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"Tis Paltry to be Caesar": Postcolonial Intimations in Shakespeare's Selected Plays

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"'TIS PALTRY TO BE CAESAR": POSTCOLONIAL INTIMATIONS IN SHAKESPEARE'S SELECTED PLAYS

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Many postcolonial studies have dealt with the destructive impact of colonialism on the Other / the colonized with comparatively less attention paid to the mentality and motives behind colonialism. In addition to showing the colonial discursive practices, this dissertation will focus mainly on the basic motives and instigators, in Shakespeare's selected plays, that are used to oppress and dominate the colonized. This study explores Shakespeare's reactions to and treatment of colonialism in light of the 16th century fledgling English colonialism that was initiated partially to compete with other European colonial powers as well as assert and protect the growing English nationalism during the Renaissance. Shakespeare demythologizes the hegemonic attitude of the colonizer towards the Other. Towards this end, this dissertation employs postcolonial theory to read selected Shakespeare's plays including, but not limited to, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *The Tempest*, and *Troilus and Cressida*. Feminist literary theory will inform the study of Shakespeare's treatment of the woman Other who is doubly oppressed by her gender profiling and by her being part of the racial Other in the English Renaissance. By tracing the aforementioned plays of Shakespeare and others of his dramatic oeuvre, I will point out modern postcolonial attitudes of the Bard in that early stage of postcolonial writings. This dissertation will show that Shakespeare attacks the Greco-Roman model of domination that was summoned during the Renaissance revival of the Greco-Roman antiquity.

This project will also show the many facets of Shakespeare's counter hegemonic and anti-colonial stratagem which he uses to disclose the colonial practices that are used to oppress and colonize nations across the globe. Shakespeare demystifies the colonial enterprise through exposing the hypocritical intentions and claims behind colonialism such as civilizing and educating the colonized people who were considered inferior to colonialists. This dissertation will tackle the Bard's iconoclasm from four angles: economic, civil, cultural, and militaristic. Shakespeare seems to understand the cultural and religious atmosphere that was not yet a fertile ground to tackle racial and religious sensitivities; therefore, he subtly counters the hegemonic practices of colonialism, including his own nation's colonialism.

DEDICATION

To my loving mother and father

For you and by your support this dissertation is brought

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Chapter One

I- Introduction: The Scope of the Study

The issue of the comparatively nascent English colonialism during the Renaissance within the larger frame of the European colonialism was taken as a fact of life. Western colonialism typically claimed as a main and justifiable goal during that era the civilization of non-Europeans. This dissertation intends to study the way in which Shakespeare deals with, reacts to, and participates in the colonial project of the West / England. While many scholars have studied the oppression of the colonized nations, this project intends to study how Shakespeare demythologizes the colonizers' oppressive strategies. It is readily understood that a keen observer like Shakespeare would note the general result and impact of any given enterprise like colonialism, but the Bard does not simply stop at that; rather, it is my contention that he works to expose and foreground the negative and discursive practices behind that phenomenon. Shakespeare does not, however, adopt a simplistic approach that straightforwardly dramatizes the malignant side of colonialism. It is my contention to show that Shakespeare uses a web of nuanced and subtle strategies which were aimed at divulging the colonizer in the first place. His plays explore the mentality behind colonialism and the way in which this mentality was created in the main through an emulation of the ancient super powers–Greece and Rome.

Shakespeare depicts the dominant models of the Renaissance that were often used as a background for colonialism in some of his works. In *Troilus and Cressida* and *Antony and Cleopatra*, Shakespeare demystifies the Greco-Roman ideals of superiority in politics, culture, and military. By reading these and other Shakespeare plays, one soon ascertains that Shakespeare subtly uncovered the seamy side of Western colonialism. In his plays, he shows how Renaissance colonialism resulted from the emulation of a long tradition of militaristic and

cultural might. In addition, colonialism, built upon a claim of civilizing the Other, actually superimposed the Western model, as in *The Tempest* for example. Shakespeare wrote at a time when English colonialism was just starting to compete with other already established colonial forces like Portugal, The Netherlands, France and Spain. Such an aspiring and nationalistic environment spawned many authors' patriotism and carte blanche support, but Shakespeare does not always buy into this nationalistic fervor. In fact, it is my contention that his questioning of the Western colonial enterprise ranges from indirect and discreet exposure to frontal revelation and even ranting invective.

This dissertation will study the post-colonial ways in which Shakespeare criticizes the power of the West and often sympathizes with the 'Other'–be it the East, women, natives, non-Christian religions, or lower social classes. It has widely been believed that Shakespeare only stands for and promulgates the universal ideals that have long been entwined with the White race—that is, Europe or the West. This dissertation will demonstrate that this has not been entirely the case; Shakespeare, rather remarkably, not only exposes but also sympathizes with the injustices experienced by the colonized people at the hands of the colonizers. Shakespeare, in fact, seemingly defends the Other by putting down the colonizer and questioning the legitimacy of the civilizing ambitions of the West. Shakespeare in *The Merchant of Venice* (1596), *Troilus and Cressida* (1602), *Antony and Cleopatra* (1606), and *The Tempest* (1611), among other works, criticizes the hegemonic discursive practices by the West to dominate the Other. The Bard, in short, exposes the imposition of Western culture, at times doing so discreetly, at other times mounting a veritable battering assault.

I will use the postcolonial critical theory to develop this thesis. Said will be one major theorist whom I will use to uncover the workings of colonialism through his theory of the

complacency between knowledge and power. Knowledge of the Other through anthropological studies, travels, and even invasion is often used as a pretext for colonial domination. To the aforementioned end, I will use Edward Said's *Orientalism* and *Culture and Imperialism*.

Edward Said in *Orientalism* utilizes the power relation concept of Foucault to show the inequality of power deployment between the colonized and the colonizer and how the West harnesses a long history of scholarship that paved the way to colonialism on the baseless ground that the Other is unable to self-govern**.** The powerful uses images, representations, and attributes of oriental scholarship to shape Otherness of the colonized and even project negative images within Europe unto the Other. For Said then, "the Oriental was linked thus to elements in Western society (delinquents, the insane, women, the poor) having in common an identity best described as lamentably alien" (*Orientalism* 207). Caliban for example is a retard who is alien to Prospero's sentimentality of modernism and imperialism.

It is worth mentioning that the Orient for the purpose of this dissertation is not inclusive to the East as a geographical entity; rather, it refers to the Other / colonized in general when it comes to the long history of early and modern colonialism. The Other in this project for examples extends from Cleopatra in the East to Shylock within the Western sphere and to Caliban with his geographical uncertainty.

Creating a cleavage between the colonizer and the colonized mitigates the necessity, if not the obligation, for the former to control the latter as a pretext to colonialism. Said further asserts in *Culture and Imperialism* that in the viewpoint of Europeans, the colonized people "were not like 'us,' and for that reason deserved to be ruled" (xi); he further asserts that "culture. . . almost always with some degree of xenophobia . . . is a sort of theater where various political and ideological causes engage one another" (xiii). The cultural engagement, I posit,

results in a cultural hegemony of the imperialist over the colonized because the former's culture is perceived superior to the latter's. Orientalism as a field of colonial studies produces an accumulation of historical epistemology that separates Europe from other nations on the grounds of modernity / backwardness dichotomy that needs to be bridged through hegemony and colonization as Said explains:

> It is hegemony, or rather the result of cultural hegemony at work, that gives Orientalism the durability and the strength I have been speaking about so far. Orientalism is never far from what Denys Hay has called the idea of Europe, a collective notion identifying "us" Europeans as against all "those" non-Europeans, and indeed it can be argued that the major component in European culture is precisely what made that culture hegemonic both in and outside Europe: the idea of European identity as a superior one in comparison with all the non-European peoples and cultures. There is in addition the hegemony of European ideas about the Orient, themselves reiterating European superiority over Oriental backwardness. (*Orientalism* 7)

Prospero practices his erudition in human sciences to oppress Caliban. Cultural imposition that is used by Prospero erodes the culture of Caliban in a systematic way that leaves Caliban at the end of the play without a distinct culture. Shylock's culture, moreover, is demonized in *The Merchant of Venice* as a culture of greed, insincerity, and inferiority to the Venetian dominant culture. By the same token, the Egyptian culture is seen by Rome as a culture of playfulness, cunning, mystery, and sensuality; it is never viewed by Romans as an equal culture to the pure and high culture of imperial Rome. The Egyptian culture is treated as Other by imperialist Rome.

In the Western construction of Otherness, the colonized woman is sometimes considered as an Other. Shakespeare criticizes the 'otherization' of women as in the case of Cleopatra, for example, whom he often empowers. In *Gender, Race, Renaissance Drama,* Ania Loomba claims that femininity and otherness overlap in *Antony and Cleopatra*: "Cleopatra is the non-European, the outsider, the white man's ultimate 'other.' . . . Colonialist, racist and sexist discourse are mutually dependent. Cleopatra embodies all the overlapping stereotypes of femininity and non-Europeans common in the language of colonialism" (78). The female body of Cleopatra comes to mean Egypt as an Other according to Rome:

> Salt Cleopatra, soften thy waned lip!
> Let witchcraft join with beauty, lust with both,
> Tie up the libertine in a field of feasts,
> Keep his brain fuming. Epicurean cooks,
> Sharpen with cloyless sauce his appetite,
> That sleep and feeding may prorogue his honor
> even till a Lethe'd dullness— (2.1. 21-27)

Egypt here is effeminate to Pompey, the patriarchal Roman leader; he even equates the female body of Cleopatra with Egypt as a subordinate state to Rome. It follows then that both are treated the same way in regard to their Otherness.

In accordance with Said's critique of Western colonialism, Mannoni in *Prospero and Caliban: The Psychology of Colonization* explores Western colonization primarily from a psychological vantage point. He asserts that Western colonialism Madagascar creates a sort of psychological ambivalence within the identity of the postcolonial subject of the former colonized nations. Mannoni claims that "When confronted with reality he [the colonized] has no feeling of

liberation; his tools and his technical knowledge give him no sense of mastery—tools are simply an extension of the master's orders, technique just a set of rules to be obeyed; his hands are still the hands of a slave" (195). Mannoni here claims that the post-independent subjects will always find themselves in need of their former colonizer. Caliban is taught the language of the colonizer, but he never uses it for his own benefit but only to curse his oppressor. The education of Caliban is not complete by the time Prospero leaves the island for his own country. Mannoni explains that the dependence complex will always be there as a negative aftermath of European colonialism. Caliban as a representative of all formerly colonized people will not be able to handle his own independence without the help of his former oppressor.

Different from Mannoni's apparent believe in the essentialism of the colonist's superiority, Fanon in *Black Skin, White Masks* studies the opposition between the superiority of the colonizer and the inferiority of the colonized. He offers a solution to the inferiority complex by releasing oneself from the "shameful livery" of (black) color (12).

Fanon emphasizes the necessity of eliminating the notion of blackness as a racial marker; he asserts: "I will say that the black is not a man. . . . The black is a black man; that is, as a result of a series of aberrations of affect, he is rooted at the core of a universe from which he must be extricated" (8). "Europeans" according to William Cohen "were never concerned about their own skin color, which they presumably accepted as the norm" (10); this clearly indicates that they use the color of other people as racial marker of inferiority of all that is non-White. Fanon states that "For the black man there is only one destiny. And it is white" (10). Black people were discursively obliged to accept that they are inferior and that they should submit to the White supremacy in the same way Caliban is forced to accept Prospero as his sole master.

Fanon further explains that “If there is an inferiority complex, it is the outcome of a double process; -primarily, economic; -subsequently, the internalization - or, better, the epidermalization - of this inferiority” (11). It follows then that the perpetuated normalcy of whiteness and the oddity of blackness becomes solid racial markers separating the colonizer from the colonized. “I am given no chance. I am overdetermined from without. I am the slave not of the 'idea' that others have of me but of my own appearance,” felt by black people” (*Black Skin, White Masks* 116). Cohen asserts that “the Africans' skin color struck Europeans as unusual” (9). They looked at the colonized people as different and inferior.

The oppressed / Other is likely to resort to violence to assert its independent identity. Frantz Fanon’s theory in *The Wretched of the Earth* that violence–like that rested on Caliban–results from the oppression exerted by the colonizer. The colonized resorts to violence in order to liberate (decolonize) his country; according to Fanon decolonization is “a program of complete disorder;” it is “the meeting of two forces, opposed to each other by their very nature . . .” (36).

I will also use Michel Foucault’s cultural insights in *Discipline and Punish* about the advent of oppression and penalty as well as panopticism—that is, the colonizer’s watching the colonized constantly. I will also use the feminist theory to show how Shakespeare explores the treatment of women in the Rome as opposed to the East in *Antony and Cleopatra* and *The Tempest*. Gayatri Spivak’s theories of subaltern and women of color will buttress my claims in this section of my dissertation. Spivak asks a rhetorical question—that begs no definitive answer—in her seminal article, “Can the Subaltern Speak?” Prospero sees Miranda’s virtue and virginity as an aspect of the White pure identity that is threatened by the racial Other / Caliban. Because Miranda is the sole female in the play, it is expected that she will play a crucial role as a subject who dominates the feminine role in the play, yet she “cannot speak” to answer Spivak’s

overarching question, “Can the Subaltern Speak?” In one reading, Miranda’s subjectivity and voice are erased for the common interest of the civilizing “Empire.” She seemingly exists in the play merely for the colonizer to justify his tyranny toward the colonized under brazen allegations of rape.

Francesca Royster asserts that “The Cleopatra icon has remained powerful over time because she signifies reinvention—the fantasy of being able to slough off one’s “tires and mantles” for a new skin (1). I contend that Cleopatra’s maneuvers and her wily mutability are emphasized by Shakespeare to show how the object can transcend the subject’s cunning, so that in a way the Bard is doubly empowering the colonized and the female. Although a paragon of femininity and sexuality, Cleopatra rejects the gender role prescribed for her by Rome as a woman who is not fit to rule. Using her sexuality to offset the Western hegemony, she refuses to be victimized by Caesar and has the final word and marks the last powerful and dramatic move, not Rome/Caesar. Shakespeare equips Cleopatra with a pool of choices as she confronts Rome/West. She adamantly exacts her free will in the darkest of times as famously described by Enobarbus who speaks of her ability to maintain her autonomy even against crushing odds: “Never. He will not. / Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale / Her infinite variety. Other women cloy / The appetites they feed, but she makes hungry / Where most she satisfies; for vilest things / Become themselves in her, that the holy priests / Bless her when she is riggish” (2.2.244-51). Because of her cunning and rigorous intellect, Rome (Antony) fails to appropriate Cleopatra and assimilate her into the political and cultural world of Rome. Resorting to “camouflage tactics,” she changes her strategies according to circumstances. Shakespeare’s endowing her and not the great Caesar with such astute, even brilliant, savvy speaks both to his championing of eastern versus western civilization and his deriding imperialistic hegemony.

Cleopatra as an iconic Eastern / black woman is used by Rome to perpetuate the West's stereotype of eastern female as sensual as opposed to the virtuous white / western woman; her body is a place of struggle to control Egypt / East. Arthur Little uses some of Shakespeare's texts to examine the inter-racial sex and shows the profiling of white women as virginal victims, white men as passive heroes, and black men as rapists who corrupt the white female body. Little examines the emerging equation of the white image with European identity and culture. Little, offering a clever reading of Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*, argues that scholars of Shakespeare will not be able to have "a deracialized or desexualized subject position" (6). The West has long been considered the center of intellectuality in the world; its classical grand narratives have almost always outlined the great values of humanity. Western classical literature set the models for the universality of the world. Thus, postcolonial readings of Shakespeare offer new perspectives, given the fact that his works have been viewed as the very embodiment of West/Europe values. Traditionally, many scholars in the West regard *The Tempest* as an icon of the West's ability to enlighten the Other—Caliban in this case. Shakespeare often speaks to the overt subjectivity of the West and tries to be objective by demythologizing the West's claim of civilization and humanity. Contrary to the alleged universal values of educating and civilizing the Other, I approach *The Tempest* as a text that embodies most of the colonial practices through modern history: it can be read as a colonial treatise on how to deal with, subdue, manipulate, and oppress the colonized. Prospero catalogues discursive practices on how to effectively colonize; he introduces surveillance, forced labor, negative stereotypes, and western-oriented education. Caliban is tortured, enslaved, constantly watched, imprisoned, and drained by hard labor.

Chapter one of my dissertation, in tracing the emergence of early modern European colonialism, will sketch the existence of non-Whites in England and show how the English

people reacted to and interacted with them. This chapter will discuss European colonization in general. I will provide an historical context for the imperialistic map as drawn by the main colonizers–Portugal, The Netherlands, Spain, France, and England. Chapter one will also trace the emergence of the imperialistic mentality of England in Shakespeare's day and examine how England came to the colonial arena comparatively late in contrast to the other European colonial powers.

The chapter will establish that colonialism was accepted as a fact of life in Europe during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as well as the ensuing centuries. Colonial practices, in short, were viewed as both beneficial and legitimate. Under the pretext of civilizing the Other and spreading Western culture and religion, Europe oppressed countries in the four corners of earth. I will overview as well as situate England's colonialism, give evidence of it, show its extensiveness, and then segue into my thesis to show how Shakespeare responds to this pervasive mentality through his dramatic oeuvre. Drawing on Imtiaz Habib's work that shows how England started to have some encounters with other non-white races as early as the seventeenth century, I will examine the treatment of the racial and religious Other within the English society and highlight that the "domestic" Other as well as the "outside." Others were oppressed so that the English identity could flourish and assert itself. Chapter one, in short, will overview English colonialism and provide a backdrop against which Shakespeare's plays can be examined.

Chapter two will emphasize the economic aspect of Shakespeare's deconstruction of colonialism. Shakespeare exposes and ridicules England's / the West's economic domination of other racial minorities within the West as well as non-European nations. After all, it is a widely accepted notion that the economic factor was the main player in colonization both old and

modern. The civil project claimed by the West was only a façade for a deeper intention to exploit the fortunes of the Other. In his masterpiece, *The Merchant of Venice*, Shakespeare, in one reading of the play, dramatizes the Venetian attempt to control the riches of Shylock. The West, the play seems to allege, uses all available means to meet its end goals. Shylock is faced with social profiling (a parsimonious Jewish trader of a religious minority), the racialization of his Jewishness, the legal system (heavy-handedly manipulated by Portia), the colonial strategy of divide and rule, and finally the defection and conversion of his daughter to Christianity. What is used on the micro level to strip Shylock of his fortune is used on the macro political level against other nations and ethnicities to steal their spoil and fortunes to enhance the economic well-being of the White Europeans. Antonio's financial distress is relieved at the expense of the Other– Shylock. This reading of Shakespeare's play speaks to his awareness of and opposition to the colonial agenda.

For Shakespeare, the emergence of a definitive English identity was a major factor in kindling colonial ambitions since other European powers had already set out to expand their dominions and accumulate wealth. Kim Hall defines the English identity and shows how this definition of identity as being pure white is set against the presence of non-whites in England. In her discussion of the early presence of black Africans in England as workers, pirates, and slaves, Hall brilliantly shows how poetry and language were often used to talk about dark races and set them off as exotic and sensual. The emergence of discussion about the dark color, for Hall, ushers the nascent economic-driven colonial enterprise in Africa and elsewhere. Hall uses *Antony and Cleopatra*, *The Tempest*, and *The Devil's Law* to explore the ways in which the colonialist project allies with the economics of marriage to try to shake the class boundaries in the English society that long had been based on class and social strata. For Hall "Miranda

embodies a cultural integrity that must be protected from encroachment by outsiders [Caliban]. . ." (125-26). Othello's marriage to Desdemona, to take another example, is destined to end as it violates race standards and crosses—if not threatens to blur—cultural difference.

Shakespeare puts down Venice's [the West's / Italy's] culture and at the same time sympathizes with Shylock who faces all sorts of manipulations which in the end impoverish him and assimilate him forcefully into the Western discourse. Shakespeare divulges the European/Western avarice for riches of the overseas / New World; moreover, he attacks the Italian culture even though it represented the brilliant pinnacle of its Renaissance accomplishment. The play accentuates the disturbing reality that Western culture, represented by Venice, is based more on greed than the cultural achievement and noble intent which it claimed to advance.

Chapter three will examine in greater detail the way in which Shakespeare shows the false civilizing claim of the colonizing West. It will show how the hegemonic discourse of the West employs education and knowledge of the Other as a pretext to hegemonize the Other. Prospero's education scheme aims at suppressing Caliban rather than enlightening him; knowledge extended by the colonizer in *The Tempest* produces a colonized individual who can "curse," not who can better his life. Prospero uses his powers over Ariel to control the island. Brazenly demystifying the educational and the civilizing claims of the West in *The Tempest*, Shakespeare shows his modernity in the sense that he first divulges the stereotypical image of the East (Other) centuries before Said wrote *Orientalism*. Because the magic only works in the enchanting lands outside Europe, Prospero uses Ariel only on the island. Is Shakespeare suggesting through this play that non-western territories are the only ones where magic and superstition work effectively?

Tellingly, Prospero, who effectively employs this magic to accomplish his end, did not use it—or Ariel—to govern his Milanese dukedom back in Europe before he was ousted by his brother.

Effectively, Prospero watches over the island, harnessing Ariel; he asks Ariel to conjure a storm that wrecks his enemies' ship and disperses them into three groups on the island without inflicting harm on them for a purpose—to meet them in the process of revenge and forgiveness. Prospero, the colonizer, constantly keeps an eye on people on the island. To use Foucault's term in *Discipline and Punish*, he rules over a "panoptic society" through the constant "gaze" around the island via the magic powers of Ariel; this will buttress my negotiations on how the colonizer uses certain repressive measures to keep the colonized in place. This shows how the colonial gaze is used to suppress as well as quell any endeavor by the colonized to revolt.

One area that is usually harmed by colonization is the psychology of the colonized people. Shakespeare tackles the severe effects of oppression on the behavior of the oppressed in *The Tempest*. Mannoni studies the psychology of the colonized and compares Caliban to Robinson Crusoe: both are taught submission and servitude to the colonizer / master. The assimilation of Caliban into the western colonial domain has not yet finished when Prospero leaves the island; for Mannoni, the incomplete educational project by Prospero fires back as Caliban learns the colonizer's way: "You taught me language, and my profit on't / Is I know how to curse. The red plague rid you / For learning me your language!" (1.2.366-68). I will show the hypocrisy of the colonizer / Prospero in his ill treatment of Caliban / the colonized. Caliban indicates the reason for his rebellion against his "master": "Thou strok'st me and made much of me, wouldst give me / Water with berries in't, and teach me how / To name the bigger light, and how the less, / That burn by day and night" (1.2.336-39). The hypocrisy of colonialism lies in the fact that the colonizers preach civilization in the colonies while their acts and manners do not necessarily

comply with the standards of the civilized colonizer while Prospero forgives those who deposed him from the throne of his Dukedom. I posit that Prospero turns a blind eye to the suffering of the colonized / Caliban, since it is not in the auspices of his mission on the island to alleviate Caliban's suffering; moreover, he leaves Caliban on the island half-human, half-civilized, and half-educated.

Mainly, the colonizer uses Western oriented education that does not necessarily suit the colonizer, given the cultural difference between the two. I believe that the hypocrisy of Prospero is typical of the allegedly civilizing mission of the colonial West. I will show that the West is not able to go beyond the inherent episteme that portrays the Other as inferior, dysfunctional, and sensually driven. Caliban is accused of attempted rape, attesting to his propelled and animalistic nature as a non-Western human. Moreover, Caliban is unable to master civility and education offered by Prospero; he is shown unfit to harness civilization—a failure historically attached to the inability of non-Europeans to educate, manage, and govern themselves. Prospero is on the island to accomplish the ostensibly civilizing mission that inevitably deepens the atrocities of Caliban/the colonized instead of bettering his life.

Chapter four will deal with Shakespeare's demythologization of the Greco-Roman culture. Shakespeare demythologizes the militaristic might of the West, its historical superiority claim, and its political system. Shakespeare rewrites the history that had become commonplace in the academy, attacking rather than glamorizing the idealization of Greco-Roman culture. The English Renaissance contributed to the translation of Greco-Roman texts to the English public; scholars were reviving the ancient Greek and Roman cultures and adapting them to England. Despite this contemporary trend, Shakespeare in *Troilus and Cressida* severely attacks the lax military order of both camps, Trojan and Greek. He also attacks the waging of war for an

apparently trivial matter which claims many lives and the lack of an intelligent political system that is able to resolve the long-enduring conflict. Shakespeare, in short, questions the very validity of the claim of Greco-Roman supremacy. This culture in *Troilus and Cressida*, *Antony and Cleopatra* and *Julius Caesar* is characterized by bawdy love, frequent betrayal, moral laxity, appalling hypocrisy, and weak militarism.

Renaissance Oxford and Cambridge scholars were emulating the Greco-Roman ideals, but Shakespeare undermines this emulation by exposing the dark side of these ideals, long held in high esteem by the English academy as represented by the two major academic pillars, Oxford and Cambridge Universities. In *Antony and Cleopatra,* Shakespeare foregrounds the prejudice of the Roman culture and body politic that tries to suppress and subdue Egypt. Cleopatra is a strong feminine figure compared to Octavia who is only used by her brother Caesar as a means to forge a political alliance with Antony.

Chapter five will summarize my argument that Shakespeare is surprisingly postcolonial in his treatment of many themes in some of his plays. I will conclude that Shakespeare uses some of his works to demystify the hegemonic image of the West and to show the injustices which the Other experiences as a result of the western colonial project. I will also conclude that Shakespeare's sympathy sometimes lies with the Other by showing how he uses counter-discursive practices that divulge the ill intentions and the destructive outcome of colonialism and how he does so in discreet, even covert, ways owing to the heightened sensitivity of this matter.

Overall, I will prove that Shakespeare often demythologizes Western colonialism by demystifying the economic exploitation, cultural domination, historical supremacy, and western military conquest. I will establish that Shakespeare often sides with the Other by showing how the West uses cultural erasure and western style education to brainwash the colonizer.

II- European Colonialism until the Seventeenth Century: An Historical Framework

Much excellent work has already been done on the effects of European colonialism upon the world. The history and roots of the aforementioned colonialism, however, have received comparatively little attention. Situating English colonialism within the western colonial discourse is necessary when one explores Shakespeare's post-colonial interpretations. European colonialism began as early as the fifteenth century contrary to the seemingly anachronistic belief that it is an eighteenth and nineteenth century phenomena; it merely reached its pinnacle in the later centuries. Although economic interests stimulated the rush of European expansion, we cannot by any means rule out other factors that were used as a pretext like the West's duty to civilize non-European peoples who were in time employed to control massive parts of Asia and Africa and Christianize natives of the colonized territories.

After the fall of the Roman Empire, the Crusades signified the first significant chapter of western religious expansionism in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries and were forerunners to the early modern European colonial project that eventually changed the course of history. The crusaders paved the way for an early western / Christian presence in the Levant (now the Middle East) that was motivated by religious purposes. Early waves of European colonialism were motivated as well as financially supported by the Catholic Church in an effort to "reduce" the pagans and the enemies of Christ. The Pope, then a major political as well as religious leader, granted the Portuguese the first colony in the lands south of Cape Bojador in northwest Africa in 1455. [1] Remarkably enough, Portugal, a country of a few million people then, was the first early

[1] A headland located on the northern coast of the Sahara (Western Sahara claimed by Morocco now); the discovery of the sailing route around Cape Bojador by the Portuguese captain Gil Eanes in 1434 was a breakthrough as a naval route to West Africa and the East (India).

modern European colonial power. Portugal, the super naval power in Europe in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, made extensive discoveries and claimed more lands in different parts of the world and accumulated massive resources.

The Portuguese established many fortified points along the western coast of Africa to guard their trade routes with India. Trade with East was mainly done through the interaction between Arabs and Italians via the Mediterranean. The intensive explorations along the western coast of Africa by the Portuguese mainly aimed to break the monopoly of the Italian cities—namely, Venice and Genoa—and Arabs over the spice route to the India.

Trying to discover an alternative maritime route to the East, Vasco da Gama scored a milestone discovery for Portugal that broke the monopoly of trade with the East by Italians and Arabs through the Mediterranean. Landing on the Western coast of India in 1498 and sailing around the Cape of Good Hope on the western African coast, he initiated the first direct naval route to India after his countryman Bartolomeu Dias discovered the Cape of Good Hope in 1488. He established the first Portuguese colony in India and named himself the governor of Portuguese India.

When Spain took over the last Moorish post in Granada in 1492, its military and naval forces were at last ready to aggressively compete with Portugal for more lands and resources. Wright explains that “Though at first Portugal was the leader in charting new lands and fathoming the ocean’s mysteries, soon she was at least equaled by neighboring Spain, who was now successfully expelling the Moors after seven centuries of struggle.” Wright further asserts that the Spanish victory over the “Moorish infidel” was only the beginning of the Spanish expansion that eventually led them to the New world, Africa, and other parts of the world in the same year that their overthrowing of the Muslim occupation witnessed the commission of

Christopher Columbus by King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella to undertake explorations on behalf of Spain (1-2).

Spain and Portugal, the two neighbors in the Iberian Peninsula, competed aggressively to secure more lands for their riches and resources. The rivalry between the two countries was heightened by the discovery of the New World. This discovery in 1492 by Christopher Columbus prognosticated the whole European colonization in the world and fueled Spain's desire for expansion that began with the establishment of Spanish colonies in the Americas. Spain capitalized on the Spanish Pope Alexander VI's Bulls that settled the on-going contention between Portugal and Spain, often in favor of the latter to whom they granted more lands in the New World than Portugal. To Roman Catholics, the Pope claimed the universal power as the successor of Saint Peter and the guardian of the supreme power of the world that was believed to descend from God through Jesus Christ; it follows then that the sanctions by the Pope for kings of Spain and Portugal to have legal possession of the discovered territories not only included the land but also the native people as their own subjects (servants). This clearly shows that ownership of slaves was originally a colonial practice sanctioned by the religious authority and inaugurated during the phase of modern European colonialism.

Spain and Portugal claimed massive territories in the New World, but because they lacked the sufficient population to man the claimed colonies, they brought African slaves as hand labor to the colonies. The fall of Granada in 1492 and the defeat of Muslims marked the turning point in history when Europe became the center of the world. Europe started to expand geographically and economically. The discovery of the New World ushered the economic abundance that Europe enjoyed for centuries in addition to its lucrative colonialism in the East. Europe nearly exterminated the indigenous people and replaced them with the white race and at

the same time imported innumerable slaves from Africa as the work force to man its colonial enterprises.

The colonial empires of Spain and Portugal amassed enormous wealth that attracted the envy of three other European countries—England, France, and the Netherlands—who sought trade privileges at first and then established direct control over their colonies. The Dutch started their colonial enterprise owing to their long naval and trade experience as well as the surge of nationalism which resulted once they declared independence from occupying Spain. After a long struggle helped by the English, the Dutch started their "corporate" colonial enterprise under the auspices of the Dutch East and West India companies established in 1602. They dominated trade with the East and other parts afterwards.

"England did not become a major contender in the New World until Queen Elizabeth's reign, but even in Columbus's time she [England] displayed a transitory interest in American exploration," contends Wright. He further maintains that England's colonial ambitions started with the reign of the first Tudor Monarch, Henry VII, who legitimately won the battle of Bosworth ending the reign of the York dynasty and became monarch in 1485. After the political turmoil of the Wars of Roses (1455-1487),[2] he was able to stabilize the political arena in England, and this in turn enabled him to look outside England in an effort to expand English geographical possessions. For England to explore worldwide, a naval power was a crucial factor, so Henry VII commissioned shipbuilding in an effort to strengthen England's naval power and consequently trade as a way of alleviating both the financial burden he had created and the heavy taxation of his subjects. He authorized John Cabot to seize any land that was not governed by a Christian Prince (11). Propelled by his desire to find an alternative route to trade with the East

[2] The Wars of Roses were a series of confrontations between the two English dynasties, the house of Lancaster, and the house of York, over the throne of England between 1445 and 1487. The wars were won by the house of Lancaster and the establishment of the Tudor monarchy of England with King Henry VII.

and to avoid dealing with Arab traders in Venice where he had lived and worked as a trader, Cabot moved to Bristol, England, thinking that Asia could be reached by sailing westward. He convinced King Henry VII that England should try its fortune to seize lands although Pope Alexander VI "gave religious sanction to the overbearing claims of Spain and Portugal. Consequently in England the party of expansion tended to become anti-papal, and Protestantism to be a force urging men to sea adventure" (Williamson 15). Thinking he had arrived at India on a shorter northerly route than Columbus, Cabot landed in the New World in 1497. His shortcut route north had actually landed him on what later came to be known as North America. Cabot was arguably the first European ever to set foot in North America and to inaugurate the early steps of English colonialism.

In 1536 Henry VIII broke with the Catholic Church—a move that in large measure initiated the emergence of a new national as well as religious identity of England. He established the Anglican Church and forced his weak neighbor Ireland to relinquish Catholicism that had been there for centuries. He confiscated the land that the Church possessed. At that point, Catholicism had been the religion in Ireland for more than a thousand years, and it constituted part of the national identity of the Irish. The Irish Catholic population was persecuted, and the Protestant British oppressors sought complete control. In 1541 Henry VIII became king of Ireland. The domination of Ireland was the first real phase in the English colonialism. The English colonization of Ireland began in the late sixteenth century by establishment of many private plantations and planting of settlers, a practice that continued all through the seventeenth century. The English colonial policies in Ireland were predicated on the precedent and claim that the Irish were inferior to the English; thus, the English took it as their task to civilize the Irish.

Queen Elizabeth I continued the English suppression of the Irish Catholics which led to crushing the revolutionary attempts in Ulster in the northern part of Ireland in 1603. Following the subduing of the Irish resistance, the English confiscated Irish lands and distributed it among settlers brought from Scotland and England. The Irish population was forced off the land and replaced by Calvinist Scots; this, as much as anything else, fired the long lasting conflict between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland. The English colonial practices split the Irish society into two distinct groups—English-speaking gentry who owned and planted the land and the local indigenous Irish who were left with virtually no land and who were exposed to disease and famine. Ireland came entirely under the control of King James I (1603-1625) who defeated the last rebellion in his reign that was supported by Catholic Spain. Cromwell initiated massive campaigns to suppress revolutions and resistance in Ireland between 1641 and 1659.

English colonialism received a great push through the defeat of the Spanish Armada by the English in 1588. This victory paved the way for England to gradually replace Spain as the dominant world power. The English victory over the well-established colonial power—Spain—was a seminal point in the history of Europe, England in particular, that led to a gradual decline of Spanish influence in both Europe and the New World and the emergence of the English colonial ambitions in the world. Historically, the first phase of the English colonialism in the New World was performed mainly by privateering individuals, navigators and merchants like Sir Francis Drake and Sir John Hawkins, and by private corporations like the London Company, since the government was not directly involved under Elizabeth I who was hesitant to establish Transatlantic English permanent presence. King James I chartered the settlement of Virginia in 1607, a move that was a great success due to tobacco plantations that became an export staple for Virginia in 1616. By the end of the seventeenth century, the Anglo population in the New World

was about a quarter million, and England had colonies in most of North America, the Caribbean, Canada, India, and Africa.

The Spanish and Portuguese success during the Age of Discovery ignited the desire of other European contenders, among them France who began to establish colonies of its own in North America, the Caribbean and India. Arriving in North America with high colonial ambitions, France discovered the importance of the Mississippi River for transportation across the continent. France dominated large parts of Canada, namely Quebec, Illinois, the north western parts of Mississippi, and Louisiana in the South. The French, in other words, controlled the main trade artery that cut North America from North to South. The first French colony in the New World was established in 1605 under the name Port Royal in Acadia in North America, and in 1608 Quebec (part of Canada now) was established. By the end of the seventeenth century, The French established many small colonies in the new World like St. Augustine, Florida, Santa Fe, New Mexico, Jamestown, and Virginia— to name just a few. The French later ventured to Africa where they and the English replaced Spain and Portugal whose control declined as a result of the victory of the English over the Spanish Armada. Great Britain and France emerged as the two imperial powers in the World in place of Spain and Portugal in the late seventeenth century onward.

III- Colonialism: Why?

