

Students name

Lecturers name

Date of submission

### Theme of religion Tartuffe by Moliere

#### Introduction

Moliere Tartuffe is a narrative that explains about a man known as Tartuffe who goes to Orgon's home, and he impresses Orgon due to his characteristics which indicate that he is religious. He also upholds moral beliefs and behaviours. From this character, Tartuffe is respected by both Orgon and his mother, Madame Pernelle. They respect Tartuffe, and they always consult him before making any decision at the expense of the family members. Despite the issue that has been raised in the family Orgon decides to let Tartuffe to marry his engaged daughter.

The more prominent family decides to look for a way to trap Tartuffe in the presence of Orgon so that he can see the authentic characters of Tartuffe. Tartuffe has developed a lust for Orgon's wife, who is used as the centre of the plot. In the first incident, the trap fails because Damis, a son to Orgon, misinterprets the scene, and Tartuffe is accused of using treachery. In the second incident, Tartuffe is heard by Orgon trying to seduce his wife, which shows Tartuffe's characters to Orgon, which he never knew. Finally, in the play, Tartuffe is seen producing papers that show Orgon had signed papers to grant him the house. Tartuffe evicts the family from their premises, the king intervenes, and Tartuffe is arrested for the illegal presentation of the papers (AYDIN, 127).

## Body

The play has a theme of religion that is evident in the play. In the play, there is religious hypocrisy evident where Tartuffe pretends to bring peace and harmony in the family after he had got a good reception from Orgon and Pernell as they saw him as a respectable gentleman in the play society. In this context, Moliere is not condemning religion. Still, he tries to show how religious hypocrisy has been evident in society and tries to show the people the importance of reasoning and clear thinking regarding life aspects. The play focuses on people's perception in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, where the church was viewed as holding power in society and righteousness, which were seen as an essential part of life. Moliere believes that religion and society are separate in that they should not be integrated with that religion as a private and personal decision. The author instigates that religion should not be privileged; from this, the churches pressurized and persuaded King Louis, resulting in it being banned. The church is seen giving controversial sentiments that are evident in Moliere's play.

Tartuffe is seen in the play using religion to influence family members in the house that made it so crucial for Orgon's family in that they could not make any decision without involving God. The perception that Orgon had developed this caused controversies about religion, which causes King Louis XIV to join the play. He is in pursuit of justice for the Orgon after Tartuffe tries to take possession of the Orgon's house and evict them; this is because Tartuffe had brainwashed the Orgon's family based on religiosity. Tartuffe is seen influencing people in the society to the church back those days because they are seen to be powerful and influential members of the community where they used the power they had acquired in accordance to their utmost convenience.

Out of their excellent and sincere hearts based on the religious background, Orgon and Pernelle to their homestead. Unfortunately, Tartuffe takes advantage of their excellent intentions where he turns to be insincere. Orgon and Madame Pernelle are a big picture of innocent people who were out of their good intentions of extending a helping hand to help the poor Tartuffe, who later uses religion as a weapon against them. In the play, some controversies show hypocrisy as a fashionable vice. Lots of controversies surround Tartuffe since the start of the play. Tartuffe is used to indicate how the individuals in the society are taking advantage of religion and depicts a character of hypocrisy by masking himself with the religion, where the church views this as an attack on the religion. At the same time, this is the valid argument on how Tartuffe is misusing religion for his gain rather than for the goodwill of all people in society.

The king is pushed and takes part in the play due to the influence he gets from the church and other mentors in the society, where after all, despite many hindrances which had been a problem in the society. It's finally accepted by the society at large and the church. Tartuffe is evidence of religious hypocrisy where he manages to manipulate Orgon, and he looks down on his family members and gets to a point where he doubts his beliefs. The play tries to make a different perception in regards to religious hypocrisy and true spirituality. Moliere uses Cleante to show the genuine spirituality concept who proclaims that an actual person should not brag about their status, nor should the individual condemn other people in the society. Cleante claims that holy people do not exist, and it's not of their nature to seek recognition. Still, contrary to this, he condemns religious hypocrisy, which is the primary factor that undermines the accurate perception of a holy man.

The church is seen to play a significant role in the misconception of the real-life situations among the people where we see Orgon blindly accepts Tartuffe's influences based on

religious aspects. That allows him to bring his evilness into Orgon's family, which subsequently destroys the sound foundations of Orgon. And takes the premises from Orgon and presents papers that show that he had taken possession of their home and was ready to vacate them from their home. Tartuffe weaponized religion against Orgon where he regards himself as a religious figure that makes Orgon believe that he can protect him and his family from sin. Even though alarms made about Tartuffe's character by other people in the society Orgon is seen protecting him against his family member's critics. Orgon highlights why he believes and defends him from other people as he regards Tartuffe as a perfect and holy man of God.

The author connects Tartuffe and the church, which makes him dangerous, wherein the play he is seen to be connected to a powerful symbol that makes him so superior and hard to be defeated. Later in the play, when the church does not accept his perception well, he makes fun and indicates that Orgon is a fool because of the religious hypocrisy used by Tartuffe to brainwash him. Back then, religion was valued by society and was used to dominate and satisfy the people who occupied significant positions in the societal hierarchy. Therefore, Tartuffe's influence regarding religion was powerful, making it hard for the two members of the family to fail to reason and were fooled by Tartuffe. As a result, they fail to reason and use their common sense on the things that are happening in real-life society. This case shows that religion can be used as a trap, which is evident where Tartuffe uses it to influence Orgon and Madame Pernelle, and they agree on all proposed issues by Tartuffe.

Moliere demonstrates how real-life religious hypocrisy and shows how the mindset of individuals are corrupted that diminishes the ability to contemplate right and wrong where religion has used a weapon to hinder the proper judgement of issues in real life. From the belief that Orgon has got from the hypocritical religious man Tartuffe, he chases his son Damis and

gives possession of his house to Tartuffe (Jones, 48). Orgon moves further and forces his daughter to get married to Tartuffe, which traumatized the daughter. It subsequently led to her attempting suicide because of his father's perception, who had adopted a patriarchal society view where women had no voice and men were entitled to making decisions independently. Marianne, the daughter of Orgon, could not be given a chance to speak about her life decisions due to the church and society perception regarding their view of life issues. Tartuffe uses diverse techniques based on the religious perspectives to win the heart of Orgon and uses these techniques to control the conscious part of Orgon and influence him in making critical life decisions.

Tartuffe uses purity and acts as an innocent person when he is around Orgon and uses this sarcastic perception of things to try and control both Orgon and Madame Pernelle. In the real sense, Tartuffe is a cunning person wherein the play is seen trying to seduce the wife to Orgon that depicts his true character of being an evil man (Kristinsdóttir, 10). Later he influences the Orgon to change possession of his house, and later when he gets the favour, he acts inhumanely and tries to evacuate them from their home. Orgon is seen to protect Tartuffe more than other family members. He fewer respects and trusts his wife, contrary to the everyday life settings where the wife should be the closest associate of Orgon. Religious beliefs victimize the female gender, and they are not given a chance to make their decisions independently. There is confusion that has been brought due to a lack of adequate knowledge regarding the separation of church and the state.

## Reference

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