

**Middle-Eastern Flavor in William Shakespeare with
Special Reference to
Antony and Cleopatra and Othello.
(An analytical Study)**

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الملخص: يتناول هذا البحث حقيقة ان الغرب قبل شكسبير كان متيمماً بالشرق، وقد أشار الانجيل الى هذا الامر من خلال عرضه لقصص العالم القديم مروراً بزنبوبيا ملكة سوريا حتى كليوباترا ملكة مصر. فقد أثر هذا على شكسبير من خلال اعماله كما في مسرحية : أنتوني وكليوباترا. فقد القى البحث الضوء على انتوني الذي نجح في نقل المعركة بين الاوروبيين الأعداء الى الشرق الساحر، حيث تمكن القيصر المنتصر بتغيير خارطة الامبراطورية الرومانية بل والعالم.

إن النكهة الشرقية تُشتم أيضاً في أوثلو حيث العادات الغربية تنعكس على العلاقة بين دسدومونا وزوجها الشرقي والتي انتهت بقتل الزوجة نتيجة لعدم فهم حضارة الآخر، وقد حفز هذا البعد الثقافي وجلب انتباه القارئ والمشاهد الغربي. وتستمر هذه الصلة أي النكهة الشرقية لتشمل العديد من مسرحيات شكسبير الأخرى، والتي تصور الغرب متيمماً بالشرق.

Abstract: This research handles, in its introduction, how the western world before Shakespeare has been enmeshed by the East. That was remarkable through the Bible which told tales of the ancient world, passing by Zenobia the queen of Syria up to Cleopatra the queen of Egypt. The thing which is reflected upon Shakespeare throughout his plays particularly Antony and Cleopatra where the scenes move restlessly from Syria to Rome, to Alexandria. The research stretched to shed lights on Antony who succeeded then in transforming the battle among the European rivals into the gorgeous East. It was here in the East that Caesar, the inevitable victor, proved himself and made a dramatic change to the map of the Roman Empire and, perhaps, of the world.

The Eastern flavor is smelled in Othello too where the strange customs are reflected upon the relation between Desdemona and her Eastern husband which ended with killing the former for a lack of understanding an alien culture. This estrangement would enhance and would enchain the attention

of the western readers and spectators. The link is continued throughout this paper to include new Eastern flavors that prevail in a number of Shakespearean plays which depict the West enmeshed in the East.

Introduction

The West has always been and still infatuated by the East, and the latter has always been looked at as the Western cozy lab. In the East there is an out let for European idealism for its atmospheres of relaxation. The Western quest has always been found in the gorgeous East. The Elizabethan England, in particular, was stirred by such spirit which was something equal to “patriotism as conventionally conceived.” (Coombes, 1977, P.33) In the uncertain years of the Elizabethan reign, it was much safer to write of Romans and Egyptians than to babble in English history. There, at the port of London, were perfumed spices; perfumes from Arabia and drowsy syrups from the East. Therefore, Shakespeare’s age was transitional economically, socially, politically and intellectually. At every level the form and pressure of the time imposed a great tragic theme on Shakespeare. However, on the tongue of a traveler, J. Y. Soloman, in his unpublished collection (2005) says:

A traveler finds his warm quest in the East;
It is our clinic and our spiritual love at least,
Beauty overflows upon us, and upon beast;
Quicken thy step towards the world’s feast.(Soloman,2005,
P.52)

So the East, in general, is present in Shakespeare’s works. Asia and Africa are never absent in the dialogues of his characters. We could argue that Shakespeare’s references to the East do not come suddenly, but come from religious point of view which concentrates on Jerusalem and Bethlehem, the birth place of Jesus Christ, the heavenly city of God. This comes testified in the words of the *Bible* where “*Saint John*” says:

“There came unto me one of the seven angles, and he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God ... in the midst of the street of

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it, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life.”
(Arthur, 1948)

John Marston (1575-1634) a dramatist, in one of his poems, describes an unknown Eastern country saying (as it comes translated in Arabic in M. Mahmoud's book *English Literature* (1965): “we knew some countries whose utensils are all of gold, their prisoners are tied with golden fetters, and people there, in their leisure time, collect from the sea coast cornelian and diamonds for their children to decorate their clothes”(Mahmoud,1956)Therefore, Shakespeare has demonstrated an assembly of kings of different regions in his plays, these kings include the kings of Libya and Arabia:

Bocchs, the king of Libiya
King Manchus, of Arabia...(Collins Dictionary,1967)

In the ancient world, two great Eastern women appeared: the first appeared in Egypt, the second in Syria. Both women fought against the Roman Empire in its zenith of power. They are Cleopatra and Zenobia, both met in many similarities: both are women, beautiful, charming, attractive, intelligent, and of influent tongues, of good minds, ambitious to greatness and glory. Both practiced authority and married to Roman famous leaders. Both fluently talked in Roman, Greek, Egyptian and Arabic. They both fought and participated in battles for the sake of the dignity of their countries, patriotic to the highest extent, that they both did their best to achieve their own interests, wishes and goals. They both are courageous and never weaken even when imprisoned with fetters. They did not yield or surrender to their enemies' insults. Both preferred honorable death to humiliation, and both committed suicide by poisoning themselves.

Zenobia, the queen of Palmyra lived in the third century A.D. She ruled the Eastern Roman Empire, and her aggressive foreign policy made the Roman general Aurelian wage war on her. He achieved victory over her, and put an end to her power, though he spared her life. (Al-quds Newspaper,1996, P.16) But as the queen of Egypt Cleopatra who died in 30 B.C. is concern, she has been commemorated in many great works of English and Arabic literature. She strokes the writers, playwrights, poets and novelists for her life overflowed with events. Shakespeare was the first who handled her life through *Antony and Cleopatra* (1606), then G. Bernard Shaw

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through *Caesar and Cleopatra* (1907), Ahmad Shawqi in his *Cleopatra's Death* (1929). Shakespeare intended to depict her human nature and passions, Shaw her natural and political traits while Shawqi showed her passions, nationality and faithfulness to Egypt. Emil Ludwig, a German writer, in his novel *Cleopatra: The Story of a Queen* (1937) was affected by Romantic historian Plutarch whose book was translated into English in 1579.

However, Cleopatra's name means national pride (Al-quds Newspaper,P.16) and it is said that six princes before Cleopatra were given the same name but were not much known. Theofield Goethe described her in 1845 saying: "wombs never produce more perfect, for she is the only who possesses the feminine meanings, and more suitable for her throne, poets were unable to add any new to her perfect personality."(Gittings, 1960, P.13) We have to bear in mind that Cleopatra, the rich charming queen, fought against her brother king Ptolemy who, according the Egyptian jurisdiction of the time, married her. Her husband-brother Ptolemy snatched her throne, but when Julius Caesar arrived in Alexandria the scale of war was for the benefit of her husband-brother. She decided to entice Caesar towards her side, and she finally managed to reach his palace. When he saw her glory, he fell in love with her and stayed longer in Alexandria. Caesar helped her in her war against Ptolemy, but soon Caesar was summoned to Rome and was assassinated there. A tripartite council ruled there where Mark Antony was the most important member among them. Antony ruled the Eastern part of the Empire around Tarsus, the southern Turkey of today. A meeting between him and Cleopatra resulted in a love story between both. But away from Eastern licentiousness and voluptuousness Antony went back to Rome and signed a reconciliation treaty with Octavius, and later on Antony married Octavia as a counterpart to Cleopatra. However Antony returns to Rome from his Eastern nest in Egypt was to meet his brother-in-law.

