

THE PARADOX OF LOVE AS A DOWNFALL OF MAN AND AS A SYMBOL OF UNITY THROUGH WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S ROMEO & JULIETTE

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Abstract: William Shakespeare is one of the most important English figure of the British literature. Reading most his works leads to dealing with the sensational theme of love in all its forms. In *Romeo and Juliette* by Shakespeare love is the central issue and has been a down fall of the main protagonists. Love is what we all need it is the main essence of our existence. It is a necessity but can also be a source of our downfall. The main objective of the paper is to highlight how destructive jealous, misunderstanding, and sterile quarrels can be not only for family members but also for the whole society. Fruit of a documentary research, the results revealed that hatred, misunderstanding could be sources of tragedy they should be replaced from individuals' hearts by true love for sustainable peace.

Keywords: love, hatred, downfall, *Romeo and Juliette*, William Shakespeare.

I. INTRODUCTION

Love! Love! And love again. This is a concept that is difficult to get rid of in individual's lives. God did everything for love. The whole creation is the work of one who is love and who gives the magnet to it by finding the necessary measures to ensure his happiness. The creation, originally, made the reflection from the heart love of him the same whose power surpasses all that man can imagine. Love was the foundation on which God laid the world. He made men and women to love and back each other. It has always been at the center of people interactions in the society since the creation of the world. Love binds people, love binds lives and leads to union and unity. In her book entitled *Love Without Limit* Deborah Taj Anapol, defines love as a force of nature. For her love can not we can not command, demand, or take away love, any more than we can command the moon and the stars and the wind and the rain to come and go according to our whims. This explain how important love is for all. At the time love can lead tragedy and total destruction. That is the case of in the tragic play *Romeo and Juliette* by William Shakespeare in which the main characters despite the true love they have for each other, have a fatal flaw that leads to their downfall. The purpose of the paper is to highlight the place and power of love as well as the risks it represents for human beings. The Empirical and documentary research are the main methodology used during this work.

II. STUDY METHODS

This research paper is the fruit of some documentary researches. For this respect I went through many other Shakespeare's works particularly *The Midsummer Night Dream*, *Macbeth* and other literary works from other writers. Top reach my goal, I also went through past publications by other researchers on the same issue and I get some useful information and comments that I used to enrich the current presentation.

III. STUDY RESULTS

3.1- Conceptual clarification and limit of the paper

The issue of love is so vast and complex that I find it necessary to clarify the concept according to my understanding and specify the limit of my paper. In fact there many definitions of the concept “love”. According to Merriam Webster love is strong affection for another arising out of kinship or personal ties like for instance a maternal love for a child. It can also be an attraction based on sexual desire, finally love could be an affection based on admiration, benevolence, or common interests.¹ The paper is mainly concerned with love between a man and a woman.

3.2- Importance of love in society

Love is important because without it life has no meaning or purpose. As Frank Tebbets says "A life without love in it is like a heap of ashes upon a deserted hearth, with the fire dead, the laughter stilled and the light extinguished." Love allows us to be more and do more than we could ever accomplish without its power². Human beings have an innate quality of giving and feeling love. Moreover, it is even related with our biological structure. It is this feeling of love, which is responsible for the existence and maintenance of the society. The sweet ecstasy of love enables the man to accomplish tasks that would not have been possible without its powers. The enigmatic emotion exceeds all boundaries and has great potential of changing lives of the people.

The majesty of the feeling is such that it allows humans to treat each other with kindness and compassion. In fact one can say that there are a number of emotions bred by love. It might be any relation binding us together; love is ubiquitous in different forms. Love is a universal feeling, which is felt by every living being on this earth. Do not be surprised when I say ‘living beings’ because it is not just an attribute of human beings. Plants and animals everyone is acquainted with this strange emotion. Though there is no definition to describe this unique feeling of love, it is characterized by a sense of attachment and affection towards somebody or something. So strong is the feeling that it is said that it makes the world go around. If you are still wondering why is love so important in our lives, the answer is that it satisfies the emotional needs of human beings.

Human beings have an innate quality of giving and feeling love. Moreover, it is even related with our biological structure. It is this feeling of love, which is responsible for the existence and maintenance of the society. When a baby is born, parents forget about their hunger, sleep, as they are so much in love with their child. The sweet ecstasy of love enables the man to accomplish tasks that would not have been possible without its powers. The enigmatic emotion exceeds all boundaries and has great potential of changing lives of the people.

3.3- The power of love through Romeo and Juliette

In “Romeo and Juliet”, Shakespeare shows that love has power to control one’s actions, feelings, and the relationship itself through the bond between a destined couple. The passion between the pair grew strong enough to have the capability to do these mighty things. The predestined newlyweds are brought down a rocky road of obstacles learning love’s strength and the meaning of love.

