craig takes his grandfather as a role model instead and carries on his aggressive attitude. Graham does not repeat his father’s disinterest and lack of love when it comes to rearing his own son.

Throughout the play, the directors address the relationship between father and son using a realist and a multi-angle approach. They have their audience come face to face with the dark and light sides of twenty-first century’s fatherhood. Whether we choose to ignore it or not, our bond with our fathers affects how we interact with others later on in life. At the end of the play, Craig returns and apologizes to his daughter for shouting at her. She, in turn, responds with maturity and forgiveness. In this sense, despite everything, Craig's behaviour offers us a glimmer of hope that we can positively change how we interact with our parents and our children alike.

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