

LOVE, FRIENDSHIP, AND MARRIAGES REFLECTED IN DRAMA ROMEO AND JULIET BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Ariyani Puspita Dewi, Yona Fauzia Salsabila, Fadlilah Rahmawati, Ruhul Ainun Husna

Universitas Negeri Malang

ariyani9a.puspita@gmail.com, yonafauzia9@gmail.com,
fadlilahrahmawati10@gmail.com, ruhulainun42@gmail.com

Abstract: *In this research, the writers analyze the culture in the drama Romeo and Juliet and its relevance to modern culture. The writers use a qualitative method in analyzing the drama. The drama tells about two teenagers who set in motion a tragic chain of events that ultimately changes the fate of two families. In this paper, we focus to analyze the strength of love and friendship, arranged marriage, and forced marriage in the drama Romeo and Juliet and the relevance to modern culture. When dealing with dramatic texts, it should be noted that drama is very different from poetry or narrative. It is because drama is usually written to be shown on stage (Lethbridge and Mildorf, 2004). However, a drama script that is generally written for a reading reader can also be changed in presentation mode or other media. By analyzing this drama enables us to develop a better understanding of the drama in which we interest. Building knowledge and understanding of the relevance between the culture in drama and modern culture, especially over the past century, enables us to develop a much greater appreciation for current events today.*

Keywords: *arranged married, forced married, love and friendship.*

INTRODUCTION

Literature and society are related to one another. It means that literature is an expression of the author in which the author is a part of society. Literature allows us to step back in time and learn about life on earth from those who walked before us. Learning literature gives us a better understanding of culture and has a greater appreciation of it. We learn from history in the forms of manuscripts and speech itself. History is a gateway to the past and also suggestive of our present and the future (Austin, 2020)

The major literary forms are prose, poetry, and drama. Since literature is part of manuscripts, we also can learn many things from them. In this paper, we analyze the element of drama entitled “Romeo and Juliet” by William Shakespeare which performs on stage. It is a drama script. Performed drama or theatre has some major elements that are script/text, scenario, plan, the process, the product, and the audience. Each element holds an important role in ensuring the success of a drama and we have to pay attention to each element that constructs it. Understanding those elements is very important to have a better appreciation of the works and also help us to grasp the message from the author. In this paper, our scope is focused on the cultural context in the drama “Romeo and Juliet”. We analyze how is the culture of love, friendship, and marriages in drama different from modern culture.

Love is complex, every human being must have felt happy because of love, and must have felt pain because of it. This shows how broad and diverse the definition of love is. Love itself has a profound influence on society. Love can even control one's behavior. In a larger scope, love is able to build history and culture in society. “In Greek antiquity, the word used for love was “Philos.” It was an adjective that was employed to designate a relationship of closeness or belonging to something—a household, a tribe, or a dynasty” (David,2014). For example, love between friends builds friendship. The love between men and women in a serious way builds marriages.

Along with the growth of human and globalization, the perspective on love is shifting as well as the culture. Drama “Romeo and Juliet” were set in the sixteenth century where its culture must be different from today's culture. This paper tries to investigate: how are the culture of love, friendship, and marriages in drama different from modern culture and what is the moral value in drama “Romeo and Juliet” related to love, friendship, and marriages.

This paper inspired by an article entitled “LOVE, HATRED, AND DEATH REFLECTED IN ROMEO AND JULIET MOVIE DIRECTED BY BAZMAN LUHRMANN (1996): A DYNAMIC STRUCTURALIST APPROACH” by Lactea. In this article, Lactea investigates how love, hatred & death are reflected in Romeo and Juliet movies. The second is what kinds of moral value are reflected in Romeo and Juliet movie.

The significance of this paper is that by learning and understanding the history of culture, especially love, friendship, and marriages in the drama “Romeo and Juliet”, we can expand our perspective of love, friendship, and marriages. A broad perspective can make someone wiser in responding to something. Besides that, this paper is also expected to contribute to scientific development especially in Literature study.

DISCUSSION

LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP REFLECTED IN DRAMA ROMEO AND JULIET

The Strength of Romeo and Juliet’s Love

As the most well-known romance play from Shakespeare, “Romeo and Juliet” surely living its name. Romeo loves towards Juliet described as love at the first sight in the story. As we can see from how Romeo describes Juliet when he sees Juliet for the first time.

