

Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*: Maladjustment of Masculine and Feminine Traits as the True Cause of Tragedy

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Abstract

The chief aim of this article is to bring about a better understanding of Shakespeare's drama *Romeo and Juliet* by tracing the protagonists' actions to the maladjustment of masculine and feminine traits. As per the accepted psychic gender principles, a man possesses more reason and less emotion, and a woman, more emotion and less reason. The context of a woman with more reason and a man with more emotion coming together in a peculiar relationship is the maladjustment of their psychic personalities. Tragedy, from this point of view, is the portrayal of the unbalanced psychological natures of men and women, which has disastrous consequences. The paper seeks to prove that neither Romeo nor Juliet is responsible for the tragedy as individuals. It is the somewhat peculiar relationship between them that influences each other's personalities and leads them to disaster. The paper also throws light on how a mere erotic sexual love metamorphoses into the sacrificial divine love.

Keywords: erotic love, maladjustment, personality, relationship, tragedy

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Introduction

From the time Shakespeare wrote his tragedies, it has been an interesting element for many scholars and critics to think about the reasons for the tragic end of the central characters. Many critics have propounded their theories and explained why tragedy occurred in the protagonists' lives. A great Shakespearean scholar and critic A.C. Bradley (1955) discussed at length the reasons for the failure of the central characters of Shakespeare's tragedies in his monumental work *Shakespearean Tragedy*. The reasons are ambition, procrastination, jealousy, flattery, and so on. When we look carefully into our lives, we discover that each one of us has one or more of these weaknesses. Still, we do not necessarily face a tragic end like the protagonists of Shakespeare. Therefore, there must be some other reason for their downfall. If we closely observe, men and women look different, but they are complementary to each other, and they need support of each other for a successful life. The researchers feel that in the tragedies of Shakespeare, men and women ruin the lives of each other. A remark of Sewall, (1951) in this regard is enlightening:

He [Shakespeare] was not only concerned with what happens to a man; he was also concerned with what happens within a man. The nature of this change and development is crucial in an understanding of the relation between Shakespeare's vision and his creation of his tragic characters (p. 64).

So, the nature of a man or a woman inside is the reason for his or her success or failure.

In this article, it is proposed to demonstrate that tragedy occurs in *Romeo and Juliet* due to the maladjustment of the masculine and feminine traits of the central characters. This conclusion is made by means of an extensive and in-depth study of the exchanges between Romeo and Juliet. Studies have long established that men are governed by reason and women by emotion, along with some other qualities. This does not mean that men do not have a fair share of emotion built into their character, and women are not equipped with the capacity for reasoning. A man would have qualities like vigor, defiance and valor; and a woman might have joyousness, tender-heartedness and a clear disposition for self-surrender. A normal man's character is formed with more reason and less emotion. A woman has more emotion and less reason. Maladjustment occurs when a man is short on reason and has instead more feminine characteristics, and when a woman is equipped with less emotion and more male characteristics. Psychologically, there are no men and women but only sexual majorities, each human being an androgyne when it comes to personality traits. Tragedy is bound to occur to a great personality due to the unbalanced commixture of the masculine and feminine elements. In addition, when a maladjusted person meets another maladjusted one, the maladjustment increases and leads to a tragic end. For instance, a Finnish writer Jaari Juutinen wrote a monologue 'Juliet, Juliet!' in 2007. He rewrote the story of Romeo and Juliet connecting it to a real-life event that happened in Finland. A woman got into debt and murdered her husband and children (Keinanen, 2019). Here also, the tragedy occurred due to the maladjustment of masculine traits in the personality of the woman. Ralli, (1932) discusses this point further:

“Shakespeare arraigns not women as such but, the relation between men and women,”

and "Though Shakespeare's arraignment of life is followed by a vindication, one of the strongest counts is his indictment of women's share in men's life." (pp.535 & 537).

So, it is the relationship between these two maladjusted personalities that draws the attention of the researchers.

