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MIMESIS OF INWARDNESS IN SHAKESPEARE'S DRAMA: *THE MERCHANT OF VENICE*

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RESUMO

Esta Tese de Doutorado tem por objetivo discutir a questão da mimesis da interioridade no **Mercador de Veneza**, de William Shakespeare. A pesquisa está embasada na obra **Inwardness and Theater in the English Renaissance**, de Maus (1995), e na obra **Shakespeare Philosophy**, de McGinn (2007), na crítica literária da peça. Maus apresenta a interioridade como um constructo social e cultural da Renascença Inglesa. Ela analisa a interioridade tomando como base a oposição entre aparências, consideradas falsas e enganosas na época, e interioridade, que era tida como manifestações sinceras e verdadeiras das dimensões interiores do indivíduo. Contudo, McGinn vai além da discussão de Maus sobre interioridade, ao perceber que Shakespeare representou as dimensões obscuras incontroláveis do indivíduo. Ele apresenta as *forças misteriosas* que controlam os pendores interiores das personagens. Além disso, a tese busca analisar a constelação de motivos e a retórica da interioridade que representam sentimentos interiores na peça de Shakespeare. Parte da hipótese de que a mimesis shakespeariana da interioridade é representada em sinais, sutis tais como os silêncios, os não-ditos, as rupturas de linguagem, gestos corporais, pathos, contradições de ideias e pensamentos, a consciência, vergonha e atos falhos. Ademais, a mimesis shakespeariana da interioridade é construída através do artifício do espelhamento que é a representação das dimensões interiores e os pendores da mente nos sentimentos, ideias, gestos, pensamentos, comportamento e atitude de outras personagens. Na verdade, Shakespeare não inventou a interioridade, mas aprofundou a representação da interioridade introduzindo traços inovadores na linguagem do drama. Este trabalho também discute o estranho desenvolvimento da crítica sobre a peça, apresentando que a crítica dos séculos XVIII e XIX lia Shylock como um herói trágico, ao passo que a crítica do século XX lia Shylock como um vilão cômico, provavelmente influenciada pelo antissemitismo da primeira metade do século. Essa pesquisa foca sobre a estranha relação entre Antonio e Bassanio, assim como sua relação com Shylock. Sua relação é representada como homoerótica e o desejo de um frívolo sacrifício de Antonio por Bassanio sugere a interioridade de Antonio. Shylock é também representado como o pai primordial da peça e esse detalhe sugere a causa da tristeza de Antonio no começo da peça. Analisa também o teste dos escrínios de Portia e demonstra seu desejo de defraudar o testamento de seu pai, tão logo ela pede que se toque uma canção que sugere em suas rimas o verdadeiro escrínio. Discute os problemas da consciência de Launcelot e da interioridade de Jessica. Analisa também a relação distante entre Jessica e Shylock, como também sua partida da casa de seu pai e roubo de seu dinheiro, como uma forma de afrontar o poder patriarcal. Centra-se também na cegueira de Shylock para com as intenções reais de sua filha. Interpreta a cena do julgamento de Shylock e como Portia forja um julgamento fraudulento, anulando o contrato de Shylock a tomando sua propriedade. Apresenta uma discussão sobre a mimesis shakespeariana de interioridade, com base nas considerações de Auerbach e Dubois, assim como discute o problema do gênero da peça, sugerindo que a peça não é uma mera comédia, mas uma tragicomédia.

Palavras-Chave: *O Mercador de Veneza* de Shakespeare; Mimesis da Interioridade; Artifício de Espelhamento; Retórica da Interioridade; Consciência; Rupturas na linguagem; Silêncios; Pathos.

ABSTRACT

This Doctorate thesis aims at discussing the issue of mimesis of inwardness in **The Merchant of Venice**, by William Shakespeare. This survey is based on Maus' **Inwardness and Theater in the English Renaissance** (1995), McGinn's work **Shakespeare Philosophy** (2007) and the literary criticism on the play. Maus presents inwardness as social and cultural construct of the English Renaissance. She analyses inwardness based on the opposition between appearances, considered false and deceitful in the age, and inwardness, which was taken as true and sincere manifestations of the inward dimensions of the self. However, McGinn goes beyond Maus' discussion on inwardness, perceiving that Shakespeare represented the uncontrolled obscure inward dimensions of the self. He presents the *mysterious forces* which control the characters' inward dispositions. Moreover, the thesis aims at analysing the constellation of motifs and the rhetoric of inwardness which represent inward feelings in Shakespeare's play. It parts from the hypothesis that Shakespearean mimesis of inwardness is represented in subtle signs such as silences, non-said, breaks in language, bodily gestures, pathos, contradictions in ideas and thoughts, conscience, shame, and verbal slips. Furthermore, Shakespeare's mimesis of inwardness is contructed through the mirroring device which is the representation of a character's inward dimensions and dispositions of the mind in other character's feelings, ideas, thoughts, gestures, behaviour and attitude. Actually, Shakespeare did not invent inwardness, but he deepened the representation of inwardness introducing innovating traits in language in the drama. This work also discusses the awkward development of the criticism on the play, presenting that the 18th and 19th century criticism read Shylock as a tragic hero, whereas 20th century criticism read Shylock as a comic villain probably influenced by anti-Semitism of the first half of the century. This research focuses on the awkward relationship between Antonio and Bassanio, as well as their relationship with Shylock. Their relation is depicted as homoerotic and Antonio's desire of a frivolous sacrifice for Bassanio suggests Antonio's inwardness. Shylock is also depicted as the primordial father of the play and such detail hints at the cause of Antonio's sadness in the beginning of the play. It analyses Portia's casket trial and demonstrates her desire of outwitting her father's will, as soon as she demands to play a song which suggests in its rhyme the true casket. It discusses the problems of conscience in Launcelot's and Jessica's inwardness. It also analyses the distant relationship between Jessica and Shylock, as well as her leaving her father's house and taking his wealth, as a way of affronting the patriarchal power. It focuses on Shylock's blindness towards his daughter's real intentions. It analyses the trial scene and how Portia forges a fraudulent trial, undoing Shylock's bond and taking his property. It presents a discussion on Shakespeare's mimesis of inwardness, based on Auerbach's and Dubois' assumptions, as well as discusses the problem of the genre of the play, suggesting that the play is not a mere comedy, but a tragicomedy.

Key-words: Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*; Mimesis of inwardness; Mirroring device; Rhetoric of inwardness; Conscience; Breaks in language; Silences; Pathos.

INTRODUCTION

The Merchant of Venice is a play specially focused on appearances and subtle inner feelings of the characters. It is a play that represents the paradoxes between outwardness and inwardness, which is suggested by the Shakespearean mirroring device, silences, non-said, bodily gestures, breaks of language and twists of language. But inwardness was a Renaissance issue emerging from previous forms of the representation of an inner-self in other literary forms. However, outwardness was supposed to be false, deceitful, and even dangerous, whereas the notion of inwardness was seen as true and sincere, even though it was imperceptible to the senses. The forms, moulds and shapes of the appearances could be calculated pretentions, which may not be seen as the symptoms of a truthful inward disposition of the mind. Such paradox was not at all an unfamiliar issue to Shakespeare's coevals. Thus, to overcome this gap certain forms of discourses described and identified discursive traits, which constituted the constellations of the rhetoric of inwardness in that age.

Inwardness is an inward space of the self, which is constituted by feelings, thoughts, and ideas which appear in ever so subtle and sometimes puzzling details of the text. In fact, inwardness is the resulting perceptiveness of an inner space of the individual. The notion of this inward space and inwardness is perceived, on the first and most obvious level, in acts and attitudes; secondly, in poetical constellations which permit to make inferences about the characters' conscience and their ethical decisions; in moments of indecisions and crises; or, more subtly and often overlooked, in the enigmas of bodily gestures, conscience, verbal slips, silences, implicit meaning in words and language, and pathos. They are determined by some *mysterious forces*[1] of the self's unconscious, which cannot be controlled and pop up in bodily feelings and paradoxical ideas. Inwardness is, therefore, the inward dispositions of the self wherein thoughts, feelings, ideas, and anxieties are floating and are incrusted in the individual's unconscious.

Considering inwardness as an epochal cultural construct, its traits and shapes are quite different from the modern concept of subjectivity. Inwardness is still a broader concept in the English Renaissance Age, rather than our modern concept of subjectivity, which is inevitably

[1] For the idea of the mysterious forces in inwardness, see later on the discussion of McGinn's ideas on his work **Shakespeare's Philosophy**, 2007.

pervaded by philosophical concepts and psychoanalytic assumptions. In fact, the notion of modern subject is invested with different traits enhanced by diverse philosophical and psychoanalytic discourses and assumptions. Freud depicts the self as endlessly lost and dissolving in the confusion of the unconscious. Human being is inexorably split by an existential shame supervened by superegoical mechanisms which control and determine the ego. Lacan's subject is determined by the emergence of another figure on the mirror, which makes him aware that the complete image projected onto the other is merely the illusion of totality of the self. In the *Stade du Mirroir* essay, Lacan parts from the neurological assumption that the human beings are born in a foetus form, who cannot control its movements, walk, or even keep in a erect position. He points out that the baby untiil the six months old expresses itself in a set of spasmodic and joyful reactions in its gestures and movements. Then, the mirror phase is considered by Lacan as an *identification* process, whereby the baby sees in the mother's presence a continuum of its body. This is an identification of the alienated image of the identity, which can only be configured through the *imago*. This alienated imago is a hallucinatory projection, which constitutes the baby's identity for a while, through which the foetus-baby imaginarily wishes to cannibalise the imago. This mirror's stage is more likely a fortress where the self produces barriers to be isolated. For Lacan,

> Correlatively, the formation of the Self symbolises oneirically in a fortified field, or even a stadium, which spreads out, from the internal arena until its walls, until its limits of rubble and swamps, two fields of opposing fight wherein the subject is entangled seeking for the high distant inner castle, whose form […] astonishingly symbolises the *id* […] We see realised this framework of the fortified work whose metaphor spontaneously emerges, as if it had popped up from the very symptoms of the subject, in order to designate he mechanisms of inversion, isolation, redoubling, annulation and drive of the obsessive neurosis. (Lacan, 1998, p. 101, translation mine)

This fortress image could be seen as the id image and construction. However, when the baby recognises somebody else's presence, like the father's presence, it immediately feels this paternal interference as a 'primordial hatred', making the baby split from the specular image projected onto the mother. Such split from the image constitutes the moment of the individuation.

Lacan introduces the bi-dimensional mirror in the image before the oedipal phase. It suggests the unified image, which is so important due to the child's lack of notion of bodily integrity. This notion complements the bodily totality that the self is not unified to the image. It is menaced by the other's presence and feels then the consequent resentment of such

menace. Thus, this non-existent subject projects itself onto the other, as if it would jump into the other's figure. The recognition of the other is shown as negation, the other is negated as saying – 'he is not me' – and by negating the other, the baby imaginatively tries to occupy the place of the other. When the third element is acknowledged, then something like a symbolic identification is constituted by rivalry. Thus, the mirror's stage is an idealisation of the image, though it negates the other, because fantasmatically it has to be sort of eliminated, which leads to rivalry, distrust, or late mimetic hostility. According to Lacan, 'this moment when the mirror's stage is constituted, it inaugurates, by the identification with the *imago* of the other and by the primordial drama of jealousy […], the dialectic which from this moment onwards links the Self to the socially elaborated situations.' (Lacan, 1998, p. 101). And the child being a foetus does not recognise the mother as the other, but just as the same person. Then the recognition of the presence of the father leads to the consequent recognition of selfness and the other. As Lacan points out,

> This development is experienced as a temporal dialectics which projects decisively in history of the individual's formation: the *stade du mirroir* is a drama whose inner impulse precipitates itself from the insufficiency to an anticipation – and which makes for the subject, got in this allurement of spatial identification, the fantasies which happen from the moment of a lacerate image of the body until a form of totality [...] and until the moment when the armour finally taken upon himself of an alienated identity will mark in its rigid structure all his mental development. Thus, the split of the circle of the *Innenwelt* to the *Umwelt* generates the inexhaustive quadrature of the inventorying of the *I*. (Lacan, 1998, p. 100)

And from the image of this "lacerate body" from this moment on, the foetus can just develop being identified in this compulsively primordial process of phagocytises in every image it sees which reminds it of the *imagos* incrusted in its unconscious. Thus, the subject is the Being of the lack, which always seek for satisfying the endless necessity of totality imagined the mirror's stage.

Face to such subleties of modern conception of subjectivity, the term *inwardness* seems to be more feasible to Shakespeare's drama, because it corresponds to the English Renaissance notion of inwardness. Our modern concept of subjectivity is a term which entered in the English lexicon just later on in the late 18th century.[2] Although some could argue that inwardness is merely a synonym for subjectivity, it seems rather specific to the age,

[2] For more details, see Judith Martins-Costa's essay *Indivíduo, Pessoa, Sujeito de Direitos: contribuições renascentistas para uma história dos conceitos jurídicos.* **Mutações do Conhecimento: O Renascimento do Homem Moderno**. Revista Philia&Filia, Porto Alegre, vol. 01, n° 1, jan./jun. 2010. Available in http://seer.ufrgs.br/Philiaefilia, accessed in 25, October, 2011. For the relations between Shakespeare and Psychoanalysis see Philip Armstrong's **Shakespeare in Psychoanalysis**. London: Routledge, 2001; Norman Holland's work **Psychoanalysis and Shakespeare**. New York and London: McGraw-Hill, 1966; and Ned Lukacher's **Daemonic Figures: Shakespeare and the Question of Conscience**. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994.

because the emergence of discussions and writings about it demonstrate a concern of defining and grasping it with Renaissance epochal frameworks. Its conception was evident and defined only in the opposition between inwardness and outwardness: inwardness was said to be true and sincere, whereas outwardness was not always able to express the inward space and dimensions of the self. Thus, outwardness or appearances of the self could be invented and pretended. However, it is not the result of language and rational construction, but a historical, cultural, social and even institutional construct of the age, which presumed to perceive the individual's inward feelings, thoughts, and ideas. Inwardness is the perception of the inner-self from outside to an imagined inside, perceived in the bodily traits and gestures, whereas subjectivity is the rhetorical construct of imaginable inner feelings in poetry and philosophy, in an opposite movement form the inside to the outside. Although the play will be analysed in terms of inwardness, sometimes it is necessary to illuminate some traits of inwardness by using some modern psychoanalytical assumptions which contribute to understand Shakespeare's mimeis of inwardness. It is worth noticing that any analysis of inwardness will be inevitably pervaded by our modern sense of self and subjectivity.

This dichotomy between inwardness and outwardness was a noticeable trait in Renaissance especially for Shakespeare's coevals. They were quite aware and worried about the relations between the outward and inward dimensions of the self and of things. In that sense, Katharine Eisaman Maus, in her work **Inwardness and Theater in the English Renaissance** (1995), analyses inwardness opposed to outwardness. She takes into account the differences between an unutterable inner-self and a theatrical outward which could be intentionally shaped. She studies the epistemological anxieties caused by this gap, the social practices created to keep them and the political purposes which they serve for. Despite the controversies about the consciousness of inwardness, Katharine Maus observes the emergence of a great number of speeches, which presented distinctions between inwardness and outwardness as a common place and a rhetorical and discursive distinction very familiar in 16th and 17th centuries. For instance, Edward Jorden in *A Brief Discourse of a Diseased Called the Suffocation of the Mother* notes the differences between the inward and outward causes of that disease; John Dod and Robert Cleaver distinguish two main manners of violating the *Ten Commandments*: inward and outward transgressions; William Perkins distinguishes, in his essay *The whole treatise of the cases of the conscience* (1606),[3] the inward and outward sadness, inward and outward cleanness, inward and outward regret,

[3] For more details about these discourses, see Maus's **Inwardness and Theater in the English Renaissance** (1995).

inward and outward veneration.[4] Likewise, beforehand Augustine had defined two distinctions in human beings: the *homo interior* and the *homo exterior* (1995, p. 16), the *inward man* and *the outward man*. Such distinctions were never questioned by polemicists of the age.

According to Maus, the distinctions between the inward and the outward overcome this visibility – and thus its validity is untouchable. The outward, on the contrary, was distrusted and sometimes considered false, partial, deceitful, and unsubstantial. (1995, p. 04-05). Tudor's and Stuart's polemists such as Stubbes, Northbrooke, Rankin, Gosson, and Prynne acknowledged the separability of a favoured and 'truthful' inwardness and a sociably visible outwardness, though counterfeited. They approximated such separation, stating that men should seem outwardly what they were and felt inwardly: "People and things *are* inwardly"; "people and things *seem* outwardly". (Maus, 1995, p. 4-5). Thus, personal inwardness was problematically undermined by the epistemological anxieties, and created the gap between the inaccessible inwardness and the possible counterfeited outwardness.

In that sense, some considered impossible to perceive what an individual actually felt and was inwardly. But according to other theorists, the distinction between the inward space and the outward appearances was necessary, because it was impossible to know a man simply through his appearance. As Maus states,

> The alienation or potential alienation of surface from depth, of appearance from truth, means that a person's thoughts and passions, imagined as properties of the hidden interior, are not immediately accessible to other people. Hamlet is not original in maintaining that the sight of his downcast visage is not the same as the sight of his grief. (1995, p. 05).

That was an anguishing problem in a time when new religious practices began to doubt ancient rituals, in exchange of refrained and less theatrical rituals, preached mainly by Protestantism. In such case, Protestants considered themselves practicing inward truth, whereas they accused Catholics of cultivating only outward deceitful rituals (Maus, 1995, p. 15 and 17). In her opinion, inwardness was shaped mainly by religious impositions which syncretised different forms of rites, provoking then the distrust and anxiety to those new

[4] These discourses of the age also defended a cautious distinction between the inward and the outward dimensions. In King James' work *Basilicon Doron*, the king himself recommended a careful orchestration of the actions and visual gestures of the king, which can reveal his virtue, for it serves to reveal the inwardness and interpret 'the inward disposition of the mind' to those who cannot see beyond the visual signs and, therefore, 'must only judge of him by the outward appearance' (1995, p. 05). Another example is that of George Hakewill, in his work *A Discourse against flattery* (1611). Hakewill describes ways to recognize a hypocrite: "wolves in sheep's clothing, richly decorated apothecary boxes with poisons inside, beautifully bound tragedies, snowy Mount Etnas with volcanic interiors." (1995, p. 05-06). The flatterers of the court awaken fear and disregard of political commentators of the 16th and 17th centuries, because 'outwardly they show themselves with the face of friendship, within they have more malice than the sings of scorpions'. (1995, p. 05-06).

forms of rites and doctrines. Consequently, the perception of a person's gestures and appearances unleashed the conjecturing of what this person might be thinking and feeling. Maus is quite aware of the possibility of failure in trying to perceive inwardness: 'The inwardness of persons is constituted by the *disparity* between what a limited, fallible human observer can see and what is available to the hypostasized divine observer […]. This disparity is subject to fluctuation, and to intentional manipulation both by the viewer and the viewed.' (1995, p. 11). The possibility of deception was one of the main concerns, but the possibility of fluctuation and incongruities were also taken into account, since the self was not just a fixed and full-constituted entity, but was constantly dependent on outward cultural constructs, such as the determining rules of the State, church, family, school, and so forth. In that sense, Maus conceptualises inwardness both historically and culturally:

> if the religious categories in which the English Renaissance tried to comprehend itself often seem to us to involve glaring mystifications of social and political dynamics, so too our secularist interpretative axioms may blind us to their own explanatory limitations. Perhaps our suspicion of privacy, inwardness, subjectivity, soul, and so forth – our conviction that such terms beg to be debunked – has less to do with what counts as a satisfactory explanation. (1995, p. 27)

She is conscious of our limited tools of analysis due to this epistemological gap between the outward perception and inward truth. But there is no possibility of achieving an 'inward truth', even after the long journeys of Psychoanalysis searching for an inward truth. For example, Hamlet never really finds his truth. Anticipating our 21st century experience, we ultimately never come to know ourselves, as in Freud's *unendliche Analyse*: infinite analysis points to that problem of endless erring in the labyrinth of inwardness, due to the lack or rejection of outward, objective limits and goals. Though all the attempts undertaken in the Renaissance to define inwardness could have failed, the acknowledgement of the existence of an unsearchable inward space proves the existence of its notion in that age.

However, different from our modern concept of subjectivity, inwardness suffered of a lack and failure of philosophical definition:

> It may be well true that Renaissance notion of interior truth turn out to be philosophically defective: they are rarely elaborately or rigorously argued for. But lack of rigor neither limits the extent of, nor determines the nature of, the power such ideas can exert. Murkiness and illogicality may, in fact, enhance rather than limit their potency. (1995, p. 28)

It is rather philosophically and even psychologically limited. Despite such lack and failure, there were some attempts to overcome these problems. For example, some polemists

such as Thomas Wright created a treatise of techniques to discover people's minds. Nevertheless, he stated that no one can 'enter a man's heart' (1995, p. 29). Such attempts were quite contradictory, because the polemists and writers created evasive arguments to demonstrate their concern. Thus, Maus defines inwardness and makes a distinction between historical and philosophical categories:

> So distinguishing between what I would call a "philosophical" argument and a "historical" one seems important. And this distinction is related to another: the difference between the origins of an idea and its effects once it becomes culturally available. The new-historicist critique insists, correctly in my view, that the "self" is not independent of or prior to its social context. (1995, p. 28)

In that sense, there are two important fantasies in English Renaissance: the first one is that 'selves are obscure, hidden, ineffable'; the other fantasy is that the selves are 'fully manifest or capable of being made fully manifest'. (1995, p. 28). Maus proposes that these notions seem to be contradictory, 'but again and again they are voiced together, so that they seem less self-cancelling than symbiotically related or mutually constitutive.' (1995, p. 29). Therefore, she views inwardness as constituted not by a determined set of features, but by variable and fluctuant traits. Our modern concept of subjectivity is voiced by philosophical and psychoanalytical frameworks, whereas Renaissance notion of inwardness was imagined as a rather social, historical and cultural construct. Thus, Maus concentrates her analysis on the historical and cultural arguments. She disdains philosophical and psychoanalytic assumptions, even though it is evident the psychoanalytic framework working on the background of her analysis. As she asserts,

> 'Subjectivity' is often a loose and varied collection of assumptions, intuitions, and practices that do not all logically entail one another and need not appear together at the same cultural moment. A well-developed rhetoric of inward truth, for instance, may exist in a society that never imagines that such inwardness might provide a basis of political rights. The intuition that sexual and family relations are 'private' may, but need not, coincide with strong feelings about the 'unity of the subject', or with convictions about freedom, self-determination, or uniqueness of individuals, or with the sense that the self constitutes a form of property. It seems to me a mistake to assume that all these matters can be discussed at once, that they are necessarily part of the same cluster of ideas. (1995, p. 29-30)

In that sense, inwardness can present just an isolated feature or few elements voiced together, whereas subjectivity comprehends symbiotic psychic dimensions of the self. However, Maus is rather interested in what she defines as 'rhetoric of inwardness' (1995, p. 30), i. e., the linguistic, discursive, cultural, and social constellations that pervade inwardness. The concern about cultural and historical issues locates the difference of our philosophical

and psychological concerns and the Renaissance concerns about inwardness. Thus, there is no determined set of constellations which defines inwardness in an age, even though they can appear together.

In addition to defining inwardness Maus states that theatre historians researched a siginificant quantity of data about the representations of the plays and the audience's aesthetic experience. In her opinion,

> They speculate about what kinds of people attended the theater and what such people were likely to notice. They make assumptions about the ways in which the play structured the experience of spectators, and about the ways in which spectators may have resisted the imposition of that structure. My own methods are unavoidably involved in the same combination of suspicion and inductive empathy I shall be endeavoring to discuss. (1995, p. 34).

If in Maus's analysis inwardness is an epochal notion determined by cultural, historical, social dimensions, it is important to refer to many historical details, for example, those presented by Kaplan (2002) and Shapiro (1996). Thus, when one sees the play and its characters through historical facts, one can see them in a different way and sometimes in an opposed way. Coupled with that, it is necessary to imagine the audience's reaction towards the characters' attitudes and act on stage; thereto it is worth using texts from Renaissance age, because conjecturing what the auditors's reaction could be in the theatre provides the analysis with multiple possibilities of types and qualities of inwardness.

Moreover, one can never forget that the construction of a play and consequently the characters' inward space are rather pervaded by the spectators' reactions and perception. Shakespeare wrote for both the high aristocracy and the mob; therefore he constantly thought of creating ambiguities and meaning which could only be grasped and understood by the fewer educated spectators. For example, when Antonio criticises Shylock for citing the scriptures for his own interests, some people could agree with Antonio and claim that Shylock's misuse of the **Bible** was religiously condemnable. On the other hand, fewer educated playgoers could have an opposing reaction: Shylock's discussion of the biblical texts would not be disregarded, because Jews were commonly asked to help Protestants to interpret difficult and complex passages of the **Holy Bible**, as Kaplan (2002) presents in full reports of the late 16th century. Then, the spectators' responses to the play could be partly determined by common-places and prejudices of the age, just as they could be partly determined by more accurate knowledge of the important role of Jewish scholars for the understanding of the scriptures. Therefore, to oppose differents facts from the age and to imagine the audience's

reactions enable the reader to see possible ambiguities embodied in the text. These altenative interpretations enable to analyse the text based on co-existent historical and cultural facts in Shakespeare's age, facts which pervade the ambiguities of the play.

In that sense, Drakakis (1998)[5] points out the necessity of 'a simultaneous awareness of the *difference* which a text such as *The Merchant of Venice* generates between its own historically specific concerns and those of the modern world, and of its *sameness* in so far as those historical differences can be collapsed into a timeless presence.' (1998, p. 182). For Drakakis, in a play such as this, complex and problematic historical elements are frequently 'filtered out through the cognate processes of reading and theatrical representation'. (1998, p. 182). Thus, it is necessary (as in Brecht's words) to analyse in necessarily 'critical mediations of literary productions of the past' with our own views on the play.

Furthermore, there are some psychic dimensions which Shakespeare represented in his characters. He perceived, at least intuitively, that there are some mysterious dimensions which the individual cannot control in his inward dispositions of the mind. Shakespeare overcame his contemporary writers and represented those mysterious uncontrolled dimensions of the self in the drama. Though Maus simply analyses inwardness as a cultural and historical event, Shakespeare saw more than that: he saw some obscure and mysterious psychic traits which determined and shaped inwardness. The inward mysterious forces of the self, pointed out by McGinn (2007), are obscure uncontrolled dimensions of the inward space of the self. It is something Shakespeare perceived in common human behaviour and represented through the characters' silences, verbal slips, ruptures of speech, the character's conscience, pathos, gestures, and bodily feelings. Such mysteriousness is incrusted in inwardness and determines the self's actions, feelings, emotions, ideas and thoughts.

In that sense, Collin McGinn also discusses relations between the self and the phylosophical possibilites of knowing the self, in his book **Shakespeare's Philosophy** (2007). McGinn goes beyond Maus' discussion about inwardness, because he perceived the uncontrolled obscure inward dimensions of the self in Shakespeare. He presents the *mysterious forces* which control the characters' inward dispositions of the mind. Inwardness is an inner space incrusted in inward mysterious dimensions, which come out in judgement, conscience, and anxieties. He analyses the problem of inwardness considering the self, his constitution, and his implications in some of Shakespeare's plays.[6] Thus, Shakespeare works

[5] See John Drakakis' essay *Historical difference and Venetian Patriarchy*, in COYLE, Martin. **The Merchant of Venice**: contemporary critical essays. Londres: Macmillan: 1998. (New Casebooks), pp. 181-208.

[6] However, McGinn seems to have a terminological lack of accuracy in his book: he takes notions as inwardness, interiority, identity, self, individual in a very mixed way: he refers to interior and exterior dimensions, to self, to character, to

with several levels in his plays: judgements and conscious manipulations, but very often also with involuntary gestures and anxieties which suggest desires, intentions, reasoning which are beyond the conscious will and feeling; i. e., murky things which the subject cannot control any longer. However, in Kantian assumptions judgement is pervaded by psychic traits, which mingle with and subtly inscribe themselves into one's perception. When one sees another person's action, one can see what he perceives in it through vague impression, suggestions and outward signs. Consequently, judgement can reveal part of the viewer's inward feelings, ideas, thoughts, and anxieties.

In the same sense, in McGinn's opinion inwardness, self, identity are impossible to be defined just by philosophical concepts and epistemological categories. There is something in the self that goes beyond our understanding and which deludes us all the time. Therefore, he puts at stake the fixed, determined definition that the self, inwardness and personality are substantially definable, because when we try to define ourselves we might be deluding us and presenting an evasive idea of all these 'mental fluxes'. When we talk about ourselves, we may be talking, not exactly what we *are*, but what we seem or want to be. In that sense, indeterminacy, vagueness and a set of 'mental fluxes' make room to ambiguity, paradoxes, and incongruity of the self.

McGinn starts the discussion emphasising man's desire for knowledge and scepticism in Western Culture. He affirms that Shakespeare added to the ancient scepticism a new concern – 'the problem of *other minds*.' (2007, p. 07). He enhances the same issue discussed by Maus (1995), the opposition and split between outwardness and inwardness. Nevertheless, McGinn questions how it is possible to know what other people are thinking, their feeling and intentions, because 'all we observe of another person is his or her body' (2007, p. 07). There is something that is not perceived in other people's mind, something hidden, 'which we can only infer from what is publicly available'. (2007, p. 07). He states that there is no way of knowing what is within a person's mind, because there is an 'asymmetry' between one's knowledge of the other's mind (2007, p. 07). Such asymmetry enhances that

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personality, to inwardness, without specifying what each of these dimensions exactly means, whether they are similar or distinguished. Perhaps he is referring to all these categories together just to make it clear that what we call *inwardness* and its synonyms are just vague definitions, or just a mere attempt to define what these inward 'mental flux', sensations, feelings, and thoughts are. He may ironically use all these known definitions to suggest that what we call inwardness, personality, self is not possible to be defined, once we have to face an epistemological gap: we have no tools, no instruments to measure and define what this self *exactly is*. We can just point out some ideas, suggestions, and evasive notions of what it might be. Thus, we have to look at these constellations of mental flux that vary and change constantly in order to construct and sketch just one vague idea of the self or inwardness. He employs so many words to suggest that it is not possible to define inwardness according to fixed and precise definitions. He might also use this lack of accuracy just to suggest that the gap between inward and outward is so complex, that we are not able to achieve plainness about inwardness. As he points out, 'the richness and variety of Shakespeare's metaphors for the concealment of inner thoughts and motives suggests careful attention to the phenomenon described. The human ability to deceive and dissemble is indeed remarkable; it is one of the main distinguishing characteristics of our species.' (2007, p. 103).

the mind is private and the body is a public property, and we can only infer one's mind by bodily and language signs. In that sense, 'the link between outward behavior and inner state of mind seems tenuous and fragile'. (2007, p. 07-08). Such split turns out to be a problem in all social domains, once all kinds of relationships are conditioned by the

> fundamental inaccessibility of other minds […]. Everything becomes a matter of *interpretation*, of competing hypotheses, with the perpetual possibility of missive error. Overconfidence is the besetting sin here, as people leap to unwarranted conclusions about the motives and thoughts of others. (2007, p. 08).

The only way of trying to know others' mind is by interpreting and judging, not what exactly occurs in their minds, but that *we* think what goes in their minds. Therefore, interpreting one's bodily gestures cand lead to confusion, misreading and misunderstanding.

Although McGinn recognises the epistemological gap in the analysis of inwardness, he considers the Self as a fundamental entity to analyse this issue. When dealing with arts, and, in this case, particularly the drama, the hidden dimensions of the selves are essential for dramatic tensions. The author considers that drama requires selves in action and 'conscious beings equipped with a suitably rich psychology' (2007, p. 09). Dramatic tension also is about changes of the self over time. In that sense, the self and the circumstances around him are interchangeable and the self is determined by outward circumstances. The self is not just configured by inner motives or dimensions, but there are also outer features that contribute to determine it. Thus, McGinn asks: 'the body has a collection of physical traits that give it the specific form it has, but does the person have a range of mental traits that collectively define his or her personality?' (2007, p. 09). It is important to focus then on personal indeterminacy, which makes the self not a pre-determined entity, but pervaded by floatation between different and interconnected sets of inward and outward constellations. This is central for the understanding of the characters, their sometimes enigmatic changes which make the character morph before us. (2007, p. 09).

Nonetheless, the self is not the soul as conceived in religion. 'Shakespeare regards the self as *interactive* and *theatrical*. The self is interactive in the sense that it makes little sense to ask what personality someone has independent of the social interactions in which he engages'. (2007, p. 10). McGinn links personality to *theatre*, because 'personality is essentially a matter of how you interact with others – how you affect them, and how they affect you. The self is also theatrical in the sense that it is often best understood in terms of *roles* a person *plays*.' (2007, p. 11). Though this idea seems superficial McGinn states that

building up the self is not faking, but we embody a role which seems sincere and natural. (2007, p. 11). Thus, it is important to remember that the self is constituted by the person's choices and the circumstances around her.

Since McGinn refers to the actor's metaphor to illuminate the idea of the self, the self as *theatrical* and *interactive*, we can better perceive inwardness if we contrapose it to Greenblatt's idea of 'self-fashioning', in his book **Renaissance Self-Fashioning**.[7] For him, self-fashioning is the manipulation of appearances for conquering social and political domain and prestige in the Renaissance Age. It is the conquest of an ever-growing inward space of perceptiveness, psychological awareness of the self and of the subtle interactions with others. Greenblatt analyses the manners of social interaction in English Renaissance, which had their basis only in the self-reference of the individual. Those manners of interaction and relationship shaped appearances and behaviour by an attitude of always veiling inwardness and, at the same time, imposing those self-patterns of conduct on the other, generally defined as an *alien*. It was a way of conquering prestige and social power through violence and aggression against the *other*. Greenblatt studies the notion of *self-fashioning*, since in the 16th century individuals, identities and behaviours could be fashioned and manipulated artificially, based on the self-reference of the subject in something outside him.

For Greenblatt, Shakespeare's male characters are constantly worried about constructing and defining their masculinity and identity. Yet these constructions are done exclusively through abrogation, violence, and aggression towards the woman, the Moor, the Jew, the Witch or the *other*. This kind of attitude was not strange in terms of social and public attitudes in Renaissance age.[8] According to Greenblatt,

> self-fashioning occurs at the point of encounter between an authority and an alien, that what is produced in this encounter partakes of both the authority and the alien that is marked for attack, and hence that any authority achieved identity always contains within itself the signs of its own subversion or loss. (1984, p. 09).

The invention of the *alien* can be seen as closely intermingled, yet this aggression is veiled and hidden through self-fashioning in the modes of interaction in language. There were 'always some elements of deliberate shaping in the formation and expression of identity'. (1984, p. 01). Probably, there was much less autonomy in the self-fashioning in the 16th

[7] See Greenblatt's **Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare**, 1984.

[8] Stephen Greenblatt analyses works by Tomas Morus, Tyndale, Wyatt, Spenser, Marlowe, and Shakespeare, showing that their works build up the characters' social and economic ascension through many modulations and impositions of language and power. Thus, those attitudes could be seen as a way for those very authors of insinuating manners of construction of their own identities and creating mechanisms of imposition and conquering benefits, prestige and social power through violence, abrogation, and aggression against the *other*.

century than beforehand, so that the discipline imposed on subjects of the middle-class and aristocratic subjects by social institutions, such as family, state and church, was too severe. Autonomy was an evident problem in that age, but it was not a fundamental one. What was more important during the 16th and 17th century was that there was a deep change in the intellectual, social, psychological, and aesthetical institutions, which used to determine the fashioning of individual identities (1984, p. 01). In Greenblatt's opinion, if there occurred changes in the social mobility, there consequently emerged new modulating moods of power by both family and state, which determined social mobility in that age (1984, p. 02). The author finds out that the 16th century is a moment of the emergence of an 'increased self-consciousness about fashioning of human identity as manipulable, artful process.' (1984, p. 02). Hence, changes of self-fashioning attitude in English Renaissance had caused changes of meaning which provoked anxieties and suspicion. This may not suggest something positive any more, a social practice linked to manners and demeanours of the elite, teachers and parents, but 'it may suggest also hypocrisy, deception, and adherence to mere outward ceremony.' (1984, p. 03). As Greenblatt defines,

> Self-fashioning is in effect the Renaissance version of these control mechanisms, the cultural system of meanings that creates specific individuals by governing the passage from abstract potential to concrete historical embodiment. Literature functions within this system in three interlocking ways: as a manifestation of the concrete behavior of its particular author, as itself the expression of the codes by which behavior is shaped, and as a reflection upon those codes. (1984, p. 3-4)

By analysing texts of the authors and the personal life of Tomas Morus, Tyndale, Wyatt, Spencer, Marlowe and Shakespeare, Greenblatt interprets the social interaction among the symbolic structures perceived in those authors' lives and in society as constituting a single complex process of self-fashioning, in order to understand how social identities were fashioned and shaped in the English culture in the 16th century (1984, p. 06). According to Greenblatt, it is possible

> to achieve a concrete apprehension of the consequences for human expression – for the 'I' – of a specific form of power, power at once localized in particular institutions – the court, the church, the colonial administration, the patriarchal family – and diffused in ideology structures of meaning, characteristic modes of expression, recurrent narrative patterns. (1984, p. 06)

Greenblatt is concerned with a common feature very particular to all the authors, i. e., they embody a deep economic, social, and cultural mobility. All of them had come out from a limited social context circumscribed by powerful figures. They almost had no contact

with power, yet they had got it with their ability of self-fashioning, even though deception comes as a negative result of the self's construction of their own image.

Furthermore, inwardness has two sides: the euphoric inwardness of a new sort of human cleverness, as in Machiavelli's exultation with the powers of manipulation. But there is also the dark side of inwardness: the discovery of helplessness when the subject gets lost in his own tricks, perceptions, calculations such as Shakespeare's Hamlet, Lear, Macbeth, Richard III and Shylock, who are good examples of these two sides of inwardness. This discovery of helplessness at the end of the plays points to the perceptiveness that something obscure and tenuously uncontrolled pervaded the character's act and made them the victims of their own misacts.

Taking into account the theatrical side of inwardness, McGinn's analysis points out that another way of considering this issue is that society imposes a role upon the subject, and it is up to him to perfect it or not: 'good son, dutiful father, regal monarch', and so forth. (2007, p. 12). This theatrical dimension of the inward self alludes to a self-fashioned dimension determined by the outer super-egoic structures. There are super-egoic mechanisms[9] in society which circumscribe the self in a restricted domain, such as the State, family, religion, censorship, and school. In Elizabeth I's reign she always wanted her subjects to pay attention to formal (theatrical) attitudes to respect the establishment's policies and actions. In fact, she just wanted the people to keep the 'outward' attitude of respecting her policies and restraining social disorder and revolt. As she affirmed once, she did not wish to make a 'window in men's minds',[10] but just to assert the outward respect to conventional cerimonies.

From this point of view, the idea of the character is just an illusion, a construct, a 'varying flux of mental events' (2007, p. 37). That is why a person needs to convey an impression of a particular self to the audience: 'this management of behaviour' is similar to the skills employed by an actor. There is an intention behind that, i. e., producing appearances, illusions and impression. Thus, inwardness in Renaissance Age could be perceived as theatrical and shaped, even though some polemists resisted such assumption, assuming that inwardness should true and sincere. From a dramatic point of view, these are not just false impressions, but this is an issue that '*constitutes* the self'. This complex process provides the self with a particular identity which envisages and enacts certain roles (2007, p. 46). Coupled with that, the self is not constituted by one single dimension: 'there is not a

[9] Stephen Collins, in his book **From Divine Cosmos to Sovereign State** (1989), points out that the Tudor's Society was superegoic-oriented, in the sense that all social domains were controlled and pre-determined by ideological mechanisms which circumscribed the individual in his social domain.
[10] See Neville Williams' biography **Elizabeth the first, Queen of England**. New York, Dutton, 1962.

single personality, lurking somehow behind the other, but a whole range, depending upon the audience.' (2007, p. 46-47). The self has to be envisaged, desired, chosen, and built up in a certain way. Imitation plays an important role, because people build their selves observing and imitating others.

Furthermore, the effects of social intitutions created in the self a sense of being predetermined and controlled in his innermost dimensions. These super-egoic mechanisms remain unconscious in the self's inwardness and come out morphed in feelings, emotions and anxieties, whose causes are completely effaced from the self's awareness. In that sense, McGinn points out that Shakespeare

> regarded the mind as subject to hidden and *mysterious forces*. It is not that everything that affects a person is transparent to her awareness, so that she always knows why she is doing what she is or feeling the way she does. Not everything in the psyche is subject to the person's rational control. The imagination, in particular, is vulnerable to this kind of irrational influence. (2007, p. 12, italics added).

Thus, there are dimensions which elude the conscious determinations of the self. They are unnoticeable to the self, as the psychic traits incrusted in inwardness. Because of these forces, the self can be divided, even fragmented. McGinn states that

> The character is a 'stranger to himself,' that he is coexisting with a part of his psyche that is subject to unruly forces. The self is not always a harmonious whole, running on rational principles, but often a *mélange* of conflicting forces, the source of which is unclear. We are as much victims of ourselves as we are of the world around us, with one part of the psyche in rebellion against the rest. Accordingly, we can be mysteries to ourselves, bewildered by our feelings and actions. (2007, p. 12).

The self can be metaphorically described as waves of 'mental fluctuations' which change and reconfigurate as soon as the self is moved by any inward or outward circumstance. McGinn affirms that 'the mind can be in conflict with itself, and the self can be correspondingly fractured. Consequently, self-knowledge, like knowledge of the other selves, is not always reliable; a person can be quite wrong about his or her character, and the way his mind operates' (2007, p. 12). These mental fluxes change all the time and lead to the rebuilding of the self, in a way that it cannot be fully aware of that change, or does not feel and cannot even imagine his inner changing dimensions. The self is not a mere 'static essence', as a steady entity through all the experiences of the individual, but it is 'a dynamic and variable thing, endlessly malleable'. (2007, p. 27).

Furthermore, McGinn analyses Shakespeare's plays based on philosophical ideas, such as knowledge, scepticism, and causality. Concepts and doctrines refer to the self as a

unified persona that sustains us during our whole life, but as we look deep into it, we only encounter this 'mental flux'. McGinn asks whether it is possible to find out just by introspection what this self really is: 'we only find particular conscious occurrences – sensations, emotions, thoughts.' (2007, p. 37). What we feel and suppose to be our character is just a 'kind of hypothetical construct', not a 'datum of a consciousness'.

McGinn states that limitations of knowledge are incrusted in the structure of the human beings' cognitive faculties and their location in the world. Everything that is sought to know goes beyond our means of understanding and comprehension. We always make *inferences* of what is going on in a person's mind and 'these inferences are both fallible and structurally suspect.' (McGinn, 2007, p. 63). Making inferences is always influenced by our own feelings and conceptions. We wonder what goes on inside people's mind, but their minds are not available for us to read in their forehead. Then, what we see is always filtered by our inward feelings, sensations, prejudices, ideas and thoughts. When a person is aware of the impenetrability of her mind, she can use this *asymmetry* to hide and deceive people around her. The mind is a domain of potential concealment, and this concealment is determined by somebody's will. Even though we consider any possible way of analysis, it is not enough to fulfil persuasively the epistemological gap between the inward and outward. For example, the role of language is significant as we deal with concealment. Language makes it possible to know somebody's mind, but it also enables to conceal a person's mind. McGinn points out that 'we can use language as a barrier, not a conduit, a means of deception, not revelation. Language facilitates active concealment, and the better a person is at using it, the better he becomes at deceiving the others'. (2007, p. 65). Lying is also a possibility that leads people to misunderstand a sincere person: a person can desperately try to reveal herself to somebody, and, although she tries it most convincibly, her sincere statements might be disregarded and considered as intentional falsehood (McGinn, 2007, p. 65). That is Cordelia's and Desdemona's case. They try to be as sincere as they can, but Lear and Othello do not read their plainness is the real representation of inwardness, but only as deceitfulness.

Furthermore, McGinn suggests that the sensibility and the body are intermingled dimensions of the self. Mind and body are closely connected and this is essential to determine and constitute the self. The *embodied agency* highlighted by McGinn is not essentially transcendent or idealistic, but it is the confluence of sensibility and rationality. Even nowadays, as McGinn points out, this is not quite well-esteemed. Only with the emergence of neurosciences did scholars start lookng more carefully to these dimensions of the human

being, as Damasio does.[11] For McGinn, imagination has an essential role in thinking and thus Shakespeare makes

> an emendation to the kind of "faculty of psychology" common in his time, a conception of the mind as an amalgam of distinct faculties, various in nature, yet interacting. While traditional authors restricted themselves to the three faculties of Reason, Passion, and Will, Shakespeare adds the faculty of Imagination, to be accorded the same status as the classic three. The imagination is just as much of a force in the psyche as the other three, and cannot be reduced to some sort of "faint copy" of sense impressions. […] As a natural psychologist, Shakespeare is insisting on the centrality of the imagination in the human mind – with Macbeth an extreme case of something universal. This emphasis on the imagination did not really resurface until the Romanticism of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, with Coleridge, Blake, and others. It has yet to be fully appreciated in philosophical and psychological circles even today. (2007, p. 99).

It is factual that Shakespeare, in certain ways, anticipates the romantic high esteem of the imagination and the self. There are many plays which heavily invest in the capacities of imagination, creating elaborate labyrinths of mutual (and mutually tragic) fantasies: just think of **Hamlet**, **Macbeth** and **King Lear**, for example. In a certain way, Shakespeare foresees that the imagination is not ancillary to rationality, but that it is *the* essential ingredient of rational understanding. Almost like a Kantian *avant la lettre*[12], Shakespeare stages rationality as feeding on imagination; the operations of fantasy are its core support, and a pre-condition of analysis and cognition. McGinn states that Shakespeare is a moral psychologist:

> He knows that human psychology and ethical evaluation are never far apart. For the human mind has considerations of morality built into its very structure. We cannot really describe a person's psychology without adverting to moral matters, since virtues and vices make up character. One person is described as kind, generous, open-minded, and judicious; another is said to be cruel, miserly, closed-minded, and rash: there are all aspects of character, and they are all morally evaluative. There is no value-free description of human psychological nature. (2007, p. 174).

McGinn remarks that it is impossible to judge and evaluate somebody without moral and evaluative categories. If someone were asked to describe his friend without moral categories, the description would be uninformative and limited to physical characteristics. We are naturally bound to describe people with evaluative categories, whether they are qualitative or quantitative. Thus, people are always judging the other whenever they talk about others or describe them.

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[11] See Damasio, **Descartes' Error**, 2006.

[12] In that sense, it is interesting to consider those assumptions (and Adelman's, as we will see further) in order to present some ideas about inwardness. In that sense, if we take into account judgement as something essential in analysing Shakespeare's plays, we shall consider one of the most striking philosophical systems that ever showed the issue of judgement before: Kant's Critiques. Such discussion on Kant's critique will be further extended in chapter 8. See KANT, Immanuel. **Critique of Judgment**. Translated with Introduction and Notes by J. H. Bernard. New York: Dover, 2005.

Therefore, the problem of knowledge, conscience and judgement pervade Shakespeare's **The Merchant of Venice**. Inwardness is deeply related to the perception and judgement of the other characters, who are seen and analysed by the others; it occurs through language, but it is a phenomenon which can also be perceived through some non-verbal signs; also, the dramatist creates the idea of inwardness, by being convincing in his creation of a mimesis of inwardness. Thus, the mirroring device enables the mimesis of the inward dimensions of one character by mirroring his attitudes and emotions on the other. Specifically in **The Merchant of Venice** the mirroring device is a literary and theatrical technique whereby Shakespeare suggests one character's feelings and inward dimensions projected and mirrored on other characters' attitudes, actions, ideas and thoughts. The fantasmatic anxiety on the double of appearances and inward dimensions is commonly represented in Shakespeare's drama.

Therefore, in this thesis Mimesis is related to Auerbach's notion of mimesis in his **Mimesis** (2007c), rather than to Aristotle's concept of mimesis in his **Poetics**. Unfortunately, Auerbach is much more concerned only with the representation of reality through styles, both lower and higher styles, and language. Though he is not worried to depict the inwardness or subjectivity of a character, he writes an interesting and revelatory analysis of Shylock.[13] To complement Auerbach's discussion of the problem of representation in the Renaissance, Claude-Gilbert Dubois also presents a renewing reading of the notion of mimesis which places the problem in Shakespeare's age, which will be also important for the analysis of the play. He focuses on the mirror as a technological discovery that was incorporated in arts and literature as a *topos* of representing the other. The mirror represented a unique discovery which fascinated people and created an astonishing impact on the ways of perceiving reality during 16th and 17th centuries.

Another important detail of the play is that **The Merchant of Venice** does not seem to be a mere comedy. The use of such genre is suggestive, because it enables to introduce ambiguities in the text, letting the reader and the audience feels ambivalent reactions: on the one hand laughing at Shylock's comic traits and at the play's happy ending, on the other hand, bitterly feeling the awkward sensations that Shylock is simply ruined without moral scruples. The tragic and comic opposition in the play constructs the character of the play, especially Shylock, as a rather complex character. His hatred and his rage may seem comic, but they suggest and represent his inward feelings and dimensions: his hatred, desire of revenge,

[13] For this see especially in Auebach's **Mimesis**, chapter 13 wherein he analyses Shakespeare's plays, especially **Hamlet**, **Macbeth**, **King Lear** and **The Merchant of Venice**.

resentment and anxieties.

Furthermore, the Shakespearean mirroring device suggests that Shakespeare probably perceived intuitively and represented foreclosure in the play. He represented some awkward obscure dimensions of the characters of the play, especially Antonio and Portia, dimensions which are not perceived by them. For instance, Antonio's ambivalent relationship to Shylock, a relationship signalled both in his hatred and in his submissive acceptance of his bond, hides in the lines the ever-denied and foreclosed anxiety towards the cause of his sadness and discontent: the anxiety regarding the paternal figure re-imagined in Shylock. Such idea of the foreclosed cause Antonio's anxiety in his inwardness also can be only seen mirrored in the other characters' anxieties in the play: Jessica's unhappiness and tediousness, Launcelot's conscience to the Jew his master, Portia's anxiety regarding the casket test are all anxieties whose cause lay in the paternal figure, epitomised in Shylock, the *ur-father*, the primordial father of the play, according to Adelman (2008, p. 131). The other characters' anxiety is clearly doubled by the most comic and seemingly secondary character in the play, Launcelot. In II, ii, Launcelot strangely drives the anxiety towards the biological father to Shylock: instead of feeling his conscience when he cheats and mocks his blind father, Gobbo, he feels his conscience and anxiety when he desires to leave Shylock's house. If Jessica's, Portia's and Launcelot's uneasiness in the play is caused by the paternal figure, contiguously Antonio's sadness and discontent is due to the absent presence of the paternal figure in the play, projected onto Shylock, though foreclosed from his inwardness and from the play. Shakespeare perceived at least in a subtler level the obscure dimensions of the unconscious acting on the self's attitudes, dimensions whose causes are quite effaced from the self's consciousness, which Lacan's Psychoanalysis names foreclosure. Shakespeare intuitively perceived something occluded and denied in human behaviour which will be important to Psychoanalysis. The suggested foreclosed cause of Antonio's inwardness is a technique to represent his inward anxieties, insinuated in his sadness and weariness in the play.

Moreover, in the case of **The Merchant of Venice**, bodily traits such as weariness, sadness, tediousness and discontent are symptomatic of psychic traits incrusted in the inner-self, which come out in moments of tension, especially for Antonio, Bassanio, Portia, Shylock and Antonio. Therefore, there are explicit contents and, beyond them, suggestions which have to be read between the lines of the words and sentences, in the constellations of gestures, repetitions, strange details, dissonances, verbal slips, silences and pathos. That is how Shakespeare constructed the mimesis of inwardness in the play.

Thus, this thesis proposes to analyse inwardness in **The Merchant of Venice**, taking

into account Maus' and McGinn's assumptions. Both critics do not analyse **The Merchant of Venice**. Thus, the thesis uses this theoretical framework to analyse the play. It also demonstrates the emergence of inwardness before Shakespeare. Thus, it presents in chapter 1 some historical, cultural and literary elements which are essential to understand the emergence of inwardness from the Middle Ages onwards. It discusses that Shakespeare did not invent inwardness by himself as Bloom and Fineman propose in their works. Rather, he developed a mimesis of inwardness specifically in the drama and that was his greatest innovation in literature. Beforehand, it is necessary to exemplify the emergence of inwardness in mediaeval writings, especially in Augustine's **Confessions** and in Dante's **Vita Nuova**. Thus, the analysis by Harrison in his book **The Body of Beatrice** (1988) is helpful to understand such process. He analyses Dante's **Vita Nuova** and demonstrates that Dante represented sensual inwardness in his work. Also, it is worth discussing some ideas in Montaigne's **Essays** and how he depicted inward feelings, sensations, thoughts and anxieties in his work. Shakespeare introduced the mimesis of inwardness in his drama in an on-going process of the development of inwardness.

After that, the thesis starts the discussion of the play, observing the awkward development in the criticism of the play. The thesis presents some of the main critical essays about the play and how there is a rupture and an inversion in the development of the play's criticism. The 18th and 19th centuries' criticism saw Shylock as a tragic figure and the Christians as cruel and disdainful to Shylock. Most astonishing, 20th century criticism changed this point of view on the play and started to see Shylock as a mere villain and the Christians as good characters. It is possible to suggest that 20th anti-Semitism and Nazi propaganda strongly influenced the reading of the play and that critics did not notice such an astonishing influence on their reading. Nevertheless, it is quite suggestive that 21th century criticism is reading the play not as a matter of black and white meaning, but in terms of ambiguities created by Shakespeare.

That is why in some moments the discussion seems to be 'defending' Shylock. Nonetheless, it is a crying need for choosing a point of view when reading and analysing such a polemic play as **The Merchant of Venice**. Moreover, it is not only the result of this research, but surprisingly it is also a tendency noticed in our contemporary criticism, especially from the 1980s, that sees Shylock simultaneously as a villain and a victim. If there is a reactive remainder in literary criticism against the 20th century anti-Semitism and the horrors of Auschwitz, it is not surprising at all that the contemporary readings of the play seem to 'defend' Shylock. In that sense, for example, Derek Cohen (2003) reveals that he

attempts

> to that it is not merely inevitable that these two characters [Shylock and Caliban] themselves are historical subjects, but also that today it is difficult, and even morally problematic, to read Shakespeare's Jew and his Slave as though the concentration camps and the institution of slavery never happened; to read them purely historically, that is, and to concomitantly obscure the terrible consequences of a marginalization that in Shakespeare is *relatively* benign. I attempt thus to link Caliban and Shylock to the subsequent histories of their nations or kinds by an examination of the contemporary contexts of marginalization described by the plays and to link that context to a larger and more catastrophic history, a history as old as social experience. (2003, p. xiii)

Then, the other chapters of the thesis propose to analyse the play based not only on one point of view, but considering the ambiguities implied in the texture of the play. The analysis is based on Maus' and McGinn's assumptions on inwardness, and on literary criticism of the play. It reads this development as a result of the ambiguities of the play created by Shakespeare and the mimesis of inwardness in his tragicomedy. He represented inwardness in the silences, non-said, gestures, pathos, and anxieties of the characters in the play, which constitute the rhetoric of inwardness in the play.[14]

[14] It is important to enhance that this research will not analyse all scenes from the play, and the last act will be only referred now and then.

CHAPTER 1

Inwardness from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance

This chapter presents a discussion about Shakespeare's authenticity of the creation and representation of inwardness. In fact, Shakespeare did not create inwardness by himself.[15] However, he deepened the mimesis of inwardness creating renewing mimetical devices for it in the *Drama*. Thus, the issue of inwardness is rather specific in Shakespeare. It is not what proposed Fineman and Bloom[16]. Fineman's assumptions about the invention of poetic subjectivity intends to discuss the problem, but his argument is quite obscuring, confusing and complexifying. He does not answer the question; instead, he just creates an awkward analysis which leads nowhere. The problem of the mimesis of inwardness in Shakespeare's sonnets has been well discussed in Lawrence Flores Pereira's essay about the specular devices in the **Sonnets** (2000).[17]

Coupled with that, one could argue that the mimesis of the inner-self was already perceived at least in a minimalistic way in both Greek and Roman Literature. In fact, Karen Newman (1985)[18] argues that Greek and Roman drama represented the inner life of the characters, or the lifelikeness through the rhetoric of consciousness. Rhetoric of consciousness is defined as linguistic breaks, uses of I/you pronouns to refer to the self, soliloquies with traits of dialogue and the inner debate of the characters to express the sense of lifelikeness in the drama. According to her,

> Speeches which manifest characteristics of dialogue such as those we have analyzed in Shakespeare's **Measure for Measure**, in Menander, and even in Plautus, create or represent an inner life regardless how typically they may code information concerning sex,

[15] Even though this thesis argues that Shakespeare did not invent inwardness by himself, such argument does not diminish his importance and qualities in the literary tradition. It rather discusses this mythmaking and idealising trends which consider, without convincing and provable arguments, Shakespeare's authenticity in the creation of inwardness and situates literarily and historically the place of his work in relation to other authors.

[16] See Bloom's **Shakespeare: the invention of the human** (2001) and Fineman's **Shakespeare's perjured eye: the invention of the poetic subjectivity in the sonnets**, 1986.

[17] See Lawrence Flores Pereira's *O jogo especular nos sonetos de Shakespeare*. In: Pereira. **De Shakespeare a Racine: o engano especular e outros temas**. (Tese de Doutorado). Porto Alegre: PUC-RS, 2000. In such essay, the author discusses the problem of narcissism in the sonnets as something related to other forms of mimesis of narcissism in Ovid's **Metamorphoses**, which Shakespeare took and re-shaped in his sonnets in an over-powering mimesis of specular images.

[18] See Karen Newman's **Shakespeare's Rhetoric of Comic Character**, 1985.

rank, fortune or age. (Newman, 1985, p. 52)

Thus, the origins of inwardness are not to be found in the Renaissance Age, but somehow beforehand.[19] Shakespeare introduced in his drama a mimesis of inwardness, just as other authors introduced mimetic devices in their works. For example, Montaigne created an innovating literary form in his **Essays**; beforehand, Augustine's painstaking work, which analysed his innermost feelings in his **Confessions**, is one of the first moments of the emergence of inwardness; similarly, Dante represented a desiring self in his **Vita Nuova** for the first time. Shakespeare's authenticity is indeed to deepen the mimesis of inwardness and its quality in the drama, overcoming his coevals, such as Marlowe, Webster and Kyd. It is worth demonstrating here that when Shakespeare started to write, inwardness was an on-going development in literary works. It is noteworthy to place Shakespeare's innovating mimesis of inwardness in the drama against the former development of literary history.

In Shakespeare, Montaigne, Augustine and Dante language and the mimetical devices swerve from the previous literary tradition. They changed language and the structure of the genre, because of an intrinsic necessity in the representation of inwardness, an inner space of feelings, thoughts, ideas, and anxiety. The language and structure of the poem, essay, confession and drama were reshaped to represent inwardness. In order to capture the remoter dimensions, these artists had to develop new stylistic devices: silences, non-said, a rather floating style, and syntactic ruptures in their literary forms. The mimesis of inwardness needed new literary forms which were able to convey the imagistic constellations, inward floatations of feelings, emotions, ideas, thoughts of the self.

Hence, this chapter presents some ideas which demonstrate that the notion of inwardness had its origins in the Middle Ages or even beforehand,[20] mainly the revealing details by Ariès's and Duby's **History of Private Life**.[21] They demonstrate that there emerged a social and cultural development of individuality and inwardness in that age. After that, Harrison's reading of Dante's **Vita Nuova**, in his revealing book **The Body of Beatrice**

[19] I am deeply indebted to Lawrence Flores Pereira for this suggestion. In a conversation about Auerbach, I told him that Auerbach acknowledged that Dante perceived inwardness in cultural and historical events. Then Lawrence agreed with that me and added that Shakespeare did not create the human by himself, but that he perceived something 'in the air'. That led me to search more about such topic and I figured out that many writings in the age were really concerned about the representation of an inner world of the self.

[20] The purpose here is not to analyse inwardness from both ancient Greek and Roman literature, but to highlight the emergence of this phenomenon in the Middle Ages, which will be important to Shakespeare's configuration the mimesis of inwardness in the drama.

[21] Trevelyan also studied some cultural and sociological assumptions which may have influenced the emergence of inwardness in England. In fact, he studies the emergence of privacy in architectural changes to ever-increasing inner comfortable spaces in spaces of smaller rooms, which allowed people's intimacy and privacy. This is taken as the starting point of many changes, such as privacy, intimacy, and later on inwardness. See Trevelyan's **English Social History: A Survey of Six Centuries: Chaucer to Queen Victoria** (1942).

demonstrates the representation of the poet's inward desires in the 'blind spot', projected first in the body of Beatrice and then in Dante's literary creation. Then, Montaigne's essays wherein he presents his proposal of self-investigation and self-analysis as an innovation in his **Essays** is useful to place inwardness in a broader context in the Renaissance.

1. 1. The Emergence of Self from the Middle Ages onwards

Phillipe Ariès and Georges Duby, in their classical work **History of Private Life** (2009),[22] state that inwardness has its origins in late Middle Ages. Ariès and Duby analyse the emergence of the first images of inwardness in cultural forms of expression, such as autobiographies, chronicles, travel narratives, books of prayers, as well as in Dante's and Petrarch's poetry. Thus, there emerged fictions of inwardness, which concentrated on the inner contemplation of the self. Such emergence was caused by the consciousness of the self as an individual whose identity could be delimited by loneliness and seclusion from society. (Ariès & Duby, 2009, p. 388). Such contemplation was enabled by lonely reading, seclusion, dreaming and ascetic wanderings. For example, the representation of an oneirical world in literary forms enabled the mimesis of mental dimensions through an 'unfolded self' who sought for love, adventure, and divine discovery. The fictionalised representation of the self created the emergence of a 'subjectivity of the allurement' which inaugurated the 'delimitation of the territory of the individual' in late Middle Ages (2009, p. 388). Such texts obsessively insisted on time, the 'perception of a lost time', in a sort of mourning such lost time (2009, p. 388). There was an effort to insist on recuperating the lost memory, the lost time, the lost paradise.

As a result, the individual could determine his own destiny and way of living for the first time. The individual of fictions as the young lovers and wandering knights were carried by their desires and went away to a long journey among forests and landscapes. Thus, they could bend over themselves and unfold their inward feelings, emotions, thoughts, unquietness, and suffering. Such seclusion and contemplation were only possible in a state of enclosure and absorption seeking for an inward state of dreaming and distancing. (2009, p. 389). Therefore, writing allowed the emergence of the self which exposed painful and exalted confessions of the inner self.

However, such representation of the 'self pretentiously unique' is in fact a rather

[22] The quotations here are taken from a Brazilian edition by Ariès and Duby's work, **História da Vida Privada 2: Da Europa Feudal à Renascença**, 2009. This exposition on the development of inwardness in the Mediaeval Ages is based on their work. All the translations from Portuguese are mine.

universal 'self' (2009, p. 390). This self is constituted by repeated and pre-established images and *leitmotifs*, through which the individual could only represent an abstract and imaginary idea of the self in poetry and narrative. The poetical and narrative self was in the 'eternal regress' to his natural origins and was obsessively allured by his own representation. (2009, p. 390). In the same sense, literary imagery was obsessed about the search for a lost identity, which needed to be discovered and scrutinised. It was artificially masked only to be seen in the scrutinising game of identity. (2009, p. 396).

In addition to that, there was an intense feeling and desire of seeking for loneliness during the Middle Ages. The primitive Christians sought for seclusion in the desert as a way of achieving divinity and purety of soul. Consequently, they rejected the body, its feelings, passions and emotions. The anchorite attitude of leaving the city to live secluded in the desert was perceived as an astonishing gesture whereby they could define the self as a private site. Thus, the primitive Christianity and its ascesis was an ur-flourishing of the representation and theatricalisation of inwardness. Living beyond the limits of the city and of the known limits of the land was a way of creating a civilisation in the desert.[23] Monastic and ascetic life was one of the first moments of the acknowledgment of an inner space which needed to be forcely suppressed. Once the ascetics denied the body, sexual life, pleasure and desire, they impinged on their body and mind sufferance, punishment, abstention of food and drink, and sought for contemplation, especially inner contemplation in the absolute silence of the night (2009, p. 532). Thus, such denial and abstention meant the rejection of an inner space, which was said to be pervaded by evil feelings, thoughts and desires, and threatened to dominate the individual and purity of the soul. The rejection of such feelings was an obsessive reaction to the percepton of an enigmatic inward life poping up in the body.

Likewise, Peter Brown[24] argues that, in the primitive Christianity, the renouncement of corporeal and material pleasure was intensively practiced by ascetic monks and anchorites from the 2th century A. D. onwards.[25] Such renouncement is due to the search for the purification of body and soul as a mystic form to achieve divinity. The rejection of pleasures as well as of the body was caused by the ever-growing consciousness that the self was a sexual being, who kept alive the sexual phantasm, exposing the 'rebel' zones of the human being (1995, p. 285). They privileged the soul as a locus of rationality and sanctity, but repudiated the body as the locus of evilness and sin. Therefore, the isolation of monks

[23] For that, see Peter Brown, in his work **Le renoncement à la chair** (1995).
[24] See Brown's work **Le renoncement à la chair** (The Renouncement of the Flesh, 1995).
[25] For that issue, Ariès and Duby, **History of Private Life II: Revelations of the Medieval World,** (2009) also present the ascetic and monastic life as a way of spiritual evolution. See details about the anchorites on pp. 534-536.

signalled, through this denegation of the body, the inward negative dimensions, which could not be controlled. The rejection of these inward dimensions and the seeking for the divinity through inner contemplation was therefore a social reaction to the perceptiveness of inwardness.

Ariès and Duby argue that the 'invention of the subject' came about in the Middle Ages, especifically in the 14th and 15th centuries. According to them,

> The private writing or the writing about the private introduces unquestionably, as the evidences increase, a deep mutation in the attitude of the individuals regarding the familial and social groups which they belong to: a concern about conveying, at least describing experienced phenomena which former generations silenced about. (2009, p. 553).

Although there came out these first embryoes of inwardness during the Middle Ages, writing about the self was limited to a small sum of people. It seems that inwardness was rather perceived in social attitudes. Moreover, 'the individual defines himself by contrast', or by the separation and rupture from the circles of the social life, such as family, community, and professional domains (Ariès & Duby, 2009, p. 554). The self's own consciousness enabled the 'radical questioning of the order'; thus, those who were outside society, such as the mad in the romances, the uproarers, the hermits, caused astonishment and anxieties in other people's view due to their assumed awkward attitude of seclusion and loneliness. In that sense, Auerbach (2007a)[26] also enhances the emergence of inwardness from the Middle Ages onwards. He states that

> whole groups of people who had hitherto lived in silent obscurity, began to achieve self-awareness, to emerge into the light of day and display their individual gestures; the long buried ancient tradition regarding the portrayal of outward and inner happening had reawakened (2007a, p. 83-84).

Even though the mimesis of an inward space was current in late Middle Ages, a former author had represented inward feelings, ideas, thouhgts and anxieties beforehand: Saint Augustine introduced a mimesis of an inward space of the self in his **Confessions** (2008). J. M. Coetzee wrote a beautiful essay called *Autobiography and Confession* (1992).[27] Such essay analyses the issue of confession of inward feelings in Augustine, Dostoevski and Tolstoi. According to Coetzee, Augustine reveals his innermost desire when he and his friends steal some pears. What moves such act is not the need of eating pears, because they

[26] See Erich Auerbach's **Dante: Poet of the Secular World**, 2007a.
[27] See Coetzee's interviews with David Attwell and essays in **Doubling the Point**: essays and interviews, 1992. The purpose here is not to analyse Augustine's work, but to present some details which show the mimesis of inwardness in his **Confessions**.

fed them to hogs later on. Rather, his feeling was the shame of being shameless. What he wanted to confess was something more than the transgression, it was 'something which lies behind the theft'. Even though he tried to analyse his inward feelings, there was something which would be completely occluded to introspection. In Coetzee's words, 'the truth about the self that will bring an end to the quest for the source within the self for that-which-is-wrong, he affirms, will remain inaccessible to introspection.' (1992, p. 252). What Coetzee perceives in autobiography and confession is the endless attempt to find out the '*truth'* about the self. He enhances that Augustine perceived in his confession that when we try to analyse ourselves, there is something which evades and cannot be grasped and written down. That is what Philosophy, arts and Psychoanalysis have tried to pin down and represent: the overcoming sense of endlessness. Augustine perceived that there are some inward mysterious forces which cannot be controlled, analysed and discoursively grasped in introspection. Therefore, Augustine presented an attempt to represent the inward dimensions in his **Confessions**. He exposed his feelings, desires, vanity, and inward dispositions of the mind, but he could not make a shape of the endless anxiety which lurks behind his phantasms. In the same sense that the Renaissace age would make a distinction between outwardness and inwardness, Augustine was aware of the distinction between inward and outward dimensions of the self. That is what he called the *homo interior* and the *homo exterior*. Thus, the argument of Shakespeare's authencity of the creation and discovering of inwardness by himself is debased when we look closer to the emergence of the self and the representation of an inward space in the writings in the Middle Ages and especially in Augustine's work.

1. 2. Inwardness and Occluded Desires in Dante's Work: The body of Beatrice

As Augustine represented inner feelings in his **Confessions**, Dante is another author who represented inward dimensions in his work. In that sense, Harrison's argument evidences that Dante represented his unconfessed desiring feelings in his **Vita Nuova**. Just as Augustine could not grasp his feelings in his endless analysis, Dante could not see what was behind the 'blind spot' in his dream in the **Vita Nuova**. Thus, by these examples, one in autobiography and other in prose and poetry, it is evident that inwardness was an ever-growing perceptiveness of the individual whose consciousness about obscure zone was achieved throughout the centuries.

Robert Pogue Harrison wrote a ground-breaking book about Dante's **Vita Nuova**, named **The Body of Beatrice** (1988). His painstaking study tries to disentail the reading of

Dante's first work from his greatest work, **The Divine Comedy**. Critics normally read the **Vita Nuova** as a mere preface, introduction or even an appendix to **The Divine Comedy**. Thus, they simply projected the mystical and theological analysis from the **Comedy** in Dante's **Vita Nuova**. What Harrison proves is that the *libello* has its own aesthetic and poetic meaning independent from **The Divine Comedy**. He demonstrates the representation of (sexual) desire for the first time, in Western Literature, a desire which is projected onto Dante's literary creation.

Harrison analyses a 'blind spot' in Dante's experience in his 'marvellous vision' of his dream. Dante's 'marvellous vision' comes about in the 3rd chapter of his **Vita Nuova**. He is on the street and sees Beatrice 'dressed in the whitest of white', remembering his first vision of the lady when he was a nine-year-old boy. Then he goes to his room, which he also recalls as 'the most secret chamber of the heart' (Harrison, 1988, p. 147) and there 'a sweet sleep overcame' him. (Dante, 2001, p. 10). Then, in 'a flame-coloured nebula' he saw the presence of a 'lord of fearful aspect' who said many things, from which the poet understood just a few words, such as '*Ego dominus tuus*: I am your lord.' (2001, p. 10).[28] This lord 'held a figure sleeping in his arms', who he identifies as Beatrice, the 'lady of the greeting'. (2001, p. 10-11). Most revealingly, she is 'naked except that it seemed to me to be covered lightly with a crimson cloth' (2001, p. 10-11). The lord, whom he identifies later as Love, Amor, is holding the poet's heart completely in fire. Then he makes the lady eat his heart, which she did 'hesitantly' (2001, p. 11).[29] After that, the lord seems to change his joyful mood to a completely sorrowful aspect and thus he weeps bitterly. Finally, Beatrice and the lord vanish unexplainably in the sky.

For Harrison, many critics and even Dante's contemporary poets attempted to interpret this oneiric configuration and its secret. This visionary dream, this marvellous vision hides the mystery about this real woman. For Harrison she is not the 'divine agent or angel', nor the 'Christ figure', nor the 'number nine' (1988, p. 18). For him, Dante sees something in this figure, which cannot be merely explained as 'poetic hyperbole, phantasmal perception, or even mystical delirium' (1988, p. 18). Harrison interrogates the nature of Beatrice and sees

[28] See the entire description of this scene: 'And thinking of her a sweet sleep overcame me, in which a marvellous vision appeared to me: so that it seemed I saw in my room a flame-coloured nebula, in the midst of which I discerned the shape of a lord of fearful aspect to those who gazed on him: and he appeared to me with such joy, so much joy within himself, that it was a miraculous thing: and in his speech he said many things, of which I understood only a few: among them I understood this: '*Ego dominus tuus*: I am your lord.'' (2001, p. 10). **The New Life** of Dante Alighieri, Translated by A.S.Kline, 2001.

[29] 'It seemed to me he held a figure sleeping in his arms, naked except that it seemed to me to be covered lightly with a crimson cloth: gazing at it very intently I realised it was the lady of the greeting, she who had deigned to greet me before that day. And in one of *his* hands it seemed to me that he held something completely on fire, and he seemed to say to me these words: '*Vide cor tuum*: Look upon your heart. And when he had stood for a while, he seemed to wake her who slept: and by his art was so forceful that he made her eat the thing that burned in her hand, which she ate hesitantly.' (2001, p. 10-11).

that she is not an allegorical, theological or mystic figure, but, above all, her presence enhances her as a woman, whom is adored by Dante and is transformed in his poetry in a 'posthumous mummification in paradise'. (1988, p. 18). For Harrison, although some critics tried to see the dream as the foretelling of her death or as the prefiguring of Dante's journey into hell, purgatory and paradise, the deeper meaning of this dream remains completely concealed.

In vain have many critics tried to explain Dante's experience. For instance, Auerbach's (2007a)[30] analysis of Dante's first experience in **The Vita Nuova** fails to figure out what is at stake in Dante's first work. However, he focuses on philosophical and subjective experience:

> there was a falling away from Beatrice, a misdirected love, a striving for illusory treasures. Neither the biographical clues at our disposal nor the works that can be situated with some degree of certainty between the last poems of the **Vita Nuova** and the generally accepted date of his journey to the Other World, gives any exact idea. […] the best we can do is to accept Dante's error as a fact, even though we cannot discover its traces in Dante's life and work. (2007a, p. 70-71).