During the Mediaeval era, people in England / Europe were mainly farmers who produced food for themselves and their animals. Trade played a partial role in cases of swapping produce and importing small amount of items not grown in Europe. The medieval community was less occupied with material ownership since the Church played a major role in diverting

people's attention from acquiring earthly possessions and redirecting their focus to the afterlife. By the advent of the Renaissance, the medieval sense of a devout Christian community attenuated, and commerce was gaining a foothold. When its people started to migrate to cities for work in newly established factories, mainly textile mills, another shift occurred: many people stopped farming to raise sheep for their wool. During this era, society was feudal, and the majority of people worked for the elite class that owned all lands. Hunger often prevailed and epidemics broke out due to malnutrition and overwork of the masses of poor laborers. The urbanization of society, however, led to the deterioration of Feudalism, the infamous social system; consequently, England's economy as a prototypical European economy in the early modern age lacked crops to feed the increasing population. Because European governments began to search for resources outside the continent, merchants and private individuals pushed for new advances in the technology of navigation as maritime travel was still the prime way of traveling. The Age of Exploration that had become synonymous with the Renaissance, was the first seed of modern European colonialism: "The availability of ambitious captains and skilled crewmen, the pressure of material needs and the possession of advanced technology, explain why the Europeans, of all peoples then on earth, were able to launch the Age of Exploration," asserts John Hale (16).

Another factor behind early modern European colonialism was religion. The rivalry between Christianity and Islam in the fifteenth century onward was kindled when Christian Europe was alarmed by the westward surge of Islam; the Ottoman's takeover of Constantinople in 1453 was seen as an imminent danger to dominant Christianity. Hale contends that "In Christianity, Europeans had a militant and expansionist religion that in patience allowed as much scope for profit as for prophets" (17). Christians, according to Hale's view, felt superior to other

peoples by the way they live, and "The canny merchants and acquisitive kings who planned the explorations utilized this sense of superiority to justify their actions." He gives an example of the kings of Portugal who were able to explore the Indian Ocean and Africa "with a Bible in one hand and a sack of gold in the other" (17).

The mercantile trend in Europe led to the emergence of early modern capitalism that called for regulation of trade and the need for money. Because coinage was needed for the exchange of merchandise, banks emerged to keep and organize money in unprecedented ways. With the money in their possession, traders felt the need to venture outside Europe to buy and sell products. Merchants were the first to explore potentials overseas, typically encouraged by rulers who wanted to expand their geographical, religious, and economical dominions.

Richard Hakluyt, who serves as a good example of this phenomenon, was a renowned English scholar, geographer, map-maker, and editor of English voyages. One of the prime proponents for advancing English settlements in the New World, he promoted English colonization in North America in his famous *Discourse of Western Planting* (1584). In his treatise he urges Queen Elizabeth I to take up English settlement in the New World and encourages English merchants also to venture in maritime trade and colonial development in the New World and elsewhere. Hakluyt outlines the benefits of such colonization for the Queen, asserting that it will gain the monarchy a lot of money in trade, expand Christianity (Protestantism), curb Spain's colonial enterprise and limit its dominion, and finally employ the English homeless, vagabond, and criminals (Quinn 2-3).

Based on what we read in the play, Shakespeare was well aware of these workings of colonialism in the Europe and England in particular. He negotiated the tropes of the comparatively fledgling colonialism in his plays; we clearly see that in *The Merchant of Venice*

where he tackles two early prominent movers of colonialism: 1) commerce—the capitalism of Antonio / Europe that was on the rise; 2) The "Otherness" and "Jewishness" of Shylock which is stigmatized / compromised by Eurocentrism / Christianity consecutively. Shakespeare also shows how England/Europe resorts to Greco-Roman ideals, mainly in the military field, in order to establish a new colonial Empire modeled after the old-fashioned Empires as depicted in *Troilus and Cressida*. Othello, the moor, represents the early encounter of the West with the "Other." *Othello* entwines the cultural sensitivity of an outsider, Othello, with the religious confrontation with the Turks / Muslims who are defeated by forces of nature, signifying in one view, the superiority of the Christian faith.

England cited the ongoing Spanish menace to its newly adopted Anglican Church, as well as to its fledgling independence from Europe, as motivation and justification to build up its military might that was manifest in its defeat of the Spanish Armada. Spain—the colonial power and the Catholic space—indirectly, thus, helped shape the English colonial scheme. The early aims of "English colonialism," for Scanlan, aimed at achieving "geopolitical and economic goals" and "certain religious and ideological causes" (22). He also contends that Catholicism's attempt to subvert Protestantism provided the English with a "convenient enemy" to fight and to define "themselves against." "Gradually, an English Protestant colonial ideology emerged that, although it privileged religious and spiritual purity, also allowed for the pursuit of economic gain and geopolitical dominance" (22). The spread of Protestantism, in short, was one of the major factors that helped shape and nourish English colonialism.

Another facet of western colonialism tackled by Shakespeare pertains to culture. Cultural superiority and the hypocrisy of the West are, I allege, dissected by the Bard in *Antony and Cleopatra* and *The Tempest*. Prospero tortures Caliban to the degree that he became delusional

after experiencing the horrible mistreatment by the “civilized” colonizer—Prospero. “Do not torment me, prithee. I'll bring / my wood home faster,” Caliban snaps to Stephano and Trinculo, mistaking them for the supernatural spirits that Prospero uses to inflict pain upon the “subhuman,” “inferior,” and “uncivilized” Caliban—a total tyranny and hypocrisy of the West by all means (2.2.72-73). Because the colonizer seemingly never pays reparations for the indemnities inflicted upon the colonized, Prospero leaves Caliban uncared for. Although one might say that Caliban lived on the Island long by himself, Caliban has been half-changed by the workings of Prospero and is left to find his own ways; Caliban is a prototype for colonized nations who were left stranded after being stripped away of their resources and after being introduced to the bad effects of colonization; Caliban masters two things after Prospero has left him: he can “curse” and get drunk.

This study will attempt to uncover tropes and mechanisms which Shakespeare uses to criticize, subvert, and counter the hegemonic discourses of the West. The Bard works to counter, albeit cautiously, colonialism and “de-objectify” the Other as we see in his extolling, in my opinion, of Cleopatra—the feminine and the eastern Queen.

IV- “Happy breed of men”: Roots of the English National Identity

Shakespeare lived and wrote when the English national identity was steadily developing and when the English people just began their grand project of building the British Empire that eventually controlled two thirds of the world’s population and lands. Historically, the English identity is hard to distinguish and define. The English, seeing themselves as a nation destined for glory, hardly compared themselves to any neighboring people in continental Europe; they rarely

talked of, or even thought of, having an independent English identity. I contend that they felt it rather than asserted it due to the anxiety of having other ethnicities within their dominion, and to their feeling of superiority in comparison to other national identities in Europe. They conducted themselves as being above a defined identity not only in Europe but also in the whole world later in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries onward; that is, they took their identity for granted. Even within their micro milieu (the British isle and Ireland), they acted as superior to Welsh, Scottish, and Irish identities. It was hard for the English to voice their Englishness when there were Scots, Welsh, and Irish who lived under England for centuries; instead of voicing Englishness, they practiced it, and to offset their European rivals, they formed a collective British identity that served as a melting pot of all peoples living in the British Isles. Kumar asserts that it was not out of modesty that the English rarely talked about themselves as being a nation; rather, he asserts, the opposite. "The English took pride, as did the Romans of old, in their role as empire-builders. They saw themselves as engaged in the development and diffusion of civilizational projects of world-historic importance," and this created for them a kind of nationalism that Kumar calls "'missionary' or 'imperial' nationalism and a national identity"(x). For Shakespeare too, England was a "throne of kings," a "fortress," a "realm," a "demi-paradise," and a "happy breed of men." In act two of Richard II, John of Gaunt speaks of England:[3]

> This royal throne of kings, this sceptered isle,
>
> This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,
>
> This other Eden, demi-paradise,
>
> This fortress built by Nature for herself

[3] All the quotations from Shakespeare's plays are taken from *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*, sixth edition, edited by David Bevington (Longman, 2009).

Against infection and the hand of war,

This happy breed of men, this little world,

This precious stone set in the silver sea,

Which serves it in the office of a wall

Or as a moat defensive to a house,

Against the envy of less happier lands,

This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England,

This nurse, this teeming womb of royal kings,

Feared by their breed and famous by their birth. (2.1.40–52)

The speech attests to the insular nature of England, separated from the "less happier lands," and to its independent English identity. In the speech, Gaunt, recalling British glory, cites history to prove the imperial power of England [Britain] before the Anglo-Saxon era as well as during the Roman Britain when it was "Fear'd" by its neighbors. As Schwyzer contends, "England in the Tudor era was a name to conjure with—but what it conjured was very often Britain" (5). Schwyzer also alleges that Gaunt recalls past glory and history to establish his new England: "the tendency of the English to lay claim to the historical and geographical attribute of Britain [which] had been witnessed for centuries." This tendency appeared again, and indeed was magnified, in the wake of the Reformation: "The very nature of the traumatic break entailed by the Reformation, cutting England off from most of the continent, encouraged the English to regard themselves as inhabiting a world apart" (5). Shakespeare is adamant in his criticism of this emulation of the past whether it is pre-Anglo-Saxon or Roman as we will see in our discussion of *Troilus and Cressida*. This emulation had not served the better of both camps of

the conflict, the Greeks and the Trojans; rather, it deepened hostility and inflicted destruction. It caused bloodshed and confrontation that lasted for a long time for no justifiable reason.

While Shakespeare's lines register memorable national tributes to England, they also show sensitivity toward other ethnic components. For instance, Captain Macmorris in Henry V wonders: "Of my nation? What ish my nation? Ish a / villain, and a bastard, and a knave, and a rascal? What / ish my nation? Who talks of my nation?" (3.2.121-23). This shows Shakespeare's awareness of the nationalistic consciousness formation that incorporates dialogues, sensitivities, and questions of what constitutes the collective English national identity, which arrayed other dominions and people groups under it. Shakespeare shows that nationalism tries to manifest itself through expansion and the use of all available means. Shakespeare exposes the hypocrisy of the state and the instrumental alliance between the state [King Henry V] and the Church to invade and subdue another country, France in *Henry V*. In the play, Henry V even employs the Church's financial support to invade another country.

Historically, England had lived for centuries as a part of the Roman world. After the decline of the Roman Empire, England embraced Christianity and was considered an integral part of the Christian world/Europe: "In virtually every respect England from the eleventh to the thirteenth century was a part of Europe, to an even greater extent than it was at the time of Roman Britain" (Kumar 51). An independent national identity had not been sought as long as England enjoyed a paramount seat in Europe. The quest for a clearly defined identity became necessary when England found itself in contradictory interest with its geographical milieu—Europe in this case. Newman contends that "Every national movement, according to the experts, involve a search for the 'essence and inner virtue of the community'—a quest, that is, for the national identity" (123). The aforementioned search for the "essence" was felt when England

separated itself from Catholic Europe as a result of Henry VIII's failure to get an annulment of his marriage to Catherine of Aragon from the Pope.

Although English nationalism sharply rose in the eighteenth century and was in its glory in the nineteenth century, it can actually be traced back as an early modern phenomenon some two centuries earlier. I contend that Henry VIII's break with Rome marks the line that separated England's identity from the collective European / Catholic identity. Earlier, the victory of Henry V over the French at Agincourt at 1415 was another precursor of national pride. The establishment of the Anglican Church meant, among other things, that England as a country would embrace Englishness as opposed to Europeanism / Christendom. Henry VIII wrote the first early modern laws, instating the "Tudor revolution in government," explains Geoffrey Elton (160). Thomas Cromwell drafted the Act in Restraint of Appeals in 1533 for King Henry VIII which in its famous preamble clearly indicates, according to Elton, the first modern manifestation of the nascent national English identity:

> Where by [sic] divers sundry old authentic histories and chronicles it is manifestly declared and expressed that this realm of England is an empire ... governed by one supreme head and king having the dignity and royal estate of the imperial crown of the same, unto whom a body politic, compact of all sorts and degrees of people divided in terms and by names of spiritualty and temporalty, be bounden and owe to bear next to God a natural and humble obedience. ("Tudor Constitution" 353)

This represents the first time England is referred to as a "realm" and an "empire" independent of Europe— a country that is ahead of Europe in both political as well as religious reforms.

Protestantism, as noted earlier, was the catalyst that sparked the new English identity which virtually developed to English nationalism later as England ventured into Ireland and the

New World. This nationalism was felt deeply after the defeat of the Spanish Armada by England in 1588. The English victory over Catholic Spain kindled nationalism in England after a long period during which the English thought to have had patriotism rather than nationalism. "… [I]t was at the nexus of Protestantism and English nationalism that English colonialism was born," asserts Scanlan. "In the end, the colonial project became an indispensable component in the English nation's search for a coherent identity" (Scanlan 34). It follows then that the emergence of English nationalism necessitated colonial ambitions of England in order to compete with other European colonial powers—namely, its arch enemy, Spain.

English individuality and their pride of their country, history, and language developed to such a degree that they felt different from their European counterparts. Scanlan points out "that colonial endeavor could nourish an emerging sense of national and religious identity" (22) Religion and colonialism reciprocated interest; it was of mutual interest to them to ally. The first English colonial project in the New World used religious pretext; it used the atrocities that Catholic Spain inflicted upon the indigenous people in the New World when it had converted them to Catholicism—used them to try to colonize the New World and try to convert its natives to Protestantism in a more "merciful" manner, so to speak. The colonies were seen as extensions of the [English] nation "and as the most effective way of articulating England's commitment to Protestantism" (22). So, English colonialism was motivated by intertwining religious, national, and economic interest. The simultaneity of the previously discussed factors shaped a huge colonial project that eventually created "The Empire on which the sun never sets"—the British Empire.

V- Shakespeare's England: The English Encounter with the 'Other'

Foreigners played a few major roles in Shakespeare's plays; *Othello*, for example, still draws literary discussions and criticism after some four hundred years. Noted earlier, Caliban also still occupies literary space in the western canon and continues to instigate more and more takes on his unique character. Shylock as a religious foreigner (Other) has always invigorated heated dialogues about his multi-faceted character. To name only the aforementioned seminal characters of Shakespeare, one can claim that the Bard has created a discursive place right within the western canon, given the fact that alien characters were not familiar enough to the English society and the English audience. Shakespeare gives the 'Other' some margin to defend themselves against prejudice and stereotypical images imposed by westerners. De Sousa asserts that Shakespeare contributed to exposing Europe / England to foreign characters and that the "European perception of alien worlds is profoundly ambivalent, ranging from fascination to overt xenophobia" (8). The very fact that Shakespeare did so indicates that the English society was exposed to foreign presence within England as early as the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. For Sousa "Shakespeare's contribution is unique" due to his "ability to reaffirm individual human dignity at moments of intense cultural conflict and racial and ethnic prejudice" (8). He further contends that "cross-cultural encounter" in the drama of Shakespeare "involves cultural definition, introspection, [and] identity exchange" (8). Shakespeare was well aware of the Renaissance world around him when Europe, in general, and his own country, England in particular, was launching a colonial project that would result in a cross-cultural globe where races, ethnicities, and religions would come into contact in one way or another.

The beginning of the western encounter with the Other was marked by exploitation on the part of Europeans and by atrocities on the part of the latter as the very early encounter led to slavery. Slaves were brought by European settlers as forced labor to the plantations and mines of the New World, and the encounter with the indigenous people was also turbulent as the European colonizers imposed their culture, language, religious, and government. Europeans established forts along the west coasts of Africa where slaves were rounded, purchased, and held to be shipped to the New World and Europe. Europeans allied with African tribe chieftains, who were tantalized by money to sell their own people to Europeans. Colonized people were subdued by force: "Their first encounter was marked by violence and their existence together—that is to say the exploitation of the native by the settlers—was carried on by dint of a great array of bayonets and cannons" (Fanon 36).

If we take England as a prototypical European country, I contend that the Other falls into two groups: non-Whites and non-Christians. Both groups were subject to prejudice and discrimination. It is the purpose of this dissertation to discover the tropes and nuances of discrimination and alienation of the non-European/non-English through examining Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* (1596), *Troilus and Cressida* (1602), *Antony and Cleopatra* (1606), and *The Tempest* (1611), as well as other works by the Bard; I will show both the grievances and the counter discursive methods—defenses that Shakespeare uses to demystify colonialism.

The religious other, namely Jews, is of a great exigency in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in England. Historically, there had been a long English encounter with Jews. Because King Edward I banished Jews from England in 1290, many of them were obliged to convert to Christianity in order to stay in England. The conversion to Christianity created great sensitivity

towards the newly converts as well as fear among the English population from the ostensible Christians. It was not until under Cromwell in 1656 that Jews were readmitted to England. Concerning the Jewish question in England, James Shapiro examines the way in which Jews were viewed in England during Shakespeare's day and earlier times too. He explains how Jewishness played a central part in the formation of the English identity because it was set against being a devout Christian. Shapiro asserts that "while there were not many Jews in early modern England, it was nonetheless a society surprisingly preoccupied with the Jewish questions" (1). Examples of such questions according to Shapiro include: "In what ways were Jews racially and physically different? Did those who convert lose all traces of their Jewishness? …, or were Englishness and Jewishness mutually inclusive identities?" (1). This debate, I posit, shows the sensitivity by which Shakespeare tackles the issue of Jewishness in *The Merchant of Venice* and his use of an ostensibly Italian setting to reflect on the precarious issue of religion in England during the Renaissance.

Elsewhere in Europe, Jews were persecuted and annihilated in the Iberian Peninsula—Spain and Portugal. The Inquisition started in 1478 when thousands of Jews were forced to convert to Catholicism. King Ferdinand of Spain decreed the banishment of the remainder of Jews from Spain in 1492. Even for Jews who chose to convert to Christianity, sincerity of their conversion was questioned. Part of the Inquisition campaign, in fact, was to uncover the apostates who falsely claimed that they were Christian, while in fact were embracing other faiths. Shakespeare, in *The Merchant of Venice,* exposes this western injustice toward the religious Other and shows how religious affiliation is affected by economic colonization.

In England during Shakespeare's time, foreigners of different races, cultures, and religions were known, especially in the city of London. Shakespeare's works incorporate

numerous references to alien locales, species, and people. He might have had the chance to both read about and meet some aliens. Ania Loomba argues that the theater of the Renaissance encompasses a great deal of issues related to outsiders like "Indians and Moors, gypsies and Jews, Ethiopians and Moroccans, Turks, Moors, Jews, 'savages', the 'wild Irish,' the 'uncivil Tartars,' and other 'outsiders'" and that some of those outsiders played central roles on stage like Othello and Shylock. According to Loomba, the English people looked at outsiders dubiously: those foreigners were held in a bad light most of the time as they were simply different from Whites in so many ways (147).

I posit that the European encounter with the Other comprises a complex web of racial, religious, and cultural components that intersect and negotiate in many manners which are tainted with misunderstanding, stereotypes, myths, distrust, and confrontations, as we will further see in the course of this dissertation. Shakespeare is sensitive to as well as aware of those elements of interactions with non-westerners; he often deals with the Other in an objective manner that reinstates the eroded subjectivity of the Other. The Bard, even on occasion, rants against the West's prejudice, stereotypical images, hypocrisy, and chauvinism. This dissertation will show that Shakespeare demythologizes colonial powers and uncovers the discursive practices of the colonial project that claims to civilize and better the lives of the colonized while in fact it erodes and blemishes their cultural and racial subjectivity. My study, building on the findings of the post-colonial critics, carries this discussion into a new area by noting that this expose applies to all imperialistic powers of all ages.

Chapter Two

Demythologizing the Economic Facet of Colonialism in *The Merchant of Venice*

I- "Why, fear not, man; I will not forfeit it": The New Capitalists

Shakespeare in *The Merchant of Venice* proposes that the ascent of the European powers to world hegemony in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries was economic in essence. Economic considerations were the main mover for early colonial expansion outside Europe as the continent witnessed a population explosion, experienced lack of resources, and underwent a marked increase of prices at the turn of the sixteenth century, all of which led to rising political turmoil during the seventeenth century across much of Europe. Western governments commissioned explorers, sailors, scholars, and merchants to venture out and seize rich lands, exploit resources, and annex territories to Western dominions, in the process converting people's beliefs, subduing cultures, and subordinating large masses of non-Europeans under Western power. In one reading of the play, *The Merchant of Venice* can be construed as a prime example of how the complex system of capitalism works as a system of alienation, domination, and dehumanization. The rise of English nationalism and English rivalry with Spain and other European countries were factors which aided the emergent capitalism and exploration of other lands for the benefit of England. Shakespeare quite possibly chose Italy because Italian cities had engaged in foreign trade and established heavily used commerce routes before other European trade centers. In addition, the choice of Venice as the setting afforded Shakespeare more freedom to reflect and comment indirectly on his own country as a theatrical space for his play. Italian cities like Florence, Genoa, Lucca, Sienna, and Venice—all outposts of early colonialism—lay the stepping stone for the spread of colonial capitalism outside Europe. Another reason for Shakespeare to use Venice is that, bordering on the East, it comprised the site for the

epistemological tension between the East and the West in history. Its maritime borders with the East became the locus for the struggle in the western thought between the subject / the Self—that is, the West—and the object / the Other—namely, the East. Venice was a discursive space within which different races came into contact with the West for different reasons: Turks, Moors, and Jews occupied marginal spaces that fostered interaction with western cultures. Shakespeare, I contend, demystifies the subversive impact of western cultures on the Other. The alienation of and treatment toward Shylock epitomizes the attitude towards the Other in the West; Shylock is denied fair litigation, forced to convert, loses his daughter, and is stripped of his wealth: all in all, he is subverted. In my reading of the play, the fate of Shylock is commensurate with and representative of the western apocalyptic outcome of struggle with non-westerners: the West, in this view, has the upper hand for it represents power and Truth.

The Bard was well aware of the workings of the new colonial project that was often shrouded with an economic façade; he wrote *The Merchant of Venice* at a time of English / European emerging capitalism that replaced a long established system of Feudalism. For centuries, an alliance existed in England between landed noblemen who owned huge properties and the monarchy wherein the two exchanged mutually advantageous benefits. During the Renaissance, as a way to raise money to pay off the debt, the monarch was forced to forge a new alliance between traders and the ruling class. This precipitated the socio-economic shift in England wherein power eventually devolved from the nobility to the mercantile class. The proponents of the fledgling capitalism worked to establish a new economic system by removing the remnants of old economic systems in order to pave the way for colonial capitalism which eventually took over not only Europe but also the whole world. As far as our modern sensibilities are concerned, I believe that Shakespeare can be considered a precursor to modernity; ahead of

his time, he seems to anticipate the time when colonial capitalism would become dominant along with many other factors like the law which were channeled to support the claim of Antonio against Shylock. In *The Merchant of Venice*, Shakespeare is showing the emergence of a new power, capitalism / colonialism that will replace an old one, feudalism, as Kermode asserts: "Shakespeare's plays can reproduce the dominant power, but at the same time distort or subvert it" (33). The rising socio-political power changed England as well as Europe. Political, social, and commercial powers in the Renaissance competed for colonial gains. *The Merchant of Venice*, directly or indirectly speaking to this change, creates "sites of institutional and ideological contestation," according to Stephen Greenblatt (*Negotiations*, 3).

Artistically, Shakespeare portrays the struggle between two economic ways of making money. First, Shylock depicts the usurious method of charging high interest, no doubt detested by Europeans who had no recourse but to borrow on high interest and in most cases default and go to prison. Second, international trade, the way Antonio makes profit, provided another money-making scheme. Antonio is loved by the common people as he counterbalances the usury of Shylock by lending money gratis; he is also an honest and upstanding citizen of Venice who helps his friend Bassanio regardless of the potential risks of dealing with Shylock.

The Merchant of Venice demystifies the hypocrisy of the colonial West which supports Europe's international trade wherein it enjoys the upper hand in exploiting the bonanza of the virgin lands outside Europe. The victory of Antonio over Shylock can be viewed as encapsulating the attitude prevalent in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries onward in Europe in regard to its expansion into and discoveries of new territories for both settlement and for exploitation of rich resources.

Moreover, international trade—that is, colonialism by appropriation—involves heroism and risk-taking as opposed to Shylock's domestic business which exploits the poor. In this reading of the *The Merchant of Venice* Shakespeare delineates the colonial discourse that upholds adventure, voyaging, fervent competition, and the oppression of any opposing forces like Shylock's—the Other's—business of money-lending.

Within the newly conceptualized colonial capitalism itself were conflicting forces. Shylock, a representative of monetary capitalism, is seen by Antonio, a representative of the merchant capitalism, as an obstacle that has to be subordinated to risk-taking colonial endeavors. The morality of the new capitalist merchants incorporates inhumane values, cruelty, and adventurous risk-taking for the sake of accumulating wealth. Antonio in *The Merchant of Venice* is not employed at a real job that requires labor: he only awaits the arrival of his wealth-laden ships that return to Venice from faraway seas. Antonio represents the new colonial merchant who reaps profits from heaps of cheaply-bought merchandise from exotic lands, rich in resources and spices. Antonio, the new bourgeois, clashes with Shylock, the lending capitalist, for domination of the market; Antonio uses all means at his disposal to crush any resistance, although legitimate under Venetian law, in an attempt to take over the colonial mercantile arena. Shakespeare exposes the hegemonic economic discourse devised by Antonio and exposes the abuse of Venetian (Western) law by Portia.

The new colonial capitalists lack vision and planning; Antonio cannot be sure that his argosies will arrive safely before he draws the details of his transaction with Shylock. The play, thus, opens with "economic" uncertainty; Antonio declares that he is "so sad" and does not know the reason for his forlornness: "I am to learn" (1.1.1, 5). Salerio has the prescription for Antonio's sadness: "Your mind is tossin*g* on the Ocean / There where your argosies with portly

sail / Like signors and rich burghers on the flood" (1.1.8-10). The moody disenchantment of Antonio speaks to his psychic unrest and uncertainty that overshadow his mercantile venture; the whole enterprise of materiality is "tossed." Shakespeare, through Antonio's inner turmoil, criticizes the colonial enterprise that mainly depends on exploitations of the world resources for the benefit of Venice / West. Antonio, I propose, models the new capitalist merchant who cares essentially for profit; he agrees to the terms of Shylock's bond without a discrete calculation of his ability to abide by the terms. Antonio, a man who used to loan to people interest-free, does not take the pound-of-flesh detail of the bond seriously: "Hie thee, gentle Jew.—
/ The Hebrew will turn Christian; he grows kind" (1.3.176-77). The new merchant for Shakespeare is impulsive, risky, yet cavalier. Antonio does not even contemplate the possibility of forfeiture.

In addition to Antonio's commercial miscalculation, he in the first place knows two things for sure: first, he does not have the money to loan Bassanio. Second, he knows that Bassanio desires a beautiful lady and her money. When approached by his friend Bassanio for the loan, Antonio forthrightly states:

> Thou know'st that all my fortunes are at sea;
> Neither have I money nor commodity
> To raise a present sum. Therefore go forth.
> Try what my credit can in Venice do;
> That shall be racked even to the uttermost
> To furnish thee to Belmont to fair Portia.
> Go presently inquire, and so will I,

Where money is, and I no question make

To have it of my trust or for my sake. (1.1.177-85)

Shakespeare here exposes the excesses of the new economic trends in the West; his association of evil with the Jew results from and is in accordance with the stereotype of Jews as usurers and devils.

Although the Bard has ostensibly portrayed a hateful Shylock, nevertheless he frames the play so that we sympathize with Shylock as an ostracized and alienated figure in the society. The new materialism that claims Shylock is evil has, ironically and hypocritically, used evil to marginalize and destroy him, as he hinders the emerging colonial materialistic discourse that is taking shape in the west.

In attacking the iniquity of the new capitalism, Shakespeare demythologizes the evils of capitalism by associating it with a Jew, thereby creating a bond with his anti-Semitic audience. The representations of Shylock as an evil and greedy character draw upon the commonplace stereotypes towards Jews in England in the seventeenth century; the Bard does not advocate stereotypical representations of Shylock. Rather, he exposes misconceptions circulated in England and elsewhere in Europe about Jews. Shakespeare, to use the language of Said's *Orientalism*, uses "representations" that "rely upon institutions, traditions, conventions, [and] agreed upon codes of understanding for their effect" in English society (22). For the audience to get the capitalist-disparaging message, Shakespeare used representations well known to the audience. Shylock has not come to usury by choice: because Jews in England and Europe were legally barred from property ownership, guild memberships, and work privileges, they were forced to resort to work as merchants, traders, and lenders of money for interest to earn their livelihood in a hostile environment. Adorno and Horkheimer explain that "Commerce was not

[the Jews'] vocation but their fate" (175). The Jews socio-political imperatives—their being ostracized—compelled them to seek the fields of commerce and money-lending to make their living.

Given the detestation of Jews for religious reasons, Shylock may owe his hatred for Antonio "for he is a Christian," but more to the point, I contend, is that he hates him because "he lends out money gratis and brings down / The rate of usance here with us in Venice" (1.3.39, 41-42). The core of tension between Antonio and Shylock then is more commercial than religious despite initial appearance. One of the men, in short, is forcing the other out of the market. Shakespeare, in this reading, is indirectly and obliquely, criticizing monopoly, dishonest competition, and colonial capitalist hegemony in *The Merchant of Venice*.

Shakespeare subverts English anti-Semitism in order to undermine presumptions and stereotypes by shifting the focus from a mere religious confrontation into a fierce colonial commercial battle over materials, markets, and recourses. The Bard, to some degree, humanizes the demonized Shylock by showing the hypocrisy of the Venetian / colonial culture that claims both civility, and human, religious, commercial, and racial rights. At a time of heightened nationalism in England, Shylock, for the English audience, reflects upon "what it meant to be English during a period marked by social, religious, and political instability," as Shapiro describes it (57). Historically, English people accentuated the mythological evil of Jews throughout history before and during the Renaissance. Those misconceptions were used to protect the English nationalism which is essentially a sort of "racialized nationalism," according to Shapiro (135). Mythological representations of Jews as evil were used as a propaganda to reinforce Englishness; that is, "The myth of the evil Jew," circulating in England at the time, reinforced Shakespeare's criticism of the evils of colonial [commercial] capitalism in *The*

Merchant of Venice, which, I allege, is the real evil that jeopardizes England. Of course this emphasis is subtle and discretely nuanced.

Shylock is another capitalist in Venice who also has made lots of money from loaning with high interest. We may assume that he does not force people to borrow from him under unfair conditions, but it is nevertheless an economic reality that Shakespeare attacks since colonial capitalism inevitably enslaves people to harsh conditions. Antonio, who destroys Shylock at the end, is not always there to lend interest-free. The Bard demythologizes colonialism by showing its rejection of the Other. Colonialism works to control the world, just as Venice, and by extension England and Europe, position themselves for the economic takeover of the world through capitalism. As part of the capitalist system, Shylock is both a subject and an object; he is the former since he has to earn his livelihood by charging high interest, and an object as the underdog of the Venetian racial hypocrisy and religious prejudice. Shylock also plays the same way Antonio does: not having the money to lend Antonio, he resorts to borrowing from Tubal:

> I am debating of my present store,
> And, by the near guess of my memory,
> I cannot instantly raise up the gross
> Of full three thousand ducats. What of that?
> Tubal, a wealthy Hebrew of my tribe,
> Will furnish me. (1.3.50-55)

Shakespeare seemingly demythologizes capitalism that outsources its ability for the sake of making profit; both Antonio and Shylock, although for different reasons, outsource their actual possession and resort to borrowing and lending to others. The play insinuates that

capitalist transactions, often complex, add more burden and bonds with the goal of scoring profits, regardless of the morality behind those bonds and regardless of the future expectations of a changing economy, of which Antonio has yet to become a victim when he loses his fortune at sea and Shylock falls prey to his own traps of greed.

Notwithstanding Shylock's victimization in *The Merchant of Venice*, Shakespeare portrays him as the typical greedy capitalist. Precisely computational, he fails to predict the collateral risks in his transaction with Antonio whose ships are still abroad, though he mentions that maritime trade is dangerous: "But ships are but boards, / sailors but men. There be land rats and water rats, / water thieves and land thieves—I mean pirates— and / then there is the peril of waters, winds, and rocks" (1.3.21-24). Although Shylock inquires about the financial status of Antonio when he negotiates the terms of the loan with Bassanio, he is unable to predict that Antonio may default: "Antonio is a good man." Because Bassanio does not grasp what is meant by "good," Shylock explains what he means: "My meaning in saying he / is a good man is to have you understand me that he is / sufficient" (1.3.12, 15-17). The computations of the new capitalist fall short of anticipating the forfeiture of Antonio—a typical characteristic of the new capitalism to which Shakespeare alludes here.

Because Venice is a city that gives trade as well as citizenship privileges to foreigners, it benefits very much from its dealings with commerce and in bringing their money into the city. If we accept the fact that Shakespeare is also talking about London by extension, then the Jews are instrumental to the English new economic system as well as to whole Europe, as Jonathan Israel maintains: "the Jew-myth was gradually replaced by a hard-headed reappraisal of their usefulness as financiers, whilst the Catholic-Protestant deadlock generated a new generation of political thinkers – Montaigne, Bodin, Lipsius, Bacon – for whom religious scruples took second

place to raison d'état" (qtd. in Usher 281). Although by the advent of the seventeenth century the grip of institutionalized religion had eased and Europe started to have a more tolerant view of other religions after the upheavals it underwent due to wars between Catholics and Protestants, a more secularized Europe began to emerge. The considerable revenue amassed by Jews was needed to finance Europe's nascent colonial enterprise. Shakespeare foreshadows this in *The Merchant of Venice*: he divulges the unscrupulous way in which Venice and Belmont ally to take over Shylock's wealth. Bassanio uses Shylock's money to conquer Portia—the wealthy Belmont lady—so as he can take over both her body and wealth too. In this interpretation, it is a colonial project right from the beginning in which law, religion, racial discrimination, and alienation systematically coalesce to strip Shylock of his money.

Advertently, capitalism allies with governments to secure political support for entrepreneurial missions. Portia, in support of Antonio, clearly allies with the Duke of Venice to terminate Shylock from the market. The governor provides a shield for capitalism to abuse the law. The duke intervenes in the trial scene in a way very much at odds to established adjudicating practices of separation between the ruling class and the courts of law. The duke appeals to Shylock to accept Antonio's offer and save Antonio the costly payback with his own flesh. His appeal is meant to save Antonio, the merchant, and, perhaps to a lesser degree, to secure financial stability by keeping Shylock a player in the market as he pays taxes and levies to Venice. The Duke has the capacity to annul the bond; the profit that Venice gains from the money lending business is behind his hesitation to settle down the issue without litigation. Antonio, who is being tried, finds excuse for "The Duke" who "cannot deny the course of law; / For the commodity that strangers have / With us in Venice" (3.3.26-28).

Although Antonio indicates “that the trade and profit of the city / Consisteth of all nations” (3.3.30-31) and although Shylock enjoys the free trade of Venice— “let the danger light / Upon your charter and your city’s freedom!” (4.1.38-39)—Shakespeare seemingly suggests that the treatment of Shylock dismisses the West's claim of globalization when it comes to domestic competition: a trade war is waged against Shylock that leaves him bankrupt. Monopoly, one may insinuate, is an underlying character of new capitalism. In the trial scene, the Duke states the importance of foreign traders in his city since he does not want to alienate foreign traders. He tries to settle down the contention between Antonio and Shylock without a trial in court.

Colonialism started as a commercial enterprise—often capital in nature— whereby new territories were discovered, invested in, and settled. England as well as other European countries dispersed their discovery campaign into the four corners of the world, bringing back much wanted resources to the West. Antonio has a far-flung trade; Shylock catalogues the areas of commercial interest in which Antonio deals:

> He hath an
> argosy bound to Tripolis, another to the Indies. I un-
> derstand, moreover, upon the Rialto, he hath a third
> at Mexico, a fourth for England, and other ventures he
> hath squandered abroad. (1.3.17-21)

This geographical catalogue hints at the massiveness of the colonial web during and after the Renaissance. Commerce emerged as a colonial tool by which masses of wealth were taken either by force or cheaply bought and transferred to Europe. “My ventures are not in one bottom trusted, / Nor to one place” (1.1.42-43), asserts Antonio. His foreign investments, in short, are not in one basket, since he has deployed his colonial capital practices in different geographical

regions of the world. This symbolizes the wide dispersion of the colonial practices outside Europe at a time when colonialism was just beginning to evolve.

I contend that *The Merchant of Venice* explores the commerce and capitalism that came to represent English nationalism and pride in Europe: "Englishness" meant Englishmen were disseminating English influence and culture all over the world, in part, through colonization of rich lands. It follows then that commerce was utilized as an instrumental tool in this endeavor. The accentuation of the multi-faceted character of Shylock serves two parallel ends—first, to accommodate the English social attitudes towards foreigners, and, second, to project, albeit subtly, the hypocrisy of the English / Venetian societies that claim civility and mercy. Shakespeare was not positioned to undermine current stereotypical image towards racial, religious, and ethnic minorities in the West, if his goal was to convey this message to the very communities he criticized: he is, after all, circumventing, even undermining, the world view of the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Jews were not alone in the "barren metal" business [money lending] in Europe at that time (1.3.132). According to Ingram, "Many more people [other than Jews] engaged themselves in the business, borrowing became respectable, and the covert procedures of the underground moneylenders quickly surfaced as the standard practice of the newly legalized brokers" (40).