And the young Shakespeare saw and read these things and talked in the taverns with the men who brought these items from the East. From those men of strange adventure he took many things to enlighten his mind about the East. Those men made young Shakespeare very eager to visit the East, but unfortunately time did not serve that purpose. Shakespeare kept talking with men from the East or men of

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connection with the East until his store of knowledge overflowed upon his papers. This is why Margret Webster, a commentator on Shakespeare, says that Shakespeare never invented an original story. (Bradley, 1904, P.13) In the intervening period, the riches of Renaissance Europe came pouring into England wealth available for the first time to anyone who could read a book. Shakespeare comes of an age wearing his youth like a bright Arabian cloak with golden skirts. His power was his wide human sympathy with all multiform types of life round him in the crowded and intense society of the Elizabethan world. Shakespeare is such a universal genius, that we are not apt to forget that he has an individual poetic style as a poet, quite apart from his skill as a wonderful playwright or his deep insight as a man. His images are a way of expressing the truth so that it has a profound effect on his mind. Shakespeare is probably known to more people in the world today than any other Elizabethans . He held the imagination of the world. His friend and fellow-dramatist, Ben Johnson, hailed him as the “applause, delight, the wonder of our stage!” that he was not of anger but for all time was to his companions. (Gittings, 1960, P.18) Shakespeare was a good comrade, an exceedingly able and a successful dramatist. It may fairly be said, that Shakespeare was born at the full tide of England’s history and that his genius matched the richness of the hour. In 1588 the terrible Spanish Armada was defeated. For the first time, England was free from fear. It is said that Shakespeare had done nothing more than re-tell in play form a number of stories known to the ancient people. Margret Webster, in her essay: *Shakespeare in Our Time* (1965) argues that Shakespeare “would be no more important than the salve who recounted the Sultan the thousand legends of the *Arabian Nights*.” (Gittings, 1960, P.43) He let his readers and audience live in an Eastern atmosphere with no lie or exaggeration. Shakespeare put his reader face to face with an Eastern landscape whether his reader loves or hates who, finally, has to bow before this selection, as if he wants to thrust the pleasure of the East upon his readers. Here Shakespeare was dragged and halted to mention the East, particularly Egypt and other Mediterranean countries. No doubt that these countries have haunted Shakespeare’s imagination. For these causes he refused to be tied to his own time and place. We find that *Cymbeline* (1607-1608) is set in Italy, while *The Winter Tale* (1607)

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was set in a pre-Christian era, *Hamlet* (1601) in Denmark, *Othello* mostly in Cyprus. *Pericles the Prince of Tyre* (1608) in the Mediterranean countries, and finally *Antony and Cleopatra* (1608) which will be the main focus of our study is set in Egypt. We, as readers, are taken clean out of time and place through Shakespearian production where he possesses the power to carry us physically and spiritually along varying countries in the East.

Antony and Cleopatra, the heavy eastern flavor

Shakespeare's greatest Roman play is *Antony and Cleopatra* (1608). The play opens with Antony's delay in Egypt because of his love to the queen of Egypt Cleopatra, the love which has become the map of the Roman Empire, the love that becomes the battle-fields of armies and great sea-battles, and the man-lover who is considered in his men's eyes as:

The triple pillar of the world transformed
Into a strumpet's fool. (Harbage, 1969, I:i-12-13)

Now, Antony is in full flush of enchantment that Cleopatra wrought upon him. No doubt that Antony, the hero, is painted to us in breadth and all details. He is given to us by Shakespeare a complete man, therefore, his actions needs no analysis. But the Eastern luxurious scene of Cleopatra with her ladies, train and eunuchs fanning her from every side attracted Antony and enmeshed him in her love. However, in western views, nothing holds Antony in Egypt except his "lascivious wassails." (Granville, 1964, P.118) Shakespeare sometime keeps us in Rome and sometime flings back to Egypt where the queen of his love lies unaffected by the passage of time:

Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale
Her infinite variety. (Harbage, 1969, II: ii-210-211)

Antony and Cleopatra is a play, in which, we all know of Shakespeare's genius, we are perpetually surprised by it. The battle of Actium, which gets a major place in Chaucer's treatment of the same theme, is almost brushed aside in the mounting tragedy of lovers, and the pull of Egypt and Rome for Antony's soul. We wonder of how has Shakespeare ennobled the character of Antony, the one of the Roman Triumvirs, and a great soldier. His followers dislike his infatuation with the Egyptian Queen. He has been neglecting state affairs and is totally unmindful of the development at Rome. His words "let Rome in Tiber melted" (Harbage, 1969, I: i- 32) reflects his attitudes towards

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the East and towards his Eastern beloved for whom he is ready to scarify everything even Rome, for he finds his highest pleasure in the company of Cleopatra, and so long as she is with him, he does not care what happens to the world and the empire. For a sip of an Eastern love he sold a whole empire that was stretched all over the old world of Asia, Africa and Europe. Antony, successfully, swaps these nations and their dominators for a wink or a touch in an Eastern pleasure, and that the reader may doubt whether Shakespeare himself was infatuated or enmeshed in Cleopatra along with his hero Antony. Perhaps Shakespeare would agree with Enobarbus, a friend of Antony, in whose view “age cannot wither her” as mentioned above. However, it is his own life affairs that matters for him.

So the conflict emerges between the magic of Egypt and of love, and the grandeur of Rome and of honor, for the possession of a great noble Roman. Egypt, in the division of the Roman Empire, was allotted to Antony. And for Antony alone there was a disaster in the impact of Cleopatra, queen of Egypt, with her beauty and the fire and plentitude of her personality that is going to burn him. The valiant soldier of Rome becomes the lover of Cleopatra, the queen of not only of Egypt but of the East in general. His love to her makes the drama of the great Roman history emerges into one of the world’s great love-story in which, according to C. J. Sisson (1960) a commentator on Shakespeare, affects men and women’s hearts all over the world: “the marching and counter-marching of the East and West are reflected not only in armies but in the hearts and minds of men and women too.”(Gittings, 1960, P133-34) Antony finds the enchantment and the magic of love only in his Eastern love affair which to him is far better than any Western flavor. The love story that has been weaved in the East could have surpassed the Eastern famous love stories such as Antara Bin Shaddad and his beloved Abla Bint Malik, Jamil and Botheina, Qais and Leila etc. Anyhow, Maynard Mack, editor to *Antony and Cleopatra*, (1969) wrote that “Cleopatra is given qualities that make her a very unequally queen: she lies, wheedles, sulks, screams, and makes love” (Harbage, 1969, P.357) Therefore, Antony glorifies lie in the chain of his Easter taste of love, the love which makes Rome and its great Empire sink into the significance of this love-relationship. The scene of the play moves restlessly from Syria to Rome, to Alexandria. Antony becomes a victim of his Eastern love,

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and that he is “obsessed” and charmed by Cleopatra that he almost “arrogantly” ignores the threat of his enemy being offered everyday and that he became a slave to the infatuation in his first meeting with her. That he is ready to let Rome go to hell, or he cannot see now except Cleopatra who becomes very dear to him. In his forgetfulness, ignorance of Rome and Caesar’s messengers, Antony is in a mood to:

Let Rome in Tiber melt, and the wide arch
Of the ranged empire fall. (Harbage, 1969, I: i- 32)

Wherever may Rome fall makes no difference to Antony who is indulged from top to toes in his “debauched Eastern queen... battenning on his apostasy.”(Granville, 1964, P. 114) Antony would not care whether Rome gets prosperity or not, what he cares for is his own Eastern relation with the best creature ever created: that is the Eastern queen of Egypt. He would not compromise his love, as it is on the top priority of his concerns. However the canvas of Antony’s love to Cleopatra is continued. His love to her surpasses everything in his life; it is his priority and not the Roman Empire that matters for him, for his own empire lies in the East where his beloved lies. So he always takes his decisions in connection with the East in his flourish of mind. To him: “The beds in the East are soft.” (Harbage, 1969, II: vi-51) Therefore, he sees that his happiness: “ I’ the East my pleasure lies” (Harbage, 1969, II: iii- 39)

Keeping in mind that there is no taste to his life without Cleopatra’s company, and that no minute should be wasted without pleasure:

Now, for the love of love and her soft hours
There’s not a minute of our lives should stretch
Without some pleasure now- what sport to-night? (Harbage,
1969,I:i-45-47)

He knows that going back to Egypt will cost him much and is a long way to go. He knows that being there in Egypt must be costly. Thus, he determines:

These strong Egyptians fetters I must break,
Or lose myself in dotage (Harbage, 1969, I: ii- 115-16)

Antony is enmeshed in Cleopatra’s love; he becomes supine under Cleopatra’s eye. By the bitter purging of the illusion that was under Cleopatra, and at her beck, he promptly re-embraced her as if narcotized saying that he is so satisfied.