Auerbach does not see this 'blind spot' in Dante's work, just as many other critics could not. He merely assumes that there are some biographical details which cannot be accessed and which could explain Dante's 'error'. Even Dante acknowledges the failure to see the vision's true meaning. His coeval poets Petrarch and Guido Cavalcanti could not grasp the true meaning of the scene as well.

Harrison wisely states that there is a 'blind spot' which 'lurks at the heart of this visionary experience', which was always there (1988, p. 21). Beatrice in this visionary dream 'gives herself to perception through a phenomenal guise that reveals and at the same time conceals her nature' (1988, p. 22). The source of this blindness lies in the problematic recognition created by just one word in the text, which appears just once in the 3rd chapter: naked (*nuda*): she was 'naked except that it seemed to me to be covered lightly with a crimson cloth' (Dante, 2001, p. 10-11). For Harrison, 'were it not for that one word in the prose, *nuda*, we could never quite be sure of Beatrice's womanhood, her corporeal facticity, as it were.' (1988, p. 22). Thus, her corporeality makes her a concrete figure rather than a merely phantasmatic projection of mystical and theological allegories, as some critics suppose.

Elsewhere in **Vita Nuova** she appears only dressed and 'above all *as* her dress' (1988, p. 22). In the memory of a nine-year-old boy the image of her dress is deeply engraved, and

[30] See his book **Dante Poet of the Secular World**, 2007a.

nine years later, when he is 'at the threshold of manhood' (1988, p. 23), he perceives her once again only by her attire. In Harrison's opinion, even granting the claims of color symbolism, one must wonder about the psycho-logic that causes the young man's perception to stop once again at the chromatic surface of Beatrice's clothing. (1988, p. 23). He asks whether Beatrice is simply a shrouded phantasm drifting through the merely symbolic space of a poetic imagination' or 'a real woman walking on the street' (1988, p. 23). The 'marvellous vision' proves Beatrice's womanhood through her 'corporeal density' revealed not by the crimson dress, but by the body which is veiled by the dress.

In a deeper level, Harrison thinks that 'the body of Beatrice is the "repressed" element in Dante's field of vision' (1988, p. 23). He indicts that no one needs much psychoanalysis or psychology to state that the dream and the 'marvellous vision' entail 'a sexual awakening' (1988, p. 23). This vision, engraved in the nine-year-old boy's memory, is awakened in the eighteen-year-old young man's psyche. Then, what remains for Harrison is to ask 'why the psychic pulsations that produce the dream [...] assume this specific and highly charged symbolic configuration?' (1988, p. 23). He sums up such conundrum revealing the ambivalent meaning of her crimson cloth:

> While it prohibits a view of her naked body, it also allows Dante to recognize the body as a body without violating a code of courtesy to which he was socially and ideologically bound. The cloth, then, acts as a censor, or as a prohibition, but at the same time it acts as the very opposite of this. Insofar as it guards the presence of the naked body by veiling it, the cloth grants Dante the permission to look at the body and to see without seeing, so to speak. (1988, p. 23).

Thus, the body of Beatrice becomes, at the same time, a site of prohibition and desire which cannot be described and praised overtly, just idealised through mystical and idealistic frameworks. After this vision, Dante starts to reflect upon the body, creating thus the first poem on his beloved Beatrice. However, in the sonnett she figures no longer as naked, but only through the presence of a cloth.[31] For Harrison, this is the 'genesis of the figure of Beatrice – her poetic potentiality' (1988, p. 24). The presence of the crimson cloth 'becomes genetic', it means, it is the genesis of Dante's poetry. For him, 'Beatrice means an inaccessible corporeal density made accessible figurally and poetically, or, more broadly speaking, phenomenally' only by this cloth. (1988, p. 24). Consequently, Dante can only

[31] 'To every captive soul and gentle heart / into whose sight this present speech may come, / so that they might write its meaning for me, / greetings, in their lord's name, who is Love. // Already a third of the hours were almost past / of the time when all the stars were shining, / when Amor suddenly appeared to me / whose memory fills me with terror. // Joyfully Amor seemed to me to hold / my heart in his hand, and held in his arms / my lady wrapped in a cloth sleeping. // Then he woke her, and that burning heart / he fed to her reverently, she fearing, / afterwards he went not to be seen weeping.' (Dante, 2001, p. 13)

praise and love Beatrice through poetic pontentiality. He instantly projects his desire – his sexual desire in this sexual awakening – on the body of Beatrice; then through thinking, pondering and imagination he drives such desire to poetic creation. Obsessively, he seeks for materialising poetically his desire in poetry, because the body of Beatrice is just made accessible 'in its figurative re-presentation' and in the cloth that veils it (1988, p. 24). That is his painstaking search through his literary carreer and his painstaking pilgrimage throughout *Hell*, *Purgatory*, and *Heaven*.

Moreover, Dante's 'role of authority' is to manipulate 'the scene of desire'. He creates in this scene a personification genetically engendered by the crimson cloth. His heart, 'fraught with phallic symbolism' is eaten by Beatrice due to his lord's order (1988, p. 24). The lord's role in Dante's dream 'is ultimately to guard the cloth's concealment of Beatrice's body and to ensure a wholly figurative transaction of desire' between Dante and her body (1988, p. 24-25). The lord, who seems a very powerful figure, holds, in one of his hands, the body of Beatrice, veiled in the crimson cloth, and, in his other hand, he holds Dante's heart, which is the 'flaming emblem of passion' in the scene. (1998, p. 25). The projection of his desire on the cloth and her idealising figure, distanced by the lord, is linked to a reversal in the scene. In Harrison's opinion,

> The reversal whereby the erotic or even phallic fire of the heart is consumed by Beatrice figures as a dubious consummation of desire brought on by the lord, for instead of a consummation we have a momentous incorporation of the heart in the withdrawing body of Beatrice. (1988, p. 25)

It is as if Beatrice captures Dante's heart and desire in a way that the only possibility of recovering it lies in Dante's possession of her body. Thus Beatrice becomes an idealised female figure whom Dante seeks for representing in his art. However, 'his active desire gets reduced to a passive impotence and castrated by the overdetermined circumstance. The flaming object tropologically condenses the raw urgency of desire' (Harrison, 1988, p. 25). Also, Harrison suggests that the flaming object means a 'sinister fragmentation', since the extraction of his heart and Beatrice's eating it figure simultaneously as 'a literal dismemberment, a figurative castration' (1988, p. 25). Such dismemberment or figurative castration makes him a passive lover who cannot achieve his beloved object any more. The metaphor of the dead heart suggesting 'the castrated phallus' (1988, p. 25) conveys the symbolic meaning that his desire must be punished by castration and impotence. Thus, the crimson cloth figures as a symbol of 'censorship, disclosure, and figuration' of Dante's desire.

(1988, p. 26). The crimson cloth remains as a symbol which represents and condenses both the expropriation and apropriation of the body of Beatrice, the permission and denial of Dante's unconfessed sexuality and sexual desire. The metaphoric field of the poetic desire is atomised in the crimson cloth, which metonimically substitutes the body of Beatrice and enables the poet's desire. Moreover, such desire would imaginatively be achieved in a distant afterlife, after Beatrice's death, who, most contradictorily, even there remained untouched by the poet. Then, the body of Beatrice is the 'undisclosed substance of revelation' and its accessibility is only permitted through the veiling cloth, which leads Dante to his 'new life [Vita Nuova] to the aesthetic order [...] to the quest for a revelation through the poetic enterprise'. (1988, p. 28). The blind spot – the concealed body of Beatrice – in that scene, potentialises, through the withdrawal of her body, the inspiration of Dante as a lover to his poetic creation.

However, Dante's first work fails to represent her body and his desire. His failure is conveyed by Dante's attitude of being silent until he can 'speak of Beatrice more worthily'. (2001, p. 80). Such failure reveals Dante's incapability of seeing and confessing 'the true meaning of his 'marvellous vision' in the dream (1988, p. 30). If the dream and its 'marvellous vision' is the starting point of his literary creation, he cannot re-present the meaning of such revelation and postpone it to his next work, his **Divine Comedy**. The first stimulus in the dream scene makes Dante more and more distant from the body of Beatrice: 'never again, not even in paradise, will Dante be so near to Beatrice' (1988, p. 30). Consequently, only the crimson cloth remains as a locus of idealisation of a vision whose meaning was not possible to be grasped. Thus, 'the distance of a veil that holds him off from her naked presence gradually becomes the vast expanse of a cosmos that the poet will traverse in an inexorable venture of representation.' (1988, p. 30). His desire is driven to poetic creation as an attempt to fulfil and depict such desire.

Therefore, it is inferable from Harrison's analysis that Dante represents his inward desire, conceals and transforms it into poetic mimesis. He represents in this scene a fully desiring self, as well as his feelings, emotions, suffering, ideas and anxieties. Dante represents a desiring sexual and sensual inwardness in his work, even though it is obsessively veiled by the crimson cloth and then by poetic and imagetic figuration. His poetic undertaking will figuratively hide and repress his innermost unconfessed sexual and sensual desire for Beatrice in his poetry. His poetic creation will veil such desire in metaphors, images, silences and anxieties.

However, in terms of literary creation Harrison is not the first critic to note Dante's

innovation in literature. Auerbach wrote a beautiful analysis of Dante's works in his book **Dante Poet of the Secular World** (2007a).[32] Auerbach points out that Dante was one of the first to represent the human inwardness in human historicity and fate. For Auerbach, Dante in his **Comedy** 'transforms Being into experience; he makes the world *come into being* by exploring it.' (2007a, p. 94). Every character in *Hell* or *Purgatorio* acts according to his feelings and desires. Human Being is always the result of their feelings, actions, ideas, convictions and anxieties. Dante's achievement is to represent human inwardness in a new literary form. According to Auerbach (2007a), 'for Dante, as for the earlier poets, the primary factor was an inward striving for form, and such a striving was already present in high degree when he found both a confirmation and a model in the poems of Virgil and other Latin writers' (2007a, p. 53). Dante creates a new form of language, syntax and twists which enables him to represent inwardness through action. For Auerbach, Dante 'discovered the European representation (Gestalt) of man' and that makes him the father of modern literature (2007a, p. 174). Auerbach points that man in Dante's work is no longer a remote hero, but a man with human traits. For Auerbach, Dante represents

> Man, not as a remote legendary, not as an abstract or anecdotal representative of an ethical type, but man as we know him in his living historical reality, the concrete individual in his unity and wholesome; and in that he has been followed by all subsequent portrayers of man, regardless of whether they treated a historical or mythical or a religious subject. (2007a, p. 174-175)

Though Augustine represented his inner feelings in his work, Dante's representation of the human being is a rather humanised self in his characters, acting and suffering the consequences of his actions. In Dante, 'the empirical person, the individual with his inner life, could become an object of mimesis.' (2007a, p. 179). This argument by Auerbach enhances that Beatrice, just as other figures in his **Comedy**, are not represented as a mere evasive figure. The lifelikeness of his works makes Beatrice seem a woman, as any character in the **Comedy** figures as a human being. The renewing literary form enabled the mimesis of inwardness in his poetry.

Likewise, centuries later Shakespeare will represent, in the drama, rather humanised figures such as Hamlet, Viola, Macbeth, Lady Macbeth, Shylock, Lear, Cleopatra, and many other in his dramas. Especially in **The Merchant of Venice**, Shylock wil project his innermost feelings in material things, such as his ducats and his 'turquoise', the ring he was

[32] It is quite strange, however, why Harrison did not quote Erich Auerbach's work, first published in 1961 in the United States.

given by his bereaved wife Leah, which Jessica will dispisingly sell for a monkey. As soon as he discovers that Jessica sold his ring, he will uncontrollably rage on the streets for his loss and he will claim his lost ring, wherein he projected his affection regarding his wife. Shakespeare innovated his drama with the mimesis of inwardness, just as he deepened the representations of psychic inner workings such as what Psychoanalysis will name projections, desires, anxieties, and conscience.

1. 3. Montaigne and the Self-Investigation of an Inward Space

Montaigne employed a mimesis of an inward space in his **Essays**. The French essayist investigated customs, behaviour, moral feelings, just as his own inward feelings, emotions, thoughts and ideas. His innovating work proposes to investigate the *for interieur*. In the 'preface' for the **Essays**, Montaigne enhances that 'it is myself the matter of this book' (1987, p. 95), which characterises his self-investigative proposal from the start. Montaigne introduced renewing elements in his **Essays**, in its form, style and content, which influenced Shakespeare a great deal. It is quite known that he strongly influenced Shakespeare after 1603 when Florio's translation of the **Essays** was first published in England. But there is evidence that perhaps Shakespeare knew some of Montaigne's essays in French before Florio's translation. Shakespeare could read very well in French, as well as he wrote some scenes in French in **Henry V**. There were many editions of Montaigne's essays in French in England during the late 16th century. However, critics point out that Montaigne's impact on Shakespeare's writing is more evident after the translation into English. But what is important now is to notice that just as Shakespeare employed a genuine mimesis of inwardness in the drama, Montaigne used a genuine literary form, the essay, to represent inwardness or, as Friedrich (2010) suggests, subjectivity.[33]

Some traits in Montaigne's **Essays** demonstrate self-investigation, the investigation of conscience and inwardness. He demonstrates blending and nuances of inwardness in his work. Thereto, he creates mimetic devices to represent inwardness, such as the divagating style, sometimes sinuous and hesitating, which alludes to inward floatation; he inserts syntax without rhetorical ornaments and stiffness. The rhythmic movement, according to Auerbach in his **Mimesis** (2007c), leads the reader to the twist and turns of inwardness and of human condition. Besides that, his ironic humbleness and his scepticism are innate signs in his style

[33] Hugo Friedrich thinks that Montaigne created subjectivity in the essays because all his writing about feelings, thoughts, anxieties and behaviour are pervaded by Hellenistic philosophic assumptions. For that see, Hugo Friedrich, **Montaigne**, 2010.

and thought, which enable the self-investigation of the inward dimensions. Montaigne suggests that inwardness is perceived in inward floatation of feelings, changes of ideas and thoughts. For instance, in his essay *Of the inconstancy of our actions* he uses the analogy of our inward dimensions as a heap of pieces put together by chance.[34] Also in his essay *Of Repentance* he acknowledges the inward floatation of the self:

> If I speak variously of myself, it is because I consider myself variously; all the contrarieties are there to be found in one corner or another; after one fashion or another: bashful, insolent; chaste, lustful; prating, silent; laborious, delicate; ingenious, heavy; melancholic, pleasant; lying, true; knowing, ignorant; liberal, covetous, and prodigal: I find all this in myself, more or less, according as I turn myself about; and whoever will sift himself to the bottom, will find in himself, and even in his own judgment, this volubility and discordance. I have nothing to say of myself entirely, simply, and solidly without mixture and confusion. 'Distinguo' is the most universal member of my logic. (1987, III, ii, p. 153)

Montaigne is aware that our feelings, ideas and inward dimensions are put together by chance and they are built with diverse elements which seem to work independently and inharmoniously. This representation of inwardness is very figurative and it metaphorically gives an idea of the configuration of the self's inward space. He describes himself showing different inward dimensions and dispositions of the mind. He acknowledges diverse inward dispositions which are not seen in merely Manichean framework. Rather, he considers all of them, good and bad dimensions of the self, important to configure the notion of the inner self.

Because his essay is an attempt to investigate the self and human condition, Montaigne does not use the conventional rhetoric of his age. The choice of a free and open form and language is due to the necessity of representing inwardness. For Hugo Friedrich (2010), there are two essential aspects in Montaigne's work: the new literary form and Montaigne's literary consciousness of his innovating work. His literary consciousness is essential to the innovating aspects of his **Essays**. He goes against the grain of the artistically elaborated forms of the humanists. He is aware of the 'clear idea of the unusual effect which the open form of his essayistic prose must produce'. (2010, p. 348). Though many writers used the essay beforehand, Montaigne is the first writer to discover the aesthetic quality of the essays. In fact, the divagation about the inward space of the individual needed another rhetoric which could comprehend the floatation and incoherence of the mind and human feelings. As he points out in his essay *Of the Inconstancy of our Actions*, 'I discompose and trouble myself by the instability of my own posture; and whoever will look narrowly into his own bosom, will hardly find himself twice in the same condition. I give to my soul sometimes

[34] Cf. book II, essay I, p. 101-102, 1987.

one face and sometimes another, according to the side I turn her to.' (1987, II, I, p. 100). Montaigne adapts the form to the content, since he understands that the meaning conveyed in the essays must be enhanced by its innovating structure. This renewing writing contributes, for him, to crystallise his consciousness and thereby he adopts the 'simultaneous observation' of facts and of his inward feelings, which form 'a tracing of the transformations of the floating subjectivity' and of 'the eternal movement of his spirit' (2010, p. 342-343). Thus, writing is for him a reflection about himself. His consciousness as a writer is part of his consciousness about himself. (2010, p. 340).

This innovating form is essential to define Montaigne's work. According to Auerbach, in his **Mimesis** (2007), 'Montaigne is something new; the flavour of the personal element' and, precisely, of only one person, presents himself penetratedly and 'the form of expression is still more spontaneous and near the language spoken every day' (2007, p. 259). Auerbach defines that Montaigne presents a modern and 'rigorous method' (2007, p. 255) and he describes it as 'the method of listening to himself, of the observation of his own inward movements' (2007, p. 261). Montaigne is the first to create the aesthetics of the essays. There were more elaborated forms of language in the period, but Montaigne was not much concerned about the formal style of theoretical discourses of the age. On the contrary, he is concerned about the mimesis of inwardness in a simple and open language. He considered inwardness as an aesthetic issue which needed a new form for its representation. That is something that Adorno acknowledges about the essay in the 20th century: for him there is no way of talking about the aesthetic unless in an aesthetic form, i. e., the form needs to be adapted to the content of the essays. (2008, p. 18).[35] Therefore, Montaigne's innovating essayistic form represents an *avant la lettre* undertaking of the modern essay.

For Montaigne, there are some uncontrolled dimensions in inwardness. For example, in his essay *Of Repentance* (III, ii) Montaigne describes the floatation inherent to the feelings, thoughts and human inwardness:

> I cannot fix my object; 'tis always tottering and reeling by a natural giddiness; I take it as it is at the instant I consider it; I do not paint its being, I paint its passage; not a passing from one age to another, or, as the people say, from seven to seven years, but from day to day, from minute to minute, I must accommodate my history to the hour: I may presently change, not only by fortune, but also by intention. 'Tis a counterpart of various and changeable accidents, and of irresolute imaginations, and, as it falls out, sometimes contrary: whether it be that I am then another self, or that I take subjects by other circumstances and considerations: so it is that I may adventure contradict myself, but, as Demades said, I never contradict the truth. Could my soul

[35] See Adorno's essay *O Ensaio como forma*, in **Notas de Literatura I**, 2008.

> once take footing, I would not essay but resolve: but it is always learning and making trial. (1987, III, II, p. 152-153).

Montaigne makes clear in this part that ideas, thoughts and feelings are not fixed and unchangeable, but they are prone to changes, floatation and contradictions. When describing himself, something alters in inwardness, because the analysis changes it, as long as he tries to pin down its meaning and shape. It is crystal clear for him that we are sensitive to outward changes. There is no way of controlling feelings, once they seem to be controlled by some mysterious forces. Such contradictions are therefore what constitute human essence and inwardness.

Even though Montaigne proposes to investigate the aetiology of inwardness, he confesses in his essay *Of Fear* the difficulty in dealing with such issue. In this essay he acknowledges once again the incapability of controlling feelings such as shame and fear:

> I am not so good a naturalist (as they call it) as to discern by what secret springs fear has its motion in us; but, be this as it may, 'tis a strange passion, and such a one that the physicians say there is no other whatever that sooner dethrones our judgment from its proper seat; which is so true, that I myself have seen very many become frantic through fear; and, even in those of the best settled temper it is most certain that it begets a terrible astonishment and confusion during the fit. (1987, I, XVIII, p. 153)

He observes that certain human feelings such as fear, shame, conscience are uncontrolled by our rationality, just as Psychoanalysis acknowledges such fact in the 20th century. We see Montaigne's consciousness in distinguishing different twist and turns of the mind, thought, conscience and unconscious. They make part of the human dimensions which make us vulnerable, even though we try to control them. There is something in inwardness which is beyond our understanding and which deceives us all the time. Therefore, when we try to analyse ourselves, the analysis interferes in our feelings and thoughts, changing them immediately. What we think that we represent is only a vague and evasive idea of all our mental fluxes. Again in his essay *Of the Inconstancy of our Actions*, he points that

> We do not go, we are driven; like things that float, now leisurely, then with violence, according to the gentleness or rapidity of the current. […] We fluctuate betwixt various inclinations; we will nothing freely, nothing absolutely, nothing constantly. In any one who had prescribed and established determinate laws and rules in his head for his own conduct, we should perceive an equality of manners, an order and an infallible relation of one thing or action to another, shine through his whole life. (1987, II, I, p. 98)

When we talk about ourselves, we can speak not exactly what we are, but what we seem or want to be. In that sense, such indeterminacy, imprecision and this set of 'mental fluxes', thoughts, feelings and ideas are a space of ambiguities, ambivalences, paradoxes and incongruences of the self. He admits that such incoherence, ambivalence and instability are elements which allude to the uncontrolled dimensions of the inner-self. It is influenced by external elements creating a space of instability. For him,

> For my part, the puff of every accident not only carries me along with it according to its own proclivity, but moreover I discompose and trouble myself by the instability of my own posture; and whoever will look narrowly into his own bosom, will hardly find himself twice in the same condition. I give to my soul sometimes one face and sometimes another, according to the side I turn her to. (1987, II, I, p. 100).

He describes his inward state presenting opposing feelings and attitudes, which signs his awareness that human beings are determined by paradoxical dimensions. Though these dimensions are conflicting, they can co-exist harmoniously in the self, as long as the human being acknowledges them and knows how to manage such uncontrolling dimensions. In that sense, Auerbach observes that in Montaigne 'man is a vacillating being, subject to changes of the world, of fate and of his own inward movements'. (2007, p. 255). The soul and reason are always modified by the experience. Moreover, the French essayist tries to pin down his inwardness employing diverse images. For instance, he uses the metaphor of the wind as a form of representing the instability of feelings. Thus, outside elements as experiences, sensations and others' opinions interfere in our thoughts, attitudes and feelings.

Montaigne was also aware of the interference that the feelings have in our judgement and understanding. In his essay *That is folly to measure truth and error by our own capacity* he anticipates some assumptions of modern Kantian Philosophy. As he states,

> 'tis a foolish presumption to slight and condemn all things for false that do not appear to us probable; which is the ordinary vice of such as fancy themselves wiser than their neighbours. I was myself once one of those; and if I heard talk of dead folks walking, of prophecies, enchantments, witchcrafts, or any other story I had no mind to believe […]. Whereas I now find, that I myself was to be pitied as much, at least, as they; not that experience has taught me anything to alter my former opinions, though my curiosity has endeavoured that way; but reason has instructed me, that thus resolutely to condemn anything for false and impossible, is arrogantly and impiously to circumscribe and limit the will of God, and the power of our mother nature, within the bounds of my own capacity, than which no folly can be greater. (1987, I, XXVII,p. 239)

Montaigne points out our incapability of judging certain phenomena only by reason. Sensibility and feelings are essential in the constitution of judgement. In many moments we

cannot explain certain phenomena only using reasoning and scientific thought. He insists that there is something in our feelings, imagination and sensibility which come together with rationality. Similarly, in Montaigne's work Auerbach draws our attention to this important trait in Montaigne's essay, which enhances that thinking is co-determined by imagination and sensibility. For Auerbach,

> the superiority of knowledge acquires a positive meaning, in the view of knowledge theory, only for the moral research of the man; because Montaigne envisages the research of the *humaine condition* in general with the investigation of life itself as a whole and he manifests thus the heuristic principle of which we use continuously, consciously or unconsciously, sensitively or not, when we are involved in understanding and judging the acts of other men… (2007, p. 265)

For Montaigne our judgement is fallible if we analyse a phenomenon only by our rationality. He draws the attention to the failure of rationality which negates extraordinary facts. Even though certain phenomena seem improbable, Montaigne does not reject the possibility of the failure of our judgement and rationality. To doubt is to the French essayist a virtue, since in doubting and questioning the truth, it is possible to create and constitute new forms of thinking and acting. According to Friedrich (2010), any judgement is imperfect and vague. Such discovery is one of the greatest vectors of Montaigne's **Essays** and its application is essential to his moral Science. (2010, p. 166).

Therefore, mediaeval and early modern authors such as Augustine, Dante, Montaigne and Shakesepare introduced some innovations in literary forms to depict inwardness. Such mimesis depends on the twists of language, level and quantities of figurations, the innovating syntax, deepening and intensification of feelings and inward obscure dimensions suggested in their work. Thus, Shakespeare renewed the mimesis of inwardness in the middle of an on-going process which had its roots in social, cultural, and historical events, such as merchantilism, the invention of the press, the new world discoveries, religious changes. Indeed, the emergence of inwardness was a fact which was 'hovering in the air'. Therefore, in authors such as Dante, Augustine, and Montaigne, one can assert that inwardness was, to some extent, a process being constituted and shaped some centuries before Shakespeare.

1. 4. Problems of Representation and Shakespearean Mimesis of Inwardness

The mimesis of inwardness in Shakespeare's drama, especially in **The Merchant of Venice**, is configured by a set of poetical constellations which constitute the rhetoric of inwardness. The texture of the play is filled with breaks in language, silences, contradictions, verbal slips, doubles and the mirroring device. Thus, inwardness is represented by suggestive signs in the characters' speeches and attitudes; in a subtler level, in bodily gestures, pathos, conscience, shame and anxieties. The enigma of human inner life is constructed and represented by such traits, creating the illusion of lifelikeness in Shakespeare's characters.

Furthermore, Shakespearean mimesis of inwardness is rooted in some cultural and imagistic issues of his age. In that sense, Claude-Gilbert Dubois (1984) has written a thought-provoking essay on the problems of representation in the Renaissance.[36] According to Dubois, the representation or mimesis can be systematised by simultaneously taking into account its 'tools of representation' and its 'mental structures, which determine models, through the intermediary of real objects that reproduce the ideal model and are reproduced through the means of art.' (1984, p. 461). In his opinion, the Renaissance was quite concerned about transposing mental structures, of cultural domain, into 'real images'. Such creative process was explained by the 'mimesis of an ideal model.' (1984, p. 461). Dubois bases his concept of mimesis on Auerbach's assumptions, rather than in Aristotle. When images and ideas are voiced together, we have a mimesis of the ideal model.

In the Renaissance, the aesthetic problems of *mimesis* are situated at the convergence of the means of representation and ideology (Dubois, 1984, p. 461), ideology meaning here the Platonic domain of the ideas. In a first level, the Renaissance naturalism is determined by the imitation of the natural object, an imitation which 'claims to remain faithful to the optical laws of representation'. (Dubois, 1984, p. 461-462). In that sense, the 16th century ideal of representation is this naturalism and this idealism, which culminates in an imagined '"perfect" representation of nature' which is at the same time 'the quintessence of its reality'. (Dubois, 1984, p. 462). In a deeper level, the 'mimetic desire is so powerful that it ends up transferring the creating subject into its object of representation's "vivid representation".' (Dubois, 1984, p. 462). That is why the represented object is not at all objective, but it is interfered by the creator's subjective dimensions which shape and transfigure the created object.

However, mimesis is entrapped by its own laws, once 'to reproduce is to multiply' and such multiplication and reproduction is the negation of the ideal model, considering that

[36] See DUBOIS, Claude-Gilbert. *Problems of "Representation" in the Sixteenth Century*, 1984.

uniqueness is the ‘essential characteristic’ of the object (Dubois, 1984, p. 462). By doubling and redoubling itself, by endlessly ‘engendering itself’, the unique object ‘ultimately loses itself in the infinite’ (Dubois, 1984, p. 462). As a result, the change from this unique view of the object to its multiplicity has been seen as the loss of uniqueness of the object’s characteristics, which consequently led to mannerism. (Dubois, 1984, p. 462). Thus, the first hindrance is multiplication which denies the unity of the represented object. And the second hindrance is the difference. For Dubois, ‘the mimetic desire is linked to a concern about differentiation, very often unconscious, that corresponds to the imitator’s desire to separate himself from his model, a break or difference through which he expresses himself as a creator. Creation is differential imitation.’ (Dubois, 1984, p. 462). Subjectivism is a powerful dimension which interferes in the creation, but it is not subjectivism per se, but the creator’s view on the represented object is a rather vivid and innovating creation.

Dubois evokes the Lacanian assumption of the desire of differentiation evoking the splitting of the self from the Other. Dubois’ view on Renaissance mimesis is based on Lacanian concepts, such as the imaginary, the symbolic and the mimetic desire of the creator. In that sense, Dubois asserts that

> Subjectivism substitutes new aesthetic criteria for objectivism; the perversion of mimetic desire makes it stray from the desire for the Same towards the emergence of the Other, from the representation of the object towards the representation of the very act of representing through direct or indirect inscription of the subject in his work. Difference from the model is what marks the presence and the originality of the subject. This subjective expressiveness is a characteristic of mannerism and as such is opposed to the objectivism of renascent classicism. (Dubois, 1984, p. 462)

Dubois perceives that subjectivism seeks for representing not the object as such, but the very act of representation which inscribes the self in his work is a ‘subjective expressiveness’ which makes the mannerist representation different from the Renaissance classicism, marked by objectivism. As the self, in fact the creator inscribes his subjective mimetic desire in his work and thus psychological representation is possible. Shakespeare’s mimesis would be rather inscribed in the subjective traits, instead of a classicist representation of his object, human inner life.

He asserts that two of the diverse technological discoveries in the Renaissance ‘had such far-reaching consequences for the modes of representation of the object: optics and printing.’ (Dubois, 1984, p. 464). Such technologies allowed the representation of big quantities of the same object. ‘Printing is therefore a rationalization of mimetism with an eye to a predetermined objective.’ (Dubois, 1984, p. 464). In the same trend, the progress of the

foundry technology is linked to such mimetism of objects. Especially the art of the medal is a form of memoration in the age. In Dubois' view,

> In this connection, one art – the art of the medal – is of particular interest in relation to problems of representation. The medal is the representation, by a seal imprinted upon metal, of a past event or glorious deed that is being commemorated. Commemoration is an act of collective memory, it combines a plural recollection and a representation (in the most literal sense of the word 'placing back in the present') of an action or of an important person whose memory should endure. In an absolute sense, 'memoration,' the representation in a material substance that resists time, seeks to transform a past moment into an eternal present. (Dubois, 1984, p. 464).

One case of the medal in Shakespeare is in **Hamlet**, when the prince compares his medal, which is of his bereaved father, and his mother's medal, which is of Claudius, the usurper of the throne. Hamlet's comparison of the medals together with his powerful rhetoric convince his mother's mistake by remembering his father's godlike figure in contrast to his uncle's satyr-like figure. He tries to convince his mother of her mistake by reminding her of the differences between the bereaved king and Claudius, the usurper of the throne.

Other forms of memoration in objects, such as sculpture on marble or bronze, and paper make the original object ideal and virtual representations to endure time. However, there is a paradox in reproducing the object in many copies:

> The paradox lies in the fact that the propagation of the model through multiplication runs counter to the singleness of the model. Accustomed as one was to the juxtaposition of two attributes of the Single Being and of the Eternal Being, now, on the contrary, we witness an "eternization" through the natural means of seminal propagation which biologically and technically is named reproduction. (Dubois, 1984, p. 464-465)

Memoration as an attempt of eternisation is a suggestive dimension of representation in art, or else, in other means, such the art of medal, medallion making, and portrait painting. Thus, memoration allows fixing the memory of an object or a person in a material form, which enables to have access to the absent object in the memory.

Though Dubois' comparison between art and other forms of representation seems quite at odd of the actual problems of representation, he enhances the necessity of such counterpoint in order to understand the theories of representation in the Renaissance age. In his book **The Imaginary of the Renaissance** (1995, p. 10), Dubois states that it is indispensable to study not only the cultural domain, but also the scientific and technological domains in order to understand the configuration of the imaginary implied in the representation in 16th art and literature. As Dubois asserts,

> The technical processes of reproduction must be studied in order to understand the resonances they will have with those philosophies that circulated concepts and metaphors borrowed from the registers of optics and imagistics; in the particular applications of ideas used from Platonism, the same problems will be encountered – unity and multiplicity, eternity, and time. (Dubois, 1984, p. 465).

As a philosophical discussion, it helps to think the emerging possibilities of representation, as well as the potential reactions to new forms of representation in the age. The Renaissance age used constantly metaphors of optics, medallions, mirrors, sculptures, painting, portraits to refer to the mimetic creation in art and poetry. The jargon of the art and poetry texts adapted and embodied such metaphors as ways of thinking representation and mimesis in the 16th century. Furthermore, in the 16th century, there emerged another instrument of representation: the mirror. In Dubois' view,

> It is the mirror, which will be the object of a real technical revolution in the middle of the sixteenth century. In this period, in Venice, the mirror, as we know it today, was invented through a process which consists of applying a coat of mercury between a glass and a protective sheet. (Dubois, 1984, p. 465).

Dubois points out that the symbolism of the mirror was initially psychological. It represented both Prudence and Vanity. (Dubois, 1984, p. 465). However, counterpoised to other forms of memoration, the representation reflected in the mirror is rather ephemeral and momentary. As a result, the mirror reflection as a momentary form of representation may have provoked rather psychological and imaginary qualities of the mirror, different from other permanent forms of representation. Representing momentary forms of perceptiveness of others' feelings, such as fears, doubt, anger, would be connected to the momentary image reflected in the mirror. Also, medallions, portraits and other objects are the equivalents of the reflection of the faces in a mirror. Dubois asserts that 'by fixing a reflection in paint, the portraits are connected to memory, obsession, and fidelity.' (Dubois, 1984, p. 465). For example, in Shakespeare, such characteristics, memory, obsession and fidelity are implied is Shylock's representation of Leah in the turquoise. The imaginary projection of his esteem for Leah is implied in his obsessiveness with his turquoise, given him by Leah when he was a bachelor.

Furthermore, the mirror, by its 'reflecting surface' allowed the creation of rooms and galleries of mirrors 'which reflect the interior as well as the exterior world. Nature and social life are thus subject to being reproduced and transformed through art into a moving picture.' (Dubois, 1984, p. 465-466). Moreover, the meaning of representation gains subtler dimensions with the quality of the reflecting image in a mirror. Such invention, the mirror,

enabled new forms of representation in art: 'painting will know how to make the most of the effects of multiplying forms by painting both the originals and their reflections in mirrors or reflecting surfaces.' (Dubois, 1984, p. 466). The mirror enabled the multiplication of the reflected images in other mirrors, a mirror mirroring a mirror. Velasquez' famous painting *Las Meninas*, very well analysed by Foucault in the introduction to his **Les mots et les choses**, is a good example of how the mirror enabled the mimesis of reflecting images in painting. The representation in the painting is a form of projecting into the picture not only the object – *Las Meninas* – but also the painter himself and other portraits and renewing forms of representation (such as changing the focus from the viewer to other points in the picture). Velasquez' masterpiece is an innovation in painting with the introduction of the mirror as a form of meta-painting.

Moreover, the quality of the representation enabled by the mirror is also symbolic and even allegoric:

> In addition, the improvement of the quality of the image gives new meaning to the symbolism of the mirror: clarity or fidelity is now emphasized. So the mirror becomes another eye, the allegory of a reflecting conscience, and philosophy conveys the vague memory of these metaphors of the mirror in its vocabulary, in words like reflection and speculation. (Dubois, 1984, p. 466).

These meanings of the mirror help to understand the deeper and subtler meaning of the mirroring device in Shakespeare's work. The symbolism of the mirror – clarity as an 'allegory of a reflecting conscience' – works behind Shakespeare's technique of mirroring in one character what another feels and fears. These new technologies participated in the elaboration of a network of concepts and techniques created by artists; also, 'theorists of knowledge conceived [the mirror] as a system of mimetic representation.' (Dubois, 1984, p. 466). Thus, the 'specular system of representation' was employed metaphorically to designate and define the 'modes of representation' that had indirect connection to the 'phenomena of optics'. As a result, the painting was 'imagined as a reproduction, in the second degree, of the picture in the eye of the painter, a sort of reflecting and projecting mirror.' (Dubois, 1984, p. 466). The painter's imaginative and subjective creation was transposed into art as a representation pervaded by the artist's eye. Thus, the mirroring device is a dramatic device which enables the psychological representation of human feelings in the character's acts, attitudes, behaviour, and speeches.

The various technologies created enabled two theories of representation in the 16th century. As Dubois describes them,

> The development of the means of reproduction, and the possibility, perceived as marvelous in its beginnings, to multiply objects should further be related to two characteristics of sixteenth-century theories of representation: on the one hand, the theory of the model and of imitation, a sort of mirror-like reflection taken out of its field to constitute a theory of knowledge which establishes the Platonic Idea as the model of our ideas and the pole of our affects, and as a theory of art; and, on the other hand, the relation between the One and the Many. (Dubois, 1984, p. 466).

The theories of imitation *per se* epitomised objectivism as an ideal of representation, whereas multiplication enabled the changing of the original object in multiple different objects, which allowed the introduction of the imaginative and subjective dimensions of the creator. Specifically in Shakespeare, the virtual act of creation was not a new copy of the person in real life; instead, the representation of the human inward world was the result of keen perceptiveness of other people's life, and the creator's own observation of his inner world led to the configuration of lifelikeness in the drama. The creator's empiricist capacity of decoding inner workings of human inwardness is indeed pervaded by the creator's subjective dimensions as well.

Moreover, the relation between the unique object and the other object, Dubois suggests, led to 'the interest in collections'. Then, the point was to have a complete series of antiques, coins, paintings, medals, instead of merely boasting a unique piece. (Dubois, 1984, p. 466). In that sense, Dubois makes a very suggestive point on the repetition in writing: 'Repetition may be considered the literary version of reproduction, and accumulation of epithets attached to the same substantive may be understood as equivalent to a collection of its qualities.' (Dubois, 1984, p. 467). Repetition of patterns of the characters' behaviour and feelings, repetition of images, comparisons, words, metaphors, breaks in language and other literary devices, which were deepened and intensified in the Renaissance, may be seen as correlative forms in literary writing of the Renaissance interest in collections. A very illustrative example is Shylock's obsessive repetition of words and adjectives to describe what he wishes, but it is also a way that Shakespeare employed to suggest his inward obsessive traits. However, Shakespeare goes beyond the mere patterns of repetition in his work. Though Shakespeare employs such repetitions as a device in his plays, they aim at producing specific effects in each play and not merely repeating and accumulating such devices in his work. His main concern is to represent the characters' inward feelings, ideas, thoughts and behaviour through repetitions of patterns.

Dubois points out that the enigmatic of human nature and the non-human nature is embedded in the dynamic forces between the unity of the Being and its creating and multiplying potentiality:

> The enigma of the diversity of beings and of the vicissitudes of things finds its explanation in this dialectic: the unique Being creates by multiplying itself, by dividing itself, by diversifying itself in the multiplicity of its parts, but this multiplicity cannot hide the opposite movement […], which is the aspiration to unity. (Dubois, 1984, p. 470).

Thus, this aspiration to unity, to the unique Being, the mimetic desire of becoming a god (or God) leads the character into the tragic. Such conflict embodied both in the creator and in his creature, such as a character or a work (**The Merchant of Venice**, **Macbeth**, **Hamlet**, **King Lear**), is the quintessence of human nature elevated at his most powerful and ambiguous dimensions. Human conflict is always the (frustrated) attempt at overcoming the endless desire of becoming a god-like creature, as well as an endless attempt of overcoming death and finitude. The tragic conflict is the essence of the utmost conflict of the human being. Shakespeare created works that embodied such essence and conflicts to create aesthetic and dramatic effects.

In a certain sense, the representation could be conceived as a 'symbolic construct belonging to the world of signs' (Dubois, 1984, p. 471). Consequently, there are some interferences 'between the mode of production of images and the mode of production of meaning' that can create 'ambivalence and confusion. The most extreme form of mimetic desire consists in making imitation into an identification with the object.' (Dubois, 1984, p. 471). This is the so-called 'vivid representation', representation as the specular nature of the object. The artist aims at the 'perfect identification of the representation' with the object which can confound it with the original object. (Dubois, 1984, p. 471). However, the mimetic desire does not simply create a copy of the original, but a representation which is different from the original, creating then an object with other meanings and ambiguities. For Dubois, 'in realistic terms, this comes down to attributing the vital and dynamic characteristics of desire, which are the privilege of the subject, to the object of desire.' (Dubois, 1984, p. 471). The subjective dimensions of the creator make the mimetic desire twist the represented object in a rather oblique form. In other words, Dubois asserts that

> The written text, which pretends to be, according to an objectivist illusion, the faithful vehicle of the idea, becomes the voice of subjective desire, and not of the "reality" of objects of which it does not partake; it is ultimately used to exhibit style. Working in the mannerist style implies that the creator wants both to show all the possibilities of the

> multiplication of words, meanings, and forms and also to play with them to the limit of the absurd in order to make us understand that it is not what is represented that has a meaning per se: it only has meaning in that it makes us admire the ingenious technique of the representation. (Dubois, 1984, p. 477).

Thus, the representation of the object is not a specular copy of nature, but it is pervaded by the 'voice of the subjective desire'. The mode of representation and its techniques create an illusion of the real which means not the real, but the imaginary and symbolic transformed into the object. This illusion created by the representation can make a theatre of the real. In a subtler level, the illusion of the inward dimensions of the self can be only created when the subjective mimetic desire of the creator configures and suggests the inner voice of the character into mimetic devices such as inner debate, breaks in language, silences, representation of bodily feelings, ideas, thoughts, fears and anxieties. This is an illusionist impression to be created in a character.

Dubois goes deeper into the twists and turns of the mimetic desire, pointing that the mimetic illusion is erroneous, because there is no possibility of accessing the real:

> The mimetic illusion takes as its point of departure an erroneous hypothesis: that reality is accessible to us and that art is a producer of the real. Artistic work does not originate in a reality but in a need: it is precisely because we have no access to reality that we try to seize it, that a mimetic desire to recreate the world exists. The real is the impossible. Conversely what does exist is the desire for reality which proceeds from a need both impossible to meet (since we have no access to reality) and impossible to leave as it is (since it would deny the force of desire). Because of the impossibility of attaining the real, the mimetic illusion is created, an illusion of which the narcissistic foundations have been placed in the foreground by modern psychology: the mimetic illusion is the aesthetic extension of the consequence of the stade du mirroir. (Dubois, 1984, p. 476).

The *stade du mirroir* could be considered as the primeval moment in constitution of the illusion of the real. The impossibility of attaining the real enables the creation of the illusion of the real and such impossibility enables the existence of the endless mimetic desire to depict the real. Furthermore, the aesthetic works inquire on the relationship of the creator, the subject to the 'universe of the objects' just as to the 'models which are provided by the culture of which that subject is a part.' The mimetic desire, the desire of representing the object implicitly represents the relation 'that the subject shares with the object,' and situates such relation 'as a symptom in a totality we could call the cultural syndrome.' (Dubois, 1984, p. 477). Therefore, the specific realism imagined in the represented object shifts towards subjectivism because it aims at displaying the subject's capability and talent of creating a technique which can portray the mimetic desire transfigured in the object, rather than the mere representation of the object. (Dubois, 1984, p. 477). For Dubois, 'the mirror, the reflector that

pretends to be clear and faithful, like any other instrument of reproduction, can be used for the creation of artifice'. (Dubois, 1984, p. 477).

Furthermore, Dubois defines the dialectic relationship between Unity and Multiplicity as the centrality of the aesthetic concepts. By such point Dubois proposes a theory of styles which 'put forth a few hypotheses on the various stylistic modalities of the arts of representation.' (Dubois, 1984, p. 470). He divides the styles in three main moments of representation:

> Renascent 'classicism' is the outcome of a yearning for balance which produces 'harmony', it is a privileged relationship between quantities, elements, and materials that is determined by a law (the law of proportions). Classicism is an aesthetic of relationships; the work of art is constructed according to a unity achieved through a proportioned disposition of relationships. Mannerism corresponds to the explosion of this unity. […] The Baroque is imposing and imposes itself - or is rejected – through force or ruse. The ruse lies in hiding a relentless unitary determination behind the diversity of appearances, the luxuriousness of the decors, and the delirium of the forms. (Dubois, 1984, p. 470).

Though Dubois is dealing with the French tradition of literary and artistic history, the description of styles as modes of representation helps us to understand the issues of mimesis in the 16th century. In fact, sixteenth century literature in England is not defined based on characteristics, but rather in epochal terms: the Tudor Age and the Elizabethan Age. But the important point here is that the differences in styles in Literature is a yearning to creating a work, whose style is consequent of the mimetic desire to make a vivid representation of an ideal object. In that sense, Auerbach's perceptiveness of the differences in styles illuminates the discussion on the mimesis of inwardness in 16th century. The comic and the tragic traits in the drama are important to think the dramatic tensions in the play.

Erich Auerbach draws special attention to Shylock in his **Mimesis** (2007c). For him, Shakespeare enhanced Shylock's ridiculously burlesque traits, mainly Shylock's meanness and fear, demonstrating already a senile side of the Jew. (2007c, p. 280). This comic dimension in this scene is a common trait in Shakespearean drama, wherein he mingles both comic and tragic, lower and sublime. In fact, in Auerbach's opinion, Shakespeare's plots are mixed up with the tragic and comic, sublime and lower. There is a decisive side of the plays for the stylistic trait of the tragedy,

> the blend of styles in his very characters. Shylock's case, in which Shakespeare finally decides for a lower-comic vision, is an example of this iridescent between the tragic and the comic in one character. That is also found, in very different blends, in characters that deserve an essentially tragic handling.' (2007c, p. 281).

Shylock's burlesque traits, mingled with his despair, fear and mourning of his loss create ambivalent feeling in the play, suggesting the tensions and conflicts which Shylock must undergo as a result of his inability of teaching his daughter his values, keeping his wealth safe and using his skeptical abilities when he needed them. Such tensional and ambivalent situations are forms of representation of inner conflict and despair, which is quite particular of the Shakespearean mimesis of inwardness. The mixture of comic and dramatic is also a device to create such tensions in the play.

It is also worth observing what Auerbach remarks on the construction of the tragic and comic characters in Shakespeare. For him,

> [Shakespeare's] tragic figures, being from the upper classes, normally present stylistic breaks turning to the bodily-creatural, to the grotesque and discrepant, but rarely the reverse; Shylock is, perhaps, a unique figure which could be considered as an exception, and we have already seen how, even in his case, the tragic motifs are abandoned at the end. (2007c, p. 293).

Shylock is, in fact, a very adjoining case in Shakespeare's work. Parting from the comic level, Shakespeare leads Shylock to some moments of tragic tension and just right after that, he diminishes such tension by abandoning tragic motifs implied in the play. Such device is commonly named as *bathos*, the opposite of pathos, which is the reversal and descendent movement of complexifying situation or character which is interrupted by some other device, reasoning or an unimportant situation. Specifically in this case, the bathos is introduced by the comic traits of the scenes.[37] By introducing the comic in the mourning moments of Shylock's loss, Shakespeare creates tension and ambivalence in the audience's reaction to the play that could not decide between laughter and astonishment.

Auerbach is interested in Shakespeare's mingling of the characters' social class and the mingling of tragic and comic, and not specifically in the representation of inward feelings and dimensions. Yet, the analysis of tragic and comic traits in the play helps us understand the tensions and ambivalences created in the play. For Auerbach, all characters treated with tragicity and sublime are from the upper classes. However, an adjoining case is Shylock; but he is not merely a common and lower character, yet an outcast, even though he is from the lower class. The light and sooth plot of the play is charged with his character's seriousness and problematicity. He criticises the actors who tried to make him a tragic figure, because he is not tragic at all moments, but just in some. Nevertheless, for him 'his figure stimulates a

[37] Some called it anti-climax. For Wehmeier, in **Oxford Dictionary**, 2010, bathos is 'a sudden change, that is not always intended, from a serious subject or feeling to something that is silly or not important'. (2010, p. 115, entrance for *bathos*).

tragic over-interpretation: his hate is motivated in a deeper and more human way, more deeply than Richard III's evilness' (2007c, p. 279). Moreover, in terms of Shylock's attitudes Auerbach suggests that Shylock 'seems important by his violence and tenuousness'. Moreover, Shylock's arguments resemble the greatest humanist thought that moved thinkers of the next centuries. (2007c, p. 280). The audience's and the readers' reaction to the play is quite ambivalent, an aesthetic effect created by such ambivalent situations: comic and tragic, lower and higher. Therefore, the mimesis of comic and tragic traits is one of the problems of representation in Shakespeare's play.

Therefore, this research has found out that the Shakespearean mimesis of inwardness in **The Merchant of Venice** is characterised mainly by the following characteristics: when Shakespeare creates the illusion of the inward feelings, dimensions, thoughts and ideas in his drama, he enables the assessment to an undiscovered space of the self. His technique is to suggest through the language the inner debate, conflicts and anxieties of the self. It is configured by the constellation of images, silences, non-said, bodily gestures, breaks in language, qualms of conscience, contradictions, moments of tension and conflict. Such constellation is also perceived in the enigmas of verbal slips, pathos and the uncontrolled dimensions of the self or the mysterious forces of inwardness. Another important device in Shakespeare is the mirroring device, which is the reflection, the mirror representation of a character's feelings, anxieties and intentions in other character's behaviour and attitude. Thus, the silences, mirroring device, shame, bodily gestures, breaks in language, and inner debate are devices, named as the rhetoric of consciousness by Newman (1985)[38]. These constellations of images suggesting the inward space of the self defined the rhetoric of inwardness and the rhetoric of consciousness of the self. The mimetic desire enables the creation of an illusion of inwardness in Shakespeare's drama.

Besides that, the mirroring device, as a Renaissance reaction to the invention of the mirror, which is depicted in Shakespeare's drama, is very important to reveal a character's feelings in other characters of the play. For example, Shylock and Antonio present similar traits which mirror their inner space, such as Shylock's hatred and bitterness, which is visible in Antonio's hatred to Shylock. Moreover, Portia, Jessica and Antonio feel sadness and discontent. Such feelings are mirrored in the characters in order to suggest the anguishing anxiety towards the paternal figure. In fact, in Antonio's sadness there seems to be no convicted cause, except the suggestion that his sadness is due to the foreclosed anxiety

[38] See Karen Newman's **Shakespeare's Rhetoric of Comic Character: Dramatic Convention in Classical and Renaissance Comedy**. London: Routledge, 1985.

towards the paternal figure, symbolically represented in Shylock.

Also, Shylock works as a mirror to enhance the hypocritical attitudes by both Christians and the Jew. In fact, Shylock is a symbolic representation hatred that the Venetian society feels of themselves. Their aggression is a way of repressing what they do not want to see and do not want to acknowledge: that they depend on money and on the Jewish usury. In that sense, there is an evident confusion of feelings and wealth in the play, which can be named wealthy inwardness. That confusion of money and feelings is more evident in Antonio's verbal slip *purse/person*, in Bassanio's description of Portia in monetary terms, and especially in Shylock's obsession for money and material objects, epitomised in his loss of his ducats and his turquoise.

Shylock's inwardness is depicted in his pathos, verbal slips, uses of passive, breaks of language and modalisation in the use of the conditionals in his speeches. The grammatical devices depict Shylock's inward confused state, signalling his inner rupture and suffering. Shakespeare uses language twists, alliterations, and breaks in language to create mimetic devices to represent Shylock's confused and disrupted inward state. In terms of language, Portia's change of you/thou is also a way of representing her confusion and anxiety facing the representation of the primordial father in Shylock.

CHAPTER 2

Sadness and Discontent in Antonio's Inwardness

2. 1. Sadness, Weariness, Discontent in Antonio's Inwardness

Antonio is represented as a sad man when **The Merchant of Venice** starts. His sadness and bodily weariness suggest he is unhappy, submissive, and resigned. Such feelings are perceived in his first speech in the play:

> In sooth, I know not why I am so sad:
> It wearies me; you say it wearies you;
> But how I caught it, found it, or came by it,
> What stuff 'tis made of, whereof it is born,
> I am to learn;
> And such a want-wit sadness makes of me,
> That I have much ado to know myself. (I, i, 1-7)

Many critics tried to explain the cause of Antonio's sadness. Antonio, in a sort of self-scrutiny, wants to know the cause of his sadness. Such a *want-wit* (foolish) *sadness* is represented as a kind of disease or fever which contaminates Antonio and even the other characters. He searches not only for its origin, but also for its material constitution – 'What stuff 'tis made of'. This metaphor plastically displays multiple tones and constellations wherein one can imagine the actual causes of his melancholy: his fear of loss of material things, his fear of what he is and his fear of facing the past. The insistence on knowing its aetiology and knowing himself suggests what is hidden in his inward dimensions: he does not know exactly his inward feelings.

It is worth enhancing that after Antonio's revealing that he must know the cause of his sadness Shakespeare introduces a rupture in a verse, making it a four-syllable verse: 'I am to learn'. This verse makes the actor be in silent for a while and it represents a moment of pondering about his conditions and his inward feelings. Although Drakakis does not keep this silence in the play, it is important to the meaning of the speech.[39] According to Bernard Lott

[39] It is worth noticing that Drakakis (2010) in his new Edition to **The Merchant of Venice** does not keep such a rupture in the verse; instead, he joins this short verse with the next one, making it longer than 10 verses: 'I am to learn; And such a want-wit sadness makes of me'. However, Walter (1960) keeps such silence in this speech; likewise, Mowat & Werstine (1992) and Kaplan & Bevington keep this silence which was originally printed in the first Quarto and in the Folio.

(1984),[40] the ruptures and silences in Shakespeare's introduce the inward instability of the character of the play. After such silence, he unveils the need of self-knowledge. His insecurity and his instability are marked by this silence in the speech, as if he were pondering about what he would say next. It is the only moment the audience sees Antonio pondering in the play. In other moments, for example, when he accepts Shylock's bond he does not think it over. His insecurity is revealed only in this first speech and in the trial scene, whereas in other moments of the play he tries to seem confident and self-sufficient.

Moreover, the words *sad* and *wearies* will be repeated throughout the play, as symbolic motifs. The symbolic here means what Lacan suggests when he refers to the imaginary, the symbolic and the real. For Laplance and Pontalis, the symbolic conveys 'the order of the phenomena which Psychoanalysis deals with, as they are structured as a language. […] For Lancan, it is the structure of the symbolic system which is primordial' (2000, p. 480), instead of Freud's Symbolik which is pervaded by the imaginary. According to Laplanche and Pontalis, Lacan's notion of the symbolic seems to be correlated to two intentions: 'to approximate the structure of the unconscious to language and apply to it the method which proved its fecundity in linguistics; to show how the human subject is inserted into a pre-established order, which comes from the symbolic nature'. (2000, p. 481). However, Lacan always refused to define the symbolic and it seems to point to two main trends: 'to designate a *structure* whose discrete elements function as signifiers […]. To designate the *law* that founds this [symbolic] order'. (2000, p. 481). Then there comes Lacan's expression the *symbolic father* or *Le Nom du Père*.[41]

Such symbolic motifs pervade other characters' inward dimensions such as Bassanio's and Portia's. In fact, they are caused, as we will see, by the ur-father's anguishing presence in the play, epitomised by Shylock's figure. According to Adelman, Shylock represents the ur-father, the primordial father of the play and of all Christians (2008, p. 131). This sort of *spleen* and *melancholic* traits define the texture of **The Merchant of Venice**. They constitute the characters' inwardness and this symbolic motif will be doubled and mirrored in other characters' feelings, thoughts, and inward dimensions. Goddard[42] also noticed such sadness felt by at least four characters of the play. For Goddard,

> Dimly, in varying degrees, these Venetians and Belmontese reveal their uneasiness, a vague discontent, an unexplained sense of something wrong. [...] Melancholy, weariness, tedium –

[40] See his introduction to **Hamlet** (1984), wherein he states that the ruptures in the play's verse signal Hamlet's anxieties, feelings, emotions and disgust.
[41] See Laplanche and Pontalis' **Vocabulário da Psicanálise**. São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 2000.
[42] See Goddard's essay *The Three Caskets*, in John Wilders' casebook **Shakespeare: *The Merchant of Venice***, 1969.

> the reiteration confirm the conjecture. Over and over they give the sense of attempting to fill every chink of time with distraction and amusement, often just words, to prevent their thinking. (1969, p. 142-143)

The world of Belmont and Venice is described as a world of entertainment and pleasure. However, what moves such a world is money, 'gold is the symbol of this world of pleasure', says Harold Goddard. (1969, p. 142). They try to seem happy and unswerving, but those are mere facts of words and appearances, because they cannot hide their deepest discontent and uneasiness. Besides Antonio's sadness, Portia feels weariness; Jessica thinks her house is a hell and thus she feels tediousness; Launcelot is fearful and guilty of leaving Shylock's house; Bassanio asks when the gentlemen will laugh; Shylock hates music and loathes Antonio. They try to fill their emptiness and forget their sadness with money and pleasure. For Goddard, 'what these people are trying to elude is their own souls, or, as we say today, the Unconscious' (1696, p. 144). In fact, they do not wish to see what causes their anxieties. Sadness and weariness represent their obscure inner dimensions occluded in the unconscious. There is something uncontrolled in their inwardness which pops up in their sadness, maybe the mysterious forces enhanced by McGinn (2007).

Moreover, Salerio and Solanio try to discover what is in Antonio's mind. Salerio proposes that Antonio's mind is on the sea, since he has many 'argosies' there. Solanio says he would naturally be sad and worried about his 'argosies'. For him:

> Believe me, sir, had I such venture forth,
> The better part of my affections would
> Be with my hopes abroad. I should be still
> Plucking the grass, to know where sits the wind,
> Peering in maps for ports and piers and roads;
> And every object that might make me fear
> Misfortune to my ventures, out of doubt
> Would make me sad. (I, i, 15-22).

This dialogue between Antonio, Salerio, and Solanio presents the atmosphere and the dangers a merchant needed to face frequently. Salerio confesses the merchants' anxieties: fear of wreck of ships, boats, and piracy. Then, he suggests that Antonio is alienated and his feelings are invested in goods and money. He imagines that the cause of his sadness is due to his overvalued ships in the ocean. Salerio enhances his investment of feelings, such as 'the better part of my affections', 'hopes', 'fear', 'sad' in goods and merchandising. Such investment condensates one of the main traits of the play: the confusion and exchange of feelings for wealth and fortune, which is epitomised in Antonio's confusion of purse/person later on. Such confusion is a result of the desperate attempt to fulfil their minds with material

gains to forget their discontent.

Salanio and Salerio indict Antonio's unsafeness and insecurity. However, Antonio denies such facts. The play presents plastic metaphors of ventures in the ocean which represent men's insecurity. According to Lewis (1983)[43] the metaphors of the ventures in the ocean and man's insecurity were Elizabethan commonplaces:

> by repeating such a widely familiar metaphor, Shakespeare ensures that the largest part of his audience will apprehend the notion of man's basic uncertainty-insecurity in a shifting reality. The unknown lurks everywhere in Act I, Scene i; every attempt to identify the source of Antonio's melancholy yields the ambiguity that Solanio expresses [...] Like Antonio and his friends, we are constantly thrust back upon the "strangeness" of cause and effect in this fictive world; and we are forced to accept Antonio's reductive description of it… (1983, p. 22)

This metaphor suggests Antonio's emotional and financial instability. Lewis proposes that 'Shakespeare includes much reason for fear in the first scene-fear that Antonio does not feel, perhaps because the play's world can also appear quite safe in this scene.' (1983, p. 24). However, what Salerio and Solanio say about the merchant suggests that the concern about wealth can be the cause of such sadness, even though Antonio does not acknowledge it. Many other motifs can be related to his sadness, such as fear of loss. Therefore, Shakespeare represents Antonio in a rather ambivalent and mysterious way, so that he can create a complex image of the merchant's inward dimensions.

Salerio's account of his ships builds gradually two plastic metaphors to which someone could react negatively and fearfully:

> My wind cooling my broth
> Would blow me to an ague, when I thought
> What harm a wind too great at sea might do.
> I should not see the sandy hour-glass run,
> But I should think of shallows and of flats,
> And see my wealthy Andrew docked in sand,
> Vailing her high-top lower than her ribs
> To kiss her burial. Should I go to church
> And see the holy edifice of stone,
> And not bethink me straight of dangerous rocks,
> Which touching but my gentle vessel's side,
> Would scatter all her spices on the stream,
> Enrobe the roaring waters with my silks,
> And, in a word, but even now worth this,
> And now worth nothing? Shall I have the thought
> To think on this, and shall I lack the thought
> That such a thing bechanced would make me sad?
> But tell not me; I know, Antonio
> Is sad to think upon his merchandise. (I, i, 22-40)

[43] See the essay *Antonio and Alienation in the 'Merchant of Venice'*, 1983.

Salerio remembers the dangers of wind, water, rocks and storms in the ocean. He expresses that seeing a stone in a wall of a church would remind him of the rocks in the ocean, which threaten any merchant's ships. This metaphor evokes two opposing feelings: the stones in a church evoke a safe place, where nobody would feel fearful, whereas in the sea stones are too dangerous to the vessels. The speech is pictorially vivid and refers emotionally to the dangers of wind and rocks which Antonio may fear. Rocks in the ocean are dangerous and they evoke wreck. Moreover, they allude to inward conflict and suffering. Consequently, the use of such imagery suggests and enhances Antonio's inward troubles, concerns, and feelings. There is an unexplainable anxiety whose effect is emotionally projected on the description of rocks and shipwrecking. Therefore, Antonio's inward feelings are mirrored on Salerio's description of this imagined plastic vivid landscape of the treacherous ocean, with its rocks and perils. Such imagery is a metaphorical device to represent Antonio's inward feelings and dimensions mirrored in Salerio's speech. The mirroring device is used to portray in Salerio's speech Antonio's inner tensions, conflicts and anxieties. Though Antonio thinks he is safe and confident (suggested here by firm rocks in the church), his innermost feelings suggested by insecurity and instability (as rocks and dangers in the ocean). Thus, such comparison alludes to Antonio's feelings which, as if they were floating in the sea, seem to suffer its vicissitudes, such as tempests, windstorms and shipwrecking storms. Antonio's feelings are floating in this undistinguished state indeed.

Nonetheless, Antonio's optimistic reply to Salerio curiously lacks the insistence of insecurity suggested in Salerio's speech: "My ventures are not in one bottom trusted' and 'Nor to one place' (I, i, 42-43). Perhaps Antonio has barely listened to Salerio's compelling speech, so little has it affected him.[44] Thus, it is not evident for Antonio that his sadness is caused by his wealthy investment. However, Salerio's and Salanio's emphasis upon his goods is a symptom of the exchange of feelings for goods in the play. There is confusion and exchange of feelings and money, so that the characters overvalue money, gold, wealth, and goods instead of feelings such as honesty, sincerity, love, and friendship. Contradictorily, some critics enhance that the play is about love, affections and friendship. In a certain sense, Antonio suffocates his feelings in his reply to Salerio's portrait of his feelings and anxieties.

The sense of security and social hierarchy is suggested here, which is illustrated by Salerio's comparison of Antonio's ships to 'rich burghers':

[44] For more details, see Lewis, 1983, p. 24.

> There, where your argosies with portly sail,
> Like signiors and rich burghers on the flood,
> Or, as it were, the pageants of the sea,
> Do overpeer the petty traffickers,
> That curtsy to them, do them reverence,
> As they fly by them with their woven wings. (I, I, 9-14)

In this speech, inferior vessels make to 'rich burghers' a sort of submissive and flattering reverence. The description of the smaller ships which make courtesy to the bigger ones seems to allude, on the one hand, to Antonio's arrogance and feeling of superiority, which will be evident towards Shylock, just as the comparison of 'signiors', 'burghers' with petty traffickers, boats and ships, suggests the differentiation of lower and upper social classes. On the other hand, such comparison also alludes to Antonio's submissive attitude towards the other characters in the play, such as Bassanio and Portia. Therefore, the metaphoric opposition between signors, rich burghers and petty traffickers suggests superiority for a while, whereas in other moments it enhances his submission to others and his resignation to his sad condition. Therefore, Shakespeare depicts Antonio's inward floatation, confusion and contradiction by this oscillation implied in these images.

Never again in the play will the characters stop for a while to ponder about their own condition, except for a brief moment when Portia first appears on stage and when Shylock gives his *I am a Jew* speech. Though Antonio acknowledges that he does not know the aetiology of his sadness and inward state, though he acknowledges that he has much to learn; and though Salerio and Salanio try to discover Antonio's inwardness, this first scene is the only moment in the play when the characters try to unfold the inward disposition of the mind and scrutinise their inwardness. However, Shakespeare presents this problem apparently unsolved in this scene, but he constructed clues suggesting the traits of inwardness in the play. The characters unveil their inward feelings through the silences, bodily feelings, anxieties, and attitudes.

Thus, Antonio's lack of knowledge alludes to some of the problems of the play. For Richard Moulton (1969), Antonio's fault is his non-knowledge of himself. He is too confident so that he thinks he can trust an outcast. Because Antonio does not know himself and his inner feeling, he is entrapped by Shylock. Moulton states that Antonio's great temptation to self-sufficiency lies in his contact with a moral outcast, Shylock; he is so 'confident that the moral gulf between the two can never be bridged over, Antonio has violated dignity as well as mercy in the gross insults he has heaped upon the Jew whenever they have met' (1969, p. 38). Thus, his hubris is his self-sufficiency and self-confidence.

Furthermore, there is an epistemological anxiety which disturbs the characters in the play. In that sense, McGinn (2007) presents a well-done discussion on the problems and anxieties of the epistemological gap on the self and inwardness. Antonio's inward dimensions, conveyed by his sadness and anxiety, mirror his inwardness, and his mind floats in indefiniteness and awkward instability. He cannot control his feelings. In fact, he cannot recognise them since they are controlled by some *mysterious forces*[45] in his inwardness. Even if he tries to define them and search for their cause, such indefiniteness continues to be obfuscated and floating in his mind. Shakespeare cunningly creates the mimetic device of indefiniteness to signal the obscurity, ambiguity, and floatation of inwardness. He uses the aesthetically inward dimension to build up this mimetic construction of a self whose inwardness is appearing and popping up in his bodily feelings at the moment of crisis.

Thus, in **The Merchant of Venice**, *sadness* and *weary* are the first symbolic motifs of the play, constituting the constellations of inward traits which convey and represent Antonio's inwardness. Such floatation makes the character feel in abeyance their inward feelings. That is how Shakespeare suggests and represents Antonio's inwardness. By enhancing feelings as sadness, weariness and discontent he represents Antonio's innermost dimensions and dispositions of his mind.

Furthermore, Salerio and Salanio misread Antonio's feelings. For Luke Wilson (2010),[46] both are partly right and partly wrong when they analyse Antonio's feelings. The problem is that they try to approximate uncertainty to sadness. If Antonio were uncertain of his ships in the ocean, he would not feel sadness; instead, he would feel fear. Sadness is the feeling not of a possible future event, but the feeling of something which has taken place or the cause of something lost. Cunningly they are right when they conjecture that Antonio is sad only in the future prospective of being sad. (2010, p. 129). If this is possible, Antonio takes possibility and risk as negatively occurred. He cannot make the difference between risk and possibility from probability, just as he cannot calculate risk as possibly managed by human agency. (2010, p. 130).

However, Antonio states his sadness is not due to his ships. That alludes to the possibility of Antonio's fearing no danger or enemy which is transformed into probability, anticipating his success. Later on he undergoes Shylock's bond without fear, suspicion, which suggests Antonio's hubris: he is too confident and imprudent. He believes that nothing can

[45] See McGinn's **Shakespeare's Philosophy**, (2007).
[46] Cf. Luke Wilson's essay *Drama and Marine Insurance*, in **The Law in Shakespeare**, by Constance Jordan and Karen Cunningham (eds.), 2010.

harm him. According to Lewis,[47] Antonio constructs an image of a confident man with an 'unshaken trust' in his ships (1983, p. 25). However, he is a quite maladjusted figure, who undertakes a strange bond with a usurer. For Lewis, such facts do not create sympathy towards him, rather pity and disgust. (1983, p. 25). Whereas Antonio denies the dangers in the ocean, Shylock is quite aware of such dangers and tries to unleash Antonio's fears in I, iii: 'But ships are but boards, sailors but men: there be land-rats and water-rats, water-thieves and land-thieves, I mean pirates, and then there is the peril of waters, winds and rocks.' (I, iii, 16-18). Shylock's awareness of the dangers of the sea mirrors what Antonio does not want to see. For Lewis, 'Antonio lacks the depth of perception and the concern to take such factors into account when dealing in and with the world.' (1983, p. 25). What Antonio does not want to see is simply what threatens any merchant.

Against the issue of self-confidence, it is strange why Antonio does not contract the commonly used marine insurance for his ships. Luke Wilson (2010)[48] points out that marine insurance was a common practice in the Renaissance England. If he is sad and perhaps worried about his ships, why did he not take marine insurance? Though not all merchants undertook marine insurance contracts, Antonio's avoidance of this practice enhances once again his over-confidence in his ventures. Such an attitude also suggests carelessness of his fortune. We also see his carelessness as he accepts Shylock's bond without hesitation. He does not acknowledge his fears and his self-confidence makes him believe that he is untouched by any danger.

In another metaphor to enhance Antonio's sadness, Solanio makes a description of the types of men who cannot laugh and embody austere and bitter appearances to seem wise men:

> Now, by the two-headed Janus,
> Nature hath framed strange fellows in her time:
> Some that will evermore peep through their eyes
> And laugh like parrots at a bag-piper,
> And other of such vinegar aspect
> That they'll not show their teeth in way of smile,
> Though Nestor swear the jest be laughable. (I, i, 50-56)

[47] For Lewis, "Antonio's unshaken trust in his argosies is thus, in realistic terms, a false one. Although attempts have been made to excuse Antonio's obliviousness toward the world by treating him as a Christ-figure, the fact remains that, as the play's very title points out, he is a worldly man." Furthermore, he is a maladjusted one. Small wonder that, as we watch him awkwardly make a contract with the keen usurer (I. iii), we cannot feel very sympathetic toward him. Shylock, whatever his faults and limitations, at least recognizes the dangers that might easily beset Antonio's ships; and, as Shylock reveals, he shrewdly bases his business decisions on that recognition: "But ships are but boards, sailors but men […] But Antonio lacks the depth of perception and the concern to take such factors into account when dealing in and with the world." (1983, p. 25)

[48] For the practices of marine insurance in early modern England and especially in **The Merchant of Venice**, see Luke Wilson's essay *Drama and Marine Insurance*, in **The Law in Shakespeare**, edited by Constance Jordan and Karen Cunningham, 2010. Luke maps the emergence of many kinds of insurance in the age, mainly personal insurance, business insurance and marine insurance.

Here Shakespeare opposes laughter and bitterness (vinegar), being merry and not showing one's teeth. The mentioning of Nestor is quite ironic, because Nestor was the Greek wisest warrior in Homer's **Iliad**. The opposition between Nestor as a wise man and men's 'vinegar aspect' alludes to the conflict of Antonio's feelings. No matter how wise Antonio pretends to be, the audience would feel suspicion of such a sad man. This ambivalent description demonstrates that such kind of sad and unhappy men just wants to seem wise and superior. Such description reveals that Antonio's sadness hides sinister obfuscated dispositions such as hypocrisy and the embodiment of austere and even moralistic attitudes, such as his attitude of condemning usury.

Furthermore, another simile enhances Antonio's ambivalent feelings. Salanio's mentioning the 'two-headed Janus' goes hand in hand with Antonio's opposing feelings and attitudes. The two-headed Janus was the Roman god who could look in opposite sides at the same time. Such reference alludes to the ambivalent feelings in Antonio's inward disposition of the mind. Though Janus is a figure mentioned only here, its presence echoes the duplicity of appearances, feelings, and intentions throughout the play.

Coupled with that, the reference to the God Janus has another implicit meaning in the play. Janus was the god of the beginnings, the god of the origins of the world, and also the god who looks into the future and into the past. Briefly, he was the god of the beginnings and of the ends. He is also the god of indecision, for though one of his head is looking in one way, the other is looking at the opposite side. In that sense, Drakakis (2010) identifies the meaning of double faces, sad and happy in such reference. More than that, the reference to Janus as the god of the beginnings may allude to primitive feelings which come out in his sadness, his aggression to Shylock and his fake image of self-confidence. Some primitive feelings are suggested as hallucinatory reaction of his sadness when he faces Shylock, as the primitive fear of facing the paternal figure. His primitive and ambiguous feelings are epitomised in this representation of two-headed Janus in this speech. Such image depicts Antonio's conflicting inward dimensions and feelings.

When Bassanio appears on stage he evokes the symbolic motif of sadness. Bassanio's first lines mirror Antonio's feelings: 'Good signiors both when shall we laugh? Say, when? / You grow exceeding strange. Must it be so?' (I, i, 66-67). As he remarks their sadness, he reiterates the same feeling conveyed by Antonio, emphasising their unhappiness expressed in their faces and attitudes. It is crystal clear his discontent when he refers to 'Must it be so?' Because he is unable to face sadness and discontent, Bassanio cannot stand these characteristics embodied by the other merchants and shown in their faces. Thus, their sadness

is stigmatised, epitomised and projected on Antonio's sadness. His sadness contaminates the rich and seemingly happy world of the play.

This uneasiness is noted in all Venetian faces, such as in Antonio's expressions of sadness; it is observed by Solanio and Salerio; Gratiano remarks Antonio's uneasiness, and when Bassanio asks 'when shall we laugh?' Harold C. Goddard[49] has noted this sort of discontent in the play as well. Goddard also notes that

> Melancholy, weariness, tedium – the reiteration of the note cannot be coincidence. And the other characters confirm the conjecture. Over and over they give the sense of attempting to fill every chink of time with distraction or amusement, often just words, to prevent their thinking. (1969, p. 143)

The Christians try to hide their feelings and do not wish to think about them. Coupled with that, their sadness is mirrored in other faces. Therefore, Shakespeare uses the mirroring device to represent inward feelings and dimensions: the feeling of a character is mirrored in the attitudes of others. It is particularly pertinent and recurrent in **The Merchant of Venice** the mirroring device which represents and doubles feelings and inward dispositions in all characters of the play. Similarly, as Lorenzo and Gratiano are bound to leave, Gratiano observes once again that Antonio is unwell:

> You look not well, Signior Antonio;
> You have too much respect upon the world:
> They lose it that do buy it with much care:
> Believe me, you are marvellously changed. (I, i, 73-76).