Capitalists in *The Merchant of Venice* are not only Shylock and Antonio; the sub-plot of Portia's marriage story centers on another capitalist attitude that Shakespeare also demystifies. Because Portia's father considers his daughter a form of capital gain, he takes pain to insure that the one who marries her is worth her value. The caskets classify how people look at things from a capitalist point of view. Upon opening the silver casket and not finding Portia's picture, the Prince of Arragon plainly exclaims: "Did I deserve no more than a fool's head? / Is that my

prize? Are my deserts no better?"— a clear indication of what he was looking for in marrying Portia (2.9.59-60). Morocco—the racial Other whom Portia hopes will not pick the right casket—chooses gold; this speaks, in one reading, to the growing interest in money over human values. Bassanio is apparently after "a lady richly left" more than he is after love (1.1.161). Portia, thus, is doubly commodified—by her father and by Bassanio. The new bourgeois capitalist, Bassanio, has led a carefree life typical of the capitalist whom Shakespeare demystifies in the play—wasting his money and indulging in debts to cater to his caprice and ephemeral desires; he confesses his improvidence to Antonio:

> 'Tis not unknown to you, Antonio,
> How much I have disabled mine estate
> By something showing a more swelling port
> Than my faint means would grant continuance.
> Nor do I now make moan to be abridged
> From such a noble rate; but my chief care
> Is to come fairly off from the great debts
> Wherein my time, something too prodigal,
> Hath left me gaged. (1.1.122-30)

Subsequently, Bassanio resorts to conquering Portia to alleviate his financial burdens; he is after "a lady richly left" (1.1.161). Upon winning her in Belmont, Gratiano thrillingly declares: "We are the Jasons, we have won the fleece!" (3.2.241). Bassanio is Machiavellian in his suit for Portia: "I come by note to give, and to receive" (3.2.140); later Portia gives herself, her household and wealth to Bassanio:

> This house, these servants, and this same myself

Are yours, my lord's. I give them with this ring,

Which when you part from, lose, or give away,

Let it presage the ruin of your love

And be my vantage to exclaim on you. (3.2.170-74)

The play juxtaposes commercial [investments] exchanges for love: Antonio risks his own life for his friendship to Bassanio, Shylock offers his friendship to Antonio (which Antonio turns down) to grant him the loan, and Portia offers all her wealth to insure Bassanio's love. Karen Newman indicates that "the exchange between the erotic and the economic" is a characteristic of *The Merchant of Venice*'s "representation of human relations" (123). She also elaborates that Portia offers a great deal in order to detach Bassanio from Antonio: "In giving more than can be reciprocated, Portia short-circuits the system of exchange and the male bonds it creates, winning her husband away from the arms of Antonio" (125). The new capitalists are Machiavellian in nature, governed by their mutual interest in business. Although she has no money in exchange for her marriage to Bassanio, Portia, in fact, deals with her marriage as a materialistic transaction, giving her monetary as well as corporeal possessions in exchange for love—if not for sex.

Clearly, capitalism as an economic system, had commenced, although slowly, during Shakespeare's time, so he took it as a subject of this play in a manner which he had not in his histories, romances, and comedies. In *The Merchant of Venice* Shakespeare eschews genealogical political drama in order to attain more freedom to demythologize the changing political discourse in England in the seventeenth century. The political atmosphere of the day faced opposition, especially when added to the uncertainty of the monarchy after Elizabeth. In the play, Shakespeare does not center his plot on kings, heirs, princes, and warriors; instead, he

focuses on a new socio-economic trend that is being shaped in England / West / Europe / Venice. It is about a class whose members—Antonio, Shylock, and Bassanio—seek power through the acquisition of money, not the other way around as had formerly been the case. The economic power will later be harnessed to gain more wealth as well as political power. The Bard, eloquently, wrote a play about the new materialistic discourse that was created, in part, as a result of the political instability and the rise of a national English identity that was jockeying for position and power in Europe and elsewhere at the end of Elizabeth's reign. *The Merchant of Venice* is a visionary play that, metaphorically, anticipates the marriage between capitalism, politics, and colonialism to control the Other. Shylock's tragedy, I contend, amalgamates the conspiracy against the Other—Shylock within the Dukedom of Venice as a political entity, Portia as a representative of the politicized law, and Antonio as an imperial merchant, who seeks the destruction of his opponents to monopolize the market—that is, the colonized world towards which Antonio's argosies sail to bring back cheap spoils and extravagant exotica. It is a nascent colonial world view that Shakespeare demystifies at its very outset.

Shakespeare examines the racial complexity of Shylock as an Other in the Venetian / English / Western dominions. Shylock, in one reading, stands as a racial, religious, cultural, and economic Other who has to yield to the western hegemony for the colonial project to prevail. Capitalism, and by extension colonialism, hence, manipulates racial otherness, religious difference, political power, and market dynamics to monopolize and hegemonize the world for capital gains regardless of the universal and civilizing claims of colonialism. One possible reading of the play, thus, is that the West considers the Other a fair game that has to yield to the powerful.

Several factors contributed to the emerging of capitalist colonialism in early modern and modern Europe: 1) nationalistic movements, 2) class mobility wherein new business and commercial classes challenged and destabilized nobility and feudalism, 3) demographical rivalry and territorial claims in Europe that led to wars between European nations, 4) the need to expand markets to provide for the increasing urbanization of the former agrarian Europe, and 5) the rise of a more secularized culture that forced religion to take a back seat to economic exigencies. Most of the aforementioned factors crystallize theatrically in Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*. Europe after the sixteenth century was never the same again. The Eurocentric colonial paradigm was pushing outside the continent looking for resources—both human and material; it was the economy after all that triggered colonialism, and Shakespeare demythologizes the materialistic bases of colonialism as well as its social formulations and interactions: Bassanio, Portia, Antonio, and Shylock are all related through economic dynamics that govern their relations, or to be precise, their transactions.

II- Shylock's Otherness: An Enclave of Resistance

Although religion is present in the play, Shakespeare, I contend, does not mean to project religious discrimination in Europe as a separate entity; rather, he shows how colonialism uses belief and race as boundaries to engulf the Other within. Historically, the Jews, banished from England in 1290 by Edward I, were not brought back until 1656 when Cromwell re-admitted them. Because only a few Jews remained in England during the Interregnum as undercover or converts, it is hard to believe that Shakespeare ever had first-hand experience with Jews. Why then did he choose Shylock the Jew as one of the main characters in the play? Shakespeare, I contend, wants to create an enclave of resistance within the western hemisphere that was not

ready for such a daring attempt. Thus, Shakespeare's astute use of Shylock appeals to the consciousness of westerners who are prejudiced on one hand and secures a safe domain wherein to mystify the West. He chooses a Jew since there had always been a historical and heated hatred toward Jews in Europe. By making this choice, Shakespeare created a protected domain within which he subtly criticized the West without being shunned and deemed a traitor. Shakespeare is deconstructing the self-centered romantic subjectivity of the West as the origin and custodian of the Truth. For Shakespeare, not confronting the Eurocentric subjectivity bolsters ethnocentrism and fervent nationalism and makes him complicit in both. In *The Merchant of Venice*, the Bard is, to some degree, humanizing the Object—that is Shylock—and giving him a space to resist and expose entrenched modes of thought and stereotypes.

Shylock's Jewishness and racial difference become the milieu by which Shakespeare demythologizes the West. In one reading, the villainy of Shylock is a product of the West; he could not act but viciously in a hostile terrain. His villainy has deep roots in the minds of westerners: Jews were considered usurers and covetous people. One of Shakespeare's intentions in *The Merchant of Venice* is to divulge the inhumane treatment of Shylock who is many times "spat" upon; he bitterly speaks to Antonio about the discrimination he suffers upon his request of the loan:

> You call me misbeliever, cutthroat dog,
> And spit upon my Jewish gabardine,
> And all for use of that which is mine own. (1.3.109-11)

He earlier complains of degradation and warns Antonio:

> Thou called'st me dog before thou hadst a cause,
> But since I am a dog, beware my fangs. (3.3.6-7)

Even this warning attests to the fact that Shylock's negativity results from discrimination and marginalization of non-Europeans in the West. He addresses Salerio and Salanio: "The villainy you / teach me I will execute, and it shall go hard but I will / better the instruction" (3.1.67-69).

It follows then that the peculiar bond Shylock demands from Antonio is in part a sort of revenge, albeit unwarranted. Jews in Venice / West lived in ghettos, segregated from the main white population, but there presence was commercially crucial to Venice. Frantz Fanon describes the segregated entities of the colonizers and the colonized, claiming that "the colonial world is cut in two" (38). Shylock exists and operates in Venice mainly because the Venetian government needs his services. The mutual interest between the colonized / Other and colonizer / Self calls for unwritten law that governs their relation. Shylock is imminently subverted to a place of colonized in Venice. Fanon elaborates on the reciprocity that applies to Shylock's case:

> The zone where the natives [Shylock / Jews] live is not complementary to the zone inhabited by the settlers [colonized]. The two zones are opposed, but not in the service of a higher unity. Obedient to the roles of pure Aristotelian logic, they both follow the principal of reciprocal exclusivity. (38-39)

For Fanon, the mutual interest relation between the colonizer and colonized shrouds a bitter reality of a divided world. Shylock wears gabardine to set him apart from other Venetians; this racial compartmentalization is built into the colonial discourse so it becomes easy to exact hegemony and subordination. The colonial world, according to Fanon, is "divided into compartments"—that is, inhabited by different people with different lifestyles (39-40). Shylock's protestations attest to his feeling of degradation.

Venice in the seventeenth century was a superfluous marketplace that incorporates many foreigners who engaged in business that provided for the progress of the republic city. The Duke of Venice tries not to settle the issue between Antonio and Shylock without resorting to litigation, but nevertheless faces Shylock's unshakable trust in the Venetian law that proves otherwise at the end of the day. Antonio, first, makes clear the reciprocal as well as the lucrative connection between foreign traders and Venice and, second, asserts the possibility that the ruling authority may not be able to side with him against Shylock:

> The Duke cannot deny the course of law;
> For the commodity that strangers have
> With us in Venice, it if be denied,
> Will much impeach the justice of the state,
> Since that the trade and profit of the city
> Consisteth of all nations. (3.3.26-31)

Although, I do not think Antonio really believes that the court will award Shylock the pound of flesh, neither does he, when closing the deal with Antonio, intend to have his flesh in the first place, as Salerio rhetorically asks Shylock: “Why, I am sure, if he [Antonio] forfeit, thou wilt not take his flesh. / What’s that good for?” (3.1.48-49). I believe that Antonio—the merchant—is aware of the sensitivity that Venice has in regard to relying on foreign traders as they connect this commercial outpost—Venice—to the world, mainly the East which is a pivotal point of the western colonial enterprise. The insistence upon the spirit of the law later comes as a reaction to an accumulation of offenses which Shylock suffers in relation to the bond on different levels—Antonio, government [Duke], law, and his own daughter’s defection and conversion; all the aforementioned deepen his revenge. Shylock’s vindictiveness results from the alienating culture

of Venice in the first place; he suffers intensely and wants to counterbalance the bitterness he harbors within his battered self.

If we, according to Greenblatt, take Shakespeare's great works to be "sites of institutional and ideological contestation," then we can assert that Shakespeare in *The Merchant of Venice* challenges colonial ideology and critiques the newborn hegemony over the cultural other in the West / England (*Negotiations* 3). Shylock's thrifty way of life threatens the extravagant prodigality of the new capitalist, especially in Belmont where we witness merriness and partying in the last act. Shylock, an imminent danger to the new bourgeois businessmen, must be removed. Because Shylock's resistance fails at the end, he is swept away with the current and is reduced to merely a convert who is forcibly made to accept the doings of Bassanio and Portia, the new capitalists who even destroy—or let's say—reduce Antonio, the "royal merchant" (4.1.29), into a subordinate capitalist. Shylock and Antonio are losers while the winners in the new colonial capitalist game in Belmont are Portia and Bassanio—"the Jasons" (3.2.241).

Artistically, the Bard questions the validity of Shylock's isolation and Otherness in Venice. The very creation of Shylock is Shakespeare's courageous way of giving voice to the marginalized in the West. Shylock, I maintain, revolts against hypocrisy and degradation of his race; his resistance starts when he questions the moral grounds of the West: "hath not a Jew eyes?" (3.1.55-56). This bold question challenges the base of the colonial discourse because it tests its validity. By questioning the morality of the West, Shylock is shaking, albeit subtly, the structural complexity of the western society that claims peace, equality, and universality. Shylock's rhetorical resistance narrates the grievances of the Other in Venice. Shakespeare gives Shylock voice, especially in court, to challenge the very law which Venice claims to uphold, thereby showing the hypocrisy of the anti-alien sentiment in the West. Shylock is aware of the

rules of law as well as the hypocrisy of the Venetian culture; he challenges Venice according to its own rules:

> You have among you many a purchased slave,
> Which, like your asses and your dogs and mules,
> You use in abject and in slavish parts,
> Because you bought them. Shall I say to you,
> "Let them be free, Marry them to your heirs!
> Why sweat they under burdens? Let their beds
> Be made as soft as yours, and let their palates
> Be seasoned with such viands"? (4.1.90-97)

He continues:

> You will answer
> "The slaves are ours." So do I answer you:
> The pound of flesh which I demand of him
> Is dearly bought, is mine, and I will have it. (4.1.97-100)

Strangers, although introduced in some early modern English writings, had not, to that point, enjoyed much freedom in resisting alienation and marginality, as typified in Shakespeare's work—most prominently in Othello, Shylock, and Caliban; they are equipped to fight for their objectified subjectivity. They score some tactical gains but lose in the long run as the social, religious, cultural, and political atmosphere are not yet ready to accept the Other as a player on the western grounds.

Shylock cultivates sympathy through his narrative about disenfranchisement; he, to some degree, still has faith in both the political system—represented by the Duke—and the judicial

system—represented by Portia—as he presents his case in court. He is confronted with an epistemological alliance still in place between those two apparatuses. His enclave of resistance is too fragile to confront and defeat the complex web of alliances, discourses, and establishments in Venice. The resistance of Shylock is just the beginning and will surely need time to mature; historically, resistance movements reinforce and grow wider by time. Shakespeare, in this play, shows himself as a pioneer in initiating pockets of anti-establishment from within like those occupied by Othello and Shylock.

Shylock, despite the persecution he suffers, never is ashamed of his race; he has unparalleled pride in his "tribe" as Jessica terms it. He takes care of his family, performs his religious duties, and succeeds financially in a hostile environment; his racial and cultural pride is self-gained and real, not a fraudulent propagandistic crutch. Shylock is subverted by Venice at the end of the play: he is controlled economically, socially, and culturally. In his demise, Shakespeare demythologizes the freedom and cultural diversity of the West. The conversion of Shylock sums up all the tyranny he has witnessed in Venice. Obsequiously, he tells the court: "I pray you, give me leave to go from hence; / I am not well. Send the deed after me, / And I will sign it" (4.1.392-94). Shylock is well aware that his resistance has failed and that there is no use to continue; he is completely powerless to refute the West's civility and freedom.

III- "My own flesh and blood to rebel!" Divide and Conquer

The Bard's demystification of the colonial West is original in the sense that he uncovers some of the foundational pillars of the colonial discourse. In *The Merchant of Venice*, he displays the tactic of "divide and conquer," one of the colonial policies of any given empire that facilitates the domination of the colonized. Historically, the English emulated the strategies of

many past empires in their use of a tactic that eventually granted them superiority in the colonial arena of the world during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It is a simplistic and reductive interpretation to see *The Merchant of Venice* merely as a play about the religious clash between Judaism and Christianity, or a play about the clash of Old Testament law and New Testament grace, or a play about love relations and the sincerity of friends. Shakespeare may well have imagined the future division of large continents like Asia and Africa in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries by colonial powers that would mirror the Venetian power's subjugation of Shylock's household. To further isolate Shylock in Venice, his household is even more divided. Various forces in Venice collaborate to completely alienate him. His daughter, for instance, converts and leaves him, and his servant boy also leaves him to work for another household. To further alienate and disenfranchise Shylock, he is stripped of not only his wealth, but also his daughter. A prominent colonial strategy to dominate is to divide so it is easier to conquer. Shylock is a good father in the traditional sense; that is, he is protective over Jessica. "Alack, what heinous sin is it in me / To be ashamed to be my father's child! / But though I am a daughter to his blood / I am not to his manners" (2.3.16-19), states Jessica. Venice has succeeded in creating a chasm between Jessica and her father. She detaches herself from her father's manners which are seen as villainous in Venetian culture. Jessica prefers elopement with Lorenzo and embracing Christianity. Under the pressure of her father's strict confinement of her in the house and her love for Lorenzo, she chooses to split from her father, steal his money, and join with Lorenzo: "O Lorenzo, / If thou keep promise, I shall end this strife, / Become a Christian and thy loving wife" (2.3.19-21). She laments:

> What, must I hold a candle to my shames?
>
> They in themselves, good sooth, are too too light.

Why, ‘tis an office of discovery, love,

And I should be obscured. (2.6.42-45)

Although Shylock’s opponents have a hand in his daughter’s elopement, he is also to blame for this; he kept her behind walls. Colonialism, according to Ania Loomba, creates “one of the most complex and traumatic relationships in human history”; Jessica is divided between her love for Lorenzo and her duty to her father (2). Shylock strictly isolated his daughter so that she would not be affected by the culture that treats him as an outcast—that is to say, he wants to save her from the humiliation which he faces daily in the streets of Venice; but to his dismay the very culture from which he has segregated her, assimilates her into its domain. In Venice, as well as in the whole of Europe during the early modern European history, Jews like Shylock and Jessica were isolated by European Christian culture and by their own choices to preserve their distinct culture. They wanted to stay away from the Western European religious, socio-political, and cultural idiosyncrasies. Jonathan Israel explains that the Jewish culture between 1550 and 1655 leaned toward more interaction with, or at least openness to, the European culture. Israel remarks that a Jewish nationalism started to independently but distinctly formulate apart from the Jewish religious identity: “As late as the early sixteenth century, some Italian Jewish scholars,” he asserts, “adhered to traditional Judaism rather than inhabited a specifically Jewish cultural world. Intellectually, they had immersed themselves in the learning of their non-Jewish contemporaries” (171). For him, the Italian Renaissance demarcates a “firm dividing line between the medieval and early modern epochs in the historical experience and consciousness of western Jewry—that is, the Jews in Europe started to gradually integrate into the European culture, mostly economically, as they played a big role in the economy of Europe” (1). Jews in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries seized the potentials of a more secularized Europe, according to Israel, to

enhance their social and economic conditions. Israel furthermore comments on the increased interaction of Jews with their surrounding European environment:

> Allegiance to traditional Judaism now fused with a whole package of new elements: a more intensified political and historical awareness: a new involvement in poetry, music, and drama; an urgent, if somewhat rambling, quest to incorporate fragments of western philosophy and science into the emerging corpus of Jewish culture; all welded by a far more potent current of mysticism than had ever pervaded the Jewish world previously. (71)

Conversely, Shylock secludes his daughter from the outside European domain in an attempt to preserve his cultural identity. Freedom, I contend, more than love precipitates Jessica's departure from her father, because he in the first place secluded her from life outside their house in Venice. Because Venice had created a rift between her and Shylock, she describes herself as torn between the two forces inside her: she, on the one hand, sets herself apart from her father's wrong-doing—usury—and keeps herself eventually linked to him by virtue of blood lineage that is hard to change like religion. The struggle of ambivalent identity inside Jessica reaches critical mass when she decides to end the "strife" for the interest of the Venetian part of her identity, although she laments her disavowal of her past identity and relation to her father Shylock. The colonial discourse of Venice eventually overpowers her and severs her affinity to her previous identity of otherness:

> Alack, what heinous sin is it in me
> To be ashamed to be my father's child!
> But though I am a daughter to his blood,
> I am not to his manners. O Lorenzo,

If thou keep promise, I shall end this strife,

Become a Christian and thy loving wife! (2.3.16-21)

Jessica here asserts her difference from her father. This disparity is what colonialism has frequently played on to divide nations so it is easy to subjugate them. For Jessica's assimilation into Venice's culture, she has to draw a line between her personality and the villain father. Gratiano refers to her as "fair Jessica" (2.4.28), just as Lorenzo also refers to "fair Jessica" in (2.4.39) in an attempt to distinguish her color and racial difference from Shylock who belongs to the "countrymen" (3.2.285) of Chus—the son of Ham, the black-colored. Salerio also affirms whiteness of Jessica who is admissible to the white culture of Venice/West/England:

There is more difference between thy flesh and

hers than between jet and ivory, more between your

bloods than there is between red wine and Rhenish. (3.1.36-38)

To bodily differentiate between Shylock and Jessica is, in one interpretation, to delineate the borderline between white Europe and the dark Other. Color here is a racial marker endowed by the colonial West to show supremacy; Jessica has to undergo transformation in order to fit in the Venetian white community. I see the conversion of Jessica as a representation of the power of Venice / West to attract others to its freedom, culture, and whiteness. The difference between Jessica and her father signifies the representation of some good in the Other that can be utilized in a good manner. Jessica has the potentiality of good since she can mutate to suit the western discourse of superiority. Jessica's transfiguration fits into Venice's image of her: she is now recognized as having a fair complexion that conforms to Venice's criteria of the racial normalcy—namely, being white. Her whiteness shifts her from one paradigm of otherness to a new one of embraced typicality. Jessica is ready to assume a new role as a racially pure

individual of Venice / the West, free from the taints of Shylock's villainy, social subordination, and reviled ostracization.

Shylock's shock is great. He has proven to be loyal to his late wife whose ring Jessica steals and swaps for a monkey: "I would my daughter were / dead at my foot, and the jewels in her ear! Would she / were hearsed at my foot, and the ducats in her coffin!" (3.1.83-85), another sign of his conformity to the established Jewish marital and filial relations that seems to be strange in the new materialistic world of Venice, the new colonial place.

Shylock's household—its territorial entity and inhabitants—is divided, impoverished, and ultimately consumed by the dominant Venetian culture—a practice synonymous with colonialism and perhaps an ominous warning by Shakespeare, the genius iconoclast. Jessica's disowning of her father embitters him and pushes him deeper into vindictiveness. Shylock's insistence on Antonio's pound of flesh is a form of payback to Venice that confiscates his wealth and takes away his own precious daughter. The traditional organization of family is destroyed, as family relations are gradually built more upon corporatism. Jessica's flight with Lorenzo, her stealing her father's money, and squandering her father's money represent a rebellion within the conventional family hierarchy. Ancient social values are replaced with opportunist market values. Jessica is oppressed on two levels: by her father and by the prejudiced Venetian society. She rebels against the oppression of her father and escapes with the man she loves, and she, by assimilating into the white Venetian society, hopes to escape the other level of Venetian oppression and alienation. Money has come to occupy a central place in the new colonial capitalist society. The founding of the future family is also financially governed as in the case of the marriage of Portia and Bassanio: yes, they love each other, but it is money in the first place that draws Bassanio to Portia. The whole casket issue is built upon wealth which determines who

wins the wealthy lady, Portia. All in all, Venice and Belmont, in this view, unite to disintegrate Shylock's household to facilitate as well as expedite the colonial take-over.

IV- "Is that the law?": The Use and Abuse of Law

The trial scene in *The Merchant of Venice* has been debated by many critics for centuries: most of the attention centers either on a legal interpretation of the scene or a religious interpretation that links it to Christian mercy. On the other hand, I read the trial scene as a colonial discourse that uses whatever means to neutralize opponents since they constitute obstacles to building the materialist empire. Shylock, the computational person who calculates every transaction, resorts to the literality of the Venetian law to secure his part of the contract with Antonio; he is unaware of the conspiracy plotted against him by the very legal system which he trusts. The government, represented by the Duke and the legal system, turns Antonio from a defendant into a victim at the end of the trial, and Shylock replaces him as the victim of despicable racism in Venice. He is forced to kneel and "beg mercy of the Duke" (4.1.361), asking mercy for "doing no wrong" (4.1.89). Shylock faces the grandly united political, social, and legal components of the republic of Venice. The Duke, who is supposed to be the guarantor of justice in Venice, unfairly aligns himself with one of the litigating parties—that is, Antonio—right from the beginning. The Duke deeply sympathizes with Antonio and fails to be neutral at the court of law; he asserts to Shylock that the magnitude of Antonio's delinquency is:

> Enough to press a royal merchant down
> And pluck commiseration of his state
> From brassy bosoms and rough hearts of flint,
> From stubborn Turks and Tartars never trained

To offices of tender courtesy. (4.1.29-33)

Living all his life as an outcast, Shylock now is maddened by the magnitude of tyranny he faces. Because the drift to extreme rage is astutely engineered, he tries to attack Antonio with the knife; in the process he inadvertently becomes the aggressor who deserves severe punishment. Ironically, Shylock insists on litigation at the court of law, yet the very legal system he resorts to persecutes him, thereby sealing his fate and turning the victim into a villain.

I contend that Shylock did not intend to kill Antonio. Rather, the whole bond is a challenge to Antonio for three reasons: first, Antonio agrees to the terms of the bond set by Shylock; second, he also turns down Shylock's offer of friendship and considerably intensifies his previous racial remarks against Shylock: the refusal signifies Shylock's social isolation since Shylock's future association with the Venetian will be confined solely to the financial arena; and third, Antonio has always insulted and berated Shylock, and it is time for Antonio to suffer psychologically at least for fear of loan default. Two points support this theory that Shylock never intended or even thought he would obtain a pound of Antonio's flesh. First, Shylock knows well before he draws the bond with Antonio that Antonio's financial situation is secure and that he awaits ventures from abroad which will further increase his wealth, even though Shylock raises some predictable questions about the safety of sea-trading. Second, we see Shylock's rage intensify after his daughter has disowned him; thus, Shylock's insistence on the literality of the law is external rather than internal. Revenge starts to work in Shylock's mind after the two big losses—the loss of his daughter to another faith and the material loss of his money to the Venetians. Perhaps worse than that, his gesture of loaning money to Antonio is essentially scorned. These three reasons combine to embitter him, break his spirit, and make him seek revenge.

Shylock is aware of the legal discourse, so when the Duke asks him, "How shalt thou hope for mercy, rendering none?" he astutely answers with another question: "what judgment shall I dread, doing no wrong?" (4.1.88-89). It turns out that the colonial and racial discourse, which so alienates Shylock, is matched by the legal discourse: the monolithic legal system that has helped create the republic of Venice is here totally neutralized.

Clearly, Portia is highly manipulative. First, she tampers with her father's will earlier in the play. Also, she, in racist fashion, declares that she does not want a foreigner suitor right from the beginning, probably because she likes Bassanio and gives him hints in the song she orders sung with words rhyming with lead, "Tell me where is fancy *bred*, / Or in the heart or in the *head*? / How begot, how nouri*shed*?" (3.2.63-65 my emphasis). We are not surprised then when she tries to manipulate the legal system by playing a judge, and then she tantalizes Shylock and leads him on by her show of her abiding by the law. As a result, he gets his knife ready for carving his pound of flesh out of Antonio's body, only to learn, subsequently, that in doing so he is attacking a Venetian subject, for which act the law punishes with death. Shylock turns out to be the defendant instead of the plaintiff, owing to Portia's subtle manipulation of the law. She insists several times on the legality of the bond only to falsely assure Shylock of his right to the forfeiture of the contract. Shylock easily falls into Portia's trap, whetting his knife in an act of intense revenge magnified by Portia's allusions of his rightful case in court; Shakespeare here demythologizes the justice system which the Venetians exalt.

The insistence on Shylock's conversion from Judaism to Christianity in the trial, I contend, shows that the West does not accept the Other; consequently, Shylock and his daughter have to convert to be accepted and integrated into western culture. Shakespeare foregrounds the West's rejection of the Other. Shylock in *The Merchant of Venice* is a religious as well as a

cultural Other who must be contained and assimilated into the West's domain. Shakespeare in *The Merchant of Venice* deliberately uses the word "Christian(s)" more than twenty times to interchangeably mean, apparently, Venetian(s); he alludes to the hypocrisy and racism of his time towards non-Christians and non-Europeans, in the process demystifying the aura of justice, civility, and humanity which the West claims. Religious allegiances in the play only serve to expose the prejudice of Venice and by extension Europe and mask over a more insidious and cleverly-nuanced imperial agenda.

V- "I am glad 'tis night": Early Feminine Intrusions

Under the patriarchal culture of the Renaissance, women were subverted and controlled. In *The Merchant of Venice*, women encounter male-dominated boundaries for different reasons. The Bard subtly demystifies the patriarchal system to prepare for a later woman's full appearance. Portia disguises as a male lawyer—Balthazar; Jessica escapes from her father's house disguised as a boy. The seventeenth century witnessed complex social dynamics that altered the view of women in society. Shakespeare seemingly sanctions female self-assertion, thereby empowering women who for a long time occupied a marginal space in the West as they did in the East. Gender issues developed in the Renaissance when females were given more social roles albeit gradually. Hall asserts that "glorifying" the freedom which Shakespeare endows to Portia and Jessica "may serve only to obscure the very complex nature of difference for a changing society in which racial categories developed along with changing organizations of gender" ("Guess" 103-04). Female transgression, as a nascent concept, is not fully welcomed by females; in fact, Jessica is even ashamed of dressing as a boy, but she justifies it as essential to realize her love:

I am glad 'tis night, you do not look on me,
For I am much ashamed of my exchange.
But love is blind, and lovers cannot see
The pretty follies that themselves commit,
For if they could, Cupid himself would blush
To see me thus transformed to a boy. (2.6.35-40)

Transvestism was an accepted practice in the theater as boys played female roles onstage during Shakespeare's time. Boys played women's roles because women were not allowed to appear onstage. The opposite occurs in *The Merchant of Venice*, wherein women cross-dress to cross boundaries long delineated by society. I contend that by doing so, Shakespeare is giving women the power to blur those borderlines because they could not remove these social boundaries during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

The subversion of women applied to white women and to non-white / non-westerner women as well. Both Portia and Jessica are dominated by their fathers—even posthumously in the case of Portia. Portia is the beautiful and intelligent heiress of her father's wealth in Belmont, yet she cannot claim the inheritance unless she goes through a tedious test of choosing the man whom she will marry. Shakespeare demystifies the patriarchal culture of the West by showing how deeply patriarchy still is rooted and by allowing women only a slight space of liberty within the male-dominated culture. Although Jessica is given a marginal role in the play, we cannot deny the epistemological interconnectedness between gender and race. Women are doubly subverted in any given colonial setting by both their colonizers and by their colonized patriarchy. Jessica is doubly removed from the center of actions in the play—as a Jew and as a female.

The entrenched patriarchy in Shakespeare's time is subtly questioned in *The Merchant of Venice*. Shylock is over-protective of his daughter, a parenting model challenged by the Bard when he allows Jessica to rebel against the social norms. Shylock, a widower, acts as a father and mother to Jessica; he assumes a dual role in his household. In order to explain the double role Shylock assumes, James Shapiro asserts "that Jewish men were represented as endowed with male and female traits" (38). Shylock has become the archetypal Jew for both sexes. Jessica reveals how oppressive her father is and shows the possibility of conversion into another social milieu. Kim Hall explains that Jessica is "a successful type of cross-cultural inter-action" ("Guess" 102). Jessica does not hold a pivotal role in the text, but I contend that she plays a role in the (con)text of assimilation of the Other in *The Merchant of Venice*. Her two simultaneous identities increase her perplexity: she is a Jew first and a convert to Christianity.

Financial sufficiency is another facet of women's empowerment by Shakespeare in *The Merchant of Venice.* Portia is rich through inheritance whereas Jessica is financially sufficient both through her father's stolen ducats, as well as from the money assigned to her by the court in her father's fortune. Because these two forms of financial independence are acquired by unusual means, Shakespeare demystifies the dynamics of money in the West where it is typically hard for women to be financially independent in the work and commercial spheres.

Shakespeare characterizes Portia as a woman who, challenging the patriarchal conventions, reacts to her father's posthumous control of her arranged marriage. She is portrayed as an intelligent and confident woman; Shakespeare, in fact, gives her one of the most lyrical speeches by a female character in his plays—that is, her speech about the quality of mercy. She emerges, in short, as an eloquent and brilliant woman talking about a sensitive issue at a court of law. Another sign of women empowerment is her ousting Shylock and rescuing Antonio in an

amazingly courageous and adroit manner. This, I believe, is new in the Renaissance: women were being accorded an emerging authority. With the rings trick in act five, Portia crowns her power over men: she indicts Shylock, saves and subverts Antonio, and lastly teaches Bassanio a hard lesson about fidelity and commitment. Although her legalism is tainted, she emerges at the end of the play a different woman from the one at the beginning of *The Merchant of Venice* who seemingly abides by the patriarchal rules of her deceased father. We see Portia as a brilliant, early modern woman of Shakespeare. I contend that the femininity of Portia and Jessica are governed by ideological as well as political limitations, though they present early feminine transgression into the male dominion that is a strong sign of the social, cultural, religious, and political changes of the English Renaissance onward.

VI- Venice and Belmont: A Tale of Two Cities

It is no accident that Shakespeare chose Venice as the site for *The Merchant of Venice*; in addition to the liberty of negotiating matters related to England, he has in mind the cultural influence of Italy and its democratic and flourishing republic cities like Venice and Genoa. Shakespeare wrote at the time of the English Renaissance, which followed the earlier Italian Renaissance that had substantially helped reshape and revive Europe, if not the whole world. Religion's grasp had been eased by this time, and the European mind started freeing itself from the shackles of the Church. Italy was the enlightened cultural center of the western hemisphere with its artists, philosophers, poets, architects, politicians, and trade with the East—Europe's closest neighbor as well as contender. It is well known that almost all plays that deal with aliens, race, and colonialism are set outside England. *The Tempest*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Othello*, and *The Merchant of Venice*, for instance, are all set outside England, mainly in Italian locales; the

last two, in fact, are set in the same city—Venice. Italy at large and Venice in particular, by virtue of their geographical position, were among the European sites of interaction with aliens like Turks, Moors, Jews, Egyptians, and Moslems. Venice was a site in the imagination of Europeans where they could meet non-Europeans, non-Christians, exotic, and non-civilized people; in short, it was the place where Eurocentric stereotypes could be projected onto others. Europe is the center, and the rest of the world is inferior by European standards as we see in European dealings with Othello and Shylock. Although Othello is entrusted with a high military position and beloved by the Venetians generally, he faces all sorts of indignations from Iago. Othello, as an Other in Iago's eyes, has to go down at the end of the play because he is driven by instinct, rage, and desire; he behaved impulsively in regard to his wife's alleged affair and killed her and himself. Many human and social shortcomings are projected on non-Europeans as we see in the cases of Shylock and Othello: they intrinsically embody human malignancy.

Venice was a flourishing republic city that possessed efficient political, legal, and commercial systems. Isaac Asimov asserts that Venice:

> . . . at its peak was richer and more powerful than almost any full-sized nation of its time. . . . It was queen of the sea and a barrier against the formidable Turks. . . . [It was] an Italian Athens born after its time. . . . [However] the fifteenth century saw her pass her peak. . . . [Yet in Shakespeare's time] she remained a romantic land, with the trappings of empire still about herself—an efficient, stable, and long-established government over wealthy merchants and skillful seamen with territory and bases here and there in the Mediterranean. (499-501)

There is no evidence that Shakespeare ever traveled to Italy or Venice, so in his tradition it may constitute an imaginary place of contact with the Other. His Venetian plays, nevertheless, abound

with foreigners. For the English audience who were essentially anti-Catholic, not all was bright in Italy. Maurice Charney, for instant, contends that Venice during the English Renaissance was "the corrupt, international, commercial city that fascinated Shakespeare and the Elizabethans" (42). In addition to corruption, Alderman, drawing on *Othello*, describes Othello in Venice "as the victim of the racist ideology everywhere visible in Venice, an ideology to which he is relentlessly subjected and which increasingly comes to define him as he internalizes it" (111). The Venice of Shakespeare, regardless of how we view it in the Bard's dramaturgical tradition, was according to Granville-Barker "a Venice that lived in the Elizabethan mind, and it is the Venice of his dramatic needs" (69). It is a place that offers a critical safe haven to reflect upon England; Shakespeare avoids a lot of embarrassment and national criticism of his allegiance to his own country. It is a place that represents an exotic milieu in the English imagination. Venice, for the purpose of this dissertation, represents, however, the new arena for international relations with the East. Belmont, on the other hand, shares some of the exoticism with Venice as they represent Italy in the English audience's imagination. In *The Merchant of Venice,* Belmont offsets Venice as a city of wealth and festivity. The last act of the play crowns Belmont as the victor in the struggle for materiality—that is, capitalist colonialism. All are winners in Belmont at the end, except for Antonio who is subverted by the influence of both Portia and Bassanio; he goes back to Venice—the city of commerce while others consummate their marriages in Belmont—the city of love, festivity, wit, power, and most importantly the new colonial city that manipulates others with hypocrisy, wit, cunning and deceit rather than civil influence, justice, and egalitarianism.