In *The Beatrice Letters*, Lemony Snicket, wrote “ I will love you as a drawer loves a secret compartment, and as a secret compartment loves a secret, and as a secret loves to make a person gasp, and as a gasping person loves a glass of brandy to calm their nerves, and as a glass of brandy loves to shatter on the floor, and as the noise of glass shattering loves to make someone else gasp, and as someone else gasping loves a nearby desk to lean against, even if leaning against it presses a lever that loves to open a drawer and reveal a secret compartment. I will love you until all such compartments are discovered and opened, and until all the secrets have gone gasping into the world. I will love you until all the codes and hearts have been broken and until every anagram and egg has been unscrambled." From this quotation, it clearly appear that love is an inner feeling, difficult to get rid of. The powerful nature of love can be seen in the way it is described, or, more accurately, the way descriptions of it so consistently fail to capture its entirety. At times love is described in the terms of religion, as in the fourteen lines when Romeo and Juliet first meet. At others it is described as a sort of magic: “Alike bewitchèd by the charm of looks” (2.Prologue.6). Juliet, perhaps, most perfectly describes her love

¹ www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/love

² Article Source: <http://EzineArticles.com/247340>

for Romeo by refusing to describe it: "But my true love is grown to such excess / I cannot sum up some of half my wealth" (3.1.33–34). Love, in other words, resists any single metaphor because it is too powerful to be so easily contained or understood.

The power of love controlled Romeo and Juliet's actions. They were so head over heels in love for each other that they were willing to do anything for their partner even if it meant to the extreme of things. Outside of "Romeo and Juliet", a wise man named Hercules said "People do crazy things when they are in love..." This is perfectly said and true especially in showing Romeo and Juliet's actions. Romeo and Juliet had only known each other for a day but their love had already taken over them. When Romeo and Juliet were confessing their love for each other during the balcony scene, Romeo said, "With love's light wings did I o'erperch these walls, /For stony limits cannot hold love out, /And what love can do, that dares love attempt./Therefore, thy kinsman are no stop to me."(Act II, Scene 2, Lines 71-74) Romeo is saying love will make a man try anything and even a stone wall couldn't keep him out. Love had the authority to make Romeo fearlessly climb the walls risking getting caught. Love seized Juliet's actions. Juliet was so in love that she was willing to drink the potion and appear to be dead all to be with the banished Romeo in the end. Romeo and Juliet are in the dock and people do not want to understand what happens to them. We do not choose who to fall in love with. It puts children penny turtles and abuse but their love conquers even after their death. The two families decide to unite and leave their conflicts to live in peace.

3.4- Love as a downfall of man

Love has taken or has another face nowadays. Many people no longer see it as an intense feeling for someone or self-sacrifice for the other; one seeks his interest through love. And sometimes this love is measured by the degree of his armor's wallet. Strange but true thing. The world is going backwards and the real reason for love has lost its meaning. This feeling that once animated Rodrigues and Chimène in Molière, Romeo and Juliette, Ahouna and Anatou in *An Endless Trap* by Olympe Behly Quenum, Pierre and Anna-Maria in *the Ghost of Brazil* is now relegated to the realm of darkness and darkness.

Peter and Anna Maria the main protagonists in *the Ghost of Brazil* by the Beninese writer Couao Zotti, are far from experiencing their love in the light of romance and the color of love. They are at an endless road. Two families, one story and especially their love awakens the past conflicts that is not prevailing any happiness in the love affairs of the two young lovers. Despite the strong energy and efforts deployed Anna-Maria's effort to remain faithful to Peter it is death that the two young men has chosen to prove their love to each other, to their family and to the whole world. The Agoudas and the do Mato refuse to leave the story behind and face the happiness of their children. Hum ! *Love when it holds us*, said a wise African.

The present world is no longer ready for a sacrifice that once made dignity the very heart of love. To sacrifice oneself for the one we love goes beyond personal interest. The heartfelt cry of this work is meant to awaken one's conscience at the return of sincere love. The relationship between Romeo and Juliet accentuated tensions between the two families and beyond families both clans. It doubled the existed tensions and conflicts between the two clans. Love which should be a source of peace, happiness and above all unity breaks out in war and in conflict and this leads to the death of Romeo and Juliette a fatality, a scandal and a terror that breaks out on the younger generation.

IV. CONCLUSION

At the end of this research work through which I first try to understand what is love and its importance in the world and the selected novels, I come to the conclusion love, which is once based on sincerity and sacrifice is today stammered and equated with a search for personal interest. William Shakespeare has long wondered about the real value of this feeling, which can lead two people to die voluntarily. Step outside of this sweet protagonist, fragile that leads to unity in the heart of love, but that can sometimes easily provoke hatred. But that's not a reason not to love each other sincerely. Will there be such love in the future?

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