

Othello theme analysis

Business



The Theme of Love Othello loves Desdemona as an extension of himself.

His marriage is sustained by an idealized vision of Desdemona serving as the object of his exalted romantic passion. When he destroys Desdemona, Othello destroys himself. The act is a prelude to his actual suicide. Iago's mode of temptation, then, is to persuade Othello to regard himself with the eyes of Venice. He is made to accept the view that he is, himself, alien and that any woman who loves him does so perversely. In Othello's tainted state of mind, Desdemona's sexuality becomes an unbearable threat to him.

Her warmth and devotion become a "proof" of disloyalty. Othello's most tortured speech reveal that he equates the seemingly betraying woman he has loved with his own mother. She gave Othello's father a handkerchief and threatened him with loss of her love if he should lose it. Othello has briefly learned and then forgotten the precious art of harmonizing erotic passion and spiritual love. As these two great aims of love are driven apart in him, he comes to loathe and fear the secularity that puts him so much in mind of his physical frailty and dependence on woman.

The horror and pity of Othello rests above all in the spectacle of a love that was once so whole and noble made filthy by self-hatred. As a romantic lover, Othello has been in quest of ideal beauty and ideal love. These he finds embodied in the figure of Desdemona. Desdemona is not only a symbol of love but the cause of love in others. In her august presence, Othello realizes the Supreme experience of love.

The symbol of love is destroyed by Othello, the lover. However, the experience of love continues. That is why Othello, even after killing

Desdemona, is in a position to be in full “ possession of this heavenly sight” of his dead beloved. The Theme of Jealousy Othello is a study in sexual jealousy. The audience has to look into Iago himself for the origin of this jealousy.

As the embodiment and genius of sexual jealousy, Iago suffers with ironic appropriateness from the evil he preaches and without external cause. Emilia understands that such jealousy is not a natural affliction but a self-induced disease of the mind. She tells Desdemona, “ Jealous persons are not ever jealous for the cause, but jealous for they are jealous. It is a monster begot upon itself, born on itself”. Iago’s own testimonial bears this out, for his jealousy is at one wholly irrational and agonizingly self destructive. “ I do suspect the lusty Moor/ Hath leaped into my seat, the thought whereof/ Doth like a poisonous mineral, gnaw my inwards.

In the night of this nightmare, the audience can see that even Iago’s seemingly plausible resentment of Cassio’s promotion is jealousy. The “ daily beauty” in Cassio’s life makes Iago feel “ ugly” by comparison. It engenders in Iago a profound sense of lack of worth, from which he can temporarily find relief only by reducing Othello and others to his own miserable condition. He is adept at provoking self-hatred and jealousy in others because he suffers from them himself.