The verse 'They lose it that do buy it with much care' reiterates St. Mark's Gospel (VIII, 36): 'For what shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul' or else, in St. Matthew's Gospel (XVI, 25): 'Whosoever will save his life shall lose it'. Gratiano metaphorically enhances the traits of Antonio's condition in the play: being sad, handing over his soul for his richness. Gratiano enhances, as Salerio and Salanio, that Antonio is sad because of his merchandising. Though Gratiano thinks Antonio is 'marvellously changed', such sadness is naturally embodied by Antonio, and it seems more evident now.

Then, Antonio's answer shows that his sadness is embodied by him as if it were naturally acquired: 'I hold the world but as the world, Gratiano; / A stage where every man must play a part, / And mine a sad one.' (I, i, 77-79). Antonio embodies the fantasy of a sad

[49] *The Three Caskets*, 1969, in Walters' casebook of the play.

actor playing a sad role,[50] as if it were an inherent psychological trait. Nobody can talk him out of being completely bound to feel and incorporate sadness as a natural psychic trait. Thus, Shakespeare manages and deals with the audience's attention in the play very well, letting their attention in abeyance for a long scene. However, according to Rowse (1971), Elizabethans were festive people and they would feel disgust to see a sad man like Antonio. Therefore, Antonio turns out to be a repository of Venice's sadness and discontent. This specular repository is a form of mimesis introduced by Shakespeare in the play.

Gratiano also tries to peer into Antonio's sadness and insists on the fact of men's face being sad, who wants thereby to seem wise. As he says 'There are a sort of men whose visages/ Do cream and mantle like a standing pond,/ And do a wilful stillness entertain,/ With purpose to be dressed in an opinion/ Of wisdom, gravity, profound conceit' (I, i, 88-92). Gratiano seems like a courtesan like Polonius from **Hamlet**. In fact, Gratiano echoes grace, playfulness and a fool. In the *Commedia dell'Arte* Gratiano was the name of the fool doctor. In this long speech, he foolishly insists on Antonio's sadness and advises him of being happier. His language is obfuscated by sentences conveying nonsense, incongruence, and pretentious wisdom. Though he makes just a pedantic speech, he alludes to the theme of hypocritical men, whose appearances and speeches embody opinions of gravity, wisdom, and morality. They pretend to be an 'Oracle', yet they do not behave as such.[51]

Furthermore, Gratiano mentions liver, heart and blood in his speech. Gratiano's foolish speech seems to mean nothing in the play. However, in **The Merchant of Venice**, Shakespeare created Gratiano's speech to hide subtler ideas in the text. That is what Thomas Moisan (1987), in his work **Shakespeare Reproduced**, defines that as the opposition of the *textuality* of the play and the *theatricality* of the stage. According to him, especially in this play, the contrast between the theatrical level, which highlights comic and burlesque characteristics of the play, veils the textual level which presents political, cultural, historical and theological problems. Therefore, characters such as Gratiano, Launcelot and Shylock embody the theatrical traits – villain, comic, burlesque – yet they touch now and then on important issues of the play. Nevertheless, most critics have just emphasised the theatrical

[50] For the imagery of theatre as the representation of the world and the man living his life as an actor plays on stage, see Jean Rousset, **La littérature de l'âge baroque en France**. Paris: José Corti, 1995.

[51] See Gratiano's entire speech: 'Let me play the fool: / With mirth and laughter let old wrinkles come, / And let my liver rather heat with wine / Than my heart cool with mortifying groans. / Why should a man, whose blood is warm within, / Sit like his grandsire cut in alabaster? / Sleep when he wakes and creep into the jaundice / By being peevish? I tell thee what, Antonio— / I love thee, and it is my love that speaks – / There are a sort of men whose visages / Do cream and mantle like a standing pond, / And do a wilful stillness entertain, / With purpose to be dressed in an opinion / Of wisdom, gravity, profound conceit, /As who should say 'I am Sir Oracle, / And when I ope my lips let no dog bark!' / O my Antonio, I do know of these / That therefore only are reputed wise / For saying nothing; when, I am very sure, / If they should speak, would almost damn those ears, / Which, hearing them, would call their brothers fools. / I'll tell thee more of this another time: / But fish not, with this melancholy bait, / For this fool gudgeon, this opinion'. (I, i, 79-90)

traits of those characters, forgetting to see in the lines many other problems proposed in their speeches. In this case, Gratiano presents the description of hypocritical men whose characteristics will be redoubled in characters such as Antonio, Bassanio, and Portia.

His foolish speech alludes to the physiology of Renaissance age: liver, heart and blood were organs whose functions were to control feelings, passions, and affections. Inwardness was then closely related to the body in the Renaissance Age.[52] Body and self were interwoven dimensions in the Renaissance Age in general. In that sense, Michael Schoenfeldt (1999)[53] studies the relation between bodies and selves, psychological inwardness and bodily processes in English Renaissance Age. He analyses the relation between humours, emotions, organs and corporeal fluids. He presents a study about the taxonomy of internal organs, demonstrating how medical discourses were appropriated by poets and writers. They employed these discourses to show how people let those bodily experiences come out in an oppressive age.[54] In that sense, the body plays a fundamental role in determining sensibility and feelings, not just physical feelings, but also emotional dimensions of the individual. Bodily feelings are hints which suggest and represent inward dispositions of the mind popping up in the characters' bodies.

In that sense, Michael Schoenfeldt presents an analysis of the deep relations between body, physiology of the body, and inwardness.[55] Schoenfeldt argues that many writers tried to express poetically their material inwardness: 'They will aspire to the *mysterious inwardness* toward which living, intact flesh can only point.' (1999, p. 01, highlights mine). Schoenfeldt shows that the bodily conditions, the inward dimensions of the self, the subjective state, and the psychological character were extremely imbricate. In Spencer, Shakespeare, Herbert and Milton, Schoenfeldt analyses 'the sensation of pain and pleasure' which requires 'a deep attention to the body, and a resultant scrutiny of the self. This attention will itself be the root of a kind of psychological inwardness that we value deeply, and that we often associate with the most valued works of the Renaissance' (1999, p. 01). Schoenfeldt demonstrates how the humoral psychology is displayed in their works in a superficial and deeper level, in comedy and tragedy, poetry and epic poetry. Schoenfeldt studies 'the mysterious dimensions of psychological inwardness that are folded into the stories of the body told by contemporaneous

[52] The word *inward* also meant literally *entrails*, in the Renaissance Age.
[53] See **Bodies and selves in early modern England**, 1999.
[54] In the same sense, that is exactly what Simon Palfrey (2005) says about inwardness: 'it referred to the bodily organ, and more precisely the entrails and bowels. Things inward become inseparable from early modern 'humoral' psychology; body and mind are of an ever-changing but absolutely linked temper' (2005, p. 176).
[55] He starts discussing Albert Dürer's self-portrait, painted around 1512. Dürer points to the region of the spleen, the organ which was supposed to be responsible to produce melancholy. The painter is seemingly troubled with the pain. He sent his self-portrait to a friend of his who was a doctor. This *Self-Portrait of the Sick Dürer* has echoed Christ; in pointing to his side, Dürer stands in the same position as the man of sorrows, Christ.

medicine.' (1999, p. 02). According to him, the core element of humoral theory was a set of doctrines determining the 'the balance within the body of the four humoral fluids produced by the various stages of digestion – blood, phlegm, yellow bile, and black bile. These fluids are then dispersed throughout the body by spirits, mediators between soul and body.' (1999, p. 03). Thus, they needed to balance these humoral fluids to have good health, to have healthy male children.

Thus, the goal of medicine intervention was to restore this balance, with therapies and bleeding. The Galenic theory embodied an ability to explain the relation of the body to the environment and its relations to the soul and rationality. It was said that since the body was the microcosm of the universe, the visceral inwardness could supply the centre which was intertwined with the 'forces of choler, blood, phlegm, and feces'. (1999, p. 04). In the Renaissance Age there was therefore a close relationship between inwardness and bodily sensations, feelings and humoral fluids. It would be unconceivable to the Elizabethans to think both things separately. For Schoenfeldt

> Whereas our post-Cartesian ontology imagines psychological inwardness and physiological materialism as necessarily separate realms of existence, and thus renders corporeal language for emotion highly metaphorical, the Galenic regime of the humoral self that supplies these writers with much of their vocabulary of inwardness demanded the invasion of social and psychological realms by biological and environmental processes. (1999, p. 08)

The Galenic theory provided the poets with an enormous quantity of metaphors, which mimetised the deep relations between bodies and souls, reason and passions. Schoenfeldt emphasises that 'by urging a particularly organic account of inwardness and individuality, Galenic medical theory gave poets a language of inner emotion whose vehicles were also tenors, whose language of desire was composed of the very stuff of being.' (1999, p. 08). This 'materialist psychology' considered that the body suffers climatological influences such as temperature, moisture, coldness, heat, and so forth. The Galenic theory stated that a person's behaviour was caused by bodily fluids. For Schoenfeldt, 'the purportedly immaterial subject is constituted as a profoundly material substance.' (1999, p. 09). Thus, thoughts, ideas and rationality are influenced by bodily sensations, feelings, anxieties and discontent.

For our post-modern age, it is strange to see this framework logically, since we have been long influenced by the Cartesian philosophical tradition. We behave as a 'self which has or is within a body', and not as a whole (1999, p. 09). Thereby, Schoenfeldt criticises Cartesian philosophy:

> brilliantly articulates a kind of uncertainly principle for a true philosophy of the subject. Yet it is just this complex mode of connection between body and mind towards with contemporary medicine, with all its mechanistic presuppositions, is being driven to endorse by its own researches into the body. (1999, p. 10)

Descartes was one of the early modern philosophers who split the experience of the body and soul and located the soul in a particular organ, in the pineal gland. Schoenfeldt points out that 'his definition of existence in terms of rational thought, as separate from the mechanisms of the body [...] produced a pronounced dissociation of essential self from body, a dissociation from which we are still trying to recover.' (1999, p. 11). What Schoenfeldt proposes is to demonstrate the earlier understanding of the individual in the Renaissance age, not as a self inside a body, which is considered nowadays as 'an inert and alien body of knowledge, but rather as a vibrantly inconsistent but brilliantly supple discourse of selfhood and agency.' (1999, p. 11) Schoenfeldt understands Galenic physiology as a form of empowerment of the body and self-fashioning. He despises the Protestant assumptions which considered the body a locus of sin and damnation. Also, Schoenfeldt points out an analogy of how the self was seen by Galenic physiology and modern psychoanalysis:

> But where psychoanalysis tends to locate identity in terms of which objects are desired among the various available possibilities, how intensely they are desired, and how these desires have been fashioned by the experiences of early infancy, the Renaissance locates identity in the more or less successful regulation of a series of desires shared by all. (1999, p. 17)

Moreover, he considers that those therapies were corollary to mental repentance. All the acts of self-expurging were to clean the inner body and soul. Therefore, in accordance with Schoenfeldt identity and inwardness were considered to be deeply related to the body. When dealing with bodily feelings and humoral fluids it is quite important to take into account that the humoral fluid theory was deeply rooted in the idea of inwardness in the Renaissance age. Though the humoral fluid theory is no longer accepted nowadays, it helps to enhance the close connection and interdependence of body and mind in the Renaissance, which was not split up by Cartesian thinking. However, it seems that there is something in our body which determines our inward dimensions. Both body and mind are correlatives which constitute inwardness. Thus, when Gratiano says to Antonio that his melancholy is due to his fluid humoral inwardness, he seems to be assuming a conception of self-fashioning of inwardness as something related to Antonio's bodily sensations. What Gratiano tries to do is

to discover what goes within Antonio's body and determines his self in terms of Galenic physiology.

After that, Lorenzo and Bassanio mock Gratiano's confusing advice, because it conveys nothing. Maybe Bassanio says it in an embarrassed and ashamed gesture: 'Gratiano speaks an infinite deal of nothing' (I, i, 114). However, Gratiano's speech evokes the impossibility of figuring out the reason of Antonio's sadness in rational terms. Most strikingly, even one of the most foolish and pedantic characters of the play realises Antonio's sadness. The question Antonio asks reveals his non-recognition of what Gratiano is talking about: 'Is that anything now?' (I, i, 113). And Bassanio's answer to it suggests that he does not acknowledge Antonio's sadness: 'Gratiano speaks an infinite deal of nothing' (I, i, 114). Hence, the reason why Bassanio does not note Antonio's sadness is quite strange. He seems to silence and make Antonio forget what is going on inside him and thus he strengthens this condition by being silent. In fact, Bassanio is also used to being sad. He had addressed to Salanio and Salerio with the first speech 'when shall we laugh?' and 'must it be so?' His habit of being sad makes him forget Antonio's unhappiness and discontent.

2. 2. Homoerotic and Fiscal Fantasies in Antonio's Inwardness: Fear and Desire of Castration

Antonio's sadness has also been interpreted as his homoerotic feelings to Bassanio. When Antonio denies that his sadness is due to his fortune in the sea, Salerio jokes by saying 'Why, then you are in love' (I, i, 46). Antonio's denegation 'Fie, Fie' is suggestive of a passionate state. Some critics point out that this may be the cause of Antonio's sadness, such as Adelman (2008), Petterson (1999), Auden (1969) and O'Rourke (2003). As Bassanio and Antonio begin their first conversation it is evident their intimate relationship. Knowing that Bassanio is interested in wooing a lady, perhaps Antonio feels sad.

Antonio asks Bassanio about his 'secret pilgrimage': 'Well, tell me now what lady is the same / To whom you swore a secret pilgrimage, / That you to-day promised to tell me of?' (I, i, 119-121). It is strange that Antonio uses 'secret pilgrimage' to describe Bassanio's undertaking to Belmont. Drakakis suggests that such usage means that Bassanio's adventure is 'quasi-religious' (2010, p. 182). Shakespeare makes a twist in the meaning of this word to represent Bassanio's deeper desires. This twist embodies a religious meaning as a way of idealising and obscuring his *real* desire, which is to marry Portia to get fortune. This idealisation is an excuse to justify his desire by religious terms. By these quasi-religious

reasons he deludes himself, Antonio and some in the audience about his innermost intentions. This twist covers his inner feelings with idealistic and metaphysical reasons.

However, Bassanio delays his answer to confess to Antonio that he has been a prodigal gentleman, who has spent everything and saved nothing so far. Bassanio demands Antonio to be bound in a sort of money-lending contract:

> 'Tis not unknown to you, Antonio,
> How much I have disabled mine estate,
> By something showing a more swelling port
> Than my faint means would grant continuance:
> Nor do I now make moan to be abridged
> From such a noble rate; but my chief care
> Is to come fairly off from the great debts
> Wherein my time something too prodigal
> Hath left me gauged. To you, Antonio,
> I owe the most, in money and in love,
> And from your love I have a warranty
> To unburden all my plots and purposes
> How to get clear of all the debts I owe. (I, i, 121-133)

It is evident that Bassanio is a bankrupt who depends on Antonio's favour. Because of that, the audience could see Bassanio as a wastrel, a thriftless man, and even an idler, who was of course an anti-model of the new mercantilist man. For Max Weber (2004), the Calvinistic Protestant ethics preached that working and saving money were sort of religious virtues and that a thriftless man would be damned for misfortune, dishonour and disgrace by God, if he made no effort to achieve those moral virtues. Thriftiness, investing and accumulating money were seen as blessing in a Puritan society; face to that, Bassanio's image would be reproved as dissipater and prodigal by some Puritans in the Elizabethan audience.[56]

Coupled with that, Venice in the late sixteenth century was already a city in decadence. That happened because the world's commerce moved from the Mediterrenean Sea to the Atlantic Ocean. Because of that, Venice had to face many social and financial problems, such as poverty, bankrupcy, scarcity of food, famine, and penury. There was a huge quantity of poor people, beggars, vagabonds, bankrupts, drunkards, and prostitutes on the streets.[57] Thus, the representation of Venice was rather decadent in the view of English travelers, storytellers, reporters, writers, and moralists. Bassanio's bankrupcy was not strange at all to the Elizabethan audience. These facts could even sound as a mirror to the very audience that went to the theatres to sse Shakespeare's play. Many people probably knew

[56] Calvinism started to influence Anglicanism about the late 16th and 17th century. For more details, see Max Weber, **A Ética Protestante e o Espírito do Capitalismo**, 2004, p. 162-163.
[57] For the details about the decadence in Venice, see **História da Vida Privada – Idade Média até o século XVI**, 2009.

some details from reports and merchants' stories.[58] Bassanio is a man who is desperately trying to gain fortune through marriage, since he himself acknowledges that this is the second time he hazards to get fortune.

Furthermore, Bassanio's declaration – 'I owe the most, in money and love' – unveils Bassanio's feelings, intentions, and desire. He mentions first 'money' and the second term is 'love', which locates feelings and affections in an inferior position to money. The connection between money, wealth and affection and feelings is established for the first time in Bassanio's speech. Drakakis observes that this is the first of many connections between *money* and *love* (2010, p. 182), which introduces a range of fiscal and affective connections in the play. Later on, Bassanio describes Portia's beauty in monetary terms. It reveals a particular characteristic of the all characters' inwardness: the confusion of feelings, affection, ethical and moral values for wealth, money and gold. Inwardness in the play is portrayed therefore by this astonishing confusion between money and affections.

Bassanio delays his speech, perhaps because he knows Antonio's feelings to him. However, Antonio's impatience shows his anxiety when he says: 'I pray you, good Bassanio, let me know it' (I, i, 134). Antonio's response reveals an immediate willing to help and provide him with all Bassanio needs: 'My purse, my person, my extremest means, / Lie all unlocked to your occasions.' (I, i, 137-138). Like Bassanio, Antonio also juxtaposes and confuses *person* (feelings, thoughts) and *purse* (money), showing he cannot separate money from personal issues and feelings. In a moment of anxiety, Antonio's verbal slip confusing *purse*/*person* unveils that he makes no distinction between feelings and money. This verbal slip reveals the confusion and exchange of feelings for wealth. In a subtler level, the merchant believes that his generosity to Bassanio will create love and affection, because his inner-self is pervaded by inward dispositions for wealth. As a matter of fact, this is a sort of wealthy inwardness or material inwardness conveyed by this exchange, association and confusion between affections, feelings and wealth, fortune, gold and money. Therefore, a person is valued and esteemed by what she possesses, instead of her spiritual traits and feelings.[59] Shakespeare introduced such verbal slip in order to represent Antonio's inward feelings and dispositions.

In that sense, Gervenius (1960) states that the play depicts 'the relation of man to property'. According to him,

[58] For that see Kaplan's marvellous collections of texts of the age about Venice and England, named **The Merchant of Venice: Texts and Contexts**, 2002.

[59] Schoenfeldt (1999) also uses 'material inwardness', but in the meaning of bodily sensations and the humoral fluids which was supposed to govern the individual inwardness. Thus, what I mean for *material inwardness* or *wealthy inwardness* is valuing of a person's affections for the money, gold, jewels a person has.

> the gold of the world, the image of show, the symbol of all external things, is money, and it is so called by Shakespeare and in all proverbs. To examine the relation of man to property, to money, is to place their intrinsic value on the finest scale, and to separate that which belongs to the unessential, to outward thing, from that which in its inward nature relates to a higher destiny. (1969, p. 34-35).

Gervenius highlights that the question of man's relation to money and wealth is ever a question of his relation to man, as it were not possible to see it apart from man (1969, p. 35). Those were anxieties caused by the new emerging mercantile society, whose new ideal of getting money at any cost threatened and concerned some people. Thus, many characters talk of feelings in fiscal terms such as Bassanio, Portia, Lorenzo, Jessica and Shylock. Therefore, the verbal slip *purse/person* enhances the range of symbolic motives, whereby the characters confuse and substitute feelings for wealth. Unconsciously what moves them is their desire of possession, even if they need to cheat others.

That is a trait which pervades the other characters' feelings in the play. In Newman's opinion, [60] in classical and Renaissance comedies

> Comic plots were traditionally based on a fundamental binomial, eros and money. These two elements combine in a seemingly infinite number of permutations to generate comic plots. They are also reciprocal because in both classical and early Italian comedies, money is required to gain love – whether simply as payment for the courtesans and prostitutes of classical and early Italian comedy, or as the price of winning the *innamorata* in marriage. The importance of this dichotomy is as clear in Shakespeare as in Italian comedy – in **The Merchant of Venice**, **Much Ado**, and **Measure for Measure**. In post-Tridentine Italian comedy […] this reciprocal relation between money and eros is called into question. (1985, p. 71)

Shakespeare uses such binomial, eros and money, to enhance the characters' double-faced attitude and feelings. Like Dante's poetic and imaginative drive to Beatrice's dress, Shakespeare also suggests Antonio's erotic desire in his confusion between purse/person. In fact, such pun represents his confusion between money and feelings and the conflicts embodied in his inwardness.

Furthermore, the speech suggests other meanings in the play. Adelman (2008)[61] remarks something very important about Antonio's and Bassanio's relationship. In such a pun, Antonio unveils his deepest fantasy in the play, the fantasy of being unlocked, which will not be done by Bassanio, but by Shylock. By *unlocked* he fantasises his desire of being unlocked to Bassanio, showing his inner heart to him and being opened up and satisfying his

[60] See Karen Newman's work **Shakespeare's Rhetoric of Comic Character: Dramatic Convention in Classical and Renaissance Comedy**. London: Routledge, 1985.
[61] See her book **Blood Relations: Christian and Jew in *The Merchant of Venice***, 2008.

homoerotic desires. Also, *purse* had a sexual connotation in the Elizabethan age. Drakakis (2010) states that 'purse' meant also 'scrotum':

> The pun on *purse* and *person* initiates a complex range of fiscal and sexual associations connected with the figure of Antonio; *purse* means primarily a receptacle for carrying money […], but there is also a direct association between *purse* and identity: one's *purse* and oneself (*person*) […]. However, *purse* also means 'scrotum' […]. It also suggests a connection between fiscal and sexual commitment that is there from the outset but is never specified. (2010, 183-184).

Nevertheless, even though his heart remains *unlocked* to Bassanio, Bassanio cannot carry out his fantasy. Thus, to accomplish Antonio's desires Shylock will potentialise such fantasy with his bond. Shylock's bond is, in a deeper level, an attempt to open up Antonio's heart and symbolically reveal his innermost feelings. In fact, one could think that Bassanio will unconsciously propose to Shylock a deal, a bond to open up Antonio's heart. Thus, the bond to open up the body which remains unlocked is an offer of the merchant's inward dimensions to Bassanio. Therefore, it seems that Antonio tries to offer his love to Bassanio, but also tries to purchase Bassanio's love.

In that sense, Hinely proposes that 'Antonio's love for Bassanio is revealed as possessiveness expressed through his generosity.[62] According to him, 'The intensity of his emotion is coupled with a sense of not receiving the full love he desires in return. […] The equalizing factor in his relationship with Bassanio was money' (1980, p. 234). Lending money to Bassanio, Antonio thinks, will multiply it and transform it into love and affection. In a certain sense, as a sort of 'usurer of love', he imagines he can breed love from money, and his interest in money-lending is to receive Bassanio's love.

Furthermore, Janet Adelman (2008) affirms that Antonio's fantasy is to be circumcised by Shylock as he seals the bond. According to her, Antonio, in his unexplainable melancholy, bears within the desire of being circumcised and opened up, which haunts him, once it evokes the sentimental ambivalence of his fear/desire for castration. Furthermore, for Adelman Shylock symbolically represents the *ur-father* (the primordial father) not only of Jessica, but also of all Christianity (2008, p. 131). Thus, it is Shylock who is going to carry out Antonio's fantasy of showing his heart to Bassanio. Shylock plays such a role as he tries to open up/circumcise/castrate Antonio. The merchant's fantasy is reinforced when he easily and willingly accepts Shylock's bond. Furthermore, according to Adelman, the trial scene

[62] Jan Lawson Hinely, *Bond Priorities in The Merchant of Venice*. Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900, Vol. 20, No. 2, Elizabethan and Jacobean Drama (Spring, 1980), pp. 217-239. Rice University, in http://www.jstor.org/stable/450170, Accessed: 20/01/2011 10:22

(IV, i) is 'erotically charged', once it 'feeds the audience's voyeuristic bloodlust and promises Antonio the masochistic satisfaction of his desire to unlock himself to Bassanio. Better: in an economical gesture, it promises to provide both satisfaction of and punishment for the desire that would rend him.' (2008, p. 120). Therefore, one of his ambiguous feelings is the desire to be unlocked to Bassanio, yet what threatens him is his unconscious fear of being castrated by the ur-father of the play.

Also, he fantasmatically re-imagines his paternal figure in Shylock. Norman Holland (1966) had already pointed out Shylock's role as a paternal figure to Antonio in the play.[63] His sadness is not just due to his fear of losing Bassanio, but also perhaps because he re-imagines fantasmatically the paternal figure whenever he faces Shylock. Shakespeare represents Antonio's inward feelings by suggesting his innermost masochistic desire of circumcision and castration.

Simultaneously, Adelman points out that Shylock could be seen as the figure of anatomist-inquisitor who would open Antonio's heart for inspection, who would punish him for his desire of being unlocked and loving Bassanio. Such a stereotype is not a Shakespearean creation, but it was taken from the mediaeval bizarre stereotypes which used to represent the figure of the Jew as stingy and cannibal. Thus, Shylock's punishment would entail Antonio's 'inside on his outside, making his desire and shame visible to all.' (2008, p. 121). What Shylock would make is the exposition of the merchant's inwardness, which would be noticeable on his body through the act of circumcision and castration.

Furthermore, the critics have not emphasised an interesting detail in Shylock's name. *Shy-lock* alludes to Antonio's desire of being himself *unlocked* to Bassanio. It is worth remarking that *unlocked* echoes a *shy lock*, which evokes Antonio's fantasy depicted in his desire to *unlock* his heart and his feeling to Bassanio. There might be erotic connotations implied in the pun *unlock/shylock*. Thus, Antonio's fantasy of being himself unlocked to Bassanio is echoed throughout the play by the pun inscribed in the name *Shy-lock*. Remember that the name Shy-lock is repeated constantly throughout the play and especially in the trial scene, when Antonio would satisfy his fantasy of unlocking himself to Bassanio.[64] Therefore,

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[63] For the representation of Shylock as a paternal figure to Antonio, see Norman Holland's **Psychoanalysis and Shakespeare**. New York and London: McGraw-Hill, 1966.

[64] What remains is to discover whether the word *lock* had any sexual connotation in Elizabethan Age, as, for example, the word *ring* had. The word *ring* will suggest sexual connotations in the last act, when Portia and Nerissa quarrel with Bassanio and Gratiano, who had given away their rings. In vain have I searched some sources to illustrate such connection; no critics suggest that *lock* had any sexual connotation as *ring* had in Elizabethan Age. But, by contiguity, if such a meaning is checkable, such echo enhances the complex range of sexual, erotic and homoerotic associations crystallised in Shylock's name.

unlocked and *Shy-lock* introduce a symbolic constellation in the play, which represents and mirrors Antonio's desire in Shylock's circumcising/castrating action.

2. 3. The Homoerotic Relationship and the Renaissance Opposing Views on it

It is supposed that Antonio and Bassanio have a homoerotic relationship. In that sense, there are some points of view which demonstrate that the homoerotic affections in Renaissance culture were very ambiguous.[65] On the one hand, Patterson (1999) discusses the positive view of the age on the issue of homoerotic relationships; on the other hand, O'Rourke (2003) presents Renaissance negative views on it. Steve Patterson (1999)[66] argues that male friendship was not a strange and negative topic in Renaissance literature. According to him some writers before Shakespeare had written about male friendship or *Amity* as an affirmative way of friendship in that period. For Patterson, 'it may be that the current confusion about eroticism and sexual practices in Renaissance England does not mean that there were no early modern systems or structures that incorporated and even valued homosexual acts.' (1999, p. 10). He argues that Antonio's love for Bassanio is a sort of 'frustrated sexual desire' and his passionate love echoes an early 'tradition of homoerotic friendship, or amity'. (1999, p. 10). Amity was defined as friendship which represented an identity between two men, which was based on the value of 'same-sex love'. There was an ensemble of tropes employed in poetry, such as in Sir Thomas Elyot's story of *Titus and Gysippus in his Boke afamed the Governour* (1531) which identified amity and homoerotic friendship. The characters in those texts were recognised and seen as homoerotic; however, such relation was not rejected in the early 16th century.[67] Just in the second half of the 16th century those relationships started to be despised, especially by Puritans.

The problem in **The Merchant of Venice** is not Antonio and Bassanio's homoerotic

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[65] Shakespeare took part of the plot of the play from the Italian play *Il Pecoroni*, wherein the merchant is an uncle to the bankrupt gentleman. Shakespeare omitted such detail and put it in an ambiguous term in order to create dramatic tension. Salanio just states that he is *kinsman* to Bassanio. But kinsman does not reveal whether they are cousins, uncle or nephew, or else if they are merely of the same nation. This definition is given by **College Dictionary**, 1975

[66] See his essay *The Bankruptcy of Homoerotic Amity in Shakespeare's Merchant of Venice*. Shakespeare Quarterly, Vol. 50, No. 1 (Spring, 1999), pp. 9-32. Shakespeare Library in association with George Washington University. Published in: http://www.jstor.org/stable/2902109, Accessed: 20/01/2011 10:30

[67] Alan Sinfield (1998) also identifies amity as not a necessarily negative relationship. According to the author, 'While the entirely respectable concept of the friend was supposed to have nothing to do with the officially abhorred concept of the sodomite, in practice they tended to overlap. Friends shared beds, they embraced and kissed; such intimacies reinforced the network of obligations and their public performance would often be part of the effect. So the proper signs of friendship could be the same as those of the same-sex passion. In instances where accusations of sodomy were aroused, very likely it was because of some hostility towards one or both parties, rather than because their behaviour was altogether different from that of other who were not so accused.' (1998, p. 172). See Alan Sinfield's essay *How to read **The Merchant of Venice** without being Heterosexist*, in COYLE, Martin. **The Merchant of Venice**: contemporary critical essays. Londres: Macmillan: 1998. (New Casebooks)

relationship, yet that two men from different classes have such a relationship: a merchant, pertaining to one of the lowest social classes in England, and a bankrupt Gentleman. Thus, for some time the difference of social class in such a relationship was more repudiated than amity. Moreover, the merchants' reputation caused anxiety and discontent among them. For instance, an epochal report illustrates that the merchants in London were not well recognised socially and morally. As a reaction to such anguishing feelings, John Wheeler wrote in 1601 an essay called *A Treatise of Commerce*, which insisted on the importance and dignity of the merchants as a profession and a vocation. Wheeler preaches that being a merchant could be suitable to the nobility, though the common assumption was that only people from lower classes could work in such a metier. His essay suggests that such profession was not well-esteemed in Elizabethan age.[68] Wheeler comments: 'Now, albeit this affection [of merchandising] be in all persons generally both high and low, yet there are of the notablest, the pricipalest traffickers which are ashamed, and think scorn to be called merchants' (2002, p. 232). His was a reaction to the prejudice against the merchants who felt ashamed of their metier.[69] Thus, some people in the audience could naturally regard Antonio and Bassanio's relationship, but they could despise their connection because they were from different classes.

A man like Antonio would be immediately perceived by homoerotic his dispositions in society. For example, among such traits Antonio risks his life for Bassanio; both declare their love publicly, and 'make hyperbolic vows of eternal devotion.' (1999, p. 12). When Bassanio says to Antonio, 'I owe the most, in money and in love' (I, i, 138), he shows his affections and debts affectively and financially. Patterson enhances the 'dramatization of the failure of male friendship in a radically shifting mercantile economy – an economy that seems better regulated by a social structure based on marital alliance and hetero-sexual reproduction.' (1999, p. 10). Consequently, Puritans thought that Antonio and Bassanio's relationship threatens to corrupt social and financial order. Puritans preached that men should not have sodomite relationship; likewise, they should not practice usury.[70] Therefore, the main

[68] See Wheeler's essay in Kaplan's edition to **The Merchant of Venice**, 2002, pp. 230-235.

[69] In the same sense Patterson reveals that 'Amity acknowledged eroticism's power to ensure loyal service in men whose economic and social bonds would otherwise be open to question. In a Tudor court where "new men" lacked the blood and property ties to one another characteristic of feudalism, and in a social world where men were as available to same- as to cross-sex attractions, a representation of male lovers compatible with heroic masculinity and good citizenship grasped the imagination with rhetorical force. Amity did not avoid the implication that deep friendships might have an erotic component but constructed same-sex desire in ways that made it commensurate with civic conduct and aristocratic ideals.' (1999, p. 12)

[70] In the same sense, Will Fisher in *Queer Money* (1999) presents that English Renaissance used to associate usury to sodomy. The word 'queer' was at first used to mean both sodomy and counterfeited money. Fisher states that 'while we might say that the present meaning of queer derives from coining terminology, sodomy and counterfeiting were also united conceptually long before the linguistic connection was established.' (p. 01). The author explores how words like counterfeiting and usury were put into the connection with sodomy, the only words used to homosexual in that age. The Renaissance patronage was said to be undermined by sodomy and usury, since both concepts represented social disorder and atheism. Fisher shows how texts in early modern England used to 'link counterfeit coins with counterfeit coitus. (p. 02). Even

point is that according to aristocratic values, amity was accepted between aristocrats for some time, but such relationship was extremely repudiated and undervalued between men from different social classes. Thus, the audience could react from different perspectives: they could whether approve of their relationship or reject it.

Moreover, amity could be a way of being a bachelor and resisting marriage.[71] If there were any sexual elements in amity, it was allowed, but it was considered an 'inherently narcissistic desire.' (Patterson, 1999, p. 12). But friends were not said to be sick or lonesome in the amity tradition. According to Patterson, 'his virtue and integrity come from an enduring love for his companion, and it is only gradually that this love is seen as a peculiar elitism or at odds with marriage.' (1999, p. 12). However, **The Merchant of Venice** puts some problems which suggest that amity and romance were no longer endured in Tudor England. If Venice was conceived as a patriarchal and family society, Antonio is completely at odds with this society. The tragicomedy dramatises the problems of the loving friends 'in a society that is re-evaluating its definitions of love and its virtues – a shift so disruptive that Antonio as amorous lover seems sadly outmoded, himself a kind of anachronism.' (1999, p. 14). Shakespeare built Antonio in a marginal position. Furthermore, Patterson highlights that 'the merchant who lends gratis in the spirit of friendship does not automatically signal a noble character, as does the gentle exemplar of gift-giving in a tale of amity, but seems, instead, foolhardy and impetuous.' (1999, p. 14). Thus, their relationship lacks the trope which used to represent the lovely friend in a fused physical and metaphysical relation (1999, p. 15-16). Though there is a lack of reciprocity between them, Antonio believes that lending money is going to 'generate love', though he risks everything he has. (1999, p. 17). Antonio becomes a bankrupt merchant by risking his life for Bassanio.

James O'Rourke (2003)[72] discusses quite an opposite view on Antonio's and Bassanio's friendship. He starts his essay stating that Shakespeare's play intends to criticise the Christians due to their own 'hypocrisy in projecting their own worst traits onto the scapegoated figure of the Jew'. (2003, p. 375). He points out that the Venetians were represented, in Tudor England, as both usurers and sodomites. According to him,

> the stability of the Jewish/Christian opposition in the play, which seems to be anchored by

James's work Basilikon Doron included sodomy and 'false coin' among capital sins.

[71] For example, see more details in Honan's biography **Shakespeare**, 2001, pp. 217-244. It is said that Shakespeare's **The Rape of Lucrece** dedicated to the Count of Southampton, Henry Wriotheley, just as his **Sonnets** were poetic undertakings whose goal was to convince the Count to get married, because he refused to marry Elizabeth Verre and his behaviour was labelled as homoerotic.

[72] See *Racism and Homophobia in "The Merchant of Venice*". ELH, Vol. 70, No. 2 (Summer, 2003), pp. 375-397. The Johns Hopkins University Press, accessed in http://www.jstor.org/stable/30029881, accessed: 20/01/2011 10:26

> the repeated use of the word 'Christian' to refer to the Venetian characters, is unsettled by the repeated juxtaposition of inconsistencies, contradictions, and hypocrisies in the Tudor stereo-typing of Jews and Italians. (2003, p. 375).

The Tudor identification with Antonio as a merchant would be completely odd and repudiated, once the 'hated foreign usurers in London in the 1590s were mostly Italians, known popularly as "Lombards" and there was a long history of English resentment of Lombard merchants.' (2003, p. 376). Besides that, Italians were not just hated because they were merchants and usurers, but also religious issues were at stake, since both the English Church and the Roman Church were enemies.

Moreover, Italian merchants and Jews were very close in the Tudor imaginary, as a 1593 handbill represents (O'Rourke, 2003, p. 377). This handbill was edited just right after Lopez's execution in London record that 'Your Machiavellian merchant spoils the state, / Your usury doth leave us all for dead / ... And like the Jews you eat us up like bread.' (2003, p. 377). The equivalence between the 'Machiavellian merchant' and 'the Jews' is a metaphor suggesting that 'Elizabethan xenophobia' put side by side Italian merchants and Jews. If the Elizabethan imaginary was very xenophobic to the Italian merchants, in the same way, it was very axiomatic in Elizabethan theatre that the Italian merchants were not 'more economically virtuous than Jews' (2003, p. 377). For example, that is more evidently depicted in the play **Three Ladies of London** (1588), by Robert Wilson. The play presents a rather virtuous Jew (Gerontus) in opposition to a meagre and Machiavelli merchant (Mercatore). This play is one of the sources of inspiration for Shakespeare's play, but Shakespeare made it more complex by putting a meagre Jew, who mirrors the Christian hypocrisy and cynicism. By the mirroring device the playwright represents the Christians' inward sinister dimensions

When Antonio reveals to Bassanio that 'my purse, my person […] lie unlocked to your occasions' (I, i, 145-145) he is suggesting something very axiomatic of Tudor age. According to O'Rourke, Antonio's metaphor enhances Elizabethan stereotypes about the 'sexual behavior of Italians' (2003, p. 377-378). As O'Rourke states that a 'fourteenth-century appeal for the expulsion of "Lombard merchants" charged not only usurious business practices but also the accusation that the Lombards had "brought into the realm the shameful sin of sodomy, that is not to be named".' (2003, p. 377-378). Besides that, Antonio and Bassanio would be immediately identified with and associated to the Italian and Lombard merchants.[73] Just to have an idea of such association, some years after the presentation of the play, in 1607, Sir Thomas Sherley wrote an essay to the king named *The profit that may be*

[73] Also, Hinely poses that usurers and sodomites were associated and compared.

raised to your majesty out of the Jews. In such essay Sherley reveals that in London most of the Jews were merchants (2002, p. 224).[74] This association was clear in the audience's mind. By such characterisation, the Elizabethan audience would feel uneasy hearing that an Italian sodomite merchant who criticised usury was identified as an exemplary and well-respected Christian. The audience would reject Antonio as a Christian because of his evident hypocrisy and cynicism.

Therefore, according to such details both Christians and Jews in the play were seen as stereotypes and were disdained by the Elizabethan audience. Nonetheless, it is not awkward to think that Shylock's attempt of revenge would be accepted or even praised by some in the audience, who were eager for bloodshed and slaughter. In fact, many people in Shakespeare's age frequently watched public executions with the same spirit they would watch a play. As a result, Shakespeare may have created Shylock as a character who embodied the potential energy and traits of a hangman. On the other hand, the audience could feel compassion when they saw Shylock being plundered and sabotaged by the Christians in the trial scene. In fact, the audience's feeling and reaction to the play is suggested in the first publication of the play, in 1598, when Shakespeare needed to change the original name of the play to ***The Marchaunt of Venyce or otherwise called the Jewe of Venyce***. The addition of Shylock in the title of the play was influenced by the audience's reaction to the play. Therefore, such reaction might have been an exciting and different view on Shylock.

Furthermore, O'Rourke reveals that there were two famous Antonios in Shakespeare's age. They could be identified by the audience as the probable prototypes of Shakespeare's Antonio. The first 'Antonio', Antonio Perez, was a Spanish émigré to England, who was probably running away from the Spanish Inquisition. He was prosecuted by the Inquisition for Sodomy in 1592 and took part in the powerful and dangerous Essex's circle. Antonio Perez was 'particularly disliked by Elizabeth' (2003, p. 379), because of his contribution to the prosecution and execution of Roderigo Lopez. Queen Elizabeth I liked Lopez very much; he was her particular physician and perhaps an intimate counsellor too.[75] The second 'Antonio' was Francis Bacon's brother, Anthony Bacon, who had been prosecuted and condemned for sodomy in France in 1586. According to O'Rourke, around 1594 he was also prosecuted because he was 'in debt for money he had borrowed' years before. (2003, p. 379). Once he was involved in Essex's circle too, he was disliked by Elizabeth I mainly because he was in favour of Bacon's advancement in the government.

[74] See the essay in Kaplan's edition to the **Merchant of Venice**, 2002, pp. 223-225.
[75] For that see Honan, **Shakespeare: a life**, 2001.

Francis Bacon was ‘involved in the circulation of political, financial and personal favours’ to both Perez and Lopez (2003, p. 379). Yet, as Francis Bacon had lost the Attorney General’s place to Cocket, Anthony Bacon started to write against Lopez, which displeased Elizabeth I very much. Thus, these two famous figures could have been in the mind of many people in the audience, just as perhaps in Shakespeare’s mind when he created Antonio.

In that context, we can try to figure out what the Elizabethan audience would have felt and imagined about Shakespeare’s Antonio on stage: this sort of sad man, of lower social rank, who seems to be in love with a gentleman, must have caused great astonishment. Similarities with both Antonios could have been reminded by Antonio’s manners and attitude towards Bassanio. Likewise, Antonio’s description as a gentle Christian must have caused displeasure in the audience, who would not feel identified with such a Christian. They would have distrusted his attitudes and inner feelings. His manners were suggestive of a man whose mind was filled with sinister dispositions such as arrogance, disdain and aggression. Also, Antonio’s sadness would be repudiated by Elizabethan audience, because they were normally festive and happy people. In fact, they liked jokes, satires, clowns’ performances and comedies. They would not feel compassion for a hero whose first verses characterise him as a melancholic and sad man. Elizabethan audiences would feel suspicion and could regard him as submissive and hypocrite.

2. 4. Jason, Medea, the Golden Fleece and Wealthy Inwardness

Instead of revealing the name of the lady he wants to woo, Bassanio just delays his revelation in his speech remembering his prodigal deeds. He unveils his inward desires and intentions: he reveals he is a prodigal and a fortune-hunter, and he tries to justify his deeds by innocence:

> In my school-days, when I had lost one shaft,
> I shot his fellow of the self-same flight
> The self-same way with more advised watch,
> To find the other forth, and by adventuring both
> I oft found both: I urge this childhood proof,
> Because what follows is pure innocence.
> I owe you much, and, like a wilful youth,
> That which I owe is lost; but if you please
> To shoot another arrow that self way
> Which you did shoot the first, I do not doubt,
> As I will watch the aim, or to find both
> Or bring your latter hazard back again
> And thankfully rest debtor for the first. (I, i, 140-152)

He confesses that Antonio helped him once and now he wants his help again. Perhaps Bassanio tried to conquer a woman. 'Shoot another arrow' and 'shaft' are taken from love and war imaginary. Eros' arrow alludes to the lover's attempt to conquer a woman. Such image was a common-place in Renaissance poetry, mainly in Ronsard's and Sidney's poetry. Despite that, he suggests that though Antonio would arrange once again another engagement to Bassanio, as he had done in his youth, Bassanio's love and affection will continue to be only his. Thus, Bassanio persuades Antonio by his cunning speech, so that Antonio takes the risk of shooting another arrow for Bassanio. The reference to 'childhood' and 'pure innocence' is an attempt to convince Antonio to help him. (Drakakis, 2010, p. 184). He idealises his attitudes as innocent and good, not seeing that which goes within his heart, intentions and desires. Goddard[76] remarks that Bassanio 'fools the average reader' and if the play is well performed he fools 'the average spectator', because when 'the young spendthrift is handsome, we forgive him much' (1969, p. 145). He acknowledges that he is planning a ''plot' to get clear of his debts' (1969, p. 144-145). Therefore, Bassanio's intentions of marrying Portia is a rather way out to get a fortune and pay his debts.

Coupled with that, Antonio cooperatively embodies fatherly attitudes to Bassanio. As Drakakis states (2010), 'by regressing into childhood Bassanio implies another kind of a relationship to Antonio: that of a prodigal (and possibly immature) son asking his father to supply his needs…' (2010, p. 184). Such trait is an inheritance from another source of they play, *Il Percorone*, wherein Ansaldo (Antonio) is godfather to his nephew Gianetto, Bassanio's prototype. Bassanio and Antonio's relationship is ambiguous because both embody traits of amity and paternal and filial relationship. Thus, he tries to justify his disbursement by suggesting that his prodigal attitudes are due to his naïveté of not knowing the consequences of his prodigality. Such attitude suggests his shame and the need to hide his inconsequence.

Bassanio's evasive speech suggests his fear of unveiling to Antonio whom he wants marry. But Antonio reacts and feels wronged for such round-about arguments:

> You know me well, and herein spend but time
> To wind about my love with circumstance;
> And out of doubt you do me now more wrong
> In making question of my uttermost
> Than if you had made waste of all I have:
> Then do but say to me what I should do

[76] See Harold Goddard's essay *The Three Caskets*, in John Wilders' casebook **Shakespeare: *The Merchant of Venice***, 1969.

> That in your knowledge may by me be done,
> And I am prest unto it: therefore, speak. (I, i, 153-160)

Antonio's response demonstrates that Bassanio's attitude makes him angry. He reveals that Bassanio would never wrong him if he had wasted all he has got, but he feels wrong because Bassanio's delay suggests distrust of his friendship and confidence. Antonio's impatience to hear Bassanio's excuses implies the merchant's anxiety, irritability and susceptibility to distrust. Alternatively, Bassanio's delay and excuses imply his shame of being prodigal in his youth. His shame is also enhanced by his need for idealisation and sublimation of his deeds and expenditure. In fact, he uses this cunning speech to bargain Antonio's approval. In that sense, a seventeenth century report entitled *An Itinerary* (2002)[77] by Fynes Moryson describes Italian and Venetian manners and attitudes. Moryson travelled throughout Europe between 1591 and 1595. Travellers' reports were well-known in England in late sixteenth century. Shakespeare probably knew some of those reports which helped him to create the image of Venetians in the play. For Moryson, Italians and Venetians were good dissemblers, flatterers and used language to deceive and persuade people:

> They are for the outside by nature's gift excellently composed. By sweetness of language, and singular art in seasoning their talk and behavior with great ostentation of courtesy, they make their conversation sweet and pleasing to all men, easily gaining the good will of those with whom they live. But no trust is to be reposed in their words, the flattering tongue having small acquaintance with a sincere heart […]. And indeed in these fair speeches which we call courting, they so transcend all golden mediocrity [moderation], as they are reputed the authors of all flattery spread through all our transalpine nations, especially in salutations by word of mouth, and epistles, forced with hyperbolical protestations… (2002, p. 169).

The image of dissemblers and flatterers as Venetians and Italians contradicts Bassanio's image of plainness and sincerity in the casket scene (III, ii). Thus, Bassanio's representation which echoes reports of Shakespeare's age is a hint the dramatist left to the audience to perceive the Christians in the play as deceitful, flatterers, hypocritical, cynical, and dissemblers. What is suggestive is that before presenting Shylock as stingy, villain, comic and revengeful, Shakespeare built the image of Bassanio as a fortune-hunter and dissembler, just as he constructs Antonio's image as a Puritan merchant. With this sprinkle of hypocritical traits in the faces of the Christians the audience could be very suspicious of what the Christians feel, think and how they act towards the other characters in the play.

Finally, after a long delay he confesses his purpose to Antonio:

[77] See Moryson's essay in Kaplan's collection, 2002.

> In Belmont is a lady richly left,
> And she is fair, and fairer than that word,
> Of wondrous virtues – sometimes from her eyes
> I did receive fair speechless messages.
> Her name is Portia, nothing undervalued
> To Cato's daughter, Brutus' Portia. (I, i, 161-166)

Portia is described by Bassanio in an idealising way. Her beauty seems to be Bassanio's reason of going to Belmont and venturing the caskets test. However, what Bassanio first mentions about her is not her beauty, but that she is *richly left*. *Richly left* reveals his sinister and eager desires for fortune. According to Maguire (2004), Bassanio always employs material words in his speeches: 'for him romance, debt, and bridging loan are inextricably linked'. (2004, p. 53). Like Antonio he confuses and exchanges feelings, affections and love for wealth. After that, he compares her to Brutus' Portia, who does not overcome her value, as it is clear by the word *undervalued*: the words *value* and *undervalued* are ambiguous, implying both respect and price. If they are too much concerned with wealth, when the audience see Shylock with the same traits, they may perceive that Shylock functions as a mirror to represent the Christians' inner dispositions. As we will see, Shylock is, indeed, a mirror of Christian hypocrisy and dissemblance in the play.

Moreover, Bassanio's eagerness for wealth is enhanced throughout the play. He describes her beauty just in three verses, and then he draws his attentions again to her wealth, comparing her to a 'golden fleece':

> Nor is the wide world ignorant of her worth,
> For the four winds blow in from every coast
> Renowned suitors, and her sunny locks
> Hang on her temples like a golden fleece;
> Which makes her seat of Belmont Colchos' strand,
> And many Jasons come in quest of her.
> O my Antonio, had I but the means
> To hold a rival place with one of them,
> I have a mind presages me such thrift,
> That I should questionless be fortunate! (I, i, 167-176)

Portia is cunningly associated to the *Golden Fleece*, which is desired by many men. In the myth, Jason goes to the shores of Colchis at the Black Sea to retrieve the Golden Fleece. Jason elopes with Medea, who was a witch. This comparison between Portia and Medea suggests the threat of being enchanted and dominated by her. Portia looks like this trophy which many men desire and which must be conquered. Thus, her description alludes to the danger and threatening she embodies in the play as the seducing Medea of the play.

Then, he mentions how much she is disputed by the suitors, eager to marry her because of her richness. He evokes the imagery of wealth with the word *worth*, which suggests *price, cost, property, richness,* and also *respect, honour* and *merit*. Likewise, as he desires to be as fortunate as other suitors, he enhances his eagerness of getting a fortune: *fortunate* means literally the receiver of a fortune (Drakakis, 2010, p. 187). Shakespeare presents Bassanio's inward intentions by using this sort of wealthy dispositions, suggesting that he is a fortune-hunter, and he uses the imagery of wealth, such as *thrift* and *fortunate*, to emphasise Bassanio's desires for wealth. Even though Bassanio swears he loves Portia, it seems that her wealth guides and determines his inward dispositions and his quest to marry her. In that sense, this insistent description of Portia with the imagery of *wealth* is echoed in the other characters' speech, mainly Portia, Lorenzo, and Jessica. Only in Bassanio's speech do many words refer to this wealth imagery: *richly left, worth, Golden Fleece, thrift, fortunate*. He doubles Antonio's *wealthy inwardness* or *material inwardness*, i. e., human and affective relationship is exchanged by the mercantile issues such as money, gold, gains and fortune. Relationships, feelings, affection and trust are measured by money and property.[78]

Bassanio takes risk for love and passion, something which could be dangerous and mistrusted in that epoch. In that sense, Moryson (2002)[79] reports that Venetian men felt passion and compulsive attraction to women. For him they would marry not for love, but rather for lust, desire and dowry. Moryson reports that

> they are carried rather with a blind rage of passion and a strong imagination of their brain, than with the true contemplation of virtues, or the power beauty, to adore them as images, rather than love them as women. And as now they spare no cost, and will run great dangers to obtain their lustful desires, so would they pursue them to very madness, had they not the most natural remedy of this passion ready at hand to allay their desires, namely harlots, whom they call courtesans, having beauty and youth and whatsoever they can imagine in their mistress, besides the pleasure of change more to delight them, so driving them out of love with love, as one nail with another. This makes them little regard their wives' beauty or manners, and to marry for dowry, parentage […] resolving … to satisfy the humors of love (be they of conversation, of beauty, or of disordinate lusts in the diverse and some bestial kinds of enjoying that pleasure) by the freedom of the Stewes [brothels]. (2002, p. 168)

Moryson suggests that it was common among the Venetians to risk everything they had for passion, desire and lewdness. They did not admire virtues and worth in a woman;

[78] In that sense, King Lear is an heir of Antonio's and Bassanio's confusion of feelings for money. He demands that his daughters flatter him and according to their speech they will inherit a third of the kingdom. When Cordelia refuses to play his game, Lear gets enraged and disinherits her. Also, Shakespeare discovered in Shylock a tragic figure who expresses his anxieties of loss and abandonment. In many senses, **The Merchant of Venice** is one of Shakespeare's greatest plays, because he discovered therein some important themes, which are essential to the great tragedies, such as **Hamlet**, **Macbeth**, **Othello** and **King Lear**.

[79] See Moryson's report in Kaplan, 2002.

instead they married for dowry and lust. This image is suggested in Bassanio's description of Portia, who is valued by her wealth and his description of her beauty in monetary terms. Thus, he sees Portia as an object, a Golden Fleece which he wants to conquer and possess.

In the history of mercantilism, there occurred some changes of values which might have unleashed anxieties and fears in the Elizabethan age. In many senses, Mercantilism pervaded social relationship, arousing anxieties about the exchange of money for affections. In that sense, Hinely (1980) states that 'in a mercantile trade society money bonds take precedence over human bonds, and the power of money is literally the power of life over death.' (1980, p. 228). In the play, not just Shylock values money over human relations, but all characters do it such as Bassanio, Antonio, Portia, Jessica, Lorenzo. For Maguire, all the characters of the play speak in financial terms, especially Bassanio (2004, p. 53). Bassanio is a 'blatant opportunist' and a fortune-hunter.[80] The anxieties unleashed in the play would be connected with the relation between money and affections. Both social context and inner self are intertwined by such gloomy desire, which makes the characters see the other as a mere object of domain and property. Therefore, in **The Merchant of Venice** human relationship, feelings and affections are measured by wealthy terms rather than friendship, respect and love, which conveys the wealthy inwardness incrusted in the texture of the play.

[80] According to Maguire (2004, p. 53), in a 1976 Vancouver production Bassanio comes on stage disguised first as the Prince of Morocco and then as the Prince of Aragon in order to know which is the correct casket. Such representation would be very funny to the Renaissance audience. It enhances his opportunism, because he is then identified as hypocritical and opportunist.

CHAPTER 3

Facing the Paternal Figure: Conscience, Shame and Inwardness

3. 1. Jacob's and Laban's sheep: Usury and the Bond

Shylock appears on stage for the first time while he discusses the bond to lend money to Bassanio. He discusses the conditions of lending three thousand ducats for three months:

> **Shylock**. Three thousand ducats; well.
> **Bassanio**. Ay, sir, for three months.
> **Shylock**. For three months; well.
> **Bassanio**. For the which, as I told you, Antonio shall be bound.
> **Shylock**. Antonio shall become bound; well.
> **Bassanio**. May you stead me? will you pleasure me? shall I know your answer?
> **Shylock**. Three thousand ducats for three months and Antonio bound. (I, iii, 1-7)

Though it is supposed to be a comic scene, its tone denotes tension and anxiety. Bassanio is trying to convince Shylock to lend him money and he impatiently demands him an answer for it. Some critics have highlighted here Shylock's comic repetition of 'well', 'three thousand ducats', 'three months'. According to Sherman,[81] such tics, style and repetitions reveal Shylock's 'doubling cast of mind' (2004, p. 279). Shylock embodies a theatrical identity to veil his inward intentions, according to McGinn's assumptions of the self as theatrical. His answers are vague and his mind seems to be distant from their conversation and Bassanio's actual aims. In fact, he has a sceptical attitude towards Antonio's and Bassanio's proposal: he doubts whether he should lend money to Antonio and Bassanio. Even though he is sceptical about Antonio's business, he is, on the contrary, very pragmatic, because he thinks about costs and profits, investments and gains. Coupled with that, Shylock is wondering about what he can do, whether it is a good opportunity to revenge on Antonio's mistreatment. He may be wondering how to take his revenge on Antonio, but he may not have figured out yet the way he is going to plot such revenge.

When Bassanio insists on his 'answer to that', Shylock ironically alludes to Antonio's reputation, attitudes and manners in the Rialto:

> **Shylock**. Antonio is a good man.

[81] See Anita Sherman's essay *Disowning knowledge of Jessica, or Shylock's scepticism*, 2004.

Bassanio. Have you heard any imputation to the contrary? (I, iii, 11-12)

Bassanio's reaction suggests something strange about Antonio in the play: why does Bassanio immediately react to Shylock's mentioning of Antonio's reputation and goodness? Such gesture suggests that Bassanio may know something about Antonio's attitudes to Shylock, as we come to know in this scene. Antonio's 'imputation' will be crystal clear later on: he spits on Shylock's gabardine, calls him a 'dog', a 'misbeliever' and other humiliating names. Moreover, as Patterson (1999)[82] has already noticed, Bassanio may echo some imputation related to Antonio's rank, since he is a merchant, whereas Bassanio is a decadent gentleman. Bassanio pertains to a higher rank than Antonio: the latter is a mere merchant, a bourgeois, an ascendant new-rich, whereas the former is a decadent gentleman, who had lost his fortune in ventures. Drakakis (2010)[83] suggests that Bassanio's reaction to him means that Antonio is 'dishonourable'' (2010, p. 203). Since Bassanio and Shylock know Antonio's conditions and the risks of marine market, Bassanio becomes apprehensive, considering that Antonio is likely to be the only person who can help him with money to woo Portia. His apprehension suggests his precipitous actions, decisions, and behaviour. However, that was something reproachable in the Renaissance Age, since a wise gentleman was supposed first to think, ponder, examine and consider any situation he would get into.[84] That is exactly what both Antonio and Bassanio do not do: neither consider they the risks of lending money and commerce, nor think they that Shylock can take revenge on Antonio.

In fact, Shylock is quite ironic. However, Bassanio thinks this is a negative answer to his question. Shylock is mocking Antonio's 'goodness', says Walters (1960). Nevertheless, he explains that his meaning by saying 'good man' is that he is financially sufficient. As a matter of fact, he is planning a plot against Antonio: he wonders what he can do to revenge himself and his Jewish nation on Antonio. He is lingering to give an answer to Bassanio, for he trickily wants to get Antonio as bait, but he may be thinking at this moment what he can do.

Furthermore, it is quite revealing that Shylock knows everything about Antonio's business. When he answers that his meaning is to say that Antonio is a good man, he reveals how much he knows about Antonio:

> Oh, no, no, no, no: my meaning in saying he is a good man is to have you understand me that he is sufficient. Yet his means are in supposition: he hath an argosy bound to Tripolis, another to the Indies; I understand moreover, upon the Rialto, he hath a third at Mexico, a fourth for England, and other ventures he hath, squandered abroad. But ships are but

[82] See Steve Patterson's essay *The Bankruptcy of Homoerotic Amity in Shakespeare's Merchant of Venice*, 1999.
[83] See John Drakakis' edition to **The Merchant of Venice**. London: Methuen, 2010.
[84] See R. Frye, 1984.

> boards, sailors but men: there be land-rats and water-rats, water-thieves and land-thieves, I mean pirates, and then there is the peril of waters, winds and rocks. The man is, notwithstanding, sufficient. Three thousand ducats; I think I may take his bond. (I, iii, 13-23).

The cat was following the mouse's steps. The fact that he knows many details about Antonio's business suggests that he could be following Antonio's steps to take his revenge on him at any moment. Moreover, his attitude is pragmatic and quite sceptical to Antonio's possessions and ships abroad. He doubts that the merchant's possessions could be safe due to the perils of pirates and tempests in the ocean, even though he does not deny that Antonio is sufficient as a warrantor. Shylock voices here Salanio's and Salerio's concerns in the beginning of the play: the dangers of rock, water, storms and tempests. The emotional anxieties are again depicted in and projected on the marine landscape and such images fantasmatically enhance the fear and apprehension a merchant could feel.

Thus, Shylock reveals that 'his means are in supposition', that is, his business is quite uncertain. He jokes with Bassanio's apprehension by twisting the word 'good': first Shylock states that Antonio is sufficient, but then he suggests his richness is uncertain, because they are all in the sea. To some extent, he predicts Antonio's bankruptcy and ruin, when he alludes to the disasters a merchant would fear most: shipwrecking and piracy. Then, he enumerates the ships Antonio has in the sea, yet he presents contrary arguments to Antonio's ventures. He introduces such oppositions through syntactical framework: first with 'yet' and then he employs 'but', which syntactically shows the opposition embedded in his discourse. Such opposition suggests in his mind that he is quite sceptical about Antonio's goodness and safety. Then he contradicts again Antonio's 'goodness' using the word 'notwithstanding', which is a very formal use in this case. His discourse ironically reveals contrary arguments to Antonio's goodness and fortune. But such oppositions are not noticed by Bassanio, because he is rather interested in his financial help: Bassanio is blind, blind for money.

Shylock finally suggests he may take Antonio's bond. However, the conversation is pervaded by uncertainty and mistrust. Shylock knows how to use his discourse trickily. According to Sherman (2004, p. 279), he adorns his speeches with 'verbal usury', enriched with punning and flattering, which, in a subtler level, reveals that his purposes are quite the opposite: he aims at cheating Antonio and revenging himself. His inward feelings are hidden in those oblique intentions, which enhance his villain traits here. He uses falsehood in his discourse to disguise his inward dispositions, feelings and thoughts; he may be even lying here, using his language as barrier to hide sinister intentions, instead of using it as a conduit to

convey his inner self, according to McGinn's assumptions (2007, p. 65). Since he is very tricky and good at using his language to cheat both Antonio and Bassanio, he is capable of disguising his intentions. Thereto, he also uses the future tense and modal verbs to obfuscate his answer:

> **Bassanio**. Be assured you may.
> **Shylock**. I will be assured I may; and, that I may be assured,
> I will bethink me. May I speak with Antonio? (I, iii, 24-26)

His answer is altogether evasive, not because he does not want to seal the bond, but because he is thinking about how to use the bond to take his revenge on Antonio. Certainly, his repetitions and uses of modal verbs are quite comic and villainous, but they suggest that he wants to mock both Bassanio and Antonio because they are naïve men. The use of the 'will-future', the modal verb *may* and the repetition of *assured* signal his double cast of mind to hide his sinister intentions. This evasiveness suggests his inward floatation and feelings such as anger and bitterness, which draws his attention from this conversation and make him think over how to deal with a possible revenge. Besides that, he is probably waiting to speak to Antonio, delaying his answer, because he wants to remind Antonio of his mistreatment.

As Bassanio invites him to dine with them, he provocatively responds to the invitation, in the same sense that he speaks ironically about Christians' habits:

> Yes, to smell pork; to eat of the habitation which your prophet the Nazarite conjured the devil into. I will buy with you, sell with you, talk with you, walk with you, and so following, but I will not eat with you, drink with you, nor pray with you. What news on the Rialto? Who is he comes here? (I, iii, 27-33)

Shylock refers now to the 'miraculous healing' that Jesus Christ made to a man possessed by the devils (according to St. Matthew, 8). As the devils left the man's body, they entered a herd of swine which ran into the sea. His mentioning of swine, the smelling of pork, also alludes to licentiousness. In fact, in Western imaginary pigs are said to represent lust and licentiousness. According to Laroque (1991), there was an animal hierarchy which symbolised either positive or negative meanings in the Renaissance age: 'Traditional bestiaries laid down an animal hierarchy. The lion, eagle, and dolphin symbolized divine kingship, whereas the donkey, pig, goat, rat, and monkey were impure animals, emblems of lechery.' (1991, p. 21)[85]. In that sense, Shylock suggests that by living, eating and drinking with Christians he would allow himself to be contaminated by Christian lewdness and

[85] See **The Age of Shakespeare**, by François Laroque, 1991.

licentiousness. Coupled with that, Drakakis points out that as Shylock refers to the expulsion of the devils, 'the Jew turns against the Christians the very rhetoric of demonization directed against him, and he mocks Bassanio and his friends because they literally ingest *the devil* each time they eat pork' (2010, p. 205). The audience could see in-between this statement the suggestion of their evil character. Thus, such reference establishes a difference between Christians and Jews in manners and habits, even though Shylock is depicted by the Christians as a cruel villain.

It is suggestive that after this allusion to pork and the expulsion of the devils, and consequently lechery, Antonio meets Shylock on stage. Shylock may be referring to some particular traits about Antonio's attitudes and habits. As we have seen above, Antonio's behaviour in public could be acknowledge as homoerotic. The juxtaposition of the smelling of pork – and consequently licentiousness and lust – with Antonio's entering the stage reinforce Bassanio's and Antonio's dubious relationship. By such suggestion, the audience could imagine that Antonio's desires are suggestively connected with lust. Therefore, once again the image of the Christians in the play could be rejected and disdained by some in the audience, face to Shylock's reference to pork and the devil.

Then, as Antonio enters the scene, Shylock gives his first characterisation of his enemy: a *fawning publican*:

> [Aside] How like a fawning publican he looks!
> I hate him for he is a Christian,
> But more for that in low simplicity
> He lends out money gratis and brings down
> The rate of usance here with us in Venice.
> If I can catch him once upon the hip,
> I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him.
> He hates our sacred nation, and he rails,
> Even there where merchants most do congregate,
> On me, my bargains and my well-won thrift,
> Which he calls interest. Cursed be my tribe,
> If I forgive him! (I, iii, 35-46)

His definition of Antonio as a *fawning publican* is very symptomatic of Antonio's attitudes. A publican was a Jew who collaborated with the Romans in collecting taxes. With the word *fawning* we can think of Antonio as a sad and submissive man, mainly to Bassanio. *Fawning publican* refers to the parable of the humble publican who is scorned by the Pharisee (according to St. Luke, 18, 10-14). Coupled with that, *fawning* means someone who seeks for notice and favour by servile attitudes and behaviour. Yet, according to Barbara Lewalski (1962), 'Antonio at the outset of the play is rather in the position of the publican described as

friendly to his brethren only – he loves and forgives Bassanio beyond all measure, but hates and reviles Shylock.' (1962, p 331). Alternatively, publicans were also the 'oppressors of the Jews' (Drakakis, 2010, p. 206). And if publicans were Jews, then Shylock is rather enhancing Antonio's similarities with himself: he is a merchant and his merchandising is a way of getting money in the same way as usury. In fact, almost all merchants were usurers in Shakespeare's England.[86] By all those suggestions, the audience would once again recognise Antonio as a submissive and conniving man, who seeks for social and economic recognition, and who is in a certain way connected with usury. Antonio's inward dimensions are represented by the mirroring device as a mimetic technique which duplicates Shylock's hypocrisy, villainy and deceitfulness in Antonio.

In this aside, Shylock justifies his hatred towards Antonio. He has mocked his customs, he hates his lending money and he hates the Jewish nation and affronts Shylock's thrift. He affirms that his hate and anger to Antonio is not something recent: his 'ancient grudge' is due to Antonio's humiliating treatment to Shylock beforehand. However, later on in this scene Shylock enhances Antonio's affronts and disdains by remarking the frequency of such attitudes: 'many a time and oft' (I, iii, 102). The use of two adverbs of frequency together alludes to the repetition of Antonio's aggressiveness to Shylock, and that is why he wants to take his revenge. Contrary to Bassanio, who dishonours his rank, Shylock wants to revenge himself, as well as his nation. Shylock honours too much his Jewish nation,[87] so that he wants to revenge it at any cost.

One of the first things we must acknowledge when analysing Shylock's character is the ambiguous characteristics Shakespeare used to create him. Some critics, such as Derek Cohen (1980), John Cooper (1970), Herbert Bronstein (1969), Laurie Maguire (2004) and Kenneth Gross (2006) have highlighted that, even though he is comic and villain, he is complex and what he feels is sincere. Some critics censure Shylock's attitudes as meagre, resentful, cruel and revengeful. Thus, Shylock is portrayed with human ambiguous traits which make him a rather complex and humanised character.

Then Antonio and Shylock face each other on stage for the first time. When Shylock

[86] For that see Kaplan, 2002, p. 224.

[87] Renaissance audience could recognise in Shylock's desire for revenge something very particularly related to honour. The Renaissance concept of honour was pervaded by terms such as courage, will and revenge. Curtis Brown Watson, **Shakespeare and the Renaissance Concept of Honor** (1960) states that the Renaissance men were said to honoured and honourable only when they had some individual virtues, such as wisdom, magnificence, wit, justice, bounty, gratitude, temperance, beauty, gentility, valour, patriotism, and desire for revenge. The opposite of revenge was cowardice. Shylock's attitude could be regarded as honourable, because he wants to take revenge to honour his nation and himself. The idea of revenge was naturally accepted, because any respectable man would take revenge and would even fight a duel as a way of keeping his honour. Moreover, there were many plays which depicted revenge as an essential issue. Those were called the 'revenge tragedies', such as the **Spanish Tragedy**, by Thomas Kyd, which is a prototype for **Hamlet**, also a revenge tragedy. In many perspectives, Shylock could be seen as an honourable man and Antonio could be seen as coward and weak.

speaks to Antonio, the merchant seems to be uneasy about meeting Shylock again, probably because of their 'ancient grudge'. Shylock ironically remarks: 'Rest you fair, good signior. Your worship was the last man in our mouths.' (I, iii, 53-54). The merchant immediately reacts to Shylock's ironic verve:

> Shylock, although I neither lend nor borrow
> By taking nor by giving of excess,
> Yet, to supply the ripe wants of my friend,
> I'll break a custom. (I, iii, 55-59)

Antonio's reaction is awkward here: nobody said anything about usury, but his reaction is to justify himself of his attitude of borrowing money with interest without being questioned. His reactive attitude suggests his contempt to Shylock's business. Antonio reacts so quickly and abruptly to defend him of a question which has not been asked yet. This abruptness suggests Antonio's suspicion of Shylock's trickiness and deceitfulness. He would not admit, even unconsciously, to be questioned and reproached of lending money. Nor would he accept the comparison of his business to Shylock's. In that sense, Drakakis (1998) points out that

> [Shylock] stands in a negative relation of 'otherness' to Venetian society. But, as a number of commentators on the play have observed, Venetian society is not presented uncritically. So there is a sense in which Shylock represents an externalisation , and a demonisation of a force that Venice finds necessary in order for it to conduct its daily commercial activity, but which it cannot acknowledge as such. (1998p. 186)[88]

His despising attitude suggests that he is being affronted, which demonstrates his vain pretention of seriousness and rectitude, in fact his two-faced attitudes. Shakespeare creates Antonio as a man who does not acknowledge his inner flaws, in order to suggest that the Christians just see the others' faults and vices, but not their own. Shakespeare creates this double in the play to provoke the aesthetic effect of surprise and perplexity.

What is more, Shylock probably notices his puritan rejection to usury, which was very common among Puritans in Renaissance England. He does that by remarking exactly the same thing Antonio has repudiated 4 lines before: 'but hear you; / Methought you said, you neither lend nor borrow / Upon advantage.' (I, iii, 62-64). He is trying to provoke Antonio and stab his puritan hypocritical pride. According to Simon Critchley & Tom McCarthy (2004),[89]

[88] See John Drakakis' essay *Historical difference and Venetian Patriarchy*, in COYLE, Martin. **The Merchant of Venice**: contemporary critical essays. Londres: Macmillan: 1998. (New Casebooks), pp. 181-208.
[89] See Simon Critchley and Tom McCarthy, *Universal Shylockery: Money and Morality in "The Merchant of Venice"*, 2004.

puritans considered usury immoral and unnatural. They state that what the Christians criticise in Shylock is what is in their own attitudes, actions and inner feelings. The Christians in the play condemn usury, yet their own speeches are full of words conveying money, gold, fortune and property. That is what happens to Antonio, Bassanio, Portia and Lorenzo. No one escapes from this universal system of money. But Antonio thinks that his way of getting money by merchandising is puritanically right. That is why he despises Shylock's usury. But his way of getting money is not different from Shylock's, as it is going to be discussed. Therefore, Shylock mirrors and represents what Antonio does wish to see in him. The mirroring device enabled Shakespeare to subtly represent inner sinister feelings, suggesting hypocrisy in both the merchant and the Jew.

Contradictorily, Antonio's criticism about Shylock's usury was simply a puritan attitude. In fact, usury became legal years before **The Merchant of Venice** was first staged. In 1571, the English Parliament established a law which allowed usury at 10 per cent interest in England. According to E. C. Pettet (1945),[90]

> As a result of the famous law of 1571, moneylending in England had at last become open and legal, and, by the time Shakespeare was writing, the business of usury had been considerably expanded, while the 10 per cent interest that the 1571 Act had established as the maximum figure had become the normal, and often, when the law was circumvented, the minimum charge. Nevertheless, the medieval objection to moneylending, that it was economically bad and religiously damnable, was still strong and continued to thrive on the confusion between usury and credit facilities. (1969, p. 102)

Such act of law was obviously a preventive act against excessive amount of interest among usurers. Nevertheless, many books, essays and pamphlets against usury were published after the 1571 Act, such as the famous *Discourse upon Usury*, by Wilson, published in 1572, and Miles Mosse's *Arraignment of Usury*, first published in 1595, probably a year before **The Merchant of Venice** was first staged. Wilson's discourse was a Puritan reaction against such an act of law, a reaction which continued to prevail from that moment onwards. Similarly Mosse's discourse states that usury was against the word of God. Thus, though the Law permitted usury in England, many puritans used to attack it most fiercely. They condemned it based on mediaeval and religious assumptions, which considered it as sinful and devilish. Shakespeare seems to put at stake such contradictions of his age, showing that Jews had the legal right to practice usury. However, he is hated, attacked and affronted by such legal practice. Shakespeare put that problem in the play probably because he wanted to show hypocritical attitudes of the Puritans, who did not accept money-lending.

