

# Tartuffe's religious hypocrisy

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Religious Hypocrisy in Moliere's "Tartuffe" Moliere's "Tartuffe" is a famous satire that amusingly criticizes the hypocrite religiosity in the late 17th century. The author himself says that his aim is to "distinguish clearly the character of the hypocrite from that of the truly devout man" (Moliere 2). Apparently, the protagonist of the play, Tartuffe is a devout religious character. But the play's underlying message is that in reality Tartuffe is a hypocrite in religious garment. Indeed Moliere's primary target is to satirize the hypocrisy of the 17th century religious system, with humor and wit. Tartuffe's hypocrisy is most satirically revealed in the following lines:

Your husband? Why concern about that rube? / He drinks in every story like a boob! / If he caught us, en flagrante, that dull lout, / Hed offer up to God a joyful shout! / And even when he realized, that clown, / Hed chastise you, be careful of your gown! (Act IV Scene V)

These lines as well as the scene exhumed Tartuffe's dirty personality before his most devout believer, Orgon, who hides beneath a table in his bedroom. Indeed such exposure of Tartuffe's deceitfulness and deceitfulness in front of his most subservient aficionado most notably indicates the witty revelation of the hypocrisy of Moliere's contemporary religious system.

Even in this scene, Orgon has been severely criticized for his blind religiosity, while evoking the audience's laughter. In the play, while Orgon symbolizes the death of common sense and blind faith, his wife, Cleante symbolizes wit. Orgon has been fooled by Tartuffe throughout the whole play. Also he remains befooled till this episode. Here Moliere draws the audience's attention to the fact that Tartuffe in religious clothe is the real culprit who continually uses religion for satisfying his carnal hunger. Such lust of Tartuffe in religious parody is obvious in the following speech of <https://assignbuster.com/tartuffes-religious-hypocrisy/>

Oregon: " Without worshipping in you both God and nature, / And sensing in my soul an ardent love / For this, the most beautiful portrait by God above.... But I finally learned, oh beauty most lovable, / That my ardor for you could never be culpable" (Act III Scene I) Oregon carefully conceals his lust in his solemn religious speeches. Quite successfully he parodies the religious authority of Moliere's contemporary society.

#### Works Cited

Dustin H. Griffin, *Satire: A Critical Reintroduction*. Univ. Press of Kentucky, 1994

Moliere, *Tartuffe*. Translated by Timothy Mooney, available at