

An Analysis of *Romeo and Juliet* (2)

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PART II

From the analysis made in Part I, it is assumed that the leitmotif of the drama *Romeo and Juliet* is a tragic love of the young couple, Romeo and Juliet.

They are destined to death because of their fate that they are born in the two families who have long hated each other. Their love is moved forward to 'death', by their 'fate' originated in their parents' 'strife'; these are the three motifs discussed in Part I. This kind of love is of course tragic, but Shakespeare makes their love far more tragic than its source, Brooke's story. What is that makes their love so tragic? How does Shakespeare dramatize it? Analyzing how he uses some images and imagery to dramatize and express their love will help to answer these questions.

(1) 'Holy' image (Religious imagery)

The holy image is predominant when they first encounter and exchange words. Romeo compares himself to a 'pilgrim' ('holy palmer'). The words underlined express something related to religious image which gives us an impression that Romeo and Juliet form their own world of love separated from the reality, the noisy feast. Their world is full of 'holy' image or religious imagery.

Rom. [To Juliet] If I profane with my unworhiest hand

This holy shrine, the gentle fine is this :

My lips, two blushing pilgrims, ready stand

To smooth that rough touch with a tender kiss

Jul. Good pilgrim, you do wrong your hand too much,

Which mannerly devotion shows in this ;

For saints have hands that pilgrims' hands do touch,

And palm to palm is holy palmers' kiss.

Rom. Have not saints lips, and holy palmers too ?

Jul. Ay, pilgrim, lips that they must use in pray'r

Rom. O, then, dear saint, let lips do what hands do!

They pray ; grant thou, lest faith turn to despair.

Jul. Saints do not move, though grant for prayers' sake

Rom. Then move not while my prayer's effect I take.

From my lips by thine my sin is purg'd.

Jul. Then have my lips the sin that they have took.

Rom. Sin from my lips? O trespass sweetly urg'd. (Act I , v , 95~107)

The word 'purg'd' reminds us of Romeo's statement about love, "Love is a smoke rais'd with the fume of sighs ; / Being purg'd, a fire sparkling in lover's eyes ; (Act I , i , 188~9). True love should be purified, holy. Here already appears the 'holy' image of love. It should be noticed that the image also strongly connected to the 'bright' image of love. And the word 'sparkling' impresses us the brevity of the brightness. John Vyvyan takes their words first addressed to each other even as allegory ;⁽⁶⁾

This is a strange first conversation for a boy and a girl. Certainly, it is not Shakespeare's aim to mirror nature here. Do romance and poetry explain it fully? I hardly think so. The religious imagery is too consistent, too sustained. It suggests allegory.

In Brooke's story, there is no specific description about what they address each other. It is clear that Shakespeare creates these words, even though in some way he relies on the traditional, stereotyped way of description of love. Through this 'holy' image, he seems to convey there is something divine in their love. Compared with the bawdy, secular type of love which Mercutio and Nurse think about, their love is celestial. This reminds us of the words uttered by Romeo when he first meets Juliet, "Beauty too rich for

use, for earth too dear!" (Act I, v, 45). He means that she is too beautiful to stay here on earth. She should be in heaven. Even Juliet's father, Capulet in earlier scene, introduces Juliet to Paris as one of the "Earth-treading stars that make dark heaven light" (Act I, ii, 25) Their conversation here is in form a complete sonnet. They duet a sonnet. It is not accidental. It is used very effectively. By using poetry, it gives an impression that apart from their environment, the real world, they build their own love-world. The people around them are enjoying the banquet, laughing and drinking. While that is called a prosaic world, Romeo and Juliet's love-world is a poetic one full of heavenly beauty. The sonnet also convinces us that their love at first sight is very special.