[90] See the essay *The Merchant of Venice and the Problem of Usury*, in Walters (ed.) 1969

Moreover, some critics have already asked the question 'Did Shakespeare have problems with puritans and Jews?' For example, Honan (2001), Lukacher (1994) and Weis (2007) propose that Shakespeare knew some Jews. Honan proposes that Shakespeare knew and had some business with Jews in the construction of the Globe. They helped the Chamberlain's Men lending money to build the Globe and investing money in the new theatre. Also, Marjorie Garber points that Shakespeare's company borrowed money from usurers to build the Theatre and the Globe at a 'very high rates interest' (2004, p. 284). Shakespeare knew many Jews, such as musicians, physicians, and usurers. Interestingly, he was a friend of the Jewish usurer John Combe and of the aggressive and audacious Jewish usurer Francis Langley, who build the Swan Theatre in 1596. In this same year, a record points to an interesting detail. According to Honan (2001), William Wayte demanded an appeal "*ob metum mortis*" (fearing death) in a formal petition against a certain 'Will[elm]um Shakspere, Francis Langley, Dorothy Soer, John Soer's wife, and Anne Lee'. (2001, p. 321). How Shakespeare got involved in such a quarrel is unknown. But such detail reveals that Shakespeare was mentioned in a formal petition side by side with a quarrelsome and aggressive usurer. (Honan, 2001, p. 321). Thus, it is worth noticing that Shakespeare seemed not to have troubles with the Jews, because he had business and needed the Jewish help in the construction of the Globe. Also, Lukacher and Weiss suggest that there were some moneylenders around 1595-1596 in Shakespeare's England. Shapiro (1996)[91] points out that there were more Jews in Shakespeare's England than we could imagine. There was even a *House of the Conversos* in London, wherein conversos were obliged to live. These details contradict the idealistic and purist hypothesis which states that there were no Jews in Shakespeare's England. In a certain sense, these facts illuminate the representation of Shylock as a Jew and a usurer, which point to opposing problems in the age: it merely represented the Jew and his stereotypes, but on the other hand, it alluded to the contradictions of Venice just as England. Drakakis (1998) [92] points out that

> We know that the figure of the 'Jew' was a theatrical type, and as such identified with the theatre itself, but in the play Shylock is depicted as a repressive puritan who presents challenges to the orthodoxies of restraint and pleasure to which the theatre itself would claim allegiance. (1998, p. 186)

Therefore, Antonio's insistence in affronting usurers is quite revealing of the problems

[91] **Shakespeare and the Jews**, 1996.
[92] See John Drakakis' essay *Historical difference and Venetian Patriarchy*, in COYLE, Martin. **The Merchant of Venice**: contemporary critical essays. Londres: Macmillan: 1998. (New Casebooks), pp. 181-208.

created by usury in that age, despite the 1571 Act of Law allowing ten per cent of interest in lending money. He reacts in fact as a sort of puritan Christian of the Elizabethan age, who contradictorily submits himself to borrow money from a usurer.

Furthermore, according to Pettet (1969), usury was a rather expanded practice in Elizabethan England after the 1571 Act of law. Many gentlemen and noblemen got debts for their increasing 'expenses of their establishments' and they had to borrow money from usurers, according to Pettet (1969, p. 101). Pettet affirms that noblemen's debts were enormous around 1595-1596. Pettet lists the debts of many noblemen:

> Sir Philip Sidney owed £ 6,000, the Earl of Essex £22,000, the Duke of Norfolk £6,000 – £7,000, the Earl of Huntingdon £20,000, the Earl of Leicester £59,000, Lord Sandys £3,700, Sir F. Willoughby £21,000, and Sir Percival Willoughby £8,000. Others who were heavily in debt included the Earl of Sussex, Lord Thomas Howard, the Earl of Rutland, Lord Vaux of Harrowden, Lord Scrope, and Shakespeare's own patron, the Earl of Southampton, who at one time had surrendered his estates to creditors and 'scarce knows what course to take to live'. (1969, p. 101)

The increasing offer of goods, clothes, shoes, jewels, spices, furniture made their expenses increase a lot.[93] Because of debts for buying new attractive goods, usury became a common practice in Elizabethan England, since they wanted to live up to their status, new fashion and possession of goods, jewels, clothes and furniture. According to Garber (2004, p. 284),[94] even Queen Elizabeth I borrowed money from usurers and bankers in Europe. Therefore, many in the audience would suspect Antonio's rejection of usury and could regard him as a two-faced Puritan, whereas others could agree with him and label Shylock a despising usurer.

However, the main problem of usury was that many usurers exceeded the legal limit of ten per cent interest allowed by the 1571 Act of Law. Most strikingly, James Shapiro (1996) reveals a detail very pertinent to Shakespeare's family: 'even after the 1571 statute permitting usury, individuals who lent money at unacceptably excessive rates were prosecuted, including, interestingly enough, Shakespeare's father'. (1996, p. 99). Such accusations were

[93] Compared to early Tudor age, these amounts were very high. According to G. J. Meyer (2010), in his work **The Tudors**, aristocrats did not need much money to be ranked among the richest nobles in Tudor England, or even to be 'elected' in the Parliament. According to him, in early Tudor England after the first decade of Henry VIII's reign, the richest noble was the Duke of Buckingham, whose annual income was of £6,045. For Meyer, 'the incomes of most lords – and there were only about fifty in the entire kingdom – were little more than a fifth, even a tenth of Buckingham's'. (2010, p. 77-78). That detail denotes that the lords had incomes between £500 and £1,200. The knights of the kingdom earned around £200 a year and 'that was usually enough to make them the richest men in their localities' (2010, p. 78) and the income of '£10 a year was enough to keep a family in the gentry' (2010, p. 78). These incomes demonstrate that the huge incomes and debts of the aristocrats had increased a lot at about 80 years after the beginning of the century; the financial amount to maintain a nobleman was getting higher and higher.

[94] Marjorie Garber, **Shakespeare after all**. 2004, p. 284.

recorded not once, but twice. According to Shapiro (1996),[95] 'John Shakespeare was twice accused of violating usury laws, charging twenty percent interest on loans of eighty and one hundred pounds, respectively. In one case he was fined forty shillings' (1996, p. 256). Thus, John Shakespeare charged more than twenty per cent interest in the first business and twenty per cent in the second one. Park Honan also remarks that John Shakespeare was considered guilty for charging twice twenty per cent interest on two loans. (2001, p. 321). Shakespeare might have evoked such facts when writing the play. However, such details about Shakespeare illuminate the prosecutions of people who circumvented the 1571 Act of Law and charged more than 10 per cent interest in loans.

Ambiguously, face to those facts, Shylock's usury could be noticed by some people in the audience as something accepted and common, whereas some Puritans would see it as unnatural and reproachable. When Shylock affirms some lines later 'then let me see, the rate' (I, iii, 98), the audience could think that Shylock checks the rate to keep the ten per cent interest allowed by law. This gesture shows that Shylock strictly followed the law which allowed usury at ten per cent interest. According to Drakakis (1998),

> But unless we are to think along certain oversimplified new historicist lines that Shylock is merely an effect of Venetian power which requires to be contained, then we are forced to recognise that there is much more at stake in this conflict. In this more complex version, Shylock is not primarily a realistic representation, not a 'Jew' in the strictly ethnological sense of the term, but both a subject position *and* a rhetorical means of prising open a dominant Christian ideology no longer able to smooth over its own internal contradictions, and therefore a challenge and a threat. (1998, p. 186)

In that sense, as the audience saw Antonio blaming Shylock for lending money, some of them would judge Antonio's attitude as puritan and hypocritical. Shakespeare's artistry is very powerful to create tensions, ambiguities and aesthetic effects in the play, as well as to show Venetian and England's contradictions no longer bearable.

Then, Shylock cunningly suggests that Antonio's ventures in the sea are similar to Shylock's usury. Shylock tells the biblical story of Laban and his sheep:

> **Shylock**. When Jacob grazed his uncle Laban's sheep –
> This Jacob from our holy Abram was,
> As his wise mother wrought in his behalf,
> The third possessor; ay, he was the third –
> **Antonio**. And what of him? did he take interest?
> **Shylock**. No, not take interest, not, as you would say,
> Directly interest; (I, iii, 65-71)

[95] **Shakespeare and the Jews**, 1996.

When Shylock says he did not take interest directly, he suggests that Jacob took it by breeding sheep, as anyone could do it with merchandising. Shylock is trying to show the similarities between usury and merchandising, and breeding rams and ewes. He wants to prove that God blesses his money-lending practice, even though Christians do not accept it as such. Maguire (2004, p. 55)[96] also states that Shylock's usury is similar to Antonio's merchandising, which, in a certain sense, makes money breed money, although what masks up his business is that Antonio merchandises goods for money. In a certain level, Antonio is facing a mirror of his repulsion of his own business. Even before he accepts Shylock's bond, we see that Antonio is similar to Shylock in his business and inward feelings.[97] Ironically Shylock mirrors Antonio's avarice and meagreness throughout the play. Shakespeare represents Antonio and Shylock with similar traits to enhance Antonio's evil dimensions. Therefore Shakespeare uses the mirroring device to represent inwardness in the play: Shylock's character mirrors Antonio's gestures, attitudes and feelings.

Then Shylock tells the whole story of Jacob and Abram:

> mark what Jacob did.
> When Laban and himself were compromised
> That all the eanlings which were streaked and pied
> Should fall as Jacob's hire, the ewes, being rank,
> In the end of autumn turned to the rams,
> And, when the work of generation was
> Between these woolly breeders in the act,
> The skilful shepherd *pilled me* certain wands,
> And, in the doing of the deed of kind,
> He stuck them up before the fulsome ewes,
> Who then conceiving did in eaning time
> Fall parti-coloured lambs, and those were Jacob's.
> This was a way to thrive, and he was blest:
> And thrift is blessing, if men steal it not. (I, iii, 71-84, italics added)

While telling the story of how Jacob took Laban's sheep, Shylock utters a verbal slip which is suggestive in this context: why does he mention *pilled me* in his report? He thinks his way of increasing money is similar to Jacob's way of increasing his earnings. He assumes that he is a sort of Jacob, embodying his values, feelings and honour. Such verbal slip also

[96] See her fabulous suggestions about the play in her **Studying Shakespeare**, 2004.

[97] Hinely (1980), in his essay *Bond priorities in the Merchant of Venice*, affirms that even though Shakespeare created different characters to the merchant and the usurer, 'the combined figure of merchant-usurer was common in London society and frequently pilloried in pamphlets and on the stage.' (1980, p. 225-226). When Salerio uses words which echo Barabas' words, one can imagine Antonio's similarities to the Renaissance merchant-usurer. For Hinely, 'the Jew Barabas has similarities as well with Shylock's enemy, the Christian Antonio, a further indication that the two are not simply opposed figures.' (1980, p. 225-226). Such similarities of the merchant-usurer were a very common idea in Elizabethan England. In that sense, Hinely reminds us that 'for the merchant, as well as the usurer, is commonly accused of avarice in the literature of the time. However he might govern his business behavior, money, not merely as a wage received for labor but as profit on the surplus money necessary for investment, was his goal. In the Renaissance the phrase "to play the merchant with" meant "to cheat," or "to get the better of." (1980, 225-226)

enhances Adelman's argument that Shylock is the ur-father. He imagines he is a sort of patriarch. In fact, Jews and Judaism were seen as mirrors of Christians and Christianity. According to James Shapiro, in his work **Shakespeare and the Jews**, 'Judaism was often imagined as a "mirror-image of Christianity", a "creed" religion, whose sacraments (such as circumcision) were comparable to Christian ones (such as baptism) that had superseded them'. (1996, p. 34). In the same way, religiously and inwardly Shylock is a mirror-image of Antonio: the difference is that Shylock reveals his evil dispositions, whereas Antonio hides them.

According to Norman Nathan,[98] Shylock's telling Jacob's story reveals similarities which he wants to embody and recuperate. In fact, Shylock mentions the story to justify the money he wants to get with usury. Also, she states that Shylock associates Antonio's flesh with the flesh of rams and ewes. (1950, p. 257). The same way that God gave the flesh to Jacob, so Shylock will have Antonio's flesh. Consequently, for Nathan 'Shylock has identified himself with Jacob and Antonio has become Laban.' (1950, p. 257). Thus, Shylock may think that using of the pound of flesh is blessed by God. He associates the pound of flesh with Jacob's cattle and his identification with Jacob is evident. Shylock fantasies he is a sort of patriarch who is allowed to take a pound of flesh as in a ritual murder.[99] When he mentions Jacob's story Shylock may have already planned how to revenge himself from Antonio.

Antonio's response to his way of telling the story enhances those similarities between usury and commerce:

> **Antonio**. This was a venture, sir, that Jacob served for;
> A thing not in his power to bring to pass,
> But swayed and fashioned by the hand of heaven.
> Was this inserted to make interest good?
> Or is your gold and silver ewes and rams?
> **Shylock**. I cannot tell; I make it breed as fast:
> But note me, signior. (I, iii, 85-91)

Antonio's description of Jacob's scheme is dissociated from probability and risk. For Luke Wilson (2010),[100] Antonio does not understand what he is saying, because 'he advocates not the taking of risks but a sort of fatalism'. (2010, p. 130). What Shylock's perceives and Antonio does not is that both risk and calculation are not contrary to one another, and that risk is the result of the 'subjection of uncertainty to calculation' (2010, p. 130). Antonio sees that

[98] See the essay by Norman Nathan, *Shylock, Jacob, and God's Judgment*, 1950.
[99] For Jewish ritual murder myth, see Shapiro's **Shakespeare and the Jews**, 1996.
[100] See Wilson Luke's essay *Drama and Marine Insurance*, in **The Law in Shakespeare**, by Constance Jordan and Karen Cunningham (eds.), 2010.

Jacob was lucky for he got his gains 'by the hand of heaven'. He considers that being fortunate is a rather pre-destined possibility, much in the sense of the emerging Calvinist Protestant ethics.[101] He does not see risking as a result of calculation and human agency.

In this speech, Antonio enhances the similarities between goods and money as a way of getting interest. But Shylock is not able to tell it – 'I cannot tell' –, yet he points out that Jacob's raising lambs into ewes and rams was not considered vulgar. Shylock is not just citing the scriptures, but he is teaching Antonio how to acknowledge that his merchant practices are similar to his Jewish usury. Hinely (1980) also highlights these similarities,[102] arguing that in the same way that Shylock uses money to make money, Antonio uses goods to breed money. The difference is that Shylock's 'method' is 'direct', whereas Antonio's is 'indirect' (1980, p. 226). However, Antonio just recognises that Jacob's used this trick as a venture, in the same way as Antonio ventures his goods in the sea. Quite obliquely Antonio's and Shylock's business are paralleled in this story: in the same way that Shylock earns money by usury, Antonio earns money by buying and selling goods. Hypocritically Antonio does not acknowledge that his method of getting money is similar to Shylock's. According to Maguire (2004), the parable is crystal clear in the play: 'Jacob's cooperative acceptance conceals his self-interested manipulation. For Jacob read Antonio. Shylock hints that Antonio is as self-interested as other usurers; he is just less overt in his usury'. (2004, p. 55). These similarities may make him hate Shylock so much. But Antonio insists that the difference between their businesses is essential, whereas Shylock sees that such distinction is a mere 'matter of language' (Hinely, 1980, 223). Shylock carries the 'money ethic' to 'its logical consequences', whereas Antonio understands Shylock's intentions as distortive (1980, 223). For Shylock, such distinctions are merely rhetorical, but they keep Antonio's interest on money-making concealed.

In the same trend, Goddard[103] argues that Shylock is trying to show Antonio the similarities of their business. The author asks 'to what has Antonio dedicated his life? Not indeed to usury. But certainly to money-making, to profits. And profits, under analysis, are often only 'usury' in a more respectable form.' (1969, p. 148). Antonio does not see such difference and thinks Shylock practices usury with interest, whereas he believes he just trades with profit. As Goddard affirms, when Shylock mentions 'directly' he is sarcastic: 'the sarcasm of it is the point. There are more ways than one of taking interest, it says. There are

[101] For the Protestant ethics, see Max Weber's **Ética Protestante e o Espírito do Capitalismo**, 2004.
[102] Jan Lawson Hinely, *Bond Priorities in The Merchant of Venice*, 1980.
[103] See Harold Goddard's essay *The Three Caskets*, in John Wilders' casebook **Shakespeare: *The Merchant of Venice***, 1969.

many tricks of the trade'. Shylock is trying to say to Antonio: 'Look a bit closer, Antonio, and you will see that your profits amount to the same thing as my interest. We are in the same boat'. (1969, 150-151). Once again Shylock functions as a mirror to show Antonio's unconfessed dispositions and attitudes. Ironically, he holds up a mirror to Antonio's hypocrisy. Hinely defines Antonio as an 'enigmatic character' (1980, p. 230) due to his melancholy, which has something to do with his relation to Shylock. When he faces Shylock, he faces what he does not want to see in his inward intentions. Such similarities signal Antonio's obscure materialism: 'Antonio's materialism is never as nakedly expressed as is Shylock's but a concern for and trust in his wealth is a recurring part of his characterization, and a partial explanation of why he enters into the bond with Shylock.' (Hinely, 1980, p. 223). Antonio's materialism is enhanced by his feeling of securing his ships in the ocean, which gives his self-confidence. Once he is a merchant, Renaissance audiences could consider him a usurer, because many merchants practiced usury in England.

Furthermore, it is very strange that Antonio calls Shylock *Sir*, instead of *sirrah*. He might use this *sir* in order to respect Shylock as a businessman. If Shylock is supposed to be an outcast and an alien in Venetian society, no one would call him *sir*. His utterance of *sir* seems a verbal slip, which oddly comes after Shylock's saying *pilled me*. There are some traits in Shylock which Antonio makes unconsciously submissive to him; consequently, he enhances his submission discursively. As Norman Holland (1966) states, Shylock embodies the symbolic representation of the paternal figure in the play, as well as the 'symbol of the vengeful father-God of the Old Testament' (1966, p. 234). Also, she states that 'Antonio shows a longing to become the passive love or victim of the father – Shylock.' (1966, p. 235). Thus, suffice it to say for now that Shylock's energy and vigour evoke the anxiety towards the re-presentation and projection of Antonio's paternal anxieties on Shylock. However, once Antonio does not attribute any reason to his sadness, this projection of his paternal anxieties on Shylock may be the cause of his sadness; yet, it remains unacknowledged and foreclosed in the play. Such fact is suggested later on in Antonio's masochist acceptance of the bond and also now as he calls him *sir*, showing thus a submissive attitude to Shylock in this verbal slip. It is paradoxical that he calls him *Sir*, face to the fact that he has cruelly mistreated him beforehand. Therefore, because Shylock represents the symbolic ur-father of the play, that Antonio re-imagines his own paternal figure whenever he meets Shylock. Antonio's verbal slip is a mimetic device to represent his ideas and thoughts in the play. It is a device of the rhetoric of inwardness.

Antonio becomes angrily intimidated and vexed because of Shylock's use of the

scriptures to his own purposes:

> Mark you this, Bassanio,
> The devil can cite Scripture for his purpose.
> An evil soul producing holy witness
> Is like a villain with a smiling cheek,
> A goodly apple rotten at the heart:
> O, what a goodly outside falsehood hath! (I, iii, 91-96)

Antonio interrupts Shylock and calls Bassanio aside to criticise Shylock's citing the scriptures. There is a strong cut in the speech, which denotes his attitude of silencing him. Antonio gets angry because Shylock uses the scriptures to justify his usury. Thus, he defines Shylock as an evil man not only in the appearances, but also in the soul – 'an evil soul'. Antonio supposes that Shylock's evilness is embodied in his soul and inwardness. Furthermore, damnation is implicit in his speech, because in the Manichean Christian tradition an 'evil soul's' and a devil's destiny is damnation. Moreover, Antonio alludes here to a common-place in Renaissance culture: the outward which seems beautiful, yet it hides something rotten inside it, according to what Maus (1995) mapped up. Inwardness is not something immediately accessible to the eyes; thus he believes that Shylock's use of the scriptures is just a hypocritical attitude of occluding his inwardness. Despite his insight mistrusting Shylock's intentions, later on Antonio will not be able to see what goes in Shylock's mind. Such failure makes him imprudently accept Shylock's bond. In fact, Antonio's acceptance of the bond is a frivolous act for Bassanio.

Nevertheless, even though it is not explicit that the Christians in the play were Catholic, the audience of course knew that the Venetian State was a Roman Catholic State. Thus, they could see that Antonio's repudiation is hypocritical and cynical. Though they are constantly named as the 'Christians' of the play, we must never forget that many in the audience saw them as 'Roman Catholic Christians', which put them in a quite lower regard, because England was a Protestant Church and thus was in constant strife with the Roman Church. Thus, when the Christians criticised Shylock in the play the audience would consider their words as hypocritical and their attitude as cynical. Simultaneously Shakespeare suggests that the same hypocritical gestures of the Catholic Christians in the play were the very moralistic attitudes of some protestants in the audience. The idea the audience had about the Christians was very ambiguous and oblique: they could repudiate their attitudes or see their own puritanic hypocrisy mirrored in the Christians.

Some reports demonstrate the Elizabethan reaction to the Venetians. For example,

Kaplan described the life and manners in Venice and England. According to Kaplan (2002),[104] in that sense 'while it [Venice] could be viewed as ripe for religious reform, it could also be criticized for current practices.' (2002, p. 148). When Antonio criticises Shylock of citing the **Bible** for his own purposes, it could be understood ironically, because, according to a letter by William Bedell to Adam Newton, Protestants did condemn Catholics for misreading the scriptures. In fact, Protestants considered that the Jews had a better and deeper understanding of the scriptures than the Catholics, whose religious rituals were seen as mere ornamented rites, as Maus has also suggested (1995). Furthermore, Jewish scholars were commonly asked to help Protestants to interpret the **Bible** and thereby they were rather admired than disdained by Protestants. Furthermore, Shapiro points out that even Henry VIII, when he was trying to get divorced from Queen Catherine of Aragon, 'sent for Jewish advisors', in order to justify that his marriage was incestuous. (1996, p. 68). In that sense, Bedell, in one of his letters, states that in Venice

> As for the Friars, which I have heard here, their whole intentions seem to be either to delight or to move: as for teaching they know not what it means. But to hear their strange wresting [twisting, forced interpretation] of the Holy Scripture, to see the fooleries of their idolatry to the little crucifix that stands at their elbow, the antics of their gesture [is] more than player or fencer-like […]; and for my part I have found myself better satisfied (at least less cloyed) with the sermons of the Jews, than with theirs. And in one thing the Jews condemn them, and not undeservedly, as merchants of God's word. (2002, p. 148-149).

Thus, against these details, the audience could have opposing reactions to the play and the audience's regard to the Jews and Christians were opposed. On the one hand, some people in the mob could criticise Shylock for citing the scriptures; however, some well-learned playgoers could disregard Antonio's criticism to Shylock and see the Jews' knowledge in a different way, once Jewish scholars were commonly asked to help Protestants to interpret the **Bible**.[105] Therefore, Shakespeare suggests in the drama opposing views in order to create aesthetic tensions in the play. He also suggests Antonio's inwardness by his judgement and intolerance.

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[104] M. Lindsay Kaplan and Bevington edited a very useful collection of texts of the Elizabethan and Jacobean ages, named **The Merchant of Venice: Texts and Contexts,** 2002.

[105] See also Arthur Lesley, who states that 'With the help of Jewish consultants, Christian Hebraists began translating Jewish books during the fifteenth century, and in the sixteenth Catholic and Protestant academic institutions came to require the study of Hebrew and Judaism. The work of Johannes Buxtorf the elder (1564-1629), a Protestant scholar, made academic Christian Hebraism into a self-sustaining discipline. A professor of Hebrew at the University of Basel from 1590 until his death, Buxtorf also worked in the city as a censor, editor, corrector, and merchant of Hebrew books. He labored methodically to raise Christian knowledge of Judaic from amateurish curiosity to levels of accuracy and completeness that were appropriate to an academic discipline. His books became the fundamental guides to Christian study of biblical and rabbinic Hebrew and of Jewish texts, Judaism, and Jews, until the nineteenth century. Stephen G. Burnett makes a surprisingly lively intellectual biography out of a life the landmarks of which were printings of grammars, dictionaries, and concordances. (849-850). See Arthur M. Lesley's essay *Jews at the Time of the Renaissance*, 1999.

Bedell also accuses the Catholic Venetians of taking money from the people in the Church and sharing it with friars, guards, collectors and other members of the church. Bedell names them pagan and idolaters (Kaplan, 2002, p. 149). When the Christians condemn Shylock of avarice and meagreness, some in the audience could see it with an eye of irony, because Protestants criticised the 'greed and financial corruption of Christianity by the Catholic Church' (Kaplan, 2002, p. 148). Similarly, another text of the Elizabethan age enhances Venetian greed and avarice.[106] It is an anonymous tract written in 1591, named *A Discovery of the Great Subtlety and Wonderful Wisdom of the Italians*. This text highlights that

> By reason whereof, besides that they are of themselves very witty and subtle headed, all cunning flights, crafty conveyances, and deceitful cozenages [frauds] are so proper and common to them, whereby they can fetch under [cheat] other people, and are so cunning to finger from them their money, and can, moreover, so closely cover their actions that of a thousand hardly one could ever come within them to perceive their juggling [practice of deception]. (in Kaplan, 2002, p. 150-151)[107]

If the audience was aware of those facts, the image of the Christians in the play was depicted very negatively. Thus, Antonio criticises and defines Shylock as evil, devilish and villain; on the other hand, his words could denote mere words of a hypocritical man, who uses a grave aspect to impose seriousness, respect and superiority. The audience could have disdainful reactions towards Antonio: they would repudiate Antonio's pretention of seeming wise and respected. His pretentious attitude of seeming wise and respected signals his pretention of self-sufficiency and even arrogance. In fact, the Christians are very hypocritical by condemning Shylock and assuming that they are more respectful than the Jews. Shakespeare built the mimesis of his inward pretentions by these traits of seriousness and wisdom assumed by Antonio.

After Antonio's aggressive attitude against Shylock, we know of Antonio's cruelty and mistreatment towards Shylock. When Antonio asks whether he will lend the money, Shylock very cunningly reminds him of his ancient mistreatment:

> Signior Antonio, many a time and oft
> In the Rialto you have rated me
> About my moneys and my usances:
> Still have I borne it with a patient shrug,
> For sufferance is the badge of all our tribe.
> You call me misbeliever, cut-throat dog,

[106] See the tract *A Discovery of the Great Subtlety and Wonderful Wisdom of the Italians*, in Kaplan, 2002, pp. 150-153.
[107] The words in brackets explaining the text are from Kaplan's notes on the same pages of the anonymous tract.

> And spit upon my Jewish gaberdine,
> And all for use of that which is mine own.
> Well then, it now appears you need my help:
> Go to, then; you come to me, and you say
> 'Shylock, we would have moneys:' you say so;
> You, that did void your rheum upon my beard
> And foot me as you spurn a stranger cur
> Over your threshold: moneys is your suit
> What should I say to you? Should I not say
> 'Hath a dog money? is it possible
> A cur can lend three thousand ducats?' Or
> Shall I bend low and in a bondman's key,
> With bated breath and whispering humbleness,
> Say this: 'Fair sir, you spit on me on Wednesday last;
> You spurn'd me such a day; another time
> You call'd me dog; and for these courtesies
> I'll lend you thus much moneys'? (I, iii, 99-123)

Instead of answering Antonio's question, Shylock reports his anger and suffering. Only now Shylock reveals that Antonio always treated him cruelly and resentfully, because Antonio judges him by his usury practices. Also, the merchant used to spit on his 'garberdine', a sort of Jewish garment. Coupled with that, Shylock is ironic to Antonio's necessity of money, when he doubts whether a dog can lend money. Besides that, Antonio's aggression was frequent, once Shylock remembers that it happened 'many a time and oft'.

Moreover, when Antonio kicked Shylock, the latter was probably in a lower position. That is Derek Cohen's argument (2003). He speculates that Shylock was probably sitting while Antonio took the advantage and spurned him.[108] Cohen asks,

> was Shylock sitting on the ground like a beggar when he was 'footed' by Antonio? These seem to me the only plausible ways in which one man kicks another without any fear of reprisal. The kicking can be a simple gesture of contempt, not necessarily a desire to injure. Its public nature provides a way for the kicker to announce something about himself to those around him. (2003, p. 72)

Perhaps some dark inward dimensions caused his reactions to Shylock, because he was a usurer and is depicted as the representation of the paternal figure. If this is his unconscious reaction to the paternal figure, he re-imagines and projects his anxieties and anger on Shylock. A man like Antonio, who is submissive, sad, melancholic and generous, is the typical person who was strongly repressed in childhood, and thus reacts submissively and sadly. That is why Antonio accepts resignedly his role and his fate as a 'sad actor'. However, his contradictory feelings pop up when he sees Shylock and he projects on Shylock his anger, resentment and anxiety. Shylock's role as the symbolic primordial father makes Antonio

[108] See Cohen's book **Searching Shakespeare: Studies in Culture and Authority**, 2003.

project on him his anxieties. However, Shakespeare created emotional ambiguities which cannot be simply reduced to one answer or another. He constructed Antonio as a very enigmatic character whose attitudes, gestures and anxieties allow us to imagine in-between the lines what is really at stake in Antonio's inward feelings. What is evident in Shakespeare's creation is that such ambiguities point to the mysteriousness of life and the enigma of the human being's feelings, anxieties and unconscious dimensions. Shakespeare depicts Antonio's inward dispositions by depicting him very submissive, sad, melancholic and resigned.

Therefore, it is evident why Shylock hates Antonio. Cohen points out that Antonio is not a violent man, but his violence against Shylock is unique. He is passive, sad and depressed. Moreover, his melancholy and his generosity to Bassanio

> leave us entirely unprepared for Shylock's characterization of him as a nasty, violent bully. Shylock's speech reveals an Antonio whom we have not seen, a man who seems unable to restrain himself from publicly assaulting another man with whom so far he has had no serious contact. Antonio seems to have been impelled by some dark forces in himself to attack a man whose simple presence evokes feelings of rage and violence in him. (2003, p. 73)

According to Cohen, his violent act of kicking Shylock alludes then to something very particular about him: these violations 'act, paradoxically, to establish a relationship of physical intimacy between the two men.' (2003, p. 72). Their relation is determined by hatred and physical contact as a form of intimacy. In fact, that demonstrates Shylock as a mirror of Antonio's hate and repressed feelings. There is no mentioning of Shylock's deeds which made Antonio loathe him so much. The apparent cause is his moralistic disdain to Shylock's usury. But, in a deeper level, he affronts Shylock, because he faces the fantasmatic representation of the paternal figure. Then he makes him the scapegoat of his anxieties and uneasiness.

But Shylock's reaction is to be a victim who bears quietly these humiliations, i. e., to be spurned, spat and kicked him as a dog. Ironically Shylock tells that once Antonio spat on him, he will lend him money. Graham Midgley (1969),[109] states that when Shylock and Antonio first met:

> Shylock is stirred to remind Antonio [...] of his former cruel behaviour to him, to call attention to the almost forgotten fact that Antonio *is* begging a favour, but he is again rejected by Antonio with cold scorn. Can we blame him if a scheme of revenge forms in his mind? (p. 198)

[109] See his essay *The Merchant of Venice: a Reconsideration*, 1969, in Walter's Casebook to the play.

Shylock sincerely reveals that his anger is provoked by Christian mistreatment against him. His ironic attitude unveils his resentment and anger to Antonio's aggression; on the other hand, he reveals himself as a victim who bears with a 'shrug' those cruelties and mistreatment. He embodies hatred and desire for revenge, which determine his feelings and reactions towards Antonio. Despite that, Shylock is, along with Richard III, Hamlet and the Fool from **King Lear**, one of sharpest-tongued characters in Shakespeare. Thus, Walter observes that the variations in the tone and rhythm 'reflect Shylock's feelings' (1960, p. 56). His feelings are simultaneously resentful, indignant, malevolent, proud, wronged and sincere. The juxtaposition of these sentiments alludes to the conflicting dimensions of his inwardness. He seems to struggle between honour and revenge: his inward feelings are focused on these opposing elements of being insulted publicly and bodily, and his honour for his gains, family, and nation.

We must observe the ambiguity of Shylock's character: he is, on the one hand, comic and villainous, on the other hand he is human and a sort of tragic character, as the romantic critics pointed out. He constantly changes the tones of discourse, and his speeches function simultaneously as comic, villainous, human and pathetic. John R. Cooper (1970)[110] remarks that critics have presented opposing views on Shylock:

> while recent critics have achieved this much of a consensus, they disagree over the depth and the consistency of Shylock's villainy and over the relationship between his wickedness and his being a Jew. One view of Shylock is that he is the result of opposed but unresolved conceptions of him in his creator's mind. It is suggested that Shakespeare intended not only a comic villain reflecting his Elizabethan prejudice against Jews, but he responded at the same time to his genius for creating rich and significant characters. (1970, p. 117).

Thus, the play presents an ambiguous construction of Shylock which unveils his deeper inner feelings and his inwardness. He may be considered a humanised character, because he brings within him both sides of human being: suffering, evil, passion, pathos and pride. In that sense, Kenneth Gross has written such an interesting book on Shylock's character, called **Shylock is Shakespeare**. According to him, Shakespeare has discovered something obscure about human life in creating Shylock, which will be very important to the great tragic figures such as Hamlet, Macbeth, and Lear. His repetitions may be comic, although they suggest artistic design: Shylock's repetitions throughout the play echo the biblical style. In that sense, while he repeats these words in the play, he reveals his

[110] John R. Cooper, in his essay *Shylock's Humanity*. 1970.

inwardness, which suggests the floatation of thoughts, feelings and remembrances. His attitude is fiercely aggressive due to Antonio's humiliations enforced on him. According to Gross, Shylock bears in himself what he calls 'Shylock's singularity [...] his opacity as a dramatic character' (2006, p. ix). Gross debates how the play's energy is organised around Shylock's character, around his blurriness which shatters the 'generic clarity' of the play. Metaphorically, Gross defines Shylock's character as having an 'atomic quality, compact yet explosive' (2006, p. ix). He highlights that his character brings in himself a sort of 'idiosyncratic eloquence' which simultaneously 'exposes and occults Shylock's inner life' (2006, p. ix). Then his words mirror his inner fury, anxiety and hatred.

Gross highlights the ambivalent and ambiguous dimensions and dispositions in Shylock's inwardness. Shylock's words express what Gross names Shylock's eloquence, an eloquence of the 'poetics of repugnancy'. For Gross, this 'eloquence has its darkly comic as well as its tragic aspects.' (2006, p. ix). His character shows resistance of absorption and clarification, because even though we try to analyse him, we cannot understand and pierce his inward life. He states that Shakespeare is Shylock not in the sense that he is meagre, revengeful, comic and deceitful as Shylock himself, but because Shakespeare discovered in Shylock's character some enigmatic dark and indistinct traits. Gross points out in Shylock 'the wild interiority of the tragedies, for one thing, and their way of rooting into reality, private and public, through staging voices of rage'. (2006, p. ix-x). This discovery is as if Shakespeare were 'tasting blood' for the first time (2006, p. x). He states that our interest in analysing Shylock is that he

> composes a powerful yet covert double for Shakespeare. Shylock's singularity translates Shakespeare's singularity, which includes his chameleon-like capacity for disguise and his fascination with extremes of ambiguity, his ability to transmute pain and pleasure, his skill in marrying the general and the particular... (2006, p. x)

For Gross, the name Shylock echoes and doubles the name Shakespeare. Thus, Shakespeare's singularity is translated into Shylock's singularity. As Shylock deals with money, as he breeds money from money, Shakespeare deals with words, and breeds money from words. His capacity of creating intense feelings with words was something very strange, suspicious, and even frightening to the early Puritan tastes. In the same way as Shylock is accused of usury, some puritans used to accuse Shakespeare of using the theatre to create a space of immoral and sinful practices.[111]

[111] See Honan, 2001, about *the war of the poets*, pp. 204-216.

Moreover, for Gross, Shylock has the capacity of an atomic projectile; he has the capacity of expanding and exploding his inward feelings and space. However, 'it is a project that gains for him the impression of an interior life, a thinking, more unfathomable and harrowing than that of any other character in the play'. (2006, p. 02). Therefore, Gross's idea of the poetics of repugnancy epitomises the negative and positive dimensions in Shylock's mind. Shakespeare represents Shylock's inner dimensions as enigmatic and ambiguous.

Surprisingly, Antonio answers Shylock with his commonly aggressive treatment, as a reaction of Shylock's reminding him of past ill-treatment:

> I am as like to call thee so again,
> To spit on thee again, to spurn thee too.
> If thou wilt lend this money, lend it not
> As to thy friends; for when did friendship take
> A breed for barren metal of his friend?
> But lend it rather to thine enemy,
> Who, if he break, thou mayst with better face
> Exact the penalty. (I, iii, 124-128)

Antonio shows that he will mistreat Shylock, spitting him, spurning him, and disdaining his customs, as a typical Christian does. Thus, Shylock becomes a scapegoat of the Christians' unconscious inward and sinister dispositions. They see in Shylock what they never dare to confess to themselves. In that sense, Harold Goddard states that Shylock is representative of money in the play and of exclusion, since he is the 'excluded thing' of the play. Thus, 'the Venetian world makes him their scapegoat. They project on him what they have dismissed from their consciousness as too disturbing. They hate him because he reminds them of their unconfessed evil qualities.' (1969, p. 144). Such projection is perceived in Antonio's aggression, disrespect and mistreatment to Shylock, because he sees in Shylock what he does not wish to see in himself. For Goddard, 'our unconsciousness is our foreign land. Hence, we see in the foreigner what is actually the 'foreign' part of ourselves.' (1969, p. 144). Therefore, Shakespeare intuited that there were unconscious dimensions of the self which he represented in speeches, attitudes and silences, especially in Shylock's speeches.

3. 2. Sealing the Bond: Affective and Fiscal Relations

Shylock proposes the bond as if he had forgotten his former hatred to Antonio. Then Shylock says that he wants to be a friend to Antonio:

> Why, look you, how you storm!
> I would be friends with you and have your love,
> Forget the shames that you have stained me with,
> Supply your present wants and take no doit
> Of usance for my moneys, and you'll not hear me:
> This is kind I offer. (I, iii, 133-138)

Shylock reveals that he would be Antonio's friend and lend him money gratis. He proposes a bond without interest as a sort of kindness. For Goddard, it is evident now that 'Antonio's anger is as good as a confession, but, clad in the pride of race and virtue, he does not realize it.' (1969, p. 154). Goddard thinks that hitherto Antonio seemed to be superior to Shylock. However, his anger to Shylock suggests the opposite: 'the significant thing is that the man who loses his temper is below the man who keeps his self-control. A small man meets anger with anger'. (1969, p. 154). Antonio's anger suggests that he is inferior to Shylock, whereas Shylock's offer of the merry bond suggests Shylock's proposal to be Antonio's friend. Yet he is quite tricky in his proposal. So far in the play no one imagines that he will really require his bond. However, Shylock will only attack Antonio as a retaliatory act for Jessica's elopement and disbursement of his money.

Furthermore, the word 'kind' will be echoed in Bassanio's answer. Bassanio considers Shylock's attitude very kind, because he is very interested in the money: 'This were kindness' (I, iii, 139). Shylock proposes thus the bond:

> This kindness will I show.
> Go with me to a notary, seal me there
> Your single bond; and, in a merry sport,
> If you repay me not on such a day,
> In such a place, such sum or sums as are
> Expressed in the condition, let the forfeit
> Be nominated for an equal pound
> Of your fair flesh, to be cut off and taken
> In what part of your body pleaseth me. (I, iii, 139-144)

With his bond, Shylock entraps Antonio, yet the merchant does not realise that at first. Moreover, it is odd that in his bond he wants to take the pound of flesh from the part of the body which pleases him. But in the trial scene it is clear that the bond determines that the pound of flesh must be taken from Antonio's breast. No one knows yet which part of Antonio's body will be taken. In that sense, James Shapiro (1998, p. 81) suggests the implicit meaning of castration in this bound. He argues that the verb used by Shylock 'cut off' unleashes the anxiety of actual castration in the Jewish myth of ritual murder:

> 'cut off' could easily suggest taking the knife to a male victim's genitals. In fact, the judgement read to convicted male traitors and felons in Shakespeare's day includes the decree that 'at the place of execution ... you are to be hanged by the neck, and being alive cut down, *and your privy-members to be cut off.*' (1998, p. 81)

Thus, the phrasal-verb 'cut off' means dilacerate and castrate in this speech. Besides that, the word 'flesh' was 'a standard euphemism for penis, not only in Elizabethan Bibles, but in popular writing' (1998, p. 81). Castration is not an anxiety which is far from the play, according to Shapiro. Not only in Antonio's own description of himself as a 'tainted wether' (a castrated ram) in the trial scene, but also in Salerio's joke that Jessica has Shylock's stones, also a slang for testicles in that age. (1998, p. 81). Coupled with that, according to Janet Adelman (2008), circumcision is paralleled with castration in the play. Shylock therefore potentialises Antonio's fantasy of castration in his attempt to 'circumcise' him in the play.

Very oddly Antonio accepts his bond very abruptly, without pondering enough about it: 'Content, i' faith: I'll seal to such a bond / And say there is much kindness in the Jew.' (I, iii, 148-149). It is very strange that Antonio accepts such a bond quite willingly and without hesitation. Sinfield (1998) points out that 'Antonio's desperate bond with Shylock is his way of holding on Bassanio' (1998, p. 164).[112] Also, Hinely enhances such fact as well: 'When Shylock first broaches the terms of the "merry" bond, Antonio, even though he has just insulted Shylock and dared him to do his worst, accepts without hesitation'. (1980, p. 223). He is quite confident of his 'ventures' in the ocean, without acknowledging the dangers in the sea. Though Bassanio opposes himself to such a bond, Antonio will very proudly state that he will have his ships back a month before the time. As Antonio says that 'I do expect return / Of thrice three times the value of this bond' (I, iii, 150-151), which reveals again that he takes interest in a different way, not by usury, but by buying and selling goods with profit. Then Bassanio reacts to the 'merry bond': 'You shall not seal to such a bond for me: / I'll rather dwell in my necessity.' (I, iii, 150-151). Antonio feels quite embarrassed of what he hears from Bassanio, just as he feels embarrassed to take money from a Jew. For Berger Jr (2010)[113]

> He is embarrassed both by the need to beg a loan from the Jew he despises and by Bassanio's uneasiness during the transaction. The text itself presents his embarrassment with embarrassed reserve. It hints at but never fully reveals the extent and character of his investment in his embarrassed and embarrassing protégé. (2010, p. 4)

[112] See Alan Sinfield's essay *How to read **The Merchant of Venice** without being Heterosexist*, in COYLE, Martin. **The Merchant of Venice**: contemporary critical essays. Londres: Macmillan: 1998. (New Casebooks)
[113] See Harry Berger Jr's Mercifixion in The Merchant of Venice: The Riches of Embarrassment, 2012.

Then, Shylock reacts to Bassanio's distrust very ironically and sarcastically to Bassanio's distrust:

> O father Abram, what these Christians are,
> Whose own hard dealings teaches them suspect
> The thoughts of others! Pray you, tell me this;
> If he should break his day, what should I gain
> By the exaction of the forfeiture?
> A pound of man's flesh taken from a man
> Is not so estimable, profitable neither,
> As flesh of muttons, beefs, or goats. I say,
> To buy his favour, I extend this friendship:
> If he will take it, so; if not, adieu;
> And, for my love, I pray you wrong me not. (I, iii, 153-163)

Shylock ironically disdains Bassanio's mistrust that Antonio can neither take the bond nor repay it. Thus, he justifies that having human flesh is not so valuable as meat. He distrusts him, because the bond seems absurd and dangerous to Bassanio, yet Antonio and Shylock try to convince him of the contrary. Shylock tries to hide his anger, but he states that they should not wrong him, otherwise he would revenge himself. Apparently he wants to be friend to Antonio and Bassanio, even though Bassanio mistrusts him. No one knows until this moment how he is going to react until the end of the play. He warns Antonio of his anger and resentful feelings, in case he does not repay the bond. He makes believe that he is kind and friendly, constructing a sense of goodness in his face, which hides his innermost sinister intentions and feelings towards Antonio and the Christians. Here Shylock embodies the theatrical side of personality, highlighted by McGinn (2007, p. 10) and Greenblatt (1984, p. 1-10). Shakespeare represents Shylock as tricky, villain and double-faced, hiding his real innermost intentions: to take his revenge on Antonio.

The bond is a symbolic and emotional motif in the play, a bond which is echoed by Portia, who says that she is bond to her father's will. According to Hinely (1980), the play is pervaded by the unifying theme of bond, and its 'magnetic center' is the bond priorities. Every character in the play is more or less connected to bond relations, bonds of blood and service which organise the society; the affective 'bonds of love and friendship which make society endurable'; and the 'unnatural bonds' of commerce, which unite people who share no other bonds (1980, p. 218). Thus, not only will Shylock's challenging bond pervade the play, but the play naturally embodies the idea of bonds as its 'magnitic centre'. All the characters act and feel according to their bonds, whether they respect or break their bonds. But it is noteworthy that Shylock's bond incarnates the blood, flesh, and the monetary bonds of the play, as well as represents the affective and emotional bonds shared by all characters.

3. 3. Antonio's Inward Sinister Dimensions and Foreclosure

Antonio's aggressive response to Shylock's report of his mistreatment reveals his capacity of imposing himself and building his male identity only through violence and aggression against an *alien*. Antonio feels proud of having wronged, spit and spurned Shylock. By so doing he shows his only way of imposing power and constructing his identity. However, he is a coward, because he is submissive to Bassanio, yet contradictorily he treats Shylock with such violent attitudes. He can neither oppose nor react to Salerio's and Salarino's mockings about his sadness and weariness. His resignation is enhanced, because he will be only able to free himself of Shylock's bond by Portia's interference in the courtroom. Before that, he is resigned and satisfied of suffering the penalty of the bond. His repressed anger to the other is projected on the alien figure, Shylock.

Moreover, Antonio's attitude shows his loss of control and his childish attitude of affronting Shylock. Shylock says that he hates Antonio because he called him dog, spat on his garbardine, and lowered his profits. At least he expresses the reasons for his hatred to Antonio. However, that is not what happens to Antonio. Harold Goddard[114] states that 'Shylock is a usurer, it will be said, while Antonio is so noble that the mere mention of interest is abhorrent to him. Why, then, does not Antonio state his objection to it like a rational being instead of arguing with kicks and saliva?' (1969, p. 148). His attitude to Shylock is childish and his violence suggests his hatred is disguised by his pretentious goodness to Bassanio and the other merchants. Also, according to Goddard,

> unless all signs fail, Antonio, like Shylock, is a victim of forces from far below the threshold of consciousness. [...] Shakespeare is careful to leave no doubt on this point, but, appropriately, he buries the evidence a bit beneath the surface: Antonio abhors Shylock because he catches his own reflection in this face. [...] It is Antonio's unconscious protest against this humiliating truth that is the secret of his antipathy'. (1969, p. 148).

That is an interesting suggestion to the problem of Antonio's violence to Shylock. But the problem is deeper. Goddard states some details about Antonio's sadness. Antonio is a bachelor and has invested his life in friendly affection and that his denegation that 'he is in love may hint at some long-nourished disappointment of the affections'. (1969, p. 152). His loss of someone's affections could be suggestive here. Perhaps Antonio fears he is losing Bassanio, but his inward feelings seem to be rooted in something deeper. Goddard suggests

[114] See Goddard's essay *The Three Caskets*, in John Wilders' casebook **Shakespeare: *The Merchant of Venice***, 1969.

psychoanalytically that Antonio's feelings may be caused by an unknown person in his past:

> Those who drown themselves in business or in other work in order to forget what refuses to be forgotten are generally characterized by a quiet melancholy interrupted by spells of irritation or sudden spasms of passion directed to some person or thing that, if analyzed, is found to be the symbol of the error that has spoiled their lives. (1969, p. 152).

Goddard's analysis leads us to some further suppositions. Antonio drives his anger to Shylock because Shylock embodies some characteristics which enable the projection of the 'symbol of the error' that spoiled his life. Antonio sees in Shylock the mirror of what is most disgusting to him and he does not want to see: the representation of his paternal figure re-imagined in and projected on Shylock. Such fact is corroborated by Adelman's conclusive definition of Shylock as the ur-father of the play. Janet Adelman, in **Blood Relations** (2008), Shylock represents the primordial father, coded as a hyper-masculine figure: 'he is the avatar of the terrifying patriarch with the knife, the ur-father not only of Jessica but of Christians and Christianity' (2008, p. 131). His proposal of the bond – a pound of flesh –symbolically and fantasmatically enables the revenge of paternal figure, the primordial father who returns to punish him for his mistreatment. The proposal of his bond potentially satisfies Antonio's masochist desire and fear of castration.[115] Antonio as a masochist is enhanced by the fact that he may take pleasure of Bassanio's rejection and of Shylock's potential act of circumcision/castration. In that sense, Luke Wilson states that 'for Antonio sadness and happiness are indistinguishable, just as pleasure and pain tend to be for the masochist'. (2010, p. 130).[116] His initial sadness may be his purest delight of pain. Goddard[117] defines him with one of the motifs of the play: 'Antonio is the silver casket. He got as much as he deserved: material success and a suicidal melancholy'. (1969, p. 153). He feels satisfaction in his unhappiness and masochist dispositions. Shakespeare portrays Shylock's and Antonio's relation as a very ambiguous in order to depict the inner obscure uncontrolled dimensions in Antonio's inwardness: his anxiety towards the paternal figure, re-imagined in Shylock.

In that sense, it is noteworthy that Shakespeare created a mirroring device[118] to double feelings and anxieties in the play. Thereby, Antonio presents some similarities to Portia. She starts the scene complaining that she is bond to her father's will, whereas Antonio

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[115] For Antonio's masochist desire for castration, see Adelman (2008), pp. 99-133.
[116] See Luke Wilson's *Drama and Marine Insurance*, in **The Law in Shakespeare**, edited by Jordan and Cunningham, 2010.
[117] Goddard remarks that 'commentators have commonly either sidestepped the problem or explained Antonio's melancholy as a presentment of the loss of his friend Bassanio through marriage.' (p. 146).
[118] For the issue of mirroring or specular games in Shakespeare, see Lawrence Flores Pereira's thesis on Shakespeare (**Hamlet** and **Kind Lear**), named **De Shakespeare a Racine: o engano especular e outros temas**. (Tese de Doutorado). Porto Alegre: PUC-RS, 2000. In this thesis he presents the specular allurement as something similar to the mirroring device.

willingly seals a bond with Shylock. They feel sadness and weariness, equalising their inwardness. They are correlative characters whose similarities suggest that, if Portia is sad and weary because of her father's will and because of his powerful present absence, Antonio's unexplainable weariness and sadness, doubled in Portia, is provoked in the same cause of her feelings and anxieties. Therefore, Portia's anxiety to her paternal figure mirrors Antonio's anxiety regarding the paternal figure which, in Psychoanalytic terms, is foreclosed from Antonio's inwardness, from the play and even form Venice.

In that sense, Drakakis presents an interesting detail about this: 'Shylock is part of Venice's own unconscious that it can only deal with either by repression, or by transformation into what we might call the Christian imaginary – that set of images and institutions in and through which Venice recognises its own cultural identity.' (1998, p. 200). Drakakis parts from Freud's idea of the 'killing of the primal father', in his **Civilisation and its Discontents** (1938). Thus, the Venetians project on Shylock his inward feelings, his resentment, anger and fear.

In fact, Shakespeare foresees *avant la lettre* the Psychoanalytic notion of foreclosure in his play. There are three apparent hypothetical causes of Antonio's sadness in the play: (1) the anxiety of losing his wealth in the sea, which is denied by him from the very beginning of the play; (2) his love for Bassanio, which is once again denied with his denegation – Fie! Fie!, though the text suggests that they have an ambiguous relationship, homoerotic or they are perhaps sort of relatives – 'kinsman'; (3) there are feelings whose cause are occluded and foreclosed in his inwardness: his anxiety towards the paternal figure. As we have seen, Shylock is defined as the *ur-father* by Adelman, just as Norman Holland sees that Shylock is 'a symbol for the vengeful father-God' (1966, p. 234). In fact, the cause of Antonio's melancholy is his anxiety towards the representation of the paternal figure re-imagined in Shylock. For Norman Holland, 'the sad Antonio […] is subjected, as if by a father who hates him, to hostility, risk, danger – no wonder he is melancholy.' (1966, p. 237).

Furthermore, there are other significant details in the play which demonstrate such evidence. Shylock reports that Antonio kicked, spurned him and spat his gabardine without any apparent reason. This fact is significant to understand the occluded reason of Antonio's aggression to Shylock, because Antonio could simply affirm that he hates Shylock because he is a Jew as the other characters in the play affirm. However, such gesture points to something more intimate of Antonio's feelings and of what Shylock may evoke to him. Alternatively, Antonio willingly accepts Shylock's bond, which demands a pound of flesh to be 'cut off'. In the trial scene, it is evident that his feelings are dominated by his inner desire and fear of

castration.[119] Therefore, ambivalently, as he faces Shylock, first he affronts him and then he willingly accepts the 'merry bond', whose implicit meaning threats and haunts him with the promise of castration. His desire of castration also appears in the beginning of the play, with his desire of being opened up to Bassanio: 'my purse, my person lie all *unlocked* to your occasions', says Antonio to Bassanio. Likewise, his anxiety of castration is enhanced when he states resignedly in the trial scene that he is a 'tainted wether' – a weak castrated ram. Antonio's sadness is due to the foreclosure of the cause of his anxiety, the anxiety against the paternal figure. However, Antonio never mentions anything about his anxiety to the paternal figure. Nevertheless, Shakespeare suggests that the paternal figure may be the cause of his anxiety throughout the play. The mirroring device helps us to see that Antonio's sadness is doubled in other characters' speech in the play.

Antonio's sadness is due to his anxiety foreclosed in the play and in his inwardness. However, the configuration of foreclosure in Antonio's inwardness seems still quite schematic in the play. The way Shakespeare represented Antonio's awkward relationship to Shylock and his ambivalent reaction to him suggests that Shakespeare perceived intuitively something in human inwardness which will be called, in modern Psychoanalysis, foreclosure. Lacan builds up the concept of foreclosure from Freud's analysis of *Verneigung*.[120] According to Laplanche and Pontalis, it is a specific mechanism which constitutes a 'primordial rejection of a fundamental "signifier" (such as the phallus as a signifier of the complex of castration) off the symbolic universe of the subject' (2000, p. 195). It is a mechanism different from repression, due to two main traits: '(1) The foreclosed signifiers are not integrated in the unconscious of the subject; (2) they do not return 'from the inside', but from the real, especially in the hallucinatory phenomenon.' (2000, p. 195). The threatening signifier, the law, the menace of castration does not come from inside, but from the outside, in a figure whose menacing act is promised in his bond: 'a pound of flesh to be cut off.' Shakespeare figured out, at least intuitively, that there were some feelings which determined people's attitudes, although the causes of such feelings were unexplainable, were only suggested in one's actions, attitudes and speeches. Thus, the notion of foreclosure is represented through a constellation of motifs in the play. Such constellation of feelings is mirrored in other characters feelings and gestures.

There are at least three characters in the play that mirror Antonio's sadness. And all

[119] See Adelman's book **Blood relations**, in which she states that in Shylock enables Antonio's masochistic desire and fear of castration, which is symbolically represented in Shylock's gesture of circumcision.

[120] Lacan discusses foreclosure parting from Hyppolite's commentary of Freud's essay on Verneinung in Lacan's **Escritos** (pp.893-902) and defines foreclosure in his commentary of Hyppolite's speech, pp. 370-401).

their feelings, anxieties and sadness are provoked the paternal figure's deeds. Portia reveals in her first speech that she is sad and weary probably because the choice of her husband is determined by her father's will. Thus, a mirror of Antonio's sadness and inward feelings is seen in Portia's relation to her paternal figure. Her desire not to fulfill her father's will is suggested in her first speech and, in fact, she cheats her father's will in casket choice demanding someone to sing a song while Bassanio makes his choice. Such song reveals which is the real casket, by the rhyme *bred, head* = lead casket.

Antonio's inwardness is also mirrored in Lancelot's comic deliberation about his leaving his master Shylock. Launcelot feels conscience, indecision and fear because he is going to leave Shylock's house. It is odd that he feels anxiety, conscience and fear to leave his master Shylock; however, he does not feel such anxieties to his real father, old Gobbo. He substitutes his real father for Shylock, the ur-father of the play. His anxiety is enhanced and doubled the Esau and Jacob plot re-imagined with his father. In that moment, he needs the blessing of his biological father to leave the symbolic father. Most strangely, though he willingly feels desire to cheat his real father, old Gobbo, who is blind, he feels guilty of leaving Shylock to serve Bassanio. Though Launcelot is a comic figure, he is the one who consciously displaces his father's symbolic power to Shylock. He substitutes his paternal figure for Shylock, projecting on him fear and anxiety. Antonio also substitutes unconsciously his fear and anxiety towards the paternal figure on Shylock.

Another mirror of Antonio's sadness is shown in Jessica's fear, anxiety and shame for eloping from her father's house. Jessica feels unhappiness and tediousness due to the repressing acts of paternal figure. She states that her house is 'hell' and thus she wants to run and 'end this strife', as we will see later on. Her feelings work as a specular device mirroring and echoing Antonio's sadness, weariness and unhappiness, whose cause is the anxiety towards the paternal figure.

Therefore, the cause of his anxiety towards his paternal figure is mirrored and doubled in the other characters' inward feelings, emotions and anxieties in the play: on the one hand, Antonio's sadness is presented as having no cause in his first speech; on the other hand, Portia's, Launcelot's and Jessica's sadness, fear, conscience and unhappiness are caused by the paternal presence in the play. If Portia's weariness, Jessica's unhappiness and tediousness, and Lancelot's conscience and fear are due to the anxiety towards the paternal figure, contiguously Antonio's sadness and weariness, by this mirroring device, is likewise caused by his anxiety towards the paternal figure re-imagined in Shylock. What is foreclosed in Antonio's inwardness is doubled in three other characters of the play. Shakespeare constructs

the mimetic device to represent foreclosed feelings by associating different effects to one precise cause: the anxieties towards the paternal figure.

Therefore, Antonio's relation to his paternal figure, re-imagined in Shylock, is seen in his hatred to him. Antonio's paternal figure is absent in the play. His unexplained anger to Shylock touches on the primitive anger to the father. Holland states that Portia and Antonio make a couple who symbolises the incarnation of the oedipal or phallic stratum which is shared by every child: the loving mother, Portia, who protects and saves Antonio from his castrating father, Shylock. (1966, p. 237). Also, his masochistic desire and fear of castration, which can be potentially accomplished by Shylock, enhance his anxiety towards the paternal figure. He accepts the idea of castration, though it causes anxiety (p. 339, 4.1. vs. 82). However, the cause of such anxiety is constantly denied by Antonio, which signals the inward dimensions foreclosed from Antonio's inwardness and from the play. Therefore, the other characters play the role of correlative figures of Antonio, mirroring similar feelings felt by him. As it is going to be discussed subsequently, Portia's, Launcelot' and Jessica's anxieties and sadness are provoked by the presence of the paternal figure.

3. 4. Launcelot and Shylock: Conscience and Anxieties regarding the Paternal Figure

After Shylock's presentation, Shakespeare introduces Launcelot's wondering whether he will leave Shylock's house. Launcelot is presented as a comic character, whose speeches are full of language mistakes, blunders and formal uses of language. He is a comic and burlesque servant to Shylock. His name may be taken from mediaeval romance **The Grail Quest**. Shakespeare's Launcelot may be taken from the Lancelot of the Round Table in the romance **The Grail Quest**, an anonymous text from the 13th century, a romance in which Galaaz is the saint man, and Lancelot is the 'sinner' who has an affair with Guinevere. In his debate with his conscience, Launcelot echoes the opposition of the saint man and the sinner.

Although leaving Shylock is a good, releasing action for him, he feels that the devil (the fiend) is tempting him to fly away. Launcelot starts the scene exposing his inward doubt and hesitation to run away from Shylock's house:

> Certainly my conscience will serve me to run from this Jew my master. The fiend is at mine elbow and tempts me saying to me 'Gobbo, Launcelot Gobbo, good Launcelot,' or 'good Gobbo,' or good Launcelot Gobbo, use your legs, take the start, run away. My conscience says 'No; take heed,' honest Launcelot; take heed, honest Gobbo, or, as aforesaid, 'honest Launcelot Gobbo; do not run; scorn running with thy heels.' Well, the most courageous fiend bids me pack: 'Fia!' says the fiend; 'away!' says the fiend; 'for the heavens, rouse up a

> brave mind,' says the fiend, 'and run.' Well, my conscience, hanging about the neck of my heart, says very wisely to me 'My honest friend Launcelot, being an honest man's son,' or rather an honest woman's son; for, indeed, my father did something smack, something grow to, he had a kind of taste; well, my conscience says 'Launcelot, budge not.' 'Budge,' says the fiend. 'Budge not,' says my conscience. 'Conscience,' say I, 'you counsel well;' ' Fiend,' say I, 'you counsel well:' to be ruled by my conscience, I should stay with the Jew my master, who, God bless the mark, is a kind of devil; and, to run away from the Jew, I should be ruled by the fiend, who, saving your reverence, is the devil himself. Certainly the Jew is the very devil incarnation; and, in my conscience, my conscience is but a kind of hard conscience, to offer to counsel me to stay with the Jew. The fiend gives the more friendly counsel: I will run, fiend; my heels are at your command; I will run. (II, ii, 1-22)

Launcelot says that he will use his conscience to run away from Shylock. However, his conscience advises him not to run away, because thereby he may lose his soul. The sides of his conscience – the evil and the good ones – depict Launcelot's moral scruples. He lingers in such a debate and then states that his conscience is just his good dimension in his mind. However, if he keeps on being ruled by his conscience he will not run away from Shylock. At last, he defines his conscience as a hard one and thinks that the fiend gives him better advice than his conscience. His actions are indecisive due to those extremes wherein his decision lingers. His inward dispositions seem to be controlled by mysterious forces, which pervade his mind (McGinn, 2007, p. 12). Shakespeare represents inwardness, which is interfered by conscience and mysterious forces of the self.

Coupled with that, he wants to embody a new religion, changing from Judaism to Catholicism. That was something quite revolting to English Puritans, which condemned both religions, just as they condemned religious changes. There would be a sense of disorder or even uproar implicit in Launcelot's reaction of leaving the Jew and becoming a Catholic. It necessary to bear in mind that, after a long time of religious changes, the idea of adopting Roman Catholicism was disquieting to the audience. It is worth remembering that the Christians in the play are Roman Catholic Christians. Moreover, England adopted a Protestant Church with its ups and downs during the 16th century.[121] Thus, the history of abrupt changes of the Church in England could cause anxiety and suspicion in Launcelot's debate. Such feelings were awakened whenever one would undertake religious conversion.

This sort of floatation between the 'good conscience' and the 'bad conscience' is a late representation of distinct figures from the *morality plays*. Besides the influences of the Latin tradition, such as Seneca's influence, Ovidius', Plutarch's, Shakespeare suffered strong influence from the popular tradition of the Middle Ages. Such popular theatrical tradition was

[121] First, under Henry VIII's kingdom, he broke with the Roman Church and changed it to what he called it the Church of England, or the Henrician English Church; then came Edward IV, who adopted rather radical and strict attitudes towards a more Puritan and Protestant Church; then Mary Stuart temporarily re-established the Roman Catholic Church; and at last Elizabeth I re-established her father's project in a more tolerant face of the Anglican Church.

constituted mainly by the *Mystery* and *Morality plays*. The *Mystery* or *Miracle plays* were playlets which presented the history of the universe from the very beginning of the creation until the Judgement Day. These representations aimed at teaching the people stories from the Bible, as Cain and Abel, the Deluge, and the Death of Jesus Christ.

Whereas *Mystery plays* taught the biblical history of the universe and the creation of the world and man, the *Moraliy plays* represented the conflicts of the soul of the individual. According to Greenblatt (2004),[122] the Morality plays were

> secular sermons designed to show the terrible consequences of disobedience, idleness, or dissipation. Typically, a character – an embodied abstraction with a name like Mankind or Youth – turns away from a proper guide such as Honest Recreation or Virtuous Life and begins to spend his time with Ignorance, All-for-Money, or Riot. (2004, p. 31)

According to Greenblatt, Shakespeare probably watched some of these plays, such as the *Interlude of Youth*, represented in Stratford-upon-Avon around 1569. Such plays were rehearsed and presented by the guilds, which were associations of craftsmen and workers. They met to represent such plays in the festivals of May, Christmas and Twelfth Night. In Shakespeare's work, there are still some traits of such plays, such as the Grave-digger scene and the actors' scenes in **Hamlet** and the entire rehearsing of a play inside **A Midsummer Night's Dream**, all of them very comic and burlesque. But Shakespeare melts and links in one character what were two or more different characters in the morality plays. In Launcelot, we see the good and bad conscience working together in the same mind, still in a very schematic way, however. In such plays, the conflicts of the soul were staged in order to discuss human destiny after death, so that they could morally teach what people should do and what principles they were obliged to follow to go to Heaven.

Not far from Shakespeare's work, Marlowe still had some of these mediaeval traits in his **Doctor Faustus**, for instance, written around 1588-9. In that play, the good angel and the evil angel fight to persuade Faustus' mind. Other abstract figures are still represented in different characters, such as *Pride*, *Covetousness*, *Wrath*, *Envy*, *Gluttony*, *Sloth*, and *Lechery*. The Seven Deadly Sins are also represented in real characters. In Shakespeare this does not appear like that: all those same abstract concepts are melted in one character, such as Launcelot. However, in Launcelot there is a sort of ontological demonstration of how Shakespeare reshaped those distinct figures from the *Miracle* and *Morality* plays in one character.

[122] See his biography on Shakespeare **Will in the World: how Shakespeare became Shakespeare**, 2004.

Counterpoised to this, inward representation of feelings in Morality plays was quite flat and predictable. Their inner self was constituted by a predetermined psychology, which put side by side good characters and good attitudes, bad characters and bad attitudes. There were no further expectations, surprise or even complexity of the characters. In Marlowe flat characters are noticeable, as in **Dr. Faustus**. Alternatively, Launcelot is already a sort of melting-pot of the soul, the good and bad conscience.[123] But other characters are very complex and enigmatic, such as Portia, Antonio and Shylock. Thus, Shakespeare overcame his contemporary playwrights creating rather complex characters whose inwardness is represented with its enigmatic and obscure dimensions.

Thus, Launcelot's first speech presents a rough representation of inwardness. It is an intermediary result of the early representation of the soul and the late complex characters in Shakespeare such as Brutus, Hamlet, Macbeth, and Lear. When Launcelot fights against the bad side of his conscience, he is not just opposing an abstract representation of the bad dimensions of the soul. In fact, he fights against something deeper in his inwardness, his conscience. Thus, conscience is an essential element to the determination of inwardness in the play. In a deeper level of his inwardness there are incrusted elements of social, cultural, and theological constructs which determine it. They were imposed on the individual's mind by the ideas of order, a very common-place in early Modern England. For example, in **Julius Caesar**, there is clear consciousness of how conscience works:

> Between the acting of a dreadful thing
> And the first motion, all the interim is
> Like a phantasma or a hideous dream. (II, i, vs. 63-65).

Brutus uses the term *phantasma* which is a word used by psychoanalysis nowadays. That is exactly what Launcelot is fighting against: his own phantasmas, which appear in his inwardness and blur his judgement. Conscience is an essential issue which constantly interferes in feelings, thoughts and actions of the characters of the play. Inwardness is therefore pervaded by the conscience of the self. Shakespeare intuitively perceived such traits of inwardness and portrayed them in the drama.

Thus, conscience is a meaningful issue in moral, theological and even philosophical dimensions in Shakespeare's plays and in Elizabethan Age. Conscience and action are two

[123] Another source helps us to understand the configuration of Launcelot's conscience. In 1584 Robert Wilson published a play called **Three Ladies of London**. In the play, Lucre, Usury, Dissimulation, Simony are opposed to Simplicity, Honesty, Hospitality and Conscience. For Janet Adelman this play is the most influent source of the play. See Adelman's book **Blood Relations**, 2008.

sides which demonstrate deep ambiguities and complexities of the characters' inwardness. Such complexities are presented through paradoxes caused by feelings, ideas and thoughts. In that sense, Stephen L. Collins (1989)[124] states that conscience in Elizabethan era was determined by the ideas of order and correspondences of macrocosm and microcosm. The political order was extremely coercive and its moral principles were an efficient way to constrain the individual to act according to the patterns of determining monarchic and theological hierarchies. Any attempt of non-cooperation with the state could lead someone to frustration and ostracism. Thinkers of the Tudor age such as Thomas Elyot, Francis Walsingham and Thomas Cranmer were quite concerned with the maintenance of social and political order of the kingdom. Thus, they moulded a thought system based on mediaeval assumptions, which were normally preached in the Homilies at church. As a result, the public domain was put on the first ground in order to control the private domain. The inner-self was determined by the coercive and political structure which needed the strongest repression of self-expression and social disorder.

The ideas of order operated not only in the political level, but they were over-determining structures of individual conscience and inwardness. The idea of order was so strong in people's conscience that it was even transposed to the description of the soul. As Collins describes,

> Because the world was naturally ordered, the individual soul was correspondingly ordered. A virtuous soul was an ordered soul; a corrupt soul was disordered or diseased. In this way Tudor psychology understood that disorderly behavior in an individual was a perversion of what was natural and good just as a disordered society was a perversion of an ordered society. Disorder was unnatural. It was merely a negation of what was good and natural and had no definable existence of its own. Intemperance and confusion, Robert Mason explained, was reason engraved with lust and concupiscence. (1989, p. 23-24)

Thus, virtue, temperance and moderation were ordering ideals of the individual behaviour. His action and conduct unveiled his virtue or corruption, since it was preached that virtue oriented correct behaviour, whereas a disordering behaviour was determined by vice and moral corruption (1989, p. 24). Here are some over-determining elements of conscience which influenced many dimensions of the inner-self. Thus, such a system, in its attempt to restrain disordering situations, was extremely super-egoical. They produced insecurity just as insatisfaction, which obliged the system to create ways of circumscribing the action of the individual in the patterns of order expected in that age.

Another aspect of the idea of order in the Elizabethan age was that the common-places

[124] See his work **From Divine Cosmos to Sovereign State**, 1989.

and Tudor and Elizabethan ethics had their ground on the conciliation of will and reason (1989, p. 24). For Collins, there was a psychological division of the body in three areas,

> the highest being the seat of reason which directed human action. Undirected will lead to disorder and chaos order and degree, the prerequisites for a public weal, revealed God's disposal of the "influence of understanding". Good counsel, that ubiquitous Tudor commonplace was right, good and honest. (1989, p. 25)

Once again, reason was considered right when it could motivate a reasonable behaviour just as behaviour was considered good and right if led by reason and never by passions and individual interests. Collins establishes an analogy between Tudor psychology and modern psychology: 'In modern terminology, Tudor social psychology was superego-oriented. The individual ego and id were restricted. The more the ego restrained the id, the more it resembled the superego and the more it appropriated 'right reason' as its own venue'. (1989, p. 25). The sense of duty was circumscribed by the thoughtless obedience of the individual, who defined himself based on an outside model and not from cognitive and logical self-reflection. Thus, it is evident how elements from the ideas of order in Tudor and Elizabethan age were essential to the policy of the kingdom with the purpose of determining conscience. Moreover, the importance of the 'decent' behaviour was extremely highlighted by Tudor theorists, so that the passions and desires of the individual were constantly denied and denigrated. Even introspection was not seen as a way of getting good behaviour. As a result, the idea of change was always reproached and the idea of cycle was appropriate to Tudor policy.

Historical and political changes were only possible when strictly linked to psychological changes and to the perception of the self. If the coercive policy of the ideas of order could not restrain psychological changes in that age, then social, historical and political changes had great impact on the psychology of the period, enlarging the consciousness of the reality wherein people lived. Thus, Shakespeare's characters embody the spirit of deep psychological changes; they could not adapt themselves to thought structures focused on the order of the world, but they searched in themselves for changing their thought and behaviour. The refusal of common patterns of action in Shakespeare, in exchange of actions leading to complexity, ambiguity, and depth, reveal a turning point to the changes and ambiguities of the character which is already rather self-centred in Shakespeare's work. That is the reaction and an attitude to exploit subtler and deeper dimensions of characters' inwardness in a world already in crisis. Therefore, Shakespeare used psychological changes in the age to represent

inwardness through complexity, ambiguity and depth.

Launcelot's debate with his conscience consists of a theatrical representation of inner workings of the individual's conscience. In this representation of conscience, once again Shakespeare uses the opposition of *theatricality* and *textuality*, proposed by Moisan (1987), in **Shakespeare Reproduced** (1987). The theatrical traits are enhanced in Launcelot and his father. They are clowns, burlesque and comic, and such traits veil essential elements reproduced elsewhere in the play, such as the case of conscience. The theatricality of the tragicomedy hides meanings which are important elsewhere in the play. Such element is not necessarily visible in other characters, but it is essential since it determines and reveals their judgement and inwardness. In the play, conscience is something apparently absent. However, it pervades many characters' decisions, acts, attitudes and gestures. For example, Jessica's spasms during her elopement are influenced by her conscience and shame. She first feels ashamed of being dressed as a boy and then runs away from her father's house. Portia's judgement in the trial scene is determined by conscience, and her decision of applying a rather strict and inflexible justice is pervaded by her conscience, which comes out in her lingering to take the final verdict. Conscience is therefore a rather determining dimension of the characters' inwardness, because it reveals incrusted traits rooted in their inner-self, and it is a psychological dimension used by Shakespeare to represent inwardness in the play.

After Launcelot's comic speech, he meets his father Gobbo, who is blind. He brings a *dish of doves* to give to Launcelot's master. He asks where Shylock's house is, but Launcelot jokingly deceives him. He cheats his father affirming that his son is dead. He wants to mock his father and after that he reveals that he is his son; he kneels, and asks twice his father's blessing. They recognise each other as father and son, as Launcelot says that his mother is Margery, Gobbo's wife: 'Her name is Margery, indeed: I'll be sworn, if thou be Launcelot, thou art mine own flesh and blood. Lord worshipped might he be! what a beard hast thou got! thou hast got more hair on thy chin than Dobbin my fill-horse has on his tail.' (II, ii, 69-72). When Gobbo notices that Launcelot has beard on his face, his words echo the biblical passage when Jacob cheats Esau by buying his primogeniture with a pot of meat. The 'dish of doves' Gobbo brings to give Shylock replaces Jacob's pot of meat. In the **King James' Bible** (*Genesis*, 25, 29-34)[125], Jacob becomes the first ascendant of Christ lineage.