When a man is dominated by feminine traits, his reactions to the situations are haphazard. If a woman, who has more masculine nature, is under the direction of such a maladjusted man, she will head for ruin. A piece of pure masculinity is tantamount to paradoxical brute man (exemplified by Caliban in *The Tempest*). He is the replica of the popular Satan. Unmixed femininity will be as plastic as dead automation or an inert wax-doll. In either case, the man and the woman would easily be a misfit in any social structure. Unless the relationship between a man and a woman is based on compatibility, their spiritual development and resultant happiness would be impossible. In *Lectures and Notes on Shakespeare* Coleridge, (1881) says,

Men and women possess different qualities; and the union of both is the most complete ideal of human character. Blending of like and unlike is the secret of all pure delight...and this is true of morals and the attachment of the sexes (p. 13).

It is clear, therefore, that the tragedy in one's life will occur when there is a disastrous clash of maladjustment of traits. The maladjustment may happen within a person or in the relationship of the opposite sexes. This disharmony of the two sets of conflicting characteristics results from the context of a false relationship setting.

The Research Methods

This article is the result of several discussions and arguments of various Shakespearean scholars regarding why tragedy occurs in Shakespeare's plays. The established reasons failed to satisfy the researchers when they did a discourse analysis of the play. Every dialogue is thoroughly scrutinized, and the deeply implied meanings are brought into the light. All the communicative events of the play are studied with a critical mind, and eclectic methods are used to draw satisfying conclusions. A qualitative research strategy that uses archival and ethnographic methods is employed as per the observation of the researchers. To understand the psychic behavior of men and women, the researchers drew inspiration from psychosexual and psychoanalytic theories of psychologists like Carl Jung and Sigmund Freud. Considerable empirical pieces of evidence are provided based on the textual analysis to support the arguments presented in the paper. Along with the original text of the play, multiple other sources like published research papers in eminent journals, lectures of prominent professors, and newspaper articles are synthesized.

The True Cause of Tragedy

The true measure of the success of a tragedy is not primarily its adherence to conventional techniques. The success of a tragedy is measured by the emotional depth of the situations it portrays while presenting its characters in their wholeness. This is precisely what makes *Romeo and Juliet* one of the most poignant tragedies. In its own way, it displays the transformation of

sheer physical sex into spiritual love. 'Eros' (sexual love) metamorphoses into 'agape' (divine love). Its crux is a sexual urge in the process of urgent maturation. In the history of Literature and Humanities, three concepts are spoken more times: time, religion and love. Among the three, the word 'love' is spoken or written more times than time and religion (Bushnell & Wagner, 2019). Shakespeare also deals with the concept of love more times than any other theme. He grapples with the concept of love by an entirely new means. He makes 'love' the only and the most effective instrument of psychoanalysis to fathom the mysteries of the relationship between the sexes. He portrays it from its pure earthiness to its metamorphosis into the mystic relationship called 'romantic love.' The love of *Romeo and Juliet* seems to express the 'religion of love' view rather than the Catholic belief. Another point is that, although their love is passionate, it is consummated only in marriage, which helps them retain the audience's sympathy (Siegel, 1961).

The constant communion of Friar Laurence, particularly with *Romeo* from start to finish, is very significant. If we carefully study the speeches of the Friar, we discover that he has the essentials of the moral faculty itself. He guides them through the sticky quagmire of mere physical sex without any appreciable admixture of the psychic elements. It is he who goads *Romeo* on to action. He whips *Romeo's* spirit into soul-saving activity from the depths of death-dealing lethargy of hopelessness. Whenever his moral insight fails him, the Friar leads him along the path of spiritual safety. For *Juliet*, naturally, he seems to advocate passivity, in keeping with the demands of her feminine nature. *Juliet* herself recognizes her part, when she assures *Romeo* with sincere emphasis that if his "bent of love be honourable," (II. 2. 143) he should say where and when he shall perform the rite.