The 'holy' image appears in other scenes. At the 'Balcony' scene, to Romeo, Juliet is a "bright angel" (here 'holy' image and 'bright' image tie together) and "a winged messenger of heaven". (Act II, ii, 26, 28) Juliet's eyes are compared to the "fairest stars in all the heaven". (Act II, ii, 15) Romeo asks Juliet, "Call me but love, and I'll be new baptiz'd." (Act II, ii, 50). For him the night is, "O blessed, blessed night!" (Act II, ii, 139). In the next scene he asks Friar Lawrence with his "holy physic" (Act II, iii, 52) to "combine/By holy marriage." (Act II, iii, 60~61). At their marriage the Friar says "So smile the heavens upon this holy act." (Act II, vi, 1) From the first encounter to their marriage holiness is consistent. The more beautiful and perfect their love is, the more deeply sorrow we feel when they die a tragic death. Their love should not be ordinary. It should be unearthly, holy. Their love is related with 'holy' image closely tied together with 'bright' image.

(2) 'Light-Dark' imagery

① 'Light' image

In the Introduction of the Cambridge Shakespeare the light image is stated as follows;⁽⁷⁾

The light image, in its associations with fire and its opposite, darkness, is further extended by the frequent references to sun, moon, stars, day,

night, heaven and lightning, a running series of iterative images which emphasises both the intensity and glory of love and its terrible brevity.

And Cedric Watts says,⁽⁸⁾

Related imagery of light amid darkness often conveys the theme of the radiant brevity of young love: Much of this 'light' imagery is basically conventional, familiar stuff for sonneteers and romance-writers, and partly derivative (of course) from Brooke ; but repeatedly in the play it gains new eloquence and immediacy ;

When Romeo first meets Juliet, he describes her using heavenly image and bright image as well.

Rom. 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 (Act I , iv, 42~46)

To Romeo's eyes, Juliet is 'the torches burning bright in the night darkness and the brilliantly sparkling 'jewel', probably hanging from a black woman's ear. She is a 'snowy dove' and the other girls around her are black 'crows'. She is the brightest spot in the darkness and likewise their love is spotlighted in the form of sonnet, which effectively separates them from their surroundings. In the Balcony scene, they vow their love under the moonlight. This 'fire sparkling' kind of love may be strong but it consumes quickly as Friar Lawrence warns, "Wisely and slow ; they stumble that run fast" (Act II , iii, 94) and "Therefore love moderately : long love doth so ; / Too swift arrives as tardy as too slow." (Act II , vi, 14~15). This fragile nature of love is suggested in Juliet's words ;

Jul. Well, do not swear. Although I joy in thee,

I have no joy of this contract to-night :

It is too rash, too unadvis'd , too sudden ;

Too like the lightning, which doth cease to be
Ere one can say, 'It lightens'. (Act II, ii, 116~120)

The word 'lightning' foreshadows the brevity of their love. It comes so suddenly, flashes in an instant and then disappears. At the last scene where Romeo comes to the tomb to see Juliet and die beside her, he says ;

Rom. How oft when men are at the point of death
Have they been merry! Which their keepers call
A lightning before death. O, how may I
Call this a lightning? O, my love! My wife! (Act V, iii, 89~91)

The 'lightning' echoes Juliet's. From the *Concordance*, we know that Shakespeare does not use the word so often. It appears most often in *Romeo and Juliet*. The image implicit in the word seems to be more significant than in other plays. What is more, as the Introduction of *New Penguin Shakespeare* comments, "It is not only the flash of lightning ; it is also the flash of gunpowder."⁽⁹⁾ Friar Lawrence's "These violent delights have violent ends,/And in their triumph ; like fire and powder," (Act II, iv, 9~10) is echoed by Romeo at the Apothecary, from whom he asks for a poison "that the trunk may be discharg'd of breath/As violently as hasty powder fir'd" (Act V, ii, 63~64). Notice that 'gunpowder' is destructive. The love like a flash of lightning ends up with such a haste and violence of gunpowder.

Romeo and Juliet's love is holy, radiant, but brief. And the radiance increases all the more because of the darkness surrounding it.