O, she doth teach the torches to burn bright!

It seems she hangs upon the cheek of night

As a rich jewel in an Ethiop’s ear—

Beauty too rich for use, for earth too dear!

So shows a snowy dove trooping with crows,

As yonder lady o’er her fellows shows.

The measure done, I’ll watch her place of stand,

And touching hers, make blessed my rude hand.

Did my heart love till now? Forswear it, sight!

For I ne’er saw true beauty till this night. (Hundsness, 2004: 1.5.56)

We could see that Romeo really captivated by Juliet’s beauty. He even approaches and flirts with her after knowing that Juliet is from Capulet.

Romeo and Juliet symbolize the burning love that happen between two young human and how innocent they are. Surprisingly, Romeo and Juliet romance did not only happen in the 16th century in Verona but also in modern days. Especially the part where both of them ended dying because of things or other people who stand against their love. In fact, “40 percent experienced clinical depression following a romantic relationship dissolution; another 12 percent reported moderate to severe depression” (Silliman, 2017). The heart broken because of a relationship is not only leading to depression but also other symptoms, for example self-harm.

The Strength of Friendship between Men

When we talk about man friendship in “Rome and Juliet”, we automatically refer to the relationship between Romeo and his best friend, Mercutio. Romeo and Mercutio are besties, with Mercutio is being slightly older than Romeo, because of their similar background. Mercutio does not only worry about Romeo’s love problem, but also Romeo in general,

"Where the devil should this Romeo be?

Came he not home to-night?" (Hundsness, 2004: 2.4.1)

During the Romeo depressed time after he got rejected by Rosalina, Mercutio offers an advice to enjoy the party and find a new woman. Later on, in the scene, not only in Mercutio's scene, but also in the themes of friendship, loyalty, and love are expressed. Through the scene where Romeo is describing the physical beauty and his unrequited love for Rosaline to Benvolio, Romeo's descriptions are dreamy yet depressing. In Act 1, Scene 2 we can see Benvolio, Romeo's cousin, advises about women to the depressed Romeo who just got rejected by Rosalina.

Benvolio tells Romeo to forget about Rosalina and look for another woman to fall in love with. Especially there are many beauties in Verona.

"I'll go along, no such sight to be shown,

But to rejoice in splendor of mine own." (Hundsness, 2004: 1.2.107)

Romeo, who seems to be a rock-headed about his love towards Rosalina, at the end gives up his feeling and listens to his cousin's words. A friendship between two males in Shakespeare seems to be so close and ambiguous. Especially between Mercutio and Romeo, where Mercutio is trying to explain that Romeo doesn't need such a relationship, knowing what kind of man Romeo is while facing a heartbreak.

If love be blind, love cannot hit the mark.

Now will he sit under a medlar tree

And wish his mistress were that kind of fruit

As maids call medlars when they laugh alone (Hundsness, 2004: 2.1.36)

The man friendship goes through some serious transformations during the 20th century. The situation changes 180 degrees from the freedom of showing affection between men to the fear of being judged by the public so they avoid bonding or any sort of physical affections. Fear of being called gay drove much of the transformation. (McKey&McKey, 2009). However, regardless of the period, no group of male friends is fully happy when one of their friends decides to spend more time with someone else and abandon the group. Usually, they won't let him go without some sort of confrontation with them and this is what Mercutio attempts to do.

Marriages Culture Reflected In Drama "Romeo And Juliet"

In the drama "Romeo and Juliet" we can find the culture of arranged marriage, forced marriage, and eloping. According to (USCIS, 2018), "Forced marriage is a marriage that takes place without the will or consent of one or both people in that marriage." Based on that definition, the forced marriage in the drama script "Romeo and Juliet" occurs when a family member who is Juliet's father forces Juliet to marry without Juliet's consent.