Belmont is the imagined world of new colonial capitalism, which is permeated with music: in Portia's house, music is always playing. It seems that Belmont is the earthly heaven in

contrast to Venice, where the villainy of Shylock taints the place and where litigation about commercial matters prevails. After Portia settles the issue of Antonio's pound of flesh to her decided favor, Bassanio tells Antonio, "And in the morning early will we both / Fly toward Belmont" (4.1.454-55). He is yearning to flee Venice to the new place of love, music, and festivity.

Venice, then, is a bustling commercial city with all the competition, prejudice against foreigners, greed, and vengeance, whereas Belmont is a serene, beautiful, and melodious city. Ironically, Shakespeare contrasts the two places as they both represent colonial domains: Venice is the traditional or old colonial space, whereas Belmont is the new colonial space that is full of lust, joy, frivolity extravaganza, and youthfulness. It is Belmont that prevails at the end; the Bard presages the new world of business people who do no real hard labor, like Portia and Bassanio, but still accumulate money and spend prodigally while poor people suffer. It is the world of social classes of bourgeoisie who dominate the market and control the well-being of middle and lower classes. If Venice is predominately male authority, Belmont is a city where women like Portia have the upper hand; Shakespeare, thus, grants females some power in the new colonial world. Jessica is free from the oppression of her father in Venice, and Portia is happy to have Bassanio—the man she loves. Venice is the business metropolis, whereas Belmont is the city of playful romance. Belmont at the end of the play restores harmony and peace: all issues are resolved there.

VII- "Which is the merchant here, and which the Jew?"

As much as Shylock is subverted and even erased after act four of the play, *The*

Merchant of Venice defies the reference of its own title by blurring the referent to the merchant in the play. Shylock, and his demand of Antonio's pound of flesh, is the center of action in much of the play, yet it is not clear why the merchant here is supposedly "the royal merchant"— Antonio. It is possible to read Portia's question as well as the title of the play through Jacques Derrida's concept of "Differánce." This concept suggests that the meaning of a given text has two cases. The first case is that the meaning is delayed, not immediate. It can be attained by critical analyses. The second case is that the meaning differs from what is stated linguistically. According to Derrida the meaning is "defer[red]"— "the action of putting off until later . . . that implies an economical calculation, a detour, a delay, a relay, a reserve, a representation;" second, the meaning "differ[s]"— "to be not identical, to be other, discernible, etc." (8). This eventually involves language and its nuances. Shakespeare, by choosing this title for the play, demystifies the West's oppression of the racial Other. Only modern readings of *The Merchant of Venice* have uncovered the differed meaning of Shylock's sufferings and his erasure by the colonial discourse of Venice/West. If for Derrida the absence of something is substituted by a "sign," then we can interpret the absence of Shylock from the title and from act five by Derrida's explanation of the function of the sign in language:

> [t]he sign represents the present in its absence. It takes the place of the present. When we cannot grasp or show the thing, state the present, the being-present, when the present cannot be presented, we signify, we go through the detour of the sign. . . . The sign, in this sense, is deferred presence. (9)

Since Shylock is denied a place in the capitalist world of Venice, Shakespeare has to work around the colonial discourse and present him as a man who has been disenfranchised on many levels: he is denied a fair trial, denuded of his fortune, detached from his daughter, and

driven to Christianity. The whole play that refers to the merchant—Antonio— in its title centers on Shylock, the outcast of Venice—the democratic and free republic city that represents the West during the onset of early modern colonialism. Shylock, the villain of Venice, is treated harshly for his villainy, whereas Antonio is praised for his charity in lending money free of interest, notwithstanding his racist belittling and insistent denigration of Shylock. Antonio's financial distress is known a month earlier to the forfeiture of the bond, yet no one helps him out. Antonio's racial discrimination against Shylock is, hypocritically, never seen as villainy in the eyes of Venetian social and political circles; rather, we see that all powerful circles help him in the trial scene where Shylock is turned from a defendant into a victim of the colonial discourse of Venice.

Apparently, *The Merchant of Venice* is about Antonio—the merchant of Venice—but the truth of the matter is that it is mainly about Shylock who is demonized as a villain by the people of Venice, while the crux of the matter is that he is discriminated against and ignominiously converted to the cultural domain of Venice/West. The foremost concentrations in the play are capitalism and materialism, embodied by Shylock and Antonio, but Shylock is highlighted because he is an Other, not a native European.

The erasure of Shylock from act five—if explained through Derrida's theory of Differánce—means that he is there in act five, but as a convert and as a purified figure; he is rescued from villainy, so to speak, through the colonial workings of Venice; he is changed forever. Having no place in the colonial capitalist Europe as a businessman, he merely inhabits a marginal space as a convert whose truth of conversion and assimilation will always be dubious.

Portia's question, "Which is the merchant here, and which the Jew?" in essence is a racial slur as she accentuates Shylock's Jewishness (4.1.172). All Jews, in her eyes, are seemingly

villains, greedy, and hateful. She has not made Antonio typical of all Christians; he is a merchant who could be anything else whereas Shylock is only a Jew. It follows then that what stigmas are attached to Shylock are also attributed to people of his race. Shylock is referred to as a Jew, not as a money-lender in the court. Shylock is even associated with a "wolf," indicating his savagery by Antonio:

> I pray you, think you question with the Jew.
> You may as well go stand upon the beach
> And bid the main flood bate his usual height;
> You may as well use question with the wolf
> Why he hath made the ewe bleat for the lamb (4.1.70-74)

Shylock's desires for money and for the pound of flesh are described as "wolvish, bloody, starved, and ravenous" (4.1.138); even Jessica who is charitable towards her father's servant is racially praised by Lancelot Gobbo: "Most / beautiful pagan, most sweet Jew! If a Christian did not / play the knave and get thee, I am much deceived" (2.3.10-12).

Historically, during Shakespeare's time race was not a big issue, but it was nevertheless there to be sure. Michael D. Bristol asserts that towards the close of the sixteenth century "racism was not yet organized as a large-scale system of oppressive social and economic arrangements, though it certainly existed as a widely shared set of feelings and attitudes" (181). Color and religion are the two main markers of race, so when Portia apparently could not tell who is who at the court, she misses the first marker, as Jews who live in Europe are of lighter complexion than, for example, the Moors of Shakespearean plays. Shylock is then associated more with Judaism than color to set him apart from Venetians. Shylock is not easily pinpoint at the court by Portia through his color, as is Othello, for example, whose "blackness" according to Stephen Greenblatt

"is the indelible witness to Othello's permanent status as an outsider" ("Improvisations" 45). In this case the religious marker plays the identification role because "Shylock is a Jew living in a predominantly Christian society, just as Othello is a Negro living in a predominantly white society" (Auden 232). Shylock's ethnocentricity is equated with his Jewishness: his race and his faith have come to represent Shylock as an alien and Other in Venice. The religious attribute here serves as a racial identification. Shylock is often associated with negative characteristics that are attached to him as a Jew; he is identified as "the villain Jew," "the dog Jew," "the very devil incarnation," whose desires are "wolvish, bloody, starved, and ravenous" (2.8.4,14), (2.2. 25), (4.1.138). The aforementioned appellations show how race plays an integral role in the capitalist colonial culture of Venice. Westerners in Venice believe that because they know Shylock, they have the right to classify him, demeaning him in the process; Todorov asserts that racists claim that "the subordination of inferior races or even their elimination can be justified by accumulated knowledge on the subject of race" (67).

Ironically, Portia's exclamatory introduction to the trial is well devised by Shakespeare to show the hypocrisy of Venice. Looking down on both Shylock and Antonio, Portia sides with Antonio, but at the end she even reduces even him to her subordinate. In capitalist colonialism, both religion and traditional trading are of less ranking. Both Antonio and Shylock are reduced to inactive participants of the new materialist world of Belmont. Venice, with its glory as a republic city, comes second to the new colonial capitalist city of Belmont; at the end of the play, Belmont has the final say: everybody is happy apart from Shylock and Antonio to a certain degree, even though news comes that some of his argosies "Are richly come home to harbor" (5.1.276). Portia and Bassanio—the merry couple—will have some hours to enjoy before the new morning; they will reap the harvest of their capitalist device that paved the way for the morning of capitalism

that triumphs at the end of *The Merchant of Venice*. Shylock, the Jew money-lender, and Antonio, the Christian merchant, are neutralized, although to a different degree. Antonio will henceforth work under the auspices of the new capitalist system; he acquiesces, “Sweet lady, you have given me life and living!” (5.1.285). It is the time for capitalist economics that sets the rules for the new world market but not in a traditional sense of commercial dealings. In Belmont, we see no real business except from the business of manipulation of market forces that enable the new businesspersons to spend extravagantly on their worldly and bodily desires while giving a blind eye to the suffering of their victims and the downtrodden. Similarly, Shylock, protests his catastrophe in vain:

> Nay, take my life and all! Pardon not that!
> You take my house when you do take the prop
> That doth sustain my house. You take my life
> When you do take the means whereby I live. (4.1.372-75)

Although both economic systems are controlled by colonial capitalism, Antonio's system is contained, whereas Shylock's system is completely appropriated. Antonio remains rich and can deal in trade after his rival is destroyed. Shylock is erased while his wealth is subsumed by new forces in the market like Jessica and Lorenzo who have not worked hard to gain this easy wealth.

Shylock has always provided Venice with money needed for its trade, but Venice has not embraced him into full membership in the economy as a native Venetian trader. Shylock’s wit and commercial faculties endow him with lots of money, and this is why he is hated by Antonio: Shylock has gone beyond the boundaries the Venetian colonial economic system has set for him. Because he has transgressed, he has to be punished, removed, and obliterated. For Shakespeare, Venice and Belmont represent the hegemony of the new colonialism that is based on

commercialism. Shylock is the epitome of mercilessness in demanding a pound of flesh, but Portia is as far from being merciful as can be imagined in her cruel verdict in Shylock and Antonio's cases. Mercilessness or villainy of Shylock, as dubbed by Portia, is no justification for tyranny, oppression, and injustice against him. Shakespeare has brilliantly made Shylock pathetic, at the same time humanizing Shylock and portraying him as a victim of circumstances beyond his reach. Shylock faces a vicious colonial economic system that manipulates the law to subdue competitors in the market. While ingeniously demystifying the West, Shakespeare has issued possibly the most meaningful racial grievance that literary history has ever witnessed. With Shylock's outcry, we cannot help but identify with him. I contend, in short, that *The Merchant of Venice* constitutes one of the earliest, if not the earliest, meaningful diatribes against racism in early modern literature.

Shylock's outcry is a shameful sign in the face of colonialism and oppression; it still resonates today to remind us of the extent of harm and bitterness human beings can inflict upon each other. It is an outcry that should not pass our attention when thinking of how racism and oppression can be treated by literary works. Shakespeare has, in *The Merchant of Venice*, stood for the oppressed in a savvy way that accommodates the limitations of his time and simultaneously demythologizes the West's claim of freedom and justice when it comes to dealing with non-westerners like Shylock. Shylock poignantly addresses the conscience of humanity:

> I am a Jew: hath not a Jew
> eyes? Hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, sen-
> ses, affections, passions? Fed with the same food, hurt
> with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases,
> healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the

> same winter and summer, as a Christian is? If you prick us, do we not bleed? If you tickle us, do we not laugh? if you poison us, do we not die? and if you wrong us, shall we not revenge? If we are like you in the rest, we will resemble you in that. If a Jew wrong a Christian, what is his humility? Revenge. If a Christian wrong a Jew, what should his sufferance be by Christian example? Why, revenge. The villainy you teach me I will execute, and it shall go hard but I will better the instruction. (3.1.55-69)

I contend that such poignant lines inevitably invite sympathetic identification with the speaker, and that sympathy is astoundingly new on the English Renaissance stage. Shakespeare here is, contrary to the prevalent sentiment towards aliens during the Renaissance, granting the Other, Shylock, some agency to confront injustice and discrimination.

Chapter Three

Demystifying the Colonial Civilizing Project in *The Tempest*

VI- Prospero's Burden: Civilizing Caliban

Take up the White Man's burden--

Send forth the best ye breed--

Go bind your sons to exile

To serve your captives' need;

To wait in heavy harness,

On fluttered folk and wild--

Your new-caught, sullen peoples,

Half-devil and half-child.

Rudyard Kipling, "White Man's Burden" (1899)

Inherent to colonialism is the claim of civilizing non-Europeans regardless of whether they have asked to be civilized or not. Prospero, the deposed Duke of Milan, takes it upon himself to civilize Caliban, rule the island, and claim it for himself. Prospero's colonial endeavor on the island is an example of the self-legitimization of those civilizations that have spread colonization around the globe. The idea that Europe has the duty of civilizing the Other—that, is non-European nations— was used as a pretext or justification to colonize lands and people. During the long history of colonialism, the West has 'pacified' with uttermost force the colonized people just as the East had done to its defeated foes in earlier epochs. Western colonial discourses have been formulated around the idea of White supremacy over other colors / nations / races. As soon as those discourses grounded themselves within Europe, they attributed to darkness all that is not Western / White. The white colonists for example ignored and sometimes

even deleted the native or aboriginal way of life of the colonized; they have created what Edward Said calls “little Europes” in the new usurped lands (*The Question* 78). The colonizer tried to consume the native history, life-style, culture, and identity and replace it with more European forms just as Prospero does when he taught Caliban his language. I posit that other non-Western powers had colonized other nations and they perpetrated ethnic cleansing even to the same color and race as theirs. The Hutus for example annihilated hundreds of thousands of Tutsis in Rwanda in the nineties of the last centuries as the Khmer Rouge militias did in Cambodia who killed huge numbers of their fellow Cambodians. It follows then that Colonial powers through history tried to obliterate the colonized nations under so many invalid claims.

Prospero promulgates ideology of colonial supremacy and domination right from the beginning of his tenure on the island. Prospero lands on the Island with his daughter after a shipwreck, and they do not know how to survive without the help of Caliban whom they enslaved later based on the unproved claim of Caliban’s trying to rape Miranda. Caliban is doomed to be oppressed regardless of his hospitality towards the newcomers to his island. For the colonizer, Caliban is an unregenerate brute that cannot control himself, let alone govern an island—a country. It follows then that Prospero has to take over the island and try to refine the deformed brute—Caliban. My reading of *The Tempest* is that Shakespeare demystifies universal colonialism that almost always oppressed and devastated nations, East or West, that are colonized. What Prospero does on the island is a repetition of a long history of colonialism. Babylonian, Greek, Roman, Muslim, Mongol, and Persian empires used oppression, cultural hegemony, racism, slavery, and military might to subdue other nations.

The “civilizing mission” occupied a central part in the most of colonial projects around the world as a pretext for dominating other nations. Colonization is justified or self-legitimated

as a mission to bring the Other from backwardness into civilization according to the colonizer's model. Civilizing Caliban is a kind of cultural colonialism in which Caliban's indigenous culture is inferior to Prospero's. As a first step, Prospero expropriates the island from its native inhabitant, Caliban, using a super power as represented by Ariel. The second step is assimilating the colonized by teaching Caliban the colonizer's language, and the third step is enslaving and oppressing Caliban using the claim of an attempted rape, and finally forsaking the colonized as half-civilized, half-educated, and half-human when Prospero leaves the island in remnants after he restores the reign of his former Dukedom. Across a twelve-year period, Prospero changes from an exiled governor into a dictator; full of revenge, he tortures Caliban who has no hand whatsoever in the ousting of Prospero from his Dukedom and his loss of political power. By condemning the English fledgling colonialism, Shakespeare warns against oppression that was used in the past and will be used in modern colonialism to colonize people and places.

In *The Tempest*, Prospero's tutelage of Caliban results in teaching Caliban language, but Prospero fails to instill the human moral faculty in Caliban. Caliban represents a lower racial level to Prospero as Caliban lacks rationality and morality, so Prospero has to rule the island and has to be a master / teacher as a European who is sent to the island with the civilizing mission outside Europe. The relationship between the West (the Occident, Prospero) and the East (the Orient, Caliban) is not a relation of cooperation, not humanistic, and not civil; rather it is a relationship of "power, of domination, of varying degree of a complex hegemony," according to Said in his seminal study *Orientalism* (5). Orientalism as a Western field of inquiry represents a colonial discourse that is built upon an "ontological and epistemological distinction made between 'the Orient' and (most of time) the Occident" (1). I posit that Said's polarization is reductive and narrow because there has been a long history of Eastern colonialism that

devastated large parts of the world. The Babylonian Exile / Captivity between 586-538 BC was one of the most ruthless oppressions in the entire history of humanity when Nebuchadnezzar devastated Jerusalem and deported its Hebrew inhabitants to Babylon. Arab Muslims enlarged their empire to include North and Western Africa, large parts of Asia, and pushes west and occupied Spain for almost eight centuries; they converted people to Islam, imposed their culture and Arabic language on people, and forced people to pay tribute to fuel their wars against other nations. Furthermore, the Mongol Empire is another example of Eastern colonization. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the Mongols devastated large areas of Asia; they obliterated entire races and cultures. Genghis Khan for an example was one of the most ruthless colonizers ever.

The colonizer always uses force to control the colonized; it follows then that there is no tangible human dialogue between the colonized and the colonizer because the latter looks down on and demeans the former; it is unequal relation that will inevitably result in the oppressed persons revolting to ratify the equation of power between the two poles in the core of the issue.

Historical accounts speak of discrimination, oppression, and violence based on race, sex, religion, and ethnicity which were prevalent during colonialism. Colonialism was by no means an individual practice; on the contrary it was a discourse initiated and maintained by both Western and Eastern powers for economical, expansionist, political, and cultural purposes. According to Western colonizing model, the Other is described, as have colonized people of the world, with tropes of degradations and subordination in order to legitimize the colonial discourse of civilizing as well as converting those sub-humans who are worthy of being colonized. Berkhofer gives a brief, albeit, encompassing description of the savage that is the target of all forms of colonization all over the world:

> According to the medieval legend and art, the wild man was a hairy, naked, club-wielding child of nature who existed halfway between humanity and animality. Lacking *civilized* knowledge and will, he lived a life of bestial self-fulfillment, directed by *instinct*, and *ignorant of God and morality*. Isolated from other humans in woods, caves, and clefts, he hunted animals or gathered plants for his food. He was strong of physique, *lustful of women*, and degraded of origin [emphasis mine]. (10)

Caliban, according to the colonizer, embodies most of the aforementioned intrinsic qualities of a savage: he is described as "subhuman," "inferior," and "uncivilized" (2.2.72-73). Although the colonizer undertook the civilizing mission of the savage, the savage will only be civilized to a certain degree and will never be equal to the white man or, to broaden and universalize the discussion, to the attributes of the colonizer. We see at the end of play, Caliban is left half-educated, half-civilized, and half-human, and this in turn inflicts misery on the colonized and will produce magnified resentment towards the colonizer.

The colonizer, in order to justify his civilizing mission, typically starts his colonial project by obliterating or at least belittling any domestic history, culture, social forms, and any traces of indigenous civilization. The colonizer starts by demonizing indigenous people and rendering them incapable of ruling themselves. Prospero's narrative is that Caliban was nothing before the arrival of the colonizer. When Prospero arrived in the island, he found two inhabitants—Ariel, the spirit, and Caliban, the savage. Prospero makes it clear that he is the savior and liberator and that the lives of those who lived on the island were nothing before his arrival; he tells Ariel:

Thou best know'st

What torment I *did find thee* in; thy groans

Did make wolves howl and penetrate the breasts

Of ever angry bears: it was a torment

To lay upon the damn'd, which Sycorax

Could not again undo: it was *mine art*,

When I *arrived* and heard thee, that made gape

The pine and let thee out. (1.2.288-95)

According to Prospero, Caliban was in a miserable state before the advent of colonialism. Shakespeare demythologizes the colonizer's strategies of obliterating the past of the colonized. The Bard endows Caliban's agency to declare that the colonizer's language, for example, is only used to curse the colonizer because the colonized feels it is imposed and has replaced his / her culture / past. Prospero demonizes Caliban's past to pave the way for his claim of civilizing Caliban. The very past of Caliban is vague and devilish. Caliban's mother, Sycorax, is erased from the story; she has been dead long prior to the beginning of Prospero's colonialism on the island. The memory of the colonized is deleted and has been replaced by the history that the colonizer intends to write for the colonized. She is even demonized and marginalized. Prospero tells of Caliban's origin [history]: "Thou poisonous slave, got by the devil himself / Upon thy wicked dam, come forth!" (1.2.322-23). Those strategies of erasing the colonized past pave the way for the colonizer to instill new history that starts with the advent of the civilizing missionary— that is, the colonizer.

Shakespeare shows facets of colonial discursive practices to justify oppression of the colonized. It not only shows that the origin of Caliban is devilish, black-tainted, and inferior, but

it also shows that the progeny of the devil mother is devilish as well; Caliban is the "hagseed," "demidevil / … bastard" offspring of Sycorax (1.2.368; 5.1.275-76). By establishing the wickedness of the inhabitant of the island and his ancestor, Prospero justifies his colonial as well as civilizing mission on the newly colonized terrain; Prospero's rehabilitative mission has now claimed legitimacy. Prospero often reminds Caliban of the malignant legacy of his mother to sever any connection with the evil past and to convince Caliban that he, Prospero, is the savior; the enlightened future is ahead of Caliban now and will be made available by Prospero, the civilized. Prospero terrifies Caliban of his origin in order to control him; in other words, Sycorax's past is used to deprecate Caliban. As Philip opines, "Sycorax continues to terrify us with her witchcraft and obeah" (173).

Caliban is confined to a fantasy created by Prospero, and he is inscribed by the colonizer as inferior. Caliban is not allowed to tell his own history; rather, Prospero is the story-teller in *The Tempest*, who writes the new history of the colonized. Shakespeare shows how scrupulous Prospero is as a narrator. He starts by telling his daughter the story of their banishment from their homeland: "Canst thou remember / A time before we came unto this cell? / I do not think thou canst, for then thou wast not / Out three years old" (1.2.39-42).

And he continues: "Twelve year since, Miranda, twelve year since, / Thy father was the Duke of Milan and / A prince of power" (1.2.53-55); he then proceeds to tells Ariel of his miserable past and of Sycorax's slavery of Ariel:

> This blue-eyed hag was hither brought with child
> And here was left by th' sailors. Thou, my slave,
> As thou report'st thyself, was then her servant; (1.2.271-73)

The narrative of the colonizer establishes the way for colonization because it justifies colonialism; the colonizer recounts a dark past of the colonizer and promises to have a new era of prosperity under colonialism.

The colonizer initiates colonization by portraying the natives as a deformed image of the colonizer himself; thus, the colonizer constructs the Other since it is so essential to the colonial discourse. What I will term "Otherization" here plays a central part in the colonial project. Because the Other—the colonized—is racially characterized as being unable to rule himself, colonization intervenes to fill the gap of governing; this becomes a justification for controlling large areas. Banished from his homeland after being ousted by his brother, Prospero seeks to redefine his identity on the island. After having spent his life studying philosophy and humanities, he realizes that something has gone wrong. Essential to its goal of defining itself, the colonizer projects what is not his tributes on another entity, thereby constituting an Other; this is instrumental in Prospero's case.

The suffering of Caliban during his enslavement by Prospero is similar, in one reading, to the suffering of Prospero and his daughter during their twelve-year-long banishment on the island. Shakespeare hints that colonialism can be everywhere on Earth. Prospero is dethroned by his brother who struggles for power and control. The thirst for power existed and will always exist everywhere. Europe is not alone in manifesting its colonial ambitions as there have been many ruthless forms of colonialism in Ancient Greece, Rome, Japan, Persia, Babylon, Mongolia, Rwanda, and Arabia to name just a few. Colonialism is worldwide phenomena since ancient time. Shakespeare in *The Tempest* and other plays is condemning colonialism and oppression regardless of its geography or racial identity.

Shakespeare is being fair when he shows that the oppressed can be oppressor at times. Caliban himself nurtures some colonial traits when he has the chance to; he rants against Prospero who teaches him language. Although the Bard shows Prospero as an oppressor on the island, he also gives evidence that colonialism is not essentially Western. Sycorax is from North Africa (Arger), and she colonized the island before Prospero did. Caliban is born on the island and consequently is considered native although he claims ownership of the island through his North African mother.

The play then does not merely dramatize Western subjugation of Eastern people groups as is typically developed in post-colonial readings; rather, it generically portrays the insidious agenda of colonizers of whatever stripe and whatever global location. Examples of non-Western colonial projects around the world are, but not inclusive to: 1) Japan's conquering of China, Taiwan, and Korea, 2) Muslim / Arab occupation of Spain for almost eight centuries, 3) the Russian occupation of several Eastern European and Asian countries in the twentieth century, 4) the German Third Reich suppression of much of Europe, and 5) the most recent Iraqi destructive occupation of Kuwait in 1990.

In *The Tempest*, Shakespeare shows the intricate web of colonialism. Prospero is colonized and colonizer at the same time; he is colonized by his brother and in turn colonizes Caliban. Caliban is colonized, but has the potential of becoming a Non-Western colonizer when he curses prospero and uses his language to curse. Shakespeare astutely presages that the European imperial aspirations of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries exemplify other imperial projects that have emerged around the globe through the eons of time. He shows that imperialism is a universal phenomenon, and he warns against its destructive impact and negative consequences, no matter the part of the world in which it is practiced.

Shakespeare in *The Tempest* provides a wide perspective on the working of colonialism. Nations who suffered colonialism are not inclusive to non-European geography. Ireland, for instance, was long colonized by England although part of Europe. Prospero and Miranda are subject to colonialism the same way Caliban is. Prospero and his daughter are alienated and banished by their own people in Milan. When Prospero treats Caliban as an Other, he establishes a new governance that is strict and hegemonic to avoid what has happened when Prospero lost his control in Milan. In other words, Prospero, in one interpretation, is more or less forced into establishing a stricter power apparatus than the one in Milan / Europe so that he is not dethroned again. Prospero not only makes an Other of Caliban, but he also creates an(Other) way of government based on surveillance, strict chain of power, penal system, incarceration, enslavement, rehabilitation, and education. Despite the seeming "good" he has done to Caliban, Prospero imprisons, enslaves, and punishes him. Prospero further educates Miranda and Ferdinand; he also rehabilitates his brother and the shipwreck party rather than seeking revenge. Prospero, who lost his supremacy in Milan, instills a new colonial power on the island.

Prospero's colonial project on the island is an example of how colonists deal with the newly occupied territories. Prospero's brother usurps the power in Milan and banishes the legitimate ruler, and Prospero assimilates this mentality and discourse of supremacy and alienation of others. By the same token, Prospero assumes control of the island, enslaves Caliban and Ariel, and behaves as an absolute ruler of the island just as his brother had done when he usurped power in Milan. Milan has a new ruler and system of government just as the island has a new system of governing with the advent of Prospero. Both Prospero and Caliban are treated as Others albeit proportionally: Caliban's alienation and suffering is severer, in my reading, than that of Prospero.

In the same vein, the construction of alterity, I contend, is an important inaugural stage of colonialism since it establishes a contender to be targeted by the colonial scheme. Thus the construction of Caliban as a deformed Other on the island is quintessentially important to Prospero's colonial endeavor. To borrow Foucault's theory of power, I assume that Prospero uses power to control Caliban in an unscrupulous manner. Foucault contends that power is different from force in that some discursive powers may be acceptable by the colonized. Prospero uses both coercion and apparent kindness to control Caliban. He enslaves Caliban and uses him as a slave laborer who runs Prospero's household errand of providing wood, food, and water. Shakespeare, bashing colonialism as he divulges its hypocrisy and ill-intentions, exemplifies one of the purposes of colonialism via Prospero's pronouncement to his daughter, "We cannot miss him. He does make our fire. / Fetch our wood and serves in offices. / That profit us—" (1.2 314-16). On the other hand, Prospero teaches Caliban the art of naming things, which is language although the purpose of this linguistic education is questionable and may not rise from good intention. Foucault contends that power is somehow different than force:

> What gives power its hold, what makes it accepted, is quite simply the fact that it does not simply weigh like a force which says no, but that it runs through, and it produces things, it induces pleasure, it forms knowledge, it produces discourse; it must be considered as a productive network which runs through the entire social body much more than as a negative instance whose function is repression. (*Power, Truth, Strategy*, 36)

According to Foucault's analysis of the power of oppression, Caliban is not only a subject to power, but also a product of it. Caliban is reconstructed through the discursive power of Prospero to suit the colonial era as a colonial object; he is molded according to the colonizer's standards of

inferior identity where colonialism comes to play the role of uplifting colonized races which has become the claimed purpose of colonization.

Caliban is (re)constructed as an Other upon the arrival of the colonizer. Difference is the space between what is Western and what is not. In one reading of *The Tempest*, Prospero uses the Foucauldian "power / knowledge" strategy to (re)construct Caliban as an Other in order to exclude and deem him unable to govern himself; this in turn justifies Prospero's rule of the island. Prospero finds his identity as a Western ruler threatened after he is forced to step down and is banished outside the Western realm of superiority. He launches what I call a revisionist campaign to redefine himself on the island. To explicate the difference between the colonizer and the Other, I will use Ferdinand de Saussure's theory of the dependence of meaning upon the difference between things. It follows then that for Prospero defines himself as a ruler of the island, he has to find an opposite / different individual / concept to set himself against. The "thing of darkness" that Prospero acknowledges at the end of the play is his own creation in order to set the imperialist model against Caliban's primitive model of civilization. Saussure indicates that "language is a system of inter-dependent terms in which the value of each term results solely from the simultaneous presence of the others" (114). Prospero delineates binary opposition to give meaning to his existence on the island. For example, one establishes the meaning of the black color, not according to the essence of "blackness" but rather by contrasting it with the color white. Meaning, for Saussure, is relational. The difference between white and black is what signifies meaning. Binary oppositions like white / black, colonizer / colonized, civilized / uncivilized, masculine / feminine established the difference between the colonizer and the colonized. Prospero here sets himself apart from Caliban and projects all negative aspects on Caliban, the deformed Other, because one pole of the binary is dominant, the one that denotes

the colonizer / power. Drawing on the Manichean opposition between White and Black, JanMohammad explains the awkward relationship between the colonizer and the colonized as a sort of:

> . . . manichean opposition between the putative superiority of the European and the supposed inferiority of the native . . . a field of diverse yet interchangeable oppositions between white and black, good and evil, superiority and inferiority, civilization and savagery, intelligence and emotion, rationality and sensuality, self and Other, subject and object.(82)

To use Edward Said's theory of Orientalism, Said claims that Western metaphysics is constructed on a binary opposition wherein, for the purpose of this dissertation, one side of the dialect is positive—that is, the self / the center / the colonizer / Prospero while the other side of the dialect is viewed in a dark light, which represents the Other / the margin/ the colonized / Caliban. All that is negative is ascribed to the Other:

> Orientals . . . shown to be gullible, "devoid of energy and initiative", much given to "fulsome flattery", intrigue, cunning, and unkindness to animals; Orientals cannot walk on either a road or a pavement (their disordered minds fail to understand what the clever European grasps immediately, that roads and pavements are made for walking); Orientals are inveterate liars, they are "lethargic and suspicious," and in everything *oppose the clarity, directness, and nobility of the Anglo-Saxon race* [emphasis mine]. (*Orientalism*, 38- 39)

This theory of Said, I posit, is reductive and idiosyncratic because history is abound with many non-European discriminatory oppression. The West has negatives just as the East, and Shakespeare rants against Western as well as other forms of oppression and racism. Said's

duality then is narrow and does not tackle the core issue of colonialism which, I contend, is the rise to power and domination that was and still is a human nature regardless of geography. The Western colonialism is part of a long history of colonization all over the world. Shakespeare does not warrant any form of colonization, and his portrayal of Prospero as a colonizer testifies to his condemnation of all forms of colonialism be they in Europe or elsewhere.

The Bard demythologizes the colonial claim of equality and civility when he shows how Prospero looks down upon Caliban. Caliban is subdued, dehumanized, and enslaved by Prospero, who claims the island's control upon his arrival with his daughter Miranda. In Shakespeare's time, an emerging English imperial project was gradually shaping; yet he shows foresight and genius when he tries to put this discourse down right from its inception. Intentionally depicted by Shakespeare as half animal, Caliban represents the Other in the colonizer's imagination well before the concept of the "Other" was coined in modern literary criticism. The representation of Caliban as an Other is part of a history of stereotyping minted by the colonizers. Edward Said insists in his book *Culture and Imperialism* that "representation itself has been characterised as keeping the subordinate subordinate, the inferior inferior" (80). The negative representation of colonial encounters with the Other attests to the colonizer's belief that the colonized people are deemed inferior and that they need to be governed and controlled by a superior power.

When Prospero lands on the island, he soon claims it for himself and ends up enslaving its inhabitants. Prospero intervenes in all joints of life on the island. He enslaves Caliban and Ariel, changes the history of the native Caliban, and superimposes his language / culture upon Caliban. The possessiveness of colonialism is part of the superiority complex that is built into the colonizer. At the close of Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, Crusoe summarizes the colonizer's viewpoint of the settled land:

> *My island* was now peopled, and I thought my self very rich in subjects; and it was a merry reflection which I frequently made, how *like a king* I look'd. First of all, the whole country was *my own meer property*; so that I had an undoubted *right of dominion*. Secondly, my people were perfectly subjected: I was *absolute lord* and *law-giver*; they all *owed their lives to me*, and were ready to lay down their lives, if there had been occasion of it, for me. It was remarkable too, we had but three subjects, and they were of three different religions. *My man Friday* was a Protestant, his father was a pagan and a cannibal, and the Spaniard was a Papist: However, I allowed liberty of conscience throughout my dominions [Emphasis mine]. (241)

In this quotation, there is an evident parallelism between Crusoe's thinking of imperial acquisition and Prospero's possession of the island, its inhabitants, and its resources. This is a commonplace colonial practice of full usurpation of colonized territories.

Prospero comes to the island after being dethroned from the dukedom of Milan and takes it upon himself to enslave the inhabitants of the island, Caliban and Ariel, under the false pretence of civilizing Caliban. This hypocrisy is exposed and thwarted by Shakespeare who shows the paradoxical mission of the colonizer. There was a widespread belief among Europeans during the colonial era that the mission of the colonizer was to civilize primitive peoples. This belief of benevolence shrouded colonialism with a humanitarian façade. In one reading of *The Tempest*, the Bard divulges the malignancy of the imperial project represented by Prospero who dehumanizes, enslaves, oppresses, and tortures Caliban contrary to the colonizer's prevalent belief that colonialism is in the interest of the colonized. Subsequently, any effort to counter colonial schemes is perceived as ungratefulness on the side of the colonized.

Far from considering Prospero as a colonizer, the long history of humanist and Eurocentric critical reading of *The Tempest* sees Prospero as a man who seeks to re-establish himself as a legitimate Duke of Milan, not the island; his mission on the island is viewed as noble and sincere; he is an educator who teaches a lesson out of his ousting experience. His humanist learning is, according to Anne Meredith Skura:

> . . . to re-educate the shipwrecked Italians, to heal their civil war—and even more important, to triumph over his own vengefulness by forgiving his enemies; they [traditional critics] emphasized the way he achieves a harmoniously reconciled new world. (42)

One can evidently see that Caliban is in no way a part of Prospero's humanist project although he is the one who is oppressed all through the "educating mission" of Prospero on the island; Caliban is just a servant who caters to the comfort of the educator, Prospero. The Bard exposes the ostentatious missionary, Prospero. Prospero in conformance with the colonizer's ethnocentric paradigm of a white supremacy and an Other inferiority has constructed Caliban as a submissive subject who does not speak against colonial domination, but Shakespeare creates a niche for a colonized counterattack. The Bard, in one reading, empowers the colonized to a certain degree. Caliban speaks out against the tyranny of his oppressor, using the colonizer's own language to do so. Caliban is an interlocutor authored by Shakespeare to occupy a counter hegemonic space within the colonial discourse:

> This island's mine by Sycorax, my mother,
> Which thou tak'st from me. When thou cam'st first,
> Thou strok'st me and made much of me, wouldst give me
> Water with berries in't, and teach me how

To name the bigger light and how the less,

That burn by day and night. And then I loved thee,

And showed thee all the qualities o'th'isle,

The fresh springs, brine pits, baren place and fertile.