The Friar, with the tenacious persistence, expounded their natural obligations as a wise and faithful counselor. If they had successfully played the roles nature had assigned to each, there would have been no tragedy of *Romeo and Juliet* as such. Indeed as Halio puts it, early psychoanalytic critics feel that the problem of *Romeo's* impulsiveness derives from "ill-controlled, partially disguised aggression" (Halio, 1998).

The Maladjustment and Lust of the Protagonists

In both *Romeo and Juliet*, emotion reigns supreme. Comparatively, masculinity, with its essential faculty of reasoning, is absent in *Romeo* while it is present in *Juliet*. Thus, it is that these two meet, equipped with the same heightened emotional disposition. *Romeo's* speech to the Friar is suggestive of this. "We met -we woo'd and made exchange of vow." (II: 3. 62). And *Juliet's* speech to the nurse suggests the same. "Go, ask his name—If he be married, / My grave is like to be my wedding bed." (I: 5. 138-139). The Friar knows the malady and prescribes the remedy: Therefore, love moderately; long love doth so; / Too swift arrives as tardy as too slow. (II: 6. 14-15).

Both have, to the same degree, the lust of the eye; both are young, and, both have the beauty of form. Nevertheless, *Juliet* alone possesses reason, large and deep enough, to endow her with sagacity or practical wisdom. The superabundance of emotion in both produces a mental state, which finally drives them on to death by suicide. There is, consequently, a relative reversal of

positions as man and woman in Juliet and Romeo. This is the true cause of the tragedy of their love and their lives. Romeo has more of the woman in his spiritual self and Juliet more of the man in hers, only, of course, with reference to each other. As they meet at the Capulet's ancient feast, emotion seems to run amuck. Juliet floats a soul denuded nymph on its rising billows, from where she giddily shrieks to Romeo, "Then have my lips the sin that they have took." (I: 5. 112). Maiden modesty is gone with the wind! Learning from the nurse that the co-partner in the revel of ready kisses is none other than the son of her father's foe, she announces a birth in self-pity to herself. Prodigious birth of love it is to me / That I must love a loathed enemy (I: 5. 144-145).

She forgets, however, that her father calls him "a portly gentleman" (I. 5. 75) and all "Verona brags of him" (I. 5. 76). But then contrariety is at the core of her very being! There is, however, an element of wonder and moderation of pure sexual desire in her. The couple soared dizzy heights through the elevation of sex, maintaining the true sanctity of love. In fact, the play has many jokes which have sexual connotations, especially those involving Mercutio and the Nurse (Wells, 2004). But the sex-alloy in this love of Romeo and Juliet is preponderant. Consequently, it has the quality of enervating rather than reinforcing the protagonists. Romeo is right in tracing back to Juliet, the presence in himself of unusual and somewhat long-drawn-out inertia: O, sweet Juliet! / Thy beauty has made me effeminate, / And in my temper soften'd valour's steel! (III: 1. 119-121).

She is so overcome with fear because of its incomprehensibility. When she sets about to assign it a cause, she finds herself baffled, and imputes it merely to too much haste.

Although I joy in thee,
I have no joy of this contract tonight:
It is too rash, too unadvis'd, too sudden;
Too like the lightning, which doth cease to be.
Ere one can say, it lightens

II: 2. 116-120

If perfect love defeats fear, the love of Romeo and Juliet is rather weak and ineffective because the lovers always feel fear, but are not controlled by it. They take bold steps to save their love and to be with each other. It is a common psychic occurrence that parties, thrown off balance by the force of love, are reborn with the spiritual traits of character unknown previously. Shyness, fear, backwardness, lack of self-confidence, maiden-modesty, self-consciousness, physical weakness and moping seclusion are replaced, or reinforced by conduct, tragic force, winsome ways, self-assurance, spiritual strength, maternal possessiveness, burst of song and praise. They disregard time and place, and become unmindful of who might hear. Man's lack of nervousness is transformed into defiant heroism; the sexual desire into saintly devotion; the self-centeredness into self-sacrifice; effeminate inactivity into manly action; inferiority-complex into inward grace and self-assurance. Likewise, self-centered love is altered into divine love in the face of opposition. This love naturally dares all, stakes all, refines all dross, and remains calm and constant in the storms that beset life. It has the quality of true stability in thought, speech, and action. The more significant element, consequently, in love between Romeo and Juliet is lust or carnal desire.