"My will to her consent is but a part;

As she agree, within her scope of choice" (Hundsness, 2004: 1.2.20)

Capulet accepts Paris to marry his daughter without asking her daughter, Juliet. This is a common culture in the 16th-century era. Parents are arranging their children's marriage for many reasons. They feel they know better what is best for their children, regardless of whether their children will like their choice or not. Frequently, the children cannot refuse and they must obey to the orders of their parents. When the child can marry the rich man, the child will be happy because he will get a comfortable life so that the child can be happy. The parents do not know how their child feels to the man. It could be that the child does not like the man even though he is a rich man. Happiness cannot be measured from the money that can be seen but also the feelings. People in the modern era think that by marrying off their children to the rich will improve the family's economy and their children will live happily because they are well off. In a wealthy family, parents arrange their children's marriage to transfer property and strengthen the alliances of the family.

network (Layson and Philips, 2017). Another reason, parents worry that their child will choose the wrong partner because children are considered too young to make their own decisions while experienced elders are likely to do better (Fish,2020). These reasons are just some example of why arranged marriage happen but in reality, there probably more reasons for that.

In act 1 scene 2 Capulet walks with Paris, a kinsman to Prince Escalus, at another street of Verona. They discuss Paris's desire to marry Juliet, Capulet's daughter. However Capulet asks Paris to wait for a few more years because Juliet is not yet 14 years old which is too young to get married. According to (Layson and Philips, 2017) "In the early 16th century, most marriages were arranged by parents or relatives, not by two people who are getting married. In the 16th century, the main purpose of marriage, especially among the upper class, was to transfer property and forge alliances between extended family networks, or groups of relatives." In this era in the drama "Romeo and Juliet", marriage may provide a way to combine family possessions that are close to each other or to make a peace treaty. In fact, people use the term family to refer to all the people who live in the same house, under one head, including servants as well as parents, children, and other "blood" relationships not centered on parents and children or what we are used to call the nuclear family.

Capulet is a rich person and likes to hold lavish parties where people who are having fun can enjoy the party. Capulet is not a poor man, where he sets Juliet on Paris not only because of wealth like people in the modern era, but also because the match between Count Paris and Juliet can be seen as socially and politically expedient. Lady Capulet and nurse are the ones who always force Juliet to marry with Paris. The fact Paris is a Count wich obviously means he is quite wealthy. Juliet's family is also very rich, as indicated by the Nurse's words to Romeo in:

"I tell you, he that can lay hold of her
Shall have the chinks." (*Hundsness, 2004: 1.5.125*)

If Juliet wants to marry with Paris, of course this would benefit Lord Capulet politically because Count Paris was a relative of the Prince who ruled Verona. The marriage between Juliet and Paris makes a lot of sense because they are from the same class and are almost the same age. Paris would also have been a good partner socially and financially for Juliet if it weren't for the bitter feud.

In this drama, we know that Romeo and also Juliet are falling in love. Because of that, Juliet refused to be arranged by her parents. Those two crazy kids in love get angry when their relationship is disapproved of for reasons of hostile family background. With unwell prepared and hasty, Romeo and Juliet plan to marry secretly or eloping.

Based on the Cambridge Dictionary, the word "elope" means "to leave home secretly to get married without the permission of your parents". In the drama "Romeo and Juliet", it is told that Romeo and Juliet intend to marry without their parent's permission. With the help of Juliet's nurse, they arrange the marriage at the cell of Friar Laurence.

In this drama, we know that Juliet was forced by their parents to marry someone they choose, Count Paris. Juliet refuses her parent's request because she was in love with Romeo who comes from the Montague family. The relationship is opposed by their family because of Romeo's family, namely the Montague family and Juliet's family, the Capulet family are enemies. Without the blessing of their family, they dare to marry in silence so that they can live together. Not only most marriages are arranged by parents, but they also believe in marriage because love is foolish (Killing,2014). This mindset is part of the culture, which difficult to change even remove.

"Alack, alack, what blood is this, which stains
The stony entrance of this sepulchre?
What mean these masterless and gory swords
To lie discolour'd by this place of peace?" (*Hundsness, 2004: 5.3.144-148*)

This scene tells us Romeo died because he believes Juliet was dead. He doesn't know it was a trick. Romeo, a teenager who is crazy in love, was devastated by the news. mindless and filled with

disappointment, he committed suicide in despair of losing Juliet. After that, Juliet pretends to die awake and she was shocked by what happened. Without thinking and giving up on losing Romeo, Juliet commits suicide. This is how the drama ends this tragic love. It begins from the hostility of two families and the existence of an extreme ideology about arranged marriage in society.