Cursed be I that did so! All the charms

Of Sycorax, toads, beetles, bats, light on you!

For I am all the subjects that you have,

Which first was mine own king; and here you sty me

In this hard rock, whiles you do keep from me

The rest o' th' island. (1.2.334-47)

Shakespeare shows how Prospero has developed into a hegemony-ridden individual although he himself was a victim of his brother's hegemony back in Milan. Prospero punishes Caliban even though Caliban is hospitable and instrumental in the beginning of the colonization. Caliban's resistance starts when he is gravely oppressed by Prospero. Even with Ferdinand, Prospero is hawkish and despotic; Prospero addresses Ferdinand as "The Duke of Milan / And his more braver daughter could control thee" (1.2.439-41) and later threatens Caliban: "I'll manacle thy neck and feet together" (1.2.463). Shakespeare shows the tyranny and despotism of Prospero who deploys his magical powers to control almost every one in the play. He wields his power to "stow" the Mariners under "hatches" (1.2.230), to "rend an oak and peg in his [Ariel's] knotty entrails" (1.2.294-95), to "sty" Caliban in the "hard rock" (1.2.344-45), to imprison the spirits in "their confines" (4.1.121), and to tie Ferdinand's arms in a "sad knot" (1.2.223). Prospero also threatens Caliban, Trinculo, and Stephano after their attempt against his life: "I will plague them all, / Even to roaring" (4.1.188-89). Prospero, in short, is shown here as a

dictator who demands the consent of all his subjects by coercion, or else they will face dire consequences; he furthers asserts his power:

> Ye elves of the hills . . .
>
> . . . that rejoice
>
> to hear the *solemn curfew*; by whose aid,
>
> . . . I have . . .
>
> Set *roaring* war; to the *dread rattling thunder*
>
> Have I given *fire*, and *rifted* Jove's stout oak
>
> With his own *bolt*; the strong-based promontory
>
> Have I made *shake* . . . (5.1.33-47; emphasis mine).

Prospero's thirst for power is also shown by silencing those voices that resist. When Ariel requests his freedom at the end of the play, Prospero commands silent obedience from Ariel: "If thou murmurst," he threateningly addresses Ariel, "I will rend an oak / And peg thee in his knotty entrails" (1.2.296-97). There is no space for opposition to his power; even his own daughter is not immune against threats from him. When Miranda speaks favorably of Ferdinand, Prospero orders her: "Speak not you for him [Ferdinand]" and later reiterates, "Speak not for him" (1.2.185, 506). He strongly commands her: "Silence! One word more / Shall make me chide thee . . . Hush!" (1.2.479-80).

The Bard demythologizes the legitimacy of Prospero's taking over the island, thereby showing rejection of the colonial model. Prospero lacks confidence in legitimacy of his authority on the island, and this is why he gets overtly angry at Caliban's mock rebellion. Shakespeare shows the hypocrisy of the colonizer who governs foreign territory and oppresses its indigenous people while at the same time seeking to punish those who ousted him from power. Showing

contradictions in the colonial discourse helps the Bard discreetly mute his criticism of the English imperial project. Shakespeare insinuates the "connections between *The Tempest* and the unfolding drama of England's overseas empire" that was shaping in and after the sixteenth century (Vaughan and Vaughan 37).

The colonizer's burden can be read in two ways. First, it can have a simplistic philanthropic reading that has little evidence when we look back in history and see the negative effects of colonialism on indigenous peoples in some parts of the world. Second, the play sustains a racist reading as its platform of initiation foregrounds negative assessment towards non-Europeans, which constitutes, to some extent, the reading of postcolonial critics as well as the reading of most of postcolonial / post-independence subjects of the Third World. This condescending view of supremacy and cultural dominance helps the colonizer advance. To take the historical context of *The Tempest*, Shakespeare is instrumental in showing how colonialism justifies itself as in the case of civilizing and educating Caliban. Prospero is shown as the epitome of imperial power as Loomba asserts: "Prospero as a colonialist consolidates power which is specifically *white* and *male*, and constructs Sycorax as a black, wayward and wicked in order to legitimise it [emphasis mine]" (*Gender*, 152).

The harsh imposition of colonial discourse upon Caliban renders him an enemy of rationality and civility. Prospero's hegemony over Caliban and his island is justified by the unproven claim that its intent is to civilize the savage. When Prospero secures his Dukedom back, he relinquishes the civilizing of Caliban, leaving him prey to other potential colonialists because Prospero inscribed dependency on others unto Caliban's nature; he enslaves him and annexes him to the colonizer's domination. In one reading, Caliban will not be the same again; he has learned to be subordinated rather than independent. The language he is taught is a colonial

tool designed to make use of Caliban in catering to Prospero's colonial project. According to the colonizing discourse, Caliban cannot and will not completely rise above his savagery and brutality. For instance, he threatens to contaminate the cultural purity when he tries to rape Miranda. Caliban's subscription to humanity is defined by Prospero. Caliban does not fit the colonial tradition of civility at the end of the play. Coleman indicates that the language Caliban is taught is "words Prospero imposed on Caliban that gave his 'purpose' 'meaning.' Its meaning is an integral part of the English language and of Western signs and symbols" (3). At the end of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, the claimed civilizing mission fails to embrace Caliban into civility; he rejects the colonizer's paradigm of civility. James Coleman, in his book *Black Male Fiction and the Legacy of Caliban*, coins the term "Calibanic discourse" which pertains to the legacy of Caliban as representative of treatments of slaves in the United States. For Coleman,

> Calibanic discourse is the perceived history and story of the black male in Western culture that has its genesis and tradition in language and non-linguistic signs. It denotes slavery, proscribed freedom, proscribed sexuality, inferior character, and inferior voice. In summary, the black male is the slave or servant who is the antithesis of the reason, civilized development, entitlement, freedom, and power of white men, and *he never learns the civilized use of language*. His voice is unreliable; his words fail to signify his humanity. He also preys on civilization and represents bestial, contaminating sexuality [emphasis mine]. (3)

It follows then that it is Caliban's fault that he could not digest the colonizer's modes of civility and adopt the colonizer's lifestyle. Shakespeare's divulges the hypocrisy of the civilizing mission in showing that Caliban is a victim of circumstances inscribed by Prospero who uses Caliban as a mere slave to serve the bigger colonial scheme. Simply put, he is not the target of civility and

modernization as claimed by almost all proponents of colonial endeavors that started in and around the sixteenth century.

So, the colonial civilizing mission embodies a kind of power to control the colonizer under its pretexts and not a real benevolent project proper. Prospero is the prophet as well as the guardian of the imperial cultural tradition on the island; he tries to assimilate Caliban to better serve the larger framework of colonization. The imperial superiority is shown through Prospero's use of “the liberal arts” that he studied for a long time; he is able to wield the power of magic to control the island (1.2.73). Ariel is harnessed by Prospero to keep an eye on the sole indigenous inhabitant of the island, Caliban, as well as control the people of the shipwreck. At the end, it is Prospero's knowledge of liberal arts that enables him to set things in their right path and to restore control in Milan also. The imperial values of civility, tolerance, and rationality prevail while the bestial nature of Caliban is, archetypally, subdued, ending most of the colonial adventures in the uncivilized world.

This colonizing mentality is not what Shakespeare apparently accepts. The Bard exposes the tyranny of Prospero, his hypocrisy, and his racism. Prospero is tolerant towards those who usurped his Dukedom while leaving Caliban without even an apology or a gesture of kindness. This double-standard dealing, in one reading, has severe psychological effect on the colonized, Caliban. In dealing with the colonized subjects, there is even racism as Shakespeare shows; Ariel, the enslaved spirit is freed at the end of the play while Caliban is left to face an unpredictable future after being deconstructed as a native inhabitant of the island and after being tainted with negative aspects of the imperial culture like the cultural erosion of his indigenous culture that has not been replaced by a completely functioning and valid cultural system. Caliban does not fit into the colonizing civilization, so he has to be left out as Shakespeare shows at the

end of *The Tempest*. Caliban according to Coleman “is antithetical to Prospero’s civilization and threatens to corrupt it with his bestiality and to destroy it with his sexual contamination” (3). Caliban is changed for the worse instead for the better after twelve years of Prospero's domination and slavery. If it were not for the intervention of Prospero and Miranda who participate in teaching him language, Caliban, in a post-colonial reading, would have been better off because he lost his past, and there is no apparent good future for him after being usurped by Prospero. Caliban is full of resentment and anger towards Prospero; he has inherited the burden of colonial predicament of the colonial culture and language without benefiting from them.

II- “Worthily purchased, take my daughter”: A Feminist Reading

In this finely crafted play *The Tempest*, Shakespeare, as we have seen, undertakes a careful task of changing, or rather challenging, perceptions of what people take for granted in the Renaissance. Shakespeare criticizes how the English, and Western society by extension, perceives certain issues like colonialism, oppression, and women to name just a few. During, before, and long after the sixteenth century women in general lacked full agency whereby almost all aspects of life were male-dominated. Shakespeare exposes the oppression of women and grants women some space of authority as we have seen in Portia's case in *The Merchant of Venice*. In *The Tempest*, Shakespeare exposes the dominant patriarchal / colonial oppression of women. The two main female characters in the play are Sycorax and Miranda; the former is completely demonized and erased while the latter is inscribed within the docile / matrimonial framework set by the father, Prospero. Sycorax is bereft of any physical or vocal roles to defend herself against Prospero's demonization of her. The story of Sycorax is written and narrated by

Prospero. Sycorax's past is told through the filtration of the colonizer who taints her past and subsequently disowns her son Caliban of the island.

Both main female characters in *The Tempest* suffer from alienation and oppression. Sycorax faces two paradigms of oppression—as a colonized individual and as a female—whereas Miranda encounters one paradigm of otherness as female in a patriarchal Renaissance society. Generally speaking, the racial form of oppression receives most attention when discussing anti-colonial texts while the latter, the gender-defined aspect of domination, is typically underlying and obscured. Dominating masculinity sets women apart as an Other, be they European or not. Simone de Beauvoir explains that "being different from man, who sets himself up as the same, it is naturally to the category of the Other that woman is consigned" and treated by men (69). Miranda apparently falls within Simone de Beauvoir's view of what it is to be an Other; she [Miranda] is under totalitarian authority of her father. Miranda has to interact with this totalitarianism so that she can gain some space of independence from the hegemonic sphere of her patriarchal father.

Prospero tries hard, and succeeds to a certain degree, to delete Sycorax, but she still shows on the palimpsest; her influence by absence is still in the play. In fact, she is the only link that proves Caliban's rightful claim to the island as he declares "this island is mine, by Sycorax my mother" (1.2.482). Shakespeare, in one reading, grants agency to Sycorax in two ways. First, he parallels her to Prospero the powerful patriarch since both control the spirit Ariel although in different eras. Second, the Bard proves Caliban's claim to the island through Caliban's filial relation to her, asserting that Shakespeare, in some sense, is against oppression of women.

The Bard demystifies negative attitudes towards women. Prospero expresses penchant fear of Sycorax; he demonizes her, blemishes her past, and warns against her devil-like son.

Sycorax constitutes a double threat to Prospero: she is racialized as a black woman, and she is sexualized as a female. Prospero declares that “This damned witch, Sycorax / For mischiefs manifold, and sorceries [too] terrible / To enter human hearing, from Argier, / Thou know’st, was banished” (1.2.265-68). Prospero also explains to Ariel that he was controlled by the witch Sycorax before Prospero freed him from his prison, “for thou was a spirit too delicate / To act her earthy and abhorred commands / Refusing her grand hests, she did confine thee” (1.2.274-76). The irony here confirms the colonial false claim of civilizing the colonized; Prospero frees Ariel from Sycorax only to enslave him and use him to control the island and Caliban and to exact, in a pay-back fashion, his revenge on those who dethroned him from his dukedom. By showing the engrained animosity of Prospero towards the Sycorax, Shakespeare brilliantly exposes the colonial paradigm in regard to women. The colonizer views colored people as inferior and treats females—be they white like Miranda, or black like Sycorax—as of lower status than men. Sycorax is lifted in status as a woman by the Bard as she is portrayed as a strong rival to Prospero despite the fact she is not physically present in the play. Sycorax plays a central role in the confrontation between Prospero and Caliban; Shakespeare brings her to surface seven times in the play despite her sheer marginalization and enmity by Prospero. She is absent and present at the same time. Shakespeare exposes the male's inability to view women as legitimate players in the social domain; both Sycorax and Miranda are silenced as well as erased in the play in two different ways that resulted in the same effect—Sycorax racially and Miranda patriarchally; however, both have been sexually discriminated against.

The colonizer even destabilizes geography in his effort to erase the colonized; Sycorax is a North African—Algerian—who controlled the island where she left her son Caliban. The geographical ambiguity serves to instill Prospero's claim to the island. Geography here is an

issue of contention between the aboriginal Caliban and the occupier Prospero. Each party tries to base his claim on evidence that he sees fit. Caliban claims the ownership of the island by birth whereas Prospero's claim is slippery. Prospero tries to prove the illegitimacy of Caliban's sovereignty over the island by demonizing Caliban's mother. Prospero claims the ownership of the island despite the fact that he coincidentally drifts to the island that was formerly inhabited by Caliban.

Prospero uses his mastery of colonial narrative to remind Caliban that his mother was a witch. The accusation of witchcraft was rampant in Europe in the late Medieval and early modern era (15th – 17th centuries). Women were tried for suspicion or rumors of witchcraft dealing. Prospero uses this tool to demonize the colonizer. Thousands of women were burned at the stakes during a period that has come to be known as the Gendercide. The timing was not an accident: Silvia Federici asserts that “the witch-hunt occurred simultaneously with the colonization and extermination of the populations of the New World, the English enclosures, [or] the beginning of the slave trade” (164). The accusation of witchcraft / sorcery is readily at the disposal of colonialists when confronting the colonized.

In one reading, Shakespeare shows his real underlying opposition to England's sixteenth and seventeenth imperial aspirations by setting his plays *The Tempest* and *Antony and Cleopatra* outside England / Europe. The Bard, who centers most of his themes on Europe, is subtly telling the West that there is a world outside the self-demarcated frontiers of Europe. In his continuous attempts for liberation, that parallel human liberation, Caliban invokes his mother, attesting to the centrality of women's struggle in the course of the colonized people’s search for freedom and independence. Inasmuch as she is portrayed as a witch, Sycorax also stands for the role of women against oppression and tyranny in the colonized world. For Prospero, she is cursed, but at

the same time she inspires Caliban not to relinquish his right to the island to the oppressor for any price. Caliban clings to his inherited right to the island through his mother. Sycorax, although absent, is a major player in the struggle between Prospero and Caliban over the island. While Prospero uses the history at his disposal to alienate Sycorax, Caliban keeps her memory (history) as a living example of how women can play a central role in decolonizing their countries. She gives Caliban the moral incentive to fight for his rightful struggle to restore his island from the usurper, Prospero. Caliban's rebelliousness, in short, is in part motivated by his mother, for his very territorial claim to the island is mainly based on his relation to his mother: "This island's mine, by Sycorax my mother, / Which thou takest from me" (1.2.482-83).

The Bard's portrayal of the centrality of Sycorax, even when she is physically absent, to Caliban's rightful claim to the island shows a significant victory to women at an early time in England. The Bard here, it could be argued, attempts to erode male dominance. He also works to extenuate patriarchy in the case of Miranda who transgresses and picks her husband, Ferdinand, on her own although this happens under her father's supervision and with his consent.

Miranda's marriage to Ferdinand, the heir to the throne of Naples, is used by Prospero as a political move to strengthen his position against those who usurped his dukedom. This seems patriarchal; however, when Miranda meets Ferdinand, she emerges as a woman with independence: she falls in love with Ferdinand, and she expresses her true feelings towards him although she lives in a patriarchal society. We assume that the meeting between the soon-to-be-wife-and-husband is contrived by Prospero and facilitated by Ariel, but the intuitive expression of Miranda's feeling upon seeing Ferdinand shows her independence. She spontaneously voices her feelings in regard to what she has seen in the following exchange with her father:

Mir. What, is't a spirit?

Lord, how it looks about! Believe me, sir,

It carries a brave form. But ’tis a spirit.

Pros. No, wench, it eats, and sleeps, and hath such

senses

As we have—such. This gallant which thou seest

Was in the wrack; and but he’s something stain’d

With grief (that’s beauty’s canker), thou mightst call

him

A goodly person. He hath lost his fellows,

And strays about to find ’em.

Mir. I might call him

A thing divine, for nothing natural

I ever saw so noble. (1.2.410–21)

She encroaches upon limitations set by her dominant father as he expresses his worries to Ariel:

At the first sight

They have chang’d eyes. Delicate Ariel,

I’ll set thee free for this . . . (1.2.428-30)

He continues:

They are both in either’s pow’rs; but this swift business

I must uneasy make, lest too light winning

Make the prize light. (1.2.441–3)

Manifesting fatherly concern, Prospero worries about the relationship between his daughter and Ferdinand intensifying after he detects a sort of agency or subjectivity on the part

of his daughter. He then works to watch over the couple's movements and tries to orchestrate the marriage in a manner that maintains his control over the situation. In my reading of Miranda, I contend that she subtly transgresses, though minimally, against patriarchal domination. Prospero, the oppressor, will not let that transgression aggrandize, so he offers Miranda as a gift to Ferdinand in a politically-fathomed maneuver; he addresses the prince of Naples, Ferdinand, who will ascend the throne of his country after his father: “Then, as my gift, and thine own acquisition / Worthily purchased, take my daughter” (4.1.13). Prospero here inscribes transformativity of oppression from him to Ferdinand. Miranda is commoditized here; she is her father's “gift” and her husband's “purchased” body. Shakespeare here demythologizes colonialism in two parallel layers: first, he grants some agency to Miranda through her spontaneous self-motivated love for Ferdinand, and, second, he shows the patriarchal domination of the women.

Shakespeare shows the intelligence of Miranda in a manner typically contrary to the public opinion in the patriarchal Renaissance. Mentally capable of analyzing that her marriage to Ferdinand is political, she has the following bold exchange with Ferdinand as they are playing chess near the end of the play:

> *Mir*. Sweet lord, you play me false.
>
> *Fer*. No, my dearest love,
>
> I would not for the world.
>
> *Mir*. Yes, for a score of kingdoms you should wrangle,
>
> And I would call it fair play. (5.1.172–76)

Shakespeare gradually grants agency to women despite the fact that he wrote at a time when males dominated, oversaw, and led English society. The Bard endows Miranda some limited

agency as he tries to stay in congruence with his Renaissance society as much as possible so that he can relate his criticism without alienating his audience. Shakespeare, again, wrote at a time of patriarchal dominance over women. The possibilities for women were limited in the Renaissance as Margaret King indicates in her 1991 book *Women of the Renaissance*:

> Daughter, mother, widow; virgin, matron, crone: these were the possibilities that encircled the female sex. A very few by an act of will or fortune, escaped the endless dance whose mode was set by sex and whose measure by years: a very few, who cheating nature, entered the service of God, and an even smaller number who joined the still lonelier pursuit of word, image, or power. (24)

Miranda, while conforming to mainstream women in the Renaissance, is an example of a woman who tries to make her own mind of the world around her. Contrary to what may be popular belief during the Renaissance, Miranda does not completely give in to her father's power. She is not completely successful at the end of the play, but she surely ushers a future rebellion of women against social norms. Miranda augurs well for a new women-balanced generation that will emerge later out of oppression and alienation. Although Prospero could be viewed as “the ideal father” for Miranda (Singh 51), he still is an example of patriarchal authority; he harnesses his daughter’s marriage to Ferdinand for his own political goals. Miranda, despite the complete authority of her father over her, tackles this authority in a subtle manner. She falls in love with and marries Ferdinand; this act, although conforming to her father’s undeclared intention, is considered, in the interpretation I offer here, a breakthrough in women's freedom of choice and independence in the Renaissance that the Bard portrays in early modern Europe.

Going back to the concept of absence in the play, we note that there is another female absence—that is, Miranda's mother. The Bard, I read, demythologizes the colonizer's treatment

of women. It might be understood that colonists would erase the colonized women, but what do we make of the colonists' erasure of their fellow European women? I posit that the colonizer first and foremost is essentially hegemonic and dominant. When Miranda asks her father: "Sir, are you not my father?" (1.1.55), he passionately answers:

> Thy mother was a piece of virtue, and
> She said thou wast my daughter; and thy father
> Was Duke of Milan; and his only heir
> And princess: no worse issued. (1.1.56-9)

Prospero here does not identify Miranda's mother as his wife; rather, he conscribed her to the realm of femaleness; she is Miranda's mother. He does not want to taint his masculinity by attaching a female figure to his domineering colonial space. By doing this, Shakespeare, portrays the colonial male as a staunch patriarch who fosters the colonist ideal of him. In his introduction to the Oxford edition of *The Tempest*, Stephen Orgel quotes the speech of King James I in the English parliament in 1603 that testifies to Shakespeare's demystifying of patriarchy: "I am the husband, and the whole island is my lawful wife; I am the head, and it is my body" (39). King James I's metaphor indicates the point Shakespeare is possibly alluding to through Prospero's totalitarianism on the island. Prospero at the same time comprises an omniscient colonist who can be an efficient ruler, a teacher, a single father, a successful colonist, and a civilizer.

Shakespeare criticizes the colonizer's claim of civility when he compares the treatment or, rather, the value of women / mothers in the two spaces—the colonizer's space and the colonized space. If we contrast Prospero to Caliban, we find that the latter is more civilly endowed in regard to his view of women / mothers. Caliban proudly announces that his claim to the island is through his mother: "This island's mine, by Sycorax my mother" (1.2.333). This is a

sharp contrast that shows the ambiguity, complexity, and irony of Caliban's sub-human nature in the eyes of Prospero and, simultaneously Prospero's claim of educating Caliban in accordance to the standards of civility and behavior.

To further prove the erasure of the female role in the colonial project, Ferdinand, the newly-wed, is expected to praise his young and beautiful wife Miranda during the wedding masque that is conjured by Ariel the spirit and agent of Prospero. Ferdinand shuns her and addresses her father, Prospero, instead:

> Let me live here, ever.
> So rare a wondered father and a wise
> Makes this place Paradise. (4.1.122-24)

Ferdinand, who is included in the colonial project by his father-in-law, also fits Prospero's patriarchal colonist model. He believes that his happiness as a colonial subject depends upon Prospero, his don and patron. The welfare of the usurped place, the island, is contingent upon Prospero who takes over the island and enslaves its inhabitants. Prospero superimposes his will over his daughter, and it seems that Ferdinand also is taken in and subsumed within the magic of the magus Duke, Prospero. The sophistication of the relationship between Miranda and her father stems from two things. First, we see the segregation of Miranda from contact with men by her father as she tells Ferdinand:

> I do not know
> One of my sex; no woman’s face remember,
> Save, from my glass, mine own. Nor have I seen
> More that I may call men than you, good friend,
> And my dear father. How features are abroad

I am skilless of; but, by my modesty

The Jewel in my dower, I would not wish

Any companion in the world but you. (3.1.48-55)

Prospero, we note here, is very protective of Miranda.

Second, he raises her as a noble women; he acts as an ideal father. This ambivalence in their relation is a characteristic of the colonial hypocritical discourse that claims the charity of the colonized people while at the same time oppressing and enslaving them. Inasmuch as Prospero cares for his daughter, he also oppresses her by segregation and by keeping her under his patriarchal control. Prospero in this regard fits into the Western colonial archetypal image of domination, patriarchy, and masculinity over the colonized who is considered feminine, weak, and unable to govern. The attempted rape of Miranda by Caliban, though unwarranted, is politicized and used as a pretext by Prospero to enslave and torture Caliban. Colonialism has a tendency to use all means available to dominate the colonized people. According to Leininger "Prospero needs Miranda as sexual bait, and then needs to protect her from the threat which is inescapable given his hierarchical world – slavery being the ultimate extension of the concept of hierarchy. It is Prospero's needs – the Prosperos of the world – not Miranda's, which are being served here" (151). Prospero, in brief, uses the rape incident to further colonize Caliban. Shakespeare demythologizes Prospero's alienation of Caliban when Prospero is also alienated by his brother and is ousted from power in his home country.

Moreover, the colonizer is being Machiavellian in the way he deals with the Other: Prospero threatens and puts down Caliban by demonizing his mother. He also uses the memory of Sycorax' imprisonment of Ariel to keep Ariel checked. When Ariel appeals to the master of the island for his "liberty" (1.2.247), Prospero reminds Ariel of the time when Prospero freed

him from the slavery of the “the foul witch Sycorax” (1.2.259). Sycorax here serves as a colonial subject only for the success of the colonial project; she is used to scare Ariel and warn him of the consequences of any revolution against his master, Prospero. This threat leads to Ariel’s help for Prospero in punishing the usurping party of his brother and eventually leads as well to Prospero’s regaining his Dukedom of Milan. Prospero, in turn, frees Ariel at the end of the play.

In accordance with the Bard's demystification of the colonization, Shakespeare criticizes Prospero's patriarchy. Miranda is oppressed like Caliban although in a different manner. Miranda and Sycorax share the oppression of Prospero albeit in varying degrees. I read Prospero as an archetypal colonist who uses practicality along with other tools to achieve his end goals.

In the course of his colonial project, Prospero is a Machiavellian who uses all apparatus at his dispose to conquer the island / the Other / and the female body. He erased Sycorax and his own wife, Miranda’s biological mother, and he control the life of his daughter. Sycorax plays a role in solidifying Caliban’s resistance to the imperial domination represented by Prospero. I read Caliban's mother as a strong woman who has influenced the course of action in the play although she is absent. Her absence / presence signifies the Other’s ability to camouflage his / her resistant tools to adapt to the cunning of the colonizer. Like Cleopatra of Egypt, Sycorax could maneuver her way through the murky seas of cultural politics. Miranda somehow disobeys her father and marries Ferdinand, though instrumental to Prospero's political ends; she shows an early attempt of casting off the shackles of patriarchy. Shakespeare, in the reading advanced her, empowers Sycorax and Miranda albeit minimally at a time when such women agency was unperceived. Miranda is also an educated woman who educates Caliban:

> When thou didst not, savage,
>
> Know thine own meaning, but wouldst gabble like

A thing most brutish, I endowed thy purposes

With words that made them known. (358–61)

The Bard seemingly rants against the colonial view of women; he demystifies the colonizer's façade of civility and gender equality. *The Tempest* is surely one of the early works that glimpses at empowering women. The Bard endows women in *The Tempest* with more agency than what the Renaissance society expected. The English society's expectations of women in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were more focused on showing the elements of beauty and virtue. Dolan asserts that the image of a woman is “based almost uniformly on her physical appearance” (30). Shakespeare gives Miranda and Sycorax unexpected agency of his time; though his empowerment of women is minimal, it is a milestone achievement during the Renaissance. It is hard to consider Shakespeare a fervent feminist in the literal meaning of the word, but surely he takes great liberty in creating "new women," at least within their respective societies. Shakespeare changes the patriarchal view of women in the Renaissance who are “defined in this culture by their relation to men” according to Stephen Orgel (*Impersonations*, 3).

Shakespeare shows that Miranda, like Caliban, is oppressed and victimized and that she is able to resist the hegemonic paradigm of the West. Some modern postcolonial readings of *The Tempest* ignore this reading of Miranda as Thompson explains: "some anti-colonialist or anti-racist readings have been unthinkingly sexist: the specific repression of Miranda has been neglected" (176). One feminist reading of Miranda is that she has risen above her circumstances. Despite the fact that she has minimal role as a character in *The Tempest*, she has developed from a submissive daughter of Prospero into an equal status with her husband Ferdinand at the end of the play.

I read Shakespeare as an early proponent of strong women. People may differ on whether the Bard is a pro-feminist or not, but certainly he creates very intelligent and powerful women. The renowned director of many Shakespearean plays, Penny Gay, asserts that "All the plays I direct analyze the roles of women from that ideological point of view. . . . Shakespeare shows women totally abused— like animals—bartered to the highest bidder. . . . There is no question of it, his sympathy is with the women, and his purpose, to expose the cruelty of a society that allows these things to happen" (104). Miranda is an epitome of a virtuous daughter the same way Desdemona is a virtuous wife who cannot disobey Othello and falls victim to his impetuousness. I read Miranda as a woman who is able to both disobey her father in choosing a man of her choice as a husband as well as stand at the same level as Ferdinand; she plays chess with him as an equal contender; she flirts with him and teases him: "Sweet lord, you play me false," and he answers: "No, my dearest love, I would not for the world" (5.1.171-72). She is also equal to Ferdinand at the end of the play. Although she lives in a highly male-dominated sphere, she survives subjugation and oppression. Shakespeare, knowing that she has limited choices, in one reading, offers Miranda an alternative agency to work around the mainstream patriarchal authority of the renaissance.

III- "You taught me language": Cultural Assimilation and the Education of the Colonized People

Colonialism has two layers: A strong, thick, and direct one—that is, occupying the lands of another nation—and a soft, slippery, camouflaged, and indirect one—namely, sneakily instilling the colonizer's culture in the newly settled lands. If we agree that the first phase of colonialism is the military conquering of a land, then we may ask: what comprises the second

type of colonialism? The answer is assimilating the native culture of the colonized people into the colonial culture. One of the most effective tools of the cultural domination is education, and the tip of the iceberg to education is teaching the language of the colonizer.

Naming is a colonial art that manifests itself by means of language. Caliban tells Prospero: “and you taught me the names for the sun and / the moon, the big light and the smaller light that / burn in daytime and nighttime” (1.2.63-65). We are told that Prospero is knowledgeable in the liberal arts and that Prospero's immersion in books indirectly helped his brother depose him as the rightful Duke of Milan. Through his studies, Prospero has learned magic and has become a magus Duke. Prospero later uses knowledge / education as a tool to control Ariel and eventually to control the island and Caliban. Ariel executes all Prospero's orders to bring the island under his control. Via learning magic, Prospero enslaves Caliban, exacts revenge upon the shipwrecked party, and reconciles with his brother and his cronies at the end of the play. Prospero equips himself with knowledge that “is not innocent but profoundly connected with the operations of power,” according to Loomba (*Colonialism*, 43).

I contend that colonialism uses two forms of power, a strong form (occupying the lands—a militaristic form), and a soft form (occupying hearts and minds of the colonized people—a cultural form). Because culture is linked directly to identity, the culture of a certain nation or geographical entity is its own identity. The colonizer most of the time erodes native culture because he wants the history of the colonized people to start with their arrival in the colonized lands. Prospero works to mold Caliban in accordance to the colonial forms.

Culture comprises many aspects of people's life. Nieto defines culture as “ever-changing values, traditions, social and political relationships, and worldview created, shared, and transformed by a group of people bound together by a common history, geographic location,

language, social class, and religion" (129). The changing here does not mean obliteration; rather, it means that our lives are dynamic, and so is our culture that interacts with other cultures rather than dominated by them. Prospero teaches Caliban his language as a tool to communicate orders rather than as a tool of interaction. The academic commodity of colonialism is colonial education that has been used to obliterate native / indigenous cultural forms and replace them with the culture of the Colonizer. When Robinson Crusoe lands on the remote island, he meets Friday, the black inhabitant of the island. To effectively enslave Friday, the colonizer builds a bridge to communicate with the slave; that bridge is language. It is most appalling to our modern sensibility that the first word Crusoe teaches Friday is "master." He teaches Friday how to address the colonizer who incidentally lands on the island.

To base my argument in pedagogical grounds, the Brazilian pedagogist, thinker and educator Paulo Freire is instrumental in deciphering tropes of colonial literacy and education. In his seminal book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Freire distinguishes a dialogical component to the education process, consisting of the oppressed and oppressor; the oppressed is the student while the oppressor is the teacher. He also separates two forms of education: banking education and problem-posing education. In banking education educators assume students are tabula rasa on which they can inscribe their own agenda. Students are passive; they only receive information and store them in their minds without questioning the validity of such information. Students are thought of as empty accounts where teachers can deposit their ideas and what they think is right; it follows then that teachers bring in their idiosyncrasies into the classroom. Teachers in the banking education view their students as machines who must be fed with ready-made information.

The second concept of education is the problem-posing one wherein questions are raised by the teacher, and everybody in class, including the teacher, participates in answering questions, finding solution to problems, and sharing their experiences (*Pedagogy*, 61-62). Freire wants the relation between the teacher and the students to be of cooperation and of reciprocal nature rather than a one way from top (teacher / Prospero / colonizer / oppressor) to bottom (student / Caliban / colonized / oppressed). Freire affirms that: "Any situation in which 'A' objectively exploits 'B' or hinders his and her pursuit of self-affirmation as a responsible person is one of oppression" (*Pedagogy*, 37). The relationship between the oppressed and the oppressor is always based on the latter possessing the upper hand when it comes to power and cultural relations. The colonizer is always the superior while the native, or the colonized, is relegated to an inferior status. Sonia Nieto contends that: "while many Whites see themselves as culturally neutral or "cultureless," at the same time they insist, through constant messages in the dominant ideology, that theirs is the valued and valuable culture" (135). It is an underlying feeling of cultural purity or supremacy: native cultures are seen as primitive and backward.

Freire warns us of the authority and privilege that the teachers have at their disposal in class; authoritarian teachers like Prospero, I contend, can channel education into their own goals. Freire explains that the teachers' "fundamental objective is to fight alongside the people for the recovery of the people's stolen humanity," rather than to "win the people over" to their side (*Pedagogy*, 95). Prosper uses education to assimilate and subdue Caliban instead of uplifting him from illiteracy. The relationship between the two participants in the education process is crucial because it decides the outcome of the education process. Freire stresses that "Education must begin with the solution of the teacher-student contradiction, by reconciling the poles of the contradiction so that both are simultaneously students and teachers" (*Pedagogy*, 72). In the case

of Prospero and Caliban, harmony is disrupted as the two are extremely polarized rather than united. Prospero has the upper hand that controls the intake and consequently decides the outcome of the process, so the outcome is contradictory to Caliban's interest. Caliban uses the education he receives from Prospero to attack Prospero rather than to reach common grounds with him about their relationship.

When Prospero teaches Caliban the colonizer's language, he actually intends to dominate rather than help Caliban. By assimilating Caliban into the colonial culture, Prospero facilitates his colonial scheme on the island. The language here is a colonial tool to convey orders, subjugation, insults, and oppression. Caliban's reaction to learning the colonizer's language is expected on the large scale. Caliban refuses to use his oppressor language instrumentally; he rather uses it to fight back because his cultural identity is threatened. Freire elaborates on the issue of teaching the colonizer's language; he states that “the syntax, orthography, semantics, and accent of the kind spoken by lower-class children [Caliban(s)] are almost always denigrated” (*Teachers*, 73). Caliban feels insulted by learning the language of his oppressor; he revolts against the cultural hegemony of Prospero who tries to subsume Caliban’s native tongue in order to facilitate Caliban's adaptation of Western language, education, civilization, and eventually identity.

The colonizer’s language is a vehicle of cultural subordination. The colonized people find themselves torn between two identities—cultures, geographies, and pedagogies. This identity ambivalence is harmful psychologically. We have seen the effect of ambivalence on Caliban who uses his oppressors' language as a counter-hegemonic tool to offset Prospero's subjugation and torture. Prospero exerts dominance by teaching Caliban the colonizer's language; this kind of cultural dominance Freire maintains “interferes with the individual’s

ontological and historical vocation to be more fully human" (*Pedagogy*, 37), and this, in the interpretation I propose here, triggers Caliban's curse—fighting back by using Prospero's language.

The education, designed by the colonist for the native inhabitants of the colonies, "sought to replace local cultures and discourses": "schools in colonial settings were primarily designed to meet the conceptions and needs of the colonizers rather than the colonized, and this influenced the amount, type and availability of education" (Wickens, 279). Caliban is taught the oppressor's language to facilitate communication that we see inclusive to threats and orders to cater for Prospero's household.

