

THE QUESTION OF ALTERITY: REPRESENTATION OF “OTHER” IN WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE’S *OTHELLO*

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ABSTRACT

In this article, I deal with otherness, namely foreignness in Shakespearean drama. Particularly, the representation of alterity in Shakespeare’s *Othello* is the dominant issue throughout. A number of Shakespeare’s plays include a foreign character; however, each of them fulfils a different function. In Shakespeare’s drama, “others” represent more than commonplace “alien” figures. They are ascribed several functions by critics. According to Margo Hendricks, they are caricatures, stereotypes other than real characters. On the other hand, Loomba aptly argues that “others are only figures of speech in Shakespearean drama, conjured up to establish a point of view” . In her view, these outsiders are initially regarded as “footnotes”, that is, they have secondary importance in the theatres; however, later on they gain value as a means to probe the relationship between West and East. In this context *Othello*, apart from the undesirable “alien” character, undertakes a multi-functional role in community. It is put forward in this study that *Othello* is two-dimensional in terms of his roles. On the one hand he is “other” who symbolizes, so to speak, the enemies of the “same”. From this aspect, he is assimilated and moulded in accordance with the available order. On the other hand, he is an individual member of the community who undertakes a complementary function that is emphasized throughout. Shakespeare, who stands in between this duality, comes up with the solution of presenting this character as scapegoat. However, that kind of sacrifice does not satisfy the biased audience; on the contrary, the majority ends up sympathizing with the victim. The people’s prejudices show a boomerang effect by turning towards them in the end.

Keywords: Alterity, *Othello*, Same-Other.

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Ötekilik Sorunu: William Shakespeare'in *Othello* eserinde "Öteki"nin Temsili

ÖZ

Bu çalışmada, Shakespeare dramasında ötekilik, yani yabancılık teması incelenmiştir. Özellikle de Shakespeare'in *Othello* eserindeki ötekiliğin temsili üzerine yoğunlaşmıştır. Ötekiler yazarın birçok sayıda eserinde rol almışlardır, fakat her biri farklı bir görev üstlenmiştir. Shakespeare'de ötekiler sıradan yabancı karakterlerden fazlasıdır. Eleştirmenler tarafından çok çeşitli işlevler atfedilmiştir. Margo Hendricks'e göre onlar gerçek karakterlerden ziyade birer karikatür, stereotiplerdir. Diğer taraftan Loomba, ötekilerin Shakespeare dramasında sadece söylem figürleri olduklarını ve bir bakış açısı oluşturmak üzere akla getirildiklerini uygun bir şekilde öne sürmüştür. Ona göre, bu yabancılar başlangıçta tiyatrolarda birer "dipnot" gibi yani ikincil öneme sahip gibi görülürken, sonradan Batı ve Doğu arasındaki ilişkiyi irdeleme vasıtası olarak değer kazanmıştır. Bu bağlamda Otello istenmeyen "öteki"den ziyade toplumda çok fonksiyonlu bir rol edinmiştir. Bu çalışmada Otello'nun rolleri bakımından iki boyutlu olduğu öne sürülmüştür. Bir taraftan asimile edilen ve mevcut düzen doğrultusunda şekillendirilen deyim yerindeyse "biz"in düşmanı, diğer bir taraftan da burada bilhassa vurgulandığı üzere toplumun tamamlayıcı rol üstlenen bir üyesidir. Bu ikilem alanında kalan Shakespeare de karakteri günah keçisi olarak resmetme yolunu seçmiştir; fakat onu bu şekilde kurban gibi göstermesi çoktan önyargılı olan seyirciyi tatmin etmez, aksine çoğunluk mağdura sempati duymakla kalır. İnsanların önyargıları da en sonunda bir bumerang misali kendilerine dönerek ters yüz olur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Ötekilik, Otello, Biz-Diğerleri.