② The 'dark' (night) image

Thinking the time scheme of *Romeo and Juliet*, night plays a very important part. On Sunday night they meet for the first time and begin to love each other. At dawn after the Balcony scene, they part with a promise to marry. On Monday night, they share their wedding bed. At dawn, they part again but this time the parting is the last one.

They never meet and talk again hereafter. On Tuesday night, Juliet

drinks the drug which causes a temporary death. The last scene is on Wednesday night and they die in the darkness of the tomb. Notice that it is at night that they meet and cherish their love. When we remember his father's word addressing Romeo's strange behavior ;

Mon. And private in his chamber pens himself
Shuts up his windows, locks fair daylight out
And makes himself an artificial night (Act I, i, 136~138)

He makes the 'artificial night' because he loves Rosaline. Night is the time when lovers meet and embrace. Night covers everything as Romeo says, "I have night's cloak to hide me from their (his enemy, the Capulets') eyes and the lovers make their own love-world. 'Night' is as it were a dream for Romeo, who says," Being in night, all is but a dream,/too flattering-sweet to be substantial." (Act II, ii, 140~141) For the lovers who are born enemy, they have to make an artificial world, 'night'. Night is their 'secret' world as Romeo talks about the cords "Which to the high top-gallant of (his) joy,/Must be his convoy in the secret night." (Act II, iv, 184~185) On the wedding night, for Juliet who is waiting for Romeo, night is 'love-performing' 'civil', 'gentle', and 'loving blackbrow'd' night. (Act III, ii, 5, 10, 20) At dawn they have to go back to their reality. And they can't resist their fate in the daytime. At the opening scene of the drama in the morning the two houses fight. On Monday afternoon, Tybalt kills Mercutio and Romeo kills Tybalt. This contrast between 'night' and 'day', 'dream-like' love-world and 'reality' is an important constituent element for the whole drama, *Romeo and Juliet*. The higher frequency of the word 'night' and 'day' proves it.

	Day	night
<i>A Mid summer Night's Dream</i>	20	43
<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	33	63
<i>The two Gentlemen of Verona</i>	9	13

After Romeo kills Tybalt, 'night' is not their love-world any longer. When Romeo says, "More light and light: more dark and dark our woes." (Act III, ii, 36), the darkness which should "hood" every thing in the real world "with black mantle", changes into "woes". For Juliet who is about to take the drug, 'night' implies death. She says, "or, if I live, is it not very like/ The horrible conceit of death and night" (Act IV, iii, 36~37). The reality that Romeo and Juliet are born enemies and he kills her cousin hinders them from building up a dream-like love-world. Romeo's dream, "I dreamt my lady came and found me dead--/" and with her kisses "I reviv'd d, and was an emperor." (Act V, i 6, 9) means that in this real world it is impossible for them to get together. Only in heaven it is possible.

(3) Time imagery

Thinking that Shakespeare deliberately compresses the original story of Brooke's into almost four-day-story, it is clear that the time sequence of the play is used effectively to spotlight the tragic brevity of love. Watts aptly states about 'time' in *Romeo and Juliet* ;⁽¹⁰⁾

Indeed, one of Shakespeare's Main thematic preoccupations in *Romeo and Juliet* is clearly the contrasting modes of apprehension of time. Through the reminiscences of the older generation, we are reminded of the customary long time-scale of human life: the long journey from birth to marriage and copulation and thence to old age and death. The lovers, in their impetuous progress, live far more briefly but more intensely, and keynote in their dialogue is their impatience, their eagerness to seize the moment of joy before it fades.

This thematic contrast in temporality was clearly intended by Shakespeare in his adaptation of Brook's narrative, particularly in his intensification of the speed of the central events.