[125] And Jacob sod pottage: and Esau came from the field, and he {was} faint: / And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red {pottage}; for I {am} faint: therefore was his name called Edom. {with...: Heb. with that red, with that red pottage} {Edom: that is Red} / And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright. / And Esau said, Behold, I {am} at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do to me? {at...: Heb. going to die} / And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he sware unto him: and he sold his birthright unto Jacob. / Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentiles [meat]; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way: thus Esau despised {his} birthright. / Genesis, chapter 25, 29-34)

Thus, Launcelot re-imagines the story of Jacob, the cheating of the father. However, what is symbolically displaced here is not primogeniture, but the anxiety Launcelot feels regarding Shylock: instead of feeling fear and conscience towards his biological father, he feels conscience as he conjectures to leave Shylock's house. The representation of Launcelot's paternal figure is re-imagined in Shylock, not in Gobbo. This comic representation of biblical events is evoked elsewhere in the play: Portia cheats her father and outwits her father's will; Jessica elopes and cheats her father, stealing his ducats and jewels.

This detail is enhanced by another detail in his speech, when he explains the way to Shylock's house: 'Turn up on your right hand at the next turning, but, at the next turning of all, on your left; marry, at the very next turning, turn of no hand, but turn down indirectly to the Jew's house.' (II, ii, 30-32). This speech signals the conversion to Christianity (Adelman, 2008). The Latin translation to *turn* is *vertere*, which is the root of *converting*. He comically echoes here the conversions of Judaism to Christianity, according to Adelman. Adelman (2008) points out that Launcelot's anxiety and guilt of leaving Shylock, as well as his deceiving his blind father Gobbo, work as an imaginary fantasy of such biblical story. She enhances conflicts between paternal figures (Shylock and Gobbo) and the filial figure (Launcelot). Launcelot needs then his father's blessing to convert to Christianity. According to Adelman, this reading is possible, since Shakespeare introduces in this comic passage in the biblical story in the play.

In Launcelot's comic deliberation about leaving his master Shylock it is worth noticing his inward feelings coming out. Launcelot's relationship with his father Gobbo and Shylock is ambiguous, since he feels anxiety of leaving Shylock's house, but he does not feel anxiety in cheating his father. On the contrary, he mocks his father and cheats him. He inverts the role of the paternal figure, taking Shylock instead of Gobbo as the representation of paternal figure, because his anxiety pops up when he thinks about running away from Shylock. Gobbo should be the character who represents Launcelot's symbolic paternal presence; instead, he projects such feelings onto Shylock: oddly, such powerful influence is not felt when he sees Gobbo, his biological father, but only when he desires to leave Shylock. Likewise, there are other characters in the play who substitute their paternal figure for Shylock, projecting on him anger, hatred, resentment, fear, and anxiety. Such twisting suggests the ambiguity of the play towards the representation of the paternal figure, epitomised in Shylock as the primordial father of the play. Launcelot feels his anxiety towards the paternal figure in Shylock, who represents the substitute of his biological father; similarly, Antonio's relation to his paternal figure may be projected on Shylock, and his anxiety which

is seen in his hatred to the Jew. His weariness and sadness are mirrored in the other characters Portia, Jessica, and Launcelot. Consequently, their anxieties are caused by the presence of a paternal figure in the play. Shakespeare represents inward feelings by the mirroring device, which suggests one's feelings in another's behaviour. Therefore, Launcelot's drive of his anxiety towards the paternal figure to Shylock is a hint of the cause of Antonio's anxiety, who re-imagines in Shylock the representation of the paternal figure.

3. 5. Fathers and Daughters: Jessica's Elopement and Denial of the Paternal Figure

Launcelot's anxiety towards Shylock's symbolic paternal presence is reproduced elsewhere in the play. It is doubled in Jessica's feelings to her father. Jessica complains when Launcelot leaves Shylock's house. This scene presents the mood in Shylock's home: 'I am sorry thou wilt leave my father so: / Our house is hell, and thou, a merry devil, / Didst rob it of some taste of tediousness.' (II, iii, 1-3). The description of their house as a 'hell' suggests Shylock's attitudes to her and to Launcelot. He seems to be a very repressive father. Thus, she feels tediousness and unhappiness. His ill-treatment to his daughter and Launcelot enhances his previous description given by the Christians. He seems to be the villain and the Renaissance audience would take such description as common reproduction of the stereotyped Jew.

Then, she gives Launcelot a letter for Lorenzo. She has already planned to run away from her house, because she cannot stand living such a life, even though Shylock is her father and she should owe respect to him. Thus Launcelot complains her leaving her father's house too: 'Adieu! tears exhibit my tongue. Most beautiful pagan, most sweet Jew! if a Christian did not play the knave and get thee, I am much deceived. But, adieu: these foolish drops do something drown my manly spirit: adieu.' (II, iii, 10-13). He describes Jessica as a Pagan who will become Christian. The juxtaposition of Pagan and Jew points to a common-place in early modern England, which defined Jews as pagan and faithless. In the next scene, Lorenzo will call her the daughter of a faithless Jew. The reference to Paganism reinforces the negative view on her in the play. Likewise, pagan conveyed the meaning of 'prostitute' in the age (Drakakis, 2010, p. 245). It suggests the enigmatic ambiguity in her manners, attitudes and behaviour, who feels like not sharing her father's blood, just as it reproduces the stereotype of Jewish women as misbelievers and prostitutes.

After that, she reveals her conscience of leaving her father's house and suggests that there is something strange and disquieting in their paternal and filial relationship:

> Alack, what heinous sin is it in me
> To be ashamed to be my father's child!
> But though I am a daughter to his blood,
> I am not to his manners. O Lorenzo,
> If thou keep promise, I shall end this strife,
> Become a Christian and thy loving wife. (II, iii, 15-20)

Here she unveils her conscience, which provokes shame and resistance to accept that she has her father's manners. Her anxiety of being different from Shylock's manners and religion evokes shame. The end of her speech reveals the end of a 'strife', which seems that she does not endure possible humiliations and suffering enforced on her. Even though she sees her house as a hell, such description is opposed to Shylock's definition of his house as sober house later on. She does not feel fit to such a hell and wants to live as a Christian.

In fact, Jessica's conscience is a sign of her inwardness. Her conscience comes out probably because she knows her elopement will dishonour and disgrace her father. She feels guilt for leaving her father's house, even though she seems terrified of living with him. Her conscience comes as an uncontrolled dimension[126] of her inwardness with its quasi-hallucinatory qualms which are the effects of superegoical cultural constructs visible in her shame and guilt. Conscience and guilt are those cultural constructs, pointed out by Collins (1989), in order to restrain social and familial disorder. Her conscience determines the self and is a trait to depict her inwardness.

Jessica's description of the house as hell and Shylock's treatment to her convey problems of the relationship between fathers and daughters. In that sense, Lenker (2001)[127] presents an interesting study about the decadent relationship between fathers and daughters in the Elizabethan Age. The author discusses the decadence of power and shift in values in late 16th century and early 17th century in England and in Victorian Age. Lenker's thesis is that literature and art function as barometers of society and its values, tendencies, anxieties and decadence. She parts from similarities of both Elizabethan Age and Victorian England and the anxieties provoked by the *fin de siècle*'s fears and uneasiness. The former was a society represented by a court, governed by Elizabeth I, whose successful kingdom brought respect, prosperity and stability in social, political, economic and religious domains. Yet, despite all Elizabeth I's achievements her people became uneasy, because she was unmarried, childless and had no apparent heir. Thus, the subjects started to speculate who was going to be the next

[126] For that see McGinn's assumption of the mysterious forces pervading inwardness, 2007, p. 12.

[127] See **Fathers and Daughters in Shakespeare and Shaw**, 2001. In a certain sense, I think these anxieties were not only represented by Shakespeare and Shaw, but by other others such as Marlowe, Thomas Hardy, and Swinburne.

sovereign, whether he would be James I or somebody else. In the same way, Queen Victoria had strengthened Great-Britain's prestige and power around the world during her reign. On the contrary, she had a legitimate heir, the future king Edward VII. However, the fears of both ages were determined by the successors' reputation, whose scandals could damage those respectable courts and monarchs' achievements: on the one hand James I was said to be 'blatantly homoerotic' (2001, p. 16),[128] while Victoria's son Edward, Prince of Wales, was 'an incorrigible womanizer' (2001, p. 16). Against these facts, the death of both supreme and respected sovereigns and the *fin de siècle* myths unleashed anxieties and uneasiness of the future of the kingdom. Thus, Lenker proposes that in these Queens' late decade, literature and art had brought on the stage and on the page fears and angst of moral disasters and of the damages of the 'most influential symbol of British life, the monarchy' (2001, p. 16). Although both societies and succession problems of those ages were quite different, the death of the female monarch, who embodied patriarchal power, caused fears, anxieties and suspicion. Such anxieties were transposed into art in the representations of upheavals and debasement of patriarchal and state power. For Lenker, this phenomenon happens mainly in Shakespeare's and Shaw's drama. Those authors represent such anxieties by the subversion of the patriarchal power social values and conventions by daughters. They also depict the changes in relationship between fathers and daughters. Daughters act and behave in an unruly way in Shakespeare and Shaw, causing the damage of the paternal power and the fall and death of the paternal figure. In a macrocosmic level, the relationship between fathers and daughters are not only symptomatic of the *fin de siècle* and of the dawn of the female monarchic power, but also the symptom of the disruption of the patriarchal power. In that sense, Drakakis (1998) also enhances the challenge of the patriarchal power 'from bellow'. For him, in Jessica's and Portia's case

> the challenge to the dominant patriarchal order from bellow, characterised in Portia's case as a rebellion of the (female) 'blood', and in Shylock's case literally as a rebellion of his 'own flesh and blood' […] threatens a division in the ideology of patriarchy, and proposes that in certain circumstances rebellion is justifiable. (1998, p. 196)

Both Jessica and Portia debase paternal power as a way of escaping from their fathers' repressive circumstances. In that sense, some could imagine that the debasement of the patriarchal power was necessary face to the individual desire who sought for freedom.

[128] Ludwig Pfeiffer has also analysed the problem of psychopathology in Stuart Drama as a signal of the shift in values and decadence. See **Drama Stuart between History and Psychopathology**, Journal Philia&Filia, No. 01, Vol. 01, 2010, Porto Alegre, Brazil, website: http://seer.ufrgs.br/Philiaefilia/article/view/14866/9258 , accessed August, 25, 2011, pp. 06-19.

Moreover, the problem of succession is an implied concern in **The Merchant of Venice**, wherein Portia's marriage is determined by the casket test. Marjorie Garber (2004) enhances similarities between Portia's marriage and Elizabeth's succession. Like Portia, Elizabeth I had many suitors from many countries and their attempt to woo and marry her were unsuccessful. In a deeper level, the casket test is an idealised and happy solution to the problem of Elizabeth's succession, who, like Portia, had many suitors from many countries, yet she refused to marry them. According to Garber (2004),

> It is possible to see Portia in a historical-allegorical frame as a figure for Queen Elizabeth here – a lady richly left, whose father's dead hand seems to control the choice of a husband. Elizabeth, like Portia, was the target of suitors from many nations as well as a number of wellborn Englishmen, each one imagining himself on the brink of becoming King of England. Portia's problem, like Elizabeth's, is that she will inevitably lose or cede power, rather than gain it, if she marries. (2004, p. 288)

Such similarities point to Portia's refusal of marrying according to her father's casket test. Such refusal of losing power signal the problematic relationship between fathers and daughters epitomised in Elizabeth's figure and symbolically represented in Portia's attitude.

Moreover, Jessica's betraying her father represents confront to the paternal power and the consequent loss of values. The paternal power is faced mainly in a comic way in Shakespeare. According to Lenker,

> Most scholars have failed to note the flourishing of a subversive dramatic convention during the early modern period that comically deflates patriarchal authority – a convention that, ironically, derived from the most patriarchal cultures – Greece and Rome. Thus, the New Comedy of Menander (fourth century B. C. Greece) and Terence and Plautus (second and third centuries B. C. Rome) consistently dramatizes the comic subversion of parental power by rebellious children of both sexes who defy their fathers, fool both parents, and succeed in choosing their own mates. (2001, p. 22)

Lenker's sociological study presents some details which illuminate the understanding of fathers' concerns to their daughters in Shakespeare's plays. Especially in **The Merchant of Venice**, Shylock's concern to Jessica is revealed when he is with her, in his pathos and despair when he loses his daughter and his ducats; such concern is similar to Portia's father's concern to assure that Portia marries a man who does not come merely to spoil his fortune. To some extent, Shakespeare adapted such subversions and the theme of generational conflict for comedies (such as **The Merchant of Venice**, **A Midsummer Night's Dream**, **Taming of the Shrew**), for tragedies (**Romeo and Juliet**, **Othello**, **King Lear**), and for romances (**The Winter's Tale**). For example, Regan and Goneril abandon and usurp Lear's power; Juliet

defies her father's will of marrying a man she dislikes; Jessica and, in a certain sense, Portia debase their fathers' power. As a matter of fact, Portia herself outwits her father's will when she gives Bassanio a hint to the right casket by playing a song which suggests by the rhymes *bred, head* that the right casket is the *lead* one.

Jessica's elopement presents the troubles of parents who were not able to teach some values to their children, provoking a generational conflict. In the Elizabethan Age a revolting child meant the disorder of the family which mirrored the possible forthcoming disorder of the state. Children who disobeyed parents were considered evil and unnatural, whereas the parents were blamed for being unable to educate them properly, because they were not severe enough and able to avoid disorder and elopement. A father, just as the whole family, would be dishonoured and disgraced if a young girl eloped. Thus, the audience could see Shylock as a repressive father, just as concerned to his daughter and honour. Thus, Shylock would be seen as a father who tries to recuperate his honour when he feels desperate.

Before Launcelot leaves Shylock's house, Shylock's speech enhances his stinginess:

> 'Well, thou shalt see, thy eyes shall be thy judge,
> The difference of old Shylock and Bassanio:
> – What, Jessica! – thou shalt not gormandise,
> As thou hast done with me:--What, Jessica! –
> And sleep and snore, and rend apparel out; (II, v, 1-5).

He judges Launcelot as a servant who only eats, sleeps, snores and tears up his clothes. According to Anita G. Sherman,[129] Shylock's attitude in this dialogue is a pragmatic and questioning attitude to his ex-servant's manners. (2004, p. 280). Shylock is quite confident of his judging Launcelot. He is sceptic, quarrelsome and sullen: 'Who bids thee call? I do not bid thee call.' (II, v, 8). On the other hand, Jessica's answer to Shylock's calling is not affective and respectful to Shylock: 'Call you? What is your will?' (II, v, 11). This cold gesture suggests that Jessica treats him affectionless. Shakespeare enhances Jessica's distance to her father, suggesting a rupture in their relationship. For Graham (1953), 'Shakespeare has shown also that in the home life of Shylock and Jessica there is little harmony. Jessica's values are not those of Shylock, and it is not merely financial standards that separate them.' (1953, p. 150). Shylock does not acknowledge he does not know her enough. He is blind, because he does not know or imagine that Jessica is about to betray him, leave his house, and become a Christian. On the other hand, Jessica also makes believe that she is loyal to her father as long as she does not reply Shylock's worries. She is silent in this scene in order to

[129] See her essay *Disowning Knowledge of Jessica, or Shylock's Skepticism*, 2004.

make believe she is an obedient daughter, as McGinn points out (2004, pp.11, 12). In fact, just as Shylock theatrically embodies traits of goodness in front of Bassanio and Antonio, Jessica also plays a role here just to seem a very submissive and obedient daughter. Her inward feelings are concealed by the theatrical device to build an image of her personality, pointed by McGinn: 'personality is essentially a matter of how you interact with others – how you affect them, and how they affect you. The self is also theatrical in the sense that it is often best understood in terms of *roles* a person *plays*.' (2007, p. 11). She embodies and plays the role of a good daughter, but she veils her true feelings lying to her father. In that sense, Sherman (2004) states that

> These six words are the only ones she addresses to her father in the entire play, apart from the lie that she tells him at the end of the scene when she conceals Launcelot's whispered message to her. In the interim, between Jessica's two lines – the one hypocritical, the other false – Shylock's self-absorption becomes clear. […] Although the play allows us to see that Shylock has no imagination for Jessica, he himself has not yet learned this. (2004, p. 280)

Thus, this scene underlines Shylock's blindness because he believes that only the eyes can distinguish what is good from bad, right from wrong. Such blindness suggests he does not recognise the distinction of inward and outward side of the self, and thus he does not understand his daughter. (2004, p. 280). He is naive and he does not distrust her. Shylock is reluctant to go, because he is suspicious of the Christians:

> I am bid forth to supper, Jessica:
> There are my keys. But wherefore should I go?
> I am not bid for love; they flatter me:
> But yet I'll go in hate, to feed upon
> The prodigal Christian. Jessica, my girl,
> Look to my house. I am right loath to go:
> There is some ill a-brewing towards my rest,
> For I did dream of money-bags to-night. (II, v, 12-19)

Shylock is unwell and indisposed to go to supper, because he feels that the Christians flatter him and invite him just as a hypocritical attitude. It is noteworthy that Shylock feels and intuits that something is going to happen. His intuition is sharpened, because he dreamed of bags of money, which he interprets as a negative sign that he should yield to. Shakespeare put this tiny little detail to suggest that Shylock is intuitive now, rather than sceptical as he seemed to be in the very beginning of the play. In fact, this opposing cognitive trait suggests Shylock's inner conflict, just as he does not know himself. But he suffers from a human weakness: naïveté, which makes him believe in Jessica, who betrays and cheats him.

Consequently, he is not able to perceive that Launcelot and Jessica are cheating and betraying him. Thus, he will suffer from such betrayals and it will be hard for him to acknowledge and accept that he was ruined, to some extent, by his own daughter. Shakespeare represents Shylock's inward dimensions by making him more and more complex and conflicting. Though some critics point out that Shylock is quite resentful, meagre, and repressive in this scene, others point out that he is rather complex and confused.

After this speech with Jessica, Launcelot begs Shylock to go to the supper, probably because the Christians will run away with Jessica. He naïvely says that 'An [if] they have conspired together, I will not say you shall see a masque' (II, v, 23). Launcelot makes a parody of Shylock's fears, suggesting that there will be masks during the night. Then, Shylock warns Jessica

> What, are there masques? Hear you me, Jessica:
> Lock up my doors; and when you hear the drum
> And the vile squealing of the wry-necked fife,
> Clamber not you up to the casements then,
> Nor thrust your head into the public street
> To gaze on Christian fools with varnished faces,
> But stop my house's ears, I mean my casements:
> Let not the sound of shallow foppery enter
> My sober house. By Jacob's staff, I swear,
> I have no mind of feasting forth to-night:
> But I will go. (II, v, 27-37)

Shylock's reaction is to distrust Launcelot and ask what he has said to Jessica. Once again, his scepticism is enhanced here, but, on a deeper level, his blindness overcomes his scepticism, because he cannot perceive in the appearances that both Jessica and Launcelot cheat him in order to veil their inner intentions. Shylock supposes that Jessica will obey his warning and will not show up at the windows or go out. He mistrusts the Venetians, because they normally elope with girls during the masquerades. In that sense, an anonymous text *A Discovery of the Great Subtlety and Wonderful Wisdom of the Italians*[130] enhances that Venetian used masquerades to get money from others. The Venetians put on masks whereby 'they are disguised to advance and enrich themselves by the overthrown and pillage of others' (Kaplan, 2002, p. 151). The negative representation of the Venetians in narratives could be known by the audience and such representation could unleash suspicion about the Christians in the play. As Shylock hears that there will be a masquerade his attitude is to react as both a repressive and concerned father. This simultaneous reaction depicts Shylock's ambiguous and

[130] See Kaplan's collection of texts, 2002, pp. 150-153.

conflicting dimensions.

Moreover, he sees and considers his house a ‘sober house’, such a dear place. His house is for him a human body, which needs care and protection: ‘stop my house’s ears’. Anita G. Sherman (2004) argues that Shylock thinks of his house as an inner space of ‘withdrawal and a symbol of interiority and selfhood’ (2004, p. 280). With this little detail Shakespeare represents Shylock’s inward dimensions, even though he is also depicted as heartless villain. In fact, what is at stake here is that he wants to be respected at home. His paternal concerns, even though repressive, are due to the risks of Jessica’s running away. According to Sherman, his verbal slip ‘my house’s ears’ means that: ‘This verbal slip, the personification of the house, shows that Shylock is not as lucid as he thinks himself to be and that in his assumption that Jessica is an extension of himself he is enormously vulnerable. It also reveals his habit of shutting out unwelcome stimuli and refusing knowledge.’ (2004, p. 280). Thus, he sees his daughter, his gains and his house as an extension of his body; however, he does not acknowledge that they are all vulnerable. In fact, he is persuaded that they will be his possessions for a long time. His feelings are revealed inasmuch as he shows concern for her, because just as he does not want to lose money and jewels which are dear to him, he does not want to lose his daughter. As he tries to re-strengthen his authority in reminding Jessica to close the doors and remain inside the house, he contradictorily unveils that he does not trust her enough. Perhaps he feels that their relationship is already compromised. He thinks he can still teach her that his house, honour, and family are the things he cherishes most. But just after Jessica’s elopement he will partly acknowledge his failure.

Though Shylock is not willing to go to Bassanio’s supper, he leaves the house at Jessica’s care, imagining that she is going to be faithful to him. However, Jessica’s attitude of leaving her house reveals that Shylock could not instil his values in her. There is something which does not go well between daughter and father. According to Anita G. Sherman (2004), Shylock could not teach her his values, just as the values of his nation and religion. When they are together, their conversation shows little intimacy, which conceals his blindness about her. For example, he could not communicate the sentimental values of his ring given by his bereaved wife Leah. (Sherman, 2004, p. 281). In a certain sense, inasmuch he does not acknowledge Jessica’s inner intensions, he does not know that he is blind and that he is being cheated. That is something quite characteristic of him, because he will be cheated once again in the trial scene, when Portia outwits his bond by twisting its meaning. Both his blindness and scepticism point to the conflicts in his inwardness. These conflicts come up in his

behaviour, attitudes and actions. Though he doubts the Christians' attitudes, he does not doubt Jessica's inward dispositions. Such paradox makes us see in-between that his inward feelings are constituted and represented by opposing feelings, blindness and scepticism.

3. 6. Jessica's Elopement: Mimesis of her Inwardness and Shame

In the elopement scene, Lorenzo plans to run away with Jessica and reveals his intentions for the elopement:

> She hath directed
> How I shall take her from her father's house,
> What gold and jewels she is furnish'd with,
> What page's suit she hath in readiness.
> If e'er the Jew her father come to heaven,
> It will be for his gentle daughter's sake:
> And never dare misfortune cross her foot,
> Unless she do it under this excuse,
> That she is issue to a faithless Jew. (II, iv, 29-37)

Lorenzo is very hypocritical and cynical to state that Jessica's attitude to get her father's money is a sort of blessing, which could help Shylock to go to heaven. Yet, her 'kindness' and 'fidelity' remain bond to her blood, because she is a Jew's daughter. If she will act as a true Jewess, she would be damned. Lorenzo seems rather interested in Jessica's fortune and jewels than in her love, as it is evident when he says that Shylock's money is transformed into 'manna' at the end of the play. Thus, the main questions are: is Lorenzo really loyal to Jessica? Does he really love her or does he just want to get her money? In the elopement scene, Lorenzo arrives late and Salerio and Gratiano criticise him for that, since a true lover would be earlier than anyone. Therefore, Shakespeare presents Jessica's elopement in an ambiguous way, because it is not clear whether Jessica and Lorenzo really love each other or they are just taking the first opportunity to get Shylock's money and run away. Thereto, they disguise their inward intentions by assuming that they love each other. By such details, Shakespeare portrays Lorenzo's and Jessica's inward dispositions and intentions.

Jessica's elopement starts in a very contradictory way. Gratiano and Salerio remark that Lorenzo is quite late for his appointment:

> **Salerio**. His hour is almost past.
> **Gratiano.** And it is marvel he out-dwells his hour,
> For lovers ever run before the clock.

> **Salerio.** O, ten times faster Venus' pigeons fly
> To seal love's bonds new-made, than they are wont
> To keep obliged faith unforfeited! (II, vi, 3-8)

Love imagery normally presents lovers as quite concerned, early, hurried, precipitate and eager to meet their partners. In Shakespeare's work, we see good examples of lovers who long to see their lover as soon as possible: in **Romeo and Juliet**, Juliet looks forward to seeing Romeo and she wants that the time passes quickly; in **A Midsummer Night's Dream**, Theseus and Hyppolita suffer because the time lingers their 'nuptial hour' (I, i, 1).[131] Nevertheless, Lorenzo does not seem such an eager lover as Romeo and Juliet, Theseus and Hyppolita; Salerio remarks that lovers are worried to 'seal love's bonds new-made' and Gratiano remarks that 'lovers ever run before the clock'. His belatedness makes them suspect that Lorenzo is not so eager to see Jessica. He might have had other affairs in the masquerade during the night. In fact, he confesses he had some 'affairs' before he came to elope with Jessica. As he confesses:

> Sweet friends, your patience for my long abode;
> Not I, but my *affairs* have made you wait:
> When you shall please to play the *thieves* for wives,
> I'll watch as long for you then. (II, vi, 22-25, my italics)

It is not clear whether the word 'affairs' means some business he had to attend to or it means another love affair. No editor has commented the ambiguity of such a word in this speech in following editions: John Drakakis' (2010), Lindlay Kaplan & David Bevington's (2002), Barbara Mowt & Paul Werstine's (1992), and Walter's (1960). Thus, Lorenzo's ambiguous attitude to Jessica is vain and doubtful when he arrives late to run away with her. Contradictorily, he promises to 'watch as long' as they wish, if they want elope with another woman (wives). It is evident by these words that he honours his friends' purposes rather than his love for Jessica. Furthermore, the word '*thieves'* implies that he is plundering Shylock's money, jewels and his daughter. Ironically, Lorenzo suggests that they 'play the thieves of wives' alluding to deceit and plunder, which is disquieting to hear from a lover. His opportunistic disposition is a trait which portrays his inward sinister intentions, which are disguised by love.

What is implied in his speech is the question: 'does Lorenzo really love Jessica?' Lorenzo's delay suggests something merely superficial in their relationship. On a superficial

[131] As Theseus says, 'Now, fair Hippolyta, our nuptial hour / Draws on apace; four happy days bring in / Another moon: but, O, methinks, how slow / This old moon wanes! she lingers my desires, / Like to a step-dame or a dowager / Long withering out a young man revenue.' (**Midsummer Night's Dream**, I, i, 1-6.)

level, they seem to love each other, and that is apparently what they do. But Jessica's superficial relationship to Shylock seems to be doubled in her forthcoming relationship to Lorenzo. In fact, he seems unconsciously more interested in her dowry than in her love, beauty and values. As a result, honour, respect, and fidelity are not Lorenzo's words of the day. Shakespeare represents Lorenzo's desires and inward intentions in such an ambiguous manner because though he swears he loves her one can figure his real purposes: he desires her wealth. Shakespeare builds the inwardness of the characters in a very similar way: just as Bassanio wants to woo Portia mainly because of her wealth, Lorenzo also seems to elope with Jessica because of money. Like Bassanio, Lorenzo is a fortune-hunter who wants to marry Jessica because of her father's jewels and wealth. They confuse money and feelings, as Antonio and Bassanio had denoted such confusion beforehand. Shakespeare enhances and depicts his inwardness through their masking relationship, mirroring one character's intentions in other character's feelings and attitudes.

Likewise, even though Jessica swears she loves Lorenzo, she probably elopes with him because she wants to take a chance to escape her hell-like house. At the end of the play she still seems to be a sad figure, who does not feel happy when hearing music.[132] That she is running away as a way of fleeing his house and that their love is doubtful is suggested by what she says when she meets Lorenzo. As she knows that Lorenzo calls her outside her house, she still does not believe in his love:

> **Jessica.** Who are you? Tell me, for more certainty,
> Albeit I'll swear that I do know your tongue.
> **Lorenzo.** Lorenzo, and thy love.
> **Jessica.** Lorenzo, certain, and my love indeed,
> For who love I so much? And now who knows
> But you, Lorenzo, whether I am yours? (II, vi, 27-32).

Although both express their love, she does not stop asking questions. It is evident that she doubts their love for each other. Moreover, the intensifiers *certainty*, *indeed* and *certain* are cast to express what is not certain and sure. Her love for him is conveyed by scepticism and doubt, suggested by her questions which put at stake his love to her and hers to him. Moreover, she may be naive in believing that running away with Lorenzo will be a way out for her troubles at home. In the last act of the play she seems an outcast in Belmont and

[132] See V, i, 69-88: **Jessica**. I am never merry when I hear sweet music. // **Lorenzo.** The reason is, your spirits are attentive: / […] The man that hath no music in himself, / Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds, / Is fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils; / The motions of his spirit are dull as night / And his affections dark as Erebus: / Let no such man be trusted. Mark the music.

she is not remarked by the other characters.[133] Jessica's and Lorenzo's dialogue suggests that their love for each other is probably insincere.

What is more, she reveals her shame of being dressed as a boy:

> I am glad 'tis night, you do not look on me,
> For I am much ashamed of my exchange:
> But love is blind and lovers cannot see
> The pretty follies that themselves commit;
> For if they could, Cupid himself would blush
> To see me thus transformed to a boy. (II, vi, 35-40)

Her shame is probably not only because she is dressed as a boy, but because unconsciously she knows she is eloping with a Christian and stealing her father's money. Her conscience comes up in her shame and in her acknowledgment of her follies and inconsequent actions. Cross-dressing is of course an excuse to explain the shame and conscience which lie in a deeper level. Furthermore, cross-dressing was very comic on Elizabethan stage. According to an early report, female cross-dressing was not virtuous for women. Fynes Moryson, in his text *An Itinerary*,[134] reports that many women were unfaithful in Italy, and he saw many prostitutes who liked dress-crossing. Hence women who cross-dressed could be seen by some in the audience as the Italian prostitutes. Furthermore, female roles were normally played by boys, which can be seen in Jessica, Nerissa and Portia's cross-dressing. Although she feels ashamed of being dressed as a boy, she thinks no one will see her because it is dark night. Shakespeare represents Jessica's inward feelings through shame and conscience. Her actions, attitudes and feelings are determined by conscience and shame incrusted in her inwardness.

Coupled with that, as Lorenzo demands her to 'Descend, for you must be my torchbearer' (II, vi, 41), she reacts much more ashamed:

> What, must I hold a candle to my shames?
> They in themselves, good sooth, are too too light.
> Why, 'tis an office of discovery, love;
> And I should be obscured. (II, vi, 42-45)

If on the one hand she is quite ashamed of the light which will reveal that she is dressed as a boy, on the other hand, *torchbearer* and *hold a candle* have erotic connotation in

[133] For example, in III, ii, 283-289, when Jessica reveals Shylock's real intentions of having Antonio's pound of flesh, no one hears her, nor Portia: When I was with him I have heard him swear / To Tubal and to Chus, his countrymen, / That he would rather have Antonio's flesh / Than twenty times the value of the sum / That he did owe him: and I know, my lord, / If law, authority and power deny not, / It will go hard with poor Antonio.
[134] See Kaplan's collection of essays, 2002, p. 162-170.

this dialogue. Venetian masquerades were usually associated with unworthy men and prostitutes, according to Moryson and Coryate (2002). Thus, there is an implicit carnal and erotic suggestion in the phallic puns *torchbearer* and *hold a candle*. Until today the slang 'carry the torch for' someone means 'to be in love with someone, especially to suffer from unrequited love for' someone (**College Dictionary**, 1975, p. 1386).[135] Moreover, it is also implied in this pun the idea of flame, lover's flame, which has been a common-place in Western poetry since Sappho. In that sense, Jessica's love for Lorenzo is enhanced by erotic and carnal connotations in their relationship, as well as their doubts and questions suggest that their love may not be sincere. If she feels ashamed of being Lorenzo's *torchbearer*, shame implies guilt for the erotic desire implicit in such pun. Once again Shakespeare portrays Jessica's inwardness pervaded by shame, conscience and even erotic unacknowledged desire.

In that sense, Ewan Fernie (2002) has written a thought-provoking book named **Shame in Shakespeare**. According to him, shame is one of the most painful and ambiguous feelings in human nature. Its ambiguity dwells on shame's capacity of constraining as well as changing the self. According to him, 'although it can inhibit, constrain and even destroy a person, it can also cause them to reform and begin a new life.' (2002, p. 1). Shame is also uncontrolled and unpredictable. Shame in Shakespeare is a way that the characters must face to undergo the 'relationship with the world outside the self.' (2002, p. 1). In Fernie's opinion, 'shame functions as the revelation of a fundamental lack in human being' (2002, p. 5). It constitutes an unwelcome revealing of the self's unaccepted dimensions and dispositions. Moreover, shame has 'many fine distinctions', especially the relation it establishes with the world. Shame can be private or public, moral and amoral. The self can experience the shame of being exposed in public, but it can also experience shame within it, without revealing it to others. Shame can be defined as morally: 'amoral or worldly shame is loss of personal power or prestige, moral or spiritual shame is the loss of virtue as goodness; the former typically leads to renewed, sometimes violent, self-assertion, the latter to repentance.' (2002, p. 12). In that sense, Jessica's shame can be read as her shame of elopement and, after that, of being unchaste. Fernie asserts that 'although all sensitive human beings remain more or less susceptible to both kinds, masculine shame traditionally derives from weakness or lack of power, feminine shame from unchastity or some other form of intemperance'. (2002, p. 12). Especially in the Renaissance age, feminine shame was more serious and appalling than male shame. Fernie points out that shame is a sign that something goes wrong within: 'if integrity

[135] For that see **Random House College Dictionary**, 1975, p. 1386, entrance for ***Torch.*** Drakakis also highlights the erotic connotation in the pun torch-bearer, which suggests Lorenzo's erotic desire for Jessica (2010, p . 259).

is the condition of self-hood, shame is an alarm bell for psychological danger, as bodily pain is for physical threat: a warning that the subject's identity is in peril' (2002, p. 17). Therefore, Jessica's shame signals her awareness of losing chastity and becoming a Christian as an alarm that something is going to change in her forever. Jessica's shame is a trait used for the mimesis of conscience and inwardness in the play.

In addition to that, Lorenzo praises her beauty and sweetness 'Even in the lovely garnish of a boy.' (II, vi, 46). Such description echoes the homoerotic connotation implied in Antonio and Bassanio's relationship. Then Lorenzo describes her in her 'wisdom' and 'fidelity' for everything she has done for him:

> Beshrew me but I love her heartily;
> For she is wise, if I can judge of her,
> And fair she is, if that mine eyes be true,
> And true she is, as she hath proved herself,
> And therefore, like herself, wise, fair and true,
> Shall she be placed in my constant soul. (II, vi, 53-58)

Although he considers she is fair, faithful and wise, he praises her most for the money and jewels she has taken from her father. Thus, what moves him is rather his interest for wealth than true love. He idealises her with words such as 'true', 'wise', 'fair', which he obsessively repeats in order to make *himself* sure of that. He considers she is *true*, because she has proved it, by leaving her father's house, taking a fortune from him and becoming a Christian. Therefore, Lorenzo is a double of Bassanio, who also is eager to get a fortune by marriage. Shakespeare doubles one character's feelings in another character in order to enhance their inward sinister dimensions. This is another example of the mirroring device used by Shakespeare to represent inwardness in the play.

Moreover, Jessica's and Lorenzo's attitudes would not be very much esteemed by the Elizabethan audience, since elopements were extremely reprehended and condemned. Mary Metzger (1998)[136] remarks the consequences of Jessica's elopement in the same trend of Lenker's analysis (2001): paternal and patriarchal power and authority were established according to the chain of order, which was divinely ordered. Such order assured the rights of a sovereign over his subjects and the power of fathers over their children. Therefore, the audience's reaction would be quite negative, because 'Jessica's disregard for that authority thus creates the first obstacle to a Christian audience's acceptance of her as a Christian.' (1998, p. 56). Thus, her conversion is quite compromised, because in the Renaissance thought

[136] See her essay *"Now by My Hood, a Gentle and No Jew": Jessica, The Merchant of Venice, and the Discourse of Early Modern English Identity*, 1998.

the woman who was not able to respect a parent or a sovereign would not be able to respect God, as well as a husband at home.

Furthermore, there is a problem in Jessica's elopement, which regards the choice of a husband. She chooses her husband, doubling Portia's desire of choosing a husband herself. Nevertheless, early modern England debated about the authority of choosing a husband or a wife for a young woman. According to Metzger (1998) and Lenker (2001),[137] this was a common issue. If princes and princesses were bond to parental decision to marry someone they had never met, even children from lower classes were sometimes obliged to accept a father's decision to marry whoever had been chosen for them. Moreover, Metzger enhances the troubles created by the marriage between a Christian and a Jew: 'the contest between individual will and patriarchal authority in the choice of spouses was often most intense when marriages were proposed between "believers and nonbelievers"' (1998, p. 56). This detail could provoke anxieties in the audience, which would react in an ambivalent way: on the one hand, some could see Jessica's elopement as a way out to be free from her repressive father; on the other hand, most of them could regard her elopement as disorder, threat and affront to the patriarchal power. These two facts – the choice of a husband and the marriage of a Christian with a Jew – would emphasise negative views on her elopement.

Likewise, according to Janet Adelman (2008),[138] Jessica's conversion to Christianity is fantasised by her in a marriage which no one knows whether it will take place. In an imaginary promise of becoming *gentile*, Jessica leaves her father's house and converts to Christianity. However, her elopement and her supposed marriage with Lorenzo do not warrant an effective conversion. Her unhappiness suggests that being a Christian does not change her inward feelings. No one in Belmont, Portia, Bassanio, Antonio, and Gratiano acknowledge her presence as a welcome Christian. However, they treat her as a stranger. For Adelman, Belmont, imagined as a place for Christian harmony, compromises Jessica's elopement and conversion, because she has in her the 'limitation' of her father's blood. Nonetheless, at the same time what disturbs the Christians most is not that she has just been converted, but the mere idea that she is too similar to the Christians in her manners, gestures and actions. Such indistinctness threatens over and over again the distinctions between Christian and Jews, which are so dear to them. When Jessica is described as 'fair', such a word, besides having the meaning of pretty, it had as well the meaning of the white colour of skin.[139] The distinction of Jews in early modern England was sometimes imagined by the colour of the

[137] See **Fathers and Daughters in Shakespeare and Shaw**, 2001.
[138] See **Blood Relations**, 2008.
[139] See Metzger, 1998.

skin. In that sense, the Christians' anxiety about Jessica was enhanced by her similarities with them, which mark that they are as equal as her.

Therefore, Shakespeare represents Jessica as a complex character, rather than merely a mean daughter, who steals her father's money and runs away. It is suggestive that until the end of the play Jessica is still a very sad and unhappy character. Her shame and conscience make her feel so sad and suggest her inward dimensions. Shakespeare represents Jessica's inwardness through shame, conscience and consequent unhappiness. She elopes and steals her father's money, because she could not feel any affective attachment to her father. In the first time both father and daughter meet, Shakespeare builds their conversation in a way that it unveils that their relationship has broken down long ago. Shakespeare represents their relationship in such a distant and awkward way to suggest that father and daughter share few feelings, affections and even respect. As Sherman (2004) affirmed, Shylock could not teach Jessica his values and thus she simply disregards what he cherishes most. Through such distant relationship Shakespeare represents Shylock's blindness about his daughter and such blindness stigmatises Shylock's inwardness: he does not know himself.

CHAPTER 4

Mimesis of Shylock's Inwardness

4. 1. Anti-Semitism and Anxieties in the Criticism on Shylock

There is an awkward evolution of the criticism of **The Merchant of Venice**. Twentieth century critics have enhanced a Manichean view on the play. They considered Shylock simply a villain and the Christians the good characters of the play. But why did eighteenth and nineteenth century critics see Shylock as a tragic figure, even though they never denied his villain and comic traits? It seems that 20th century anti-Semitism pervades many analyses of the play in the last century critique at least until the 1970s. It is remarkable that some awkward feelings and dispositions come out when the critics analyse the play. Sometimes one can see in-between the lines of their analysis some obscure elements which hint at such influence of Anti-Semitism. It is quite clear that twentieth century criticism was, in some extent, contaminated by Anti-Semitism.

However, these extreme opposing views on Shylock and on the play lead criticism to a rather balanced view in the late 20th century and early 21st century. The criticism seems to suggest nowadays the convergence of the comic and tragic sides of Shylock voiced together: in fact, it is the effect of Shakespeare's artistry to create ambiguities. Some critics such as Adelman, Gross, Shapiro, Kaplan, Maguire, Marjorie Garber and Hinely[140] point to the ambiguous dimensions of the play. Thus, ambiguity is a keyword to understand both the play and Shylock, which enables to see him more of a complex character that embodies both good and evil dimensions in his inward dispositions, which point to Shakespeare's representation of the conflicting and obscure inwardness of the character.

An interesting example and one of the most remarkable examples of how anti-Semitism pervades criticism is presented by Janet Adelman (2008). In her book **Blood**

[140] See especially Janet Adelman, **Blood Relations: Christian and Jew in *The Merchant of Venice***, 2008; Kenneth Gross. **Shylock is Shakespeare**, 2006; Jan Lawson Hineley. *Bond Priorities in The Merchant of Venice*. Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900, Vol. 20, No. 2, Elizabethan and Jacobean Drama (Spring, 1980), pp. 217-239. Rice University, in http://www.jstor.org/stable/450170; M. Lindsay Kaplan **The Merchant of Venice: Texts and Contexts**, 2002; James Shapiro. **Shakespeare and the Jews**, 1996; and Marjorie Garber. **Shakespeare After All**, 2004. All these authors I shall quote extensively from chapter 3 onward.

Relations (2008), she makes a disquieting confession of her own experience when working as a Shakespearean scholar: one of her colleagues criticised her because of her working with Shakespeare, a Christian and an anti-Semitic author, according to her colleague. Alternatively, she describes and criticises her interlocutor's concern in fine irony:

> At the beginning of my career, in 1968, just when I had come to Berkeley and was attempting to manage the transition from graduate student to full-fledged Shakespearean, a senior Renaissance scholar told me that Jews shouldn't be allowed to teach Renaissance literature because Renaissance literature was Christian literature. I think that he would, if queried now, disown his comment as facetious, but I don't think that it was facetious; I think that it was provoked by the spectacle of yet another Jew – and a woman to boot – coming to teach his literature in a department already littered with Jews. In 1968, Berkeley included among its Renaissance scholars Jonas Barish, Don Friedman, Norman Rabkin, Stephen Orgel, Stanley Fish, and Paul Alpers, though not yet Stephen Greenblatt or Joel Fineman, both of whom came within a few years – in fact an extraordinary collection of Jews working in the Renaissance, and my interlocutor was right to be worried. Though there were still major universities where Jewish faculty members were welcomed cautiously, if at all, at least at Berkeley Jews had entered what was then the inner sanctum of literature and were converting this holy of holies to their own uses, developing a set of critical practices that read obliquely, against the grain, and permanently changing the map of Renaissance studies in the process. (2008, p. 1)

Janet Adelman is saying that the phantasms of dealing with one of the dramatists said to be anti-Semitic may dishearten a critic researching in the Shakespearean area. This quarrel enhances rather the commonplace which considers Shakespeare as anti-Semitic. Nonetheless, the critics forget that the analysis of art is not a matter of right and wrong, but that art works with an imaginative, creative world wherein our feeling of what is right and wrong has few values or even no value. In fact, art creates another reality, a fictional one, wherein feelings, ideas and thoughts can be depicted in alternative ways. What is important to see in art are its aesthetic effects, anxieties, disquietedness, fear, and inward feelings.

Someone could argue that this sort of reactive attack would be inconceivable nowadays. However, Adelman quotes another baffling example. In 1992, Elliott Baker, in his book attacking bardolatry, states that 'new Shakespearean are also disproportionately Jewish', and he envisages that 'if Yeshiva University had a football team, the lineup could read pretty much the same: Adelman, Fineman, Goldberg, Greenblatt, Kahn, Schwartz, plus a few ringers from inter-marriages' (2008, p. 2). And his absurdities do not stop here. He compares them to 'moneygrubbing Jews' and other negative terms. Although many people believe that our 'democratic' society no longer allows anti-Semitic manifestation after Auschwitz, these startling examples show how critics blame and attack others critics, because of anti-Semitic anxieties prevailing in their minds. In the whole, Adelman confesses that those early appalling

conversations haunt her analysis of the play.[141]

Coupled with that, Shakespeare has been usually attacked of writing an anti-Semitic play. For example, Derek Cohen (1980) points out that the use of the *Jew* by the characters in the play shows this anti-Semitic trait of their own. According to him, 'each time that Jew is used by any of Shylock's enemies, there is a deeply anti-Jewish implication already and automatically assumed.' (1980, p. 55). He also criticises the critics who try to persuade the readers that Shakespeare was not anti-Semitic. Moreover, some critics state that Shakespeare is not anti-Semitic at all. These opposing trends of the anti-Semitic and philosemitic seem to be irrevocable.

But when reading this play, readers should draw their attentions to subtle religious facts of Shakespeare's age. Inner religious practice was very common in Renaissance age, and the constant changing of the official religion might have created suspicion and anxiety in supposed inner concealed religious practices, as well as the suspicions of appearances and counterfeited inwardness. Remember that first the Catholic Church in England was changed to Catholic Henrician Church under the reign of Henry VIII; then Edward IV imposed a very radical protestant Church just right after his father's death; after that, Mary Stuart re-established the Roman Catholic Church in England; finally, Elizabeth I instituted the English Church created by her father, named as Anglican Church. Such wavering changes caused confusion and distrust in the new forms of the Reformed Church.[142] According to Maus (1995),[143] 'this experience, too, while less sensational than the experience of the declared heretic, calls attention to the strategic difference between thought and utterance, secret conviction and external manifestation'. (1995, p. 19). Since a standard form of religious was imposed upon the Elizabethans, any word defending the Jews, for example, would provoke suspicions that this person would be a crypto-Jew or even crypto-Catholic practicing unofficial rites at home. These changes provoked inward rupture and anxieties, once the imposition of different rituals created a void of reference of religious truthfulness, and consequently opened up a void gap of confidence in these multiple comes and goes of the

[141] I begin with these odd interlocutors because they *haunt the edges of this book*. First of all, they eerily replicate some of the anxieties that drive **The Merchant of Venice**: my senior scholar in 1968 imagined English Renaissance literature as a kind of Christian Belmont where no Jewish foreigners need apply; Baker imagines it as already contaminated at its source, salvageable only a latter-day conversion that would repudiate its Jewishness. [...] Both assume that my Jewishness must matter to my reading of Shakespeare: my interlocutor in 1968 that my status as a Jew would necessarily interfere with my reading of "Christian" Shakespeare; Baker that no Jew could be drawn to study Shakespeare without construing Shakespeare as somehow "Jewish". The question raised by these assumptions – and sometimes echoed by Jews who ask with irritation why I am devoting my time to the author of so manifestly anti-Semitic a play – stands obliquely behind the writing of this book. For what is a Jewish Shakespearean to make of *The Merchant of Venice* if she wishes neither to convert Shakespeare by making him a kinsman or partisan of Shylock nor to convert herself into the normative Christian reader my interlocutor envisioned in 1968? (2008, p. 3, my own highlights)

[142] About the reformed Church under the different Tudor sovereigns, see Meyers, **The Tudors**, 2010.

[143] Katharine Eisaman Maus, **Inwardness and theater in the English Renaissance**, 1995.

English reformed church.

Even Shakespeare might have felt anxieties of religious change and conversion, since his own father, John Shakespeare, was supposed to be a crypto-Catholic in one moment in his life.[144] Under Elizabeth's reign, John Shakespeare was charged of not going to church: he was first mentioned among the names of the religious dissidents; then, after a year, he was fined to pay a penalty and to excuse himself in public.[145] Honan states that there are two explanations for his not going to church: he was fearful of his creditors, since he was financially in trouble; or else, he was practicing an unofficial ritual at home, which casts suspicions that John Shakespeare was a crypto-Catholic. In 1757 it was discovered a form between the roof timbers and the tiles in John Shakespeare's house. In such a form, a certain 'John Shakspear' declares that he was Catholic. Probably he was convinced by a Jesuit priest to declare his inner faith around 1580-1581. However, the Stratford-upon-Avon records propose that he was not going to church and to the city council because he feared creditors.[146] But the suspicion that he was a crypto-Catholic picturesquely enhances the inner religious conflicts in the age, because some could publicly declare to be Anglican but could be inwardly devoted to other forms of rites.

Nevertheless, the problem of anti-Semitism in the play is presented by James Shapiro in opposing views. His opinion strongly criticises the modern taste of stating that Shakespeare was anti- or philosemitic. Shapiro affirms, in his book **Shakespeare and the Jews** (1996), that the terms anti-Semitic and philo-Semitic are completely anachronistic to early modern England, because they are 19th century inventions. The concepts are 'fundamentally ill-suited for gauging what transpired three hundred years earlier' (1996, p. 11). In Shakespeare's Age, an anti-Semite and a philosemite had goals which were not at all opposed: 'The 'philosemites' sought to overcome the problem of difference either by inviting Jews to England in order to convert them, or alternatively, re-establishing them in a distant homeland in order to hasten the Day of Judgment. The anti-Semite preferred to maintain cultural difference by keeping the dangerous Jews out.' (1996, p. 11). However, this opposing problem is the effect of different points of view which insert ideological assumptions in the reading of play. In our modern sense, Shakespeare was anti-Semite, since every Elizabethan had to follow the standard religious values of the age. If any person said anything in favour of Jews or the Catholics, people would suspect that the person was a crypto-Jew or a crypto-Catholic practicing an unofficial rite at home. But it is worth enhancing that Shakespeare knew many Jews and

[144] See Honan, 2001
[145] See Park Honan's biography **Shakespeare: uma vida,** 2001.
[146] See Honan, **Shakespeare**, 2001, p. 64.

transacted business with them, especially in the construction of the Globe, by borrowing money from them.

4. 2. Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries' Criticism: Shylock as a Tragic Hero

In the 18th and 19th centuries' Criticism on **The Merchant of Venice**, Shylock was commonly interpreted as a tragic hero. The Romantic critics were concerned with human feelings and passions, which are very significant in Shakespeare's play. They normally considered the play in a very positive view, except Francis Gentleman (1770), who saw Shylock negatively. Morally, Gentleman says that the Jew is bloody, 'we learn that persevering cruelty is very capable of drawing ruin'[147] (1969, p. 26). He points out that Shylock is the most 'disgraceful picture of human nature'. He considers him subtle, selfish, irascible, tyrannical, and malevolent. (1969, p. 26).

Other critics presented positive views on Shylock. For example, George Farren (1833) argues that Shylock is more human than the Christians.[148] Also, Nicholas Rowe, in 1709, exposes a very positive reading of Shylock. He states that though it is supposed to be a comedy, it was designed tragically (1969, p. 25). William Hazlitt, in 1817, also presents a positive view. Hazlitt provokes and puzzles us by saying that Shylock is a '*good hater'*, that is to say, the Jewish revenge is at least as good as Christian injuries. Shylock shows to the Christians what they do not see and do not want to see. In Hazlitt's opinion, 'he seems the depository of the vengeance of his race' (1969, p. 27). Hazlitt pities Shylock because of the cruelties impinged by the Christians. There is a strong, quick, and deep sense of justice mixed up with gall and bitterness of his resentment. For Hazlitt, Shylock has the best arguments and questions, 'reasoning on their own principles and practices' (1969, p. 27). He states that the Christian treatment is inconsistent to any Catholic of those times, since 'the appeal to the Jew's mercy, as if there were any common principle of right and wrong between them, is the rankest hypocrisy, or the blindest prejudice' (1969, p. 28). Besides that, Hazlitt draws attention to the error of interpretation of Shylock:

> We expected to see, what we had been used to see, a decrepit old man, bent with age and ugly with mental deformity, grinning with deadly malice, with the venom of his heart congealed in the expression of his countenance, sullen, morose, gloomy, inflexible,

[147] John Wilders presents in his casebook **Shakespeare: *The Merchant of Venice*** (1969), a chronological collection of essays of the main critics of the play *The Merchant of Venice* during the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries. This collection of essays is quoted when the Romantic and 20th century critiques are analysed. It was used this casebook, but it is good sample of how the critics saw Shylock as a tragic hero and how others misinterpreted him as a mere comic villain.

[148] See his *An Essay on Shakespeare's Character of Shylock*, 1833.

> brooding over one idea, that of his hatred, and fixed on one unalterable purpose, that of his revenge. We were disappointed, because we had taken our idea from other actors, not from the play. (1969, p. 28).

Thus, some critics and actors used to judge Shylock just by his comic appearances, not by the text. He is caricatured due to an error of interpretation, according to Hazlitt. Hazlitt argues that 'he has more ideas than any other person in the piece; and if he is intense and inveterate in the pursuit of his purpose, he shews the utmost elasticity, vigour, and presence of mind'. (1969, p. 29). Although one might say that Hazlitt is a romantic and that he is idealising Shylock, he enhances Shylock's human dimensions, vigour and ambiguities. If he seems to be villain and evil, he is so due to the Christian ill-treatment against him. Nevertheless, when we hear his saying 'the villany you / teach me, I will execute, and it shall go hard but I / will better the instruction' (III, i), we notice that Shylock is doing to Antonio and to the Christians what they did beforehand to him.

In the same sense, Heinrich Heine,[149] in 1839, presents an amazing interpretation of Shylock and report about the play's reception. As Nicholas Rowe, Heine argues that the play was tragically designed. Heine presents an illuminating example he eye-witnessed when he was watching the play:

> When I saw this piece played in Drury Lane there stood behind me in the box a pale British beauty who, at the end of the fourth Act, wept passionately, and many times cried out, 'The poor man is wronged!' [...] I have never been able to forget them, those black eyes which wept for Shylock! (1969, p. 29).

Heine's eye-witnessing of the aesthetic effect felt by that black-eyed young lady testifies the tragic dimensions in Shylock perceived by the 19th century audience. He confesses that 'when I think of those tears I must include **The Merchant of Venice** among the tragedies, although the frame of the work is a composition of laughing masks and sunny faces, satyr forms and amorets, as though the poet meant to make a comedy.' (1969, p. 29). What is implicit in Heine's and Rowe's concerns is that if we see it as tragically designed, we focus on Shylock's sufferings, ideas, thoughts, and inward feelings; if we see the play as a mere comedy, we focus rather on the Christian seemingly happy faces, love, and laughter and in Shylock's villainy; then, we see cynically, sarcastically, and pleasantly the Christian hateful despise and scorn towards the Jews; thus the view on Shylock influences our interpretation, whether we see him as tragic or comic.

Moreover, Heine well remembers that the Christians never repay Shylock, which is

[149] From **Shakespeares Mädchen und Frauen**, 1839, translated into English by C. G. Leland in 1891.

usually forgotten by critics. And thus, Heine points out that Bassanio is the kind of 'fortune-hunter', Lorenzo is the infamous theft, and Antonio's friends, when he is in difficulties, 'they have nothing for him but words and minted air [...]. The bankrupt Antonio is a weak creature without energy, without strength of hatred' (1969, p. 30). Venice's is a vague world peopled by hypocrite Christians, who cannot see the mirror which shows their malicious faces. As Heine affirms, 'truly Shakespeare would have written a satire against Christianity if he had made it consist of those characters who are the enemies of Shylock' (1969, p. 29). In Venice's world, being Shylock is being a true Venetian, i. e., to be hateful due to the Christian ill-treatments. Shylock is not bad because he wants to be, but because of the Christians ill-treatment.

Herman Ulrici, also in 1839, presents a positive view on Shylock. He analyses the human values presented in the play, that is to say, human life is considered as a transaction of business, with right or justice as its foundation (1969, p. 32). Every being in the play is, in a certain way, linked to business and to the problem of money. That is the most striking problem in the play. Ulrici also points out that what is important is that right and wrong become indistinguishable when carried to their utmost limit in the play. (1969, p. 33). In other words, when Shylock demands his bond and Antonio is threatened of death, the limits of what is fair loses its boundaries. Ulrici remembers something very important yet usually forgotten for the tragic effect effaced in the play: the last act 'effaces the *tragic* impression which still lingers on the mind from the fourth act'. (1969, p. 33). He says that 'in the gay and amusing trifling of love the sharp contrarieties of right and wrong are playfully reconciled'. Their hate seems to dissolve into melancholic strain (1969, p. 33). Shakespeare may have designed the last act as a device to efface the disquieting effects of the forth act of the play. When analysing the play, it is worth not forgetting such effacing device.

Richard G. Moulton, almost at the end of the century in 1885, analyses the play in a historical literary framework. For him, the starting-point of analysing a piece of work is 'its position in literary history'. In that sense, he suggests that Elizabethan dramatists started their art dramatising from history which is already from art. Shakespeare presented the Jew and the Heiress. What he wants is to analyse a piece of art considering the historical moment and its insertion in the literary history. Following this concern, he emphasises that the story of the Jew presents the idea of the Nemesis, a universal dramatic motive. (1969, p. 36).[150] The Jew contains a double Nemesis, attached to Shylock and his victim. (1969, p. 37). He says that

[150] Nemesis is the retribution as it appears in the world of art. In Ancient thought, the nemesis was an artistic bond between excess and reaction. In modern thought the Nemesis is an artistic bond between sin and retribution.

'Antonio's excess of moral confidence suffers a nemesis of reaction in his humiliation, and Shylock's sin of judicial murder finds a nemesis in his ruin by process of law'. (1969, p. 37). Antonio is the perfect mediaeval character. In his age intolerance was a mediaeval virtue and this virtue is associated to him. (1969, p. 37). Moulton states that Antonio's great temptation to self-sufficiency lies in his contact with a moral outcast, Shylock; 'confident that the moral gulf between the two can never be bridged over, Antonio has violated dignity as well as mercy in the gross insults he has heaped upon the Jew whenever they have met' (1969, p. 38). His hubris is self-sufficiency. Regarding Shylock, he points out that he is a moral man, his malice is such as his crying for retribution. As he argues that 'there is such a foundation of Justice for [Shylock's] taunts that for a moment our sympathies are transferred to Shylock's side'. (1969, p. 39).

As we have seen, the earlier criticism on Shylock is much more concerned about the problems regarding Shylock. Although someone may consider that the 18th and 19th century critics are romantic and are bound to idealise both Shakespeare and Shylock, their critique are clearly worried about the disquieting effects of the play. They are concerned about problems implied in the texture of the play. In that sense, Thomas Moisan,[151] points the opposition between theatricality and textuality of the play. That means that comic and burlesque elements of the play conceal paradoxes, contradictions, and ambiguities in its textuality, as, for example, political, cultural, sociological, and theological problems embedded in the play. Because they were concerned with such paradoxes, the romantic critics interpreted Shylock's character in a deep and complex way, since they analysed ambiguities, paradoxes and Shylock's tragic fate, whereas the early 20th century criticism, until 1970, seem to be concerned about superficial and peripheral elements of the theatricality, highlighting the comic, villain and burlesque image of Shylock.

4. 3. Twentieth Century's Criticism: Shylock as a Comic Villain

The 20th century critique considered and analysed Shylock as simply a comic villain. However, reading him just as a comic villain is a distortive reading, which may be influenced by anti-Semitism. Among the recent studies,[152] there is an essay by E. E. Stoll, called *Shylock*,

[151] See his chapter in **Shakespeare Reproduced**, 1987.

[152] This part will not analyse the whole critique by the twentieth century criticism on the play **The Merchant of Venice**. It presents some general characteristics of the criticism and the most striking turning-point in the early 20th century critique: their view on Shylock as a mere comic and villain character. It does not mention now the essays by John Palmer, *Shylock* (1946) and Harold Goddard, *The Three Caskets* (1951), because they present similar readings to the 18th and 19th criticism, which was concerned in the core problems of the play. Also, it is strange that Freud in his essay *The Theme of the Three*

published in 1927. The author presents in some moments of his analysis a view which shows Shylock's good and bad dimensions. He affirms that though Shylock is considered 'a villain, cruel comic villain or butt', he humbles himself to seek for Christian friendship, he is patient, he honors his family, nation, he is 'martyr and avenger'. (1969, p. 47). His love of his race is 'deep as life'. But after that he changes completely the mood. He takes into account that many of Shylock's stereotypes come from Marlowe's Jew and his beliefs of his period. (1969, p. 48). Jews were represented as usurers, devourers of Christian blood, villain, miser, and 'limb of the devil'. (1969, p. 49-50). For him, Shakespeare gives his villain a chance to speak in public. But Shakespeare managed it strangely to stand for the Jews. (1969, p. 53). Stoll says, 'we are alienated' not only by Shylock's avarice, but by the 'comic circumstances': that is the reason why we feel much more comic attachment than pathetic one. (1969, p. 53-54). He considers that generations misread Shylock's speech 'Hath not Jew eyes', because they have simply taken it out of context, 'with our humanitarian impulses, we jump the track'. (1969, p. 54). Here, he opposes his reading to the romantic critics and swerves the mood of his analysis. He thinks that we have misread and distorted Shylock's intentions. (1969, p. 55). He observes that 'the sound and rhythm of it, his repetitions, exclamations, and rhetorical questions [show that] Shylock is villainous – not a hero – but our sympathetic sentiment makes him a hero' (1969, p. 56). He wants to evidence that once Shylock is villainous, then he is a comic character. He does not acknowledge that he can be both simultaneously: he does not recognise the possibility of Shakespeare's ambiguity in the play. Stoll just keeps saying that Shylock is a hypocrite, a trickster, 'his dignity is extend, and vanishes once his fraud is revealed.' (1969, *sic*, p. 57). Finally he imagines that Shylock 'has forgotten his nation since long' when he wants his revenge (1969, p. 56). Though Stoll's essay starts showing Shylock's ambiguous dimensions, he contradicts himself and presents only his negative views along the essay.

Harley Granville-Barker wrote the essay *Shakespeare's Venice*, in 1930, wherein he describes the environment of Venice in the play. He talks about the mirror characters, Bassanio and Lorenzo, Salanio and Salarino. (1969, p. 69-70). They function as theatrical images of each other. But he does not mention Shylock and Antonio as mirrors, yet he thinks that there is an opposition between the 'sordid' Shylock and the 'magnificent' young gentlemen, which suggests a Manichean reading (1969, p. 71). He states that the speech about mercy gives the 'true Portia' (p. 72). However, his gesture is to idealise her. He does not mention whether this 'true Portia' is good or bad. Barker idealises her saying that 'she expands in her fine freedom, growing in authority and dignity, fresh touches of humour

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Caskets does not mention anything about Shylock, though it will be used in the analysis of the play.

enlightening her, new traits of graciousness showing'. (1969, p. 72). She is 'a wise and gallant spirit so virginally enshrined' (1969, p. 74). Many critics have idealised Portia, commenting nothing about her sinister gestures which come out in the fourth act. In fact, the critics idealise her, repeating the characters' idealisation. Such idealisation contaminates the critics in a way that they cannot see her sinister dimensions, intentions and desires. When Granville-Barker says that Portia is 'a wise and gallant spirit so virginally enshrined', he is reproducing in fact Bassanio's and the suitors' view on her.

Max Plowman, in his essay *Money and the Merchant*, written in 1931, presents a negative view on Shylock. He starts saying that money is a mysterious and dangerous subject and that 'only one race understands it'. (1969, p. 77). The spiritual world is the ideal world without money and art is the first step to this world. Living without money is very romantic, though life and experience show that to live without money is impossible, we continue to dream about that. (1969, p. 78). Yet he contradicts himself when he says that **The Merchant of Venice** is Shakespeare's most misinterpreted play by the romantic critics: he views Shylock as an enemy, though Shakespeare made him human. 'Money is to-day what Shylock was to the world of Venice – the forbidding aspect, the dark principle, the shadow in the sun, the grim necessity. Its logic is inhuman'. (1969, p. 79). Also, he idealises Portia and her solution in the trial scene as something positive.

G. Wilson Knight, in his essay *Tempest and Music*, in 1932, states that in this play, there is a 'clear and significant contrast between the tempests of tragedy and the music of romance'. (1969, p. 81). That is one of the tragic features of the play. He concentrates his analysis on these themes of music and tempest, love and romance. Much worried about the imagery of the play he states that such themes are the very plot of the play. In an idealised way, he puts that Antonio is 'royal merchant' [...]; Portia's boundless wealth is emphasized again and again; riches are scattered over the play'. (1969, p. 84). His analysis focuses on a Manichean trend: for him, 'Shylock rates his ducats and jewels above his daughter, strongly as he loves her; but Bassanio's and Portia's love is finely shown as being of an integrity that sees through the superficial brilliance of gold to the true within: hence Bassanio's choice of the leaden casket' (1969, p. 84). Knight analyses the themes in the play, but he does not concentrate on its dramatic and ambiguous traits.

He mentions Shylock just fortuitously. There are just two moments in his essay when he mentions Shylock. Nevertheless, Knight contradicts himself: though he shows Shylock's bad dimensions, he reveals that he is the tragedy-force in the play (1969, p. 86). Such contradiction is provoked by the ambiguity of the play; however, Knight does not notice

anything about its ambiguities. Then, Shylock is compared to the wolf, the sea, and the winds. He keeps on insisting on the association on the themes 'sea-beast-wind'. (1969, p. 88). Quite strangely, he also idealises Portia, and he associates Jessica to the 'wildness of animals'. Jessica is supposed to be a wild animal just because she is a Jewish girl.

In the essay by Mark Van Doren (1939), *The Merchant of Venice: an Interpretation*, the author idealises themes such as love and friendship and presents negative views on Shylock. His speech is full of stereotypes, such as that Shylock is 'of another species': 'Love is the natural language of these men and women: love, and its elder brother generosity. Not generosity to Shylock, *for he is of another species*, and cannot receive what he will not give.' (1969, p. 94, my highlights). It is evident here the 20th century anti-Semitic influence on Doren's criticism. He presents Shylock as if he were *of another animal species*. It is quite strange that the critics have symptomatically presented such negative readings on Shylock, who just a century before was seen as a tragic character. The critics present the common Manichean view that the Christians are 'good' and Shylock is evil and devilish. Also, he evaluates Shylock's speeches morally and in a deluding way:

> They are short phrases; niggardly, ugly, curt. They are a little hoarse from their hoarding, a little rusty with disuse. And the range of their sound is from the strident to the rough, from the scratchy to the growled. [...] The names of animals are natural to his tongue, which knows for the most part only concrete things, and crackles with reminders of brute matter. (1939, p. 96)

Just as the other critics, the author is looking only at Shylock's stereotypes; he is not looking at the complex development of the character and his deep emotional and dramatic changes. He reproduces the same stereotypes that the Christians use to describe Shylock in the play. When Doren analyses Shylock's hateful speech (III, I, 123-8) he compares him to an animal, 'an animal itself is howling, and the emphasis upon 'wilderness' is shrill beyond the license of human rhetoric. We may feel pity for the man who remembers Leah, but the spectacle of such pain is not pleasant, the wound is animal, self-inflected, and self-licked'. (1969, p. 97). In another moment, the contradictions in his analysis are evident:

> Where Shakespeare's sympathies lay it has long since been useless to inquire. His gentlemen within the code are as harsh to Shylock as Shylock is to them; however much love they have, they cannot love him. Nor has Shakespeare made the least inch of him lovely. He would seem in fact to have attempted a monster, one whose question whether a Jew hath eyes, hand, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, and passions would reveal its rhetorical form, the answer being no. Yet Shylock is not a monster. He is a man thrust into a world bound not to endure him. In such a world he necessarily looks and sounds ugly. In another universe his voice might have its properties and its uses. Here it can issue as nothing but a snarl, an animal cry sounding outrageously among the flute and recorder

> voices of persons whose very names, unlike his own, are flowing musical phrases. The contrast between harmony and hate, love and discord, is here complete, and Shakespeare for the time being is content to resolve it in comedy. Even in his tragedies it cannot be more complete. (1969, p. 99)

It seems that Doran wants to show pity and sympathy towards Shylock, but he immediately despises that possibility emphasising common stereotypes from the play. He sees his tragic dimensions, but what remains is the Manichean view on Shylock. The anti-Semitism interferes in his analysis of the play. His analysis floats between his negative views and some restrained pitiful sentences about Shylock. Once again the contradictions pop up in such conflicting analysis of Shylock.

E. C. Pettet presents an essay with interesting details about the problem of usury in the late 16th century, the essay *The Merchant of Venice and the Problem of Usury* (1945). When he analyses the trial scene, he omits Portia's judgement and does not give his opinion about it, as many other critics omitted their opinion about her judgement. When the reader expects in his analysis any statement about her judgement, he changes the subject to the 'idealized traditional values of the aristocracy and medieval morality triumph [by Portia], and the play dissolves appropriately, in the exquisite love-scene under the moon at Belmont.' (1969, p. 110). He draws his attentions from the core problem of the trial scene to mere issues of love and friendship. He states that money is for Shylock the supreme value, whereas for Portia money has no importance (1969, p. 112).

Sighurd Burckhardt, in the essay *The Merchant of Venice: the Gentle bond*, (1962), sees Shylock as a villain and Antonio as a hero. He structures his essay in Manichean dichotomies such as that Venice is the world of law, public sphere, whereas Belmont is the realm of love and of the private. (1969, p. 212). Moreover, he twists the implicit meaning of Portia's judgement in the trial scene: he says that she wins Shylock, 'not by breaking the bond, but by submitting to its rigour more rigorously than even the Jew had thought to do'. (1969, p. 211). The analysis distorts and obfuscates the implicit meaning of the cruelties in the trial scene. His opinion is to read the trial scene 'differently':

> If we read Portia's judgment as a legal trick and Shylock's defeat as a foregone conclusion, the Jew's final humiliation must appear distressingly cruel. But there is good reason for reading the scene differently. Portia's is one more hazard, and Shylock's moral collapse does not demolish the bond and all it stands for, but rather proves him unequal to the faith he has professed. (1969, p. 221).

He considers the facts of the trial scene as merely coincident facts, not acknowledging the Christians' actual intentions. He distorts the scene stating that Portia's action is fair to

prove that Shylock's faith, actions, and intentions are inflexible and morally condemnable. He does not mention the hypocritical attitude of the Christians in the play. He reproduces the same Manichean reading of other critics and he obscures and twists the meaning of Portia's judgement, which is to create a fraudulent judgement to overcome Shylock.[153]

W. H. Auden, in his essay *Brothers and Others,* idealises the play as a play of love and romance. The world of the play, without Antonio and Shylock, is 'an unambiguous, unproblematic world wherein there is no contradiction between appearance and inner reality, a world of being, not becoming'. (1969, p. 227). He reads it as a mere fairy tale, the world of friendship, without presenting the disquieting ambiguities of the play. He enhances the problem of usury in theological terms, disregarding the 1571 Act of Law which allowed usury at ten per cent interest. Thus, he states that 'Shylock is a miser and Antonio is open-handed with his money'. (1969, p. 238). He analyses the play idealising the world of Belmont as a place of love and friendship, as other critics analyse it. As we have seen so far, the 20th century critics have seen Shylock as a mere comic villain. For them, the ambiguities of the characters are not the words of the day. Everything is just a matter of black and white; everything is over-determined by the Manichean oppositions and by the anti-Semitic influence on criticism. In that sense, aesthetic coherence, historically specific conditions of production and subsequent receptions

> are necessarily inscribed within a dialectic of *difference* which only a politically involved and theoretically aware reading can properly recover. To locate 'change' in the past is to affirm the possibility of change in the past, and to detect the process working imaginatively through the tensions, structural discontinuities, and contradictions negotiated through any text, is to observe the manner in which such change might be articulated, perceived and possibly secured. It should also be emphasized that this fundamentally political trajectory is simultaneously a product of *reading* as much as it is the property of any text. In other words, it is the reception of a text by subsequent generations of readers (and in the case of the theatrical text, spectators) that will determine the cultural use that is made of it. Texts themselves do not usually or systematically *resist*, although there are exceptions. (1998, p. 182-183)[154]

The critics feel uncomfortable to read the play, because they think that Shylock's presence haunts the edges of their criticism, but what haunts the edges of criticism is the denied anti-Semitism in their reading. Thus, they tend to read the play in terms of themes such as love, friendship, romance, and values. Also, they are very influenced by the final effect created by the fifth act, which effaces the acts committed by the Christians to Shylock.

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[153] For Portia's fraudulent judgement, see Charles Ross's essay *Avoiding the Issue of Fraud*, in: **The Law in Shakespeare**, edited by Jordan and Karen Cunningham.

[154] See John Drakakis' essay *Historical difference and Venetian Patriarchy*, in COYLE, Martin. **The Merchant of Venice**: contemporary critical essays. Londres: Macmillan: 1998. (New Casebooks), pp. 181-208.

As seen in this sample of essays, though the play is commonly classified as a comedy, it presents traits which make it sadder than a common comedy. Moreover, the suggestive analysis of the Romantic critics that Shylock is a tragic figure and that the play may have been intentionally designed as a tragedy denotes that the play is in the edge of two different genres, drama and comedy. It is worth remarking that Shylock is not a tragic hero, nor a mere comic villain, but embodies the comic and tragic traits in many moments of the play, signalling Shakespeare's artistry to create ambiguities and ambivalences. That is what makes him an ambiguous figure and the most humanised character in the play, because a human character is not only made of good traits, but of good and bad traits simultaneously. Thus, Shakespeare created Shylock a rather complex character.

What is important to highlight is that 18th and 19th century criticism saw Shylock as a tragic hero, seeing just one dimension depicted in his character; 20th century criticism regarded him as a comic villain, making the salience of the text rather flat and uniform. Maybe 20th century anti-Semitism strongly influenced the reading of the play during the last century, whereas romantic ideals influenced the previous reading of the play in a positive way. The late 20th century and beginning of the 21st century critics are dealing with the play in a rather ambivalent way, enhancing then both Shylock's comic and tragic dimensions, pointing to Shakespeare's artistry of creating ambiguities in the play.