INTRODUCTION

In Shakespeare's theatre, one can encounter a number of aliens because the issue of alterity inspired Shakespeare and his contemporaries for a long time. Those kinds of "borderline figures", according to Leslie Fiedler, "have been named variously the 'shadow', the 'alien', the 'outsider', the 'stranger', and the 'other'" which is used as the generic term in this text (1974, p. 15). In order to make a true analysis of the function of such characters, their background should be illuminated at the outset. Where does the otherness of these characters come from? or, in first place, who is an "other"? In order to confine the scope of the term in view of Shakespeare's others, we divide it into two

subheadings in view of Jacques Lacan's psychoanalytic theory¹: the imaginary and the symbolic other². When looked at from a sociological perspective, there is an imaginary other which is the other according to "I". In a sense, when an individual gets to know himself in the mirror, those who are distinct from his appearance are the imaginary others thereafter. To put it simply, one's own image creates the consciousness of who the "others" are.

Apart from the imaginary other, one other concept comes to the fore as "the symbolic other" which is the society itself. In this case, differentiation happens not according to "I" but "We". The symbolic other, which is concerned with the dichotomy of societies (opposite groups), begets a new separation which is between "same" and "other" (Dadabhoy, 2008). The point is that, on the one hand, "same" and "other" are interwoven with each other; one strictly depends on the other. From this point of view it can be deduced that the "other" indicates the realization of what already exists. When an individual starts to familiarize himself with his surroundings, he becomes conscious of the "others" around him, not as individuals but as a group. If one does not look like us or behave in the same way, then we mark him/her as "other". It should be noted that it is not fair merely to assert that otherness refers to the idea of being different. Rather, differences turn into otherness only when they bring out divisions, discriminations and power struggles. In this context, "other" will be used as the symbolic other forthwith.

In Shakespeare's drama, "others" represent more than commonplace "alien" figures. Shakespeare's others in the referred plays are not portrayed as completely inferior to the "same" or as full "scapegoats" whose elimination pleases the society. Furthermore, they cannot be characterized as bad characters or "spoilsports". As Fiedler indicates, "stranger" and "spoilsport" do not necessarily have the same meaning, hence should be separated definitely. According to him, even if Shakespeare is disturbed by the defeat of these characters in the end, he principally targets to satisfy his audience, a vast majority of whom desires their "symbolic casting out" (1974, p.16). Shakespeare tries to humanize them to the degree that can be accepted by the Christian audience who is already obsessed with prejudices.

1 As explained in Wikipedia, Lacan's first official contribution to psychoanalysis was the "mirror stage", which he described as "formative of the function of the I as revealed in psychoanalytic experience." Also, in the "mirror stage", Ego is introduced an "imaginary dimension" and a "symbolic dimension", which have their own particular effect on it.

2 My own translation from Abdullah Şengül, "Edebiyatta Ötekilik Meselesi ve Türk Edebiyatında Öteki".

OTHELLO AS "THE OTHER"

Othello, or The Moor of Venice, is a Shakespearean work with an outsider taking one of the major parts, in which same-other dichotomy is revived. As the religio-racial discourse was highly influential in the formation of conflicts between "same" and "other", it should be considered related to Shakespeare's exotics. Othello's alienation is most probably due to his skin colour, because there are a great number of allusions to his colour in the play. Although Othello's 'race' and its historical roots are difficult to trace back, it is evident that his otherness depends basically upon his difference from the original Venetians. He epitomizes a Moor in a white Christian society where blacks are labelled as "alien". His skin colour makes him an intruder who is supposed to cause disorder. His otherness is continuously emphasized by the ones who are disturbed by his presence. His name is not used; instead, he is called many times as "Moor" and referred to as "an old black ram" (I. i. 2088), "African horse", "stranger", "barbarian" (I. i. 2089) and so on. Still, it is not clear whether he was "tawny" or a "Negro" which is indeed not so crucial in this context. Hendricks states that, according to Barbara Everett, "Othello is almost any 'colour' one pleases, so long as it permits his easier isolation and destruction by his enemies and himself" (2000, p.6).