The Love and the Reversal of Traits as Revealed by Friar Laurence

If we carefully follow the anxious Friar Laurence, we shall know that this love was bound to come to grief, when those professing it are too feeble. Friar Lawrence's speech to Romeo underscores this fact. "So smile the heavens upon this holy act. / That after hours with sorrow chide us not! (II: 6. 1-2). For "These violent delights have violent ends / And in their triumph die, like fire and powder." (II:6, 9-10). He had warned earlier: "Women may fall, when there's no strength in men" (II:3. 80).

The Friar lays down the law in all its loveliness and inexorability in his first soliloquy, "The Hymn to Nature:"

Two such opposed foes encamp them still
In man as well as herbs, grace and rude will;
And where the worser is predominant,
Full soon the canker death eats up that plant.

II:3. 27-30

His guidance to the lovers, particularly to Romeo, centers on above the law. After the Balcony-Scene, Romeo goes to the Friar. In response to Romeo's early salutation, the Friar assures him that either his early visit is due to "some distemperature" or "our Romeo has not been in bed tonight" (II: 3. 42). On being told that latter was the case, the Friar immediately asks him a question which smacks of a firm conviction. "God pardon sin! Wast thou with Rosaline? (II: 3.44).

This is significant since it shows that the Friar could not have been surprised at all had Romeo spent the night with Rosaline. He is genuinely surprised at Romeo's transferring his love from Rosaline to Juliet. "And art thou chang'd? Pronounce this sentence then: / Women may fall when there's no strength in men" (II: 3. 79-80).

The Friar thus points to a chink in the lover's armor. Romeo reminds him in protest that he has often rebuked him for loving Rosaline. The Friar's rejoinder has oracular riddles. They have the ease, clarity, naturalness, and power to convince. The genuinely puzzled Romeo pushes the argument over the edge, but evidently with a sincere desire to understand better the present course of his love. "Thou chidd'st me oft for loving Rosaline, / And bad'st me bury love" (II: 3. 81 and 83).

But the wise old divine is amused at his young friend's seemingly sound reproach. It shows that Romeo has completely missed the point the Friar wished to enforce. He hurries to explain that the chiding was: "For doling, not for loving, pupil mine" (II: 3, 82).

And as for "bury love," it is to renounce love, the act of loving itself, and not to abandon one object of love for another. The Friar further interprets 'bury' to Romeo: "Not in a grave. / To lay one in, another out to have" (II: 3.84-85). Both Rosaline and the Friar knew that Romeo does not possess the necessary manly strength. So, his love will not prosper. His love will not transcend the basic sexual to the sublime spiritual. In this connection, Kottman (2012) says that both Romeo

and Juliet love each other for love's sake. They do not acknowledge the dead body of the other. They don't even feel sad or cry, looking at each other's ruin. Instead, both of them commit suicide with joy and happiness. Their love is not for each other, but love's sake.

The Friar has no doubt whatever on this point, and, therefore, is naturally averse to being a party to such love with its collateral misery to two young lives. This is in keeping with his earlier counsel to Romeo: "wisely and slow; they stumble that run fast" (II: 3. 94). But suddenly he does "espy a kind of hope," which is paralleled in Juliet's case, when he hands her the vial of artificial death potion. It is suggested here that in either case, the fates intervene with disastrous consequences! In one respect I'll thy assistant be; / For this alliance may so happy prove, / To turn your households' rancor to pure love (II: 3. 90-92).