Prospero as a colonialist agent presents himself as an educator; he educates his daughter Miranda, teaches Caliban according to the Western pedagogy, and teaches his brother, the usurper of Prospero's dukedom, in a redemptive way that restores a pacifist political milieu back at home in Milan. Prospero is the omniscient educator on the island who encompasses all truth; we see him in an ongoing educational expedition all through the play. Portraying him as a monopolizing colonial agent, Shakespeare is actually demystifying the colonial metaphysics that rules out any role for the colonized access to Truth / knowledge. Prospero is the only wise man in the play; he is the mover of all actions toward the ends of his own devise. Prospero expresses his knowledge of the world, next he controls Caliban, and then he punishes him for being ungrateful for Prospero's gift of enlightenment:

> . . . I pitied thee,
> Took pains to make thee speak, taught thee each hour
> One thing or other: when thou didst not, savage,
> Know thine own meaning, but wouldst gabble like

A thing most brutish, I endow'd thy purposes

With words that made them known. But thy vile race,

Though thou didst learn, had that in't which good natures

Could not abide to be with; therefore wast thou

Deservedly confined into this rock,

Who hadst deserved more than a prison. (1.2.356-65)

Prospero, the erudite scholar in humanities, knows that language is one of the main tools by which he can control and abuse Caliban, so he and his daughter Miranda launch an education expedition to bring Caliban into the light of the colonial civilization and culture. Peter Mwaur explains the centrality of language in acculturation: “Language influences the way in which we perceive reality, evaluate it and conduct ourselves with respect to it. . . . Language controls thought and action and speakers of different languages do not have the same worldview or perceive the same reality unless they have a similar culture or background” (27). By teaching Caliban the colonizer’s tongue, Prospero finds it easier to pass orders and to shift the colonized thinking into the colonial domain of how he wants things to be. In his 1986 book *Decolonising the Mind*, Ngugi wa Thiong'o explains that in addition to the colonizer’s leaving the colonies, the mind of the colonized people must be decolonized. Ngugi asserts that: “The language of an African child's formal education was foreign. The language of the books he read was foreign. Thought in him took the visible form of a foreign language. . . . [The] colonial child was made to see the world and where he stands in it as seen and defined by or reflected in the culture of the language of imposition” (17). Caliban is left at the end of the play with all the bad baggage that Prospero brought to the island, nor does Caliban use the language for benefit; he uses it to rant

against his oppressor. Shakespeare, I read, mystifies colonial cultural imposition; rather, he is against cultural domination / colonization.

Language does not stand alone but is part of a wide cultural system. For Caliban to learn a language means, he has to absorb the larger culture it represents. In *Black Skin White Masks*, Frantz Fanon contends that: "To speak means to be in a position to use certain syntax, to grasp the morphology of this or that language, but it means above all to assume a culture, to support the weight of a civilization" (17-18). Teaching Caliban the colonial language means eventually assimilating him to what culture this language is representing. Shakespeare demystifies the imposition of culture, language, lifestyle and governing system on colonized nations. Fanon, in discussing the colonial language, further asserts that: "To speak a language is to take on a world, a culture. The Antilles Negro who wants to be white will be the whiter as he gains greater mastery of the cultural tool that language is" (*Black Skin*, 38). Fanon asserts, in his book *A Dying Colonialism*, that the language of the French colonist in Algeria for example is considered and meant to be a means for humiliating communicating orders to the Algerians:

> The French language, language of occupation, a vehicle of the oppressing power, seemed doomed for eternity to judge the Algerian in a pejorative way. Every French expression referring to the Algerian had a humiliating content. Every French speech heard was an order, a threat, an insult. The contract between the Algerian and the European is defined by these three spheres. (89)

The colonial language has become a tool to suppress the colonized. We see examples of colonial languages being used as formal and first languages in decolonized countries like India, Algeria, and Pakistan, to name but a few. The cultural influence of colonialism is the most effective tool of new imperialism that, like the older colonizing empires of the past, indirectly imposes its will

and power upon the decolonized countries. I posit that the cultural—or what I termed the soft—"power" of colonialism is enduring and alluring at the same time; decolonized subjects tend to take their former colonizer's culture as the signifier of modernity and civilization. Long after the colonial powers have left their former colonies, their cultural manifestations of power and imperialism still exist. The linguistic link between the oppressor and the oppressed is forged by the former and is a kind of a superior / inferior relation instead of an equivalent relation that guarantees reciprocal interest and productive cultural interaction. A good example of this is Rome. The Roman Empire colonized the then known world. Vestiges / ruins of Rome's four-century domination are seen all through parts of the former Roman Empire.

Caliban, as an alienated Other, learns the language of his master, but he uses it as tool to counter-attack his oppressor, Prospero. By arming himself with the colonial language to fight back, Caliban has indeed attempted to destabilize the "metropolitan center" represented by Prospero; in doing so Caliban has proved that the "idea of the center as permanent and unrefractory" is vulnerable and can be destructed (90-91). Shakespeare, in the reading I offer here, empowers Caliban when he arms him with the colonial language to attack his oppressor and demystifies Prospero's imposition of his language upon Caliban. Caliban refuses assimilation and creates a counter-hegemonic discourse of cultural defiance to the tropes of the colonial civilization imported by Prospero to the island. Caliban angrily as well as proudly declares his cultural revolution: "You taught me language; and my profit on't / Is, I know how to curse. The red plague rid you / For learning me your language!" (1.2.366-68). Caliban here shows his fear of cultural dominion and assimilation; he voices his protest against Prospero's coercive acculturation process of him. Caliban, in this view, is acting as a Machiavellian just like

his oppressor; he harnesses the colonial language in order to revenge himself for what Prospero has done to his identity, culture, property, and history.

By speaking up, even through the use of the colonizer's language, Caliban subverts Gayatri Spivak's claim that that the subaltern (Caliban) cannot speak under oppression and colonialism. In my reading, the Bard deconstructs Prospero's colonialism by empowering Caliban, at least as far as linguistics is concerned. Caliban's counter-linguistic / counter-cultural attack compelled Prospero to admit his wrong-doing, thereby forcing Prospero, in a way, to declare his share in the misery of Caliban whom he enslaves: "this thing of darkness I acknowledge mine" (5.1.278). The subaltern can revolt against tyranny if favorable circumstances arise. By granting Caliban limited agency to speak against Prospero's oppression, Shakespeare anticipates the resisting potentials that the oppressed can gain out of his very oppression. Caliban reverses the oppressive tool of Prospero's language to his own benefit. He uses it to decolonize himself although not completely successful.

Prospero's teaching Caliban language is not meant as a cross socio-cultural medium of collaboration; rather, it is a medium to further subvert Caliban's culture. Caliban's resentment of the colonizer's language is associated with the embitterment he faces at the hands of Prospero. The cultural dissonance is hard to compromise on the part of Caliban who is threatened with cultural omission. Caliban has suffered at the hand of Prospero, and he has resisted assimilation. Shakespeare has endowed Caliban with a defined agency to fight back, refuse tyranny, oppose cultural erosion, and above all he has made of Caliban a colonized person who can say no to his oppressor. While Prospero thinks Caliban's abandonment of his culture would help assimilate him, Caliban is well aware of what his oppressor plans for him. Caliban at the end of the play declares his refusal of the colonizer's cultural domination, and he uses what he has been taught—

the language of his colonizer—to combat his oppressor. Shakespeare's visionary thinking enabled him to predict the emerging European colonial discourse at its fledgling period in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The Bard anticipates future use of tools like language and cultural imposition by colonial powers, and he exposes and demystifies them right from the beginnings of the English imperial aspirations to build and empire. He warns against the coercive cultural tools at an early stage of modern Western colonialism which emulates the program of all colonizers including that of the ancient world as when the Greeks forced Greek on conquered peoples and the Romans Latin on theirs.

IV- Surveillance (The Panopticon): A Colonial Tool

The genius of Shakespeare is much felt today as we are under technological surveillance around the clock. The modern man is under cameras, telephone, taps, radars, and sensors that are invented and used by governments to control people through a complex web of intelligence apparatuses. In his study on prisons in France, Michel Foucault analyzed the way power dynamics work; he studied government surveillance of society, especially the way inmates are watched in a prison. Governments used what Foucault terms as the "gaze,"[4] an analogy to an eye watching people all the time. Although the panoptic system started to restrict people's movement in plagued areas in Europe / France in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, it has developed into measures incorporated into the penal system. Foucault in this sense will illuminate the discussion on how Prospero uses Ariel, the spirit, to radar the island and to make things happen

[4] I borrow the terms "gaze" from Michel Foucault in his 1975 book *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, and from his book *Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception*, Trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Vintage Books, 1975). The Gaze is originally a technical / medical term for Foucault where physician watch their patients to find out the disease they have. Foucault himself borrowed the term from his fellow *psychoanalyst* and philosopher Jacques Lacan (1901-1981) who explains that one can be anxious when he / she feels he is being watched / observed. For more information see Jacques Lacan, *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan: Book XX: On Feminine Sexuality, The Limits of Love and Knowledge 1972–1973*, Trans. Bruce Fink (New York and London, W. W. Norton & Company, 1998).

the way Prospero designs. The only native inhabitant of the island and the shipwrecked party are constantly watched by Prospero through his eye, Ariel. All the machinations Prospero wills are put into action via the magic of Ariel. Although Foucault's theory of direct government surveillance of places and people has been around for quite sometime, it is instrumental in explicating how Shakespeare in *The Tempest* anticipates oppressive practices of intelligence by showing Ariel's use by Prospero to keep an eye on the island and its people. I posit that Prospero adeptly uses the colonized to watch over their fellow colonized people. The Bard shows the cunning strategy of colonialism to use the oppressed people against one another. Ariel is enslaved by Prospero who uses him against Caliban; both Ariel and Caliban are oppressed, but still the former participates in further oppression of the latter. This is a pernicious colonial strategy exposed by Shakespeare in *The Tempest*.

Shakespeare demythologizes the oppressor's use of all tools at his disposal to suppress the Other. Prospero’s use of the supernatural is analogous to using knowledge to produce power and eventually to suppress the colonized. Michel Foucault, theorizing on the interconnectedness between power and knowledge, contends that:

> We should admit that power produces knowledge (and not simply by encouraging it because it serves power, or by applying it because it is useful); that power and knowledge directly imply one another; that there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations. (*Discipline*, 27)

Prospero who studied liberal arts is able to wield magic to secure absolute power over the island. By using his power over the supernatural, Prospero is able to know all that is happening on the island and further manipulates his knowledge to produce the desired result. To show techniques

that were primarily designed to suppress prisoners and by time developed to control entire societies, Foucault coined the term "panopticon" which refers to a surveillance technique wherein a high tower is installed in middle of a prison manned with guards to watch prisoners all the time[5]. Michel Foucault explains that, Jeremy Bentham "invented a technology of power designed to solve the problems of surveillance" ("Eye of Power," 148). By the same token, I posit that Prospero enslaves Ariel and uses him as kind of gaze / Panopticon to watch over his colony. Foucault's insight is valuable when he explains that:

> There is no need for arms, physical violence, material constraints. Just a gaze. An inspecting gaze, a gaze which each individual under its weight will end by interiorising to the point that he is his own overseer, each individual thus exercising this surveillance over, and against, himself. A superb formula: power exercised continuously and for what turns out to be a minimal cost. ("Eye of Power," 155)

It follows then that Prospero's gaze is considered both a controlling tool as well as a disciplinary tool just like Foucault's Panopticon. Ariel flies over the island to watch, gather information, and exact punishment at the orders of his master Prospero. The Opticon here serves as an ideal way of disseminating / deploying power so people under power fear its existence and behave accordingly. Modern states have organized intelligence agencies that monitor their respective societies as their (potential) enemies by sophisticated technological apparatuses like satellites, cameras, radars, planes, sensors, and other advance espionage tools. Prospero practices

[5] The Panopticon: (*Pan* here means all prisoners / people and *opticon* relates to observe(r) / eye) is a surveillance design for prisons where the prison is constructed on a circular shape and cells face the middle of the circle where a high tower is installed and manned around the clock to watch the prisoners around the clock. The Panopticon design of prisons was invented in 1785 by the English utilitarian theorist Jeremy Bentham (1748 –1832). The prison building design is created for easy supervision of inmates. Foucault describes the building as: "a perimeter building in the form of a ring. At the center of this is a tower, pierced by large windows opening on to the inner face of the ring. The outer building is divided into cells each of which traverses the whole thickness of the building ("Eye of Power," 147). I refer to Ariel as "Panopticon" that Prospero uses to watch over the island constantly.

his power and conducts his surveillance of the island, watches Caliban, and follows the movements of the shipwreck party through the unseen spirit Ariel. In order to sway his daughter's attention from Ferdinand, Prospero claims that Ferdinand came to the island to work "as a spy" (1.2. 459). This, in one reading, indicates that Prospero is aware of the working of surveillance, espionage, and monitoring.

Prospero's colonial project encompasses spying, secrecy, force, and cultural alteration of the target island. He uses a secret agent, Ariel, as a Panopticon that constantly monitors the island. Ariel also implements orders, executes punishments, and conducts surveillance tasks around the island. Right from the commencement of his colonial project, Prospero asks Ariel to use a water nymph costume to cover his identity. Prospero commands Ariel also to be invisible but to his eyes: "Be subject / To no sight but thine and mine, invisible / To every eyeball else" (1.2.304-06). This attests to Prospero's secretive colonial intentions that he wants to keep to himself. Prospero's colonialism right from the beginning is suspicious and vague. He does not want to declare his real intentions just like almost any colonial discourse.

Well before all the cutting-edge advances in surveillance apparatus even envisioned or developed, Shakespeare proves his genius by demythologizing Prospero's power machinations in *The Tempest* in the beginning of the seventeenth century. Caliban himself admits to being intimidated by Prospero: "I must obey. His art is of such power / It would control my dam's god *Setebos*, / And make a vassal of him" (1.2.375-77). Although it is not necessary for the observed person to know that he is being observed, Caliban nevertheless knows that he is under a constant gaze imposed by Prospero. The effect of the gaze or the panoptican surveillance is so far-reaching that it creates in the colonizer the sense of perpetual fear of being monitored by his colonizer. Foucault insists that "the inmate must never know whether he is being looked at any

moment; but he must be sure that he may always be so' (*Discipline*, 201). Although Ariel is unseen to and unknown by Caliban, yet Caliban knows the great powers of his oppressor, Prospero. Ainley insists that the prison inmates are constantly subject to "the constant torture of the random but ever possible gaze" (*Discipline*, 90).

Prospero's behests come into application via Ariel who conjures tempests, calls wind, and sinks ships; he also majestically plays music and brings about enchanting airs to the young lovers, Miranda and Ferdinand. Terry Eagleton contends that "the name of Prospero's language is Ariel, who symbolizes his word in action" (94). Prospero's words come true through the magical powers of Ariel, the Panopticon / the gazer. It is also important here to point out the relation between surveillance and geography: Prospero can observe and control the whole island as a space including all elements which this space incorporates. Shakespeare divulges the Prospero's direct control of his colonizers through surveillance.

The Panopticon apparatus is manipulated by Prospero to suit his ends. He conjures a big banquet for the shipwreck people, yet before they enjoy the feast, he uses his manipulative strategies to set up an attempt on his own life so that he can charge the men with this crime to further indulge them as an adversary against himself. Prospero does not see the tripartite conspiracy on his life being plotted by the Caliban, Stephano and Trinculo, but Ariel who monitors the spatiality of the island discovers the plot and thwarts it.

Ariel is analogous to intelligence-gathering agencies that have been used from time immemorial to bolster governments' control over people and territories. Prospero knows all things that go around on the island through Ariel's reports. When Prospero conjures the tempest that wrecks the ship of his opponents, Ariel shows up and submits his report on the incident, addressing his master Prospero: "Not a hair perished. / On their sustaining garment not a

blemish, / But fresher than before" (1.2.218-20). Shakespeare, in my reading, is criticizing the secretive practices of colonialism whether they be old or new. He alludes to the tough panoptical authority of King James I in England who openly declared that he had the right to watch over his own people for the best interest of England. King James I used his absolute authority to use espionage over his own people. In his book *Basilicon Doron*, King James I declares the pretext for his secretive surveillance of his own people, cloaking his insidious intent in biblical language:

> Charitable Reader; it is one of the golden Sentences, which Christ our Sauiour vttered to his Apostles, that there is nothing so couered, that shal not be reuealed, neither so hidde, that shall not be knowen. . . . Most trew must it be, since the authour thereof is the fountaine and very being of trewth: which should mooue all godly and honest men, to be very warie in all their secretest actions. . . since the deepest of our secrets, cannot be hidde from that all-seeing eye. (3)

King James I was using undercover agents and spies to gather information after many attempts and conspiracies to dethrone him by force. Prospero also uses Panopticon practices to avoid Caliban's dethroning of him in the same way he had been overthrown from power by his own brother who conspired with the king of Naples to usurp the throne of Milan. King James I justified his secret watch over people: "for Kings being publike persons, by reason of their office and authority, are as it were set (as it was said of old) vpon a publike stage, in the sight of all the people; where all the beholders['] eyes are attentiuely bent to looke and pry in the least circumstance of their secretest drifts" (4). Shakespeare shows surveillance as a controlling as well as oppressive tool in *The Tempest*.

The surveillance agent, Ariel, is under complete control of the master and the mover of all actions on the island; he believes that his freedom is in the hand of Prospero. When Prospero summons Ariel, he promptly comes and offers his services and puts them at the disposal of the colonizer. Ariel addresses Prospero:

> All hail, great master, grave sir, hail! I come
> To answer thy best pleasure; be't to fly,
> To swim, to dive into the fire, to ride
> On the curled clouds, to thy Strong bidding task
> Ariel, and all his quality. (1.2.190-94)

If we consider the spirit Ariel as one of the colonized—an obvious interpretation—then he contrasts strongly with Caliban who revolts against Prospero, curses him, and tries to rape his daughter, whereas Ariel completely acquiesces to the power of his oppressor and colonizer. Both Caliban and Ariel are oppressed, although each goes a different way to free himself. According to Retamar "There is no real Ariel-Caliban polarity: both are slaves in the hands of Prospero, the foreign magician" (16).

In my reading of *The Tempest* I contend that Shakespeare demystifies the absolute control over people by using secret surveillance of the kind Prospero uses over the colonized island. Shakespeare shows how Prospero colonizes Ariel to colonize Caliban, meaning that colonization can be conducted in a chain of power. The Bard anticipates some of the controlling practices the colonizer uses to oppress colonized nations. I used Foucault's theory of the Panopticon that started in Europe as part of a penal system that extended virtually to all aspect of life. The controlling apparatuses were meant to control prisoners at first, "But in the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the disciplines became general formula of domination"

(*Discipline*, 137). Prospero uses surveillance to put down revolutions against his settlement on the island and to restore his dukedom of Milan. The colonizer uses practices of control to dominate just as Prospero uses Ariel as a tool to achieve his political ends.

V- Caliban: A Winner or loser?

Some past readings of *The Tempest* emphasized the fact that Prospero is a civilizer who tries to bring Caliban to enlightenment out of his sub-human darkness. I contend that the Bard portrays Caliban as a human who feels the world around him and interacts with human agency; the referral to Caliban as brutish and as monster in the play is meant by Shakespeare to show how the colonizer views aliens. Throughout *The Tempest*, Caliban is repeatedly described as a monster, but he acts and responds to Prospero's torture as a human being who feels the suffering and knows that he is being ill-treated by Prospero. This ambiguity arises from the fact that the English people and the Europeans by extension had, like all colonizers of all ages, some interactions with the slaves who were brought to Europe early in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; the nature of this encounter is racially defined. The slaves are black and speak different languages, and it follows then that they were considered of inferior nature—that is, they are inferior and of a different lower human nature.

The Bard divulges the aforementioned claim when he shows that Caliban is a human being who is able to learn language and know his awareness of his surroundings, both of which reveal human capacity; Caliban addresses Prospero:

> This island's mine, by Sycorax my mother,
> Which thou take'st from me. When thou came'st first,

Thou stroked'st me and made much of me, wouldst give me

Water with berries in't (1.2.334-37)

Caliban also knows that the colonizer has changed some things in him. He is aware of the eroded influence of colonialism which cannot be recognized by a beast or a brute; he realizes some of the doings of Prospero and continues:

and teach me how

To name the bigger light, and how the less,

That burn by day and night. (1.2.338-40)

Caliban is also endowed with one of the purest human agencies: he is a person with a big heart who loves an intruder and a settler in his own land. He is aware of the geography of the island, its natural recourses, and what is best to eat and drink on the island—human capabilities that contradict the claim that Caliban is a sub-human monster. Caliban reminds Prospero of the early time of his arrival on the island with his daughter:

And then I loved thee

And show'd thee all the qualities o'the'isle,

The fresh springs, brine-pits, barren place and fertile (1.2.341-43)

Also he recognizes his mistake of trusting Prospero which is also a human faculty that attests to Shakespeare's siding with the colonized against the colonizer who deceives people of other nations under the claim of helping them. Caliban complains that he has been wrong in trusting Prospero who does not honor the help Caliban renders him when he and his daughter first arrive on the island:

Cursed be I that did so! All the charms

Of Sycorax, toads, beetles, bats, light on you!

For I am all the subjects that you have,

Which first was mine own king; and here you sty me

In this hard rock, whiles you do keep from me

The rest o'the'island. (1.2.344-49)

Knowing of the colonial intentions short after Prospero arrives, Caliban declares that he is the ruler of the island and that things have changed now; there is a colonizer who controls the island. The Bard grants Caliban, in my reading, some sort of agency to refute the colonizer's claim that the Other cannot rule himself and that he needs the civilized West to upgrade the level of non-Europeans. Shakespeare demythologizes Europe's colonialism at an early stage of its destructive colonial project. Caliban lived and governed himself before the advent of Prospero; he knows the geography of and the resources in the island. He shows Prospero around the island.

Shakespeare demythologizes the good intentions of Prospero by refuting the colonialist claim of bringing civility to the backward nations and lands. At the end of the play Prospero admits that he has a share in the misery of Caliban: "This thing of darkness I acknowledge mine" (5.1-289). The question here is who wins at the end of the play, Prospero or Caliban. The answer to this question is complex and might seem too simplistic to claim victory by either sides, but in my reading of the play, the Bard to some extent empowers Caliban who cursed Prosper and disrupted his colonial project. Shakespeare could not express frankly his anti-colonialist views of the English fledgling colonial project, but he was, to some extent, able to demythologize the project albeit indirectly. At the close of the play, I contend that the cultural superiority claim of Prospero is rather simplistic, making it hard to distinguish who wins and who loses; both Prospero and Caliban have their ups and downs. I find that Annabel Patterson is instrumental here to support my point; she explains that "*The Tempest* warns us against the easy assumption

of superiority, and suggests that Prospero, and hence Shakespeare himself, are not the masters of all they command, but the slaves of peculiar circumstances" (159). Shakespeare in *The Tempest*, in short, mystifies the colonizer's claim of absolute superiority and civility by showing Prospero's ill treatment of Caliban and by giving Caliban some sort of space to resist Prospero. Inasmuch as the Bard shows the negative side of Prospero, he also shows that Caliban is not completely colonized by the end of the Play, Caliban says that:

> Ay, that I will; And I'll be wise hereafter
> And seek for grace. What a thrice-double ass
> Was I to take this drunkard for a god
> And worship this dull fool! (5.1.298-301)

Shakespeare here also endows Caliban with intelligence as he is easily able to ascertain that Stephano is a "fool" and "drunkard"— a lesson that Caliban is able to learn in addition to learning the language of Prospero. Caliban is, thus, somehow elevated to human capability of distinguishing right from wrong, contradicting the colonizer's claim that Caliban is sub-human and needs the colonizer's help to be civilized.

Out of the misery of colonialism, Caliban emerges a more rationally endowed person, a savvier politician, and a stronger individual. Caliban has become a politically utilitarian person who knows that he cannot overthrow Prospero unless he allies himself with the colonizer's powers that manifests the might of Prospero the colonizer; Caliban forges a mutual interest alliance with Trinculo and Stephano who are swept ashore the island. To successfully accomplish the mission of dethroning Prospero, Caliban tells his two European allies of the first step of the conspiracy which is to get rid of Prospero's book because they are the source of magical power for the colonizer; this attests to Caliban's advanced mental capacity and his ability

to figure out the main source of his colonizer's oppression—that is, knowledge. He even tells his allies of the plan to attack Prospero: “Remember / First to possess his books; for without them / He's but a sot" (3.2.61-63). Caliban here proves that he is able to wield alliances, collaborates to set up conspiracies against his oppressor, and articulates an intelligent plan to end oppression though not successful. Shakespeare has granted Caliban with agency albeit limited at an early stage of colonialism and anti-colonialism; he is a fore-runner of revolutionary colonized subjects. Shakespeare has predicted anti-colonialism sentiment and resistance at an early stage of the colonialism of the modern era. This resistance to oppression eventually matured later, just as it refined the colonizing strategies used by world empires throughout past ages. Shakespeare's Caliban augurs well for the colonized subject that there is a way out through resistance and defiance. Shakespeare demythologizes oppression and expects an end to all sorts of oppression by empowering the colonized people.

Shakespeare in granting Caliban limited agency invites us to think of him as a native who can, if circumstances serve him, limit the power of his colonizer. There is not much Caliban can do about the fact that his land is usurped because he lives in peace and harmony with his environment and never even remotely considered the possibility that an intruder would come to take over his land. This attitude, unfortunately, is prevalent in almost all colonies of all ages where native people were not readily resistant to colonialism due to their naiveté. Caliban shows Prospero and Miranda the best of the island and even helps them survive. Caliban never thought that by helping the newcomers, he was actually helping them dominate the island and its inhabitants. Prospero, who is dethroned from his lawful dukedom by betrayal and force, uses the same techniques and practices to dominate and usurp another country. This shows the imperial hypocrisy that the Bard criticizes in *The Tempest*. It is expected from someone who was subject

to tyranny and betrayal to be more considerate and sensitive to tyranny and oppression, but the opposite happens: Prospero usurps another land after his own land, Milan, was usurped by his corrupt brother and his allies.

Shakespeare also mystifies the dilemma of the modern man who strives for knowledge and individuality at the expense of losing social ties. Prospero's suffering from the immorality and insincerity is projected towards Caliban who has nothing to do with the suffering of the early modern Western man. Prospero explains the ramifications of his indulgence in knowledge to Miranda:

> My brother, and thy uncle, called Antonio--
> I pray thee mark me, that a brother should
> Be so perfidious--he whom next thyself
> Of all the world I loved, and to him put
> The manage of my state, as at that time
> Through all the signories it was the first,
> And Prospero the prime duke, being so reputed
> In dignity, and for the liberal arts
> Without a parallel; those being all my study,
> The government I cast upon my brother,
> And to my state grew stranger, being transported
> And rapt in secret studies. (1.2.66-77)

After being dethroned from the dukedom of Milan, Prospero is banished by the new ruler to a remote island—an unknown territory. Prospero in turn dethrones and enslaves Caliban who was hitherto his "own king" (1.2.347). Prospero uses oppression, torture, and hard work as

punishment and magic to subdue Caliban, the Other, who is viewed as an imminent danger to his control of the island. Caliban is treated as an outcast, a threat, and a sub-human Other on his own land while the real alien is the intruder Prospero. The Bard demythologizes the colonizer's double-standard, hypocrisy, and tyrannical treatment of the oppressed people.

Shakespeare demythologizes the Renaissance rise of intellectuality that is used to subdue other rations and also shows how individuality has risen but without complete control over the self. Prospero indulges himself in liberal arts—books—and instead of using his newly obtained knowledge to better the life of his people in Milan, he uses this knowledge to attain power over Caliban's island. Indulgence in knowledge during the revival of the Italian Renaissance in Europe had great impact in advancing science, liberal arts, education, and humanity, but it was also used as a tool to oppress Other people. Caliban was in a perplexing position as to how to use the education he obtained from Prospero, but he decides to use it to counter- attack his colonizer because the very education he got from Prospero was used to subdue Caliban and to lead him to live in servitude after he had been independent on the island before the advent of colonialism. Caliban uses education / knowledge of the colonizer to de-colonize himself and the island.

I propose that Shakespeare elevated Caliban to a higher human level than what Prospero has retracted him to. Caliban attained some agency, some independence, and some human faculty to live on the island by his own after Prospero departs for Milan. William Hazlitt contends that "the character of Caliban is generally thought (and justly so) to be one of the author's masterpieces" (91). In his brilliant characterization of Caliban, Shakespeare shows that the erosive affects of colonialism are grave. People in the previously colonized countries in Asia, Africa, Greece, Rome, South America, and elsewhere had been enslaved, their cultures destroyed, and their languages disappeared or relegated to second languages and replaced by

colonial languages. As with the French language in many African countries, people were displaced, identities were split, and some races were completely razed to name just some of the negative effects of the colonialism of the modern era. With all the aforementioned negative impacts, Caliban emerges as a new person, even if weakened by oppression and torture, but much stronger in will and resolution. He survives colonialism—one of the points Shakespeare wants to relay to the reader. Caliban represents the colonized individual who is at odds with his circumstances and who makes creative use of whatever meager opportunities to fight back. He has proved mutable to follow whatever course of action to counter oppression. Caliban is "the amoral, appetitive, suffering Self in all of us, ever in search of freedom to satisfy all its hungers – visceral, sexual, and emotional – and ever ready to follow any 'god' who promises such freedom," as succinctly described by Robert Egan (95). Anne Skura opines that Caliban stands for marginalized races and minorities like the "demonized women, Moors, and Jews in the canon" (44); he fills a gap in the representation of so many oppressed groups, I contend, because he was subject to imprisonment, enslavement, forced labor, verbal and physical abuses, and prejudice. Caliban suffers for the sacred concept of freedom; he tolerates grave suffering for the sake of independence just like all colonized nations throughout history. Shakespeare is visionary in writing his masterpiece *The Tempest*, for he divulges the very crux of colonialism that encompasses all sorts of racism, oppression, torture, exploitation, cultural domination, enslavements and usurpation of resources of colonized territories.

Caliban is described with all sorts of denigrating attributes by Prospero and other characters in the play. To name but a few he is "a tortoise" and "a born devil" (2.2.145) according to Prospero (1.2.316), and when Trinculo and Stephano encounter him he is "a fish" (2.2.24, 28), "a cat" (2.284), "a delicate monster" (2.2.90), a "moon-calf" (2.2 21). Prospero

even calls him a “demi-devil” (5.1.273) and “subhuman,” “inferior,” and “uncivilized” (2.2.72-73). Shakespeare shows that Caliban can be sensitive and even romantic at times: he describes the island in an enchanting way and has refined human taste and appreciation for music and sweet sounds that is not monstrous:

> Be not afeard, the isle is full of noises,
> Sounds, and sweet airs, that give delight and hurt not.
> Sometimes a thousand twangling instruments
> Will hum about mine ears, and sometimes voices
> That, if I then had waked after long sleep,
> Will make me sleep again; and then, in dreaming,
> The clouds methought would open and show riches
> Ready to drop upon me, that when I waked
> I cried to dream again. (3.2.136-44)

Caliban’s character is by no means linear and simple; the Bard creates a complex character in Caliban who can maneuver the complexity of the colonial project itself. He is oppressed beyond comprehension by Prosper the colonizer. He is left on the island with little of the education and civilization which the colonizer claims to have instilled in him, but above all he resisted colonialism with the little capability which he had. He confronted a mighty colonizer but emerged a better individual than before. The Bard, taken all around, granted Caliban some agency to revolt and to be independent and de-colonized at the end of the play, and in doing so he sends a message to England and Europe, already well advanced in Europe’s modern colonizing era, that they could subjugate colonized people all over the world, just as has been done by the dominating empires throughout history—Assyrian, Medo-Persian, Egyptian, Greek,

Roman, and many others. Is this why we walk out of the theater—or end our reading of the play—and feel much sympathy for Caliban?

Chapter Four

Demystifying the Greco-Roman Ideal in *Antony and Cleopatra* and *Troilus and Cressida*

I- Demystifying the Roman Colonial Power in *Antony and Cleopatra*

The role of the Greco-Roman traditions and cultures in Western thought is outstanding and virtually unsurpassed. It is after ancient Grecian and Roman models that Europe shaped its modernity and advancement in almost all fields of humanities and sciences. The English Renaissance of the sixteenth century, moreover, was an emulation of the Italian Renaissance of the fourteenth century, and both movements—the Italian and the English— were considered an early modern revival of the Western ancient tradition, that is, of the Greco-Roman civilization that inspired the whole world and particularly Europe where the Greek and the Roman cultures originated and built great empires that dominated the then known world. The Greco-Roman ideal was the touch stone for the Western system of culture, military, ethics, and politics. The Greek and Roman colonization of the ancient world were probably the first two kinds of colonization ever known on earth. In Shakespeare's appropriation, Rome is more than a city, a republic, a colonizer, or a model of antiquity. For the Bard it is, rather, a mosaic of so many representations—an amalgamation of portrayals:

> It is sometimes metaphor, sometimes myth, sometimes both, sometimes neither. Despite its metamorphoses, Rome maintains a distinct identity. Constructed of forums, walls, and Capital, opposed to outlying battlefields, wild, primitive landscapes, and enemy cities, Rome is a palpable though ever-changing presence. The city serves not only as a settling for action, but also as central protagonist. (Miola 17)

It follows then that Rome was present in the conscious of the Englishman especially in the wake of colonial adventures and expansion in Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The imitation of classical antiquity played a great role in shaping the early modem and modern cultures of Europe and by extension the world cultures as it was, along with Christianity, the main source available for the West upon which to build its systems. Europeans imitated the classical traditions through essentially establishing their systems of government, military, economy, society, art, education, and politics in accordance.

The early modern return to classicity most likely started in the sixteenth century. Martin Luther's revolution destructed the notion of Europe's unity under Christianity, so each European country sought to have an independent identity of its own. The Renaissance endowed Man his place of importance after a long era of the Church's subversion of Man. Referring to the Renaissance of the sixteenth century in England and in Europe, Jacob Burckhardt posits that the Renaissance is "the discovery of the world and of man" or "the revival of antiquity" (104, 171). It follows then that the discovery of the world necessitated the conquering of new and virgin lands, and this is exactly what Portugal, Spain, Netherlands, Denmark, France, and England did in a fervent competition over riches and resources.

I posit that the departure from the domination of the Church by Martin Luther's revolution instigated Europe to find new secular systems away from the control of the Church, and one of the main approaches available then was to restore the classical traditions of the Greeks and the Romans. Not only had the emulation of the ancient classics produced a plethora of art, literature, sculptor, and painting but also extended to political thought, military science, and many other fields. Free of the constraints of the Church, Europe started to aspire to build great empires modeled after the Greek and the Roman empires, and this in led to colonization of

other territories and resources. Spain in particular began building a strong naval power because it was the only way to control naval trade routes that secured the supply of provisions, resources, spices, precious metals, and food to its mainland. To keep pace with Spain and to protect itself against Spanish domination, England also created its navy. The return to classics marked the return to the Greco-Roman hegemony. European countries, England in particular, borrowed colonial tendencies from their predecessors in Rome and Ancient Greece.

The historiography of modern colonialism shows that the imperial powers of the Renaissance borrowed the notion of superior empires from the Greek Empire and its successor the Roman Empire. The West viewed itself as a spiritual power called to advance civilization and usher in modernity. It is well known that many non-Western colonial empires existed in Asia and Africa, but the modern Western colonial powers ameliorated the Greco-Roman model of colonization more than any other colonial modalities of the past. Towards the end of the sixteenth century, main European countries established themselves as naval powers that dominated trade all over the world. With the rise of nationalism and patriotism in Europe, European countries competed among themselves for control of resources and labor in the colonies of Asia, Africa, and the New World. Modern colonialism is, then, mainly a European creation. Christopher Hill posits that "one man's patriotism can be another man's imperialist aggression" (163): the colonies would suffer from hegemony, cultural colonization, slavery, and Europeanization of their communities. England, in rationalizing its imperial desires, looked for a model to follow. Helgerson indicates that the English had two models to copy: the "Greco-Roman antiquity or the middle ages that provided the recognized models of civility and barbarity against which English writings were inevitably measured" (23).

William Shakespeare wrote Roman plays that dramatize the workings of the Roman history, military, government, politics and morality. In *Antony and Cleopatra*, the Bard deconstructs the Roman colonial practices that the English would emulate later in their colonial project; he shows that colonialism is an old phenomenon which existed almost everywhere and at all times. The Roman world view is practical, militaristic, superior, and emotionally devoid; Antony speaks for the great Roman generals whose main tasks were war and expansion:

> Sextus Pompeius
> Hath given the dare to Caesar, and commands
> The empire of the sea. Our slippery people,
> Whose love is never linked to the deserver
> Till his deserts are past, begin to throw
> Pompey the Great and all his dignities
> Upon his son; who, high in name and power,
> Higher than both in blood and life, stands up
> For the main soldier; whose quality, going on,
> The sides o' th' world may danger. (1.2.190-99)

It follows then that the modern colonizers were after a practical alternative to religious sentimentality that advocates mere peace and love. They needed a solid example of materiality rather than spirituality in order to execute their expansionist project. Their best choice was the Greco-Roman model of war, expansion, worldly gains, subjugation, oppression and occupation. The English appropriation of Rome and Greece past transformed this past from the realm of mythical / legendary history in the imagination of Englishmen to actual practice at a time when England moved away from the authority of the Pope in Italy to a new prospect of religious

tolerance, cultural expressions, and new socio-political milieu. According to Bondanella, Roman classicism encompasses "the historical, philosophical, and human problems of change, process, growth, evolution, revolution, decline, decay, corruption, and death"; Rome has become a model that is "not so much a relic to be venerated as it is a flexible and limitless source for self-expression, a common heritage which has met the needs of successive generations, influenced the styles of different periods, and inspired widely different forms of artistic expression" (1, 4).