Besides his physical difference, he is geographically stranger to Venice. It is understood from his speech that he does not quite belong to that society since he settles in Venice only a short time ago: "From year to year: the battle, sieges, fortune, / That I have passed" (I.iii. 2096). For this reason, "he was twice an outsider" to the play (Honigmann, 1997, p. 29). Berry construes this by suggesting that "representing a homeless wanderer perhaps offered him [Shakespeare] a way of dramatizing alienation without the necessity of creating a credible cultural background" (1990, p.323). Gillies adds to this the tragic consequences of being "geographically displaced", which is the fact that it causes Shakespeare's 'strangers' to become more threatening" (1994, p.100).

It is clear that Othello is not totally excluded out of the status quo. At least, Shakespeare does not fully discard this "alien" in his play. He probably aims to demonstrate that an "alien" may well be an active force in a Christian society. For this reason, he tries to portray the "other" as a part of "normal" life, and as human as the "same". Othello the Moor is a highly conceivable personification in this sense. He is useful to the country which he is incorporated into. As is the case in Shylock, Shakespeare somehow includes Othello into society so that "same" and "other" construct a unity.

Moreover, even more importantly, by means of Othello-Desdemona

marriage, Shakespeare leads to the proximity of "same" and "other", or, at least, enables the feasibility of such an interrelation. For example, Fiedler takes the view that "Shakespeare dreams through her [Desdemona], a symbolic marriage of all that Europe and Africa mythically mean". However, he later adds that "when it [marriage] fails, it represents ... the eternal impossibility of the union that man eternally dreams...." (1974, p.146). In other words, the "undifferentiation" of two opposite values does not last long since Othello's blackness is contrasted to Desdemona's whiteness, hence making Othello a fearful "other". The Christian society evaluates their matrimony as a violation of their white race by the blacks. Thus, in the end, the victimization of the "other" expectedly, if not pleasingly, occurs.

It is suggested that Othello is "constructed on a 'double antithesis': the protagonist is visibly a black Moor, but he exhibits the heroic virtues conventionally associated with North African 'white Moors'" (Neill, 2006, p. 119). On the one hand, he is persistently reminded of his alterity, while, on the other, he is tolerated to an extent which facilitates his marriage with a white girl. To put it more precisely, "Othello is both a fantasy of interracial love and social tolerance, and a nightmare of racial hatred and male violence" (Lomba, Shakespeare, Race, 2002, p.91). That is why it can be inferred that Othello is more than a hateful stereotype of black man. Because, this time, Shakespeare presents us with an extraordinary type of "alien".

Besides, Othello gets stuck between two worlds. He continuously struggles with the problem of being a foreigner, who is never completely included, and a potential insider, who is not completely excluded because of his utility. He may well appear like a sympathetic hero as well as a monstrous villain. Berry further exemplifies this by stating that

Othello's pride appears at times as vanity, at times as rightful self-respect. His passionate nature leads to murderous violence, but it also contains deep love and tenderness. His courage serves him well in war but is ill-adapted to the complexities of peace (1990, p.317).

This two-sidedness brings about a weak self-identification of the hero, which reinforces his predicament. Though this inconsistency in his behaviours could be received as duplicity, it, almost certainly, results from the unstable attitudes towards him. And finally, it is this equivocacy³ that brings the outsider to an end, which is called "scapegoat" herein.

³ According to Fiedler, the play has an equivocal tone.