It is significant that when the Friar swerves from the path of rectitude, he stumbles in pursuance of the law: 'Virtue itself turns vice, being misapplied' (II: 3. 21). The Friar is, consequently, responsible for performing a marriage between the parties. He does this not with an eye to the intrinsic good of the participants, but to the instrumental good of their households. And so, clinging each to each, the old priest hastens to lead them prematurely to shoulder the responsibility of marriage. As a result, he contributes, in a large measure, to the tragedy of their love, and through it of their lives. We remember the last line of Capulet's lamentation over the fair seeming-corpse of Juliet! "And all things change them to the contrary" (IV: 5. 90).

Although the poor Capulet cannot understand why things have so transpired, the well-meaning Friar holds the key to the mystery. In his Hymn to Nature he had earlier sung: Nor aught so good but strain'd from that fair use / Revolts from true birth, stumbling on abuse; / Virtue itself turns vice, being misapplied; (II: 3. 19-21).

With something of the innate weakness of the professional preacher and the meddling moralist, he has run too fast to misapply "this alliance" of love. He designs it, primarily, for the self-development of its protagonists as a relationship of instrumental good of their households. To Romeo, his two-fold warning has been: "Wisely and slow: they stumble that run fast" (II. 3. 100-101).

Nemesis, therefore, pursues him with the relentless natural laws. The misapplication of "virtue" at the root resulted in the miscarriage of all his relevant plans. The letter to Romeo and the false-death-drug to Juliet are perfect examples of this miscarriage. He deserves punishment for the double crime of being foolish and fast. The reason for this is the permanent blindness of the pampered priestly class. He is unable to see the criminality of his atrocious but well-meaning acts. His acts are conventionally condoned by the superstitious people and their princes! Lurking in the concluding part of his defense is an unmistakable challenge, and, if aught in this / Miscarried by my fault, let my old life / Be sacrificed, some hour before his time, / Unto the rigor of the severest law (V: 3. 266-269).

And the conscious inability of the Prince to take action in the matter is expressed by him in an evasive, spineless line. "We still have known thee for a holy man." (V: 3. 270).

The old Friar is so fast and fond a fatalist that he wholeheartedly believes along with Juliet in "What must be shall be" (IV: 1. 21). Romeo himself is a truer fatalist than both of them without any tangible or even a far-fetched cause. Before entering the Capulet's hall, he declares, "But He that hath the steerage of my course, Direct my sail!" (I: 4. 113-114). He has the warning of "some consequence yet hanging in the stars" (I: 4. 2). It is a strange hotchpotch of the enlightened Christian faith and unscientific pagan blind beliefs! The Roman Catholic priest naturally has this attitude: The old Friar possesses the learning and experience that his calling and age give him. But, one cannot help feeling that in the long term plans, Reason in him lags behind Impulse. As a consequence, he fails to make the necessary provision against the play of Accident. It happens in the execution of a plan of the momentous Romeo-Juliet meeting, in which all concerned run such uncommon personal risks. He can parrot-like utter the sermons containing rules of conduct for others to follow, which he does not, or cannot, practice. His guidance, however, is clear-cut, and as to its value for practical living, there is hardly any doubt.

For understanding and acceptance of this guidance, there should be a strong character which unluckily Romeo does not at all possess. Juliet, too, largely fails to avail herself of his advice. Juliet is left looking passively for support to any but Romeo, being conscious of the relative weakness of his character. If Friar Laurence had refused to compromise concerning the renunciation of love by Romeo, at least for the time being, everything would have been all right. His very first piece of advice shows that he has terrific insight into Romeo's character, which is devoid of good Characters for loving. He can only dote, and doting is a pseudo-sentiment and degenerate form of true love. On deeper reflection, we find Romeo both unwise and sentimental. Now, the reckless may form a part of love which, with persistent care and effort and the passage of time, might be remedied. But in doting, this element being organic, it is chronic and incurable. Since doting is a result of some deep-seated spiritual or physical shortcoming, it leads to an inability to feel genuine emotion. It is a constant desire for being in love, which is synonymous with sentimentality. Hence, it is vitiating and not vitalizing as strong, healthy love usually is. Genuine emotion alone is the test of the reality of true love.