4. 4. Shylock's and Antonio's Losses and the Mimesis of Shylock's Inwardness

As the play moves on Shakespeare presents Shylock's inward traits in a rather complex way. For example, that is more evident when Salerio and Salanio describe Shylock's and Antonio's losses. Salanio states that 'The villain Jew with outcries raised the duke, / Who went with him to search Bassanio's ship.' (II, viii, 4-5). He refers here to Jessica, whom he attempts to rescue. Both Lorenzo and 'his amourous Jessica' had already gone to Belmont. Then Salanio enhances Shylock's feelings, despair, and hatred:

> I never heard a passion so confused,
> So strange, outrageous, and so variable,
> As the dog Jew did utter in the streets:
> 'My daughter! O my ducats! O my daughter!
> Fled with a Christian! O my Christian ducats!
> Justice! the law! my ducats, and my daughter!
> A sealed bag, two sealed bags of ducats,
> Of double ducats, stolen from me by my daughter!
> And jewels, two stones, two rich and precious stones,
> Stolen by my daughter! Justice! find the girl;

She hath the stones upon her, and the ducats.' (II, viii, 12-22)

Salanio particularly remarks Shylock's passion: 'So strange, outrageous, and so variable'. His inwardness is not enhanced by stereotypical traits, but by passionate and strange dimensions. The words he chooses to describe – strange, outrageous, variable – suggest again that Shylock is not merely a stereotype and reveal something unknown to the Christians so far. The word 'strange' does not refer here to Shylock as an alien as elsewhere in the play, but it suggests that his feelings and grieving are astonishing for the Christians. His feelings are described in this speech, in a way that such description unleashes Salanio's astonishment. Shylock is outraged because he was wronged and his honour for his family, gains, and nation were dishonoured. When he uses 'variable' he refers to the inward floatation of the self, the floatation of feelings, emotions and thoughts. Shakespeare represents Shylock's inward feelings in other characters' discourse in order to enhance the intensity and tension of his inner state of the mind.

However, Salanio says that Shylock confuses what he mourns and complains. His feelings are confused, for example when he complains about his 'Christian ducats'. He wants his money, jewels and his daughter back, just as he claims for justice and law. According to Drakakis (2010, p. 270), one of the word 'sealed' in the verse 'A sealed bag, two sealed bags of ducats' must be pronounced as dissyllable in the iambic pentameter. Thus, Salanio is imitating Shylock's loss of control, which is enhanced in the oscillation of pronouncing such a meaningful word: what was seemingly well-sealed is lost and no longer guarded. Moreover, like Antonio, Shylock also confuses money and affection. The juxtaposition of his money and his daughter, just as the intensity with which he expresses his losses indicate the confusion between wealth and feelings. Shakespeare represents inwardness in the play as the confusion between money and feelings, doubling Antonio's confusion in Shylock.

Therefore, Shakespeare builds Shylock's inward feelings and anxieties in such a confused way that one can perceive that he experiences something deeper in his heart: the feeling of deep loss, loss of honour, loss of respect, loss of his daughter. More than that, it is an *ontological loss*, because something changes in Shylock's inner-self as he realises that he is blind. He was secured of his honour, his nation and religion, his daughter's respect, pride of his possessions, and such assurance kept his self-confidence. Consequently, in his ontological loss he reveals through his claiming that he is human and such claiming reveals his awareness of his inner dimensions. One can see in his crying out that his complex inward feelings come out through bewilderment, confusion and hopelessness. Such change makes him try

desperately to recuperate his losses, appealing to the duke for his rights. According to Gross (2006),[155] Shylock experiences something new in his loss, and consequently Shakespeare experiences new feelings in building Shylock's character. He says that Shakespeare was tasting blood for the first time (2006, p. x). Nevertheless, Gross quite mistakes the matter, because has already obsessively tasted blood before in **Titus Andronicus**, one of the most violent and bloody plays by Shakespeare. What he discovered and experienced was not the taste of blood, but some anxieties which were important to the great characters of the great tragedies: the fear of loss, the anxiety of losing respect, honour, the threatening and despair feeling of being alone. Thus, he represents such dimensions of human inwardness in Shylock's and Antonio's relationship, pervaded by hatred, resentment, anxiety, despair and fear of loss.

In this speech, Janet Adelman (2008)[156] suggests that there is a potential feminisation of the Jew. According to her, when Salanio tells that

> Of double ducats, stolen from me by my daughter!
> And jewels, two stones, two rich and precious stones,
> Stolen by my daughter! Justice! find the girl;
> She hath the stones upon her, and the ducats.' (II, viii, 19-22)

The word *stone* was the common slang for testicles in Shakespeare's Renaissance. There are many traces of sexual meaning implicit in the play. For Marjorie Garber, 'Shylock's phrase inadvertently makes Jessica into a phallic woman – "She hath the stones upon her – a joke that is very clear to the Venetians who ridicule him' (2004, p. 306). Thus, Jessica takes his lineage and family away (Garber, 2004, p. 307). For Adelman, once Jessica has two stones upon her, she phantasmatically feminises and castrates Shylock (2008, p. 101 & 177). The idea of castration is implicit in this slang and it is doubled in Antonio's fear and unconscious desire of castration. Imaginatively, Shylock loses his strength as a father and a male figure when he realises that he has lost his jewels and money, which gave him a certain confidence and strength. Symbolically the stones epitomise his self-confidence and his strength. And his daughter and his money were what gave him self-confidence.

Furthermore, Antonio's misfortunes enhance his similarity to Shylock, which is juxtaposed in this scene. Shakespeare presents Shylock's and Antonio's misfortunes one after another:

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[155] See his book **Shylock is Shakespeare**, 2006.
[156] See **Blood Relations**, 2008.

> **Salerio.** I reasoned with a Frenchman yesterday,
> Who told me, in the narrow seas that part
> The French and English, there miscarried
> A vessel of our country richly fraught:
> I thought upon Antonio when he told me;
> And wished in silence that it were not his.
> **Salanio.** You were best to tell Antonio what you hear;
> Yet do not suddenly, for it may grieve him. (II, viii, 28-34)

Here Salanio observes once again Antonio's sadness and now Salerio suspects of his losses. He alludes to Antonio's sadness, for he seems very susceptible to any fact which can disturb. His inward feelings float and change with any unexpected and unpleasant news. To some extent Antonio's susceptibility and confusion are doubled in Shylock's 'passion' which is 'so confused, / So strange, outrageous, and so variable' (II, viii, 12-13). Therefore, Shakespeare depicts the merchant's inwardness mirroring of Shylock's inward floatation, confusion, susceptibility, and resentment in this scene.

4. 5. *I am a Jew*: Shylock's Inwardness and Pathos

In act III, scene i, Salerio and Salanio present news of Antonio's ships. Salanio confirms that Antonio lost his ships.

> **Salanio.** Now, what news on the Rialto?
> **Salerio.** Why, yet it lives there uncheck'd that Antonio hath a ship of rich lading wrecked on the narrow seas; the Goodwins, I think they call the place; a very dangerous flat and fatal, where the carcasses of many a tall ship lie buried, as they say, if my gossip report be an honest woman of her word.
> **Salanio.** I would she were as lying a gossip in that as ever knapped ginger or made her neighbours believe she wept for the death of a third husband. But it is true, without any slips of prolixity or crossing the plain highway of talk, that the good Antonio, the honest Antonio, – O that I had a title good enough to keep his name company! –
> **Salerio.** Come, the full stop.
> **Salanio.** Ha! what sayest thou? Why, the end is, he hath lost a ship.
> **Salerio.** I would it might prove the end of his losses. (III, i, 1-18)

Salanio and Salerio reveal their anxieties in the depiction of Antonio's misfortune and losses. In fact, they know the threatening of losing ships in the ocean, as was seen in the beginning of the play. Salerio's suspicion of Antonio's misfortune reveals he is concerned about his friend's situation. His eagerness to know the truth – 'Come, the full stop' – alludes to his anxiety and fears. Alternatively, Salanio's delay in telling that Antonio has lost a ship suggests his concern and pity for him. Their evasive sentences unveil their gloomy feelings, concern and suspicion of mere hear-saying news, because they do not wish to acknowledge what really happened to Antonio's ships. Shakespeare juxtaposes once again Shylock's and

Antonio's misfortunes to enhance Antonio's and the Christians' similarities with Shylock.

When Salanio and Salerio perceive that Shylock is coming, they describe him as the figure of a devil. Salanio notices that Shylock is coming and says that 'Let me say "amen" betimes, lest the devil cross my prayer, for here he comes in the likeness of a Jew.' (III, i, 19-20). Once again, Shylock is presented in the figure of a devil, which, according to Shapiro (1996), was a commonplace in Elizabethan England. Such myths and stories were very much present in the audiences mind. Shakespeare's **The Merchant of Venice** is not a mythmaking play, even though he reinforces the common stories regarding the Jews. He just took myths and stories from popular tradition, ballads, songs, and playlets. Thus, the characters projected onto Shylock's figure their inward negative dimensions, such as faithlessness, suspicion, and hatred. Therefore, Shylock plays the role of a mirror which reflects their feelings and works as a repository of their darker inward dimensions.

Then, Salanio asks: 'How now, Shylock, what news among the merchants?' (III, i, 17). Salanio addresses Shylock as if he were commonly present among the merchants and informed about the merchants' deeds. After that, Shylock states resentfully: 'You know, none so well, none so well as you, of my daughter's flight.' (III, i, 18-19). Then they mock his grief and pain. Salerio says that 'That's certain: I, for my part, knew the tailor that made the wings she flew withal.' And Salanio says that 'And Shylock, for his own part, knew the bird was fledged; and then it is the complexion of them all to leave the dam.' (III, i, 24-28). Salerio and Salanio employ the imagery of ornithology to represent Jessica as a bird that flew away from Shylock, as well as the imagery of tailoring to suggest that she was entrapped by the tailor's net. But it also means that the tailor entangled Shylock in a sort of net, entrapping his feelings and unleashing his bitterness. In fact, Shylock's anger to Antonio is increased because of Lorenzo's running away with Jessica. Shylock is entrapped by his feelings and now he cannot control his hatred and his desire for revenge. He wants to take his revenge against Antonio as a way to release his anger against Lorenzo.

Moreover, according to Bevington (2002), in this speech *dam* means mother, in this case Leah. Salanio means that the little bird flew away from her nest. Nonetheless, in Elizabethan age, there was a proverbial that said 'the devil and his dam', which, according to Drakakis (2010, p. 282), associated 'the Jew and his absent wife with Satan', which reproduced the myth that represented the Jews as devils. Besides that, Shylock uses damned which echoes *dam*: 'She is damned for it'. (III, i, 24). Damnation is a New Testament concept, which sounds ironic in Shylock's mouth, because his daughter has just been converted into Christianity, as well as he is going to be forcibly converted in the trial scene. Therefore,

damnation is an imaginary attempt to satisfy his revenge in Christian assumptions.

Shylock's despair over his losses denotes his fear of loss and abandonment. Shylock reveals his grief and dishonour:

> **Salanio.** That's certain, if the devil may be her judge.
> **Shylock.** My own flesh and blood to rebel!
> **Salanio.** Out upon it, old carrion! rebels it at these years?
> **Shylock.** I say, my daughter is my flesh and blood.
> **Salerio.** There is more difference between thy flesh and hers than between jet and ivory; more between your bloods than there is between red wine and rhenish. (III, i, 30-37).

In this dialogue, as Shylock insists on his loss – 'I say, my daughter is my flesh and blood', we see in-betweens that his inward feelings demonstrate his values: his honour to his daughter, because although she ran away he still considers her his 'own blood'. He is mourning his loss and, in his confused sentences, he confesses his pain, his anger and even his fear of being disrespected and left alone. He also mourns because he lost his Jewish lineage as soon as Jessica eloped. (Garber, 2004, p. 307). Moreover, Salerio and Salanio are opposing the devil to the Christian God, who, according to Drakakis, would not damn Jessica for her elopement (2010, p. 282). In Drakakis's opinion (2010) Salanio establishes a relation between flesh, blood and carrion in order to imply 'morbid sexual desire' and 'scandalously promiscuous' attitude (2010, p. 282). Besides that, such suggestion mirrors Christian sexual desires projected on Shylock, as their sexual desire is mentioned elsewhere in the play. Salanio's inward feelings come out and are revealed in the judgement he makes of the Jew and reveals imaginatively Christian desires which are erotically charged in the play. Therefore, Shylock is a mirror that reflects the Christians' sinister feelings. The mirroring device is a mimetic device introduced in Shakespeare's drama to represent inwardness and create tension and collision between the characters of the play.

Then, Salerio marks the difference between Jessica's blood and flesh to Shylock's blood and flesh. Imaginatively, he uses the whiteness of ivory to define Jessica's flesh and blood and jet to define Shylock's; he also compare the Rhenish wine to Jessica's blood and the red wine to Shylock's blood, meaning that his blood is darker than hers. Salerio's claim of Jessica's similarity to the Christians is enhanced by the use of quite opposing similitude. They are therefore very sarcastic and ironic to Shylock.

In that sense, in Hegelian terms, their use of irony signals implicit and subtle aggression that disrespects what Shylock honours and loves. For Hegel, irony is on the edge of sarcasm and even destruction. It has an egotistical dimension, because the individual lives

concentrated on the fruition of the self. According to Hegel's **Aesthetics** (2009), irony is the affirmation of negativity and such ironic negativity 'dwells in the *vacuity* of concreteness, of moral, of everything which is rich in content, in the affirmation of the nullity of everything which is objective and possesses an immanent value.' (2009, p. 85). Thus, this immanent capability of destruction embodied in irony is due to the potential tendency that irony possesses to destroy what is pure. Irony causes the 'auto-destruction of everything which is noble, grand and perfect' (2009, p. 86). Hegel strongly criticises the irony created by the romantics, avoiding what was superior in the human being. Alternatively, the ironic tends to 'repudiate and disown all concrete values, all substantial content inside the individual' (2009, p. 87). Though Hegel criticises those who deny such values in themselves, denying those values in others is a similar destructive gesture. For Hegel, such individual is 'a mean and despicable character and that his negation only reveals weakness and moral inferiority' (2009, p. 87). In an artistic sense, Hegel points out something which can be thought of the Christians in the play, and which is the reverse of Shylock: 'For true character implies, on the one hand, essentially worthy aims, and, on the other hand, a firm grip of such aims, so that the whole being of his individuality would be lost if the aims had to be given up and abandoned. This fixity and substantiality constitutes the keynote of character' (2009, p. 87). Thus, a human being who denies such values is denying his own individuality and his inward feelings. Thus, Salanio's, Salerio's, and the other Christians' irony destroy what is valuable and substantial in the play.

Though he seems to be for some very pathetic, he is mourning his loss: he is showing his deeper feelings when he complains about his daughter and his money. According to Gross, Shylock's dimensions demonstrate that

> The power of the character also lies in what he reveals in more general terms about the human enigma, its jointure of freedom and dependence, secrecy and histrionics, alienness and complicity, its capacity for terror, for aggression, resentment, forgiving itself over to the inhuman. The play explores what it means to inhabit this enigma, this divisive jointure, to expand it from within and force it into new combinations. (2006, p. 04)

His feelings and mourning represent the human condition of suffering, anxieties and fear that are quite uncontrolled. The human enigma of feeling fear, anxiety, and sense of loss is embodied in Shylock's character, signalling such enigma in any circumstance, whether losing a dear person, losing possessions and money, as well as his Jewish lineage. Shylock's inwardness is pervaded by this strength, by his feelings, his energy, his anxieties and his

hopelessness facing his loss. Human enigma is portrayed in Shylock's contradictorily feelings and inward dimensions.

Then Salerio asks whether Shylock had heard anything about Antonio's loss in the Rialto: 'But tell us, do you hear whether Antonio have had any loss at sea or no?' (III, i, 38). Shylock answers and warns that Antonio must take care and fulfil his bond:

> There I have another bad match: a bankrupt, a prodigal, who dare scarce show his head on the Rialto, a beggar, that was used to come so smug upon the mart. Let him look to his bond. He was wont to call me usurer; let him look to his bond. He was wont to lend money for a Christian courtesy; let him look to his bond. (III, i, 39-45)

'Match' in this speech means 'bargain' or 'marital alliance' (Drakakis, 2010, p. 283). Then, Shylock considers Antonio as a prodigal, a bankrupt and a beggar who borrowed money without interest. Shylock attacks Antonio for his attitudes in the same way the Christians attack his Jewish customs. Shylock remarks Antonio's fear to appear in public, probably because of his fear of his creditors.[157] In one of the sources of the play, **Three Ladies of London**,[158] Gerontus (the Jewish prototype of Shylock) says to the merchant Mercadorus (likely to be Antonio's prototype): 'You were not to be found but was fled out of the country' (2002, p. 154), meaning that the merchant avoided the creditors by running away. Shylock also remarks that Antonio 'dare scarce show his head on the Rialto', meaning that he is coward, fearful and frightened of his creditors. Then he says that Antonio must take care of his bond and its deadline. Likewise, Gerontus remarks to Mercadorus the same thing: 'well look you do keep your promise' (2002, p. 156). Shakespeare probably got Gerontus and Mercadorus as prototypes for both characters, but he changed their feelings and intentions: both carry opposing characteristics which were separated in the play **Three Ladies of London**: Gerontus was the good Jew and Mercadorus was the malicious and evil Venetian Merchant. Shakespeare used these prototypes to enhance Shylock's complexity and ambiguity, building his villainous, dramatic and confusing dimensions. His inwardness is depicted in his desire for revenge and his resentment against Antonio.

In Shylock's most famous speech we can see his complex humanised dimensions. Salerio asks Shylock what is the use of a pound of flesh: 'Why, I am sure, if he forfeit, thou wilt not take his flesh: what's that good for?' Then Shylock answers such question in his most astonishing and touching speech:

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[157] In the same way, John Shakespeare also was afraid of appearing in public due to his debts. He was charge of not going to church and to the city council. Perhaps Shakespeare had these details in mind when he created Antonio. His fear of his creditors may be Shakespeare's father's fear of his creditors. For more detail, see Honan, 2001.

[158] I use the edition of the play in Kaplan's book, **The Merchant of Venice: Texts and Contexts**, 2002.

> To bait fish withal: if it will feed nothing else, it will feed my revenge. He hath disgraced me, and hindered me half a million; laughed at my losses, mocked at my gains, scorned my nation, thwarted my bargains, cooled my friends, heated mine enemies; and what's his reason? I am a Jew. Hath not a Jew eyes? hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is? If you prick us, do we not bleed? if you tickle us, do we not laugh? if you poison us, do we not die? and if you wrong us, shall we not revenge? If we are like you in the rest, we will resemble you in that. If a Jew wrong a Christian, what is his humility? Revenge. If a Christian wrong a Jew, what should his sufferance be by Christian example? Why, revenge. The villainy you teach me, I will execute, and it shall go hard but I will better the instruction. (III, i, 40-54)

First of all, he presents his reasons for the bond. The desire of revenge and his reasons for it are clearer now, though he had already mentioned them before (in I, iii, 42-4). All his losses were caused by the Christians, as well as by his daughter, who is now a *converso*. He unveils that Antonio was bound to disdain his way of earning money and his customs, such as religion, faith, and nation. The only reason for Antonio's ill-treatment to him is because Shylock is a Jew. Then he claims that a Jew has the same feelings, affections, desires, organs and dimensions as any Christian does. Jews are subject to the same vicissitudes of life as a Christian is, such as poisoning, hurting, and dying. However, he uses such comparisons to justify that if a Christian can take revenge, so the Jews will take the same revenge. Although the Christians highly praise the value of 'mercy', they are as merciless to Shylock as he is to them.[159]

Finally Shylock reveals that Antonio and the Christians' deeds have taught him to be merciless, revengeful, perfidious, and villain: 'The villainy you teach me, I will execute, and it shall go hard but I will better the instruction.'[160] The Christians think that he cannot claim for justice and no one can come back to revenge their deeds. Shylock is the avenger of himself and of his nation; he is the incarnation of the avatar 'of the terrifying patriarch with the knife' as states Adelman (2008, p. 131). The point is that Shylock's villainy and mercilessness are due to Antonio's mistreatment and violence. He mirrors what all the Christians have done against him. He justifies his claims with the *lex talionis* which claims an eye for an eye, a hand for a hand. However, the Christians are hypocritical when they claim that Shylock is a villain and they are merciful and generous. They do not acknowledge that Shylock can, by his own means, claim for the *lex talionis*.

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[159] See Cary Graham's *Standards of value in the Merchant of Venice* (1953, p. 148).

[160] In the same way, Shakespeare puts a similar speech in Macbeth's mouth, as he fears his conscience: 'But in these cases / We still have judgment here; that we but teach / Bloody instructions, which, being taught, return/ To plague the inventor: this even-handed justice / Commends the ingredients of our poisoned chalice / To our own lips.' (**Macbeth**, I, vii, 7-12)

His energy in this speech is quite enigmatic. He makes the audience feel the pain of his loss, his anger, anxiety, desire for revenge, and his resoluteness for it. His pathos is vibrating, vigorous and deep, because he is simultaneously mourning the loss of his daughter and money and roaring his inward rage against Antonio. His inwardness is represented in its deepest dimensions and we see that his humanity is enhanced by this energy, strength and vigour of such inward feelings coming out so violently. As Cohen points out (1980, p. 59): 'He is a suffering human being.'[161] In fact, many critics analyse his speech as a claim for his humanity, such as Goddard (1963), Charlton (1984), Hinely (1980), Sherman (2004), Cooper (1970), Cohen (1980).[162] His humanity is enhanced by his suffering and his claim for equality.

In his **Mimesis**, Erich Auerbach points out Shylock's complexity and human side. For Auerbach, though Barabbas in **The Jew of Malta** possesses more greatness than Shylock,

> Shakespeare acknowledged and understood with more depth the human problematicity of his Jew. For him, Shylock is, regarding his social position and considering the aesthetic view, a lower figure, unworthy of the tragic, whose tragicity is invoked during one moment, but it is not more than a flavor of a triumph of a higher humanity, nobler and freer, and also more aristocratic. (2007c, p. 280).

His inward dimensions and human feelings are not determined simply by his actions. According to Auerbach, there is a notion of destiny, not in the ancient sense, but in the sense of life experience which precedes the action itself. Auerbach focuses his analysis on the idea of destine, not in the Greek sense, but as the configuration of the character's pre-history and on-stage actions.

> Due to a multiplicity of themes and to the remarkable liberty of movements of the Elizabethan theatre, there are clearly shown, in each case, a special atmosphere, life conditions, a pre-history of the characters; […] we can observe thus many other things on the main characters; one makes a big picture of his normal life and of his peculiar character, independently of the plot wherein he is involved now. Thus, destiny means here something more than the current conflict. In ancient tragedy, it is almost possible to distinguish clearly between the natural character of the personage and the destiny he is doomed to. In Elizabethan tragedy, we are faced in many cases, not only to the purely natural character, but to a character already pre-determined by birth, vital circumstances, by his own pre-history (that means, by destiny); a character in which destiny already partakes in a great measure, before it is accomplished in the form of the tragic classic determined conflict; this is often only the motif through which a tragicity long ago in process is realised. This is seen with special clarity in Shylock's and Lear's cases. What happens to each one is especially destined to them, for the special character of Shylock and Lear, and such character is not

[161] His essay *The Jew and Shylock*, 1980.
[162] For more detail, see what the critics have analysed as claim for Shylock's humanity: as in Goddard's essay *The Three Caskets* (1963), Charlton, **Shakespearean comedy** (1984), in the chapter *Shakespeare's Jew*, Hinely in his essay *Bond Priorities in The Merchant of Venice* (1980), Sherman *Disowning knowledge of Jessica, or Shylock's skepticism (*2004), Cooper *Shylock's humanity* (1970), Cohen, *The Jew and Shylock* (1980).

> only natural, but pre-formed by birth, situation, pre-history, that is to say, by destiny, when it reaches an unmistakable peculiarity and the tragedy destine to him. (p. 284-285)

'Pre-historical' seems to refer here to a set of life experiences which one can imaginatively build from the character's behaviour, feelings, thoughts, ideas and gestures. His condition as an outcast, his problematic relation to both Antonio and Jessica makes his own deeds to go against him. He is a sort of victim of his own actions and of his circumstantial situation as a usurer and a Jew. Such situation is enhanced by his being despised by the Christians in the play, overcharging his anger and bitterness towards him. In a similar way, Antonio's destiny or pre-history determines his actions and attitudes. For example, his sacrificing attitude for Bassanio's sake and his sadness and discontent determine their relationship. The pre-history of the characters and of the play suggests and represents the characters' attitudes, actions and inwardness.

Furthermore, in this speech there are some syntactical details which enhance his pathos and the effects of Shylock's speech. In the beginning of the speech, he uses the present perfect (hath + past participle), a tense which suggests that an action which happened in the past still has its effects in the present. And he still feels their effects inside him: Antonio's mistreatments make Shylock feel resentment, bitterness, and anger: 'He hath disgraced me, and hindered me half a million; laughed at my losses, mocked at my gains, scorned my nation, thwarted my bargains, cooled my friends, heated mine enemies; and what's his reason? I am a Jew.' Shylock complains revealing Antonio's disrespect. He starts the speech using the formula 'he + hath + past particle'. He parallels many verbs of action in the past particle in order to enhance Antonio's mistreatment to him. The use of this syntactic parallelism enhances the acts done by Antonio against Shylock. They are altogether eight different actions which aimed at affronting Shylock: disgraced, hindered, laughed, mocked, scorned, thwarted, cooled, and heated. All of them have negative meaning in his speech. Such despising attitudes signal that the Jews are not respected by the Christians in the play.

When he stops the speech at the sentence 'I am a Jew', which achieves its heights of tension and passion, he inverts the grammatical structure of his prose. Shylock asks rhetoric questions, which refers to obvious truths about humanity: 'Hath not a Jew eyes? hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions?' Here he changes from the present perfect to the use of the simple present. Simple present is normally used to express habitual actions or universal truths. It is evident here that Shylock is using just rhetorical questions to enhance his human condition and to remember the Christians and the audience that he is human being as any Christian on stage. Shylock's employment of parallelism

dovetails with J. M. Coetzee's analysis about parallelism in his essay *The Rhetoric of the Passive in English*.[163] For Coetzee,

> Parallelism, periodicity, and balance and/or antithesis are structures that in fact lend themselves rather readily to interpretation. Balance and antithesis are above all principles of ordering: parallelism (a more fundamental operation, and more widespread in language) creates what we can call temporary semantic equivalents between parallel elements, and periodicity is a syntactic image of closure (no addition to the structure is possible). (1992, p. 163).

Thus, such parallelisms and repetitions in Shylock's speech enhance the rhythm and pathos of the speech. Shylock balances his feelings, positive and negative, which unveil the ambiguities of his character. The rhythm of his speech is quite intense and quick, jumping from word to word. Such intense, energetic and quick rhythm is also intensified by alliterations, mainly the fricative ones such as /th/, /s/ and /f/, and the nasal ones, such as /an/, /en/ and /ions/, as well as the plosive ones such as /p/, /t/, /k/. In that sense, Emil Staiger (1997)[164] analyses the main aspects of the drama. He highlights that the goal of such intense and 'complex' rhythm in the pathos 'is not to contaminate us with the 'mood', but to purify the atmosphere with rude strikes as those of a tempest'. (1997, p. 123). Such mood is produced and represented by alliterations, which reveal and intensify his disturbed and confused suffering and inward feelings.

Then he twists the structure of the sentences to reassert a rather general view of his human condition: 'fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is?' Once again it is a sentence filled up with alliterations enhancing his inward floatation and feelings. Moreover, he uses the past participle in the passive voice as a rhetoric device. Its main effect is to efface the agent of the action. It demonstrates more general and universal ideas of the human condition as well as his similarity to the Christians. He breaks the grammatical rule, not introducing the passive verb with the verb 'to be', but he simply repeats the structure with parallelism. The grammatical devices depict his inward confused state, signalling his inner rupture and suffering.

In that sense, J. M. Coetzee (1992) makes a ground-breaking analysis of the use of the passive voice in literature. He states that it is a device used by many classical authors to twist the meaning of the sentence and reverse the proposition of the sentence against those who

[163] Coetzee wrote an interesting book **Doubling the Point** (1992), which contains such essay.

[164] The following discussion is based on the Brazilian edition of Staiger's book **Conceitos Fundamentais da Poética**. 3rd edition. Rio de Janeiro: Tempo Brasileiro, 1997. He defines the drama as the 'Dramatic Style', whose main trait is 'tension'. For more details, see specially pp. 119-159. The translations of the quotations in English are my own.

criticise or practice the actions in the propositions. He focuses his analysis on passivisation, a rhetoric operation which deals with and intends hidden meaning in the text. Rhetoricians argue that the use of the passive can affect 'the focus of a sentence, the active form can consolidate the superficial subject as "hero" where the passive would consolidate the subject as "sufferer" (1992, p. 150). Thus, the focus on the passive answers rather to a 'preference for objectivity and distance, which seeks for avoiding personal attachment, commitment, and responsibility to one's speech'. (1992, p. 150). In classical terms, passivisation was named *hyperbaton*. Rhetoricians always tried to analyse the infringement of the natural order of the sentence, whose order is disturbed and whose meanings are changed. (Coetzee, 1992, p. 150). Thus, Coetzee presents some important aspects of classical passivisation or hyperbaton:

> In the interest of aesthetic appeal, or for the sake of emphasis, or (in Longinus) for the sake of representing dramatically states of inner passion, transgressions of the natural, logical order may take place. […] Hyperbaton must be used sparingly, since it depends for its effectiveness on the maintenance of the norm of natural word order. (1992, p. 151).

Coetzee argues that in classical English writers, such as Defoe, Swift, Gibbon and Henry James there is a rather intense use of the passive and of the agentless sentence as a rhetorical device. Such device tends to abstractness, generality, and irony, i. e. 'the aristocratic mode of irony' (1992, p. 159). Such authors also employ twists in language which reverse the expected idea proposed by the passive. In Coetzee's opinion, the analysis of the implicit meaning of the passive, specifically the short passive, in which 'the agent is "never there"' can be sustained by 'comparative, historical, and psychological' evidence (1992, p. 173). For him, a way of thinking the passive is to consider them as

> sentences whose agent is not merely veiled (but still there behind the veil) or deleted (but once present) or unexpressed (but thought), but is actually null, void. The short passive is the principal means language provides to enable us to talk about acts as though they occurred without agents. (Coetzee, 1992, p. 173).

Thus, meaning and form are twisted together in order to create multiple and ambivalent meanings. The meaning is enhanced in the twist of the form. (Coetzee, 1992, p. 174). Thus, Shakespeare also uses the passive ironically, because in this speech Shylock does not mention anything directly about the Christians; however, one can infer that he is attacking the Christians when he utters verbs in the passive. By omitting the agent in some of the sentences of Shylock's speech, Shakespeare creates a vague but known and foretold idea of what is behind the faces in the play: the Christians are represented as mirror of Shylock and

they are hypocritical by criticising him, yet they try to hide that they injured Shylock. Shylock is trying to enhance his condition as a sufferer and a victim, revealing that the causes of his anger and anxiety are Christian actions and mistreatment. In that sense, Coetzee enhances that the passive,

> despite its convenience, leaves an uneasy feeling: it opens up an area of vagueness that can simply be skated over (as most of us do in everyday usage), but that can be explored and exploited for their own ends by writers who take seriously the question of whether language is a good map of reality. (1992, p. 174).

Such 'uneasy feeling' is enhanced throughout the play, but it gets at its top in this speech. Even though Shylock uses prose when he speaks, its tension is emphasised by the use of passive. To a certain extent one can say that 'God' may be the agent of some actions, being thus more of a Job's God who gives and takes away a man's blessings. But, 'hurt with the same weapons' are, in fact, Christians' deeds in the play. By paralleling human actions with the inexorable fate any human being must endure, Shylock confesses his fate and points to the Christians' attitudes in the play. He is also ironic stating that he was 'hurt with the same weapons', which suggests that as he is hurt by Antonio, he can take the same weapon against Antonio.

After that, Shylock swerves the syntactic construction of his speech: he introduces the conditional as a way of enhancing his humanity through hypotheses which work as merely rhetorical questions:

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

More precisely, he uses here the Zero Conditional with if'. It 'expresses 'certainty rather than possibility', according to Oxford (2010, p. R33).[165] Such usage implies a rather informal, loose and familiar language, which syntactically is not so well-structured as the First, Second or Third Conditional.[166] This form of the verb conveys something that is

[165] The Zero Conditional requires the employment of verbs only in the present or in the past tense.

[166] The first conditional is constructed with an if clause in the present tense and the main clause in the future tense, as in *If I have money I will buy the book*; the second conditional is built with and if clause in the past tense and the main clause in the conditional tense, as in *If I had money, I would buy the book*; and the Third conditional is built with an if clause in the past perfect and the main clause in the conditional perfect tense, as in *If I had had money, I would have bought the book.* For more details, see Oxford, 2010, p. R. 33.

universally accepted as true. Thus, it reveals his pathos and inward confusion, hatred, and resentment. After that, in the final part of the speech he becomes more rational; his feelings are not so confused, because he thinks more rationally and organises his speech structurally. Such rational tone is enhanced syntactically by the elaborated use of the 'First Conditional with if' and the will-future (Oxford, 2010, p. R33). Now he is coming back to what he was initially in the play: thinking, pondering and counterbalancing the pros and cons of his revenge. Thus, Shylock cries out his resentment, anger and his deep suffering through some breaks in the grammatical norm.

According to Staiger, pathos normally breaks the grammatical rules and 'goes directly from a high point to another one in the speech' (1997, p. 120). Therefore, when Shylock expresses his inward feelings through the pathos he violates grammatical normativity to represent the inward disruption and laceration in his feelings, thoughts, and mysterious dimensions. Such twisted uses of language enhance strength, depth and laceration in Shylock's pathos. Shakespeare mingles different syntactic forms in order to modulate the rhythm of Shylock's speech, which creates ambiguous dimensions whose meaning is pervaded by tension and ambiguity. His feelings make him confused, so that language is disrupted intensifying such confusion. Shakespeare introduced the mimesis of inwardness by breaks and twists of language, pathos and modulated rhythm in Shylock's speeches.

Thus, in Shylock's pathos his inwardness comes out. It is enhanced in such speech by his anger, desire of revenge, resentment, and sceptical thought. According to Staiger (1997), in his analysis of the drama, originally *pathos* meant 'living, experience, misfortune, suffering, passion, and many other expressions' (1997, p. 121). Shylock's experience and endurance of the Christian mistreatments against him and his people are enhanced and revealed by his pathos in this scene. 'Man is moved by passions', states Staiger (1997, p. 121). Shylock's energy and perturbation are extreme revelation of his inward feelings. Thus the speech of the dramatic character is quite appropriated to his feelings, which act on his passions overwhelming him. (Staiger, 1997, p. 121). His pathos may be felt as exaggerated and even histrionic. Nevertheless, Staiger points out that whereas in the lyrical poetry feelings are quite inwardly kept, in the action of the pathos feelings are not much discreet. As Staiger defines, the action of the pathos implies

> resistance – a rude clash or mere apathy – which tries to shatter with impetus. Thus, stylistic peculiarities are explained in this new situation. The pathos is not spread out in our inner self; it must be engraved many times by force in our inner self. The context of the sentence does not dissolve itself oneirically as in the lyric work, but the whole strength of the speech is cored on loose words. (1997, p. 122)

For Staiger, such twists are intentionally made by the dramatist, who proves that he violates the verse and its language spontaneously. (Staiger, 1997, p. 124). With such intentional twists and breaks Shylock tries to persuade the Christians and the audience of his human condition. What moves him is his desire and will to recover his daughter, money, honour, and respect. In this sense, 'the pathetic man is moved by what must be and his passions invest against the *status quo*.' (1997, p. 125). Shylock does not accept his loss of respect, lineage, and gains; he fights in fact against his entourage.

Furthermore, there is something noble in Shylock's pathos. According to Staiger such noble dimension in the pathos is because the *status quo* is always beyond of that what moves the *pathos*. (1997, p. 126). Shylock's pathos is moved by his honour and respect. Pathos is then elevated, noble, and deep. Hence, it is a way the dramatist can elevate the characters, because even though they are lower personages, they are able to express their feelings and inwardness through their pathos. The grandeur or nobility of the pathos dwells on the factuality of 'being ahead' of his *status quo*. (Staiger, 1997, p. 126). And in many senses, Shylock is ahead of his entourage, because he perceives that the Christians are hypocritical and cynical and do not see him as a human being. In a subtler level, he represents a rhetorical device to point the Christians' contradictions, who are no longer able to smooth over them.

Furthermore, Staiger sums up very well the intentions of the use of the pathos in the dramatic work and its effects:

> Everything leads to this: the impetuous rhythm is due to the tension between present and future, the strikes which affect us as an unquestionable exigency, and the pauses show the vacuity of the inexistent as the vacuity in which the *status quo* is absorbed, the situation to be changed. (Staiger, 1997, p. 126)

What Shylock foresees is the vacuity of his loss. He tries to revenge himself and to cry out against the Christians as a retaliatory act, as a reaction to satisfy his anger and resentment. It is his way of recovering his control. But as soon as he claims for justice in the trial scene, he will be obliged to face his fate and accept his ruin imposed by Portia and the Christians. Thus, the bend of such devices aim at representing floatation of Shylock's inwardness.

Shylock feels and expresses his pathos, whose meaning and feelings have received deep Christian dimensions. In that sense, Erich Auerbach analyses the historical development of the meaning the pathos/passio in Western tradition, in his essay *Gloria passionis*

(2007b).[167] Originally, for Aristotle pathos meant a spasm. It maintained the meaning of 'suffering' and 'passivity', 'as well as its ethical neutrality. No one could be praised or reproved because of his pathos' (2007b, p. 77). Later on, with the stoical moral, pathos (*passio* in Latin) assumed negative connotations of 'inquietude' and 'compulsive movement which destroy the wise man's peace' (2007a, p. 77). For the stoics it was something to be avoided, 'it was a wise man's duty to be *impassibilis,* to keep him, at least inwardly, imperturbable by the world' (2007b, p. 77). Then there came images of tempest and the agitation of passions to represent pathos, as well as sometimes pathos was substituted by perturbation. In this second moment of the semantic development of pathos/passio the word was associated to violence and activity, due to the stoical interference in the meaning of passio/pathos (2007b, p. 77).

However, Saint Augustine deeply changed the meaning of pathos/passion in his work *De Civitate Dei*. The stoical idea of pathos/passio as something to be avoided, negative and disgusting was substituted by the idea of pathos as something good – *bonae passiones* (2007b, p. 79) For Auerbach, 'the Christian authors did not oppose *passions* to the tranquillity of the wise man, but the submission to injustice – its intention was not that one of escaping from the world in order to avoid the suffering and passions, but to transcend it through suffering.' (2007b, p. 79). Moreover, it was Ambrose of Milan who enlarged the idea of good sentiments of passio/pathos to something sublime, meaning that pathos/passio was something glorious: the *gloria passionis*, the glorious passion. Then, the Christian forlorn of the Church Fathers associated pathos/passio to Christ's passion and later on it was associated with ideas of love, both sensual and charitable love. Such erotic reading came from the reading of the *Song of Songs* by Bernardo, who associated pathos/passio to love, both sensual and divine love. Thus, passion became something sweet and bitter, 'bitter and salutary' (2007b, p. 85), and it also meant 'sufferance' and the 'ecstatic creative amorous passion' (2007b, p. 86). As a result, pathos was associated with other love motives in later poetry and drama, such as 'ardour', 'love', 'fervour', and 'inebriety' (2007b, p. 89). Therefore, in comparison to all previous ideas of pathos/passio it turned out to be something praised and sought for in the late Middle Ages and in the Renaissance. Despite that, its ambiguity is embodied in its modern concept: pathos/passio is seen as something good and terrible simultaneously. In the end, Auerbach makes clear that pathos/passio 'always comes from super-human powers – from the depths as well as from the heights – it is always received and endured as a magnificent and terrible gift.' (2007b, p. 93).

[167] See Auerbach's book with essays on Western literature, **Ensaios de Literatura Ocidental**, 2007b.

Therefore, Shylock's pathos is expressed not to avoid the world or to avoid his fate, but to face injustice. He is not submissive, since he wants revenge and justice; thereby, he lets his own passions overwhelm him and his action. He wants to have his daughter back and his money, as well as he wants to revenge himself from Antonio. That is why his sufferance and feelings make him act. One feels quite disquieted when one sees Shylock's rage, anger, and desire for revenge. That is the dramatic device that Shakespeare created and employed in the play to represent Shylock's inwardness and to make him a more complex and deeper character. Shakespeare built, with impressive ability, the mimesis of inwardness in Shylock's character, representing his inwardness by repetitions, floating, confused, and disrupted feelings and pathos.

4. 6. Shylock's Fantasies and Anxieties regarding the Female Figures Jessica and Leah

After such speech whereby Shylock reveals his feelings and anxiety through his pathos, Shylock and Tubal meet on stage for the first time. Salanio remarks that he is coming, by suggesting that he is another devil: 'Here comes another of the tribe: a third cannot be matched, unless the devil himself turn Jew.' (III, i, 70-71). His disdainful comparison of Tubal to the devil shows his recurrent sarcasm to the Jews. Then Shylock asks Tubal about the new on the Rialto and about his daughter:

> **Shylock.** How now, Tubal! what news from Genoa? hast thou found my daughter?
> **Tubal.** I often came where I did hear of her, but cannot find her.
> **Shylock.** Why, there, there, there, there! a diamond gone, cost me two thousand ducats in Frankfort! The curse never fell upon our nation till now; I never felt it till now: two thousand ducats in that; and other precious, precious jewels. I would my daughter were dead at my foot, and the jewels in her ear! would she were hearsed at my foot, and the ducats in her coffin! No news of them? Why, so: and I know not what's spent in the search: why, thou loss upon loss! the thief gone with so much, and so much to find the thief; and no satisfaction, no revenge: nor no in luck stirring but what lights on my shoulders; no sighs but of my breathing; no tears but of my shedding. (III, i, 72-88)

Tubal just heard about her, what displeases Shylock so much. Contrary to the *I am a Jew* speech, now he complains about his financial loss: a diamond, some precious jewels, and the money spent in the search for her. He seeks his revenge by imaginatively burying and sort of mummifying his daughter. He cannot accept her departure and disbursement of his money, though unconsciously he feels he cannot have her back. His use of '*would'* highlights such impossibility. Just imaginarily Shylock can have revenge himself from his daughter. Therefore, his anxiety, pain, and despair will remain in his thought. His deepest desire would

be the trophying of her body locked in a coffin, as Portia's father imaginatively locked her in the leaden casket to protect her of rapacious suitors. According to Hinely (1980),

> Again the theme of the "locked away' daughter appears, but instead of the protectively designed symbolic burial of Portia, Shylock desires an actual lead coffin for his treacherous daughter. Shylock's response to Jessica's elopement is excessive, but our rejection of his cruelty is tempered by an awareness of his mistreatment. (1980, p. 221-222)

Moreover, there is a personification of his losses, when he says 'thou loss upon loss'. The use of *thou* for his losses is very familiar and intimate, as if they were now part of his body. There is an ontological change or even an ontological loss in Shylock's inwardness with the loss of his money, his daughter and lineage. Furthermore, this speech is linguistically fragmented and its language is syntactically disrupted. He uses many loose sentences, some of them with no verb, some of them with very simple syntactical structures. There is neither logic connection, nor argumentative expositions. He just throws out words which mean something for him: his unconscious reasons are embodied in such speech. He is rather mourning his loss, because there comes again the intensification of his *pathos*, enhanced by the fragmented language and the repetition of words, which represent his inward feelings.

If one separates this speech in short sentences, one will hear in the rhythm and in the style of the speech a sort of mourning prayer. The whole speech is Shylock's mourning for his loss of money and his daughter. According to Gross (2006),[168] there are some repetitions of words in Shylock's speech and eloquence which are not really comic, but rather pathetic: they echo the biblical repetitions from the Lamentations, Job, Cohelet. In fact, they can be seen as both comic and pathetic, depending on the audience's reaction towards the play.

Moreover, the idea of the curse seems to come as a curse of the Old Testament, although Gross thinks it is a New Testament curse; for Gross, 'the word reflects, unconsciously, the language of Christian tradition, wherein Jews were cursed both for their part in the death of Christ and for their continuing failure to recognize his godhead.' (2006, p. 23). It is rather a stigma from his enemies, a stigma which comes to plague Shylock like Daniel, Joseph in the *Genesis*, and even Job. It seems to function as the Old Testament curse than a Christian curse. Antonio and the Christians mistreated Shylock and the Jews due to their practicing of usury, the myth of killing Christ as well as their rejecting Christ as the saviour. Despite that, the curse does not seem to refer to a clear cause, but rather to the cause-effect logic of the play: he has lost his daughter, his money, jewels and stones because he

[168] See the chapter *Shylock's nothing*, in his work **Shylock is Shakespeare**, 2006.

could not teach Jessica how to honour and value what he dears most. In a certain sense, Shylock embodies tragic traits and fate, though not in the classic rationale, but in the Shakespearean rationale of the great tragedies. Then, Gross contradicts himself putting that the curse here is rather from the New Testament than the Old Testament, though he argues in the last moment that it works simultaneously as both conceptions in the play:

> It is an apprehension by which he cuts himself off from Jewish history as much as he aligns himself with it. (In this he is a little like Job, refusing the comforts of a conventional, moralistic explanation of human suffering.) For this loss Shylock proposes a compensation that compounds the loss itself. He wishes his daughter back, but only when she is dead. He wishes the jewels in the coffin with her, preserved together, as something to be buried, but perhaps also – we cannot exclude this thought – kept together like some ghoulish mummy-trophy in his house. (2006, p. 24)

Shylock wants to mummify Jessica in her coffin. His prose eloquence of consciousness reveals that Shylock's inwardness moves around a pivotal point: his fantasies and anxieties towards the female figures. However, he does not seem aware of his feelings regarding the female figure. In fact, the female figure assumes for him the negative potentiality of castration, annihilation and abandonment, something which is commonly representative in Western Literature in Dante's dream, wherein Beatrice's eating his heart – a phallic symbol of love and passion – symbolises castration and annihilation. Such feelings make Shylock dwell on circling attitudes of mourning and victimisation, emphasised by his pathetic repetitions. His suffering as a human being is indeed due to this deprivation and loss of his daughter and money. Therefore, he is rather a humanised character. In that sense, Gross suggests that

> At this moment Shylock gives himself over to a knowledge or wish he can scarcely understand. What kind of waking dream king is he here? We get a glimpse of another world, in Shylock's mind, also at his feet, in the empty place where he stands onstage, looking and pointing down at what isn't there. The eloquence of this is a prose eloquence – that seems crucial. It is not the eloquence of an enlarged consciousness, such as we feel in Hamlet, Lear, or Macbeth. It is an eloquence of deprivation. It is an eloquence of being, yet also an eloquence of nonexistence, and of curious dependence. Shakespeare means to show us the shape but also the agony of this eloquence, the agony of what it asks and cannot get, and the agony of what it costs that cannot be restored. (2006, p. 23)

What must be buried is not just her body, but rather his own feeling. Thus, such burial of anger and anxiety will only occur through the satisfaction of his revenge. For Gross, when Shylock says that he wants Jessica buried with the jewels in her coffin, he means that he still unconsciously loves her. He makes an impressive imaginative affective investment on Jessica's body. Such theme is not at all unfamiliar in Shakespeare's plays: at the end of

Romeo and Juliet, both fathers Montague and Capulet desire to build two golden statues to honour their Romeo and Juliet. Montague affirms:

> For I will raise her statue in pure gold
> That whiles Verona by that name is known
> There shall no figure at such rate be set
> As that of true and faithful Juliet. (**Romeo and Juliet**, V, iii, 298-301)

And Capulet, still in a competitive manner, proposes: 'As rich shall Romeo's by his lady's lie, / Poor sacrifices for our enmity.' (**Romeo and Juliet**, V, iii, 302-303). This material and psychological investment in such statues is an imaginary and fantasised releasing for their loss. In Marjorie Garber's opinion (2004), 'Old Montague and Old Capulet have translated their losses into material terms, into golden statues'. (2004, p. 212).[169] This is an imaginative compensation for their loss, which suggests their ever-growing consciousness of their affective loss and desire of mummifying their children in golden statues. In Shylock's case, such investment makes Jessica imaginatively 'embalmed and galvanized' in her coffin. For Gross,

> The hallucinatory force of this comes partly from Shylock's use of repetition, by which he at once marks and seeks to compensate for his loss […]. The mysterious quality of the lines also lies in his ambiguous description of what he wishes to see, what he 'would'. He wishes to see his daughter and to put her away at the same moment, he wants both to have his jewels and to bury them. The description is ambiguous: To be hearsed is not necessarily to be dead. For jewels to be 'in' an ear is not the same as for god 'in' a coffin, and Jessica's ear are 'hers' differently from the way the coffin is 'hers'. Thus imagined, Jessica hovers in an uncertain state – both alive and dead, something between a mere corpse and the body of an individual, she is at once embalmed and galvanized. The gold in the casket is riches, trash, ornament, and a symbol of love all at the same time. It gains by proximity to the imagined body of Shylock's daughter its own unsettling life, both natural and unnatural. (Gross, 2006, p. 25)

Shylock still sees her as a human being, as he reveals his pain for his daughter. It is his paternal feeling and his honour which make him state such things. By burying her 'galvanised' with the jewels, he would imaginarily recuperate her and get back his lost honour as well as hers. Shakespeare suggests and represents Shylock's exaggerated feelings to Jessica in his desire of galvanisation and mummification of his daughter.

In a certain sense, such investment Shylock makes on Jessica's body is not something strange in Literature. In that sense, we have also to bear in mind that in a period when a daughter eloped, the parents' and her family's honour were ruined. Even later in the 18th and 19th centuries this was a big trouble. For example, in **Pride and Prejudice**, by Jane

[169] See Marjorie Garber's **Shakespeare after all**, 2004.

Austen (2007), Lydia's elopement illuminates the troubles a father would face. Mr. Bennett, Mr. Gardiner and Mr. Darcy do their best to recover Lydia and marry her to save Mr. Bennett's daughters from vexation, scandal, shame and dishonour. Even though Shylock desires that Jessica be buried in his feet, this is the ultimate way one could solve such a disgracing elopement. It is a cruel solution, but he cannot imagine any other way out. Likewise, in another play by Shakespeare such problem is more evident. In **Much ado about Nothing**, Hero is unfairly accused of being unchaste and thus she is dishonoured by Claudio who accuses her. Then, as a transitory solution to the problem, the priest, believing in her innocence, convinces her father of proclaiming the Hero is dead due to the suffering caused by Claudio's unfairness. The play's plot creates tension and conflict by its tragicomic dimensions.

Thus, Shylock fantasises the ritual sacrifice when he desires to see his daughter dead at his foot. According to Gross,

> Shylock wants his jewels back, yet he imagines them transformed into ornaments for his dead daughter, and reduced to nothing but earrings. The fantasy is at once vengeful and recuperative, also sacrificial, since the gold and the jewels will be buried away in the earth along with the ornamented corpse. Neither gold nor child is quite confused with the other; neither is tradable for the other; there is no easy logic of exchange here. The child is no longer a child; the jewels are more than jewels. Indeed, in this sacrificial bundling of the two we can sense an ironic sort of generosity, a grim mirror of, and a revenge against, the prodigality of Jessica that Tubal reports to Shylock in this scene. She is still, in Shylock's fantasy, decked as a bride. He is in the coffin with her, buried alive. (2006, p. 24)

The fantasy of having his daughter back, although dead, is very startling for our modern tastes. The sacrificial fantasy of his daughter functions as a compensation for her betrayal and elopement. He would sacrifice her to keep her as trophy. Dying with her could be a sacrificial solution; and sacrificing her would sound like Jacob sacrificing his dearest son Isaac. Thus, Shylock makes Jessica an imaginary scapegoat for his anxiety and shame. Shylock's reaction is actually controlled by the mysterious forces pointed out by McGinn (2007, p. 12).

As seen in chapter 1, in a similar way Dante's projection of his inward feelings just as he unacknowledged sexual awakening onto Beatrice's body and, later on, metonymically onto her dress is a resembling drive Shylock makes here. In fact, in Psychoanalytical terms Shylock's projection of his inward feeling onto Jessica's body, as well as onto Leah's ring works as a driving mechanism as a compensation for his loss and frustration. In a deeper and subtler level, his relationship to Jessica represents a sort of incestuous-like repressed unconscious desire. The awareness Shylock experiences now is the awakening feeling of loss

of his beloved objects, both Jessica and Leah's ring, which symbolised so far the fusional imaginary state with both the maternal and daughterly body. His daughter's presence re-presented the love for his wife re-imagined in his daughter's body, configuring an incestuous-like relationship. His material inwardness linked to money and their body represents imaginarily his inward desires of possession and his own egotism. Both Dante and Shakespeare intuitively felt that human relationship to others was pervaded by obscure and mysterious forces which determined and configured their affection to them. They could represent the mysteriousness of inward human life by perceiving such human traits. Particularly in Shakespeare's work, Shylock is a very complex character. Shakespeare represented, in creating Shylock, inward dynamic forces which would be essential for creating Brutus, Hamlet, Macbeth and Lear.

Shylock feels shame of being dishonoured by his daughter. In that sense, according to Ewan Fernie (2002), in his work **Shame in Shakespeare**, loss of honour causes shame in the self:

> The subject of shame may be ashamed of itself directly or because of others upon whom its honour depends: the closest the connection, the greater the shame here; disgrace of one's own parent, spouse or child is especially grievous. The subject may feel shame as a part of a group. Or it may feel shame vicariously, on the part of another or of others. (2002, p. 12)

Shylock's shame is a painful experience and a very dishonouring feeling. As he acknowledges that he could not teach Jessica his values and could not avoid her elopement, his desire of seeing his daughter dead at his feet and having back her jewels works as a compensatory and satisfying act to stop his shame. Instead of seeking inward changing, he converts his feeling into anger and bitterness as an obsessive reaction to his dishonour. Therefore, Shakespeare represents Shylock's confusing inward dimensions portraying his inward dispositions by the confusion of feelings, emotions, and sensations.

Moreover, Shylock's reference to 'Frankfort' in the speech above, is something quite revealing of his origins. According to Cecil Roth, in her essay *The background of Shylock* (1933), Shylock's ghetto was supposed to be a German ghetto in Venice. Cecil Roth presents a study which describes that there were three ghettoes in Renaissance Venice, of three different 'nations' according to Roth. They were grouped in three ghettoes, the 'Ponentines', which comprised the 'refugees from Spain and Portugal', the 'Levantines', which comprised Turkish refugees, and the '*Nazione Tedesca*', or the German Nation (1933, p. 150). Roth describes that the ghetto

> was a commodious area, capable of giving accommodation (with an unconscionable degree of overcrowding) to as many as five thousand souls. It consisted of streets, and alleys and squares, leading all the way from the Cannaregio to the Rio S. Girolamo. But, in Shakespeare's day, it was rigorously divided off into districts. The "Ponentines" and the "Levantines" were supposed to live in the Ghetto Vecchio, or Old Foundry, which had been set aside as an exclusive place of residence for them in I54I. The Nazione Tedesca were confined to the Ghetto Nuovo – that same area, surrounded on all sides by water and thus easily cut off from the outside world, to which they had been first relegated in 1516. (1933, p. 152-153).

The two first ones, the Ponentines and the Levantines, were strictly prohibited to money-lending and were obliged to practice commerce, mainly specialties and clothes (Roth, 1933, p. 150). The German ghetto was not allowed trading, although they desired it very much. The *Nazione Tedesca* was the oldest established ghetto in Venice and it was probably established in the beginning of the 16th century or even earlier. Most strikingly, it was the only ghetto allowed practicing usury. For Roth, 'the so-called "Germans" […] were tolerated in Venice solely on condition of maintaining the essential money-lending establishments in which the tender conscience of the Serenissima [Venice] would not allow any Christian to engage.' (1933, p. 150). The Christian obliged the Jews to be usurers to borrow money, because the law did not permit any Christian Venetian to be a money-lender.

Besides that, Shylock mentions that he has bought his turquoise in Frankfort. Roth argues that Shylock probably pertained to the German nation in Venice, because he practiced money-lending. However, Roth states that 'the fact that Shylock belonged to the German "nation" does not imply that he was of German birth, or even of immediate German origin: though his relations with Frankfort, where he had bought the ring stolen by Jessica, render this hypothesis possible.' (1933, p. 151). Moreover, according to Roth, the German ghetto spoke Italian, instead of German:

> whereas the Levantines and Ponentines spoke Spanish or Portuguese amongst themselves, carrying on a great part of their communal business in those languages, the Nazione Tedesca had, for the most part, completely abandoned the last relic of their ancestral German, and used Italian for all ordinary purposes. (1933, p. 152)

The German Nation was rather well-integrated in Venetian society, because they could practice money-lending, though under strict laws. Thus, one can suppose that Shakespeare could be aware of the division of the Ghettoes in Venice, since he and his coevals knew many reports from travellers, translations and draws. Perhaps some or many in the audience were quite aware and informed of the Venetian Ghettoes, or even visited the

ghettoes. If Shakespeare put the reference to Frankfort in Shylock's speech, it was intentional and, doing so, he wanted to create some effect in the audience. Such effect would be easily stirred up because Elizabethan audience was very imaginative.[170] Such details could have portrayed a rather precise image of Shylock's life.

In this scene, as Tubal talks about Antonio's misfortunes, Shylock becomes euphoric about Antonio's losses:

> **Tubal.** Yes, other men have ill luck too: Antonio, as I heard in Genoa, –
> **Shylock.** What, what, what? ill luck, ill luck?
> **Tubal.** Hath an argosy cast away, coming from Tripolis.
> **Shylock.** I thank God, I thank God. Is't true, is't true?
> **Tubal.** I spoke with some of the sailors that escaped the wreck.
> **Shylock.** I thank thee, good Tubal: good news, good news! ha, ha! where? in Genoa?
> **Tubal.** Your daughter spent in Genoa, as I heard, in one night fourscore ducats.
> **Shylock.** Thou stickest a dagger in me: I shall never see my gold again: fourscore ducats at a sitting! fourscore ducats! (III, i, 89-101)

It is a very ambivalent scene: it is quite comic and moving. Shylock's reaction is, on the one hand, quite comic; on the other, quite pathetic. First he shows his feeling of satisfaction for Antonio's losses, which in a certain sense satisfies his desire for revenge. According to Auerbach, in his **Mimesis** (2007c), Shakespeare emphasised Shylock's comic traits, mainly Shylock's meanness, fear and repetitions in the play, but he also mingles them with tragic traits. Shylock's comic traits, together with his despair and mourning of his loss provokes an ambiguous reaction in the audience, suggesting the tensions and conflicts which Shylock must undergo to face his blindness and his inability of teaching his daughter his values and keeping his wealth. Such tensions are forms of representation of inner conflict and despair, which configure Shakespearean mimesis of inwardness.

As soon as Tubal mentions Jessica's expenditure in Genoa, Shylock becomes madly angry and exasperated. We feel his despair and angst for his losses, which are revealed in his pathos and in the fragmentation of the language. Shakespeare puts in this scene the juxtaposition of Antonio's misfortunes, which please Shylock very much, and his losses, which let him despaired. Then Tubal comes again to Antonio's losses and bankruptcy:

> **Tubal.** There came divers of Antonio's creditors in my company to Venice, that swear he cannot choose but break.
> **Shylock.** I am very glad of it: I'll plague him; I'll torture him: I am glad of it.
> **Tubal.** One of them showed me a ring that he had of your daughter for a monkey.

[170] For example, when a character mentions a horse, the ocean or a forest, the audience would immediately imagine them on stage. See more information in Honan, 2001. For example, in **King Lear**, when Edgar leads Gloucester to Dover's cliffs, the audience did not need to be invited to imagine the cliffs, the sand and imagine hearing the ocean.

> **Shylock.** Out upon her! Thou torturest me, Tubal: it was my turquoise; I had it of Leah when I was a bachelor: I would not have given it for a wilderness of monkeys. (III, i, 102-111)

Once again, Tubal inflames Shylock's desire for revenge, which is momentarily satisfied, but then he 'tortures' Shylock as he reminds him of his daughter's disbursements. Once again, it is crystal clear that Shylock did not know Jessica and could not teach her what he dears most such as values, respect for the past, the parents, and his nation. As he realises that she betrays him, his anger is moved by a mixture of feelings such as deception, hopelessness, and fear of loss. According to Drakakis (1998),[171]

> In this case of Shylock, it is precisely the *failure* of this patriarchal power of constraint, embodied in Jessica's rebellion, which is emphasised. But this creates an additional problem in that Shylock feels her rebellion as a father; and the language in which he articulates his own agony is one which imitates the ethos of Christian humanism… (1998, p. 197)

That is a means to create inner tension and conflict in the play, as well as it is a good device to suggest Shylock's real feelings: hatred, bitterness, fear and despair. According to Sherman,

> At this moment Shylock discovers that Jessica has never understood the sentimental value that he attached to that ring and, worse still, that he has evidently failed to communicate and instill in her any attachment to the past. Not only has he not taught her the importance of honoring her mother and father, but she has adopted the callow, mercenary manners of which Christians accuse him. (2004, p. 281).

Jessica addresses herself to her father only twice in the play. Such a distant and laconic relationship enhances that their feelings and respect are quite out of the tune. If he could not instill in her some feelings and values, there was always a distance and even a rupture in their relation. According to Cary Graham (1960),[172] 'in the home life of Shylock and Jessica there is little harmony. […] Jessica's suggestion of tediousness and unhappiness is substantiated by the Shylock who goes to dinner hating the Christians.' (1960, p. 150). Thus, we see that Jessica's departure is caused because she could not endure disharmony, tediousness, unhappiness, repression, and imprisonment in her own home. Graham suggests that it is not the 'merely financial' values which separate Jessica and Shylock, but Jessica's values are not the same as Shylock. Shakespeare represents Jessica's and Shylock's relationship as a distant and awkward relationship.

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[171] See John Drakakis' essay *Historical difference and Venetian Patriarchy*, 1998.
[172] See the essay *Standards of Value in The Merchant of Venice*, in Walters' casebook to the play, 1960.

For the first time in the play Shylock mentions the name of his wife Leah. Leah was the name of Laban's elder daughter. Launcelot, whose mother is Margaret, and Jessica are the only characters who have mothers in the play. However, they are absent figures, which apparently have no importance to the whole meaning of the play. Antonio, Bassanio, Portia, Nerissa, Gratiano and other characters have no mother. Nonetheless, the female figures seem to be obfuscated and incomprehensible for Shylock, since he does not know his own daughter and gets mad at her departing, which threatens and haunts him. According to Sherman,

> In short, Jessica's departure confronts Shylock with their separateness from each other. He has hitherto considered her an appendage like the pound of flesh he proposes to gouge out of Antonio. Whether she represents Shylock's sexual potency or all that is close to his heart, her loss, like Antonio's mutilation, means death. (2004, p. 281).

Neither could he know or understand her, nor can he bear the idea of separation, desolation, and abandoning. In a certain sense, her departure brings back unconsciously and phantasmatically his despairing feeling of individuation and abandoning. This symbolic imagery has the power of weakening Shylock's paternity and manhood, which is imaginatively reproduced the myth of the feminised Jew.[173] The maternal presences cause anxieties in the male characters in Shakespeare's play. Shylock faces Jessica's elopement as an irreversible departure.

In that sense, it is quite strange that Janet Adelman (1992)[174] did not see Shylock's anxiety towards the female figures. She points out that this problem is exclusively pertinent from **Hamlet** onwards, but it appears implicitly in earlier plays. Thus, maternal anxieties are silent mechanisms in the earlier plays, causing anxieties which are only felt as anguishing effect. In Shylock's case, his ruin is due to his daughter and Portia. The representation of female figures alludes to the fantasy of the female figure as dangerous, so that every man inescapably can take risk and may suffer damnation.

Janet Adelman analyses the maternal fantasies of the Shakespearean male characters re-imagined as a return to the maternal body. But this re-imagined return is disclosed in terms of aggression and confrontation with the maternal body, because the female body is in general seen as a locus of evil, danger and death for the male child. According to her, 'the actual conditions of infancy would have intersected with cultural representations of the female body to mark that body as the site of deformation and vulnerability' (1992, p. 05). In a period of starvation, when children routinely died, mothers were held as responsible for those deaths

[173] For that, see Shapiro's **Shakespeare and the Jews** (1996), and Adelman's **Blood Relations** (2008)
[174] See **Suffocating Mothers: Fantasies of maternal origin in Shakespeare's plays, *Hamlet* to *Tempest***, 1992.

(1992, p. 04). Since the maternal milk was considered dangerous, even noxious to the child or pus, wet-nursing was sometimes regarded as the cause of many children's deaths (1992, p. 06). That long period of starvation created a long dependency on the maternal body, during which children were said to be subjected not only to dangers, but mainly to psychological dependency on the mother. The author states that 'the womb was traditionally understood as the entrance to death and the site of mortality' (1992, p. 06). Thus, negative views on women were normally conveyed by many analogies, which used to represent them tendentiously and negatively. Moreover, wet-nursing was re-imagined by male children as abandonment. Reports from diaries and letters show that little boys imagined that they had been abandoned twice: first by the mother, who gave him to a nurse, and then again by the nurse, who gave him back to his mother. Adelman states that,

> Wet-nursing merely gave the child two psychic sites of intense maternal deprivation rather than one: first, the original maternal rejection signaled by wet-nursing itself; and then the weaning – routinely by the application of wormwood or another bitter-tasting substance to the nipple – and abrupt separation form the nurse-mother he or she might have known for two or three years. (1992, p. 05).

These actual social conditions created thus a negative perception of wet-nursing as something noxious and dangerous to children. But that had not only been the main cause: the Aristotelian theory in his *Genesis* states the duality between male and female as a duality 'linking male with spirit or form and the female with matter, as though mortality itself were the sign of hereditary deformation by the male' (1992, p. 06). Both social conditions and beliefs, as the belief that the maternal first milk was noxious, led to negative projections of the 'child's vulnerability in the body of the mother/nurse' (1992, p. 06). As one can see, social nourishment and medical birth problems created depreciative projections on women, as though these events were something natural and were consequently taken for granted.

Those distorted ideas will be projected by the Renaissance playwrights and poets as well, such as Sidney, Spencer, and Shakespeare. For instance, in **Richard III** by Shakespeare, Richard's fantasy that his mother's womb had deformed his body reiterates symbolically that the mother 'could literally deform foetuses through excessive imagination, her uncontrolled longings, her unnatural lusts. And his fantasy of suffocation in the womb is no more than scientific fact: many understood birth itself as the foetus's response to the inadequate supply of air and of food in the womb'. (1992, p. 06). This negative view is not only projected in terms of dramatic devices in Shakespeare's plays, but also as a social construct rebuilt in his plays, based on 16th and 17th century's medical, moral, and theological discourses.

Moreover, even spontaneous abortion or miscarriage was scientifically held as the mother's responsibility, because of excessive blood, food, or even suffocation and strangulation in the mother's belly (1992, p. 06). At this point, we can perceive, both in Shakespeare and in social discourses, male inward projections towards the female body due, in fact, not to actual biological and natural women conditions, but to beliefs, medical and moral discourses which preached and evaluated negatively mothers' conditions, as something natural and willing. Furthermore, male inward projections toward the maternal body in Shakespeare are due to the fallacious idea and image evocated by those discourses in the re-imagined return to the maternal body. Male anxieties are projected on the female as a nucleus of psychological release of their inner tensions, such as desire and anger felt in moments of psychological crises.

In the same way that Shylock loved his wife Leah, he wants to galvanise and turn Jessica into a sort of trophy. Jessica and Leah are deeply dear to him and, to say so, desired. They become thus his eternally beloved objects in his dream of galvanising them. Jessica and Leah are connected to Shylock by the ring. Consequently, the loss of the ring signals the loss of Jessica's body and Leah's memory. If his affection for his wife is invested in the ring, he wants to galvanise Jessica in the ring and in the jewels now. What remains to Shylock is just 'nothing', something that Lear feels in Cordelia's nothing. Jessica's giving away the ring may symbolise the splitting experienced between father and daughter/boy and mother re-imagined in the loss of the ring.

In addition, it is quite odd that Freud, in essay *The Theme of the Three Caskets* (2006), and Adelman never perceived that what moves Shylock's fantasy is the compulsive attitude to keep them in an everlasting presence of the maternal figures which is projected onto Jessica's body and Leah's turquoise. What moves Shylock is his desire of fusion with the body of Jessica mummified in the jewels and the body of Leah previously galvanised in the turquoise. This material investment is mingled with his feelings and anxieties.

Freud does not mention anything about Shylock in his essay *The Theme of the Three Caskets* (2006). The symbolic framework of the three caskets designed by Freud alludes to Shylock's fate as well. For Freud, in the casket scenes the identity of the suitors is revealed by their choices: Morocco chooses the golden casket, he is the sun; Aragon chooses the silver one, he is the Moon; Bassanio chooses the leaden casket, he is the star youth. (2006, p. 60). Freud analyses in that essay the imagistic set of figures relating three women, who are interwoven with the male fantasies, as an inward and unconscious trait of male identity. It represents the inexorable choice men must make: to choose death. The third sister, the silent

one, is the most beautiful and desired. To each casket the suitors must make a speech of praising it. He points out that in a dream, we could see each casket as a woman. It is thus a 'man's choice between three women' (2006, p. 60). Yet there is something anguishing in this choice, because the third suitor must find praise in it:

> The most difficult task thus fell to the share of the third fortunate suitor; what he finds to say in glorification of lead as against gold and silver is but little and has a forced ring about it. If in psycho-analytic practice we were confronted with such a speech, we should suspect concealed motives behind the unsatisfying argument. (2006, p. 59).

Another mysterious scene in Shakespeare shows the same pattern: King Lear's division of the Kingdom between his three daughters, who praise their loves for the father. 'He should have recognized the unassuming, speechless love of the third and rewarded it, but he misinterprets it, banishes Cordelia'. (2006, p. 61). Freud suggests that this is a general theme: choosing between three women; the youngest is the best and most beautiful choice. Freud analyses other tales such as Portia's, Cordelia's, Aphrodite's, Cinderella's, Psyche's; 'three women, of whom the third surpasses the other two.' (2006, p. 61). By analysing the theme of the three women, Freud explained that the three caskets are seen 'as symbolic of three women' (2006, p. 61-62);

> It may strike us that this surpassing third one has in general instances certain peculiar qualities besides her beauty. They are qualities that seem to be tending towards some kind of unity; we certainly may not expect to find them equally well marked in every example. Cordelia masks her true self, becomes as unassuming as lead, she remains dumb, she 'loves and is silent'. Cinderella hides herself, so that she is not to be found. We may perhaps equate concealment and dumbness. [...] We have decided to compare Cordelia, with her obstinate refusal, to lead. (2006, p. 62).

In the praising speeches by Paris, the Prince in Cinderella, Bassanio, Freud points out that its paleness / plainness moves them "more than the blatant nature of the other two. Gold and silver are 'loud'; lead is dumb, silent in effect as Cordelia is, who 'loves and is silent'. Thus, concealment, disappearance from view, and dumbness represent death:

> If we follow these indications, then the third one of the sisters between whom the choice lies would be a dead woman. She may, however, be something else, namely, Death itself, the Goddess of Death. [...] if the third of the sisters is the Goddess of Death, we know the sisters. They are the fates, the Moerae, the Parcae or the Norns, the third of whom is called Atropos, the inexorable. (2006, p. 62-63) [175]

[175] Originally, there was just the *Moîra*, mainly in Homer, but lately the Greek introduced the Graces and the Horae, the Hours. The Hours were Goddesses of the waters, the sky, and the clouds, which were conceived as a kind of web, so that they looked like spinners, attached then to the Moerae. In the Mediterranean lands, the Hours are the goddesses of vegetation and fertility. Due to the beautiful flowers in this period, they were associated to the seasons: winter, spring and summer. Autumn was added in the Graeco-Roman times, according to which four Hours were normally represented in art. 'The hours thus

Thus, it is recurrent that all men in myths, tales and literature always choose the third one – death –, which in fact they do not want to choose, yet they inexorably do. Thus the three sisters mean: the woman that gives men life, the woman men marry, and the woman that leads men to death.[176] For Freud, this detail suggests how the choice is related to the myth of the three sisters. A wished reverse is once again manifested, since the choice is put in the place of necessity, of destiny. Only where man follows his compulsion he makes his choice; and the one he chooses is not something which provokes horror, but the 'fairest and the most desirable thing in life'. What seems to be free choice between the three sisters turns out to be no free choice.

Alternatively, though the maternal presence is absence in the play, for Shylock the presence of the three women is felt in his mother, Leah and Jessica. This analogy of Shylock's three women suggests that the female presence in the play is quite negative and threatening. Therefore, for Shylock the three beloved women are his mother, who bore him, Leah his wife, who loved him, and Jessica, who, instead of taking care of him in his old age, abandons and ruins him. Therefore, his anger for Jessica is a sign of his anxiety toward the maternal figure that must be galvanised with his jewels. Shylock's inward dispositions of the mind are represented through his anger and anxiety towards Jessica and his wife as his maternal figures.

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became the guardians of the law of Nature, and of the divine order of things whereby the constant recurrence of the same things in unalterable succession in the natural world takes place.' (2006, p. 65). The hours started to govern human life as something inexorable. Freud points out that 'this knowledge of nature reacted on the conception of human life. The nature-myth changed into a myth of human life: the weather-goddesses became goddesses of destiny. But this aspect of the Hours only found expression in the Moerae, who watch over the needful ordering of human life as inexorably as do the Hours over the regular order of nature. The implacable severity of this law, the affinity of it with death and ruin, avoided in the winsome figures of the Hours, was now stamped upon the Moerae, as though mankind had only perceived the full solemnity of natural law when he had to submit his own personality to its working.' (2006, p. 65-66).

[176] Freud points out also that 'we shall remember that there are forces in mental life tending to bring about replacement by the opposite, such as the so-called reaction-formation, and it is just in the discovery of such hidden forces that we look for the reward of our labours. The Moerae were created as a result of a recognition which warns man that he too is a part of nature and therefore subject to the immutable law of death. Against this subjection something in man was bound to struggle, for it is only with extreme unwillingness that he gives up his claim to an exceptional position. We know that man makes use of his imaginative faculty (fantasy) to satisfy those wishes that reality does not satisfy. So his imagination rebelled against the recognition of the truth embodied in the myth of the Moerae, and constructed instead the myth derived from it, in which the Goddess of Death was replaced by the Goddess of Love and by that which most resembles her in human shape. The third of the sisters is no longer Death, she is the fairest, best, most desirable and the most lovable among women.' (2006, p. 66-67).