At the outset, Othello is identified as a noble Moor with heroic deeds. His language and manners are more sophisticated than is expected from a black stereotype. For example, he utters these words in order to defend himself against the accusation that he cheats Desdemona to marry him:

Most potent, grave and reverend seigniors,
My very noble and approved good masters:
Tat I have ta'en away this old man's daughter,
It is most true: true I have married her; ... (I. iii. 2095)

Furthermore, he is, by and large, admitted as a successful black commander who is revered by his people due to his social prestige. For example, even though he is a "new citizen" coming from slavery, he has already gained the trust of Venetian government. The Duke is so confident in Othello's fidelity that he puts him in charge of the guard in Cyprus which is in danger of invasion. In addition, when he learns that Othello is blamed for deceiving Desdemona, he tries to soften Brabantio's heart by telling: "If virtue no delighted beauty lack, / Your son-in-law is far more fair than black. (I. iii. 2099)

What is more, Othello happily marries a white woman with mutual love and respect. However, at the time the play was written, miscegenation was not quite an ordinary occurrence and not very welcomed either (Honigmann, 1997, p. 60). Similarly, in the play, it is such an unbelievable incident that Brabantio accounts for it merely by Othello's using of witchcraft:

Damned as thou art, thou hast enchanted her,
For I'll refer me to all things of sense —
If she in chains of magic were not bound — (I. ii. 2092)
...

Yet, on the other side, Desdemona loves Othello so much that she defies her father for the sake of the marriage with the black man:

I am hitherto your daughter. But here's my husband,
...
So much I challenge that I may profess
Due to the Moor my lord. (I. iii. 2097)

Even Brabantio, who strictly objects to their marriage, actually likes him before the deed comes true. Apparently, he does not feel any antipathy or fear for him. On the contrary, he enjoys listening Othello's interesting tales in his house. Othello narrates their past acquaintance as follows: "her [Desdemona's] father loved me and oft invited me" (I. iii. 2096).

In addition, there is another fact that contributes to this peaceful atmosphere in the play: Othello is a Christian convert which means, according to Lupton, that Shakespeare shows "Christian universalism" to his audience (1997, p.77). Also, she rejects the view that Othello-Desdemona marriage is scandalous, rather pointing out that it "assumes almost cosmic significance" conveying the "Christian message" all over the world.

On the other hand, no matter how sympathetic Othello is at times, it is inevitable for him to be cast outside the play as a victim. Obviously, otherness is a label which is very hard to remove. The fact that Othello performs a good service to the state does not necessarily signify that he is apt to be treated as a "normal" person. After all, he is an "alien" to be exploited and sent away. Although, from time to time, he manages to go beyond this limit, he is fated to be the victim of an ill-ordered society.

Moreover, Othello's being a Christian convert does not make any difference for those like Iago. For such kind of people, "strangers", or non-Christians, have always become inferior to the "same", and should remain as "footnotes" to the society they shelter in. In this play, it is mainly Iago who undertakes the responsibility of alienating the "other". Even, it is put forward that Iago's malignity is closely related to the "political rise of the West as a colonial power" (Al-Kadi, 2000, p.20). This assertion is acceptable in that western society was accepted to be in pursuit of establishing superiority on its "others" (Said, 2003, p. 7).

From the very beginning, Iago cannot tolerate the respectable position Othello holds. He regards the "Moor" as an obstacle in front of his way. According to him, only a "true Christian" can command the army and deserves to be a high-ranking general. He thinks that it is not fair for a white to be under the service of a Moor; rather, it is the Moor who is borne to be a slave. Iago intends not only to take over his position, but moreover to get rid of him forever:

However this may gall him with some check,
 Cannot with safety cast him, for he is embarked
 With such loud reason to the Cyprus wars, (I. i. 2089)

...

As I have stated earlier, his priority is to isolate Othello, thus putting the system back into the right order. In other words, he tries to “define himself on the negation of” Othello.

However, Iago is not alone in his wicked intention. Berry describes how Othello’s blackness, more or less, arouses aversion in almost everybody. For example, Roderigo is among the ones who severely attack his racial difference. In this regard, Berry assesses Iago and Rogorigo’s attitude as an “overt and vicious racism” (1990, p.319). He sustains that “these characters evoke... the reigning stereotype of the African on the Elizabethan stage.” Brabantio, besides, does not treat Othello more mercifully, if not as cynically, compared to them.