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Thus satisfaction and content is the ultimate end of Antony as pleasure is the ultimate end of man, this satisfaction and pleasure Antony finds in looking for a woman who is not cold-hearted, meaning by that his Western wife Octavia who is cold. Antony has loved Cleopatra, the worst and the best of her; and given her the best and the worst of him. He wins much from the world around, and he has much to lose if his beloved is taken from him. Even Octavia who was meant to be a contrast to Cleopatra has proved failure in the eyes of Antony who, as we learnt, would take his first chance to go back to Cleopatra, for still he was picturing her in her barge on Cyndus, a river in Rome. Cleopatra was the only person passing his sight and he hears only her voice. In this connection, we hear Agrippa, a friend of Caesar, calling Antony as :

O Antony! O thou Arabian bird! (Harbage, 1969, II: ii- 12)

Having this wish fulfilled, Antony, the Western man of honor, proved inferior to the queen of Egypt. Cleopatra is seen rigged and that her motion on her barge reveals itself as “flux”. Antony, in Egypt, is stunned upon seeing the esteem of Cleopatra surrounded by Eastern luxuries, he immediately embraced her saying: “kingdoms are clay.”(Harbage, 1969, I: i-35) Antony who perhaps receives no respect and no warmth upon his return from his Eastern romances declares: “I will to Egypt.” (Harbage, 1969, II:iii-39) It seems that the one who tastes the Eastern love and delight cannot forget it. This delight brings accusation of “fluctuations in both war and love” to Antony. (Harbage, 1969, P.385) For, indeed, we see Antony is torn between the love of his country and Empire and his unique Eastern relations and romances in Egypt.

That the voice of Egypt and love is quite clear in his reaction after his military defeat when he says to Cleopatra:

Fall not a tear, I say: one of them rates

All that is won and lost.(Harbage, 1969,III:xi-69-71)

A statement full of ambiguity and discrepancies, what does he win, and what does he lose? Perhaps, in his view, he wins what he wants to win and loses what he has to lose. The theory of his winning and loss was away when he first met Cleopatra and took her in embrace saying: “here is my space”(Harbage, 1969, I:i- 34) the space of the East, the space of the sunny land of Egypt which, to Antony, is a model. Antony gives more sacrifices for the sake of the East more than any

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other Shakespearean heroes, for he gives his life to his Eastern love, and perhaps this was the noblest in him. However, the Western readers may ask if his death is a hero's death. It may be to this Western reader, a humiliating love and relation, likewise Cleopatra seems to give her life for love. There is similarity between the fate of Romeo and Juliet and that of Cleopatra and Antony, this similarity in Eastern faithfulness in love could be stretched to include other Eastern stories of faithful love of the above mentioned Arabian love stories. However Shakespeare considers Antony a courageous lover and a bridegroom in his death:

And run into 't
As to a lover's bed (Harbage, 1969, IV: iv-99100)

Antony admits his end which to him an honorable end for the sake of his own particular affairs. The taste of life has become tasteless after the loss of his Eastern nest, particularly his belief that his Western alternatives has no image of pleasure or any promise as compared to the former. He loved his queen to the extent that while at his final moments of his life he addresses Egypt instead of Cleopatra:

I am dying, Egypt, dying; only. (Harbage, 1969, P.385)

Finally he was not killed by other's sword but by his own, he was killed not for the honor of Rome but for his own lost love. Hence the sacrifice is great; it is as great as his love to the Eastern beloved. The drama of his end is great that we may well see in the great scene of Antony's death, wounded by his own hand and now lifted up into Cleopatra's monument where she awaits him with her women such as Iras and Charmian.

Antony is dead and the domination of the play passes at once to Cleopatra, this she asserts in her lament over him. Antony, in his Eastern ambition and relation, made a huge breach in the court of great Rome whose hand stretched across the sea to Egypt to "touch" and "beckon him from Cleopatra's palace" to return to Rome because he was one of the three pillars of the state. But Antony, who knows the danger that besets the Empire, is not ready to scarify his Eastern love for the sake of Rome. This would smell a new flavor to the Western audience. So Shakespeare won the admiration and applause of his spectators through the new shift overseas. Shakespeare would depict the nature of Cleopatra the mistress of love as she was called according to Sisson in his *The Living Shakespeare* (1960): "mirrored in the dark Mediterranean sea that lay between Egypt and Rome." Shakespeare, on the tongue of Enobarbus, the close friend of Antony, brings to his Western audience a canvas of what is Cleopatra and in what she

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believes. This would sound odd in the ears of the Shakespearian audience who knew that Cleopatra's goddess is Isis, who is the goddess of love and the moon. This Eastern queen is depicted as a "siren" not only in Plutarch's description but also in Shakespeare's. The city of Alexandria comes alive to cast a look upon the glorious queen, while Antony is left sitting in the market place "whistling to the air." Even the great leader Antony would prefer to "gaze on Cleopatra too." (Gittings, 1960, P.127) When a messenger comes from Rome bearing news to Antony in Egypt, Cleopatra, triumphant and confident in her power over Antony, urges him to hear the messenger.

Queen Cleopatra is great with her special procession in the streets of Alexandria where the Egyptians pay her all respect; homage and a whole esteem, with her maids fluttering round her. Iras and Charmian attend upon Cleopatra and she puts them in the shade not far from her throne. The two of them decorate the Egyptian scenes; "deft and apt, poised for their mistress's call" (Granville, 1946, P.168) Cleopatra does not allow her maid Charmian to compare Julius Caesar to Antony, the man once she calls the man of all men. Antony, after marrying Octavia, sister of Caesar, asks an Egyptian soothsayer about his fortunes. Here, Antony believes the Eastern soothsayer and not the Western. However Antony was in dilemma, and that the troubles that have been going between him and the other part of the Empire would be nothing to him before a kiss of Cleopatra.

H. Granville-Barker, in his book *Prefaces to Shakespeare* (1964) sees that Shakespeare "seizes the chance to show us, first the savage and suffering Cleopatra ... the colder, baser-natured woman, feeding on deceit" and that Cleopatra is an "Egyptian stigmata" (Granville, 1946, P.231) Cleopatra again is a "farthingale" and thenceforward she is counted, too, as a "gipsy." She once furiously hauls the messenger of Antony's faithlessness up and down by the hair of his head, and then she orders that such a messenger, who brought the ill-tidings that Antony has married Octavia, be killed. Thus Cleopatra is a *wench* in the eyes of the Roman leaders: Agrippa and Macenas were "hanging back to hear the latest Egyptian scandal from Enobarbus" They were shocked about the "goings on of that royal wench" meaning by that Cleopatra. (Gittings, 1960, P.135) Antony's infatuation with Cleopatra is great, despite the fact that some critics try to snatch away her womanly charm seeing her hauling the bringer of the news of Antony's treachery. Lepidus, one of the Triumvirs, described Cleopatra as the snake of Egypt.