Shakespeare is very conscious about the 'time-related' words. He is more deliberate in mentioning specific time and date than in other plays, which is clearly shown in the following chart ;

	time	Tomorrow	tonight	morn (ing)	Name of Day*
<i>A Midsummer Night's dream</i>	9	2	1	2	0
<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	35	12	15	13	16
<i>The two Gentlemen of Verona</i>	27	3	0	4	0

*Wednesday (3), Thursday (12), Monday (1)

There are a few more 'time-related' words which are used to accentuate the pace and the theme of the play.

① 'Hasty' image

Some word intensifies the pace of the time. When Friar Lawrence consents to Romeo and Juliet's marriage, Romeo looks urged by something unseen. He says, "O, let us hence ; /I stand on sudden haste." (Act II, iii, 93) He insists of going at once, immediately. This is the first place where the word 'haste' appears. After the first addresses of love, Romeo seems to hasten his pace and the whole play seems to quicken its pace. In fact after the Balcony scene the development of the play is speeding up.

There are many episodes and fatal incidents such as the quarrel between Mercutio and Tybalt, their death, Romeo's banishment, Juliet's grief, their parting, advanced marriage with Paris, and so on. The pace of the time clearly changes from slow to fast. The word 'haste' helps to intensify it.

The next chart shows the number of the similar words ;

	Haste (y)	Quick (ly)	Swift
<i>A Mid summer Night's Dream</i>	3	4	2
<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	12	7	4
<i>The two Gentlemen of Verona</i>	3	3	2

It is clear that in *Romeo and Juliet* these words have an important meaning. To Juliet who can't wait for Romeo's answer, Nurse says, "Jea-

what haste? Can you stay a while?" (Act II, v, 29) Juliet is the same as Romeo "on sudden haste". After Romeo kills Tybalt, the word appears more often. Beginning with Nurse's words to hurry Romeo to Juliet, "Hie you, Make haste, for it grows very late." (Act III, iii, 164), --here 'hie' means also 'hasten', there continue Capulet's words to hasten the marriage of Paris and Juliet. He says to Paris, "Do you like this haste?" (Act III, iv, 22), and for the preparation he urges servants, "Come, stir, stir, stir!", and orders, "make haste, make haste". He repeats the word 6 times in the 26 lines of the scene. The more he hastens, the faster the tragic end comes. The word is effective to emphasize the brevity of the love and life of the two lovers.

When Paris informs that Capulet hastens the marriage and he is "nothing slow to slack his haste." (Act IV, i, 3) Friar Lawrence says, "On Thursday, sir? The time is very short." (Act IV, i, 1) This is very symbolic. The last 'haste' appears in Romeo's words asking for a poison "that the trunk may be discharg'd of breath/As violently as hasty powder fir'd" (Act V, ii, 63~64). Their intense love hastens to end.

② "Too quick" image

The underlined 'too' expressions in Juliet's comment on their first-sight love, "It is too rash, too unadvis'd, too sudden; / Too like the lightning, which doth cease to be/Ere one can say, 'It lightens'. (Act II, ii, 119~120) also help to accentuate the fast pace of their love and so of the whole play.

When Romeo is about to attend the Capulets' party, he says "I fear, too early" to answer Benvolio's "Supper is done, and we shall come too late" (Act I, v, 105~106). The 'too early' is echoed by Juliet's "My only love sprung from my only hate!/Too early seen unknown, and known too late!" (Act I, V, 136~137). If they did not meet, the tragedy would not happen.

They meet too early. This is their fate; they meet too early and die too quickly. They hurry their journey to death. Juliet's "Or, if thou think'st I am too quickly won" (Act II, ii, 95) reflects their fate and the quick pace of the tragedy. Friar Lawrence's "Therefore love moderately: long love

doth so;/Too swift arrives as tardy as too slow.” (Act II, vi, 14~15) exactly points to their destiny, even though he doesn't really mean it. When Mercutio dies, Benvolio says, “That gallant spirit hath aspir'd the clouds,/Which too untimely here did scorn the earth.” (Act III, I, 114~115).