In addition to their personal reasons, the Othello-Desdemona matrimony doubles the rage of those characters at the Moor. Othello, as an old black man, is regarded as inferior to Desdemona. Owing to his skin colour, he is severely attacked especially by Iago, Roderigo and Brabantio. Their marriage is, from the first moment, registered as anomalous; it is considered as extremely strange and used against Othello. Thus, Iago makes use of this situation in order to eliminate Othello. It is himself who contrives to tell on Desdemona’s affair with Othello. Briefly, he announces himself as the “devil of the play” (Lupton, 1997, p.77). With his “I am not what I am” speech (I. i. 2087), the extent of the danger becomes more evident. After that, the audience, step by step, witnesses the casting of the Moor.

In order to fulfil his aim, he sets out by deceiving Othello into the idea that his wife is cheating on him, and insidiously declares a pseudo-intercourse between Desdemona and Cassio. According to Loomba, it does not take long to make Othello envy since he is already familiar with this kind of feeling. She asserts that jealousy is a common sentiment possessed by the inhabitants of where Othello comes from (Shakespeare, Race, 2002, p. 94), and maintains that although Iago does not have any doubts about Othello’s love and loyalty, still he believes that a Moor is jealous by “nature”. That is, to her, Iago is of the opinion that so long as Othello is a Moor, he can turn into an envious and violent man as his race is commonly accepted to be.

Above all, what primarily drives Othello into the act of violence in the second half of the play is the dilemma Othello experiences. Indeed, it is not certain whether Othello really becomes evil or not. Honigmann puts forward that the motives and thoughts of “the real Othello” are quite hard to interpret on the grounds that Othello undertakes several roles at a time. For instance, he is “a time traveller, burdened like every human being with too much psychic

luggage, a man hidden from us by slander, misunderstanding, idealization, self-deception...." (1997, p.25).

What is more, he is tacitly stuck in between being a Muslim and a Christian. Loomba aptly argues that "the jealousy that tears Othello apart manifests itself as a division between his Christian, loving, rational self, and the Muslim identity that erupts and disrupts it" (Shakespeare, Race, 2002, p.96). Othello seems to assort with the prerequisites of Christianity; nevertheless, his identity before the conversion keeps affecting his life. Even though at the beginning of the play Othello is portrayed as a loyal Christian to his country, Lupton, taking Othello's religious difference into the centre, argues that his tragedy leads to a crux influencing his religious status as well as his marriage. According to her, Christian universalism comes to a halt when it comes to the "circumcised" including pagans, Muslims and Jews (1997, p.78).

Although Lupton states that it is nowhere clearly given from which religion Othello converts from, his "professed Christianity" is attempted to be reconverted. His descending into a wilder personality is interpreted as his religious transformation to paganism, or his being "Islamicized and Judaized" (1997, p.79). To put it more simply, Lupton says, Othello begins to "turn Turk" who is wild and bestial according to him:

Why, how now, ho! From whence ariseth this?

Are we turned Turks, and to ourselves do that

Which heaven hath forbid the Ottomites?

For Christian shame, put by this barbarous brawl! (II. iii. 2111)

...

No matter how dedicated to Christianity Othello seems to be here, he is somehow forced to be the man outside the borders of this religion. When this purpose is achieved, Othello is no more the soft-hearted man of Christianity. He becomes, rather, the maligned Turk as it is supposed to be. However, when all the misunderstandings are revealed, Othello returns to his true identity. Before he punishes the evil, jealous outsider, he stops to seek the justice of the state at least to be remembered as a man of honour.

