

# Powerful devices in the othello

[Life](#), [Love](#)



The role of love, jealousy, and betrayal in Othello serves to show the stages of a character's development. These stages show who they were and who they have become by the end. Othello, is a play written by William Shakespeare and takes place in Venice, Italy. It is about a general named Othello who experiences troubles in his life and marriage due to his insecurities. Initially, he was confident but loses that confidence as falls victim to his insecurities and the schemes of his enemies. He reacts irrationally which causes him to lose everything he cherished. The portrayal of love, jealousy, and betrayal in Othello serves to show Othello's transformation as a character; each of these emotional stages is a representation of how Othello changes and how it affects who he is.

The theme of love shown in the play serves to show who Othello is superficially. When Othello and Iago are conversing, he refuses to doubt his relationship with Desdemona without sufficient evidence. "For she had eyes, and chose me. No, Iago; I'll see before I doubt; when I doubt, prove; And, on the proof, there is no more but this, Away at once with love or jealousy" (680). The Othello that is being portrayed to us in this scene is a man who is confident with who he is. He has no doubts about his relationship nor does he feel inferior. The doubt that Iago attempts to place upon Othello is unable to faze him due to him being in love. His wife, Desdemona disobeyed her father in order to be with him. In addition, the authority figures approved their union when challenged. The concept of love shown in Othello is designed to show how at the moment, the main character, Othello is strong. He is rational, powerful, and a strong leader. Moreover, the role of love is necessary to Othello's character development. Throughout the play, we see

his personality evolve into something incomprehensible. The role of love allows us to see how far from his peak he has descended which eventually shows the audience his true colors.

The portrayal of love in the play has the ability to cause conflict among characters. Iago discusses a possible infidelity that may have occurred between his wife and Othello and decides to get even with him. “ For that I do suspect the lusty Moor Hath leap’d into my seat; the thought whereof Doth, like a poisonous mineral, gnaw my inwards; 119 And nothing can or shall content my soul Till I am even’d with him, wife for wife...” (663). Love is a double-edged sword, it consists of love and hate and can be manifested into either of the two. Othello and Iago’s love represent the best of Othello and the worst of Iago. The possibility of Othello having an affair with his wife manifested Iago’s love into hate. The role of love shows Iago’s disdain towards Othello and the only solution he perceives as just is by ruining his relationship with Desdemona. He attempts to sabotage their marriage by implanting false accusations in Othello’s head until it becomes too much for him to bear, we see his love evolve into something ugly. Love in Othello serves as a force to drive characters against each other.

The main purpose of depicting jealousy among characters was to portray Othello’s downfall. Iago expresses his hate towards Othello because he was not given the promotion he believed he deserved. Additionally, there was a possible infidelity that might have happened between him and his wife. “ I hate the Moor, And it is thought abroad, that ’twixt my sheets He has done my office: I know not if’t be true; But I, for mere suspicion in that kind, Will

do as if for surety” (655). As soon as Iago felt jealous, he became righteously angry. He was under the impression that he deserved the military rank. In addition, he believed that his leader deserved some form of punishment and he continues to pursue that feeling. The jealousy that Iago was feeling consumed him and he was not going to stop until Othello pays the ultimate price. He needed to see Othello suffer for making the wrong decision. Furthermore, he contributes to his downfall by feeding his mind these poisonous ideas in the hope that it will consume him and make him insecure about himself. The role of Iago’s jealousy is successful to an extent as Othello’s walls fell down until he was dictated by his own jealousy.

The jealousy that resides in Iago caused him to act against Othello which played a significant role in breaking down Othello’s character. Othello and Iago are conversing about whether Desdemona is faithful or not and vows to not lose to jealousy. “Tis not to make me jealous to say my wife is fair, feeds well, loves company, is free of speech, sings, plays and dances well; where virtue is, these are more virtuous: nor from mine own weak merits will I draw the smallest fear or doubt of her revolt; for she had eyes, and chose me” (680). Othello proclaims that he will not lose to jealousy however, he already did as the thought of Desdemona being unfaithful consumes his mind. We start to see his insecurities take over as his mind is being consumed by his jealousy. The insecurities that plague Othello are his ethnic background, standing in society, and his marriage. His ethnic back and standing in society plague him because people view him as inferior due to the color of his skin. He is residing in a community where he is the only foreigner and people frown upon him because he looks physically different compared to them. In

addition, there are stereotypes that are associated with people who share Othello's skin color. Moreover, this insecurity combined with his marriage brings Othello further down. There is a possibility that his wife is cheating on him with another man and he would be viewed as a cuckold if word were to get out. Society would not only see Othello as inferior but weak as well. People will not respect him and disregard his position in the military. The purpose of Othello's jealousy is to show how far he has fallen.

The intention behind showing betrayal in the play is to showcase the final stage of Othello's character growth. When Othello confronts his wife about her untrue affair, she becomes deeply upset and he accuses her of having fake tears. " O devil, devil! If that the earth could teem with woman's tears, Each drop she falls would prove a crocodile. Out of my sight!" (701). Othello is at the final stage of his growth, he has been consumed by his insecurities to the point where he is lashing out on his wife. When she is brought to tears, her husband accuses them of being fake. He is delusional to the point where no matter what she says he will not believe her. In his mind, she slept with another man and views him as inferior which drives him over the edge. As his insanity consumes him, the only solution he sees to his problem is murder. He kills Desdemona for the acts she was believed to have committed. " Speak of me as I am; nothing extenuate, nor set down aught in malice: then must you speak of one that loved not wisely but too well; Of one not easily jealous, but being wrought perplex'd in the extreme" (725). It was only until after Desdemona's death was he able to see the truth.

Additionally, he wants to be remembered by whom he was and not by who he has become. He realizes the mistakes he has committed and how he was

deceived and feels remorse for accusing his wife of cheating and murdering her. The role of betrayal in the play allows us to see what the character has manifested into in the end.

The roles of love, jealousy, and betrayal are significant to the story as well as to Othello's character development. The roles showed Othello at his peak and at his lowest as we see him become a powerful man and devolving into a weak man who fell victim to his insecurities. The theme of love was to showcase Othello at his best while letting us know that it has the ability to bring malice, the theme of jealousy was to portray how both Othello and Iago's jealousy contributed to Othello's downfall, and the theme of betrayal was to depict who Othello became in the end. Love, jealousy, and betrayal are powerful devices in the play that conveyed the evolution of Othello throughout the story.