And now Antony and Cleopatra's stormy seas fall into a brooding serenity, and that Dolabella, a friend of Caesar, tells Cleopatra that Caesar plans to set out for Syria and take her and her son with him. Caesar does mean to lead her chained in his triumph. In this way, we have Egyptians against Romans now. However it seems that Cleopatra, passionate and unstable, shows a

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very child beside the victorious Caesar. This news was told to Cleopatra by Dollabella:

I tell you this: Caesar through Syria

Intends his journey, and within three days. (Harbage, 1969, I:i-12-13)

However, it seems that there at Alexandria, not only Antony who has become enmeshed in the “silken coils of Egypt’s Queen, Cleopatra” but also, as it seems, the triumvir Caesar sent Proculeius to her, tries to entice her to his side after the death of Antony. She seems to have agreed with him to travel to Rome, but her majesty and esteem does not allow her to be dragged to Rome and to be caged like an animal. The Eastern faithfulness speaks loudly in Cleopatra, the loyalty to her dead lover brought her death, to join him in another course of faithfulness, and that is why she allows a snake to sting her. But the Easter readers will frown to hear one of the Roman leader and a friend to Caesar calls her “strumpet”, they grumble to see:

The triple pillar of the world transformed

Into a strumpet’s fool (Harbage, 1969, V: ii- 310-11)

Cleopatra, with her strong love for Antony decides to join him in death with her golden garments. The reader would be stunned at the Eastern faithfulness of her two maids who, were not only faithful to Cleopatra but also to Antony. Both maids Charmian and Iras died beside Cleopatra as a sign of faithfulness to her in life and in death. That is the union of life and death represented in the union of a lover with another lover. Cleopatra the Eastern example of love sees her husband Antony:

As sweet as balm, as soft as air as gentle

O Antony, (Harbage, 1969, IV: xii- 55-57)

A reader may realize the Eastern faithfulness of love, for it appears rooted in Cleopatra when she new that Caesar intended to lead her in triumph and into Rome, she leaves no way and no device to die instead of humiliation on the hands of Caesar who is coming for revenge. The Eastern faithfulness of Cleopatra is embodied in her longing to die and never to leave him. The picture of the Eastern countryman and his figs is perfectly depicted as he brings Cleopatra the *comfort* of death in a basket slung on his arm. Here, Cleopatra orders that her robe be given to her and her crown be put on. It is a royal Eastern death. This Eastern faithful death is found in Iras’ heart

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as she breaks silently at the sight of the ceremony of Cleopatra's dying.

Antony is nothing without Cleopatra; the world looks empty and even time has no meaning to him without her. Without her, no honor is gained, and even gods will detest him without his beloved:

.....since Cleopatra died,
I have lived in such dishonor, that the gods
Detest my baseness (Granville, 1946, P. 217)

Her Eastern greatness and glory is now as a trapped animal "cringing and whining and cajoling" under the heavy steps of Caesar (Harbage, 1969, V:ii- 86-87) Here, Cleopatra calls her beloved Antony as:

.....Husband, I come
Now to that name my courage prove my title (Granville, 1946,
P.233)

Iras, her maid, dies of the very grief of the leave-taking: her services consummated by her mistress's kiss. She dies as the lover people of the East do, so they say, by pure denial of life.

Charmian, her other faithful maid, sees her as an uplifted shining star: "O eastern star!" (Harbage, 1969, V:ii- 308) So, her death is similar to the Eastern heroines who died easily for the sake of their beloveds. Defiantly she died, noble in her heart, convenient in her righteousness. A reader may notice Cleopatra's passionate hysteria calling death:

Where art thou, death?
Come hither, come, come and take a queen. (Harbage, 1969,
V: ii-280-81)

Of her death Shakespeare wants to give his verse solid strength and dignity as she says:

Give me my robe, put on my crown, I have
The juice of Egypt's grape shall mist this lip (Harbage, 1969,
V: vii-44)

The quality of the faithful Eastern love and idealism in love is shown and reflected upon Antony, who became even more faithful to his beloved even than the Eastern lovers themselves when he replies her call for death; he swears not to hesitate to join his Eastern beloved Cleopatra. Therefore, he is ready to:

I will o'er take thee, Cleopatra, and
Weep for many pardon; so it must be now (Oscar, 1966, P.26)

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This Eastern heroin is alone among Shakespeare's women dominates a whole play, whose absence or presence gives rise or fall to it. Cleopatra, alone among Shakespearian heroines, shows and proves that love is stronger than anything, stronger than home and may be stronger than the gift of life. All of these, she proves through her relation with Antony. Perhaps Shakespeare wants to tell his audience that these passions are weaker than love if one of the lovers is an Eastern such as Cleopatra whose first priority is love. She opens the great "love-duet" of the play. She, too, closes the play upon her royal death with the name of her lover Antony upon her lips. This Eastern new trend of love left a great impact upon the Western audience and perhaps a lesson of how should lovers behave under the sun. Finally, Cleopatra created an exited scene of heart-broken people particularly at the death of Iras who falls dead through her depression. At the same time, there is a kind of exaltation that befits a high tragedy which her death only marked. So, taking the deadly serpent to her bosom, to this Eastern faithful beloved, is more tolerable than the separation from her beloved Antony.

This situation could mark Westerners being stunned before Cleopatra's faithful action. This, too, makes them realize how perilous the human condition is, although this Eastern protagonist and Egyptian heroin, is to the Elizabethan audience, merely "a cousin to the gypsies" (Harbage, 1969, II;iii-44)) Antony's death in her arms purges her love of its trickery.

To conclude that the conflict between love and honor bewildered Antony, but finally the scale of his Eastern love weighed heavier than his Western honor, because there is a different interpretation of honor to Antony. He finds honor to himself and not to Rome. This honor, according to him, is by joining their tow noble souls. There is delight in this changeability, therefore, Shakespeare intended to spread delight which his audience embrace heartily. The delight is in the Eastern atmosphere of love where the battle is joined between Rome and Egypt in the heart of and soul of the valiant soldier and lover Antony. Shakespeare offered a special Eastern style of love in which wisdom, honor, and the pride of the soldier fight on one side, and on the other side only love and enchantment could be plucked by his hero-lover Antony. It is a new style of love Shakespeare introduced to the

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readers, the love which differs from that of the old faithful Eastern love such as Antara-Abla's love, which was called in Arabic: (Hob Othry) or Platonic love. These two Shakespearian lovers and protagonists defended their love with open eyes.

It is on the Eastern land and over the Eastern seas that the end of Antony, the Roman general, and his beloved Cleopatra has come now, and that their stormy love and even their stormy seas have now fallen into a brooding serenity and fully quenched on the hand of another Roman leader, and their "hot quarrels are over," (Gittings, 1960, P.135) However, Antony and Cleopatra were to be buried in the same grave to have the death embrace.

Othello, a different eastern flavor

It could have been better for Shakespeare if he had given the name "Moor" to his play instead of Othello since the name Othello has been used in his direct or indirect address twenty-eight times throughout the play, while the name "Moor" has been used fifty eight times, which means twice as the first name "Othello". This is to say that the name "Moor" was known among the characters of the play, to Shakespeare and his audience than the name "Othello". He is thus, a Moor and not Othello. If this signifies anything, it signifies the range of hatred to the black hero who was very much hateful, repugnant and a weary guest on the Italian land.

It seems that *Othello* was a drama of modern life of the time then, it was a drama almost of contemporary life, for it came coincide with the date of the Turkish conquest of Cyprus in 1570. So its characters came close to the readers of the time, which shows that the application of the drama was more immediate to the readers than it could be in *Hamlet* or *King Lear*.