From this drama, we learn that culture in society can influence a person's behavior. Meanwhile, to prevent or avoid culture itself is very difficult because culture grows together with the people. Nowadays, forced marriage is still very much developed, and there are even some countries that adhere to this culture. So, what is the difference between the culture of forced marriage that developed in the drama "Romeo and Juliet" and the culture of forced marriage in modern times? According to Pamela Regan (2020), a professor at California State University in Los Angeles, tells The Knot, that "Today's arranged marriages place much more emphasis on free choice. People are saying, 'I'm willing to let my parents find someone, but if I don't like him, I have the right to say no'". This statement indicates arranged marriage is not a bad culture as long as it still gives the spouse to decide what they want.

Do not be careless in judging something that we think bad for us, because not necessarily other people have the same opinion. Learning from the love story of "Romeo and Juliet", as a child, it is not a mistake to reject parents' decisions but not in an extreme way like Juliet. On the other hand, learning from Romeo and Juliet's parents, it is not a mistake to try to choose the best for their children, but parents must also consider their children's choices. We live in a society with many cultures in it. These cultures may develop and vary over time. It is impossible for us to fully control the culture, but as humans, we can become wiser in accepting every existing culture, and be clever at sorting out what is good and what is not.

CONCLUSION

Culture is a society. This statement means that culture and society are two inseparable elements. Both live side by side and share roles. Culture can build a society, and society can build culture. Since they grow together, it would be better for us as humans to learn from culture.

In the analysis of the culture of love and friendship in the drama "Romeo and Juliet", we learn that in the past, have a bromance or a close friendship relationship between two men can be considered as a thing that someone can be proud of. However, the changes in social behavior from time to time make a lot of changes in the concept of bromance. In modern days, the two-man who seems to be "too close" considered gay from a social point of view and these conditions make men think that their friendship is taboo. In contrast to the bromance concept that changes over time, the concept of love between Romeo and Juliet doesn't seem to change. Suicidal love still happened in the modern world, moreover it getting worse.

In the analysis of the culture of marriages in the drama "Romeo and Juliet", we learn that the arrange married by parents still happened until now. However, the response of arranged married by their children is not completely negative. As long as the child has the freedom to accept the proposal or reject it, They pretty cool with the arranged married.

For the future direction, the writers hope can revise any deficiencies and develop this paper into a better study. We also recommend the broader and deeper analysis for the next study because there are still many aspects can learn from this drama script entitled "Romeo and Juliet".

REFERENCES

- Austin, S. (2020). The Importance of Literature in Modern Society. Retrieved from <https://www.findcourses.co.uk/inspiration/hobby-fun-leisure-articles/the-importance-of-literature-in-modern-society-17411>
- David,R. (2014). Love and Society. Retrieved from <https://opinion.inquirer.net/71517/love-and-society>
- Definition of forced married. (2018). Retrieved from <https://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/forced-marriage#:~:text=Forced%20marriage%20is%20a%20marriage,the%20timing%20of%20the%20marriage>
- Hundsness,D. (2004). Romeo and Juliet. Retrieved from <http://www.hundsness.com/>

- Fish, J.M. (2010). Arranged Marriages. Retrieved from <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/looking-in-the-cultural-mirror/201004/arranged-marriages>
- Killing, J. (2014). Marriage in 16th century. Retrieved from <https://prezi.com/crwhxfp5qw--/marriage-in-the-16th-century/>
- Layson and Philips. (2017). Marriage and Family in Shakespeare's England. Retrieved from <https://dcc.newberry.org/collections/marriage-family-shakespeare-england>
- Noah, S. (2017). Teenage heartbreak doesn't just hurt, it can kill. Retrieved from <https://theconversation.com/teenage-heartbreak-doesnt-just-hurt-it-can-kill-81878>
- Regan, Pamela. (2020). What Modern Arranged Marriages Really Look Like. Retrieved from <https://www.brides.com/story/modern-arranged-marriages#:~:text=%22Today's%20arranged%20marriages%20place%20much,the%20right%20to%20say%20no>