The Weak and Unsupportive Relationship

The weakness underlying the love of Romeo and Juliet is that, each surrenders to the feeling of love rather than to one another, Romeo more so. Therefore, he has no spiritual strength to guide Juliet. Juliet is bound to fail as she does the unnatural role of his guardian angel and mentor. In their very first meeting, as strangers in the Capulets Hall, it is Juliet who leads Romeo to the initiation and declaration of love. She does it audaciously offering her "sin-infected lips" to Romeo's sin-purged ones to receive the sin back again! And, before he knows what he is about to face, she hurriedly binds him down to a clandestine marriage, the very next day! Honegger, (2006) has some enlightening comments to make in this regard:

By bringing Romeo into the scene to eavesdrop, Shakespeare breaks from the normal sequence of courtship. Usually, a woman was required to be modest and shy to make sure that her suitor was sincere, but breaking this rule serves to speed along the plot. The lovers are able to skip courting and move on to plain talk about their relationship— agreeing to be married after knowing each other for only one night. (p.73)

It is Juliet who remembers and constantly reminds him of his dangerous state in the orchard. But her love, as Romeo's, best befits the night since her reason is rather short-lived. Her love is not bold enough, and her reason is not strong enough to make the success of long term engagements. If either of them has the strength of all-daring love, they could have efficiently planned an escape to Mantua with the help of the friendly Friar, and maneuvered with ease and security under the protective care of the long-armed Church. Love means life, which implies action. It is the sin of inactivity that runs them both into the ground.

Romeo is the metaphorical younger brother to Hamlet. But, Romeo doesn't have comprehensive knowledge and resultant habitual reflecting like Hamlet. Juliet is Ophelia without her inherent innocence, the actual quality of the "yet a stranger to the world, "in thought, word, and deed. The couples were misfits in their relationships. If Hamlet and Juliet had been in love, they would have undoubtedly triumphed together. As for Romeo and Ophelia, their meeting in the Capulet's Hall would have led to nothing more substantial than a short flirtatious tête-à-tête!

The Prologue tells us that they are star-crossed lovers "with their death-marked love." This role of nature, in the strictly Shakespearean sense, is of the nature of fate as a character. Consequently, it is the inherent defect in the sexual nature of each that leads to this devastating carnage of six lives. These lives are of the noblest, though three of them were tainted with the guilt of willful self-slaughter! Juliet's lamentation over the murder of Tybalt by Romeo should be specially noted here. This is no elegy on the former's death; but a Hymn of Hate: "O serpent heart" to the latter, the burden of which again is indicative of the lust-of-the-eye quality of Juliet's love, beginning with, "O Serpent heart, hid with a flowering face" (III: 2. 73-74).

Another speech of Juliet's is reminiscent of the vacuous state of her heart when Romeo is exiled. She is faced with the problem of the bigamous marriage with Paris, or with homelessness:

O, God! O, Nurse! How shall this be prevented?
My husband is on earth, my faith in heaven;
How shall that faith return again to earth,
Unless that husband send it me from heaven,
By leaving earth? Comfort me, counsel me.

III: 5. 206-210

And then introspection shows her soul in all its frail femininity. She emits a frame shattering shriek of self-pity. "Alack, alack! that heaven should practice stratagems / Upon so soft a subject as myself!" (III: 5. 211-212).

A change in her attitude to Romeo has taken place, but she looks in vain up to him for moral support and spiritual strength. But, Romeo is naturally unfit: "Romeo I come, this do I drink to thee"(IV: 3. 59). The speech to the nurse, however, is remarkable. It shows that the most insurmountable impediment to her marriage with Paris is not the unbreakable, spiritual and mystic union of love, but the conventional bond of marriage! She has not, therefore, fulfilled the essential womanly condition of complete self-surrender to Romeo, who has made in his turn a preposterously unmanly surrender to Juliet!

