

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.53032/tcl.2017.2.1.11>

Benevolence and Fondness in Shakespeare's Poetry and Plays

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Abstract

This paper attempts to bring forth the humanitarianism and affection in the different plays and poetry of Shakespeare. His plays reveal love, mankind, humanity and individualism with great impact. Shakespeare was a fantabulous humanist showing important perceptions which focus on moral, political, social and philosophical questions of universal significance, endeavoring his best to transform the world to make it a better place to live. William Shakespeare is a versatile and seasoned author in terms of psychology, emotions and ideology and above all ethical values. Honesty, Truth, Forgiveness, Love, Sincerity, Mercy, and Discipline can easily be learned from the literary works of the Shakespeare. He exposed masculine and feminine features in a unique way, Shakespeare displayed true realism in his drama and took it to pinnacle with profundity. His dramas have the strong touch of humanity with the assistance of several sound memorable characters. Even in the present world his several characters of different plays can be remembered for their specific aspirations, their strengths and shortcomings. Today in the newfangled and modern world people prefer to love only an object and an object of love is for physical pleasure. A modern man is fully ignorant from the real feelings of Human love, human relationship and humanity. Human love is degrading with each passing day today due to over modernization, globalization and the current virtual world has crossed the all boundaries. Modern man is advance and making machines and becoming himself not more than a robot or a machine. In the present world Human Being are found without love, sentiments and moral values. The same values which are mandatory to lead a happy and peaceful life.

Keywords: Humanitarianism, Fondness, Realism, Strengths

This paper attempts to bring forth the humanitarianism and affection in the different plays of the Shakespeare. His plays reveal love, mankind, humanity and individualism with great impact. Shakespeare was a fantabulous humanist showing important perceptions which focus on moral, political, social and philosophical questions of universal significance, endeavoring his best to transform the world to make it a better place.

He was a true humanitarian with real human experiences bringing humanist approach. Shakespeare's plays and poetry reveal his approach to the subject matter seems to have been influenced by classical and Renaissance notions about the significance of reason and of mankind and humanity. Shakespeare had intense inclination towards ghosts and devils and witches. But ultimately, religion is a major power or driving force in their lives; moral choices are made for human – rather than religious – reasons and characters such as Macbeth implant the human and social consequences of evil actions in the loss of the fondness and respect of their fellows, and other severe punishments along with repentance. William Shakespeare's plays and poetry allow us to analyze the different social values and characteristics. Shakespeare treated males with certain "feminine" and females with certain "masculine" characteristics. Shakespeare was a master of human psychology and human values. He has drawn his characters with peculiar characteristics and drawbacks. Humanity is like a web that scattered and spread in all kinds of human relations. So, man should have shared all kinds of ethical values with all kinds of relations but it should be cordial and congenial to keep harmony in the globe. Shakespeare love to create, to establish human bondage with unifying force of 'love'. Sometimes the precious value of love brings together the force of hate which causes problems in human relations and segregation of families. Anger in *Lear* sorrow of *Cordelia*, hatred in *Iago*, Jealous of *Leantes*, cunningness of *Cassius*, villain attitude in *Claudius* and love of Romeo and Juliet, are ultimately transformed. He also explained the quality of mercy in an amazing manner an below mentioned words:

The quality of mercy is not strain'd.

It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven

(*"The Merchant of Venice"*, Act 4, Scene 1)

Today in the modern family system joint-family is out of fashion and there is only nuclear family in order of the place. There is a small amount of harmony, love and peace in such corporate families today because true love and human values are missing. There is only desire for materialism and money in the name of modern progress. The situation is extremely crucial in the first unit of society as when there is no love and respect for every member of the family, the entire family structure will be destroyed. Number of rapidly increasing cases of divorces and the extreme sense of individuality and selfishness is the root cause for the disorder of family and personal relations. The modern man doesn't understand the value of 'love' and 'kindness'. Today the word 'love' is immensely used in words but not indeed. It has lost its power to build and sustain the human bond in the world today. Honesty, Truth, Forgiveness, Love, Sincerity, Mercy, and Discipline can easily be learned from the literary works either plays or poetry of the Shakespeare.

Maintaining a good relationship requires diligence, love, respect, skill and patience. Relationships can be revived with true love, trust and faith or it withered in no time. There is

a crucial need to organize discussions and debates exploring the problems faced by today's world. It is need of the hour to develop values to keep the normal pace of the world in a balanced manner. In the present situation, everyone must prefer human relationships and human bonding which is rapidly destroyed by the modernity. To find the right remedy to make up and restore the same *tranquility* in life. People of today should find true meaning of love and humanity in William Shakespeare's literary works. Shakespeare presented different, complex and contrary views of marriage through different characters in the play. One of the aspects of marriage in Shakespeare or the Elizabethan age which one must not forget is the emphasis on female chastity.