CHAPTER 5

Portia, Judgement and Inwardness

5. 1. Portia's Inwardness: her Weariness and Concealed Desires

Portia is represented as an idealised character in the play. Likewise, she is seen as an intelligent gracious female figure by the critics, such as Knight, Barker, Von Doren, Pettet, Heliodora, among others. They idealise her for her being magnificent, beautiful, and smart in undoing Shylock's bond; she is also seen as merciful, charitable, and receives many other positive attributes. However, their analysis is based on the Manichaean opposition of goodness and evil in the play. They say she is merciful, intelligent, and good, whereas Shylock is said to be a villain, meagre, and resentful. But such a description is the mere reproduction of her description by other characters of the play. Some critics do not go further in the analysis to see what her desires and inward dimensions are.

Moreover, it is difficult to analyse Portia's intentions and attitudes, because she is the most idealised among characters in the play; she is even idealised by Shylock in the courtroom, when he praises her as he says 'O, wise young judge, how I do honour thee' (IV, i, 220). Thereby, her representation obfuscates her inward dispositions and intentions. This idealising device in the play obscures Portia's real intentions in a way that it gets hard to see what she really is.

Thus, it is noteworthy to see closely her inward intentions and desires. Portia's speeches reveal that her inward intentions are not to follow her father's will and thus she wants to choose herself a husband. Few critics such as Goddard (1969),[177] Thomas Billelo (2010) and Charles Ross (2010) analyse Portia's real intentions to Shylock and her father: Goddard considers that Portia is the golden casket and thus she is deceitful and dangerous; Thomas Billelo analyses how Portia twists the law, usurps the judge's role, condemns Shylock and introduces the revenge rationale instead of the judicial rationale in the courtroom; Charles Ross puts that Portia is fraudulent, but she does not acknowledge such

[177] See Harold C. Goddard's essay *The Three Caskets*, in John Wilders' casebook **Shakespeare: *The Merchant of Venice***, 1969.

fact, because she obliges the Duke and Antonio to state Shylock's penalty. Thus, she embodies Pilate's attitude of simply washing her hands.

Though this idealisation is significant for the concealment of the play's intentions, she strangely echoes the symbolic motifs of weariness and sadness present in Antonio's first speech: 'By my troth, Nerissa, my little body is aweary of this great world.' (I, ii, 1-2). She evokes Antonio's weariness, saying that her body feels tiredness and discontent. Walter (1960) states that 'this echo of 'wearies' is 'perhaps a reflection on and a corrective complement to the previous treatment of Antonio's melancholy' (1960, p. 40). Similarly, Drakakis states that for sure this is a reference to and similarity with Antonio's sadness (2010, p. 188-189). If they are correlative, what causes Portia's melancholy may be her obligation of following her father's will, according to which she must marry the man who chooses the right casket. This correspondence suggests her inward dimensions, unveiled through the repetition of the same symbolic motif revealed by Antonio. If the first thing Antonio and Portia convey is their melancholy, sadness, and weariness, then this has to do with their inwardness, which occlude their feelings and disguise them in their sadness. Portia and Antonio are represented by their sadness, which is odd to the festive atmosphere of the play. Elizabethan audiences were very fond of merry tales, festivals, comic plays, and farces. When they saw a sad character on stage, they would feel displeasure, disgust, and repudiation. Shakespeare created a mirroring device to represent one's feeling doubling it in another character. Such double enhances discontent which determines their inwardness: the anxiety to the paternal figure.

The opposition of her *little body* to the *great world* echoes also the macrocosms and microcosms symbolism, according to which both cosmos were closely related and maintained correspondences between them. Thus, if her body is weary, the great world mirrors its weariness in her body. In fact, the idealised and festive Belmont hides the characters' discontent and anxieties. If she is sad, Belmont however is not a happy world as many critics enhanced, but a sad place. Portia's weariness represents her inner dispositions because she does not want to accept her father's will and she cannot choose a husband. Shakespeare portrayed her inward dimensions in Portia's body as weary.

Quite wittily and ironically Nerissa answers Portia's complain:

> You would be, sweet madam, if your miseries were in the same abundance as your good fortunes are: and yet, for aught I see, they are as sick that surfeit with too much as they that starve with nothing. It is no mean happiness therefore, to be seated in the mean: superfluity comes sooner by white hairs, but competency lives longer. (I, ii, 2-8)

Nerissa states that Portia's complains are due to nothing. The suggestive *aught*, means this *littleness* in her complain. Nerissa uses the imagery of wealth, *abundance, fortunes, surfeit,* and *superfluity* to describe Portia's fortune. Alternatively, she describes poverty and starvation with terms such as *miseries, aught, starve, nothing, mean*. The opposition between *surfeit* and *starve* is suggestive, because surfeit means, besides excess, indigestive indisposition, which may convey that Portia is over-satisfied with her wealth. Shakespeare inter-mingled these oppositions to demonstrate how deeply these sides are intertwined in the human being: being rich, although in her inward dimensions we can feel her uneasiness. In this first description of Portia's inwardness, the magnetic and symbolic motif of Bassanio's description of Portia as *richly left* makes her uneasy, her richness wearies her and makes her sad.

Portia immediately responds to Nerissa's ironic comment by saying 'Good sentences and well pronounced' (I, ii, 9). She alludes to the theme of judgment in law and the difference between idealised desires and their unsatisfying achievements. Moreover, it unveils Portia's judgement of others, which reveals her inward feelings, ideas and thoughts. As she judges her suitors, she does not say exactly what they really are; her judgement and inference reveal her own inward dispositions, as is discussed by McGinn (2007, pp. 63, 174). In that sense, Richard Moulton (1969)[178] points out that judgment by appearances 'is the only method of judgment proper to practical life' (1969, p. 42), that is to say, when one judges other, something of his inwardness intertwines with his judgment. 'Clearly judgment by appearances will reach the ideal stage when there is the maximum of importance in the issue to be decided and the minimum of evidence by which to decide it' (1969, p. 42). What Nerissa is judging in Portia is not possible to state quite certainly, yet her ironical and witty tone denounces it, as Nerissa says 'They would be better, if well followed' (I, ii, 10). It means that she should be happy with her wealth and condition, but she complains because there is something which causes fear and anxiety, the fear of being chosen instead of choosing a husband.

Furthermore, Nerissa's Christian teaching about resignation contrasts with Portia's insatisfaction, anxiety and discontent. Then, Portia pronounces her first speech about the gap between ideals and actual achievements:

> If to do were as easy as to know what were good to do, chapels had been churches and poor men's cottages princes' palaces. It is a good divine that follows his own instructions: I can easier teach twenty what were good to be done, than be one of the twenty to follow mine own teaching. The brain may devise laws for the blood, but a hot temper leaps o'er a cold

[178] See Walter's Casebook on the play, 1969.

> decree: such a hare is madness the youth, to skip o'er the meshes of good counsel the cripple. But this reasoning is not in the fashion to choose me a husband. O me, the word 'choose!' I may neither choose whom I would nor refuse whom I dislike; so is the will of a living daughter curbed by the will of a dead father. Is it not hard, Nerissa, that I cannot choose one nor refuse none? (I, ii, 11-23)

Such a speech is not much commented by the critics and it has been even completely forgotten by them. She refers here to the gap between idealising and accomplishing one's idealised plan. The comparisons between chapels and churches, cottages and palaces convey the huge difference between what one wants to do and what one is able to do. Moreover, teaching someone how to do something and following one's own instruction is idealised: 'I can easier teach twenty what were good to be done, than be one of the twenty to follow mine own teaching' suggests that she acknowledges such a gap, but she cannot overcome it. The distance between morality and ethics is suggested by her speech. What she must do is different of what she really wants to do and does.

Coupled with that, she seems to disregard her father's attitude of putting the casket trial to choose her husband. She enhances in this speech her deepest desire: to choose by herself a husband to marry. However, her conscience does not allow such choice, once she is doomed to accomplish her father's will. She could satisfy her desire if she could disdain her father's will without the haunting and anguishing conscience. Thus, her saying 'the brain may devise laws for the blood, but a *hot temper leaps* o'er a cold decree' implies that her inward feelings, thoughts, ideas and desires are bound to leap over her bereaved father's cold decree. However, she cannot do such a thing because she may fear her own conscience.

She enhances her desire of choosing a husband by exclaiming in sorrowful tone: 'O me, the word 'choose''. Although she assumes it is impossible to use this reasoning in choosing a husband, this denial suggests her feelings: 'But this reasoning is not in the fashion to choose me a husband.' However, the denial of this reasoning seems to be a mere performance, because as soon as Nerissa mentions her suitors she despises one by one. Thus, she emphasises her innermost dimensions and desires: not to accomplish her father's will. She tries to react, but such reasoning does not enable any possible way out. Since she is obliged to accomplish her father's will honourably, she cannot deny her obligations to the caskets test, because she would be judged by refusing a husband. She needs to embody the theatrical side of identity, playing the social and family role of the good daughter, pointed out by McGinn (2007, pp. 11, 12). We have to take into account that choosing a husband was normally a task of a father, not of a daughter, not only of princes and princesses, but also of the noble class. She may feel her hatred and resentment towards her father's putting the casket test. Therefore,

she is haunted and terrified by the possibility of being chosen by one of the despised suitors of the play, just as she is willing to outwit her father's will. Her inward desire for free-will of choosing a husband is represented in her speech and reaction to the casket test. Shakespeare represents her inward desire and feelings in this reactive attitude to reasoning of the caskets.

Then, Nerissa's answer reversibly reveals her father's virtuosity:

> Your father was ever virtuous; and holy men at their death have good inspirations: therefore the lottery, that he hath devised in these three chests of gold, silver and lead, whereof who chooses his meaning chooses you, will, no doubt, never be chosen by any rightly but one who shall rightly love. But what warmth is there in your affection towards any of these princely suitors that are already come? (I, ii, 24-31)

Nerissa enhances an idealising description of Portia's paternal figure. He was always virtuous and had a good intention right before his death. Nerissa is instinctively responding to cultural assumptions of marriage, according to which every daughter was obliged to marry the man who was chosen by her father. Thereby, Portia must marry an honoured and virtuous man, who is able to distinguish sincerity and hypocrisy, ornament and feelings, appearances and inwardness.

Portia's father devised this test to see if the man who chooses her would choose not by the appearances, but by sincerity. Since Portia was not married and not engaged yet, her father decided to choose a casket trial. A psychoanalytic reading by Otto Rank identified the theme of the incest in Portia and her father's relationship. Portia is, in his reading, the daughter of a jealous father of folktales who imprisoned the daughter and enforce many obstacles to impede young men who seek for freeing the young imprisoned girl.[179] In a certain sense, Portia's father desired to keep her to him. Putting the caskets to choose a good husband suggests his jealousy and possessiveness. In the same sense, Freud suggests that the three caskets represent the three aspects of men's relationship to women: the mother who bore him; the beloved wife; and the Mother Earth or the wife who buries him. Thus, Portia's relationship to her father is said to be close and his presence still symbolises a strong power over her decisions and attitudes.

5. 2. Portia's suitors: from Inwardness to Judgement

Since the play presents the issue of judgement as an essential theme, everyone judges

[179] For that see Norman Holland, **Psychoanalysis and Shakespeare**, 1966. See also Phillip Amstrong's **Shakespeare in Psychoanalysis**, 2001.

by the appearances, including Portia. Portia's description of her suitors reveals how she sees and acts in the world. She asks Nerissa to name her suitors: 'I pray thee, over-name them; and as thou namest them, I will describe them; and, according to my description, level at my affection.' (I, ii, 31-33). She describes and analyses them not according to what they really are, but according to her inward dispositions and feelings. Judgement alludes to some hidden dimensions in the characters' inwardness: hypocrisy, irony and detachment. Portia describes them as stereotypes of different countries and these correspond to commonplaces in Elizabethan Renaissance. The first suitor is the Neapolitan Prince, whom Portia describes as a horseman: 'Ay, that's a colt indeed, for he doth nothing but talk of his horse; and he makes it a great appropriation to his own good parts, that he can shoe him himself. I am much afeard my lady his mother played false with a smith.' (I, ii, 38-42). Her attitude is to despise him because he is a horseman who speaks but of his horses and embodies animal traits in his manners. Portia mocks him because she thinks her mother had an affair with a smith. The representation of the Neapolitan Prince is superficial, suggesting rather Portia's prejudices than his own characteristics. Her mocking demonstrates detachment and her incomprehension denotes that she does not see him as human being, but rather as an ensemble of comic traits. Shakespeare portrays her inner dispositions by her judgment of her suitors.

Also, the description of the County Palatine is quite similar to Gratiano's description of Antonio's sadness:

> He doth nothing but frown, as who should say 'If you will not have me, choose:' he hears merry tales and smiles not: I fear he will prove the weeping philosopher when he grows old, being so full of unmannerly sadness in his youth. I had rather be married to a death's head with a bone in his mouth than to either of these. God defend me from these two! (I, ii, 44-50)

As Gratiano's description of Antonio's sadness, the Palatine is also described as a sad man. Shakespeare juxtaposes two characters to enhance their feelings and especially to enhance Antonio's sadness. But it also emphasises Portia's feelings of sadness and weariness in the beginning of the play. What Portia sees in the County Palatine is what also troubles her. She prefers to marry a 'death's head', instead of marrying the man she dislikes. Also, she prefers to die as virgin as Diana to marry the man she does not love.

After that, she describes the French lord, Monsieur Le Bon as everyman:

> God made him, and therefore let him pass for a man. In truth, I know it is a sin to be a mocker: but, he! why, he hath a horse better than the Neapolitan's, a better bad habit of frowning than the Count Palatine; he is every man in no man; if a throstle sing, he falls

> straight a capering: he will fence with his own shadow: if I should marry him, I should marry twenty husbands. If he would despise me I would forgive him, for if he love me to madness, I shall never requite him. (I, ii, 53-61)

The representation of the French lord as everyman is a common stereotype of the morality plays, in which everyman is the incarnation of a man with no personality. He embodies every common trait, as well as he dresses every suit he finds interesting. It was an Elizabethan commonplace to see the French and also the Spaniards, as we see later on Aragon, as common and naïve who had no taste for clothes and had no manners. We have to bear in mind that the French and the Spaniards were England's enemies, whose plans were to disenthrone Elizabeth I. In that sense, Kaplan (2002) presents the image called *A Frenchman*, printed in Andrew Boorde's *The First Book of the Introduction of Knowledge*, printed in 1542. The image comes with some verses which describe the clothes of the Frenchman as "Jagged and cut round about [as decoration] / I am full of new inventions / And daily I do make new toys and fashions. / All nations of me example do take / When any garment they go about to make." (in Kaplan, 2002, p. 162).

She mocks him by saying that he is worse than the other two first suitors. Portia demonstrates irony and sarcasm to her suitors. In that sense, Hegel (2009) points that irony is the affirmation of negativity. A sarcastic figure swerves his action easily from irony to sarcasm, mocking and aggression. No one can see any attachment to others in an ironic attitude. In this speech, though she acknowledges, in her conscience, that it is a sin to be a mocker, her conscience cannot persuade her of sincerity and compassion to others. She becomes a mocker who gives a show to the audience; irony and mocking destroy even the purest feeling such as love and respect.

Nerissa asks about Falconbridge, the young baron of England. Portia describes him as a dumb-show:

> You know I say nothing to him, for he understands not me, nor I him: he hath neither Latin, French, nor Italian, and you will come into the court and swear that I have a poor pennyworth in the English. He is a proper man's picture, but, alas, who can converse with a dumb-show? How oddly he is suited! I think he bought his doublet in Italy, his round hose in France, his bonnet in Germany and his behavior everywhere. (I, ii, 64-71)

It would be funny for the audience to hear such description of themselves. However, some of them could feel enraged because this description affronted their Englishness. The Englishman as a person with no particular and definite behaviour was a commonplace in France and Spain. Kaplan (2002) presents a similar image to the Frenchman, representing

now *An Englishman*, printed in Andrew Boorde's book *The First Book of the Introduction of Knowledge* (1542). In description of the image, the representation of the Englishman: "I am an English man, and naked I stand here / Musing in my mind what raiment [clothing] I shall wear / For now I will wear this and now I will wear that / Now I will wear I cannot tell what. / All new fashions be pleasant to me."(in Kaplan, 2002, p. 165). Such descriptions go in the same trend of Elizabethan commonplaces which described other people with stereotypes and prejudice.

Similarly, the Scottish lord is described by Portia as a man who borrows from another person and needs surety: 'That he hath a neighbourly charity in him, for he borrowed a box of the ear of the Englishman and swore he would pay him again when he was able: I think the Frenchman became his surety and sealed under for another.' (I, ii, 74-78). Such description echoes Bassanio's borrowing money from Shylock and using Antonio as a surety. Such description is very ironic, because Portia will marry a prodigal gentleman who has borrowed money from a usurer.

Then, Portia describes the Duke of Saxony as a drunkard:

> Very vilely in the morning, when he is sober, and most vilely in the afternoon, when he is drunk: when he is best, he is a little worse than a man, and when he is worst, he is little better than a beast: and the worst fall that ever fell, I hope I shall make shift to go without him. (I, ii, 81-86)

The Saxons were said to be drunkards, as Fynes Moryson describes them in his essay *An Itinerary* (2002).[180] According to him, 'all the Germans have one national vice of drunkenness in such excess (especially the Saxons), as it stains their national virtues, and makes them often offensive to friends and much more to strangers.' (2002, p. 166). All her descriptions are comic and correspond to Elizabethan and continental common-places about people throughout Europe. Then, as Nerissa suggests that Portia could refuse him, Portia unveils her desire of not performing her father's will:

> **Nerissa**. If he should offer to choose, and choose the right casket, you should refuse to perform your father's will, if you should refuse to accept him.
> **Portia**. Therefore, for fear of the worst, I pray thee, set a deep glass of rhenish wine on the contrary casket, for if the devil be within and that temptation without, I know he will choose it. I will do anything, Nerissa, ere I'll be married to a sponge. (I, ii, 87-94)

Comically, Portia suggests for the first time that her intention is not to respect her father's will, because it denies her desire of choosing a husband. Putting a glass of Rhenish

[180] See Kaplan's collection, 2002.

wine on the wrong casket potentialises Portia's fantasy and desire of outwitting her father's will. That is what she does in the casket scene when she chooses a song which gives Bassanio a hint of the right casket. Sinfield (1998)[181] points out that the critical point is 'to reject the sentimental notion of Portia as an innocent, virtuous, 'Victorian' heroine' (1998, p. 165). In fact, her real intention is to outwit her father's will. Her inwardness is depicted in her revealing her innermost wishes and intentions.

After Portia's swearing of putting a glass of Rhenish wine in the wrong casket, her speech enhances once again her innermost desires of not accepting the casket test:

> If I live to be as old as Sibylla, I will die as chaste as Diana, unless I be obtained by the manner of my father's will. I am glad this parcel of wooers are so reasonable, for there is not one among them but I dote on his very absence, and I pray God grant them a fair departure. (I, ii, 101-106)

Her desire of dying 'as chaste as Diana' if she lives as long as Sybille enhances her desire of not marrying any man and of not accepting and taking her father's will. She does not wish to marry those suitors who came to woo her, but her will is to choose a husband herself. Moreover, according to Drakakis (2010), the reference to Sybil marks the return of the Virgin: 'the 'Virgin' in this case was significantly, Astraea or Justice, the last of the deities to leave the earth. Portia becomes the upholder of 'justice', and these classical references both have a semantic density and anticipate the later action' (2010, p. 199). Thus, this suggestion evokes her decision of being the judge of Antonio and Shylock's bond. If she embodies this fantasy of being Astraea and Justice, she wants in the same way to use justice for her own purpose.

5. 3. The Casket Scene: Inwardness and false Appearances

It is worth remarking the differences between inward and outward dimensions in the casket scenes. According to Maus (1995), inwardness was not easily conceived by the spectator. Thus, the notion of deceitful appearances receives a cunning twist in Shakespeare's work; the changing from the schematic medieval representation now unfolds new forms of representation in Shakespearean drama. That is the case in the three caskets scene in **The Merchant of Venice**. Portia, commanded by her dead father to accomplish his will, is obliged to marry the man who chooses the right casket, that which contains her picture. The suitors

[181] See Alan Sinfield's essay *How to read **The Merchant of Venice** without being Heterosexist*, in COYLE, Martin. **The Merchant of Venice**: contemporary critical essays. Londres: Macmillan: 1998. (New Casebooks)

must choose one of the three caskets, the golden, the silver, and the lead one. Thus, the casket test is in fact a cognitive test, which obliges the suitors to interpret and infer the right casket according to their feelings, intentions, dispositions, and thoughts.

According to the inscriptions, read by Morocco,

> The first, of gold, who this inscription bears,
> 'Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire;'
> The second, silver, which this promise carries,
> 'Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves;'
> This third, dull lead, with warning all as blunt,
> 'Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath.' (II, vii)

The inscriptions of the caskets bear riddles which must be interpreted by the suitors. Each one deciphers it according to his feelings, ambition, and inward desires. Coupled with that, the attempt to choose one of the caskets obliges them to an oath with three requests: first, they must never reveal to anyone the casket he had chosen; second, never marry any woman; and third, leave Belmont immediately. These riddles and the conditions of the oath embody a threatening which, in the profoundest level, denotes limitation and even unleashes fears of castration. For example, for the characters who choose the wrong casket, such as Morocco and Aragon, the consequences of this wrong choice is evidently the imposition of limiting condition, which they must accept resignedly. They are deprived of their capability of wooing another woman and thus they must endure a symbolic sense of castration. According to Norman Holland,[182] Portia's represents a sort of mother who threatens to make men passive and powerless. Her cruelty is disguised in the riddle ordeal of the caskets. Consequently, men's failure of solving such a riddle 'means that the man is not really a man' (1966, p. 233). He is prohibited to marry and he symbolically loses his manhood, he is symbolically castrated.

Among the suitors are Morocco, the moor, The Prince of Aragon, and Bassanio. The choice of the three caskets by the first two suitors, Morocco and Aragon, is done by the allurement of the appearances. Morocco describes himself as a valiant heart (II, i) and calls himself 'a golden mind', the prince of men, whose aspect has feared the most valiant men he ever met. Morocco disdains the lead casket because it threatens and has no value. He disdains the silver casket because it offers only that what a man deserves, no more, no less. He considers him as a man above the common condition of others. Thus, he presumes he deserves and has qualities to marry Portia. Consequently, Morocco fails to choose the casket

[182] See her book **Shakespeare and Psychoanalysis**, 1966.

because he takes appearances as essential to interpret the caskets. He cannot perceive that the golden casket and ornament deceive, because they create the illusion of beauty.

He chooses gold, because he thinks it offers what every man desires, i. e., Portia. However, when he opens the golden casket, he only finds a skull inside it. What it suggests is that the interiority of something is veiled by the outward beauty. The value of gold is just ornament, and it deceives men who invest everything they have in money and venture. Thus, the beauty of gold has inferior value, hiding degradation and death. For Goddard, Portia is the golden casket,[183] because she only displays ornament and outward appearances and hides the threat of death. We see in such suggestions that she embodies the threatening of degradation, ruin, and deceitfulness, as Maus (1995) also highlights.

Aragon, after taking his oath, is quite disposed to face the riddle of the three caskets. He is also entrapped due to his choosing by the appearances. He disdains the lead casket, because he thinks that to risk everything he has for uncertainty is madness. Moreover, he disdains not only the lead casket, but Portia as well: 'You shall look fairer, ere I give or hazard'. He despises gold, because he does not want to choose what 'many men desire'. For him, the phrase 'many men' denotes:

> The fool multitude, that choose by show,
> Not learning more than the fond eye doth teach;
> Which pries not to the interior, but, like the martlet,
> Builds in the weather on the outward wall. (II, ix, 25-28)

Aragon is aware of the deceitful appearances and fears them, because they threaten and veil the interiority of things, fearing to choose by the outward ornament. The multitude is for Aragon like the Martlet, who chooses the outward of a house to build its nest. However, martlet/martin was a common slang for fool, as Spurgean points out (2006, p. 178-179). Ironically, he chooses the silver casket, because he considers that he really deserves Portia. Nevertheless, his choice is done by presumption of a refinement which he judges he has and which makes him different from the mob. Walter states that,

> Arragon, scornful of popular opinion, rejects the golden casket. Proud of his won worth, he exclaims against the corrupt way in which many obtain their position and honours. Finally, he does what no true Elizabethan lover should do – assumes that he deserves Portia. (1960, p. 104).

Thus, what he gets is just the portrait of a 'blinking idiot', the portrait of a fool

[183] See Harold C. Goddard's essay *The Three Caskets*, in John Wilders' casebook **Shakespeare: *The Merchant of Venice***, 1969, p. 162.

(martlet/martin), which mocks his choice. Aragon's incapability of judging is suggested when he chooses just by his presumed merit, because he considers himself covered by silver (Silver'd o'er). As he disdains Portia, she refutes him by saying 'To offend and judge, are distinct offices / And of opposed natures.' (II, ix, 60-61). His attitude of offending does not convey judgement; instead, it displays loss of control, impertinence and arrogance. Aragon also fails because he constructs a false and presumptuous image about himself, an image of a man who exhibits a merit which he does not have. He praises himself, trying to deceive other characters through his image. In fact, he wishes to embody the role a magnificent, proud and honourable man, yet he is merely fashioning image to create a good impression on her.[184] Aragon and Morocco do not see what the relationships veil underneath the appearances. Human relationship can be mined and corrupted in their innermost hidden dimensions. The inaccessibility of inward sides of human relationships, according to Maus (1995), creates frustration and allurement.

However, the right choice, Bassanio's choice, is not done based on appearances, but it seems to be by despising them:

> So may the *outward* shows be least themselves:
> The world is still deceived with ornament.
> In law, what plea so tainted and corrupt,
> But, being seasoned with a gracious voice,
> Obscures the show of evil? In religion,
> What damned error, but some sober brow
> Will bless it and approve it with a text,
> Hiding the grossness with fair ornament? (III, ii, 72-80)

It is possible to perceive in this soliloquy that Bassanio considers speeches and appearances deceitful and dangerous. The outward appearances have less moral value and they are considered less trustful than inwardness and sincerity, something which reinforces Maus' discussion on the differences between outwardness and inwardness. It is also what happens in laws and religion, wherein the corruption of the speeches is due to human ambition and desire.[185] His reference to the corruption of law alludes indirectly to what Portia will do to Shylock in the trial scene. Desire and ambition corrupt law, justice and honesty. This affront to the speeches of law and religion conveys anxiety and suspicion to the large quantities of discourses emerging in the age and the religious changes in that period. Thus, the distinction between outwardness and inwardness became a common issue in moral, theological, medical, legal and literary discourses of the age.

[184] For this see McGinn, pp. 11, 12 and 65.
[185] For the emergence of the suspicion of false religious rites, see Maus, 1995, p. 15 and 17.

In the second part of this soliloquy, Bassanio reveals that

> There is no vice so simple but assumes
> Some mark of virtue on his *outward* parts:
> How many cowards, whose hearts are all as false
> As stairs of sand, wear yet upon their chins
> The beards of Hercules and frowning Mars;
> Who, *inward* search'd, have livers white as milk;
> And these assume but valour's excrement
> To render them redoubted! Look on beauty,
> And you shall see 'tis purchased by the weight; (III, ii, 81-89, my own highlights)

The opposition between *inward* and *outward*, pointed out by Maus, is enhanced now by the contrast between moral values and trustfulness. The awareness of the problematic representations of the appearances is seen in the comparison between the coward's outward and the brave warriors, as Hercules and Mars, in opposition to the false inward self (*hearts*) as "stairs of sand", which suggests the danger of false appearances. The allusion to the inward as "livers white milk" suggests that sometimes inwardness is not deceitful and corrupted. Moreover, beauty is measured not by its inward values, but just by its weight and by its ostentation.

However, Bassanio's choice seems to be based on the silence of the lead. The shifting from inner-self to the outer appearances presupposes his experience with different codes, the heterogeneous semantics of inwardness, which is already highly sophisticated in Renaissance. For example, the unthrifty use of rhetoric and ornament causes suspicion. Bassanio's choice may be just a better, clever decoding of the appearances. He is a clever master of the multiple codes and his love may be feigned:

> Thus, ornament is but the guiled shore
> To a most dangerous sea; the beauteous scarf
> Veiling an Indian beauty; in a word,
> The *seeming truth* which cunning times put on
> To entrap the wisest. Therefore, thou gaudy gold,
> Hard food for Midas, I will none of thee;
> Nor none of thee, thou pale and common drudge
> 'Tween man and man: but thou, thou meagre lead,
> Which rather threatenest than dost promise aught,
> Thy paleness moves me more than eloquence;
> And here choose I; joy be the consequence! (III, ii, 97-107, my own highlights)

Bassanio's choice is supposed to be not in accordance to the *seeming truth*, but to the silent paleness, simplicity and weight of the lead. What Portia's father left written on a note inside the casket reveals exactly that the choices based on appearances are dangerous and deceitful: "You that choose not by the view, / Chance as fair and choose as true!" ! (III, ii).

Although Portia's father was a wise man, who knew the danger of vanity, pride, greed, he was outwitted by Bassanio. In that sense, Bassanio is clever enough to perceive that the opposition between gold and silver is fundamental: gold, whose excessively garish beauty is said to threaten Bassanio rather than seduce him, is opposed to the silver, *common drudge,* which is nothing but a commercial symbol used by men. Just the lead casket, which has Portia's picture, is the true one.

Ironically, Shakespeare put in Bassanio's speech a description of outward appearances which echoes Bassanio's description of Portia as a Medusa:

> So are those crisped snaky golden locks
> Which make such wanton gambols with the wind,
> Upon supposed fairness, often known
> To be the dowry of a second head,
> The skull that bred them in the sepulchre. (III, ii, 92-96)

The phrase *golden locks* echoes Portia's golden locks in the description of the beginning of the play are now seen as deceitful and dangerous in description of deceitful ornament. They are merely what will remain in the memory after death. The snaky locks suggest Medusa's image; also, it displays the 'seductive satanic deceit' (Drakakis, 2010, p. 299) and 'wanton gambols', which dance in the wind, also suggest this seductive and deceitful dimension in ornament. Such contraction in Bassanio's description of Portia suggests his inner intentions: beforehand to marry Portia and get her fortune, and now to convince everybody of his sincere belief in the simplicity of true inwardness.

Likewise, sepulchre enhances the threat of death and destruction suggested in Portia's former association to Medea and the Golden Fleece quested by many Jasons (I, i, 170-172). Such description of golden locks mirrors and enhances Portia's deceitful outward appearances, which veil her inward dispositions. Such deceitful dimensions will be revealed in the trial scene, when Portia undoes Shylock's bond and when she cheats Bassanio and Antonio taking Bassanio's ring and quarrelling because of it.

After that, Bassanio opens the lead casket and he describes her portrait in the same sense which was undervalued in the speech above:

> Here in her hairs
> The painter plays the spider and hath woven
> A golden mesh to entrap the hearts of men,
> Faster than gnats in cobwebs; (III, ii, 120-123)

Once again, Bassanio blindly associates the representation of Portia as mere painting

of a sort of spider who has ‘woven / a golden mesh’ to deceit and entrap her suitors, as Morocco and Aragon were entrapped before. Bassanio’s hyperbole alludes to the spider’s web as an instrument of allurement, deception and treason. In that sense, Drakakis enhances that *gnats in cobwebs* denotes ‘a striking image that amplifies the power and fineness of Portia’s ‘hairs’ emphasizing their appearance as a mesh of such fine quality that they can entrap the most insignificant of flies. The gnat was sometimes associated with blindness.’ (Drakakis, 2010, p. 302).[186] Thus, Portia’s snaky locks are the entrapping web which ruins many in the play: Morocco, Aragon and Shylock. And Shylock is entrapped by her, because he judges her by the appearances: he thinks Portia (the Judge) is a noble young man and a right judge.

However, what is disquieting in the play is that perhaps it is not Bassanio who deciphered the riddle of the caskets, but that Portia herself outwitted her father’s will, by choosing a convenient song for the occasion. As soon as Bassanio meets her in the first place, Bassanio cleverly asks her to confess the true casket, “confess and love”. It is astonishing that just one critic has highlighted this possibility in the casket scene. Harold Goddard (1951) was the first critic to point out that the song which Portia demands to play suggests the right choice through a cunning pun of rhymes:

> Who selected the song that is sung while Bassanio mediates we shall never know. It of course gives away the secret. And in the connection there is a point *I* have never happened to see noted. The verses inside the g*o*lden casket begin with a rhyme on long o (g*o*ld); those inside the s*i*lver casket on a rhyme on short *i* (th*i*s). The song sung while Bassanio is making up his mind begins with a rhyme on short *e* (br*e*d). But *bred* [...] is a full rhyme with *lead*! (1951, in Wilders, 1969, p. 157).

And as we realise in the song sung when Bassanio is choosing the casket, the rhymes suggest the true casket:

> Tell me where is fancy *bred*,
> Or in the heart, or in the *head*,
> How begot, how *nourishèd*?
> (III, ii, 63-65 my own highlights)

The first three rhymes *bred, head, nourishèd* rhyme of course with *lead*, the casket containing Portia’s picture. One can see in this intentional suggestion that Portia accomplishes what she most desired in the very beginning of the play, when she tells Nerissa, by a sort of denial of the reasoning of choosing a husband:

[186] Drakakis points out that such suggestion of blindness is found, for example, in Matthew, 23: 24.

> But this reasoning is not in the fashion to choose me a husband. O me, the word 'choose!' I may neither choose whom I would nor refuse whom I dislike; so is the will of a living daughter curbed by the will of a dead father. Is it not hard, Nerissa, that I cannot choose one nor refuse none? (I, ii, 21-25).

If she chose the song for Bassanio, her desire to refuse her father's will is now satisfied. Drakakis states that this song is a 'charge against Portia's good faith' (Drakakis, 2010, p. 296). Coupled with that, in I, ii, she wanted to cheat the Duke of Saxony by putting a glass of wine in the wrong casket: 'Therefore, for fear of the worst, I pray thee, set a deep glass of rhenish wine on the contrary casket, for if the devil be within and that temptation without, I know he will choose it. I will do anything, Nerissa, ere I'll be married to a sponge.' (I, ii, 87-94). Just Goddard has pondered about the suggestion of Portia's cheating her suitors and her choosing the song for Bassanio. Here is enough evidence that she really wants to choose a husband, but first she wants to outwit her father's will. Therefore, Portia's weariness in the beginning of the play is the symptom of her anxiety of her obligation to accomplish and submit herself to her father's will. Therefore, the paternal figure is still an absent presence that haunts and disturbs her.

Moreover, if we take a look in a few lines before the opening of Bassanio's choosing the casket, they suggest the intention of revealing the right casket:

> **Portia**. Upon the rack, Bassanio! then confess
> What *treason* there is *mingled* with your love.
> **Bassanio**. None but that ugly *treason of mistrust*,
> Which makes me fear the enjoying of my love [...]
> **Portia.** Ay, but I fear you speak upon the rack,
> Where men enforced do speak anything.
> **Bassanio.** Promise me life, and I'll confess the truth.
> **Portia**. Well then, confess and live.
> **Bassanio.** 'Confess' and 'love'
> Had been the very sum of my confession:
> (**Merchant of Venice**, III, ii, my own highlights)

Here Shakespeare enhances some important *leitmotivs* of the play: treason, suspiciousness, mistrust and the revealing of inward thoughts, feelings and desires. 'Treason mingled with love', 'the treason of mistrust' and rack, in the meaning of extortion, alludes to Bassanio's rhetorical abilities as a fortune-hunter. We can imagine that Bassanio wants her to confess the truth about the caskets. In this dialogue, both Bassanio and Portia enable Portia's fantasy of outwitting her father's will, in a way that they can marry without being blamed of dishonour. There is a fantasy implicit in the core of their discourses, which is just slightly suggested. Shakespeare represents her inward dispositions of the mind by depicting Portia's purpose of tricking her father and outwitting his will.

5. 4. Suing the Merchant: Shylock's revenge

Shylock's rage and bitterness because of Jessica's elopement projected onto Antonio is a retaliatory act against the Christians. Though Lorenzo ran away with Jessica and took Shylock's money, he uses Antonio as a sort of scapegoat to his revenge. At the end of III, i, Tubal affirms that Antonio is indeed bankrupt. Shylock is quite determined in suing Antonio. He wants to satisfy his revenge at any cost:

> **Tubal.** But Antonio is certainly undone.
> **Shylock.** Nay, that's true, that's very true. Go, Tubal, fee me an officer; bespeak him a fortnight before. I will have the heart of him, if he forfeit; for, were he out of Venice, I can make what merchandise I will. Go, go, Tubal, and meet me at our synagogue; go, good Tubal; at our synagogue, Tubal. (III, i, 112-118)

He wants to anticipate the date of the bond and he will demand his bond 'a fortnight before'. In fact, he wants at any cost to revenge himself of Antonio's mistreatment, disrespect and disdain. Shylock desperately wants to do it because nothing else remains: he has lost many things he esteemed, so that he cannot bare the idea of leaving Antonio unpunished. Thus, he reacts by not waiting for the deadline of his bond. Moreover, his repetitive comic speech enhances once again his resentment and obsession for revenge. By these repetitions Shakespeare suggests Shylock's inward feelings and intentions. Such comic repetition is a mimetic device to represent his inwardness.

The next time we see Shylock on stage is in III, iii, a scene when Antonio is imprisoned by the jailer. Enraged, Shylock does not want to hear Antonio's complaints and requests: 'Jailer, look to him: tell not me of mercy; / This is the fool that lent out money gratis: / Jailer, look to him.' (III, iii, 01-03). In this moment, Antonio gives a positive description of Shylock for the second time: 'Hear me yet, good Shylock.' (III, iii, 03). Antonio tries to dissuade him of his bond and his demanding for a lawful decision in court. The merchant could have thought about any solution for his bankruptcy and his debts to Shylock. It is worth noting that Antonio's friends do nothing for him *now*. In fact, they did not do anything for him in the beginning of the play, when he needed to help Bassanio to get the loan of three thousand ducats. Why then did Antonio ask money to Shylock and not to his friends?

Then he claims the Jew's mercy who does not want to hear him:

> I'll have my bond; speak not against my bond:
> I have sworn an oath that I will have my bond.
> Thou calledst me dog before thou hadst a cause;
> But, since I am a dog, beware my fangs:
> The duke shall grant me justice. I do wonder,
> Thou naughty jailer, that thou art so fond
> To come abroad with him at his request. (III, iii, 4-10)

In a loquacious discourse, full of repetitions expressing his anger, Shylock clearly claims that he will have his bond at any cost. Once again Shylock remembers Antonio's calling him a dog. But here he cunningly reverses Antonio's insults into a sort of weapon against him. Now the kicked dog can attack Antonio with his fangs. Shylock remarks once again that Antonio had no cause to offend, aggress and strike the Jew. Thus, his discourse makes evidence that he cannot control his anger and resentment. His uncontrolled dimensions overcome him, making both the audience and the read see in-between that his inward feelings, rage and bitterness are represented in his loquacious speech. The uncontrolled dimension was something perceived in the Renaissance not only by Shakespeare, but by Montaigne, who pointed out that our ethical and moral decisions are partly determined by the uncontrolled dimensions of the inner self.

Against the Shylock we saw in I, iii, who wanted to seem kind and generous to Antonio, even though we knew his secret intentions, this Shylock reveals his innermost dark and sinister dimensions. He looks rather evil and villainous than in other moments of the play. It is quite surprising to see his anger and crying out on the streets. However, Shylock's rage was visible in the previous scene when he claimed that both Jews and Christians are similar in terms of feelings, ideas, intentions and physical constitution.

Though Antonio tries to speak to him and dissuade of his intention of suing him at court, Shylock is not merciful to Antonio, he insists on not hearing the merchant's claims.

> I'll have my bond; I will not hear thee speak:
> I'll have my bond; and therefore speak no more.
> I'll not be made a soft and dull-eyed fool,
> To shake the head, relent, and sigh, and yield
> To Christian intercessors. Follow not;
> I'll have no speaking: I will have my bond. (III, iii, 12-17)

Shylock's strong-headedness will indeed be a problem for him in the trial scene, when Portia will use his unmercifulness to outwit his bond. Here and in the above-mentioned speech, Shylock obsessively repeats the sentence 'I'll have my bond'. He is, in fact, moved by his obsessive desire for revenge against Antonio's mistreatment, Lorenzo's running away

with Jessica, as well as his own daughter's theft and disbursement of his ducats. This obsession for revenge unveils his bitterness and resentment. His seeking for revenge turns out to be fanaticism and even madness.

Shylock recognises in this speech that in some occasions he had been soft and kind, and even made a fool's eye to Antonio's ill-treatment to him. He was used to being submissive and relenting to the merchant's mistreatment and undoing of his business. Against Shylock's rage and desire for revenge, his submission which once made him accept Antonio's aggressions, is an imagistic powerful contrast in this scene. The reversal of the roles – Antonio was once the aggressor and Shylock the victim, and now Shylock is the aggressor whereas Antonio embodies the victim – demonstrates Shakespeare's cunning artistry in building contrasts. Though they seem to be opposing characters, they have indeed similar sinister and aggressive impulses and feelings. What Shakespeare is suggesting that their relationship is not a matter of black and white, but their relationship simply reveals that both Antonio and Shylock can play tricks, be victims, aggressors and avengers.

Though Shylock does not hear Antonio, the merchant also acknowledges his undoing of Shylock's business:

> **Salerio**. It is the most impenetrable cur
> That ever kept with men.
> **Antonio**. Let him alone:
> I'll follow him no more with bootless prayers.
> He seeks my life; his reason well I know:
> I oft delivered from his forfeitures
> Many that have at times made moan to me;
> Therefore he hates me. (III, iii, 18-24)

Salerio states Shylock is an impervious dog among men and that no one can dissuade him of his intentions. Salerio's mentioning 'impenetrable cur' alludes to the commonplace of the impossibility of knowing and figuring out one's heart, intentions and ideas, according to Maus (1995). It is ironic, because though the merchants were supposed to know Shylock's real intentions, Antonio was not able to prevent the embarrassing situation of being bankrupt and sued by Shylock. According to Harry Berger Jr. (2010),[187] the play is about embarrassment and humiliation. All characters embarrass others, especially Portia, who embarrasses Shylock, Antonio and Bassanio. But here Shylock's bond aim at humiliating

[187] *Mercifixion in The Merchant of Venice: The Riches of Embarrassment*, by Harry Berger Jr, 2010.

Antonio, as well as Antonio's signing the bond aims at humiliating Bassanio. According to Berger Jr (2010),[188]

> Instead of being crucified, he is mercified. Mercifixion may be more humane than crucifixion: you mercify rather than punish. Nevertheless, it inflicts its own kind of pain: you punish by mercifying. […] The pain mercifixion inflicts is the pain of embarrassment. […] More generally, *The Merchant of Venice* is a comedy of embarrassment […]. To embarrass is to make someone feel awkward or uncomfortable, humiliated or ashamed. Such feelings are triggered not only by specific acts of criticism, blame, and accusation. (2010, p. 3-4).

Portia embarrasses not only Antonio and Bassanio, but Shylock as well. Portia's rhetorical power makes possible that she outwits Shylock's bond and does not lose her money in a thriftless enterprise. In a certain sense, the figure of Medea suggestively comes onto stage, bewitches Shylock and wins him.

Furthermore, as in I, iii, Antonio recognises once again that Shylock hates him because he had undone his 'forfeitures' and helped other merchants to repay their debts. He also acknowledges the lawful impossibility of stopping Shylock's civil suit, in his conversation with Salerio:

> **Salerio**. I am sure the duke
> Will never grant this forfeiture to hold.
> **Antonio**. The duke cannot deny the course of law:
> For the commodity that strangers have
> With us in Venice, if it be denied,
> Will much impeach the justice of his state;
> Since that the trade and profit of the city
> Consisteth of all nations. (III, iii, 24-30)

Though Salerio believes that the Duke is going to free Antonio from such a bond, Antonio denies such possibility, because it could set a precedent in Venetian laws and many other merchants would be able to claim the right of undoing their bonds. In this speech, Antonio also reveals to the audience that Venice is economically based on foreign commerce. Both foreign and Venetian merchants had the same rights, because Venice depended financially on their profits and commerce. In fact, Venice was much like the late 16th century London. Some reports of Shakespeare's age revealed that the commerce and financial gains in London and Venice were basically provided by foreigners, especially Jews.[189]

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[188] See Harry Berger Jr's *Mercifixion in The Merchant of Venice: The Riches of Embarrassment*, 2010.

[189] See Kaplan's (2002) collection of reports of the age, which enhance constantly that both Venice and London had many foreigners who worked merchandising and lending money.

After Shylock's leaving the scene, Antonio is very submissive and resigned to his fate. He accepts that he will be sued by Shylock and, as a result, there seem to be no way out. He only prays that Bassanio comes back to see his sacrifice for him:

> These griefs and losses have so bated me,
> That I shall hardly spare a pound of flesh
> To-morrow to my bloody creditor.
> Well, jailer, on. Pray God, Bassanio come
> To see me pay his debt, and then I care not! (III, iii, 32-36)

In fact, Antonio embraces the Christian-like sacrifice for Bassanio. In a subtler level he seems to be delighted with the sacrifice Shylock will impinge on him, revealing his frivolous attitude towards Bassanio. In fact, Antonio's sacrifice for Bassanio, enabled by Shylock, satisfies his masochistic desire and fear for pain and pity. He accepts to be sacrificed like a lamb, in fact he will call himself a 'tainted-wether' (a weak castrated ram) that is ready to be murdered. This masochistic desire for sacrifice/castration is the effect of the mysterious forces incrusted in his unconscious forces which determine his inward feelings (cf. McGinn, 2007, p. 12). What is more striking is that the more Shylock will claim for his bond and torture Antonio with his promise, the more Antonio will be resigned. The following scene shows both together again, and Antonio will be weaker and complied with his fate, and Shylock will be stronger and more confident that he will have his bond.

5. 5. The Trial Scene: Judgement, Conscience and Inwardness

In the court of justice, the Duke confirms Antonio's submission to Shylock's bond:

> **Duke**. I am sorry for thee: thou art come to answer
> A stony adversary, an inhuman wretch
> Uncapable of pity, void and empty
> From any dram of mercy.
> **Antonio**. I have heard
> Your grace hath ta'en great pains to qualify
> His rigorous course; but since he stands obdurate
> And that no lawful means can carry me
> Out of his envy's reach, I do oppose
> My patience to his fury, and am armed
> To suffer, with a quietness of spirit,
> The very tyranny and rage of his. (IV, i, 1-12)

The Duke describes Shylock as a heartless being, who does not want to hear their begging and is merciless. The Duke sees Shylock as merely incapable of mercy and pity.

Though the Duke, as the representative of Venice's law and justice, tries to defend Antonio from Shylock's suit, he is unable to undo Shylock's bond and dissuade him of his intention. However, Antonio is prepared for Shylock's suit and rage. In fact, after Antonio's words the duke simply silences and demands: 'Go one and call the Jew into the court' (IV,1, 13).

Moreover, in this speech the merchant also acknowledges that there is no law in Venice which can stop the Jew and break such a bond. Antonio's attitude is resignation and even submission to Shylock's bond and Venice's law. In fact, in the trial scene, he embodies the trait of a lamb ready to sacrifice, a sacrifice he is bound to suffer for Bassanio's sake.

When the duke demands Shylock to enter the courtroom, he tries to dissuade Shylock of his bond once again. However, in vain can the Duke convince Shylock:

> Make room, and let him stand before our face.
> Shylock, the world thinks, and I think so too,
> That thou but leadest this fashion of thy malice
> To the last hour of act; and then 'tis thought
> Thou'lt show thy mercy and remorse more strange
> Than is thy strange apparent cruelty;
> And where thou now exactest the penalty,
> Which is a pound of this poor merchant's flesh,
> Thou wilt not only loose the forfeiture,
> But, touched with human gentleness and love,
> Forgive a moiety of the principal;
> Glancing an eye of pity on his losses,
> That have of late so huddled on his back,
> Enow to press a royal merchant down
> And pluck commiseration of his state
> From brassy bosoms and rough hearts of flint,
> From stubborn Turks and Tartars, never trained
> To offices of tender courtesy.
> We all expect a gentle answer, Jew. (IV, i, 15-33)

Now the duke tries to persuade Shylock reminding him of Antonio's former losses and his misery, though his talk is in vain. The Duke hopes that Shylock is merciful to Antonio. For him Shylock's suit is quite strange and reveals his mercilessness. However, the duke suggests that if he takes the pound of flesh he will lose his money and the chance of forgiving him. In an attitude similar to selling indulgencies, as the duke states 'forgive a moiety of the principal', he implicitly connects money and mercy. In fact, mercy is echoed in words like com-merce, com-mercial. According to Critchley and McCarthy (2004) the word *mercy* 'is derived from *merches*, that is, from the same root as merchant, meaning "payment,"

"recompense," and "revenue." What is revenue in talk of mercy is mercantile revenue. Christianity is the spiritualization of the originally material.' (2004, p. 04).[190]

In this speech the Duke opposes, in a long and confusing sentence, the 'royal merchant' and 'Turks and Tartars'. 'Royal merchant' does not mean that Antonio is from the aristocracy, but that he deals with assured merchandises. (Drakakis, 2010, p. 333). What is more, in Renascent and Christian imaginary, Turks were connected to the savagery against the Christians, just as they were thought to be in league with Jews (Drakakis, 2010, p. 334). In one of the play's sources, in Marlowe's **The Jew of Malta**, such allusion is clearer. Barabbas takes a Turk and a Moor as his slaves (in II, iii 130-140), and later gives Malta to the Turk Calymath (V, ii, 85-95). Contrary to Marlowe and his coevals, Shakespeare constructs the tessitura of the play in a complex web of allusive suggestions.

Likewise, Tartars were inhabitants from Central Asia and also inhabitants of hell (Drakakis, 2010, p. 334). However, quite ironically, tartar was a kind of rich silk cloth traded by merchants in the Renaissance (Drakakis, 2010, p. 334). Such an allusion suggests more of closeness and similarities than difference and distinction between the merchants and the Jews. In fact, it ambiguously presents Antonio and Shylock, on the one hand, distinct and different. However, on the other hand, it suggests that implicitly they are quite similar and share equivalent inner dispositions: hatred, resentment, mistrust, and hypocrisy.

Shylock's answer to the Duke reveals not only his inward unexplained reasons for his suit, but also suggests the inward uncontrolled dispositions of the human being:

> I have possessed your grace of what I purpose;
> And by our holy Sabbath have I sworn
> To have the due and forfeit of my bond:
> If you deny it, let the danger light
> Upon your charter and your city's freedom.
> You'll ask me, why I rather choose to have
> A weight of carrion flesh than to receive
> Three thousand ducats: I'll not answer that:
> But, say, it is my humour: is it answered?
> What if my house be troubled with a rat
> And I be pleased to give ten thousand ducats
> To have it baned? What, are you answered yet?
> Some men there are love not a gaping pig;
> Some, that are mad if they behold a cat;
> And others, when the bagpipe sings i' the nose,
> Cannot contain their urine: (IV, I, 34-49)

[190] CRITCHLEY, Simon & MCCARTHY, Tom. *Universal Shylockery: Money and Morality in "The Merchant of Venice"*, 2004. Their reading proposes that the play is a prototype of Nietzsche's **Genealogy of Morality**, because what Shylock wants to teach Antonio is the morality lacking in him. For them his bond works as a sort of punishment to inflict shame in the merchant by exposing his inward sinister dispositions.

In the first part of his speech Shylock affirms that he will have his bond, because of his swearing on the holy Sabbath. Shylock had probably sworn that he would take his revenge against Antonio. If the bond will not be granted him, he wishes that Venetian law and city be damaged.[191] However, he explains he will give no answer to his desire of having a pound of flesh instead of his money, because it is not his humour of doing so. In the Renaissance trend of attributing feelings and affection to the humours is implied in Shylock's answer.[192]

Then, Shylock presents a list of causes to other human obscure and uncontrolled dispositions of the mind which correspond to Shylock's inward dispositions and feelings. First he refers to one's spending ten thousand ducats to kill a rat that disturbs a house; some men cannot see a 'gaping pig', nor behold a cat; some cannot help urinating when hear a bagpipe. According to Drakakis (2010), the reference to the 'gaping pig' alludes to a proverbial sentences in the Renaissance of an 'irrational dislike' (2010, p. 335). Likewise, all other references here hint at the irrational causes of human dispositions of the mind, inward feelings and thoughts. That is what McGinn points out when he alludes to the mysterious forces that control and determine inward feelings, ideas and thoughts. In fact, Shakespeare perceived that there are some feelings and thoughts which cannot be attributed to rational causes. He represents human inwardness as determined by mysterious forces which cannot be controlled and explained.

After that, Shylock exposes that inward obscure dimensions of the self are simply caused by affections, feelings and uncontrolled dispositions of the self:

> for affection,
> Mistress of passion, sways it to the mood
> Of what it likes or loathes. Now, for your answer:
> As there is no firm reason to be rendered,
> Why he cannot abide a gaping pig;
> Why he, a harmless necessary cat;
> Why he, a woollen bagpipe; but of force
> Must yield to such inevitable shame
> As to offend, himself being offended;
> So can I give no reason, nor I will not,
> More than a lodged hate and a certain loathing
> I bear Antonio, that I follow thus
> A losing suit against him. Are you answered? (IV, I, 49-61)

Shylock declares that human affection is the source of passions, feelings, emotions and sensations. Shylock acknowledges that there is no reason for human inner dispositions of the

[191] Drakakis puts that danger light means 'damage fall' here (2010, p. 334).

[192] For the study of early Renaissance physiology and Psychology and the theory of humours represented in poetry and drama, see SCHOENFELDT, Michael C. **Bodies and Selves in Early Modern England: Physiology and Inwardness in Spencer, Shakespeare, Herbert, and Milton**. New York and Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

mind. Drakakis suggests that in this speech the phrase ‘of force’ is used because it is ‘driven by an irrational compulsion’ (2010, p. 337). Shylock alludes to the human uncontrolled dimensions of the self, which strongly interfere in human choice and ethics. In that sense, in his **Mimesis** (2007c), Auerbach illuminates such argument by stating that ‘in that moment and in others Shylock has something of human and obscure nature; in general, he does not lack the problematic depth, the energy in his appearance, the power in his passions and the violence in his utterance’ (2007c, p. 280).

In this speech, Shylock presents in black and white the cruelly double-faced attitude of the Christians, who disguise their attitude with a grave posture. Shylock works, in fact, as a mirror which reminds the Christians of their own double-faced attitudes towards the Jews. Also, he surprises us revealing their sinister dispositions and actions to him and others. Anderson (1985)[193] puts that Shylock works as counterpoint to Christian hypocritical attitudes:

> In any event, it is clear that Shylock himself is something less than a pattern for his people. In this much, he is a perfect complement to Antonio, whose brand of Christianity is every bit as repellent as Shylock’s blood lust. Shylock far exceeds his Christian counterpart, however, in dramatic grandeur. Antonio’s passionate outbursts against Jews in general and against Shylock in particular make only a second-hand appearance in the play itself Shylock reports them to us. Shakespeare chooses to give full and direct expression exclusively to Shylock's memorable counterattacks against Venetian racism. (1985, p. 126)

Though Shylock’s sentences about the irrational dispositions of the mind seem quite cynical and ironic sentences, he demonstrates a clearer view on the Christians’ and his inward dispositions. He plays the role of a mirror which reflects what the Christians do not wish to see and acknowledge in their inwardness. Here there is another example of the Shakespearean mirroring device used as a means to build the mimesis of inwardness in the play. The mirroring device, together with other techniques such as breaks in languages and silences, is a way of portraying the characters’ inwardness and mental dispositions. In this case, Shakespeare hints at the Christians’ inward dimensions by mirroring in Shylock’s speech what they do not wish to see.

Then, Bassanio and Shylock have an argument on the relation between hatred and killing. Bassanio and Shylock discuss the nature of hatred and killing in a stichomythia, a rhetorical device constituted of a dialogue exchanged by two characters, wherein each one speaks one line. When Shylock replies to the Duke’s speech, Bassanio criticises the Jew:

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[193] See Douglas Anderson’s *The Old Testament Presence in The Merchant of Venice*, 1985.

Bassanio. This is no answer, thou unfeeling man,
To excuse the current of thy cruelty.
Shylock. I am not bound to please thee with my answers.
Bassanio. Do all men kill the things they do not love?
Shylock. Hates any man the thing he would not kill?
Bassanio. Every offence is not a hate at first.
Shylock. What, wouldst thou have a serpent sting thee twice? (IV, i, 62-68)

In Shylock's answer, *bound* implies a fiscal or lawful contract, which refers implicitly to his *bond*. He assumes he is not obliged to submit himself to please them at the courtroom, because of his assumed right before the Venetian law. Furthermore, such stichomythia reveals that Shylock hates not only Antonio, but in fact all Christians in the courtroom. However, they are not speaking the same language. This stichomythia reveals that Shylock's reason for hate is not grasped by Bassanio, whereas Bassanio's meaning is not really in tune with Shylock's meaning and intentions. In the first couple of stichomythia Bassanio implies that a man does not kill everything he hates, whereas Shylock misreads Bassanio, twists his meaning and suggests that a man can kill even a thing he does not hate, or something that he likes. In this vague allusion to killing someone a man likes or loves, Shakespeare suggests Shylock inward sinister dispositions towards Antonio. That is why he seeks for killing Antonio as a desperate attempt to compensate his hatred and bitterness.

In the second couple of stichomythia Bassanio argues that an offence does not come necessarily from hate, whereas Shylock's idea implies the *lex talionis*, a hand for hand, and an eye for an eye: he would not bear a second offence. Moreover, Shylock's mentioning of a *serpent* associates Antonio with the figure of evil. The Christian Antonio is demonised by Shylock's revelation that he would not be bitten twice by the same serpent (Drakakis, 2010, p. 337). The devil imagery used before by the Christians to characterise Shylock is now used to describe Antonio and associate him to evil. In Shylock's lines of such stichomythia he twists the meaning of the lines uttered by the Christians for his own purpose: to convince his audience that he has the right to stand for law. However, one can see that his misreading Bassanio's words unveils his double-edged intentions at the courtroom.

In this moment, Antonio tries to convince the Christians that there is no use trying to convince and stop Shylock, because of his hard heart:

I pray you, think you question with the Jew:
You may as well go stand upon the beach
And bid the main flood bate his usual height;
You may as well use question with the wolf
Why he hath made the ewe bleat for the lamb;
You may as well forbid the mountain pines
To wag their high tops and to make no noise,

> When they are fretten with the gusts of heaven;
> You may as well do anything most hard,
> As seek to soften that--than which what's harder? –
> His Jewish heart! (IV, i, 69-79)

Ironically, Antonio's description of the Jew as a hard nut to be cracked goes against his own purpose. In fact, he praises Shylock's attitude and character. According to Anderson (1985), in this speech 'Antonio himself half acknowledges this supreme dignity in his enemy, even as he gives frightening expression to the depths of his own bigotry.' (1985, p. 126). Besides that, he asserts that

> Elements of Antonio's speech are clearly invidious: the implied comparison of his antagonist to a wolf, the embittered racism behind his reference to the "Jewish heart." But these elements clash with others which are substantial and striking: the comparison of Shylock's force of character with the force of the tides, the suggestion that his passion has some of the grandeur and beauty of mountain pines tossed by the wind. Half of this passage, if you will, chooses life and half chooses death. Half of Antonio's intelligence is locked in bigotry and half is illuminated by a sympathy richer and more compelling, perhaps, than any other human sympathy in the play. (1985, p. 127)

In a certain sense, he is submitting himself again to Shylock when he describes Shylock as the astonishing and tragic forces in nature. Antonio's sympathy to Shylock in the play enhances his submissive attitude throughout the play. However, it also suggests something hidden and unconscious in Antonio's inwardness: his ambivalent relation towards Shylock, the ur-father of the play. His ambivalent reaction towards Shylock is dichotomised, on the one hand, in his attitude of criticising Shylock; on the other hand, by implicitly suggesting his sympathy and even unconscious admiration. Antonio praises Shylock with attributes of forces of nature. In a similar trend, G. Wilson Knight, in his essay *Tempest and Music* (1969), observes that

> Here we should observe also (i) the sea; (ii) the wolf, and (ii) the winds: all associated with human cruelty, and the forces of tragedy. Here the wolf, thus enclosed by the other two, stresses the association. Elsewhere Shylock is powerfully compared to a wolf in a speech which vividly outlines the Shakespearean intuition of the beast in man. [...] This play, as certainly as, and more tragically than, the induction to *The Taming of the Shrew*, sets the beast in man against love and music. The tempest-beast association is always important. And here both are clearly to be related to Shylock and tragedy. (1969, p. 87)

Knight's analysis of the association of Shylock to tragic forces, the cruel and beast dimensions of human beings and nature enhance the ambiguities conveyed in the play. Such ambiguity is not only signalled by Shylock's complex character, but also by Antonio.

Shakespeare poised such ambiguities in the play to create a space of tension and conflict, as well as to suggest in such ambiguities Antonio's inwardness.

Furthermore, to everyone's surprise, no one comments on Antonio's speech. There is a silence here which signals that the courtroom could be surprised at Antonio's submissive attitude. Actually, the audience could have rejected Antonio's description of Shylock as powerful beings in nature, a rejection which hints at what they do not want to see in the Jew. However, no one says anything about it, an attitude that seems rather conniving to Antonio's speech. When the merchant finishes his speech, Bassanio changes the issue of the argument: 'For thy three thousand ducats here is six.' (IV, i, 83). Nonetheless, Shakespeare trickily suggests that they take Antonio's speech for granted and no one comments on nor agrees with Antonio's speech. Such silence is suggestive of Shakespeare's ambiguous artistry, which creates between the lines subtle possible meaning which could only be understood by some well-educated playgoers.

At the end of Antonio's speech, he acknowledges once again that he is ready to have his judgement and be sacrificed by the Jew:

> Therefore, I do beseech you,
> Make no more offers, use no farther means,
> But with all brief and plain conveniency
> Let me have judgment and the Jew his will. (IV, i, 79-82)

Antonio refers to the bond with *will*, which means testament and his desire. But it also meant the male and female sexual organs in Shakespeare's age. In the sonnets, Shakespeare plays with his own nickname *Will* and the sexual and sensual connotations implied in his name, especially in Sonnet CXXXV,[194] where *will* ambiguously means both male and female sexual organs, making a pun on Shakespeare's nickname. In this case, Antonio reiterates his acceptance of his doom to his desire of letting Shylock have his *will*: 'Let me have judgment and the Jew his *will'* (emphasis added). Unconsciously Antonio willingly accepts Shylock's attempt of circumcision and, in a subtler level, castration.

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[194] **Sonnet CXXXV –** Whoever hath her wish, thou hast thy 'Will,' / And 'Will' to boot, and 'Will' in overplus; / More than enough am I that vex thee still, / To thy sweet will making addition thus. / Wilt thou, whose will is large and spacious, / Not once vouchsafe to hide my will in thine? / Shall will in others seem right gracious, / And in my will no fair acceptance shine? / The sea all water, yet receives rain still / And in abundance addeth to his store; / So thou, being rich in 'Will,' add to thy 'Will' / One will of mine, to make thy large 'Will' more. / Let no unkind, no fair beseechers kill; / Think all but one, and me in that one 'Will.'
Also, Ned Lukacher states that in Shakespeare's his very name Shake-Speare was very embarrassingly phallic due to its sexual connotations. He refers to 'a certain Hugh Shakespeare who changed his name to Hugh Sawnders' due to such sexual connotations and also to the provincial background implied in his name. See Ned Lukacher's **Daemonic Figures: Shakespeare and the Question of Conscience**, 1994, p. 108.

Then, Bassanio offers him six thousand ducats, and Shylock assures that he would not take the sum, but only his bond: 'If every ducat in six thousand ducats/ Were in six parts and every part a ducat, / I would not draw them; I would have my bond.' (IV, i, 84-86). His words reveal his bitterness and desire of revenge. The Duke's reply to Shylock's refusal of the six thousand ducats alludes again to the issue of mercy: 'How shalt thou hope for mercy, rendering none?'(IV, I, 87). Shylock answers that he fears nothing, since he did nothing wrong: 'What judgment shall I dread, doing no wrong?' (IV, i, 88). He stands at the courtroom believing that he has lawful rights to demand his bond, since Antonio has forfeited his bond and did not pay it so far. Then, Shylock ironically says what the Christians do not want to see, mirroring at their faces their attitude towards the other and thus justifies his lawful right to his bond:

> You have among you many a purchased slave,
> Which, like your asses and your dogs and mules,
> You use in abject and in slavish parts,
> Because you bought them: shall I say to you,
> Let them be free, marry them to your heirs?
> Why sweat they under burthens? let their beds
> Be made as soft as yours and let their palates
> Be seasoned with such viands? You will answer
> 'The slaves are ours:' so do I answer you:
> The pound of flesh, which I demand of him,
> Is dearly bought; 'tis mine and I will have it.
> If you deny me, fie upon your law!
> There is no force in the decrees of Venice.
> I stand for judgment: answer; shall I have it? (IV, i, 89-102)

Shylock compares his pound of flesh to the Christians' slaves, mules, asses and dogs: just as the Christians bought them, Shylock argues that he has bought the pound of flesh and therefore he can do anything with it. But he uses this analogy to convince that he wishes to have his bond. What Shylock asks is why they do not treat their slaves as equally as them. In a certain way, it represents the inward uncontrolled feelings which interfere in human action, thoughts, ideas, judgement and attitudes. Shakespeare's perceptiveness of the human psychological inner world is represented in speeches like this and others.

In addition to alluding to such obscure dimensions, Shylock ironically touches on the Christian hypocrisy of buying and using slaves. Moreover, he sarcastically suggests that they should marry their slaves with their daughters and sons, and give them the same comfort a Christian has. One may imagine that Shylock would prefer to marry his daughter Jessica to a slave, rather than to a Christian. In this same scene he affirms that he would rather marry Jessica to one of Barabbas' descendent than to a Christian: 'I have a daughter; / Would any of

the stock of Barabbas / Had been her husband rather than a Christian!' (IV, i, 291-293). Shylock's resentment makes him sarcastically criticise the Christians' use of slaves as a retaliatory attitude to Lorenzo's elopement with Jessica and dishonouring her. Shakespeare puts in Shylock's mouth very ironic and sarcastic remarks attacking the Christians.

Conversely, Shylock unconsciously represents himself as being also judged, as soon as he declares that 'I stand for judgement'. Such speech is contrasted elsewhere in this scene when he says 'I stand here for law (IV, i, 141). Drakakis enhances that the verb *stand for* is ambiguous here, meaning '(1) to occupy the position of and (2) to represent. In so far as the conflict is allegorical, this is an example of the opposition between the Old Testament law and Christian imperative'. (Drakakis, 2010, p. 340). Whereas Shylock stands for law, the *lex talionis*, Antonio stands for sacrifice. Ironically, Antonio, who stands for sacrifice, acknowledges his desire for sacrifice in a Christ-like personification of a lamb, or a 'tainted wether' to re-present Christ's sacrifice on stage.

After that, Bassanio and Antonio have a sort intimate conversation:

> **Bassanio**. Good cheer, Antonio! What, man, courage yet!
> The Jew shall have my flesh, blood, bones and all,
> Ere thou shalt lose for me one drop of blood.
> **Antonio**. I am a tainted wether of the flock,
> Meetest for death: the weakest kind of fruit
> Drops earliest to the ground; and so let me
> You cannot better be employed, Bassanio,
> Than to live still and write mine epitaph. (IV, i, 110-117)

Bassanio's speech mirrors Antonio's desire for sacrifice. The word *flesh* was a standard euphemism for penis, not only in common texts in the Renaissance age, but also translations of the Holy Bible of the age. Antonio enhances his desire for sacrifice for Bassanio and his unconscious desire for castration. A 'tainted wether' means a diseased castrated ram which epitomised his innermost masochistic feelings which will potentially be satisfied by Shylock's cutting off the pound of flesh. For Drakakis (2010),

> In substituting himself as a sacrifice for Bassanio, Antonio conflates both Old and New Testaments: (1) he replicates the action of Abraham, who sacrifices a ram in place of his son Isaac (Genesis, 22, 13), and (2) offers himself, Christ-like, as a sacrifice whose function is to take away 'the sin of the world' (John, 1, 29) […]. This conflation is in stark contrast to the Jew's earlier reference to Old Testament narrative of Jacob and Esau, in which he justifies usury through an act of deception. (Drakakis, 2010, p. 341)

This is a moment when both reiterate their inner desire of sacrifice for each other epitomising their inward sinister dispositions. They justify their deeds for good causes, as if

they were sanctifying their actions. These revealing speeches depict their inward dispositions and could sound quite weird and awkward for two men at the time. Shakespeare introduces in an intimate dialogue their innermost feelings as a device of representing their inward feelings and dispositions of the mind. Antonio's and Bassanio's relationship could be read by the audience as a blatant homoerotic relationship, which is reiterated here in their speech declaring their desire to being sacrificed for each other's sake.

Moreover, it is quite interesting to observe that Antonio's is almost all the time silent at the courtroom. This speech and the latter wherein he unconsciously praises Shylock as the forces in nature are the only speeches he utters until Portia undoes Shylock's bond. Such silence is very suggestive of his submissive attitude towards everyone at the courtroom: to Portia, the Duke, Bassanio and Shylock. In contrast to Antonio's silence, Shylock's attitude is to speak most of the time in his own defence. Antonio's silence also suggests his acceptance of his fate and of Shylock's bond. Moreover, Portia is responsible for saving him from the Jew's bond. Throughout the play Shakespeare constructs Antonio as a very submissive and conniving character who cannot defend himself at the courtroom, but who, contradictorily, is able to kick and spurn the Jew. Shakespeare represents Antonio's inwardness by showing contradictions in Antonio's attitude, at times being silent or attacking Shylock publicly.

Furthermore, shame is implied in Antonio's attitude at the courtroom. Shylock's demanding his bond impinges shame upon Antonio. However, according to Fernie (2002), in his work **Shame in Shakespeare**, there is a contradiction in Christian shame. Shame is a feeling which cannot be controlled and dominates the self as a compulsive reaction to an act. Nevertheless, Fernie points that there is a contradiction in Christian shame:

> To the Christian, only wickedness and impiety are shameful. In human experience and conduct there is often tension between shame of worldly humiliation and moral and spiritual shame, particularly for a man: for instance, it may seem shamefully passive not to retaliate but morally shameful to strike back. (2002, p. 13)

In the Christian view, being passive and resigned is really praised, whereas it sounds shameful not to defend oneself. Also, Antonio's shame is mixed with guilt. For Fernie, guilt is a legal concept:

> It implies responsibility for an offence. Whereas shame is focused inward, on the damaged self, guilt focuses outward, on the subject's transgression or the violated victim or law or other authority. Conscience transmits a sense of guilt; a clear conscience brings an awareness of freedom from guilt. Much shame has nothing in common with guilt, because it is not to do with wronging another or breaking the law, although it can operate in that context; then the two emotions come together, but they may still be conceptually

> distinguished: guilt is other-directed, shame comes from within. […] Shame requires renegotiation of the subject's relationship with itself; guilt requires negotiation with the party offended, usually by accepting punishment from it and offering some other compensation. (2002, p. 13-14)

Antonio feels both shame and guilt, whereas Shylock feels guilt and embarrassment is imposed on him. As Adelman (2008) points out, Shylock's act of circumcision/castration is a sort of punishment to expose Antonio's inside in the outside and as a way of embarrassing him in front of the courtroom. Shakespearean mimesis of inwardness focuses on the suggestion of inward space of the self, represented by shame and guilt.

5. 6. Undoing Shylock's bond: Judgement and Conscience

While the Duke waits for Bellario at the courtroom, Bassanio, Gratiano and Shylock have an argument:

> **Bassanio**. Why dost thou whet thy knife so earnestly?
> **Shylock**. To cut the forfeiture from that bankrupt there.
> **Gratiano**. Not on thy sole, but on thy soul, harsh Jew,
> Thou makest thy knife keen; but no metal can,
> No, not the hangman's axe, bear half the keenness
> Of thy sharp envy. Can no prayers pierce thee? (IV, i, 120-125)

Shylock's whetting the knife and his demanding a pound of flesh hints at the mythical Jewish murder. According to this myth, the Jews used to take an innocent Christian child and used his body in a sacrificing ritual. For James Shapiro (1996),[195] **The Merchant of Venice** suggestively re-enacts the mythical sacrificial murder throughout the play. In the myth, the Jews sacrificed a Christian when another Jew died, because they believed that bathing the bereaved Jew in Christian blood would save his soul, in case Christian baptism was really necessary to get into Paradise. However, Shylock's reasons for killing Antonio do not lay on stereotypical ritual murder, but on his hate and desire of revenge. The play's tessitura is made of a convergence of ambiguous allusions which create tensions and anxieties in the audience. Shakespeare cunningly mixes up opposing possibilities which make the effect of the play very conflicting and tensional.

Furthermore, Gratiano alludes in this speech to the possibility of perceiving and knowing a man's inwardness, according to Maus (1995). Gratiano suggests that the knife Shylock is whetting will be used to pierce his soul. Gratiano implies that his intended action

[195] See Shapiro's **Shakespeare and the Jews**, New York: Columbia University Press, 1996.

will damn his soul (Drakakis, 2010, p. 342). Moreover, Gratiano refers to Antonio's premise of the Jew's hard heart, which cannot be moved by any prayer. He subtly refers here to the impossibility of knowing one's heart and soul through this metaphor of piercing his soul, and to the impossibility of figuring out Shylock's inwardness: his inward feelings, inward dispositions of the mind, and innermost intentions. Ironically, though the Christians know Shylock's hate towards Antonio, Gratiano assures that they do not know and acknowledge Shylock's actual meaning. Shylock's sacrificing promise symbolically depicts him as Abraham-like figure who swore to sacrifice his son Isaac at any cost. As Shylock's figure represents the primordial father of the play, he threatens and provokes anxieties and fear of castration, implied in his bond.