I have done the state some service, and they know't —
No more of that I pray you, in your letters,
When you shall these unlucky deeds relate,
Speak of me as I am: nothing extenuate,
Nor set down aught in malice... (V. ii. 2155)

From his last words, Berry draws the conclusion that Othello, in fact, kills "his own blackness" (1990, p.329). According to him, Othello, in search of justice, acts with the intention of rescuing the state from the hands of traitors. Correspondingly, Lupton takes the view that he, indeed, kills his undesirable half, "the turbaned Turk", namely, the alien who betrays his country:

And say besides, that in Aleppo once,
Where a malignant and a turbaned Turk
Beat a Venetian and traduced the state,
I took by th' throat the circumcised dog
And smote him, thus. (V. ii. 2155)

Here, circumcision can be interpreted as the "inclusive sign of Othello's radical otherness" (Boose, qtd. in Lupton, 1997, p. 81). Lupton puts forward that Othello is aware of this distinctive quality of his, which is why he sacrifices himself to be emancipated from the disgrace of his strangeness. She states that "through his suicide, Othello has become literally 'circumcised in the heart'..." (1997, p.84). That is, the sign of his difference once more becomes more apparent.

Actually, Othello is isolated from his environment before the final victimization occurs. He is never allowed to integrate with the "same" as he is reminded of his difference at the first opportunity. Berry, on this matter, indicates that Othello is neither fully a "Venetian hero", nor a "Turkish savage", because both of them are "artificial constructs" since Othello does not choose what to be; on the contrary, he is made to. In his view, what Othello utters in the last scene reveals that he actually kills the man he is supposed to be. That is, he destroys the vicious Turk as well as symbolizing it as a Moor.

Aware of this division in Othello's self, Iago probably thinks this will make it easier to stir up a wave of chaos so that Othello is slowly moulded into the stereotype that fits to the archetypal black figure. However, this alienation

process does not take the form of a punishment. Instead of being cast directly, Othello is driven into a crux finally to destroy himself. The purpose to make him turn into the wild Turk becomes successful as is clear in his words: Arise, black vengeance, from thy hollow hell!" (III.iii. 2126) As Fiedler points out, he is initially identified as "fair" while, by the end of the play, he is made a "fool" (1974, p.161). Besides, upon the death of Desdemona, Emilia laments: Oh murd'rous coxcomb! What should such a fool / Do with so good a wife? (V. ii. 2152)

However, Othello is not the only one who falls victim in this story. Desdemona, on the other hand, because of violating "Venetian canon of race" (Jeoung, 2003, p.75), is indirectly punished. As she marries a black guy, and what is worse, she does not even ask for her father's approval, her mistake ends up with her exclusion. Brabantio discards her: "I had rather to adopt a child than get it ... / I am glad at soul I have no other child". (I. iii. 2097) Moreover, accepting a Moor as a husband is received as complicity in this regard. The couple is believed to ruin the state by "producing hybrids" (Bajpaie, 2007, p.101): "For if such actions may have passage free, / Bond-slaves and pagans shall our statesmen be" (I. iii. 2093). Hybridity is claimed to destroy "the difference between the 'self' [same] and the 'other'" (Loomba, *Colonialism-Postcolonialism*, 2005). This is why she is condemned to a kind of sacrifice.

As a matter of fact, Desdemona's sacrifice, at any rate, contributes to the damnation of the Moor since she is the one who, without discriminating, realises Othello's "essential humanity" (Berry, 1990, p.321), his "visage in his mind". (I. iii. 2098) As Berry puts forward, Desdemona is the person from whom Othello gets his strength. Iago knows that the infidelity of Othello's dear wife is a valid enough reason for his culmination. However, together with the black man, other innocent people such as Desdemona, Emilia and Roderigo are punished as well.