The emulation of the classics was not merely in the artistic and cultural domains, but it was also adopted as a new way to erect a great empire. It was no coincident then that in 1534 the English parliament proclaimed England to be an Empire and King Henry VIII the supreme head of both the Anglican Church and the state; the English aspirations of independence and nationalism, then materializing, led to a great colonial empire that dominated large territories of the modern world.

The metamorphoses that Europe underwent in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries transformed its respective countries into modern colonial powers which competed for the acquisition of resourceful and rich lands in the colonized world. England then started to aggrandize its military, navy, and commercial ties with the East and the New World. In his four Roman plays, Shakespeare treated history and commented on it from the viewpoint of early modern England / Europe. In *Antony and Cleopatra*, Shakespeare uses the metanarratives of the Roman Empires to indirectly comment on colonial empires of the modern age. In the play Shakespeare shows how modern colonialism emulated past colonial empires in the course of its development by employing past colonial tactics of hegemony, politics, expansionism, military invasion, and cultural imposition, since the revival of the Greco-Roman tradition suited the sixteenth and seventeenth tumultuous time in Europe. It was a time of insurgency against the

Church as an establishment and a time that began to celebrate / value worldliness and materiality of life. It was an era when a new materialist world view emerged and replaced the long celebrated spiritual world view. The Greco-Roman pagan world view fit this new perspective of imperial Europe. Expansion was the solution to Europe's political, religious, and civil turmoils of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Inasmuch as Shakespeare comments on Rome, he also highlights England's shift into colonialism. *Antony and Cleopatra* historically relates to the late republican governing system after the assassination of Caesar when fears of despotism and dictatorship were rampant. The early imperial formation of Rome began with the rise of Octavius Caesar who became Emperor Augustus in 27 BC. The Bard, astutely sensing the early formation of the colonial discourse in England, wanted to warn against the trepidations of copying the model of the Roman Empire. By hinting on the colonial project of Rome, Shakespeare critiques the heavy reliance on the models of the Greco-Roman antiquity without careful discretion of the downfalls and dire consequences of such blind amelioration of classical antiquity, especially on the militaristic level.

Shakespeare demythologizes the Greco-Roman ideal by criticizing the main pillars of that ideal— military, political, historical, and cultural in *Antony and Cleopatra* and *Troilus and Cressida*. The Bard foresees that Europe's solid attachment to this ideal is groundless and foolhardy as the whole Greco-Roman ideal was built upon hypocrisy, hegemony, injustice, and cultural fragility. Demystifying colonialism, Shakespeare astutely begins *Antony and Cleopatra* with the image of a troubled military leader; this heralds the archetypical fall of all empires. In the first lines of the play, Philo notices the toll the infatuation with Cleopatra has had on his friend Antony: "Nay, but this dotage of our general's / O'erflows the measure" (1.1.1-2). In one reading, Shakespeare demythologizes Rome's militaristic might by showing the ability of the

Other / the colonized to subsume the colonizer—that is, Cleopatra's ability to defend Egypt by winning Mark Antony to her side of the struggle with Rome. Cleopatra is able to alienate, or at least neutralize, one of the three pillars of the Rome along with Octavius Caesar and Lepidus. Antony, "the triple pillar of the world" (1.1.12) and one of the epitomes of Rome's military might, is caught between Egypt and Rome. Egypt has transformed Antony from an adversary into an ally as his army fought Caesar along with Cleopatra's army. In Actium, Antony's defeat signals the fragility of Rome's militaristic presence. After his insulting defeat in Actium, Antony changes; his lieutenant Canidius explains the reason behind the defeat in the battle: "Had our general / Been what he knew—himself—it had gone well" (3.10.26-7). Antony himself views his defeat in light of what Caesar must think of him as a transformed figure: "For he seems / Proud and disdainful, harping on what I am, / Not what he knew I was" (3.13.146-48).

Shakespeare here heralds the inevitable decline of colonization. Antony further admits his insulting defeat:

> I have fled myself and have instructed cowards
> To run and show their shoulders. Friends, begone.
> I have myself resolved upon a course
> Which has no need of you. Begone.
> My treasure's in the harbour. Take it. Oh,
> I followed that I blush to look upon!
> …….
> Pray you, look not sad,
> Nor make replies of loathness; take the hint
> Which my despair proclaims. Let that be left

Which leaves itself. (3.11.7-20)

Rome's manhood has been tarnished by the defeat of one of its renowned generals although the defeat was inflicted by his fellow Romans. In one reading, Antony betrays the Roman ideals of a military leader: he is controlled by an Eastern woman. In a highly masculine Roman society, Antony loses his manhood and is seen as "an effeminate or feminine Man," according to Arthur Little (108). Antony does not fit the Romanness of a warrior because his duty to Rome comes second to his love of Cleopatra.

The defeat of Antony, in addition to his dissent from Rome, presupposes the decline of Rome's militaristic fame as a colonial power although the descent came later in history. Antony has won as a compassionate lover, but he lost his Roman identity as a fierce fighter for the Empire. He accepts his share of the defeat and highly appreciates the nobility of Cleopatra who has died in honor:

Since Cleopatra died
I have lived in such dishonour that the gods
Detest my baseness. I, that with my sword
Quartered the world, and o'er green Neptune's back
With ships made cities, condemn myself to lack
The courage of a woman—less noble mind
Than she which by her death our Caesar tells
"I am conqueror of myself." (4.14.56-63)

By orchestrating her own death Cleopatra triumphs over her colonizer who is left divided and ambivalent. Caesar and Antony fight one another, thereby precipitating early disintegration of colonial powers. Shakespeare demythologizes the materiality of the Roman culture; the Romans

built a great empire by invading other nations, but Cleopatra is able to attenuate the Roman control with her feminine power even though she is not able to parallel Rome militarily. Shakespeare rants against Rome's masculinity and military; with the cunning at her disposal, Cleopatra shows her ability to subdue Antony:

> I laughed him out of patience; and that night
> I laughed him into patience. And next morn,
> Ere the ninth hour, I drunk him to his bed,
> Then put my tires and mantles on him, whilst
> I wore his sword Philippan. (2.5.19-23)

Antony realizes that he has relegated himself from a great warrior into a man with less power. The Bard demythologizes a once powerful and commanding pillar of Rome. Antony, having lost a lot of his grand stature, is even unable to command Cleopatra's servants. When the servants were late in answering him, he feels nostalgic for his Roman power that seems to be eroded by Egypt / the colonized: "Authority melts from me. Of late, when I cried 'Ho!' / Like boys unto a muss, kings would start forth / And cry 'Your will?' Have you no ears? I am / Antony yet" (3.13.95-98). In showing the diminishing power of Antony as a great Roman leader, Shakespeare alludes to the fact that the model which modern colonizers try to emulate is fragile. This underlying fragility of militaristic leadership and the use of military power to subdue the Other will inevitably lead to the disintegration of the Roman Empire in later centuries. The Romans exercise power over Egypt and other colonies for centuries, attesting to Foucault's claim in *Discipline and Punish*, that "power is exercised rather than possessed" (26).

The Roman establishment certainly used resources of military and despotism to maintain itself as a colonial power that dominated large masses of land surrounding the Mediterranean.

The Republic has degenerated into absolutism and dictatorship after Octavius removed Antony from power and annexed Egypt directly to Rome. After the assassination of Caesar, the republic changed into anarchy and civil war. Octavius Caesar fashioned himself as a despotic dictator and later proclaimed himself Augustus, the prime head of Rome. He ruthlessly subdued the revolting territories of the Roman Empire. Shakespeare demystifies the Roman model of war and killing that modern colonizers want to emulate. The tyranny Cleopatra and her country witnessed at the hands of the Romans is likened to the tyranny Romans themselves underwent under Roman dictators like Octavius Caesar. The Romans killed Julius Caesar for fear of his becoming a dictator. After the assassination of Julius Caesar, Octavius, Antony, and Lepidus fought in revenge of their late Caesar, breeding new dictators that led, in time, to the demise of the Empire.

In his Roman plays, Shakespeare compares the Roman politics and deployment of power to the politics of England in his time. He vents his commentary on the Tudor and Stuart politics by showing the political manifestations and workings of Rome with all their complexity, struggle, warring, and empire building. King James I succeeded Elizabeth, and Englishmen eventually griped about his reign after a while in London since he referred to himself as Augustus, the Roman Emperor, and England as Rome. In the play, Antony relinquishes his duties toward Rome and follows his worldly sport of love. King James I, by the same token, indulged in matters that conflicted with his performance as a monarch. Upon the request of King James I, the Lord Chamberlain wrote to the English parliament in January 1605 that "The king . . . finds such felicity in that hunting life that he hath written to the council that it is the only means to maintain his health (which being the health and welfare of us all) he desires them to undertake the charge and burden of affair" (qtd. in Lee 147). Shakespeare takes careful liberty in

criticizing the politics of his country. In “The Rape of Lucrece,” Shakespeare characterizes the model prince / governor:

> For princes are the glass, the school, the book.
>
> Where subjects’ eyes do learn, do read, do look. (615-16)

Although Shakespeare covertly criticizes the English politics, he seems to side with the order and unity of command that the Monarchy provides. He shows factionist practices and dissent within Rome in *Antony and Cleopatra* and elsewhere in his drama and poetry; he expresses how this leads to chaos and anarchy. Rome’s government was comprised of three mighty rulers, each of whose geographical entity ushered the disintegration of the Roman Empire at later times because of the omission of unity of command. Octavius fought with Antony and engaged in suppressing many civil disorders in many parts of the Empire. Although Octavius ushered peace after he took over Egypt and suppressed civil wars, peace was only maintained for a comparatively short time in the age of empires. The Romans had to face domestic unrest as well as external enemies from the East that eventually led to the fall of the Roman Empire in the end of the fourth century and the advent of the fifth century. Shakespeare’s depiction of a chaotic political system in Rome, signals his disdain of the lack of social, political, and military order and cohesion.

Shakespeare demystifies the militaristic leadership of Rome that the colonizers try to emulate as the ultimate example of bravery and nobility. Antony hides his fear by drinking as he claims it frees him from the boring constraints of politics—the night before Actium:

> Come, let’s all take hands
>
> Till that the conquering wine hath steeped our sense
>
> In soft and delicate Lethe. (2.7.108-10)

He continues: “tonight I’ll force / The wine peep through their scars. Come on, my queen” (3.13.193-94). This shows that the ancient antiquity is shrouded with mythological portrayals. The hypocrisy of the Greco-Roman models of military, leadership, and politics is constantly divulged by Shakespeare in *Antony and Cleopatra*, as are the ideals of antiquity questioned. Those grand models of militaristic might are hypocritical in that they conceal within themselves fears and trepidations of war. For example, Pompey after being taken by the effect of wine remembers, “O Antony, / You have my father’s house. But what? We are friends / Come down into the boat” (2.7.129-31). The Roman military ideal leaders are hypocritical, indulgent, and sexually controlled. Cleopatra states that Antony has become “Caesar’s homager” as she rants against Antony: “As I am Egypt’s Queen / Thou blushest, Antony, and that blood of thine / Is Caesar’s homager” (1.1.30-32). Antony betrays Rome and acquiesces to Cleopatra the Queen of Egypt:

> Let Rome in Tiber melt and the wide arch
> Of the ranged empire fall! Here is my space.
> Kingdoms are clay; our dungy earth alike
> Feeds beast as man. The nobleness of life
> Is to do thus; when such a mutual pair
> And such a twain can do't, in which I bind,
> On pain of punishment, the world to weet
> We stand up peerless. (1.1.35-42)

Rome as a place that represents idealism, has to exclude any individual like Antony who does not live up to the idealistic image of Rome. Antony is given chances to reinstate himself within Rome, but he in captured by the power play of Cleopatra. He is praised by Caesar as a

great warrior who devastates his foes and wreaks havoc in corners of the world where his Roman army sets foot:

> …….at thy heel
> Did famine follow, whom thou fought'st against,
> Though daintily brought up, with patience more
> Than savages could suffer. Thou didst drink
> The stale of horses and the gilded puddle
> Which beasts would cough at. Thy palate then did deign
> The roughest berry on the rudest hedge.
> Yea, like the stag, when snow the pasture sheets,
> The barks of trees thou browsed. On the Alps
> It is reported thou didst eat strange flesh,
> Which some did die to look on. (1.4.59-69)

His fellow Romans find excuses for Antony's estrangement from Rome. Maecenas tries to do Antony justice: "His taints and honours / Waged equal with him" (5.1.30). Agrippa also finds excuse for Antony's wrongdoings: "A rarer spirit never / Did steer humanity; but you gods will give us / Some faults to make us men" (5.1.31-33). So his faults are excusable and / or justifiable at the beginning, but when he fails to reenlist in the colonial sphere of Rome, Octavius Caesar angrily admonishes him and excludes him entirely from the masculine, patriarchal, militaristic, and imperial domain of Rome—Antony's previous locale that signifies manhood. Caesar addresses Lepidus about Antony:

> You may see, Lepidus, and henceforth know,
> It is not Caesar's natural vice to hate

Our great competitor. From Alexandria

This is the news: he fishes, drinks, and wastes

The lamps of night in revel; is not more manlike

Than Cleopatra, nor the queen of Ptolemy

More womanly than he; hardly gave audience, or

Vouchsafed to think he had partners. You shall find there

A man who is the abstract of all faults

That all men follow. (1.4.1-10)

There are no longer excuses for Antony's faults'; he has been displaced from the heroic idealism of Rome into the erring and compulsive discourse of Egypt. He does not belong to the idealist entity of the colonizer. As a result Caesar severs Antony's access to the Roman superiority. The contestation within Rome's leadership, in one reading, is an omen of the failure of the emulation of the Greco-Roman colonial command; the command lacks military unity and accordance. Shakespeare demythologizes the Roman military and political leadership that England, as well as all modern colonial powers, tries to revive and use as a model on which to mold its colonial project. Shakespeare rants against the emulation of such decadent hegemony that Rome practiced for centuries over large portions of the known world at the time of the Roman Empire. Colonists, in one reading of the play, borrow hegemonic practices from their predecessors and / or contemporaries. The Romans inherited the idea of building their republic and empire upon war and suppression of other weak nations. Shakespeare seemingly does not buy into hegemony and subjugation since he chooses to empower Cleopatra and at the same time admonish Rome.

II- "As I am Egypt's Queen:" [6]The Formation of Feminine Subjectivity in *Antony and Cleopatra*

There has been always been a fear of the Other / colonized development into having independent subjectivity because it threatens the very existence of the colonial project. Cleopatra governs one of the last remnants of the Greek Empire of the East. Egypt was a "client state" that is not directly occupied by Rome, but was mutually arranged as a satellite country within the Roman Empire. Caesar helped Cleopatra against her domestic Egyptian rivals within her family in exchange for her loyalty to Rome. The fear of an emerging independent state on the eastern shores of the Mediterranean intensified after the engagement of Antony with Cleopatra, a move that Octavius Caesar feared would undermine his colonial expansions in the East. The connection between Rome and Egypt then has to be reviewed in light of the danger the love affair between *Antony and Cleopatra* posed to Rome's hegemony and colonialism of Egypt and elsewhere in the world.

The Romans viewed the colonized as inferior and subjugated. To Rome, Egypt was a follower state whose very existence was contingent upon Rome. Cleopatra had love affair with Julius Caesar, and she had children to him. Agrippa summarizes the Romans' view of Cleopatra; she is a "Royal wench! / She made great Caesar lay his sword to bed; / He plowed her, and she cropped" (2.2.236-38) — a sexual description that relates to the relationship between a man and a woman in a highly patriarchal Roman social stratification. She had used her sexuality to gain great Caesar's approval of her and his support for Egypt; she repeats the same strategy with Antony. "Cleopatra was clever and well-educated, but unlike Caesar and Augustus the nature of her intelligence remains elusive, and it is very hard to see how her mind worked or fairly assess

[6] *Antony and Cleopatra* (1.1.30)

her intellect," as Adrian Goldsworthy explains (4); "her" elusiveness and "infinite variety" gave her power to wield amidst intricate politics in face of the threats of Rome (2.2.246).

Another front at which Shakespeare demythologizes classical models of colonization that modern colonizers try to emulate is the nature of the love affair between *Antony and Cleopatra*. The Bard shows the fragility of the Roman leadership; he endows the colonized with some agency. Antony relinquishes his main duties to Rome and indulges in joyful life while Cleopatra uses her charms and sexual trappings to save her country. Cleopatra is shown as a strong woman governor although she does not belong to the imperial space of Rome. By showing her like this, *Antony and Cleopatra* is a kind of dramatization of positive women representation that is grounded in a real historical story.

Shakespeare grounds his critique of the modern colonial culture in events that took place in another colonial culture. By paralleling his critique of modern colonization with an old imperial system, Shakespeare shows that ruthless imperialism of the past could be defeated by the colonizer with less confrontation than might be thought of. Cleopatra does not confront the Roman colonization by force because she is aware of the trappings of waging war against a surmountable empire, so she resorts to using her sexuality, beauty, and cunning—that is, using her female Eastern / exotic body—to infiltrate the Roman politics. To infiltrate the body politics of Rome, she uses her infatuation with Antony, the great Roman leader, so that she can ally with him against his own country. Right from the onset of the play, Shakespeare gives us a picture of the infiltrated subject: Cleopatra forces a portal into the Roman body politics through which she is able to split the colonial subject (Rome) into two confrontational sub-selves—Octavius Caesar and Antony. This bifurcation of the colonial agency of Rome enabled Cleopatra to survive in a tumultuous imperial atmosphere. As a result of Cleopatra influence Antony declares his

geographical displacement from Rome to Egypt: “Here [Egypt] is my space” (1.1.35), yet he sometimes entertains the idea of shedding the shackles of his Colonized / Colonizer (Cleopatra) and the notion of living up to his imperial mission in Egypt: “These strong Egyptian fetters I must break, / Or lose myself in dotage” (1.2.122-23). He also senses the future dangers of his obsequiousness to Cleopatra: “Ten thousand harms, more than the ills I know / My idleness doth hatch” (1.2.135-137). Antony, almost completely subsumed by Egypt, has become the colonizer who has turned colonized by Cleopatra. He declares his complete submission to the charms and powers of Egypt:

> Egypt, thou knew’st too well
> My heart was to thy rudder tied by the’ strings
> And thou shouldst tow me after. O’er my sprit
> Thy full supremacy thou knew’st, and that
> Thy beck might from the bidding of the gods
> Command me.
> …….
> You did know
> How much you were my conqueror, and that
> My sword, made weak by my affection, would
> Obey it on all cause. (3.11.55-68)

He fails to grasp the bitter reality of his dissent from the colonial space of Rome to the point he is never the Roman Antony again; the general and statesman of glorious, formidable, colonial, and masculine Rome is someone else now:

> Look, where they come.

Take but good note, and you shall see in him

The triple pillar of the world transformed

Into a *strumpet's fool*. Behold and see. [emphasis added] (1.1.10-13)

Cleopatra uses complex power relations to save her political entity, or at least to live with peace within an explosive area of empirical contestation. Cleopatra succeeds in carving a web of political and military power relations through emotional intimacy within Antony. She is aware that the power of her sexuality can gain political power to survive. As a result, she manipulates her opponents with unconventional power relations; it is hard to thwart her unconventionality of using her sexual power / prowess. In an exchange with Charmian, she wonders what the best way to deal with Antony is, and she offers sagacious advice:

Char: Madam, methinks, if you did love him dearly,

You do not hold the method to enforce

The like from him.

Cleo: What should I do I do not?

Char: In each thing give him way. Cross him in nothing.

Cleo: Thou teachest like a fool: the way to lose him.

Char: Tempt him not so too far. I wish, forbear;

In time we hate that which we often fear. (1.3.6-13)

Charmian proposes that Cleopatra not "cross" Antony so that she can win him to her side because she is giving too much of her to him. She has to delineate a line between herself and him so that he cannot completely consume her into the Roman space as Octavius Caesar tries to do but fails peacefully and thus resorts to war to annex Egypt to Rome at the end of the play.

Cleopatra, in one reading, plays the exotic temptress who brings about the downfall of a great Roman general and statesman. Cleopatra subscribes to the ontological seductive representation of the Eastern women although she succeeds to some extent in changing the negative stereotypical image of herself. She appears as a strong woman who fortune betrays although she lacks sufficient military and political power to stand with Rome on equal terms. Instead of being contained by Rome, Cleopatra is able to contain part of Rome— a core part of it, that is, Antony—has come to ally with the colonized in the same sense Homi Bhabha says of the colonized mimicking the colonizers. The equation is reversed here. Antony indulges himself in a complete mimicry of Egypt that he even adopts Cleopatra's war strategy when he follows her advice of fighting Octavius Caesar on sea. Bhabha warns against the disruptive consequences of mimeses:

> . . . the excess or slippage produced by the ambivalence of mimicry (almost the same, but not quite) does not merely "rupture" the discourse, but becomes transformed into an uncertainty which fixes the colonial subject as a "partial" presence. By "partial" I mean both "incomplete" and "virtual." It is as if the very emergence of the "colonial" is dependent for its representation upon some strategic limitation or prohibition within the authoritative discourse itself. The success of colonial appropriation depends on a proliferation of inappropriate objects that ensure its strategic failure, so that mimicry is at once resemblance and menace. (127)

Antony is transformed, in one reading, into a colonized subject on two fronts: he is controlled by Cleopatra, and he is alienated from Rome. The destructive force of his mimeses of the East has consumed him by the end of the play. He invests himself in Egypt but fails in face of the

insurmountable might of Rome that destroys both Egypt and the dissent or fragmented self of Rome—Antony.

The stereotypical image of a sensual and exotic East is something controversial in *Antony and Cleopatra*. The Egyptian queen is simultaneously portrayed as a strong-willed female governor, which is something powerful at that time, yet she is portrayed as a lascivious individual who indulges in many love affairs with Roman leaders. I contend that Shakespeare is being just and fair here in portraying Cleopatra in those two seemingly dichotomous ways. The Bard empowers the colonized—Egypt / Cleopatra / East—and at the same time highlights the negative aspects of the colonized as if to say that one must beware of the weaknesses of a long stereotypical image of the Other. In the Roman imagination of the Other, images that may be invented, imagined, and construed out of fantasy. Enobarbus, to take a notable example, describes the Roman encounter with Cleopatra:

> The barge she sat in, like a burnished throne,
> Burnt on the water. The poop was beaten gold;
> Purple the sails, and so perfumed that
> The winds were lovesick with them. The oars were silver,
> Which to the tune of flutes kept stroke, and made
> The water which they beat to follow faster,
> As amorous of their strokes. For her own person,
> It beggared all description: she did lie
> In her pavilion—cloth-of-gold of tissue—
> O'erpicturing that Venus where we see
> The fancy outwork nature. On each side her

Stood pretty dimpled boys, like smiling Cupids,

With divers-colored fans, whose wind did seem

To glow the delicate cheeks which they did cool,

And what they undid did. (2.2.201-15)

Although Edward Said's theory of the oriental formation rants against the West as the sole responsible factor in creating the image of the Orient, I contend that some Eastern colonizers invaded Western entities and also dealt with the West as inferior. If we want to be fair, we have to recognize that the Orient—Egypt in this study—has the potentiality of falling under colonization. Cleopatra does not have a strong army; she deals with the Roman colonial project with political maneuvers rather than with military resistance. Edward Said, admitting himself that the Orient is borne to be inscribed according to the colonizer's agenda, concurs that "the Orient was Orientalized not only because it was discovered to be 'Oriental' in all those ways considered commonplace by an average nineteenth-century European, but also because it could be – that is, submitted to being – made Oriental" (*Orientalism* 5-6). I contend that Shakespeare highlights the human nature of both the colonizer and the colonized as universal contenders who treat each other in accordance with power relations—that is, both parties can interchangeably assume both roles of being colonizers and / or colonized.

Cleopatra, in one reading, colonized part of Rome through gaining influence over one of the pillars of Rome in its heyday. She uses approaches of cunning and sensuality to resist Rome's influence, thereby subscribing to the perpetuated stereotypical images / attributes of the Orient. Cleopatra likes to tease Antony: for example, she asks him to tell her how much he loves her: "If it be love indeed, tell me how much" (1.1.14). Her maids Charmian and Iras show their Queen's Eastern qualities. They advocate the use of eastern ways of sensuality, temptation, and

game-playing in dealing with Mark Antony, the great Roman general and statesman. Albeit morally unwarranted, Cleopatra uses her beauty and body to save her country. She is aware of the influence of her sexuality and beauty on Antony, one of the three main policy-makers in Rome. She "was aware of the seductive powers of spectacle," as Diana Preston contends (27). In one reading, Cleopatra, although endowed with some agency in the play, subscribes to the stereotypical image of the Orient. Ania Loomba claims that "in colonialist discourse, the conquered land is often explicitly endowed with feminine characteristics in contrast to the masculine attributes of the colonizer. . . . All Egyptians, represented and symbolised by their queen, are associated with feminine and primitive attributes—they are irrational, sensuous, lazy and superstitious" (78-79).

I posit that Loomba's feminine reading of *Antony and Cleopatra* is simplistic and traditional; the connection between Cleopatra and Rome as Shakespeare shows is more complex than a dualistic reading the play. Cleopatra is able to resist the Roman hegemony and succeeds to a considerable degree. She is able, in fact, to divert one of the three mighty leaders of Rome into the Egyptian sphere, in the process gaining more immunity against Rome's colonialism for quite some time. Egypt is occupied at the end, but Cleopatra did all that was at her disposal to avert being paraded in denigration and humiliation through the streets of Rome.

Cleopatra and Antony enjoyed a love relationship for quite sometime, during which Cleopatra uses both her exotic sexuality and clever manipulation to control Antony. During this period, she has complete control over him: "His captain's heart, / Which in the scuffles of great fights hath burst / The buckles on his breast, reneges all temper, / And is become the bellows and the fan / To cool a gipsy's lust" (1.1. 6-10). Antony sacrifices his office duties as a general in the service of Rome because he falls into the traps of Eastern stereotypical images; in one reading,

this turns out to be true. Those images of the Orient may differ from those Said talks about in his book *Orientalism* because Said's theory speaks of the oriental discourse championed in Europe, Britain and France in particular, during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that witnessed the aggrandizement of modern colonialism. Richmond Barbour explains that "to project his [Said's] findings backward, to read precolonial ethnography as if its rhetoric bespoke European dominance of the world, or its defensive tropes necessarily foretold aggressive expansion, is anachronistic . . . Pre-Enlightenment 'orientalisms' expressed material, political and discursive relations profoundly different from those Said finds typical of modernity" (3). Many colonizers, other than Europeans, also dealt with the colonized people in a way similar to that used by the modern Western colonizers in my judgment. Shakespeare criticizes all forms of colonization, be they Eastern or Western, old or modern. Eastern and Western colonial projects existed sometimes in the same period, and the encounters between those rival colonial endeavors were shaped with mistrust and struggle; Aune elaborates on the encounter between competing colonial powers of varying geographies:

> The Ottoman and Mogul Empires, rather than European states, were economic and military centers of power in the early modern period. Encounters and exchanges between these cultures and Europe were often asymmetrical, and characterized by anxiety and fear on the part of the Europeans and indifference on the part of the Ottomans or Moguls. Imperial projects in the New World were clearly established in the sixteenth century, while such projects in Asia and Africa, comparatively, developed more slowly. European interest in these areas tended to focus on trade and commercial competition rather than colonization. This is not to say that the Europeans did not portray themselves as culturally or

morally superior; the writing of travelers, diplomats, merchants, and others all deployed a range of rhetorical strategies to manage the instability and asymmetry of these encounters. (121)

So Cleopatra is acting from a colonial world view that instigates her to harness power relations to secure Egypt's place in a hotly contested Mediterranean that links three major continents: Europe, Asia, and Africa. Endowed with intelligence and beauty to survive, she is nevertheless overwhelmed with the lack of military power to offset the Roman Empire. Cleopatra manipulates Rome through her control over Antony; she even causes Antony's defeat when she proposes to fight Octavius Caesar in a sea battle rather than a ground confrontation. She insists, "I have sixty sails, Caesar none better" (3.7.50), and Antony, the renowned general, follows her advice ignoring his military expertise that he gained over the many victories he scored for Rome in the past. They are defeated when Cleopatra's navy withdraws from Actium inflicting a shameful defeat on Antony. Further, Antony feminizes himself and contradicts the staunch Roman masculine authority; as a result, he has to be removed from the Roman domain of male-dominated atmosphere. Antony admits that he is controlled by Cleopatra's femininity:

Egypt, thou knew'st too well
My heart was to thy rudder tied by th' strings,
And thou shouldst tow me after. O'er my spirit
Thy full supremacy thou knew'st, and that
Thy beck might from the bidding of the gods
Command me. (3.11.55-60)

He continues to describe his concession to the powers of Egypt: "You did know / How much you were my conqueror, and that / My sword, made weak by my affection, would / Obey it on all

cause" (3.11.64-67). This marks the triumph of Cleopatra; she has emerged as a subject that causes things to happen rather than be a mere reactionist or object to the will of the colonizer. Because Rome exercises power over Egypt, Cleopatra has to maneuver her politics to safeguard herself and her country. Foucault asserts in *Discipline and Punish* that "power is exercised rather than possessed" (26). It is incumbent upon Cleopatra then to practice what she thinks is a kind of effective sexual power to thwart the power discourse of Rome; she succeeds in keeping a sort of power equilibrium with Rome for quite sometime.

The relation between the sexual and the political is inherent in all ages of past and present. History abounds with great narratives of sexual relations that changed the face of history. Many classical Greco-Roman myths / legends are built upon sexual relations / politics between heroes and heroines. The English drama is no exception to this as Shakespeare used classical antiquities to draw resources that informed his dramaturgical oeuvre. Leonard Tennenhouse explains that in Jacobean drama the "sexual relations are always political" (124). We have seen this in love / sexual relations between Antony and Cleopatra, Troilus and Cressida, Othello and Desdemona, and Hamlet and Ophelia. The power relation then can involve sexual love / desire as one element among many other aspects.

In recognizing for Cleopatra's ability to maintain a certain level of sexual power relations in dealing with Rome, Octavius Caesar could not neglect her powerful influence and intelligence; he honors her by ordering that she be buried along with Antony: "She shall be buried by her Antony. / No grave upon the earth shall clip in it / A pair so famous" (5.2.358-60). Shakespeare then elevates Cleopatra to a stature that parallels the stature of Rome, highlighting that her honorable burial alongside one of the pillars of the Roman Empire foresees the possibility of the colonized being treated on equal terms with the colonizer. Cleopatra, while

losing her confrontation with Rome on the material level, wins when Rome is bereft of the chance of humiliating her. She has the final say in her own fate. Antony is trapped in a moral dilemma between his duties to his country and his love of Cleopatra. His (in)-between(ness), in one reading, may explain his fall at the end of the play because he cannot figure out a way of either keeping his loyalty to both Rome and Cleopatra or choosing to serve his country as is expected of a great general and statesman of Rome.

Shakespeare has created a strong Cleopatra although he lived in "a society where the feminine model . . . is silent acquiescence," as Sharon Hamilton explains (127). Both *Antony and Cleopatra*, notwithstanding their human shortcomings, underwent "a profound experience of life and love, of hurt and healing," and "a deep caring for their people," as Rosenberg elaborates (33). In *Antony and Cleopatra*, Shakespeare, according to Marvin Rosenberg, "evokes more sharply diverse responses than any of his others" (27). *Antony and Cleopatra* is a great masterpiece that comments on the intricacies and manifestations of power relations between the colonized and the colonizer.

In demystifying the Roman colonialism of Egypt and other provinces, Shakespeare actually exposes the inherent Roman fear of kings that led to adopting a republican system. He also divulges an inherent xenophobic attitude towards the Other / Foreigner. Cleopatra has not posed a direct threat to the Romans, but she is a potential resurgent against Rome. Octavius Caesar's preemptive occupation of Egypt can be read in this context of fear. The fear of the Other has always been used as a pretext for subjugation. In our modern sensibility, the fear of terrorism and religious fanaticism are used by some governments as a pretext for building huge armies, accumulating arsenals of modern weaponry, and spending huge sums of money on security apparatus. The Roman fear of the Other indicates inherent instinct that propelled them to

erase the other. Julia Kristeva, in *Strangers to Ourselves*, elaborates that we all have ". . . infantile desires and fears of the other—the other of death, the other of woman, the other of uncontrollable drive," and that this Other may be part of us: "The foreigner lives within us: he is the hidden face of our identity" (191, 1). Antony then can be read as an Other in the Roman perspective after his dissent; he is a fragmented part of the Self / Rome.

Antony is also a colonial figure as is the ruthless and ambitious Octavius Caesar. In forging an alliance with Egypt, Antony might be considered an ambitious general who wants his own empire in competition with Rome itself. Because the events of *Antony and Cleopatra* in historical context came after the assassination of Caesar for fear of his dictatorship, it could be argued that Octavius is alarmed by the dissent of Antony and his alliance with the colonized / Egypt. Rome fears that Antony's dissent to the East will reinforce his imperialistic and dictatorship ambitions because of the opulence of the East. Egypt is a wealthy country, and Antony has access to its wealth through Cleopatra. In Egypt, everything "o'erflows the measure" (1.1.2). Egypt is a rich country; its opulence and wealth have attracted many colonizers throughout history. Enobarbus comments on the prodigal abundance in Egypt in his exchange with Maecenas:

> Enobarbus: Ay, sir, we did sleep the day out of countenance
> and made the night light with drinking.
> Maecenas: Eight wild boars roasted whole at a breakfast,
> and but twelve persons there; Is this true?
> Enobarbus: This was as but as a fly by an eagle. We had
> much more monstrous matter of feast, which worthily
> deserved noting. (2.2.187-193)

Antony, in the reading, I posit here, poses a great threat to Rome as he assimilates the colonized cultures and manners. He is also generous with Cleopatra; he allocates part of the Roman territories under his control to Cleopatra's sons. Given the eruption of civil wars in the extended parts of Rome, Rome feared the revolution of its territories and colonies. The Romans were calculative imperialists; the Bard demythologizes their imperialism and oppression of Egypt as well as of other colonized peoples under their hegemonic fist. The colonial powers, in this reading, were oppressive and would not permit any sort of resistance even if minimal.

Shakespeare demythologizes Roman colonialism as well as all types of colonialism. Egypt is colonized and oppressed by the Romans as it was colonized earlier by the Greeks. In putting down all forms of colonialism, Shakespeare is obviously anti-colonial. The Bard was of great vision in sympathizing with the oppressed because he was aware of the workings of the colonial discourse of any given imperialism. Egypt was colonized by the Greeks, by the Romans, by the Muslims, by the French, and by the Ottomans— to name just a few. By sympathizing with the oppressed, Cleopatra / Egypt in this case, the Bard shows his deep criticism of oppression and subjugation of nations. He demythologizes the Roman idealism that has long been celebrated around the world. The Bard encourages the reader to rethink all unproven claims of cultural and moral superiorities that have been handed to us throughout history. Sheer dependence on militarism will eventually lead to dictatorship wherein the military leader will oppress both his people as well as subjugate other peoples to fuel his militaristic ambitions. After defeating Mark *Antony and Cleopatra* at Actium, Octavius Caesar, for instance, emerges as the sole ruler of the Roman World precipitating the metamorphoses of Rome from a supposedly democratic republic into a great colonial power (The Roman Empire) that dominated most of the then known world. Octavius has been transformed into a dictator; this transformation, in a way, reminds us of the

assassination of Caesar for fear of becoming a dictator after his many victorious wars. Shakespeare warns of the ascent of modern colonialist who emulate the steps of the Roman Empire with its long history of domination and subjugation of others.