Thus, marriage equated to chastity and predicted as the opposite of lust, the features demanded a good wife. Chastity therefore became the *Sine Qua non* in a wife, beside all other qualities. This is why Prospero has to save the chastity of his daughter, even though he arranges privacy for *Miranda* and *Ferdinand* to make love. There is evidence how zealous is he about the protection of his daughters' virginity:-

“Then, as my gift and thine own acquisition
Worthily purchased. Take my daughter but
If thou dost break in virgin-knot before
All sanctimonious ceremonies may
with fully and holy rite be ministered
No sweet aspersion shall the heavens let fall
To make this contract grow, but barren hate,
sour eyed disdain and discord shall bestrew
The union of your bed with weds so loathing
that shall hate it both...”

(“Tempest” - Act IV)

It apparently shows that Shakespeare also preferred marriage to be preceded by mutual liking between the opposite genders. Importance of spiritual and platonic love is highlighted where there is no role of physical desires and that is the base of pure and long-lasting relationships which are very far from immorality.

Apart teaching human values through his plays, the one of the major theme of his plays and poetry is fondness. Today in the newfangled and modern world people prefer to love only an object and an object of love is for physical pleasure. A modern man is fully ignorant from the real feelings of Human love, human relationship and humanity. Human love is degrading with each passing day today due to over modernization, globalization and the virtual world has crossed the all boundaries. Modern man is advanced and making machines and becoming himself not more than a robot or a machine. In the present world Human Being are found without love, sentiments and moral values. The same values which are mandatory to lead a happy and peaceful life.

As the very term 'love' is an abstract one it is quite difficult to define and not to set any specific meaning to it. It is a multi-dimensional emotion or passion. It generally depends on the mindset that endeavors to love and being loved. There is truly an emotional fight till the end of life. It is not merely physical attraction of each other. It is an emotional bond between two persons. It does not occur as a miracle. It usually starts with likeness that leads to mutual love and understanding. It is generally based on comprehending the limitations of each other and that in turn naturally respecting each other's feelings. Thus it creates a kind of emotional attachment and the concern for each other. The realization of proper understanding and care between them is the channel where love may blossom. It is an eternal bliss of man which man strives to get it in many ways in all walks of life. Loving an object or a person is an attachment but if it goes beyond its limits, it becomes greed and lust. He wrote:

The course of true love never did run smooth'

(*"A Midsummer Night's Dream"*, Act 1, Scene 2)

His power of expression is awesome or can be said magical. He was a true literary artist with extraordinary skills. How beautifully he remarked:

'If music be the food of love, play on'

(*"Twelfth Night"*, Act 1, Scene 1)

He associated music with the intense feeling of love in everlasting words. He knew that the hunger and thirst don't reach to love-stricken so he composed those lovely lines that only melodious music could be the food for such people. "Love" is an abstract term and several great people have attempted to define it in their own way. It is universally known that being in love with someone and being loved creates life worth living. He articulated love in various ways as it comes in life in secret manner:

'Love goes by haps; Some Cupid kills with arrows, some with traps'

(*"Much Ado About Nothing"*, Act 3, Scene 2)

God of love Cupid is also described in an amazing manner. Shakespeare is also known for composing sonnets. In his *Sonnet No. 116* he highlights true-love. He tells "Love Is Not Love Which Alters"-

Let me not to the marriage of true-minds,
Admit impediments, Love is not love,
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove:-
O' No! It is an ever-fixed mark
That looks on tempest, and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.

Not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come:
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom
If this be error, and upon me proved
I never write and no man ever love'd.

(Sonnet No: 116)

William Shakespeare is a versatile and seasoned author in terms of psychology, emotions and ideology and above all ethical values. He exposed masculine and feminine features in a unique way, Shakespeare displayed true realism in his drama and took it to pinnacle with profundity. His dramas have the strong touch of humanity with the assistance of several sound memorable characters. Even in the present world his many characters of different plays can be remembered for their specific aspirations, their strengths and shortcomings. Love is timeless but today only physical and erotic-love is in trend and platonic love has been vanished. It is a high negative sign of downfall of human relations. Sensual Pleasures are dominant and grabbed the place of true love. It is artificial, mortal and sometimes immoral too. Faithless love is a sign of failure and futile of life. He presented love innumerable ways:

‘There's beggary in love that can be reckoned’

(*“Antony & Cleopatra”* – Act 1, Scene 1)

‘Speak low if you speak love’

(*“Much Ado About Nothing”* – Act 2, Scene 1)