In short, Othello is a noble and brave "alien" who occupies an important position in the society. When he takes one step further by marrying a white woman, he crosses the border drawn for "others". This miscegenation, which is accepted as "the play's hidden nightmare" (Berry, 1990, p.324), is seen as a huge "alien" intimidation to the order of the state. Now, it is time to protect the city by isolating Othello. However, the best way to defeat someone in this sense is to generate a conflict in character's mind. Therefore, he is estranged from himself, thus gaining "anxiety about his blackness", which, according to Berry, brings along the catastrophe in the end.

Despite the victimization and collapse of the hero, it may well be said that Shakespeare manages to introduce us a real-like black man with “his past, his bearing, and, above all, his language, with its unusual rhythms, grandeur, and exoticism” besides his skin colour (Berry, 1990, p.316). Contrary to the belief that Shakespeare “reduces him [Othello] to a mere entertainer or the white audience” (Bajpaie, 2007, p.102); he evokes a kind of sensitivity in the audience by presenting a sympathetic black hero like Othello.

CONCLUSION

Overall, my argument is that Shakespeare takes an unusual approach to the issue of otherness in the play. He looks through the framework of same-other opposition, yet demonstrates their interdependency at the same time. On the one hand, Christian mercy is somehow included in the texts; while on the other, as Lupton argues, “Christian-humanist discourse always operates as a *universalism minus the circumcised...*” (1997, p.78). Furthermore, one may even discern a sort of role exchange between “same” and “other”, or more precisely, between Christians and non-Christians. It is, by and large, this dichotomy that I have utilized to certify the unusualness of Shakespeare’s exotic.

Othello is “twice an outsider” to Venice, who is black, and, concurrently, coming from foreign lands. However, his distinctness as an “alien” is based on the fact that he gains a prestigious place in society. It is inevitable to suppose that “choosing Othello for his protagonist Shakespeare sought to create a realistic portrait of a Moor” (Berry, 1990, p.316) as distinct from many other portraits of “aliens”. He is a strong character who has a number of supporters as well as opposers, which makes it difficult to discredit him. Othello is a multi-functioned victim-hero who has a set of various roles. Shakespeare ascribes Othello’s fate not only to his racial difference, but also his status as a notable person in Venetian society. By this way, he somehow demonstrates that as long as Othello makes a contribution to the state he lives in, he should be incorporated into it; otherwise, his undoing may negatively affect the situation of the “same”. His collapse does not merely discard him and reduce the tension; contrarily, as Berry indicates, “...he tends to lose his individuality as a Moor and to become a representative of humanity” (1990, p.316).

Othello does not fully match the category of a villain. In other words, Shakespeare avoids drawing thoroughly a negative stereotype. He is apparently in an effort to point out that others are a danger to the society only when they are at stake. In other words, they may be dangerous because “...they are never isonomic” (Gillies, 1994, p.100). Based on the points considered above, it can be concluded that Shakespeare, with a high degree of probability, is not an



anti-alien. Rather, one can confidently propose that he, in fact, points to the significant position they hold in people's lives. His Othello plays the role of the useful stranger "within", not the stranger "outside" the society. Although he is suppressed in the end, seemingly, externalization of the "other" does not bring along welfare as is supposed. Since the "same" includes the "other", their separation could only give rise to a mutual downfall. Briefly, I can fairly propose that, in the light of the other's functions, Shakespeare makes the inside "out" in *Othello*.

In order to study Shakespeare's exotics further, Gillies's ideas on the "geography of difference" might be taken as a step. According to him, Shakespeare's "idea of the 'exotics'" does not only signify the "foreign" characters; he emphasizes that "it is an action rather than a phenomenon, a kind of relation rather than a kind of character" (1994, p.99). He firmly refrains from using the "anachronistic terminology of 'race', 'colour' and 'prejudice'" (Loomba, *Shakespeare, Race*, 2002). Instead, he interprets Shakespeare's "exotic" figures as inseparable from ancient geography by suggesting that Shakespeare might not have been gratified with "Renaissance geography" alone. What he does is to rest the idea of otherness on space through a study of iconography.

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