His love grows to true manly stature rather late, when he laments the fate of his beloved in false-death. The five short monosyllables "O, my love! my wife!" (V: 3. 91) transform him into a man of action in love. Just before taking the fatal poison, he assures the unresponsive half dead Juliet: "I still will stay with thee / And never from this palace of dim night / Depart again: here, here will I remain" (V: 3. 106-108).

The Transformation of Eros to Agape

The possessive and protective manly love is sufficiently matured to reach "the undiscovered country from whose bourn no traveller returns" (Hamlet, III: 1. 79). And Juliet, waking from her drug-induced sleep, finds Romeo dead through poison. She notices, with grim intent, his hand closed over an empty cup with a last sad reproach for his habitual unhelpfulness. It's full significance to their love and themselves now seems to come home to her in her last moments from the supraliminal regions of consciousness. With the bewildering comprehension of the true relationship between the sexes, Juliet hastens after Romeo: O Churl! Drunk all, and left no friendly drop, / To help me after I will kiss thy lips: / Haply, some poison yet doth hang on them (V:3. 163-165).

She kisses the imagined drops of poison, from his lips and stabs herself with Romeo's dagger with a felicitous invocation to it and falls across his body, murmurs her last words. "O happy dagger! / This is thy sheath there rest, and let me die" (V: 3. 169-170).

In this most solemn and terror-striking moment, we turn away in silence, as we recognize in this last act of Juliet's a re-consummation of their marriage through the mediation of the dagger!

Thus fire and powder, being highly flammable in their union, lose several existences and vanish in their contact. Thus Romeo and Juliet, possessing a high-density emotion, had set up by their first kiss the internal combustion at the Capulet's ancient feast. It grew to an all-consuming conflagration in the course of time and ultimately consumed both in a dull, short muffled explosion. The spreading smoke, gathering and rising and floating like a calm downward stream, branched off into two little wisps of auburn streaks. They hover over the two dull-hued monuments symbolizing the vanity of the expectation of each lover for the perfect union in life as in death. As Prince Escalus laments, in the thick mistiness of the early dawn: A glooming peace this morning, with it brings;

The sun, for sorrow, will not show his head (V: 3. 305-306). We seem to hear with the souging of the morning breezes in the funereal churchyard-trees, Romeo and Juliet whisper to each other their unrealized and unrealizable craving for sex. "O! wilt thou leave me so unsatisfied? / What satisfaction canst thou have tonight?" (11:2. 125-126).

Romeo and Juliet battle with time to make their love last forever. In the end, the only way they seem to defeat time is through death that makes them immortal through art (Lucking, 2001). Thus, love between Romeo and Juliet rises from 'eros' (sexual love) to 'agape' (divine love) and lingers in the minds of the audience for long.

Conclusion

In *Romeo and Juliet*, the central characters are highly maladjusted personalities in a love-at-first-sight relationship. Masculinity, with its crucial faculty of reason, is found in Juliet, while it is almost totally absent in Romeo, signifying the relative reversal of essential gender qualities in them. But a mixture of their personality traits produces a surplus of emotion in each, leading them both to suicide. The predominant element in their love is sexual desire, which is known as 'Eros.' Lust has triumphed over love in their relationship. The concept of death becomes operative in them because Romeo and Juliet enter into the reproductive relationship through the "rude will" and not "grace" on the very eve of their decreed permanent separation. Even the Friar, representing conscience, suffers a degeneration of his character in their company. His spiritual vision gets clouded, leaving him wondering why "all things change to the contrary." He misapplies the "virtue" of the marital relationship as instrumental good for their families, and not as a means to the spiritual development of each. His guidance, however, is sound. But to accept it, it is necessary to have a fully formed character, which neither of them possesses. They cling to the emotion of love rather than to each other. It leads to tragic consequences for both of them.

It is neither woman nor man who is responsible for the tragedy; it is the peculiar relationship between the parties that ultimately generates the destructive forces. The same men and women, bound together in relationships with people differently constituted, would stand a higher possibility of living happily in a stable marriage.

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