In *Othello* there is an external conflict in the hero's soul which is obviously must be hostile to evil, this imagination is "dilated" by the appearance of the supernatural power. This power is connected to the witches in *Macbeth*, to the Eastern soothsayer in *Antony and Cleopatra* and in *Othello* where the power lies behind the handkerchief which also has some of the Eastern power of charm that

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comes from Egypt. It is in the cozy East that Shakespeare chooses for Desdemona to die in along with her complete-built Eastern husband.

To the Western readers, the play Othello is no more than a study of a noble, savage, of a noble barbarian who has, according to Bradley, become a Christian and has gained some of the civilization from his new Western surrounding. But the Eastern habit is still working on him- and that the Western civilization was unable to clean his backward, uncivilized mind, which, according to Bradley, hides savage Eastern passions of his Moorish alien blood, the blood which is contaminated with heavy thought and ideology regarding female chastity which is so common among the Easterners until now. Perhaps these Western readers laugh or perhaps stunned at the Moor's racial psychology as he behaved from the strange and previous war atmospheres and adventurous past he had lived in his childhood. The behavior which ranked him out of the Venetian civilization with which he failed to coop with, and that he does not belong to the European world, for he came from a wonderland and atmosphere that is totally different from Othello's new surroundings. And that his wandering in vast and dry deserts among marvelous people whose heads are beneath their shoulders; his story of the magic Egyptian handkerchief and the prophetic issue of his baptism, "his being sold to slavery [and] his sojourn in Aleppo," all of these matters do affect Othello's behavior among European atmospheres which count him away from "our world"(Bradley, 1904, P.157)

Othello, who has come from the Eastern atmosphere, comes now to have his life crowded with glory and love, although it is crowded with deadly and dangerous ventures. Here Shakespeare depicts him as if he does not deserve such glory and esteem as the events of the play show later on. But in connection of Othello's color Bradley would say: had Othello been a little bit light brown, Brabantio, a Venetian senator and the father of Desdemona, would have turned him for possessing a "sooty bosom."(Bradley,1904, P.166). The European denied Othello's any royal blood, and instead of being called an Ethiopian, he is called a "Barbary horse" particularly as it is said that he has gone to Mauritania. The English and Europeans in general know that sixteenth-century writers called any dark North African "a Moor, or a black Moor." Sir Thomas Biyot, a commentator on Shakespeare

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(1904), calls every Ethiopian a Moor. The Oxford English Dictionary (1547) illustrated the black Moor as “I am black more, or a man of Ethiope”(Bradley, 1904,P.1670) Shakespeare too could have imagined Othello as a negro or a Moor. Even these nicknames “thick lips” and “black” in the first act of the play *Othello* lead us to imagine Othello as of dark complexion, which provide us with proof that Othello was a Negro. Bradley wrote in his book *Shakespearian Tragedy (1904)* that the English audience was disposed in the seventeenth century to read about the “beautiful Venetian girl falling in love with a veritable Negro,” where the whole process of marriage would argue a “disproportionateness, a want of balance” in Desdemona.” (Bradley, 1904, P.168) This imbalance happens when she chooses for the subject of her affection a Moor, or a black oriental husband.

The Eastern flavor deepens itself in Shakespeare’s Othello who, at that junction of time, happened that the state of Venice had need of the services of the Eastern hero Othello. And that the news having arrived that the Turks with mighty preparation had fitted out a fleet which was bending its course to the island of Cyprus to regain that strong post from the Venetians, and now then Othello, the black, the moor and perhaps the Arab is the rescuer, the savior of the Venetian state and front, to regain their dignity there in the East. We have to bear in mind that the dignity of the Venetian government is connected to the “Barbary horse” and “the sooty bosom” and to the “black ram” who is “tupping” the senator’s ewe (Desdemona) from the back. (Muir,1968, I: i- 90) The savior, now does not know, according to the western report to Desdemona’s father, how to handle the sexual matters like a human being who, in the Venetians’ opinion, is just like the beasts. Othello, now a faithful to the Italians, is to rid of, for he is one of the “strangers or infidels” (Charles and Mary Lamb, 1977, P.290)

In *Othello*, the Eastern flavor is quite clear rather it is a dominating force throughout the play, and the places mentioned are scattered from Morocco to India. We could say that the play *Othello* is of an Oriental setting, for the first act opens on the night of Othello’s marriage, on that night he is dispatched to Cyprus, leaving Desdemona to follow him. And in act two, scene one, there arrive at Cyprus. In *Othello*, the readers smell the Eastern flavor by mixing many Eastern, natural

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fragrances and spices together. We may not forget that Shakespeare's readers may sniff a smell of racism in dealing with Othello.

The vast wilderness and romantic caverns, quarries, rocks and Eastern mountains whose heads are in clouds, of the savage nation, the cannibal who are men eaters, and a race of people in Africa and Asia whose heads do grow beneath their shoulders. These stories would "enchain the attention" not only of Desdemona but also of Shakespeare himself, who really colored some of his dramas with original Eastern colors. (Charles and Mary Lamb, 1977, P.281)

The East pronounces itself clearly in Othello's handkerchief which was a gift from an Egyptian woman to Othello's mother. This valuable gift, which has some particular importance in Othello's life-affairs, and that was spotted in Casio's hand, it was a motive enough to the deluded Othello to pass a death sentence upon them both Casio and Desdemona. A step not strange for an Eastern husband, who as Othello did, would not hesitate a moment to cut the throat of his infidel wife, daughter, sister or any female relative involved in any dishonest activity. The innocent Desdemona told Othello that the handkerchief was lost, but the angry Eastern husband in an investigative way said to her:

I saw my handkerchief in's hand (Muir, 1968, V:ii- 62)

He means that he has seen the kerchief in Casio's hand, the one who is accused of having an illicit relation with Desdemona. Here, in this position, we find Othello, as an Eastern torn husband, swearing to cut her into parts as they do (sometime) in the Middle East up to this moment:

I will cut her into messes! (Muir, 1968, IV: i- 197)

This Shakespearian Eastern *naïve* hero, strong in the field, valiant enough for any battle, victorious upon his enemy, but failure at his house, doing a coward job by covering his wife up in the bed-clothes, stifled her till she died. The simplicity and naivety of Othello is presented in testing Desdemona's faithfulness through the superstitious handkerchief, through which he saw a fatal confirmation of his wife's guilt. The plea or pretension of the handkerchief, from European point of view, is as "trifle as air to the jealous proofs, as strong as holy writ."(Charles and Mary Lamb, 1977, P.290) The

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Egyptian handkerchief (of special value to Othello) was a motive enough to the deluded Othello to pass a sentence of death upon the European lovers- Desdemona and Casio.

Concerning the Eastern jealousy of Othello, Bradley finds no subject more exciting and striking than the Eastern jealousy, represented in Othello's behavior, of sexuality which is rising to the pitch of passion. This Eastern jealousy as Othello, in Western understanding, "converts human nature into chaos." (Bradley, 1904, P. 149) This jealousy reflects the beast in man. The feeling of this black man is turned into longing and loathing in the same time, and that is the characteristic of the Eastern man, whose relief only in a "bestial thirst" for blood shedding in matters and issues concerning honor and female chastity.