In *Antony and Cleopatra*, Shakespeare hints at the possibility of the colonizer emerging as an independent self to counter oppression, tyranny, and subjugation. Cleopatra wins Shakespeare's sympathy because she represents an emergent discourse of anti-colonialism that can one day become mature enough to liberate and to decolonize the oppressed nations. Cleopatra and Antony, although of different world view, shared a common believe of resistance and independence. Shakespeare empowers Cleopatra so that she attempts to decolonize her country from Rome with the help of a dissenting Roman general. This empowerment ushers the potentiality of the colonizer, or at least part of its colonial apparatus, which can be won to support the just cause of the colonized. We now see many people, conscience of previous colonial countries, condemning colonialism and working for a kind of reparation for the atrocities their colonial fellow people inflicted on others. It all resides in the recognition of justice and in the courage to condemn past colonialism. Shakespeare heralds the emergence of condemnation of colonialism from within the colonial discourse itself, just as Antony does when he sides with the colonizer. Shakespeare, in *Antony and Cleopatra* and other plays, demystifies the emulation of colonialism of antiquity and modern colonialism, be it Roman, Greek, Muslim, Babylonian, Persian, Nazi, Japanese, or Western to name just a few.

III- Demystifying the Culture of War and Militarism in *Troilus and Cressida*

In line with Shakespeare's demystification of the Greco-Roman ideal, *Troilus and Cressida*, in my reading, is one of Shakespeare's diatribes on the very concept that the Greco-Roman ideal is built upon and championed—that is, war. The Greco-Roman culture, civilization, thought, and socio-politics were mainly evolved around power over the world. Dramatizing the groundlessness of the conflict between the Romans and the Greeks in *Troilus and Cressida*, Shakespeare warns of the new colonialists of the world, especially in Europe and his country England, since, for him, war is not the path to acquire greatness and honor. The two parties in the play lose many lives for a trivial matter that that could have been resolved peacefully if they had resorted to reason rather than to the passion of power and domination. If we accept that the Western thought starts with Homer's *Iliad*, which most scholars believe is very true, then one can understand why Shakespeare is so cautious when it comes to the modern colonialists' emulation of the twin pillars of Western culture, the Greeks and the Romans. The *Iliad* features war over a woman as its main subject, and it follows then that the sensibility of modern colonialism might be belligerent in nature because of its amelioration of the Greco-Roman tradition of warring.

In *Troilus and Cressida*, Shakespeare critiques two cultures of classical antiquity—the Trojans and the Greeks. The Bard ridicules their military leadership and shows the leadership's lack of vision and morality. The legendary grandeur of those two militaristic cultures is put down. In England, Shakespeare understands deeply the false heroic codes of the English military that copies the classical models. The dramaturgical art of Shakespeare has effective portrayal of human pomposity as well as frailty; his words and characters, according to James Shapiro,

constitute what might be called a “kind of code for courtiers at this time because no other writer spoke to their preoccupations so directly as Shakespeare” (18). Shakespeare seems, in one reading, to put down the Greco-Roman military ethos that informs the modern colonialists and their expansionist ambitions that is built upon war and dominations for unjustifiable reasons just like the war between Troy and Sparta of old. The Greeks have crossed the Aegean Sea and besieged Troy for seven years trying to penetrate the Trojan fortification in vain. Their military doctrine, leadership, and tactics seem questionable. Ulysses, in explaining the status quo in his camp, describes the malfunction that led to the no-war-no-peace situation; it is the lack of discipline and order (Degree) which is the skeleton of efficient armies:

> Troy, yet upon his bases, had been down,
> And the great Hector’s sword had lacked a master
> But for these instances.
> The specialty of rule hath been neglected;
> And look, how many Grecian tents do stand
> Hollow upon this plain, so many hollow factions. (1.3.75-80)

Ulysses, Nestor and Agamemnon represent military tactics different from that of Achilles who is for individuality, not collectivity—team-work in our modern sensibility. A split occurs in the Greek military leadership between Achilles who champions individual heroism of a leader and Ulysses who is for a collective effort based upon strategic planning of military leaders. The lack of unity of command and of a solid strategic planning has yielded no fruits as Agamemnon complains:

> Nor, princes, is it matter new to us
> That we come short of our suppose so far

That after seven years' siege yet Troy walls stand,

Sith every action that hath gone before,

Whereof we have record, trial did draw

Bias and thwart, not answering the aim,

And that unbodied figure of the thought

That gave't surmised shape. (1.3.10-17)

Agamemnon diagnoses the military fiasco as the result of weakness of planning on the part of the Greek military leaders. In *Troilus and Cressida*, Shakespeare warns of the blind "emulation" of self-assured generals by their subordinates. He, in one reading, hints at the necessity of careful emulation of the good in classicity, not its bad aspects. Ulysses explains the importance of hierarchal emulation by each echelon in the military of its superior; that is, soldiers and low-ranking officers follow the steps of their professional generals:

The general's disdained

By him one step below, he by the next,

That next by him beneath; So every step,

Exampled by the first pace that is sick

Of his superiour, grows to an envious fever

Of pale and bloodless emulation.

And 'tis this fever that keeps Troy on foot,

Not her own sinews. (1.3.129-136)

Shakespeare in *Troilus and Cressida* examines the shortcomings of the allegedly strong Greco-Roman military tradition; the play shows the impairment of military council on both camps to the conflict. It also shows the malignant politics of the main war lords / generals and

their lack of unity, discretion, vision, hierarchy, and decisive decision-making. The generals in both camps debate the justification of war: they are split as to whether to continue the fight or end it with the safe return of Helen to Sparta. The discordance within the military councils on both sides divulges the ostentation of the Greco-Roman militaristic might and ideal that has been held throughout history.

In the Trojan camp, Priam's sons debate the cost of keeping Helen hostage. Hector tells Troilus that she "is not worth what she doth cost the holding" (2.2.51-2). Hector debunks the matter behind this useless war that claims many lives of soldiers on both sides of the conflict. Troilus asks his brother Hector about the "value" of keeping Helen: "What's aught but as 'tis valued?" (2.2.52). Hector then explains the real meaning or value of anything; they differ on the meaning of value, ushering a division in their morality as to what is wrong and what is right. The bifurcation of morality and ethos prevails in the play as if Shakespeare is directing our attention to the shortcomings of the Greco-Roman ideal:

> But value dwells not in particular will;
> It holds his estimate and dignity
> As well wherein 'tis precious of itself
> As in the prizer. 'Tis mad idolatry
> To make the service greater than the god;
> And the will dotes that is inclinable
> To what infectiously itself affects,
> Without some image of th' affected merit. (2.2.53-60)

In showing the groundlessness of the war about Helen, Shakespeare gives Helen few lines in the play that reveal shallow thinking. The war over Helen, in one reading, is a war about the honor

of protecting women rather than about Helen as a paragon of beauty. There is no solid indication that she was beautiful, but mythical history always perpetuated the extravagance of beauty of female figures in the Greco-Roman mythology. Juliet Dusinberre, in her 1983 article "*Troilus and Cressida* and the Definition of Beauty," posits that "the idea of Helen as the archetype of beauty seems to have been challenged very early by shifts in perspective" (85). Thersites, for example, expresses his moral perplexity with the war over the kidnap of Helen. Subverting the whole argument, Thersites claims that "the argument is a whore and a cuckold" (2.3.71). Troilus also questions the high price they have paid in the war for Helen; he rhetorically sheds doubts about the feasibility of the long war over Helen: "Is she worth keeping? Why, she is a pearl / Whose price hath launched above a thousand ships" (2.2.81-82). Price is emphasized many times in the play, showing the materiality of the Greco-Roman tradition that the modern colonizers wants to emulate. The colonial scheme is built upon material gains from the colonies. The Greeks try to re-charge Achilles with motivation to fight, and they debate the price for re-enlisting him in the fight against the Trojans. Agamemnon tells Patroclus to convey a message to Achilles who is bored of the lengthy and useless war:

> Go tell him this, and add
> That if he overhold his price so much,
> We'll none of him, but let him, like an engine
> Not portable, lie under this report:
> "Bring action hither; this cannot go to war."
> A stirring dwarf we do allowance give
> Before a sleeping giant. Tell him so. (2.3.131-37)

Although the Greco-Roman tradition has informed the civilization of the modern world, it also had a down side to it. Shakespeare points out that the militaristic treatment, used to resolve the conflict, will end with the destruction of both parties, the colonized and the colonizer. In the original story, the siege of Troy ends with the destruction of the city. No materialistic or positive moral values resulted from the conflict. The Greco-Roman ideals were materialistic—love and war. Helen and Achilles have to be priced as Heather James asserts: "play and the war cannot effectively end before their values have been defined" (95).

Shakespeare also harbingers the fall of all states that are built on pure militarism; he foreshadows the fall of chivalry and morality due to the negligence of degree / order. It is not incidental that Ulysses stresses the primary of order and chain of command in the military and society by extension. The Greeks besieged Troy for seven long years trying to penetrate its fortification; their military campaign tried in vain to occupy the city and free Helen. Shakespeare, by extension, rants against the fervent effort of modern colonial powers that compete for materialist gains in the colonies that swept Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Chaos will inevitably follow if things are settled by force. Ulysses in his speech on Degree pinpoints that the Greek military stratagem is outdated and dysfunctional:

> The heavens themselves, the planets, and this centre
>
> Observe degree, priority, and place,
>
> ……..
>
> Oh, when degrees shaked,
>
> Which is the ladder to all high designs,
>
> The enterprise is sick. How could communities,
>
> Degrees in schools, and brotherhoods in cities,

Peaceful commerce from dividable shores,

The primogeneity and due of birth,

Prerogative of age, crowns, scepters, laurels,

But by degree, stand in authentic place?

Take but degree away, untune that string,

And hark what discord follows.

……..

Force should be right; or rather, right and wrong,

Between whose endless jar justice resides,

Should lose their names, and so should justice too. (1.3.85-118)

Ulysses' oration on order is considered an exposition on military hierarchy, or what is called in our modern military science the chain of command. Ulysses here is being philosophical and patronizing in the way things should be executed. He at the same time is scheming to fight the war individually for personal gain of esteem and reputation; he is an extreme hypocrite by preaching what he does not follow. Shakespeare shows this hypocrisy to be one of the ills of the classical tradition where heroes sought personal gratification and recognition at the expense of the welfare of their respective nations. Ulysses has no intention of handing down power to his military superiors Nestor and Agamemnon, even though they are both senior to him in rank and age.

Ulysses champions the old order of things; that is, he is against new strategies in the war. He is Machiavellian in that he wants to return to a hierarchy that allows him to be on top of his fellow Greeks. Potter explains that "This much-discussed speech contains, as it has been exhaustively shown, a series of Medieval commonplaces" (33). The speech on Degree may well

explain the positive effects of order, but it just as readily may be read as resistance to innovation in the socio-political as well as the military fields.

Ulysses is an example of indecisiveness, pragmatism, and political cunning. He preaches order and hierarchy but soon he changes his mind, as Marjorie Garber comments: “No sooner does Ulysses laud the universal value of ‘degree’ and hierarchy than, in the next moment, he argues that the inferior Ajax be substituted for the incomparable Achilles” (6). His eloquent oratory on the essentiality of degree (order) can be read as a political move of practicality to hide his personal ambitions of waging the war as a sole leader of the Greeks. Ulysses is a hypocrite; he respects the old general Nestor but will not yield leadership to him. He praises Nestor as the “most reverend for thy stretched-out life” (1.3.61). Nestor, despite his old age, is a brave warrior who offers to fight Hector if no other Greek will challenge him in the field. He is a man of experience, honor, and loyalty to his nation; he asserts:

> . . ., tell him [Hector] from me
> I'll hide my silver beard in a gold beaver,
> And in my vambrace put this withered brawn,
> And meeting him, will tell him that my lady
> Was fairer than his grandame, and as chaste
> As may be in the world. His youth in flood,
> I’ll prove this truth with my three drops of blood. (1.3.295-301)

Troilus and Cressida lacks decisive action on the parts of the two warring sides, at least in the first half of the play, because the two councils of war spend too much time debating the feasibility of the war itself and the validity of keeping Helen as a hostage. Troilus, fed up with the stalemate in both the war and in his love affair with Cressida, explodes in extreme anger:

"Words, words, mere words, no matter from the heart; / Th'effect doth operate another way" (5.3.107-08). Shakespeare here divulges the Greco-Roman ideal; it is a culture of rhetoric, oration, soliloquy, and philosophical debate and not a culture of decisive actions. Parker explains that "Words, in this inflated economy, consume deeds, as its amplified speeches and debates replace action on the battlefield" (221).

Contrary to the codes of the Greco-Roman ostentatious military honor, the play ends with Achilles, the supposedly renowned Greek warrior, ordering his followers to kill the unarmed Hector instead of honorably fighting him man to man. This is a major affront at the idealistic militarism of the Greeks that many colonizers of early modern and early time held up as an icon. Shakespeare, in my reading, is the iconoclast who undermines the Greco-Roman / Classical military idealism. Killing Hector, who earlier on the day of his death said that he is the "vein of chivalry" (5.3.32), in such a fashion is against military ethos and conventions of all ages. This shows how the Bard exposes the intricacies of the classical tradition and questions the validity of the Greco-Roman ideal. Hector, by the same token, is a shameful example of the heroic classical antiquity because he killed an unknown knight for his shiny armor:

> Stand, stand, thou Greek! Thou art a goodly mark.
> No? wilt thou not? I like thy armor well;
> I'll frush it and unlock the rivets all,
> But I'll be master of it. Wilt thou not, beast, abide?
> Why then, fly on. I'll hunt thee for thy hide.
> …….
> Most putrefied core, so fair without,
> Thy goodly armor thus hath cost thy life.

Now is my day's work done; I'll take good breath.

Rest, sword; thou hast thy fill of blood and death. (5.6.27-32, 5.8.1-4)

Hector's treacherous act precipitates, according to Shakespeare, his fall from an iconic warrior into the abyss of shamefulness. The non-heroic actions of both men, Achilles in the Greek and Hector in the Trojan camp, indicate the hollowness of the highly acclaimed heroism in the Greco-Roman cultures. Shakespeare, though a great poet, gives no positive license to the Greco-Roman decadent militarism of both the Greeks and the Trojans. The militarism of the classical antiquity, it could be argued, declined from heroic idealism into what might be called barbarism.

After putting down the Greco-Roman militaristic ideal, Shakespeare, questions the whole idea of war and killing in general. Achilles in a grandiloquence treatise on war explains:

Time hath, my lord, a wallet at his back,

Wherein he puts alms for oblivion,

A great-sized monster of ingratitiudes.

Those scraps are good deeds past, which are devoured

As fast as they are made, forgot as soon

As done. Perseverance, dear my lord,

Keeps honor bright; to have done is to hang

Quite out of fashion, like a rusty mail

In monumental mock'ry. (3.3.146-54)

War paraphernalia outlives warriors, indicating the moral invalidity of war itself. Why do people kill themselves in wars? What is the morality behind colonizing others? The Greeks and Romans were big colonial powers that in their respective eons dominated almost all the known world. Their mythology centers, in the main, on wars and devastation. Shakespeare critiques the use of

force by all colonizers, be they Eastern (Greeks / Sparta) or Western (Trojans / Romans). Shakespeare, in *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Troilus and Cressida*, *The Merchant of Venice*, and *The Tempest*, among other plays, questions the use of power as a device to settle differences. He rants against the subjugation of other nations and critiques the hollowness of cultures that are built upon supremacy over other nations. On both camps of the feud, Generals debate about war while the war claims many of the lives of their soldiers. Because the two war councils are composed of the elite, the aristocracy, the high-blood linage, the orators, princes, and kings, it seems that Shakespeare is denigrating the ethics of the war of the nobles whose interest is love, lechery, women, and personal gratification. Gordon Williams explains that "War in this play, like love, is understood as an elite activity, taking scant account of the commoners' role or opinion" (115). The low-ranked soldiers are but fuel to conflicts, heroic excursions, dalliances, forays and feuds of the noblemen, princes, generals and kings. Shakespeare does not buy into all this fake culture of classical antiquity.

In writing *Troilus and Cressida*, Shakespeare puts down the militaristic ethos of classicity that the new colonizers try to emulate, showing that the aggrandizement of the Greco-Roman tradition is actually hollow and false. It is full of treachery, pretentions, discordance, chaos, hypocrisy, and fragility. He is demystifying the Greco-Roman militarism contrary to the world view that has long held the classical antiquity in positive light. Shakespeare, in this interpretation, does not champion the Greco-Roman ideal; he seems to question the validity of the classical ideal. Potter explains that:

> It could be argued that Shakespeare wrote *Troilus and Cressida* in the same conservative spirit (as the *Tudor Homilies*, etc.), yearning nostalgically for a perfect past which is implied by its obvious lack in the play, *yet* it seems to me

> that the undermining of so many of the central myths and beliefs of the Elizabethan/Medieval view of life suggests that Shakespeare is writing from a somewhat different position, expressing rather in dramatic form an intense awareness that not only is the present different from the past, but that the interpretation of the *world inherited from the past had always been illusion, something like a vast cultural and political confidence trick foisted upon Englishmen for centuries, with no basis in reality whatsoever*. [emphasis added] (26)

So, the Bard, in *Troilus and Cressida* and *Antony and Cleopatra*, puts down a long history of celebrating the Greco-Roman culture that had great influence in shaping the Western civilization and culture. The Bard asks his audience to question the underpinnings of classicity and to not take it for granted without valid evidence. *Troilus and Cressida*, in the reading I espouse here, does not perpetuate the mythical war story of Troy; rather, Shakespeare deconstructs it, showing that the classical culture is not always valid as an example to follow.

The Greco-Roman ideal of the "line of order" (1.3.88), for example, that Ulysses speaks of, is entirely fake; at the end of the play Ulysses seems to be disinterested in the whole fight to defend his own nation, and the order he has championed earlier in the play has transformed into carelessness as he explains:

> Roaring for Troilus, who hath done today
> Mad and fantastic execution,
> Engaging and redeeming of himself
> With such a careless force and forceless care
> As if that luck, in very spite of cunning,

Bade him win all. (5.5.37-42)

Like Shakespeare, Ulysses heralds the inevitable fall of all military machinations and colonialism because they lack validity and moral license; he reads the future of war and contentions over materiality and indulgencies, he addresses Hector: " Sir, I foretold you then what would ensue. / My prophecy is but half his journey yet, For yonder walls, that pertly front your town, / Yon towers, whose wanton tops do buss the clouds, / Must kiss their own feet" (4.5.218-22). This is an archetypical ending to all treachery, tyranny, and oppression. Achilles asserts: "My mind is troubled, like a fountain stirred, / And I myself see not the bottom of it" (3.3.308-09), indicating the aimlessness of waging wars that will consume the warring parties. Because the entire Trojan War is groundless, perplexity, chaos, and uncertainty ensue. As a result of the invalidity and worthlessness of the whole matter of war, Troilus is dubious of the identity of Cressida:

This she? No, this is Diomed's Cressida.
If beauty have a soul, this is not she;
If souls guide vows, if vows be sanctimonies,
If sanctimony be the gods' delight,
If there be rule in unity itself,
This was not she. Oh, madness of discourse,
That cause sets up with and against itself!
Bifold authority, where reason can revolt
Without perdition, and loss assume all reason
Without revolt! This is and is not Cressid. (5.2.141-50)

This indicates the sheer uncertainty of the base of the Greco-Roman militarism that was being revived during Shakespeare's time, and it would precipitate the unpredictability of the colonial scheme of modern colonizers who emulate the Classical antiquity of militarism. Troilus is vexed as to whether this is his beloved or not; Garber posits that "Troilus's despairing declaration 'This is and is not Cressida' tells the only real 'truth' the play has to offer. It is a 'truth' as meta theatrical as it is metaphysical; the actor who plays Cressida 'is' and 'is not' the figure of consummate desire and legendary inconstancy" (554). The entire tradition of war-for-war-sake is incoherent and incomprehensible: after all those long years of fighting, the outcome is questionable. The Bard presages the demise of colonialism since it is based on false pretext and on oppression and domination.

In conclusion, Shakespeare does not propagate blind emulation of the classical antiquity; he is for independence of identity and of practice. He champions independence and decolonization of oppressed nations. *Cymbeline* is instrumental here in its portrayal of the struggle of the English people to liberate their country. Shakespeare dramatized the English successful struggle to defend and decolonize ancient Britain from Roman oppression and colonization in *Cymbeline*. In one reading, *Cymbeline* is an English attempt to adopt Rome on English terms, not on Roman hegemonic terms. Miola claims that Shakespeare's *Cymbeline* "celebrates an assertion of *British* independence as well as the creation of a *new alliance with Rome*" [emphasis added] (207). There was deep ambivalence towards Rome. On the one hand, Rome was a colonizer, and on the other hand, it participated in creating Britain as an early modern country. Willy Maley attributes the reason behind this ambivalence towards Rome in *Cymbeline* to associations between Roman and British imperialism in opposition to English insularity: "a new English nation grew into an empire virtually overnight, then sealed its fate

through an act of union that resulted in a net loss of English sovereignty in favour of a British empire modelled on the Roman one that had only just been shaken off" (149). It follows then that when a nation entirely emulates another nation, it loses part of its heritage, history, identity, and national pride. At the end of John Fletcher's *The Tragedie of Bonduca*, Bonduca takes her own life with poison just as Cleopatra does to avoid indignation. Bonduca, although defeated, is still deviant and proud of her identity as a British citizen; she tells the Romans at her death bed:

> nay, so much
> I hate to prosecute my victory,
> That I will give ye counsel ere I die.
> If you will keep your Laws and Empire whole,
> Place in your Romane flesh a Britain soul. (4.4.149-53)

In rejecting total Romanness, she heralds the evolvement of Britain into a great empire probably on Roman principles albeit with British / English / national spirits. Shakespeare struggles to draw the line between complete emulation and national independence; certainly he is not for unplanned emulation of colonialism. The Bard, in my reading, is modern as he belongs to us today as he did to his time and place in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. He has deep vision as to the malignity of colonialism of both past and modern, West and east.

The Bard in *Antony and Cleopatra* and in *Troilus and Cressida* demystifies the emulation of the Greco-roman ideal that was later used to colonize other nations. He is against following the Roman and Grecian steps of oppression and use of militaristic might. Shakespeare opposes the emulation of imperialism of the past that bred modern colonialism. The Bard dismantled the allegedly professional militarism of Rome and ancient Greece; he shows the fragility of such military on the strategic as well as tactical echelons. He puts down the Greco-Roman morality,

socio-political structure, the thirst for domination and warring, and finally he endows the colonized with agency to courageously thwart colonialism.

Chapter Five

Conclusion: (Post)-colonizing the Bard

The exegesis of Shakespeare's works are said to be challenging and not easily yielding. During the twentieth century, the second half of it in particular, the world view towards colonialism has dramatically evolved into condemnation of colonialism. With the decolonization of most countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and elsewhere, the field of postcolonialism within the larger frame of literary studies has gained momentum and acquired significant renown from scholars. Anti-colonialism occupied a sizable role in the political currents in the twentieth century and on. Shakespeare is as relevant to us today as he has always been to our predecessors all over the world. Revisionist reading of the works of Shakespeare started and intensified in the last three decades or so.

Shakespeare, this dissertation maintains, belongs to us today as he has always done to his audience and readers across ages. Although he wrote in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, his oversight and deep vision is felt today. The past has always been fascinating because it provided modalities of culture, politics, economy, society, and art. The study of the past literary production is not as easy as it might seem. Heather Love elaborates on the difficulty of our going back to the past in search of subjectivities:

> The effort to recapture the past is doomed from the start. To reconstruct the past, we build on ruins; to bring it to life, we chase after the fugitive dead. Bad enough if you want to tell the story of a conquering race, but to

> remember history's losers is worse, for the loss that swallows the dead absorbs these others into an even more profound obscurity. (21)

This difficulty applies to the literary oeuvre of the greatest poet ever, Shakespeare. But it is incumbent upon scholars to defy the challenge and employ literary criticism to explore infinite possibilities of readings of his production. Postcolonialism is one of the comparatively new currents in studying the Bard. Notwithstanding the contrapuntal structure of Shakespeare's works, his plays, I submit, offer a powerful framework for constantly thinking about their meanings. Postcolonial readings of Shakespeare were probably unimagined half a century past; however, such readings yielded to strenuous inquiry. Today, there is a burgeoning trend in the scholarship of the Bard that is open to unending possibilities of interpreting his production.

The trend to read Shakespeare as a postcolonial writer in some of his plays drew a lot of attention towards the end of the twentieth century. In my study of Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* (1596), *Troilus and Cressida* (1602), *Antony and Cleopatra* (1606), and *The Tempest* (1611), among other works, I uncovered how the Bard criticizes the hegemonic discursive practices by the colonialists. I have found that Shakespeare, in the four plays that were the subject matter of this dissertation, typically sympathizes with the Other / the colonized / the oppressed. He is against all forms of colonialism including, but not limited to, militaristic occupation, cultural imposition, economic monopoly, socio-political oppression, educational influence, and oppressive regimes. The Bard demythologizes colonialism of the past and present regardless of who the colonizer is. It is simplistic to insist that Shakespeare demystifies Western colonialism only; rather, he rants against all colonizers regardless of geography, religion, ethnicity, or dogmatic background.

In *The Merchant of Venice*, Shakespeare shows how the emerging capitalist system and its proponents of the Venetian colonialists join forces to eliminate Shylock from the market so that they won't face any competition. Colonialists use markers of race, religion, ethnicity, and color to ostracize the Other. As a result, Shylock is treated as an intruder in Venice. He is stripped off his wealth and separated from his daughter. Ania Loomba contends that "Jews, Moors and Christians were never simply religious categories, but variably articulated with nationality, and ethnicity, and often colour" (210). Although the issue of race was complex at his time, Shakespeare demystified racism; he endowed Othello with military honor, gave voice to Shylock to voice his outcry, and bereft Rome from humiliating Cleopatra.

In *The Tempest*, Prospero, enslaves and tortures Caliban who is faced with all sorts of prejudice, injustice, and brutality. Shakespeare sides seemingly with Caliban; he gifted him with agency through education to revolt against tyranny and oppression. Paul Brown explains that *The Tempest* interferes into colonialism in "the form of a powerful and pleasurable narrative which seeks at once to harmonize disjunction, to transcend irreconcilable contradictions and to mystify the political conditions which demand colonialist discourse" (46). In the play, Shakespeare proves that Prospero is a dictator, slave keeper, hypocrite, and oppressor. Prospero has usurped Caliban's island, constructed a superior / inferior social system, and enslaved Caliban; Shakespeare predicted tyranny and subjugation by the colonial powers. Caliban cries out:

> When thou cam'st first,
> Thou strok'st me and made much of me, wouldst give me
> Water with berries in't, and teach me how
> To name the bigger light and how the less,
> That burn by day and night. And then I loved thee,

And showed thee all the qualities o'th'isle,

The fresh springs, brine pits, baren place and fertile.

Cursed be I that did so! All the charms

Of Sycorax, toads, beetles, bats, light on you!

For I am all the subjects that you have,

Which first was mine own king; and here you sty me

In this hard rock, whiles you do keep from me

The rest o' th' island. (1.2.334-47)

Another facet of Shakespeare's affront against colonization, is demystifying is forceful subjugation and annexation. Rome politically dominates Egypt; moreover, when Cleopatra showed resistance to Rome's domination, Octavius Caesar occupied Egypt and directly annexed it to the Roman World. Cleopatra although not as powerful as Rome when it comes to military prowess, is able to fragment Rome, causing a rift in its leadership. Antony is contained by Egypt. Cleopatra is empowered by the Bard to counter the hegemonic power of Rome. Shakespeare sympathizes with Cleopatra in her struggle against the Roman colonialism The Greco-roman tradition in *Troilus and Cressida* is also debunked by the Bard. The two parties throughout the Trojan War lacked courage self-esteem, order, moral, validity, and self-constraint. The two camps to the war show weak militarism and disunity. Shakespeare questions the validity and moral license of the Greco-Roman tradition that the colonizers of the modern world, especially in Europe, try to emulate. The Trojans and Spartans engage in a grinding war over Helen when in fact the issue of her captivity could be solved, avoiding bloodshed. Hector realizes the catastrophic impact of the war over Helen, albeit, this realization comes late:

Let Helen go.

Since the first sword was drawn about this question
Every tithe-soul, ‘mongst many thousand dimes,
Hath been as dear as Helen—I mean, of ours.
If we have lost so many tenths of ours
To guard a thing not ours—nor worth to us,
Had it our name, the value of one ten—
What merit's in that reason which denies
The yielding of her up? (2.2.16-24)

In all four plays, Shakespeare sympathized with the colonized, and the colonizer is constantly admonished. In the four plays that are the subject matter of this project, Shakespeare, in the reading this dissertation advocates, shows postcolonial intimations as early as the sixteenth century.

The traditional universalist, humanist, and aesthetic readings of the Shakespearean oeuvre prevailed for centuries. Those readings, although still valid today, have relegated other possibilities for interpreting Shakespeare’s works. There has been a burgeoning of new readings that dealt with Shakespeare from different vantage points. The avalanche of adaptations of Shakespeare also opened new horizon for interpreting the Bard’s works. Harold Bloom challenges that “We are lived by drives we cannot command, and we are read by works we cannot resist. We need to exert ourselves and read Shakespeare as strenuously as we can, while knowing that his plays will read us more energetically still. They read us definitively” (xx). This dissertation reads Shakespeare in light of the postcolonial literary theory that has lately revisited many Shakespearean works. Postcolonial readings have sought to dig textual underpinnings and textual evidence to reinforce different viewpoints of approaching Shakespeare.

Shakespeare's visionary and prophetic endowments make him the center for studies and scholarship since it's as thought he is writing in our time and frame time. For instance, racial profiling and discrimination on bases of ethnic origin, religion, color, political affiliation still are still practiced with all our modern pretentious of equality, political correctness, human rights, and the rule of law. Shakespeare was aware of the aforementioned malignant manifestations of racism early in the sixteenth century. He was aware of the prejudice of his Renaissance society; for instance, "When Shakespeare chose, for this audience, to present a Moor as his hero, he was . . . simply more aware than his contemporaries of the complex pattern made by white and black": "To Elizabethan Londoners the appearance and conduct of the Moors was a spectacle and an outrage, emphasising the nature of the deep difference between themselves and their visitors, between their Queen and this 'erring Barbarian," posits Harris (35). This testifies that postcolonial intimations have long been a part of the human condition; nonetheless, postcolonial interpretations of Shakespeare are relatively new. Shakespeare divulged the sentimental racism of his time toward the Other in his plays.

In *The Tempest* and *Antony and Cleopatra*, the colonizer and the colonized are governed with an intricate web of power relations. With the advent of the early modern colonialism, power relations determined the dealing between the colonizer and the colonized. Those relations comprised an amalgamation of so many determiners like race, gender, nationalism, religion, color, and social stratification. Shakespeare, in the plays with which this dissertation is concerned, negotiates markers of superiority and inferiority and works to figure out a road map to empower the inferior, taking into account the limitations of his time, and to divulge the oppressive practices of the superior without confronting the social, political, governmental apparatuses of censorship. In my reading of *The Merchant of Venice*, *The Tempest*, *Antony and*

Cleopatra, and *Troilus and Cressida*, I pinpointed the maneuvers and strategies by which Shakespeare attacked colonialism and uncover its discursive practices. Notwithstanding the recent sheer inclination to invest Shakespeare in the field of postcolonial criticism, Fischlin and Frontier warn that "Simplistic assumptions about the place of Shakespeare in relation to cultures of resistance or complicity are to be avoided, if only because they reproduce the reductive hegemonies . . . they are seeking to overturn" (12). Shakespeare recently has been open to all sorts of readings including the postcolonial reading. This dissertation shows how Shakespeare exposes the colonial practices in general. He rants against Western modern colonialism as well as all colonial projects of all ages.

Shakespeare shows that the experience of colonization affects both those who were colonized and the colonizers themselves as we have seen in Antony alliance with Egypt. This dissertation explored forms of resistance against colonial control. Prospero uses the colonizer's language / education to counter-attack his oppressor, whereas Cleopatra wielded her sexual body to politically offset the hegemony of Rome. Cleopatra, the exotic Eastern queen, is depicted as a goddess of beauty and as a whore; Shakespeare portrays her "infinite variety" which helped her subvert Rome's colonial hegemony (2.2.246). Cleopatra controls Mark Antony; she sexually attracts him and is viewed by the Romans as a deceptive and cunning woman—"the serpent of Egypt" (2.7.26). This study showed how Shakespeare's sympathy actually lies with the colonized with Egypt (Cleopatra), and with Antony. Egypt is shown as a place of cultural heritage, economic prodigality, and captivating scenery. The Bard blurred the line between the colonized and the colonizer in a way that accentuates the possibility of both being equal. Egypt has become such an elusive atmosphere to the Romans that they hardly realize any difference from the grand stature of their Roman spectacle, it has captured their conscious and

imagination—that is, it has conquered them unaware. Antony addresses Octavius Caesar about the Nile:

> Thus do they, sir: they take
> the flow o' the Nile
> By certain scales I' the pyramid; they know,
> By the height, the lowness, or the mean, if dearth
> Or foison follow: the higher Nilus swells,
> The more it promises: as it ebbs, the seedsman
> Upon the slime and ooze scatters his grain,
> And shortly comes to harvest. (2.7.17-24)

He further describe the crocodile in the Nile to

> It is shaped, sir, like itself; and it is as broad
> as it hath breadth: it is just so high as it is,
> and moves with its own organs: it lives by that
> which nourisheth it; and the elements once out of
> it, it transmigrates. (2.7.40-47)

Traditional readings of *Antony and Cleopatra* constantly read the play as an aesthetic piece of romance and love between *Antony and Cleopatra*; however, recent postcolonial readings have interpreted the play in light of the Roman colonization of Egypt and elsewhere. The appropriations of Shakespeare by postcolonial theories have not always held the same opinion as to whether Shakespeare is anti-colonial or pro-colonial. Some critics accuse him of propagating while others find in some of his work a staunch critique of colonialism. “Postcolonizing” the Bard uncovers how he works to overturn colonialism at an early stage of its conception as we

have seen in the subject matter plays of this project. It is possible always to find postcolonial intimations in Shakespeare's works that will defy other readings and / or interconnect with them: that is, as has been the case with modern literary criticism, literary works can be looked at from different perspectives and backgrounds.

This dissertation tackles an ingenious writer whose political, social, economic, artistic, and human philosophies still apply today, even though were written in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries (about 400 years ago). This project shows how the Bard demythologized colonialism of the past, of his age, and of our age. His vision and prophetic thinking are utterly rare. Although the colonizers' moral justifications of Shakespeare's age were accepted and championed, Shakespeare did not propagate them. He, in the postcolonial reading I adopt here, rants against colonialism, tyranny, subjugation, oppression, and cultural imposition in *The Merchant of Venice*, *The Tempest*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, and *Troilus and Cressida* among other plays. Shakespeare demystifies the perpetuated colonial mentality of all ages. This dissertation exposes Shakespeare strategies of demythologizing the cultural, military, economic, and political facades of colonialism, yet further studies can uncover the response of Shakespeare audience during his time. Shakespeare presaged modern colonialism and its erosive impact on people; he was operating at a time when modern colonialism in Europe was underway. Shakespeare's plays abound in racial representations that fueled the debate about the validity and moral justification of colonialism. MacDonald posits that the "representations of racial identity and difference, similarly matter and show in early modern English literature, [are] itself the product of an age of slavery and colonial displacement" (7). Shakespeare, it is noteworthy to state, demystifies colonialism in general. He is against subjugation, oppression, racism, and

occupation of other countries. He demythologized the colonialist claim of good intention and at the same time divulges the colonial practices that inflicted hardships and pain on the colonized.

Current postcolonial studies have researched the malignant effects of colonialism on the part of the colonized. This dissertation studies the colonial discourses, authorizations, and licenses which the colonizers use to justify their colonialism and how Shakespeare divulges those self-stipulated licenses to colonize, dominate, oppress, and culturally erase the Other / the colonized. All this concerns our modern response to Shakespeare, and I propose that studies of the response of Shakespeare's audience during his time are of use and can participate in enriching the postcolonial debate about Shakespeare. Margo Hendricks stresses that the "framework of assumptions about foreigners had to be expanded" (4). I posit that a lot can be retrieved in case more scholarship is done in regard to the response and prevalent sentimentality of Shakespeare's audience towards the other.

In fine, Shakespeare can be read as a postcolonial writer who astutely demythologizes colonial discourses. He many times sides with the colonized people by showing their grievances and by empowering them. Our postcolonial reading of the Bard can be idiosyncratic and subjective; however, it is difficult to deny the postcolonial intimations in his drama and poetry. Our response to Shakespeare's works could very well be shadowed by experiences of modern forms of imperialism, so I propose further studies about the responses of postcolonial intimations among the audience and readers of his time. Such studies will further inform our modern sensibility of postcolonialism in Shakespeare.

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