His death is also too early. Everything seems to happen at an untimely fast pace. The word 'untimely' may be a very important word.

③ “Untimely” image

From the fact that Shakespeare uses the word 'untimely' only in eight plays and in *Romeo and Juliet* it appears most often, 5 times, it is likely that the word plays more important role in the play.

The first one appears in Romeo's statement about his vague fear that “Some consequence--Shall--expire the term/Of a despised life clos'd in my (his) breast,/By some vile forfeit of untimely death.” (Act I, iv, 107~111) It is not Romeo but Mercutio that first dies 'too untimely'. (Act III, I, 115)

This is the second 'untimely'. The third one is in Old Capulet's grief over his daughter's death, “Death lies on her like as untimely frost/Upon the sweetest flower of all the field.” (Act IV, v, 28~29) Here she isn't really dead, but without seeing her parents again she is destined to kill herself and die, just as her mother's wish, “I would the fool were married to her grave.” (Act III, v, 140) Juliet is 'the fool' who will not obey her parents' order to marry Paris.

The fourth and fifth one are in Friar Lawrence's, “and their stol'n marriage-day/Was Tybalt's doomsday, whose untimely death/Banish'd the new-made bridegroom from this city;” (Act V, iii, 232~234) and “But when I came, some minute ere the time/ Of her awakening, here untimely lay/The noble Paris and true Romeo dead.” (Act V, iii, 256~258)

He narrates the whole sad story to Prince. He repeats the word, 'untimely', which echoes Romeo's fear of his 'untimely death'. His foreboding comes true with not only his own death but Tybalt and Paris's.

The word 'untimely' means 'too early', that is, their death is not at the right time. It shows there is great difference between the expected time

and the real time. To extend the meaning, the word can be said to symbolize some deviation or discrepancy between what it is expected to be and what it really is, such as, dissociation between good intention and its ironic results.

All the characters in this drama are good by nature. No one is willing to do evil to others. They are just set in the context of feud. Partly because of this situation, they have an outcome that they didn't expect or intend. Friar Lawrence, for example, agrees with Romeo and Juliet's marriage because the "alliance may so happy prove/To turn your (their) households' rancour to pure love." (Act II, iii, 91~92) The result is their death, even though the two families reconcile after all. Mercutio and Benvolio are kind enough to take Romeo to the Caplets' party in order to let him have a chance to see Rosaline, but the result is the beginning of Romeo and Juliet's tragic love. Old Capulet advances the wedding day of Paris and Juliet because to him Juliet looks too grieved by Tybalt's death.

And Nurse suggests to Juliet to marry Paris not from evil intention but all for Juliet's happiness. Their good intention drives Juliet to take the drug and then to death.

The most ironic is Romeo's intervention in the fight between Mercutio and Tybalt. He tries to stop the fight, but it causes Mercutio's death. Romeo cries, "I thought all for the best." But the result is death of his friend. Meanwhile seeing Romeo endures Tybalt's insults, Mercutio begins the fight in place of Romeo. This is good intention too.

These good intentions turn bad because they are 'untimely' and facile. "Facile good intentions serve only to hasten disaster"⁽¹¹⁾

(4) The image of 'Hand'

Hand is used symbolically in this play. Compared with other plays the word is used more often.

It must convey more special meaning to the play.

In the Prologue, hand is symbolically used to introduce that the feud is public, that is, everyone in 'fair Verona' is involved in the feud of the two