Desdemona, who has never seen or heard about Eastern customs or tradition of women in the East, has also never chanced to see an Eastern or an African violently excited, she is startled at Othello's intended bodily expressions. She does forget that Othello is a Moor and not a countryman who may not understand her at once. This position, women-men interaction, to Desdemona is quite normal, for the Venetian women do not take the issue of infidelity as a serious matter. Therefore, she forgets the gap between Othello's origin, culture and that of hers. This is why the Western readers consider her mistaken in dealing with a stranger husband in a moment of anger. When Iago assures her guilt through the incident of the kerchief, and that she and Casio have confessed their guilt. Othello trembles all over like an Eastern husband, and "matters disjointed words" through his anger. Before the killing scene, his sight adds, to his confusion, madness of anger that Desdemona could feel: the once beloved husband "a ravenous thirst for revenge" (Bradley, 1904, P.164) As he speaks the final words, by which he puts us again in the picture of his previous life of heroism in India; in Arabia, in Aleppo, and now in Cyprus, we feel that every thing now is gone with no return, rather everything is to ravish. Othello forgets all those agony and glory of his life and kneel before Iago's feet to prove more about his wife's infidelity. This plot: agony, naivety and misunderstanding are made by Shakespeare to show the reality of such an Eastern husband.

Although Othello had loved wisely is now accused of insincerity to his innocent wife, and that his manly eyes (when he fears his mistakes), though not used to weep on every small occasion dropped tears as fast as the Arabian trees their gum. Thus watching with his "poetic eyes" those trees dropping their medicinal gum is still a striking event to Othello whose eyes:

Drop tears as fast as the Arabian trees.

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Their med'cinable gum. (Muir, 1968, I: ii- 31-32)

Othello saw, too, the Indian throwing away his "chance-found pearl." Such a man, who watched and witnessed such stupid experience of the Indian, in Shakespeare's view, doesn't deserve the Venetian calm and rich luxurious life. The Venetian community condemns the man who easily stirred to indignation as once happened with him in Aleppo for trifle things. This man is again stirred easily to indignation by Iago and the outcome was the life of his Western wife.

When chaos has come and gone, the reader will be stunned as Othello speaking his final words in which all the glory of an Eastern strong man's life-long ago has all now come to end in a moment of loss, in a moment of search for, as he visualized, a lost honor. When Othello was outraged and offended enough, he decides and acts instantaneously by saying: "in Aleppo once" the scene which brings us to the Oriental setting where love is respected and sacrificed for, where the Eastern lover can consider his love as heaven where he either must live or bear no life. In this connection Bradley wrote at the footnote of his book *Shakespearean Tragedy*, that the "Venetian women do not regard adultery so seriously as Othello does, and again that Othello would be wise to accept the situation like an Italian husband..."(Bradley, 1904, P.161) The thing which does not apply to Othello's case whose passion is aroused into jealousy which "swell into a well-high uncontrollable flood" but if Othello is so "he will act with the authority of a judge and the swiftness of a man in mortal pain" and this is the character of an Eastern lover. (Bradley, 1904, P. 160) Even Emilia, the servant, has the chance to abuse the one who is supposed to be her master. She described him after killing Desdemona as a black devil:

O, the more angel she,
And you the blacker devil (Muir, 1968, V: ii- 123)

Thus Emilia had her chance to revenge Othello, the Eastern protagonist, by abusing him for his action. He is to her more than black, but even "blacker" than devil. It is as a whole, a strange process to the Western readers and even to the audience. However, Shakespeare was able to thrust the load upon the shoulders of the Europeans in general and upon the English in particular.

We may come to the conclusion that these rash acts, from an Eastern husband, raised much passion of horror and amazement in the readers. Indeed, Othello is seen as "already superseded at Cyprus when his fate is consummated, and as we leave him no vision rises on us, as in other tragedies, of peace descending on a distracted land."(Bradley, 1904, P. 151)) This philosophy is not far from an eastern Muslim philosophy concerning

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fate when it consummated. For Othello has gone to the East outwardly to fight, but from the Islamic religious point of view, to meet his fate there. Desdemona too, sets out from Venice later than the others, but reaches Cyprus on the same day with them, as if her fate draws her to her inevitable end in the East. It is, too, a Calvinistic view in which a person believes that man's fate is written before his birth.

The East in Different Shakespearean Plays

The Eastern flavor stretches to include *Macbeth* as a play. For we see that Lady Macbeth, after taking part in murdering Duncan, was so exhausted as nearly to faint. To her the only way to get rid of the crime is "little water", but after the crime, she realized that "all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand" (Lott, 1982, V: i- 40) and that the Arabs and their perfumes of the best quality ever made for humanity at the time will not sweeten her crime, nor the little water she thinks of is able to wash her crime. The Arabs spices and their curing herbs are preset in the Shakespearean plays; and in English and Western literature in general. That means the perfumes of Arabia, on the days of Shakespeare, had the boom of reputation of the time. A challenge is thus made between Lady Macbeth and her inner side whether the perfumes of Arabia are sufficient to remove and delete her crime or not.

In scene three of the first act, there is a clear reference to the East particularly to Aleppo on the tongue of the withes: "her husband's to Aleppo gone, Master O' the *Tiger*..." (Lott, 1982, I: iii- 7) The most poetical words are those of the lady Macbeth about the perfumes of Arabia which, despite its best quality to flourish and thrust nice scent in the surrounding atmosphere, will not sweeten her little hand.

King Lear, too, has its share mentioning the East through many discussions among its characters. Palestine is present in *King Lear* and the concentration this time is on Bethlehem or Bedlam. The speech now is to Edmund, the bastard son to Gloucester, who is revolting against his parentage and originality which according to him was lecherous. He pronounces his repentance and remorse for the whole process of his birth:

My cue is villainous melancholy, with a sigh like Tom o'
Bedlam- O, these eclipses do portend these divisions. (Harbage, 1969,
I:ii- 31-32)

By referring to Bedalm, Edmund means the madhouse of Bethlehem which is still hosting tens of Palestinian patients. We trace the same reference by Edgar (legitimate son to Gloucester):

The country gives me proof and precedent

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Of Bedlam beggars ... (Harbage, 1969, II: ii 13-14)

Again Edgar refers to Turk, he expresses his exhaustion in his role by an allusion to the horns proffered by Toms of Bedlam in begging drink. King Lear, in his turn, says:

You will say they are Persian, but let them
Be changed. (Harbage, 1969, III: vi- 78)

Lear, here, refers to Edgar's rags which are just like the Persian costume. However we are not far away from Othello's color, for in *Titus Andronicus* (1593) Aaron, the Moor, appears to have been a Negro. In the play he is twice called "coal black." His color is compared with a ram and his child is a little "coal-black" and "thick-lipped" and "a fleece of wooly hair" exactly the same portrait of Othello. (Bradley, 1904, P.167) The danger is that the black color is connected to the devil when the targeted person is an Eastern: Arabian or African, therefore the prince of Morocco is described in *Merchant of Venice* (1598) as having, like Othello, "the complexion of a devil"(Bradley, 1904, P. 167) He is among the suitors for Portia's hand, who came the whole way from Africa to compete with others for her hand. Thus, the dark-complexioned foreign suitor of Portia appears in a gorgeous robe.