There is a multi-faced pure love in the Shakespeare's ideology of love. It is of different kinds like: Political Love, Platonic Love, Spiritual Love, Ideal Love, Angel Love, Adolescent Love, Mature Love, Physical Love etc. In the play ‘*Hamlet*’ one can see the mild love of Ophelia but there is no proper match between prince Hamlet and Ophelia. There is a gap between rational and innocent love in Hamlet and Ophelia. It is not matured love with complicated path. Love between Ophelia and Hamlet is very unique and it is highly philosophical and intellectual. It is quite hidden and potential one. Hamlet expressed his true feelings of love for Ophelia after her death as; -

“I loved Ophelia: Forty thousand brothers
Could not, with all their quantity of love
Make up by sum. What thou do for her?”

(*“Hamlet”* - Act-5, Scene-I, 95)

The love of Cordelia is an Angel's love. She expressed her angelic love when her sisters Goneril and Regan expressed their love in words in order to make their father to get kingdom but Cordelia alone articulated true emotions of love. Political love is found in Macbeth. There was love between husband and wife to get power. They loved each other for

political purposes. The aspiration for power leads to Macbeth's downfall. Due to political Love, Macbeth suffered a lot and met tragic climax. Eventually there is a marvelous transformation from worldly love to spiritual love in Macbeth. It is what Shakespeare has done so beautifully and which is essential and remarkable as well. There is an adolescent or teen age love between *Romeo and Juliet*. It is not matured love like that of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth but later it becomes spiritual. It has become a land mark in the whole world. There is a sacrifice in everything for love which is marked by *Romeo and Juliet* of Shakespeare.

Human personality is made with the prime passion of love. The spring of love grow from man to humanity. Human relations developed in a family. In Shakespeare's vision of life nothing is contrary but each and everything is associated relatively with bond of love. The love between *Romeo and Juliet* in the two feudal families causes quarrel between them. The rivalry in the families ends with the same love bringing about their tragic death. When there is no space for love, jealousy and hatred grab its place and the same feelings are overturned and transformed into love. Hence 'Love' is the most powerful emotion and it controls all human passions and rules them. It reminds us the words of Geoffrey Chaucer, "*Amor Vincit Ominia*" to justify the power of love which means "*Love conquers all*".

Shakespeare is admired by all because he presented all sorts of human nature and gave message to be a good person. 'Live and let Live' is a slogan approved by the words of Shakespeare to establish human bond in human relationships. Shakespeare is an immortal persona and his words are universal because he knows about everyman's aspirations and psychology. *Shakespeare's treatment of 'Love'* - It has been an eternal theme for the poets and writers all over the world. Love to Shakespeare was a sacred emotion. He displayed it in various aspects such as the sentimental love of *Orsino* for *Olivia* in *Twelfth Night*, the youthful exuberant love of *Perdita* and *Florizel* in '*The Winter's Tale*', the romantic love of *Viola* and *Rosalind*, in the play *As you Like It* the one side love of *Malvolio*, in the play *Twelfth Night* the genuine love of *Ferdinand* and *Miranda* in the *Tempest*, and so on. But what he excelled the most is the romantic love between a young man and a young woman. According to Shakespeare true love is unshakable and immovable like the pole star. In *Venus* and *Adonis* he compares lust with true love. He says,

"Love Comforteth like sunshine after rain
But lust's effect is tempest after sun:
Love's gentle spring doth always fresh remain:
Lust's Winter comes are summer half be done.
Love surfeits not: Lust like a glutton dies.
Love is all truth: Lust full of forged lies."

("Venus and Adonis" No.799-804, Page-1278-Complete works of Shakespeare)

Love can be understood in different ways in different contexts. Love is an abstract feeling which cannot be seen and touch as an object but it is only subjective. It is immensely

powerful and emotionally strong enough. Love for humanity is the most important today when Modern man loves and likes comfortable and luxurious life. His opinions are neither ideal nor valuable because he has lost his natural feelings for natural love. As modern man is running after material success, he in turn running out of pure love towards his fellows and his human relationships of different kind in the society are collapsed. In newfangled world there is only self-love or ego which is popular. In this context, views of Shakespeare are very relevant and soothing. His approach to human love is commendable. He loves mankind and all phases of life of all sections of people. As he likes life the most, he presented those values and feelings which are the most important to fill the loss of human love today.

Benevolence and Fondness are inevitable and indispensable to everyone to bind good human relationships. The bond is created in a small unit of society which is known as Family. In a family there are different sorts of relationship like between spouse, Grand parents, siblings and cousins and aunts and uncles and others. There is consistent need of nurturing moral values along with patience to maintain healthy relationships to live with tranquility and these values can be easily learned through Shakespeare's literary world.

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