	Hand
<i>A Mid summer Night's Dream</i>	15
<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	35
<i>The two Gentlemen of Verona</i>	9

families by the image of bloody 'civil hands'. The image is repeated in Prince's "From those bloody hands/Throw your mistemper'd weapons" (Act I, i, 83~84) Then the image of innocent hand appears in the sonnet duet by Romeo and Juliet. Among the Holy image the hand is unstained, fair and even holy when they touch each other's hand with 'palm to palm'. It is 'holy palmer's kiss' (Act I, v, 94~101). This innocent image of hand leads up to Romeo's "Do thou (Friar Lawrence) but close our hands with holy words,/Then love-devouring death do what he dare;" (Act II, vi, 6~7) He asks the Friar to marry them, but the word 'love-devouring death' foreshadows their fate and then the very next 'hand' is in Benvolio's explanation about the 'bloody fray', "Tybalt, here slain, whom Romeo's hand did slay;" (Act III, i, 147~148) "Romeo's hand shed Tybalt's blood." (Act III, ii, 71) His hand is not clean any more. It is 'cursed hand' (Act III, iii, 103)

At the last scene, the 'hand' stands for reconciliation. Romeo says to Paris whom he has just killed, "O, give me thy hand,/One writ with me in sour misfortune's book!" (Act V, iii, 81~82). And to dead Tybalt he says about his intention that for atonement he will kill himself with "that hand that cut thy (Tybalt's) youth" (Act V, iii, 99).

The last 'hand' appears in Juliet's words, "What's here? A cup, clos'd in my true love's hand?" (Act V, iii, 161). It is very impressive because this is the last moment she touches his hand. Probably his hand is no more stained. Because of the reconciliation it is purified. Though 'hand' is just a single trivial word, Shakespeare uses it symbolically.

Conclusion

From the analysis of various images and imageries, it is clear that Shakespeare dramatizes Brooke's rather moralistic love-story into a much more tragic drama. Those imageries illumine and emphasize the two lovers' very short, but pure and celestial kind of love and give an accent to the quick pace of the development of their tragedy. But the tragedy of *Romeo and Juliet* is quite different from his later tragedies in which protagonists choose the way to disaster with his own hand. In *Romeo and Juliet*, the two lovers are already set in the feud of the two families. The Prologue makes the frame of the drama as if it is a piece of art. The situation, the development and the result---everything is already fixed in the form of the sonnet prologue. Within this frame, Shakespeare draws and paints a beautiful picture of the tragic love with various techniques. We are moved to tears at their tragic death because of his skill. The sonnet form is very effective to add to beauty of the drama and the love. As is stated in the Introduction of *New Penguin Shakespeare*, "Benvolio's suggested remedy for love (I.2.45-50); Romeo's analysis of his love for Rosaline (I.2.87-92); the first conversation of Juliet and Romeo (I.5.93-106); the address of Paris at the Capulet tomb (V.3.12-17);" and "The two choruses and the final speech of the Prince (V.3.305-10)" are "in sonnet or half-sonnet form," "the familiar tune of love poetry."⁽¹²⁾ "The sonnet is the channel through which the play flows."⁽¹³⁾

The repetition of the name of Romeo, ---36 times only addressing like, "Romeo, Romeo," ---and the repetition of the same word , like 'banished', 'dead' or 'woe' give some rhythm to the drama.

Romeo and Juliet is a well-wrought piece of art showing us the fragile, brief, but violent tragic love of the young couple. Juliet is less than 14 years. The love is all the more beautiful for its brevity and their young age.

Notes ;

※For the quotaiton I used William Shakespeare, the Complete Works, ed, by Peter Alexander, words I used John Bartlet, *A Complete Concordance*

to Shakespeare, published by S published by Collins in 1966.

For counting the number of the t.Matrin's Press in 1990.

- (6) Vyvyan, John, *Shakespeare and the Rose of Love*, pp.149-150
- (7) New Cambridge Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, p.18
- (8) Watts. Cedric, *Romeo and Juliet*, Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1990, pp.58-59
- (9) New Penguin Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, 1967, p.31
- (10)Watts, op. cit. p.58
- (11)Traversi, D.A., *Romeo and Juliet, Critical Essays*, Garland Publishing, 1993, p.32
- (12)*New Penguin Shakespeare*, p.38
- (13)Berry, Ralph, *Romeo and Juliet, Critical Essays*, p.133

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