The setting in *Pericles, Prince of Tyre* (1608) is in the East, it is a whole Eastern atmosphere on the Mediterranean shores, the city of Tyre, is a Lebanese city today. It is mentioned more that twenty-eight times throughout the play which indicates that the whole atmosphere of the setting is purely Eastern. Tarsus, too, a city in southern Turkey of today has a great share in an Eastern landscape, Ephesus on the western coast of Turkey and Greece, and many other places in the East that played a crucial role in the events of Shakespearian oriental atmosphere. However the story has a thorough Middle-Eastern setting where Pericles, prince of Tyre, became a voluntary exile from his dominions to avert the dreadful calamities which Antiochus, the wicked emperor of Greece, threatened to bring upon his subjects and city of Tyre, in revenge for a discovery which the prince had made of a shocking deed which the emperor had done in secret. Pericles left Helicanus, as deputy, in his place and set sail from Tyre, thinking to absent himself till the wrath of Antiochus should be appeased. The first reference of the Chorus at the beginning of the play is to Syria:

.....Antiochus the great
Built up this city for his chieftest seat,
The fairest in all Syria- (Harbage, 1969, I: i- 17-18)

The king of Antioch made the first reference to the prince of Tyre introducing him to us:

Young Prince of Tyre you have at large received
The daughter of the task you undertake(Harbage,1969, I:i-1-2)

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In Comedy of Errors Dromio of Syracuse, one of the twin brothers to Antipholus, tells Adriana, who asks about his master, that he is not well for he is “in Tartar limbo”(Harbage, 1969, IV: ii- 32) which is worse than being in hell. Tartars seem to be combined with the Eastern pagan place of punishment. It is a hard imprisonment place for bad ones particularly for unbaptized infants. Dromio continues about his master that he:

Set up his rest to do more exploits

With his mace than a morris-pike (Harbage, 1969, IV; iii- 24-25)

This means that his master exploits others, he is a mischievous person and hard in his treatment of others more than a Moorish-pike which means a Moorish spear. Same scale of effect of the East on Shakespeare continues, for in *The Taming of the Shrew* we are transformed from the Moorish land in the western Arab World to the Tartar Eastern landscape, and then to Assyria, an old kingdom ruled in Iraq, and that its own culture and civilization were the prevailing idealism in the East. Gremio, suitor to Bianca, is trying to attract his beloved Bianca by offering her what furniture he has at his house which is richly furnished with golden plates and Turkish cushions:

My handing all of Tyrian tapestry;

Fine linen, Turkey cushions bossed with pearl (Harbage, 1969, II: i- 351-52)

A parallel action is added by Shakespeare to the action of *The Taming of the Shrew*, which is considered as “third action” in a form of induction. The action added is the gulling of Christopher Sly. This action is “an example of a wide-spread motif originating in the story of [sleeper Awakened] in the Arabian Nights.”(Hosley, Introduction, P. 38)

The East and Africa are ever present in Shakespearian plays: in tragedies and in comedies. Here in *Coriolanus* whose full name is Caius Marcius Coriolanus, a proud Roman general. He performs wonders of valor in a war against the Volscians, then (out of his contempt of the Roman) he leads the Volscians against Rome to affect his grudge and revenge. Volumina, the mother of Coriolanus, his wife and son come and beseech him to spare the city, his mother wishes that her son:

Were in Arabia, and thy tribe before him

His good sword in his hand (Harbage, 1969, IV: ii- 23-24)

Not only Arabia is present here but also Africa. On the tongue of Aufidius, general of the Volscions pronounces his hatred to Rome, and that he does not hate the African serpent as he does with the Romans:

We hate alike

Not Afric owns a serpent I abhor (Harbage, 1969, I: viii- 2-4)

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It is true that the East is never absent from Shakespeare's tragedies or comedies. In *Mid Summer Night's Dream*, Theseus, the Duke of Athens, sees Helene's beauty among the Egyptian women, although he sees her in the face of the gipsy. Hippolyta, the queen of Amazons, was also betrothed to Theseus who sees (at the beginning of act five) himself as a lover. In his own view a lover is but a frantic, for he sees Helen's beauty just like the Egyptian dark beauty of the gypsies: However the speech of Theseus goes as the following:

And somewhere we find another reference to India on the tongue of Titania (the queen of That is the Madman; the lover, all as frantic,

Sees Helen's beauty in a brow of Egypt, (Harbage, 1969, V: i- 9-10)

Somewhere Puck (one of the fairies) gave an example of how he went as fast as the Tartar's arrow goes. Here the Tartars, who came from the East, were fierce in fighting and that their arrows and bows are the world's examples, they have their place in Shakespeare's plots throughout his plays. However Puck, the mischievous fairy, says:

I go, I go- look now I go

Swifter than arrow from the Tartar's bow (Harbage, 1969, III: ii- 100)

the fairies) when she refers to Himalayan Mountains:

Come from the farthest steep of India (Harbage, 1969, II: i- 69)

These Himalayan Mountains are of a fantastic color- white streaked with purple. And some- where in the play, the Tartars are now on the tongue of Lysander:

Thy love! Out, tawny Tartar, out (Harbage, 1969, III: ii- 246)

In these lines, too, the Eastern atmosphere and landscape is quite clear among the Taurus mountain ranges in Asia Minor:

That pure congealed white, high Taurus' snow (Harbage, 1969, III: ii- 141)

Conversing love affairs, Peter Quince, a carpenter in the same play, with Thisby, refers to an old Eastern love story between Pyramus and Thisbe who, during the reign of Queen of the ancient Babylon, Semiramis, were forbidden by their parents to see each other. They agree to run away and meet at the tomb of Ninus, king of the ancient Babylon, outside the city walls, under a white mulberry tree. However, Thisby of Shakespeare wants to bring back to memory the ancient lovers:

I'll meet thee, Pyramous, at Ninny's tomb

Ninus' tomb, man. Why you must not speak

That yet. That you answer to Pyramus. (Harbage, 1969, III: i- 87-89)

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Orbion, the king of the fairies who was enticing Titania, finds nothing to beautify his beloved but with oriental pearls:

And that some dew which sometimes on the buds

Was not to swell like round and orient pearls (Harbage, 1969, IV: i-52-53)

Those pearls were especially lustrous and precious ones, knowing that the best pearls came from the East. Shakespeare assimilates the dews on buds on his heroin's cheeks to these oriental pearls. Berwne, who attends on King of Navarre in *Love's Labour's Lost*, argues matters concern the King and the county- through which he sworn to stay with the king when the latter asked him to go away, although Berwne admits having a touch of barbarism which, in its turn, affiliated to the East and Africa:

And though I have for barbarism spoke more

Then for that angel knowledge can you say. (Harbage, 1969, I: i- 112-113)

Master, a page to Don Adriano de Armado, tells his master about a dancing horse who is trained to count in hoof-beats. The most famous of the time was Master Bank's horse which was called "Morocco." Again Babylon which is an intrusion from Psalm (CXXXVII) is mentioned in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*:

When as I sat in Pabylon. (Harbage, 1969, III: i- 23)

In another reference Host, one of the characters in the same play, connects the Bohemians Tartar to barbarism:

Here's Bohemian-Tartar tarries the coming down. (Harbage, 1969, IV: v- 18)

Not far from Babylon in Iraq, Nebuchadnezzar, the once king there, is connected to the greatness of the East when Lavatch, the clown, in *All's Well That Ends Well* says:

I am no great Nebuchadnezzar,....(Harbage, 1969, IV: v – 18)

Cyprus is never absent from Shakespearian text, but this time in *Winter's Tale*. It is depicted as black as raven, that came clear on the tongue of Perdita, daughter of the king of Sicilia, while conversing matters with the clown, son of the shepherd:

Lawn as white as driven snow,

Cyprus black as ever was crow (Harbage, 1969, IV: iv- 216-217)

Algiers and Tunis too have a place in the world of Shakespeare, for in *The Tempest*, Prospero, the Duke of Milan, is talking to Ariel, an airy spirit:

.....From Argier

Thou know'st, was banished ... ((Harbage, 1969, I; ii- 264-265)

In the same play where the East is the pilgrimage place for Shakespearian characters, giving examples of its beauty, and sometimes of its ugliness and

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so on, we find Gonzalo, an honest old councilor, is browsing another canvas of the Arab World with Alonso, king of Naples. The former informed that in one of the voyage:

Did Claribel her husband find at Tunis. (Harbage, 1969, V: i-209-210)

The East and Egypt in particular are always present to the English readers of Shakespeare. This time in *Romio and Juliet* (1594) when the Friar, a Franciscan, painted the picture of:

.....the Eastern clouds with streaks of light

and flecked darkness like a drunkard reels. (Harbage, 1969, II: iii- 2-3)

We do not forget Mercutio, a kinsman to Escalus prince of Verona, and friend to Romeo, who depicted Cleopatra as a gipsy, and perhaps an Egyptian gipsy

.....Cleopatra a gipsy (Harbage, 1969, II: iv- 41)

In Julius Caesar The Eastern references, this time, goes back in history nearly to the beginning of man's life on Earth. For Cassius, who was one of the conspirators against Julius Caesar, is addressing the Roman and Rome that all the Romans have the noblest blood on Earth since the great flood of Noah, which with no least doubt, took place in the Middle-East according to the ancient tales, religious Muslims and Christian references and classical literature of East and West. Cassus's speech is a classical analogue of Noah, the flood and the ark:

Rome, thou hast the breed of noble bloods

When went these by an age since the great flood (Harbage, 1969, I: ii- 151-152)

Hamlet is not excluded from references of the East. The play has its share of the Middle- Eastern analogue. Hamlet says:

I would have such a fellow whipped for ordering Termagant. (Harbage, 1969, III: ii- 12-13)

Termagant is a Saracen god in the medieval Romance and drama. Hamlet again says as he attends the play which shows how the King was killed: "would not this, Sir, and a forest of feathers-if the rest of my fortunes turn Turk with me" (Harbage, 1969, III: iii- 37-38)) Here, 'turn Turk' means: renegade, like a Christian turning a Muslim.

We may transform to another hint of the East in Hamlet. It is the Biblical and Koranic story of Able and Cain where the latter murdered his brother Able and was unable to manage or what to do with the corpse, until a crow appeared holding his dead fellow crow, the alive started digging a hole, then he buried his dead fellow. The King sits aside and admits killing his brother:

It hath the primal eldest curse upon 't,

A brother's murder (Harbage, 1969, V: ii- 143)

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Barbary means in the days of Shakespeare the lands along the North coast of Africa, the Arabian part of the coast, which was famous for breeding fine strong horses. It is a place not only known for breeding fine horses but also fine and perhaps good sincere men, valiant warriors who stretched from Arabia too to quench and submit people distributed over Asia, Africa and Europe, and sat shaded under their fluttering banners from China to Spain. The East in general is the place where the westerners find their quests in. Therefore, it is not strange to find the East in Shakespearean plays and in the works of many others Western writers and artists.

Conclusion

It is true then that Antony's pleasure and true love lie in the East to which he became animated by a passion for Cleopatra's love, that he is unconquered of leaving the East to others, or any kind of pleasure to be found in another place except the East and particularly in Egypt. Shakespeare made his hero praise the East and what it contains. He thinks that his marriage from his Eastern beloved creates peace of mind to him, because his main outlet in love is his joining Cleopatra the brown queen of beauty as compared to her European counterpart. Despite this tumult of love of Antony and his beloved Cleopatra, the victimized Octavia (Antony's wife and Caesar's sister) is a pallid and remote figure, never made to appear as a rival motive to the Egyptian seductions and attraction.

However Antony's uneasy peace with his rival Octavius is buttressed and strengthened by his marriage with Octavia, sister of the young Caesar. Hindrance is what is meant by this marriage, but no barriers can stand before the promise of the Eastern love. For this, his marriage in the West did not delay the hot-hearted lover Antony from travelling to the East. Antony knows that his return to the East, where Cleopatra is flourishing, means the battle of death. That is why we read the determination of Antony to join his Eastern beloved at any cost for, according to him, his pleasure lies in the East.

Antony breaks from Cleopatra to patch up an insincere peace with Caesar, since Pompey threatens them both; he marries Octavia, and deserts her to return to Cleopatra, the queen of Eastern beauty. And that she manages to thrust enmity among the Roman leaders. But for a broad picturesque contrast, Roma and Egypt are set against each other and the result of this conflict is that Cleopatra's love has parted the great Empire into two parts. Both Egypt and Rome stand "respectively for love" Egypt stands in a trench against the only powerful Empire of the Universe that is the East stands opposing the West, the then power of one polar might like America today.

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Shakespeare successfully transforms the battle among the European rivals to the East.

Cleopatra is dearer to Antony than winning a battle here or losing a battle there. We find Antony cooling the queen's Eastern tears at the loss of Actium battle asking her not to drop any tears, for in his scale of love nothing equals or deserves her tears. Cleopatra's behavior is remarkable: her childish susceptibility to flattery, her magnificent spirit, her royal pride, the gorgeous Eastern coloring of her character, her oriental voluptuousness, and gipsy sorcery, all dyed the play with Eastern colors.

But as the theory of life and death is the judge in this futile game, the glow of Cleopatra has faded. Its splendor once dazzles us, but when the splendor vanishes, we mourn her death. At the end, Antony chooses Cleopatra's love and death. Nothing is left for him except a ditch to be buried in there in his beloved East. Even his suicide is a love story established in the East and that his suicide is a love-death, and since the heavy task of the game is done, nothing is left except lying beside his beloved Cleopatra where they "must sleep." In this way Antony decides to follow Cleopatra in the other world, in Elysium, where he will be her bridegroom, away from Rome, Octavia and Ocavius; away from Europe and Syria where no one is able to throng or compete with him for a share in Cleopatra, he will be A bridegroom in his death and will run to it as if to a "lover's bed."

The shining sun of the two leaders has to set now. It is over the Eastern land and seas that the disaster happens, that Antony, the great Roman general, and Cleopatra the queen of Egypt, of Ptolemy's royal dynasty, they both come to their fullest stature and then "their stormy seas fall into brooding serenity" (Gittings, 1960, P.135) However Caesar orders that Cleopatra and Antony, the once beloved in their lives, be buried in the same grave to have the death embrace as they once had the same embrace in their lives.

Doubtless then, that it is a new style, a new flavor and a new turn for the English spectators who accustomed to the Western landscape. The Western audience applause such an Eastern set of views. And here, in the East, the final campaign is to be fought between the lovers on one side and their enemy on the other led by Caesar. It was there in the East that Caesar the inevitable victor proved himself and made a dramatic change to the map of the Roman Empire and, perhaps, of the world. So the world was under his position, he would change even the face of the globe for the sake of his lady love or glory.

The Eastern landscapes and setting is not only reflected in *Antony and Cleopatra* but also it deepens itself in Shakespeare's *Othello* who, once,

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chanced that the state of Venice had been in need of this Eastern protagonist to regain an island from the hands of the, according to the Venetian government, “infidel” Turks. And now Othello, the black horse, the black ram, who is ‘tapping’ Brabantio’s ewe, is now the rescuer and a new savior of the Venetians to regain a long lost dignity in the East. The setting of the East is always present there, decorating a good number of Shakespearian plays with new flavor, with new breath of an alien atmosphere, of the near and dear East. *Pericles, Prince of Tyre* (1608) is set in the East, it has an Eastern atmosphere, this time, on the clear virgin Mediterranean shores, the city of Tyre, (or Soure in Arabic) is a Lebanese city. Southern Turkey, where the city of Tarsus is present too, along with Ephesus on the western coast of Turkey, and eastern coast of Greece , in addition to many other Eastern places and sights that play a crucial and important role in the events of Shakespearian oriental atmospheres.

Shakespeare and the East

Queen Cleopatra is the whole Eastern scent
While hero Othello is the black Eastern mint
For Egyptian pleasure Antony to the East went
Lady Macbeth, for an Arabian perfume sent
Which to her and her husband, is but a vent,
So the East is the Western halo, a halo to rent.

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