Then Shylock acknowledges that no Christian prayer can move and change him: 'No, none that thou hast wit enough to make.' (IV, i, 126). Then Gratiano insists once again on Shylock's beastly nature of his spirit:

> O, be thou damned, inexecrable dog,
> And for thy life let justice be accused!
> Thou almost makest me waver in my faith
> To hold opinion with Pythagoras,
> That souls of animals infuse themselves
> Into the trunks of men: thy currish spirit
> Governed a wolf, who, hanged for human slaughter,
> Even from the gallows did his fell soul fleet,
> And, whilst thou layest in thy unhallowed dam,
> Infused itself in thee; for thy desires
> Are wolvish, bloody, starved and ravenous. (IV, i, 127-137)

Gratiano tries to figure out the nature of Shylock's soul. Shylock's attitudes and actions make Gratiano believes in Pythagoras' theory. However, Gratiano twists Pythagoras' theory that assures the transmigration of human soul into animals. Gratiano's argument is, in a superficial level, quite comic, but in a subtler level, asserts that Shylock's body possesses a beastly soul. In the second part of the speech Gratiano emphasises more cunningly the wolfish and beastly nature of Shylock's soul, which was a common-place in English Renaissance. According to Bronstein (1969),[196]

> to justify the ferocity with which Jews were attacked, excuses just as ferocious had to be made. The image of the Satanic Jew flourished in literature, in ballads, in plays, and was used both as a justification of the terrible treatment of the Jews and as encouragement to the masses to attack the Jews. Thus arose the stereotype of the Jew which Shakespeare knew. (1969, p. 6)

[196] See Bronstein's essay *Shakespeare, the Jews, and The Merchant of Venice* (1969).

When Gratiano refers to ‘unhallowed dam’ he means that the Jew is the son of the devil, because ‘unhallowed dam’ means ‘unholy mother’, ‘the profane opposite of the Virgin Mary’ (Drakakis, 2010, p. 343). He also highlights the Jew’s desires as wolfish (usurious), bloody, cruel, mean and ravenous. Ravenous means voracious, raven-like, black and thus devilish in the age. Gratiano’s description of Shylock’s soul enhances Shylock’s evil, which depicted in his actions towards Antonio.

The second verse of his speech is very ambiguous: ‘And for thy life let justice be accused!’ Drakakis suggests that the meaning of this verse is unclear. For him, two possible readings can be implied here: (1) ‘let justice stand accused for allowing you to continue to live’ (2010, p. 342), which, in fact, does not seem to be tuned with Gratiano’s vehement aggression in his speech; and (2) ‘even though you are technically in the right, your inhumanity would provide the justification for taking your life at the risk of justice itself being arraigned for it’ (2010, p. 342), which suggests Gratiano’s and the Christians’ desires in the play: to expatriate and kill the Jews. In that sense, Drakakis (1998) points out that

> To this extent the Venetians in the play project onto Shylock a hatred which stems from their recognition of the need of his money to sustain their own society, which are in effect a practical necessity, can have either a religious or an ethical validation. In this sense, Shylock is the object upon whom Venetian society vents its own hatred of itself, and in this respect his own dramatic characterisation is made to incorporate those negative social forces, such as Puritanism, which challenge the norms of Venetian/Elizabethan society. It is within this complex web of significations, both as an *effect* of Venetian self-hatred, and as the representative of a historically ostracised ethnic group, that Shylock is forced to eke out a precarious existence, marginally, yet symbolically central to Venice’s own perception of itself, tolerated, yet repressed. (1998, p. 191)

Gratiano’s hatred, just as Christian hatred, is moved by the recognition of something in Shylock which they indeed hate in themselves. Shylock works as a symbolic figure which haunts and threatens to unmask the true Venetian face. However, his symbolic presence is tolerated and ambiguously repressed in acts of exclusion, marginalisation, and aggression. It is a sort collective unconscious which is projected onto Shylock as a scapegoat to alleviate their inner unconscious conflicts and anxieties. Their ashamed need of money, dealing with money and needing the Jews’ money can be only tolerated through this mechanism of aggression and then scapegoating. Shakespeare constructed Shylock aesthetically, as well as symbolically to represent not only Venetian ashamed unconscious, but also English collective ashamed unconscious. Actually, there were many merchants who worked with usury and their usurious practice was extremely rejected and reproached in London.

Shylock’s reply to Gratiano’s speech suggests Shylock inexorability at the courtroom:

> Till thou canst rail the seal from off my bond,
> Thou but offendest thy lungs to speak so loud:
> Repair thy wit, good youth, or it will fall
> To cureless ruin. I stand here for law. (IV, i, 138-141)

Shylock's attitude is nourished by his belief that he has the right of demanding his bond in front of the law. He assumes here an arrogant attitude of a self-sufficient man who believes he will never be outwitted and subdued. However, the inexorability of his bond will make him susceptible to the law and will enable Portia to defeat him. As he says that 'I stand her for law', he ironically suggests that the same law he claims will judge him and even take from him what he has.

In the next moment of the scene, amid the turmoil of the crowd, the Duke announces that he can dismiss the court unless Bellario comes to the trial. Then, Salerio reveals that there is a messenger (Nerissa, disguised as a lawyer's clerk) standing at the door, waiting to hand in a letter from Padua to the Duke. Then, she hands in a letter from Bellario, allowing Portia (disguised as young Balthazar) to represent him at the courtroom:

> Your grace shall understand that at the receipt of your letter I am very sick: but in the instant that your messenger came, in loving visitation was with me a young doctor of Rome; his name is Balthazar. I acquainted him with the cause in controversy between the Jew and Antonio the merchant: we turned o'er many books together: he is furnished with my opinion; which, bettered with his own learning, the greatness whereof I cannot enough commend, comes with him, at my importunity, to fill up your grace's request in my stead. I beseech you, let his lack of years be no impediment to let him lack a reverend estimation; for I never knew so young a body with so old a head. I leave him to your gracious acceptance, whose trial shall better publish his commendation. (IV, i, 149-162)

Furthermore, the name Portia takes – Balthazar – echoes Beltashazzar, which was the Babylonian name for Daniel,[197] an attribute Shylock will give to Portia due to her wisdom and knowledge. Moreover, Shakespeare enhances Portia's law authority by stating that young Balthazar comes from Padua and Rome. Padua was a famous centre of civil law in Renaissance Italy, which would suggest Portia's proficiency in law. Rome was the theological centre in Europe, which makes the judge's character more convincing and could also suggest his proficiency in Theology.

Then, Bellario refers to Portia first as a Doctor, and then as a 'young body'. Though he is described as a learned doctor, his presence is merely bodily, a physical presence which theatrically represents a doctor and disguises her female nature through cross-dressing. In a

[197] See Drakakis, 2010, p. 344.

certain sense, Portia's disguise and theatrical representation of Balthazar usurps the law in Venice by a fraudulent trial. For Ross, 'Portia is always on the verge of fraud' (2010, p. 98). Indeed, she forges a fraudulent trial to undo Shylock's bond. Moreover, instead of determining Shylock's condemnation, in a Pilate-like attitude she washes her hands and demands the Duke and Antonio to give Shylock's condemnation. Thus, it is quite interesting to remark that just some critics have really noticed the Christians' flaws in the play: Shakespeare's artistry veils deeper intentions of the characters by creating an awkward effect. Such veil is constructed by the apparent qualities attributed to the Christians by other characters. For example, they say that Portia is magnificent, smart, beautiful and just; and thus the reader may take for granted that the Christians do no wrong in the play.

Then the Duke lets Balthazar (Portia) enter the courtroom. As soon as the Duke asks Portia whether she is acquainted with the whole suit, she asks an awkward question at the courtroom: 'I am informed thoroughly of the cause. / Which is the merchant here, and which the Jew?' (IV, i, 169-170). Such odd question synthesises the problematic distinctions between Christians and Jews in the play. According to Cecil Roth, in her essay *The background of Shylock* (1933), such question would never be posed because any Elizabethan and Venetian would recognise a Jew by the distinctive symbols and clothes that they were obliged to wear in the ghettoes and publicly. In I, iii, Shylock refers to his Jewish gabardine, whereon Antonio used to spit. For Janet Adelman (2008), such question signals the anxiety of loss of the distinction between Christians and Jews in the play and such anxiety is unconsciously pervaded in the characters' speeches, just as in the disturbing fantasies which threaten to efface the differences between them, taken as legitimate and ontological by the Christians. Alternatively, such anxieties veil the intimate connection between the Jews and Christians in the textuality of the play. For Adelman, 'the Jew is not the stranger outside Christianity but the original stranger within it' (2008, p. 04). However, though Roth argues that there were distinctive clothes which differentiated the Christians from the Jews, James Shapiro (1996)[198] argues that Shylock's speeches which make the point of no difference between Jews and Christians touches on the Christian anxiety of non-differentiation:

> his lines take us in a striking different direction, for Shylock's insistence on the similarity of Jews and Christians is mirrored in the proverb's double message, one that can be traced back to Paul's epistles: a Christian is the antithesis of a Jew and yet, in certain circumstances, is potentially indistinguishable from one. (1996, p. 8)

[198] See James Shapiro's **Shakespeare and the Jews**. New York: Columbia University Press, 1996.

Portia's awkward question to distinguish the merchant and the Jew reveals the Christian anxiety in the early modern England that the Jews were similar to them. In Shapiro's view, 'the early modern Jew, in contrast, confounded those who sought more precise definitions in terms suited to emerging notions of nationhood and race'. (1996, p. 5). Likewise, in an age of religious changes, both Protestants and Catholics accused each other of 'Judaizing tendencies' (Shapiro, 1996, p. 8). Shakespeare put such question in Portia's mouth to represent Christian and Jewish inner similarities in the play. It enhances the mirroring device used to represent one's feelings in other's actions and attitudes.

Then, she starts to analyse and discuss the bond. The first point is that there is no decree in Venice which can impugn such bond: 'Of a strange nature is the suit you follow; / Yet in such rule that the Venetian law / Cannot impugn you as you do proceed.'(IV, i, 173-176). Portia confirms what Antonio had stated in III, iii, 26-31: that no one can change the law in Venice, because Venice depended on foreign commerce and usury.[199] However, as we will see, Portia's judgement is full of judicial contradictions which reveal the nature of the trial: a fraudulent judgement (Ross, 2010, p. 91ff). Then, she asks the Jew to be merciful:

> **Portia**. Do you confess the bond?
> **Antonio**. I do.
> **Portia**. Then must the Jew be merciful.
> **Shylock**. On what compulsion must I? tell me that. (IV, i, 177-179)

Portia's reply to Shylock's question is given in her beautiful and well-known speech on the quality of mercy:

> The quality of mercy is not strained,
> It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
> Upon the place beneath: it is twice blest;
> It blesseth him that gives and him that takes:
> 'Tis mightiest in the mightiest: it becomes
> The throned monarch better than his crown;
> His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,
> The attribute to awe and majesty,
> Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings;
> But mercy is above this sceptred sway;
> It is enthroned in the hearts of kings,
> It is an attribute to God himself;
> And earthly power doth then show likest God's
> When mercy seasons justice. (IV, i, 180-193)

[199] The duke cannot deny the course of law: / For the commodity that strangers have / With us in Venice, if it be denied, / Will much impeach the justice of his state; / Since that the trade and profit of the city / Consisteth of all nations.

At first, mercy is metaphorically a 'gentle rain' from heaven. It blesses twice, it is a blessing from above, from God. It is the greatest feeling in the world; it is mightier than the monarch's thrones and sceptres. The majestic quality of mercy puts it above the kings and should make them be fearful if they were not merciful. 'Gentle rain' evokes gentile, which suggests that mercy is a Christian assumption. Moreover, the double quality of mercy is due to its possibility of blessing twice, the one who gives, and the one who receives it. It is multiplied and reproduced just as Shylock and Antonio create money in different ways of gaining money. Thus, it is, in a subtle and cunning level, a sort of commerce. Though mercy implies humbleness and generosity, Portia's attributes of mercy implies power. Thus, a merciful being seeks, in a deeper and unconscious level, power, because as soon as one is merciful, he can demand submission and abnegation from receiver of his mercy. This connection between mercy, power and force in Portia's speech enhances the implicit connection between mercy and com-*merce*, which philologically share the same root: *merches*. In a subtler level, such detail implies the connection of mercy and power: mercy, money, and commerce. Portia's speech aims at justifying mercy for domination attributed by God. Thus, since mercy and commerce have same the root *merches*, Portia's speech is subtly an attempt to market mercy with the Jew. Somehow, in the same way that Antonio believes that lending money gratis will generate Bassanio's love for him, Portia believes that money can generate mercy, which implicitly is another form of usury. Nonetheless, she attempts to disguise such trick using the name of justice and faith. The confusion between money and feelings is already enhanced in this speech by the financial attributes implied in mercy.

In the second part of the speech, she tries to convince Shylock of giving up his bond by mercy:

> Therefore, Jew,
> Though justice be thy plea, consider this,
> That, in the course of justice, none of us
> Should see salvation: we do pray for mercy;
> And that same prayer doth teach us all to render
> The deeds of mercy. I have spoke thus much
> To mitigate the justice of thy plea;
> Which if thou follow, this strict court of Venice
> Must needs give sentence 'gainst the merchant there. (IV, i, 193-201)

Though Portia stated at the beginning of the speech that mercy is not given under compulsion ('not strained'), at the end of the speech she acknowledges the necessity of obliging Shylock to be merciful. She uses the verb *must* above to refer to mercy, when she demands Shylock's mercy – 'Then *must* the Jew be merciful' (IV, i, 178, emphasis added),

and verb *consider* in the imperative trying to dissuade Shylock of his suit. Such speech echoes Antonio's supposition of Shylock's 'hard heart' which cannot be pierced by anybody.

In this speech she recognises that the 'strict court of Venice *must'* condemn Antonio, because there is no way to undo such bond. Then, Shylock's answer to Portia's speech alludes to the *talionis lex*. He prefers to claim law and his rights, instead of accepting mercy: 'My deeds upon my head! I crave the law, / The penalty and forfeit of my bond.' (IV, i, 202-203). He prefers to suffer the consequences of the strict law instead of accepting the money back.

Then Portia changes the subject of the conversation and asks whether Antonio cannot pay the bond: 'Is he not able to discharge the money?' (IV, i, 204). Bassanio answers that

> Yes, here I tender it for him in the court;
> Yea, twice the sum: if that will not suffice,
> I will be bound to pay it ten times o'er,
> On forfeit of my hands, my head, my heart:
> If this will not suffice, it must appear
> That malice bears down truth. [*To the Duke*] And I beseech you,
> Wrest once the law to your authority:
> To do a great right, do a little wrong,
> And curb this cruel devil of his will. (IV, i, 205-213).

Bassanio wants to pay the money back with six thousand ducats. However, he is bound to pledge his body – 'my hands, my head, my heart' – in the same as Antonio pledged his body for Bassanio. Bassanio wishes to undergo a similar sacrifice for Antonio now. Bassanio also assumes a submissive attitude to Shylock's bond, which enhances his ambivalent relationship with Antonio. Bassanio ends the speech with 'will': 'curb this cruel devil of his will'. It implies his devilish desire for revenge, as well as echoes the erotic connotations of the word in Shakespeare's age. If such frivolous sacrifice will not be enough to save Antonio's life, it will be proved that Shylock's evil is more powerful and will degrade Venetian law.

Bassanio's attitude is remarkable in this speech. When speaking to the Duke, he wants *the Duke* to take the authority at the courtroom and decide the trial: 'Wrest once the law to your authority'. Drakakis highlights that this verse can be read so: 'On this occasion (*once*) stretch (*Wrest*) the letter of the law so that it becomes subject to your own executive power' (2010, p. 249). He wants to diminish the lawyer's power to give a quick solution to such plea. He encourages the Duke 'To do a great right, do a little wrong', which is a request to contravene the Venetian law and open a precedent in the law. The audience could perceive that the atmosphere at the courtroom was quite delicate and any misdeed could compromise not only Antonio and Bassanio, but even the Duke. Bassanio's attitude disregards Venetian

strict laws and he is quite cynic in suggesting it at open court. However, it is astonishing that no one mentions anything about Bassanio's plea. Such silence makes clear that everyone at the courtroom, including Shylock, is really conniving with some frauds in Venetian law.

When Bassanio states that he wants to give the money back, Portia contradicts her question above: 'Is he not able to discharge the money?' (IV, i, 204):

> It must not be; there is no power in Venice
> Can alter a decree established:
> 'Twill be recorded for a precedent,
> And many an error by the same example
> Will rush into the state: it cannot be. (IV, i, 214-218).

She reiterates that there is no power to change such bond. She uses the modal verbs 'can' and 'must' in the negative, which enhances the impossibility of breaking the law. In fact, Venice was seen as a city state whose justice was very strict and Shylock's plea was legal and formally according to the law (2010, Drakakis, p. 349), even though it was a very odd one. Then, Shylock praises her: 'A Daniel come to judgment! yea, a Daniel! / O wise young judge, how I do honour thee!' (IV, i, 219-220). She makes him believe that he is going to have his bond. However, he does not see that her speech is pervaded by contradictions, because he is blind for his revenge. Thus he praises and exalts her wisdom by calling her Daniel, who was well-known in the Old Testament for his wisdom.

When she asks to see the bond, she contradictorily claims Shylock's mercy again and asks him to take his money: 'Shylock, there's *thrice* thy money offered thee.' (IV, i, 223, emphasis added). Her statements oscillate between reiterating that there is no power to break such law and the offer of the ducats. Nevertheless, Bassanio's offer is not thrice the sum, but only twice. Such contradiction is a raising of sum created by Portia, which signals her inconsistent argument against Shylock and the fraudulent disposition in his intention.

Shylock answer that he has an oath in heaven: 'An oath, an oath, I have an oath in heaven: / Shall I lay perjury upon my soul? / No, not for Venice.' (IV, i, 224-226). Here he reveals he has promised to take his revenge at any cost. Damnation, which is a very Christian dogma, is implied in these statements. He ironically suggests the idea of conversion when he refers to 'perjury'. Then Portia contradicts her discourse again by saying that the bond is forfeited, she asks Shylock to be merciful and to take the money and tear the bond:

> Why, this bond is forfeit;
> And lawfully by this the Jew may claim
> A pound of flesh, to be by him cut off

> Nearest the merchant's heart. [*To the Jew*] Be merciful:
> Take *thrice* thy money; bid me tear the bond. (IV, i, 226-230, emphasis added)

Her speech oscillates between the promise of giving the money (her money) and to execute the law. The contradiction about the sum of money is reiterated once again (thrice the money, not twice as Bassanio promised). It is quite odd why Portia is contradicting her arguments at the courtroom. One could imagine what goes within Portia's mind at this moment. According to Karen Newman (1985), such contradictions in Shakespeare's play is what she calls the rhetoric of consciousness, the representation of inward feelings, anxieties and inner debate which creates an illusion of lifelikeness in Shakespeare's characters. Portia is debating the bond sealed between Antonio and Shylock. In that sense, it is worth noticing a similarity between Portia and Antonio: she was also bound to her father's will, which obliged her to marry the man who would choose the right casket, the leaden casket. Thus, her body was also bound to her bereaved father's will. As a result, in an unconscious level, Portia is fantasmatically re-imagining the situation she was obliged to accomplish and to be submissive and obedient. Furthermore, in a Psychoanalytic reading, if Shylock symbolically represents the ur-father of the play, she might re-imagine, as Antonio does, the absent presence of the paternal figure in Shylock. Imaginatively she is in front of her paternal figure while she debates and discusses Shylock's bond, which in subtler and unconscious level, also represents her father's will which she was obliged to accept. Their feelings represent the mirroring device Shakespeare used to represent her inward feelings, fears and anxiety at the courtroom. Antonio's anxieties towards the paternal figure re-imagined in Shylock is also Portia's anxieties towards the paternal figure unconsciously re-imagined in Shylock.

Furthermore, Portia's trembling and indecision in the trial scene comes out as she faces Shylock as the representation and the imaginary return of the paternal figure; and such indecision and trembling is hinted by the constant and seemingly gratuitous changing of the use of the pronouns *you (your, yours), thou (thee, thy, thine*), third personal pronoun and imperative when she addresses Shylock. Portia uses imperative and third person to compel his mercy, as in 'Why doth the Jew pause? Take thy forfeiture.' (IV, i, 331), 'Then must the Jew be merciful' (IV, i, 178) and 'Be merciful' (IV, i, 229). The shift of the pronouns *you* and *thou* can be seen in the following examples:

> **Portia**. I pray *you*, let me look upon the bond.
> **Shylock**. Here 'tis, most reverend doctor, here it is.
> **Portia**. Shylock, there's thrice *thy* money offered *thee*. (IV, i, 221-223, my emphasis)

And here she also changes the pronouns,

> **Portia**. A pound of that same merchant's flesh is *thine*:
> The court awards it, and the law doth give it.
> **Shylock**. Most rightful judge!
> **Portia**. And *you* must cut this flesh from off his breast:
> The law allows it, and the court awards it. (IV, i, 295-299, my emphasis)

During the entire scene she shifts from formality to informality and vice versa. Actually, there is no metrical need in changing these pronouns to fit the verse, because *you* and *thou* are both monosyllable words. The shift of *you* and *thou* marks the passage from distant relationship of respect (you) to the close and familiar relationships (thou), epitomised in the parent/child relationship. Alternatively, *thou* marks the diametrical and vertical relation of a parent to a child and the relation between the master and the servant. Shakespeare intentionally inserted such floatation of the use of the pronouns *you/thou* to represent Portia's inward feelings such as fear and anxiety. Such feelings are suggested in her indecisive use of the pronouns *you* and *thou*. In that sense, Maggie Secara (2010)[200] has written an interesting compendium which explains the uses of the pronouns *you* and *thou* in Shakespeare's age. According to her,

> Thou and thee are familiar or informal forms of you. You use it to address your children, your servants, your wife, your most intimate friends, your dog, and God. (who knows you better than God?) Use the more formal you when addressing your parents, your master, your social superiors, your patron, your customers, your officers […], who may be worth as much as you are. […] Anger and strong feeling, of course, cancel other conventions. (2010, p. 16-17)

Interestingly, no critics have remarked and analysed such floatation in the use of *you/thou* in Portia's speeches in the trial scene (cf. IV, i, 178ff). Therefore, Portia's desire of undoing her father's testament will be projected and fully accomplished in her undoing of Shylock's bond. But such compensation will be only possible since Portia unconsciously projects the symbolic representation of paternal figure on Shylock. Therefore, Shakespeare uses the variation in language, the shifts of pronouns *you* and *thou* in order to depict Portia's inward conflicting feelings. The uses of break and shift in language constitute a trait of the rhetoric of inwardness in Shakespeare's drama.

During this whole discussion Antonio is silent at the courtroom. After a long time he says two verses, which signals his submissive attitude to Portia and Shylock, accepting his judgement: 'Most heartily I do beseech the court / To give the judgment.' (IV, i, 239-240). On

[200] See Secara's **A Compendium of Common Knowledge (1558-1603): Elizabethan Commonplaces for Writers, Actors, and Re-enactors**, 2010.

the one hand, Shylock exalts Portia's wisdom and knowledge; on the other hand, Antonio assumes a mere submissive attitude, as an obedient lamb that goes to sacrifice without mourning. When Antonio wishes to have his bond, Portia than awards it to Shylock and demands Antonio to prepare his breast:

> **Portia**. Why then, thus it is:
> You must prepare your bosom for his knife.
> **Shylock**. O noble judge! O excellent young man!
> **Portia**. For the intent and purpose of the law
> Hath full relation to the penalty,
> Which here appeareth due upon the bond.
> **Shylock**. 'Tis very true: O wise and upright judge!
> How much more elder art thou than thy looks!
> **Portia**. Therefore lay bare your bosom.
> **Shylock**. Ay, his breast:
> So says the bond: doth it not, noble judge?
> 'Nearest his heart:' those are the very words. (IV, i, 240-250)

Shylock appreciates her decision, enhancing her wisdom, rightness and age, whereas Portia repeats that the pound of flesh is his.[201] In fact, he is blind and very naïve at this point of the play. His blindness is due to his eager desire to take his revenge against Antonio. She may take advantage of such blindness to lead Shylock to believe that it is only possible to give the pound of flesh and no blood.

Moreover, only now do we learn that the pound of flesh to be cut off is from Antonio's breast. Lukacker's analysis is very suggestive to understand to what is really at stake in such a speech. It is not simply the opposition between mind and the hard heart. For him, 'Shakespeare does not simply oppose to such force the inwardness of the loving heart. Shylock's force draws upon an inwardness far more powerful than that to which any other character in the play has access.' (1994, p. 112). In fact, Shylock embodies the inner obscure dimension of the self which is not noted in a superficial level. Then, Portia asks whether Shylock has the scales to weigh the flesh:

> **Portia**. It is so. Are there balances here to weigh
> The flesh?
> **Shylock**. I have them ready.
> **Portia**. Have by some surgeon, Shylock, on your charge,
> To stop his wounds, lest he do *bleed* to death.
> **Shylock**. Is it so nominated in the bond?
> **Portia**. It is not so expressed: but what of that?
> 'Twere good you do so much for charity.

[201] Shylock reiterates Portia's wisdom and rightness in judging the case, such as in 'When it is paid according to the tenor. / It doth appear you are a worthy judge; / You know the law, your exposition / Hath been most sound: I charge you by the law, / Whereof you are a well-deserving pillar, / Proceed to judgment: by my soul I swear / There is no power in the tongue of man / To alter me: I stay here on my bond.' (IV, i, 231-238)

Shylock. I cannot find it; 'tis not in the bond. (IV, i, 251-258, emphasis added)

Portia claims mercy again by asking a surgeon to stop the wounds. At this moment, she reads the spirit of the letter. But Shylock does not read the spirit of the bond, just the letter, stating that he cannot find it in the bond. She reiterates the spirit of the letter by stating that' it is no so expressed' in the bond, but it would be for charity and mercy. In this moment, she acknowledges the jot of blood implicit in the cutting of a pound of flesh: 'lest he do bleed to death'. Why does she deny the blood implied in the bond some lines later and acknowledged by her now? In fact, 47 lines later she will deny it, saying that Shylock has no right for a drop of Christian blood. It seems a rather fraudulent trial, according to Charles Ross (2010).

After that, Portia asks whether Antonio has anything to say. Only now does he give a long speech after a long time of silence and obedience:

But little: I am armed and well prepared.
Give me your hand, Bassanio: fare you well!
Grieve not that I am fallen to this for you;
For herein Fortune shows herself more kind
Than is her custom: it is still her use
To let the wretched man outlive his wealth,
To view with hollow eye and wrinkled brow
An age of poverty; from which lingering penance
Of such misery doth she cut me off.
Commend me to your honourable wife:
Tell her the process of Antonio's end;
Say how I loved you, speak me fair in death;
And, when the tale is told, bid her be judge
Whether Bassanio had not once a love.
Repent but you that you shall lose your friend,
And he repents not that he pays your debt;
For if the Jew do cut but deep enough,
I'll pay it presently with all my heart. (IV, i, 260-277)

Antonio's speech represents the reiteration of his resignation to fortune, doom, and death. He accepts his fate, desiring thus Shylock's act of circumcision/castration. However, he does not acknowledge that his fate is due to his own deed of accepting the bond of a revengeful man. Instead he attributes it merely to fortune. His non-acknowledgement of his deeds signals Antonio's imagined unmistakable behaviour. Moreover, his attitude of willingly taking his judgement and penalty enhances his stoical attitude suggested from the very beginning of the play: as he believed that his ships were safe just as his gains, now he believes that even Shylock's cruellest act of cutting off a pound of flesh will provoke suffering and pain, which he will face fearlessly and resigned.

Antonio's sinister inward dispositions of the mind are represented in such frivolous act of sacrificing himself for Bassanio. The physical description of the man's faced with a 'hollow eye and wrinkled brow' is a symptom of anxiety and suffering brought on by the premature ageing and misfortune. Furthermore, Antonio asks Bassanio to tell the story of his life to his wife. As Othello asks to make the narrative of his past as glorious and honourable, instead of the past of an act of murder, Antonio wants to glorify and idealise his sacrifice for Bassanio. His innermost desire is to hide his inward dimensions, which he does not wish to see and praise only his act of generosity paid with his life. Antonio's inwardness is depicted in terms of such frivolous act of sacrifice which modern Psychoanalysis would call a masochistic symptom which provides the self with pain and pleasure, suffering and delight. In a certain sense, by depicting Antonio's inwardness by such masochistic act of sacrifice, Shakespeare intuitively anticipates some of important assumptions pinned down by Psychoanalysis and represents the darker and sinister dimensions of the self, projected in such sacrifice, which imaginatively would generate love, affection and recognition.

Bassanio also makes a speech revealing his love for Antonio, which does not please Portia, as well as Gratiano's speech does not please Nerissa:

> **Bassanio**. Antonio, I am married to a wife
> Which is as dear to me as life itself;
> But life itself, my wife, and all the world,
> Are not with me esteemed above thy life:
> I would lose all, ay, sacrifice them all
> Here to this devil, to deliver you.
> **Portia**. Your wife would give you little thanks for that,
> If she were by, to hear you make the offer.
> **Gratiano**. I have a wife, whom, I protest, I love:
> I would she were in heaven, so she could
> Entreat some power to change this currish Jew.
> **Nerissa**. 'Tis well you offer it behind her back;
> The wish would make else an unquiet house. (IV, i, 278-290)

Both Bassanio and Gratiano declare their love for Antonio and would rather see their wives dead to save the bankrupt merchant. The idea of sacrifice is again at stake here. As Abraham, Shylock's power over the scene makes the Christians offer what they cherish most for a frivolous sacrifice. Counterpoised to that, both Portia and Nerissa disapprove of their sacrificing act, which veils their frivolousness of sacrificing them for Antonio. Moreover, in a subtler level, Portia may be cruel to Antonio by lingering the final verdict due to a possible jealousy she feels as she sees Bassanio declaring his love to Antonio. For Berger Jr. (2010),

> Shylock's bond threatens Antonio with bodily harm and possible death, but Portia quickly neutralizes that threat because Shylock isn't her real target. Her problem is to overgo Antonio, her competitor in noble deeds, by proving that she can save someone for Bassanio. If she can put Antonio in her debt, she will loosen his powerful hold over Bassanio. (2010, p. 28) [202]

Portia's cruelty of delaying Antonio's verdict makes him suffer more than he wished. In addition to that, if she saves Antonio is because she wants to pledge him again as a form of submitting him to her power. In act V, she will make Antonio pledge his body once again for Bassanio, because he lost his ring for the merchant Antonio. She will make Antonio pledge his body again for Bassanio, initiating then a new contract similar to Shylock's bond.[203]

Even Shylock criticises Bassanio's and Gratiano's speeches: 'These be the Christian husbands. I have a daughter; / Would any of the stock of Barabbas / Had been her husband rather than a Christian!' (IV, i, 291-292). Now, instead of desiring to see his daughter dead, he sarcastically reveals that he would rather see his daughter married to a thief like Barabbas than to Lorenzo. Barabbas is the thief who was pardoned and released instead of Jesus Christ. Barabbas was freed because the mob that was prosecuting Jesus Christ demanded it from Pilates. Also, Barabbas is the Jew of Marlowe's **The Jew of Malta**, which is one of the sources of **The Merchant of Venice**. Such speech reiterates Shylock's evil and villainous traits. He could not avoid her elopement, which dishonoured him.

Finally Portia allows the bond and she reiterates it twice:

> **Portia**. A pound of that same merchant's flesh is thine:
> The court awards it, and the law doth give it.
> **Shylock**. Most rightful judge!
> **Portia**. And you must cut this flesh from off his breast:
> The law allows it, and the court awards it.
> **Shylock**. Most learned judge! A sentence! Come, prepare! (IV, i, 295-300)

Shylock compulsively emphasises his victory and his conquering the pound of flesh from Antonio. He believes that he has got his revenge now. He exalts Portia's intelligence, rightness, and wisdom. It is more and more evident that Shylock is blind, which contradicts his former attitude of scepticism portrayed in the first three scenes of the play. His inner self floats from his sceptic attitudes to blindness now. But his blindness and scepticism were something that could be perceived together beforehand: he was sceptic to Antonio, Bassanio and Launcelot, yet he was quite blind to Jessica's lying and possible betrayal. Shakespeare depicts Shylock's inwardness presenting both feelings appearing together.

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[202] See Harry Berger Jr, *Mercifixion in The Merchant of Venice: The Riches of Embarrassment*, 2010.
[203] See Benston, *Portia, the Law, and the Tripartite Structure of the Merchant of Venice*, 1979, p. 369.

Then Portia stops Shylock and turns her way of reading the bond: now she just reads the letter, not the spirit anymore:

> Tarry a little; there is something else.
> This bond doth give thee here no ***jot*** of blood;
> The words expressly are 'a pound of flesh:'
> Take then thy bond, take thou thy pound of flesh;
> But, in the cutting it, if thou dost shed
> One drop of Christian blood, thy lands and goods
> Are, by the laws of Venice, confiscate
> Unto the state of Venice. (IV, i, 301-308, emphasis added)

Portia swerves her argument which stated that the court and the law allowed Shylock to have his pound of flesh. Once again she contradicts her speeches and reveals just now the tiny little detail which annuls Shylock's bond: the jot of blood. For Portia, if Shylock drops one jot of blood, his lands and gains will be confiscated by the law of Venice. Nonetheless, a few lines before, Portia claimed that Shylock should provide a surgeon for Antonio to stop the bleeding. In that moment, she recognised the jot of blood in the cutting of a pound of flesh: 'Have by some surgeon, Shylock, on your charge, / To stop his wounds, lest he do *bleed* to death.' (IV, i, 253-254). Now she contradicts her argument, because if before she acknowledges the spirit of the letter by stating that a surgeon would be necessary, now she just reads the letter and does not acknowledge the spirit of the letter.

However, the jot of blood is implied in the bond for any court of law. According to Richard Moulton, Portia's turning-point suggests that 'the two sides are bound together by the principle of measure for measure' (1969, p. 39). He shows then the opposition of the written and unwritten law and he points a juridical problem in Portia's argumentation:

> It is appropriate enough in the mouth of a bright girl playing the lawyer, but no court of justice could seriously entertain it for a moment: by every principle of interpretation a bond that could justify the cutting of human flesh must also justify the shedding of blood, which is necessarily implied in such cutting. (1969, p. 40)

Portia's non-acknowledging the shedding of blood is a contradiction, since she had recognised it implied in the bond before. This is an argument that suggests Shakespeare's ambiguities in the play. Shylock's refusal makes that 'the wheel of Nemesis goes round', and though Shylock tries to get back his money, Portia denied it, 'on the ground that he had refused it in open court'. (1969, p. 41). Portia forges a trial which denies Shylock's bond and money. Since the six thousands ducats she theatrically promised to pay back is in fact hers, in a certain sense, the denial of her money is essential to prove her power over Shylock,

Bassanio, and Antonio.

Portia's judgement represents the inflexible law in Venice. Though she allows the bond at first, now she just reads the letter of the bond, not the spirit. As Shylock asks at least his principal back (three thousand ducats), she simply denies it. Thomas Billelo (2010)[204] states that Portia twists the law, usurps the judge's role, condemns Shylock and introduces the revenge rationale instead of the judicial rationale in the courtroom. She becomes as inflexible as Shylock was during the whole trial. The speech on the Quality of Mercy has no effect now. She embodies a hard heart to outwit Shylock's bond and take his fortune. She waited until this point to give the verdict. She wanted to make a show, to be in the centre of the scene, wherein she would play the *beau role* in front of the audience.

Then Shylock asks whether this is the law:

> **Shylock**. Is that the law?
> **Portia**. Thyself shalt see the act:
> For, as thou urgest justice, be assured
> Thou shalt have justice, more than thou desirest. […]
> **Shylock**. I take this offer, then; pay the bond thrice
> And let the Christian go.
> **Bassanio**. Here is the money.
> **Portia**. Soft!
> The Jew shall have all justice; soft! no haste:
> He shall have nothing but the penalty. (IV, i, 310-317)

Now she denies Shylock's money (in fact, her money) in the excuse that Shylock will have all justice. She enhances that Shylock will have more justice than he asked for, which means that she is going to enforce upon the Jew the strictest law of Venice. Portia's enforcing justice is the very Christian law predicted in the New Testament, Luke 6, 37-38:

> Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven: / Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again. (Luke 6, 37-38, King James' **Holy Bible**, 1611).[205]

In the same way that Shylock judged Antonio beforehand, now Portia judges him. The strictest laws in Venice are indeed based on Christian law. James 2, 13 also provides such law with the same logic of judging: 'For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment.' (James 2, 13, King James' **Bible**, 1611). Shylock's trial fantasies and enacts the law of the *talionis lex*, an eye for an eye, a hand for a

[204] See his essay in Constance Jordan and Cunningham's book **The Law in Shakespeare**, 2010.
[205] See King James's **Holy Bible**, 1611.

hand. When Shylock asks to have thrice the sum, which Portia promised beforehand, Portia denies it and affirms he will have only the penalty, meaning that he will have the pound of flesh and, in a subtler and trickier level, the penalty of trying to kill a Venetian citizen. Shylock's problem is that he had been too stubborn up to this point, that he did not want to accept his principle. Now is too late to retreat and try to have his money back.

In fact, the Venetian law, which promises to be impartial and equal to both Venetian and foreign citizens, is now valid only to the Venetians, not to the Jews. However, its basis, the New Testament, guarantees that such double standard becomes a construct based on theological and judicial assumptions. Such judgment is pervaded by the double standard which secures the Venetian rights, whereas it threatens and denies the foreigners' rights. Thus, the inflexible law of Venice is justified in the Christian's eyes by the **Holy Scriptures** which maintains and guarantees its actual application. No one in the courtroom dares to question such assumption embodied by the Venetian law. Most contradictorily, the New Testament law which promises to be based on Love and Mercy is at this point as inflexible as the Old Testament law which is based on the strict laws of the *talionis lex*. Therefore, Shakespeare touches here deeply the wound and contradictions of Christianity, demonstrating that double standard and injustice are justified by Christian scriptures.

In that sense, Portia applies the principle of equity to render the common law less inflexible. Equity implies impartiality and fairness. According to Stein and Hauck (1975), the equity principle was 'the application of the dictates of conscience or the principles or natural justice to the settlement of controversies' and also 'a system of jurisprudence serving to supplement and remedy the limitations and the inflexibility of the common law' (1975, p. 447). As a matter of fact, the equity principle was always applied to amend the common law. But as soon as Portia applies such principle, she makes it more inflexible, because through such rationale she does not allow a drop of blood implied in the bond. It is worth enhancing here that the principle of equity was determined by the judges' conscience, i. e., moral and ethic principles of the judge. Portia's conscience is suggested as soon as she applies the principle of equity, as every judge at the time was supposed to do: to judge according to his conscience. Though Portia makes a beautiful speech trying to teach Shylock mercy, she is not able to show him mercy. Portia is not moved by her own conscience. In Kaplan's (2002) compendium of historical texts, a text by William Thomas, *The History of Italy*, presents an important detail about the relationship between the judge and conscience in the age. Though Portia assumes that her judgement is based on the strict Venetian law, according to Thomas's report it was in fact based on the judge's conscience:

> Their advocates (as we should say are men of law) study principally civil laws, and besides that the statutes and customs of the city: which are so many, that in manner they suffice of themselves. But he that substantially considereth the manner of their proceedings, shall plainly see that *all matters are determined by the judge's consciences*, and *not by the civil, nor yet their own laws*. For in every office there be diverse judges, and that part [party, one of the sides litigating] that has most ballots, prevails ever: be it in matter of debt, of title of land, upon life and death, or otherwise. (2002, p. 133 my highlights).

This report illuminates the play by suggesting the ambiguities implied in the trial scene. Though Portia claims that there is no power that can break the bond, her conscience interferes in her judgement. Conscience and judgement are intertwined in a way that there is no possibility of assuming that judgement is pervaded only by rationality, because conscience and the inner dimensions of the individual interfere in judgement. Shakespeare intuitively perceived the relation between judgement and conscience in this scene. Shakespeare suggests Portia's conscience – and one would say, moral and ethical principles – as soon as he makes her apply the principle of equity, yet making it more inflexible than the common law.

In a certain sense, Shakespeare intuitively anticipates Kant's assumptions that both rational and irrational dimensions of the self, ethical and aesthetical faculties of human nature are provoked by inward feelings, sensations, emotions and imagination. Immanuel Kant (1727-1804), in his **Critique of Judgement** (2005), defines his philosophical system based on Aesthetics. Both **Critique of Pure Reason** and **Critique of the Practical Reason** are based on the **Critique of Judgment**. Kant proposes a philosophical system (the rational, ethic, and aesthetic), in which the aesthetic was the touchstone of his system. This was an innovation in philosophical thinking. He had already considered sensibility and imagination since his first critique. When judging, conceptualising or defining something, imagination pervades all philosophical and analytical categories employed in our interpretation. Eckart Foerster (2010), parting from Kant's *Opus Postumus*, considers the importance of Kant's **Third Critique** as a touchstone in his philosophical system, once sensibility and imagination are essential faculties which constitute human judgement in sciences, arts and Philosophy. Thus, when we judge, define and conceptualise an object, imagination and sensitivity pervade philosophical and analytical categories employed in our interpretation. According to Kathrin Rosenfield, in her book **Estética** (2006, p. 27-36), Kant freed his Critique from any 'historical presupposition' or 'cultural concepts' which are always determining what art is. He established the relationship between beauty and sensibility, knowledge and practical reason. He did not separate aesthetical from the reasonable. He did not determine that imagination was just ancillary to the knowledge. Kathrin Rosenfield states that 'instead of opposing sensibility and

reason in a hierarchy, Kant is interested, since the **Critique of the Pure Reason**, in the function that the imagination (which selects the sensible perceptions) fulfils in the activity of understanding.' (Rosenfield, 2006, p. 27-28). There is a free and harmonious game between understanding and imagination, through which, as we analyse or define an object or person, our imagination and sensibility interferes in the constitution of our judgment.

Such an innovating perceptiveness of human nature is not only Shakespeare's capacity of perceiving the mysteriousness of human inward dimensions. Michel de Montaigne also considered such possibilities in his **Essays**. Montaigne was aware of the interferences of our feelings on our judgement, understanding and cognition. In his essay *Of the Folly of opining about the true and false only according to reason* (I, 27), Montaigne also anticipates some of Kant's assumptions. Montaigne points out that it is foolish to judge everything just by rationality. (Montaigne, 1987, I, 27, p. 239). Montaigne signals the incapability of judging certain phenomena according to reason. Sensibility, imagination and feelings interfere in our judgement, taking into account that in many moments we cannot explain such phenomena only according to reason. In many senses, both Montaigne and Shakespeare anticipate the assumptions of Kant's critique, just as innovate the literary forms introducing inward sides of the self, which strongly interfere in judgement and conscience.

Then, Portia threatens Shylock with the Venetian law, which can take all Shylock has:

> Therefore prepare thee to cut off the flesh.
> Shed thou no blood, nor cut thou less nor more
> But just a pound of flesh: if thou cutest more
> Or less than a just pound, be it but so much
> As makes it light or heavy in the substance,
> Or the division of the twentieth part
> Of one poor scruple, nay, if the scale do turn
> But in the estimation of a hair,
> Thou diest and all thy goods are confiscate. (IV, i, 320-328)

The justice Portia promised to Shylock is the confiscation of all his goods and even his death. Portia's law and the Venetian law imply annihilation. As seen before, Portia as a Medea whose powers can bewitch, paralyse and dominate, is again evoked in Shylock's trial. The emphasis Portia gives to the correct measure and weight of the pound of flesh, which cannot be more than a hair, enhances the strictness of the law enforced upon Shylock.

Then Portia denies his money, the money which made Bassanio suitable to woo her:

> **Portia**. Why doth the Jew pause? take thy forfeiture.
> **Shylock**. Give me my principal, and let me go.
> **Bassanio**. I have it ready for thee; here it is.

Portia. He hath refused it in the open court:
He shall have merely justice and his bond. […]
Shylock. Shall I not have barely my principal?
Portia. Thou shalt have nothing but the forfeiture,
To be so taken at thy peril, Jew. (IV, i, 331-340)

Shylock demands now only his principal, his three thousand ducats. Though Bassanio is willing to hand it over, Portia denies it once again. The Jew has only the right for a pound of flesh cut from Antonio's breast. Portia's statement is the configuration of the inflexible justice, which now denies Shylock's money. In fact, any court of law would accept negotiation, if one of the parts accepted the payment of his money.

After that, Shylock reacts with rage and contempt: 'Why, then the devil give him good of it! / I'll stay no longer question'. (IV, i, 341-342). Though Shylock gives up arguing at the courtroom, Portia declares other inflictions of the law upon the Jew:

Tarry, *Jew*:
The law hath yet another hold on you.
It is enacted in the laws of Venice,
If it be proved against an *alien*
That by direct or indirect attempts
He seek the life of any citizen,
The party 'gainst the which he doth contrive
Shall seize one half his goods; the other half
Comes to the privy coffer of the state;
And the offender's life lies in the mercy
Of the duke only, 'gainst all other voice.
In which predicament, I say, thou standest;
For it appears, by manifest proceeding,
That indirectly and directly too
Thou hast contrived against the very life
Of the defendant; and thou hast incurred
The danger formerly by me rehearsed.
Down therefore and beg mercy of the duke. (IV, i, 342-359, highlights added)

This speech suggests that Venetian law is not really based on precedents, but on strict decrees. Though Portia assumes beforehand that breaking Shylock's bond would open a precedent: 'the Venetian law / Cannot impugn you as you do proceed.' (IV, i, 174-175). However, now she decrees that there are strict laws to judge a suit in Venice. Also, the duke and Antonio stated that Venetian laws protected foreigners and aliens. Shapiro (1996) remarks something very interesting about this speech: that the Venetians could do that to Shylock as long as they (represented by Portia) identified him no longer as a Jew, but as an alien. According to him,

> Many readers, and I count myself among them, have found something troubling about this speech. Through the precedent of old laws still on the books – but apparently unknown to Antonio, Shylock and the Duke, and all other interested parties – Venetian society is able to have it both ways: while the city's charter guarantees equality before the law, a feature that has attracted foreigners to Venice, it retains legislation that renders this equality provisional, if not fictional. The trial scene thus offers a fantasy resolution to the conflicting and overlapping jurisdictions intrinsic to such trials by invoking a law that effectively supersedes the city's charter [...]. As much as it might want to, given its charter, Venetian society cannot punish Shylock simply because he is a Jew. But in the terms of the play it can convict him as a threatening alien. In order to accomplish this delicate maneuver in the space of these dozen lines, the nature of Shylock's difference is reconstituted: a Jew at the start of the speech, three lines later he is an alien. Yet once Shylock is convicted as an alien, he can be punished, not as an alien, but as a Jew, who must 'presently become a Christian'. (1996, p.188-189)

However, Antonio and the Duke knew that Venetian laws guarantee the same to the Jews, since they depend on Jewish money and usury. The guarantees foreigners have Venetian laws seem to be merely contingent. The only way of condemning the 'Jew' is just by transforming him into an alien. Contradictorily, Shylock is punished not as an alien, but as a Jew. In addition to that, the Christians' aggression to Shylock was a Renaissance attitude towards the Jews. Though there were some positive writings about the Jews, they were commonly treated as alien. Thus, Shylock is visibly the alien in the play. In that sense, Stephan Greenblatt (1984)[206] analyses Shakespeare's characters considering the aggression towards an *alien*: *the witch, the Negro, the women, the other, the foreigner, the Jew, the poor, the moor* are always created as inward projections and used as tools of power and triumph and targets of violence and aggression, in order to build up the male self and identity. Besides these projections, the characters tend not only to show their negative points of views on them, but mainly they react negatively with aggression and violence in order to conquer social domain over the *alien* and to ascend socially and economically. Therefore, the *alien* can be seen as a result and a construct of the inward male projection, which is invented and controlled to achieve and maintain power.

However, Portia's attitude is to reject the above-mentioned statement and turn to rather strict laws. As a result, part of Shylock's gains and property goes to the state, but the other one goes to the victim of the attempt of murder. The confiscation of Shylock's property was not at all strange in Shakespeare's age. Kaplan (2002) states that reports in Shakespeare's age blamed 'the Italian practice of confiscating a convert's property for the low rate of conversions there. This practice resonates in **The Merchant of Venice** with the dual threat of conversion and the state confiscation of Shylock's property at the end of act 4.' (2002, p. 131). The confiscation of Shylock's property depicts the Venetian practices described in

[206] See Greenblatt's **Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare**, 1984.

reports of the age. Shakespeare and his audience probably were aware of such practices not only in Venice, but even in England, for example, when king Edward I spelled the Jews from England in 1290 and confiscated their wealth.[207]

Moreover, Shylock's life is in the Duke's hands now. Instead of giving the final verdict to Shylock, Portia demands that the Duke and Antonio give the court's verdict. However, before the Duke pronounces his verdict, Gratiano interrupts his speech in aggressive and derogatory words:

> **Gratiano**. Beg that thou mayst have leave to hang thyself:
> And yet, thy wealth being forfeit to the state,
> Thou hast not left the value of a cord;
> Therefore thou must be hang'd at the state's charge.
> **Duke**. That thou shalt see the difference of our spirits,
> I pardon thee thy life before thou ask it:
> For half thy wealth, it is Antonio's;
> The other half comes to the general state,
> Which humbleness may drive unto a fine. (IV, i, 360-368)

Gratiano interrupts not only here, but during the whole trial. His statements are quite 'anti-Semitic', epitomising the 'anti-Semitism' of the play. In fact, Gratiano's words are quite ironic against the Duke's statement that Shylock will see the 'difference of our spirits'. The contrast between Gratiano's speech and the Duke's speech is suggestive of their differences of spirits. According to Berger Jr, 'Christian villainy in *Merchant* takes a deceptively mild form. In ancient times Jews were tied or nailed to a cross and left to hang until dead. In Shakespeare's Venice strict justice is mitigated by an act of mercy: the Jew is denied his living but granted his life.' (2010, p. 3).[208] Though Shylock's attitudes are villain and evil, the Christians' attitudes are mirrored in Shylock's actions, and their own deeds also suggest such villainy. In fact, the Duke misrepresents himself by generalising their inner representation with a false premise that all Christians are good to Shylock. Shakespeare contrasts the Duke's and Gratiano's speech in order to suggest that the Christians do not realise their hypocrisy towards the other, the foreigner and the Jews. By counterpoising these speeches, enhances their inward dimensions: their blindness of their hypocrisy.

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[207] See James Shapiro's **Shakespeare and the Jews**, 1996. See Bronstein's essay, *Shakespeare, the Jews, and The Merchant of Venice* (1969). For him, 'William the Conqueror, for his own benefit, brought the Jews to England. The wealth and power of the nobility was based on land, but in a rising money economy the nobility often needed ready cash. They forced numbers of Jews to lend to themselves as well as to the peasants so that these latter could pay their dues to the nobility. Since the nobility did not use the money for productive gain, ultimately they could not make good on their debts. As long as the nobility were economically solvent, the Jewish position was excellent. But when the nobility had gravely overextended themselves, the position of the Jews began to deteriorate. Fearing the loss of their pawned lands, the nobility turned the wrath of the oppressed peasantry from themselves and against the Jews, often using the instrument and teachings and rulings of the Church. A reign of terror was generated against the Jews which led gradually to their humiliation and impoverishment, expropriation of their wealth, and their final expulsion in I290 after brutal riots had been let loose against them.' (1969, p. 6)

[208] See Harry Berger Jr's *Mercifixion in The Merchant of Venice: The Riches of Embarrassment*, 2010.

Shylock's reply unveils his suffering and pain popping up at this moment of the play:

> Nay, take my life and all; pardon not that:
> You take my house when you do take the prop
> That doth sustain my house; you take my life
> When you do take the means whereby I live. (IV, i, 370-373)

Shylock sees his house and his life as a continuum. His life is his house and his wealth is the means whereby he lives. He prefers to die instead of losing the 'prop' of his life: his house, his gains and his property. Like Antonio and Bassanio, Shylock also confuses and exchanges money and emotions, money and his life, which suggests that his life depends deeply on his gains. As he enhanced in II, v, 'stop my house's ears' (II, v, 33), here again his house means his life to him, it is like an extension of his body. Shakespeare represents Shylock's inward feelings by such metonymy which suggests that his house is a sort of extension of Shylock's body. His inwardness is emotionally depicted in such connection between his life, his body and his house.

Then Portia asks Antonio to give his verdict to Shylock: 'What mercy can you render him, Antonio?' Instead of proclaiming the verdict, she lets Antonio give his verdict, as if she wished to wash her hands:

> So please my lord the duke and all the court
> To quit the fine for one half of his goods,
> I am content; so he will let me have
> The other half in use, to render it,
> Upon his death, unto the gentleman
> That lately stole his daughter:
> Two things provided more, that, for this favour,
> He presently become a Christian;
> The other, that he do record a gift,
> Here in the court, of all he dies possessed,
> Unto his son Lorenzo and his daughter. (IV, i, 376-386)

What judge would ask the accused to give the verdict to the accuser? Such gesture signals at the inflexibility of Venetian law and also Portia's attitude of washing her hands like Pilates. Furthermore, Antonio's mercy is not to Shylock, but rather to Jessica and Lorenzo. In fact, Antonio's decision of giving Shylock's money to Jessica and Lorenzo after his death inflicts pain and embarrassment in Shylock. Shylock feels ashamed of losing his money in the trial scene and to those who stole his money and jewels.[209] Shame is inflicted here in its extreme. Antonio accepts Shylock's money and his purpose is to use it in usury to get interest

[209] For the issue of shame in Shakespeare, see Ewan Fernie, **Shame in Shakespeare**, 2002.

with Shylock's money. Drakakis points out the verse 'To quit the fine for one half of his goods, / I am content; so he will let me have / The other half in use' is very confusing and disturbing:

> Antonio's proposal is not entirely clear. He is asking that the fine proposed earlier in 368 be remitted, and that he be allowed to administer the remainder of the Jew's wealth with the aim of handing it over to Lorenzo and Jessica on her father's death. The phrase *in use* means simply 'to hold in trust' […], with the possible subsidiary meaning of deploy in accordance with his own stated mercantilist principles. However, Mahood regards this part of the proposal as 'disturbing' […], since it resembles a kind of 'usury'. The first gloss effectively transforms the Jew into a beneficent patriarch through an act of Christian mercy, but the second leaves Antonio open to the charge that this demonstration of 'mercy' is less than generous. (2010, 360).

This act of mercy that Antonio believes to show is, in fact, a disguise for his cynical attitude of taking Shylock's money and use it for his own purpose. Drakakis' reading is quite revealing of what the Christians would never acknowledge. Though Antonio strongly criticises Shylock for gaining money through usury, now Antonio suggests, but at the same time tries to disguise, his intention of using Shylock's wealth in a usurious way. Once again Antonio's speech and attitude enhance the Christians' similarities to the Jews in the play. Shakespeare suggests Antonio's innermost intentions in such obscure and deluding verses, representing therefore his inward dimensions.

One example counterpoises Shylock's trial with the way the law was applied in Shakespeare's age. Portia's partial judgement was not in the same trend of England's law, but in fact in the Venetian way. According to Kaplan 'the state was clearly concerned that its officers hear and judge cases fairly and impartially to ensure justice and safety for resident and aliens.' (2002, p. 159). Elizabeth I's speech *Proclamation Ordering Peace Kept in London* (1559) decreed that

> it is presently ordered by her majesty that the whole circumstance of certain frays in London betwixt her subjects and certain *strangers* shall be duly examined and tried, and according to the laws of the realm judged and determined. For this is her highness' determination, that no partial favor be showed to English or *stranger*, but that every of them shall live in the safety and protection of her laws. (in Kaplan, 2002, p. 160, italics added).

Such act by Queen Elizabeth I contrasts to the way the Christians treat the Jews in the play. In that sense, some playgoers in the audience could react in different ways to such act of 'mercy'. On the one hand, they could be astonished by Portia's twist of the bond and taking of Shylock's wealth. Such gesture was in the same trend that the Venetians, Italians and

Catholics were described in the age.[210] On the other hand, other playgoers could react positively to the Christians' verdict to Shylock, due to the pervading xenophobia and 'anti-Semitism' taken for granted in Shakespeare's age. Shakespeare creates tensions in the play to provoke the dramatic effect of the play, just as to suggest the inward sinister dispositions of the Christians in the play.

Then Portia asks whether the Jew is content:

> **Portia**. Art thou contented, Jew? what dost thou say?
> **Shylock**. I am content.
> **Portia**. Clerk, draw a deed of gift.
> **Shylock**. I pray you, give me leave to go from hence;
> I am not well: send the deed after me,
> And I will sign it. (IV, i, 389-393)

Portia's question is really cynical and hypocritical. Moreover, she inflicts more pain and shame on Shylock. As Berger Jr (2010) points out, the play is based on embarrassment. Just as Shylock tries to embarrass Antonio by his act of circumcision and castration at the courtroom, Portia embarrasses both Antonio and Shylock at the courtroom. First, the promise that the law awards the pound of flesh to Shylock makes Antonio very ashamed by exposing his breast at the courtroom, ready to be killed by Shylock.

Ironically, Portia has just taught Shylock how to beg mercy. However, some lines later, when Portia asks Antonio's gloves and Bassanio's ring as a token, Bassanio refuses to give his ring to Portia. Portia's reply is very out of the tune of what she has just done to Shylock: 'I see, sir, you are liberal in offers / You taught me first to beg; and now methinks / You teach me how a beggar should be answered.' (IV, i, 434-436). How ironic these lines seem counterpoised to what she has done a few lines before. First she is 'liberal' with Shylock and then she teaches Shylock how to beg mercy to the Duke and Antonio; after that, she also reveals how Bassanio treats a beggar. Shakespeare created such contradictions to show the inconsistence of the court's argument and Venetian law. Such device provokes tension and anxiety, making the audience react ambivalently to the aesthetic effects conveyed in the play.

Besides that, Portia taught Shylock to be merciful to Antonio. But did she really follow the lesson she taught on the quality of mercy? No, certainly not. As Graham (1953) acknowledges, 'Obviously Shylock, valuing his revenge above all else, shows no mercy for Antonio. But do the Christians, valuing so highly the "quality of mercy", exhibit no revenge towards Shylock?' (1953, p. 148). The point is that they do not repay Shylock, whose money

[210] Some reports in Kaplan's collection state that Venetians used to steal money from Jews and aliens, p. 150 and 151.

helped Bassanio to woe Portia. According to Drakakis (1998),[211] 'Shylock is certainly a victim of judicial violence in the play, and Venice certainly depicts him negatively.' (1998, p. 186). Even in London, if we think of Elizabeth I's *Proclamation Ordering Peace Kept in London*, the court should pay at least Shylock's principal. But as an alien in Venice, ethical and moral scruples are not values which the Christians want to show to Shylock. Shylock represents a symbolic scapegoat to alleviate the Venetian unconscious hatred towards what they do not acknowledge and do not want to see in themselves, according to what Drakakis affirmed (1998, p. 186).[212]

What she acknowledges in her first speech in the play, she does not apply to her own acts:

> If to do were as easy as to know what were good to do, chapels had been churches and poor men's cottages princes' palaces. It is a good divine that follows his own instructions: I can easier teach twenty what were good to be done, than be one of the twenty to follow mine own teaching. (I, ii, 12-17)

Her speech is merely a matter of rhetoric to disguise her own intentions in the play. Her conscience interferes in her judgement of Shylock. Though she acknowledges that it is easier to teach twenty a lesson than to follow her own instructions, she is not able to show mercy to Shylock and give at least his principal: his three thousand ducats. Actually, it is not a trial based on law, but a theatrical representation of the Christian hypocrisy, their unconscious unacknowledged hate for themselves and their blindness to see that they are as villainous and evil as Shylock. In that sense, Derek Cohen (2003) points out that 'an honest and accurate reading of **Merchant** must acknowledge in Portia's triumph over Shylock the affirmation of a community value that takes satisfaction in the humiliation and exclusion of the Jew' (2003, p. 61). It is an attempt to maintain state power and the individual privileges. They did not give back his money and force him to become a Christian as a way of imposing power and punishing him.

Shylock's revelation 'I am content' echoes Antonio's acceptation when he signs Shylock's bond: 'Content, i' faith: I'll seal to such a bond' (I, iii, 148). Shylock's mood changes here as he states that he is unwell and wants to leave the courtroom. He silences and

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[211] See John Drakakis' essay *Historical difference and Venetian Patriarchy*, 1998.

[212] See Drakakis' words already quoted in chapter 4, 'But unless we are to think along certain oversimplified new historicist lines that Shylock is merely an effect of Venetian power which requires to be contained, then we are forced to recognise that there is much more at stake in this conflict. In this more complex version, Shylock is not primarily a realistic representation, not a 'Jew' in the strictly ethnological sense of the term, but both a subject position *and* a rhetorical means of prising open a dominant Christian ideology no longer able to smooth over its own internal contradictions, and therefore a challenge and a threat.' (1998, p. 186)

is silent in front of the court. Then the tragic may start. Sherman (2004) suggests that the tragic starts at this moment, when imagining that Shylock becomes mad as soon as he leaves the courtroom. For her, 'the skeptical trajectory moves from doubt to crisis to madness, as in the tragedies of **King Lear** and **Othello**, or it moves not to madness but to the fanatic's quest for certainty, as in the case of Leontes in **The Winter's Tale**.' (2004, p. 278). Shylock's fanatic quest for revenge makes him tend to madness in some moments, especially in III, iii, 12-17, when he insists that he will have his bond and ask the jailer to arrest Antonio. Moreover, Sherman states that 'Shylock's bitter passions, however, do not follow the skeptical trajectory mapped out by Shakespeare's tragic protagonists. Unlike Lear, Shylock does not go mad, although it is possible that he descends into madness after he exits.' (2004, p. 284)[213]. This possibility of being mad suggests Shylock's complex inward dimensions.

5. 7. *The Merchant of Venice*, a Comedy or a Tragicomedy?

Though some assume that **The Merchant of Venice** is a comedy, the problem of the literary genre of play is not a well-solved issue until today. Some critics have already pointed out that the play was tragically designed, as Nicholas Rowe, Heine and Ulrici affirmed. In a similar way, Laurie Maguire has recently pointed out that the play is 'a deeply uncomic comedy' (2004, p. 147), because 'the last scene is unusually private and anti-social. It is also indifferent to the preceding events: the characters indulge in bawdy jokes, oblivious to the fact that they have just destroyed a man.' (2004, p. 149).[214] Also, Graham Midgley, in *The Merchant of Venice: a reconsideration* (1969), recognises the difficulty in reading Shylock and the tendency to forget the events of the trial scene (1969, p. 191). Thus he criticises the inclusion of **The Merchant of Venice** in the comedies, because it is not at all a funny play (1969, p. 195).

The label 'comedy' did not imply that it was a funny play. Other Shakespeare's plays present similar traits to Shylock's play. For example, in **Much Ado about Nothing** there emerges a dramatic plot, when Hero is unfairly accused of having lost her virginity. Despite that, the play ends in a happy-ending scene with the couple's reconciliation and marriage. Furthermore, according to Marjorie Garber,[215]

> The term 'festive' refers not so much to the plays' presumptive joyousness as to their

[213] See Anita Gilman Sherman's text, *Disowning knowledge of Jessica, or Shylock's scepticism*, 2004.
[214] Laurie Maguire, **Studying Shakespeare**, 2004.
[215] Marjorie Garber, **Shakespeare after all**, 2004, it is a useful and comprehensive study on Shakespeare's work.

> thematic links and plot links to seasonal festivals from May Day to Christmas and Twelfth Night, and it is noteworthy that in each of these plays, especially the **Merchant**, there is much that actively resists joyful celebration. (2004, p. 284-285).

Thus, **The Merchant of Venice** cannot be simply classified among the comedies, because it seems more a tragicomedy. For Janette Dillon (2010),[216] **The Merchant of Venice** just as **Much Ado about Nothing** could be included among the tragicomedies. In her opinion, 'tragedy seems narrowly avoided' in those plays. 'Indeed, in that both these plays 'want deaths' but 'bring some near it', they arguably fit Fletcher's definition of tragicomedy better than the latter group' of Shakespeare's plays (2010, p. 171), such as **Pericles**, **Cymbeline**, **The Tempest** and **The Winter's Tale**. She builds her argument based on John Fletcher's **The Faithful Shepherd**, which pointed out that the tragicomedy's plot was between tragedy and comedy, and that it does not represent death, but it 'brings some near it', which does not mean that it is simply a comedy (2010, p. 170). For Dillon, there is no consensus among the critics about 'what generic name to give to the group of Shakespeare's late plays' (2010, p. 170). Some approaches concentrate on their tragicomic aspects, whereas others concentrate on their comic aspects and happy endings. Therefore, **Merchant of Venice** is a tragicomedy.

Though **The Merchant of Venice** was first published as a comedy, it presents sadness and discontent in every moment of the play: Antonio opens the play saying that he is sad and weary; Portia complains about her weariness; Bassanio asks when the gentlemen will laugh; Jessica complains of tediousness, says that her house is hell and she is sad during the whole play.[217] In addition to some critics who think that it is not a funny play, Shakespeare may have intentionally designed Shylock as a tragic character. Interestingly, the play's effects of Shylock's energy and tragic dimensions were noted in the very moment when it was first staged. According to Harold Goddard,[218] on 22 July 1598, James Roberts published the play in the Stationers' Register with an alternative name: ***The Marchaunt of Venyce or otherwise called the Jewe of Venyce***. It seems that the audience's aesthetic effects instigated Shakespeare to add a second name which drew attention to Shylock. For Goddard,

> Here is testimony that already in Shakespeare's own day the public was puzzled by the title of the play and had substituted for, or added to, the author's another title more expressive of what seemed to be its leading interest and central figure. The world did not have to wait for Kean and Irving to discover its 'hero'. [...] The public needed two titles. Shakespeare is content with two-in-one. (1969, p. 150).

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[216] See Janette Dillon's chapter *Shakespeare's tragicomedies*, in: WELLS, Stanley & DE GRAZIA, Margreta. **The new Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare**. New York: Cambridge, 2010.
[217] Marjorie Garber in **Shakespeare after all**, 2004 (p. 285) also points out that this uncomic atmosphere does not give much credit to the play to be a comedy.
[218] See Goddard's essay *The Three Caskets*, in Wilders' casebook **Shakespeare: *The Merchant of Venice***, 1969.

This change of the name of the play suggests that the audience felt an astonishing and disquieting feeling in the first representation of the play. Against the Christians' ill-treatment to Shylock it is difficult to see the play as a mere comedy. They never give back his money; they force his conversion into Christianity; they give half of his money to the State and half of money goes to Antonio and then to Lorenzo. It is noteworthy that they forget him in the last act and that they forget that they have just ruined a man. The final act's effacing effect creates feelings of discontent and anxiety in the audience, in the readers and in the characters of the play. Thus, such feelings are not fortuitously produced. Shakespeare actually created ambiguities that puzzle the audience and unleash disquieting and anguishing feelings after someone sees the play. At the end of the play, the audience feels constrained and uneasy because of what happened to Shylock. Such feelings are the obscure uneasiness we may feel because at first we laugh at Shylock's comic repetitive talking and then, reversibly, we eye-witness the cruelties that the Christians impinge on him. We share the uneasiness provoked by the sensations and feelings of such opposing moments of the play.

The greatest problem of the play that makes it difficult to analyse it as a drama is the fifth act, with its effacing devices and the total forgetfulness of the cruelties that the Christians inflicted upon Shylock. The last act's effect is rather conflicting. The talking about love and romance, music and stars, the reconciliation of the couples Portia and Bassanio, Nerissa and Gratiano, who have just quarrelled about their giving away the rings are over-determining elements which foreclose the sour effects of the fourth act. In that sense, according to Drakakis (1998),[219]

> The process that we see operating through the text of **The Merchant of Venice** is one which, with the benefit of hindsight, can be shown to constitute a systematic 'forgetting', effected through the conversion of Shylock, and the formal shift into the genre of comedy as a means of effecting closure. Whereas in tragedy what we experience is the *isolation* of the protagonist, in comedy the closure is usually one which incorporates participants into an inclusive definition of 'society'. (1998, p. 188)

Against Shylock's isolation and exclusion is necessary a comic and pretended happy-ending to efface the play's sour effects. However, such closure is not dramatically convincing, since the play provokes a sort of bitter feeling at its end, which we try to reject or assimilate. This feeling provoked by such occlusion is disquieting and disturbing. But some other elements point to sadness and discontent in the last act. Antonio ends the play completely

[219] See John Drakakis' essay *Historical difference and Venetian Patriarchy*, 1998.

alone. Like Shylock, he continues to be an outcast of the play, a social outcast who is not happy. Likewise, Jessica remains sad and discontent in the final act. The opposing elements – festivity and sadness – have annihilating effects in the audience and the reader. The play's aesthetic effect is thus rather conflicting and anguishing.

As a result, this effect may be the cause of the contradictory reading of play throughout the centuries and even our reading is affected by such disquieting effect, because the play leaves its meaning open at its end. It is not like other plays such as **Hamlet**, **King Lear**, **Othello** and **Macbeth** wherein desolation and death unleashes the so-called cathartic feelings. Indeed, **The Merchant of Venice** is rather an 'uncomic comedy' than a common festive comedy. The tragicomic figure of the play, Shylock, suffers his fate silently and becomes a scapegoat[220] of the Christians' anxieties and sinister dimensions.

Therefore, for the first time Shakespeare created a drama wherein the silencing of a tragic figure causes an annihilating effect in the drama. In fact, Shylock is a tragic and comic figure, because Shylock faces the final verdict impinged by Portia with his silence 'I am content'. He faces life, tragedy and his fate as it is, as life really is. He is not coward, just as he does not deny the consequences of bond: 'My deeds upon my shoulder', as he says. He tragically accepts the consequences of his bond and his desire for revenge.

Interestingly, after Shylock's trial, one question may remains

> 'If a man had stolen a pound in his youth and had used that pound to amass a huge fortune how much was he obliged to give back, the pound he had stolen only or the pound together with the compound interest accruing upon it or all his huge fortune?' (p. 120)

The question above is asked by Stephen Dedalus in James Joyce's novel **The Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man**. He asks such questions during his divagations on what is right and wrong, when he is in front of the rector. Though it is a question quite displaced from its original context, it invites and provokes us to see and think about the problem of the forfeiture of Shylock's bond and Portia's denial of Shylock's ducats. Of course Bassanio and Antonio have not stolen Shylock's money. Nevertheless, in the trial scene Portia's denial of the bond could compromise their ethical and moral integrity. How much money should Portia and Bassanio give back to Shylock, once he is the money-lender who provided Bassanio with three thousand ducats to woo Portia and make them happy? Is it just a question of money? How much respect, admiration and mercy do they owe to Shylock for his lending money to

[220] For the reading of Shylock as a scapegoat, see Derek Cohen's analysis, *The scapegoat mechanism: Shylock and Caliban*, in his book **Searching Shakespeare: studies in Culture and Authority**, 2003.

Bassanio? How much happiness has Shylock provided for Portia and Bassanio? Is it repayable? Is it fully repaid? How much do Gratiano, Nerrissa, Lorenzo and Jessica owe to him? Are they really merciful? The questions could go further and further restlessly. But the answers to those questions dwell on the conscience of the characters, playgoers, critics, and readers.

CONCLUSION

The doctorate thesis **Mimesis of Inwardness in Shakespeare's Drama: *The Merchant of Venice*** discussed and analysed the representation of inwardness in **The Merchant of Venice**, by Shakespeare. The discussion was framed especially by Maus' assumptions in her book **Inwardness and Theater in the English Renaissance** (1995), and McGinn's work **Shakespeare's Philosophy** (2007). Katharine Maus discusses the dichotomy between inwardness and outwardness, which was a remarkable characteristic in Renaissance, especially in Shakespeare's works and in contemporary discourses. The Elizabethan writers were quite aware and worried about the distinctions between the outward and inward dimensions of the self and of things. In that sense, Maus analyses inwardness opposed to outwardness. Maus takes into consideration the differences between an unutterable inner-self and a theatrical calculated outward which can be intentionally shaped. She investigates the epistemological anxieties caused by the gap between inwardness and outwardenss. In analysing the controversies about the consciousness of inwardness, Maus remarks the emergence of a great number of discourses, which presented the differences between inwardness and outwardness, a rhetorical and discursive distinction very common in 16th and 17th centuries.

Furthermore, in Shakespeare it is possible to notice some psychic dimensions represented in the characters of his plays. He intuitively perceived some mysterious dimensions that the self cannot control in his inwardness. Shakespeare noticed inward dimensions appearing in the obscure, sinister, uncontrolled dispositions of the self. He overcame his contemporaries and represented such mysterious uncontrolled dimensions of the self in the drama. Though Maus simply analyses inwardness as a cultural and historical event, Shakespeare represented more than that: he portrayed the obscure and mysterious psychic elements that determined and shaped inwardness. The mysterious forces of the self, pointed out by McGinn (2007), are obscure uncontrolled dimensions of the inward world of the self. They are represented through the characters' silences, verbal slips, non-said, ruptures of speech, the character's conscience, pathos, gestures, and bodily feelings. Such mysteriousness is embodied in inwardness and determines the self's actions, feelings, emotions, ideas and thoughts.

Thus, inwardness is an inner space rooted in inward mysterious dimensions, which are suggested in judgement, conscience, and anxieties. McGinn (2007) also analyses the problem of inwardness taking into account the self, his constitution, and his implications in some of Shakespeare's plays. Thus, Shakespeare works with several levels such as judgements and conscious manipulations, involuntary gestures and anxieties, suggesting desires, intentions, reasoning which are beyond conscious will and feeling. There is something in the self that goes beyond our understanding and which deludes it all the time. Inwardness is more or less comparable to the mental floatations, suggesting divations and inner debate. In that sense, indeterminacy, vagueness and a set of 'mental fluxes' make room to ambiguity, paradoxes, and incongruity of the self.

inwardness is an epochal cultural construct. However, its traits are very different from the modern concept of subjectivity. Inwardness is still a broader notion in English Renaissance Age, rather than our conception of subjectivity, which is inevitably constituted by philosophical concepts and psychoanalytic assumptions. In fact, the notion of modern subject is invested with different traits enhanced by diverse philosophical and psychoanalytic discourses and assumptions.

Thus, this thesis proposed to study inwardness in **The Merchant of Venice**, as well as to map some moments of the emergence of inwardness before Shakespeare. Chapter 1 presented some historical, cultural and literary elements which are useful in understanding the emergence of inwardness from the Middle Ages onwards. It discussed that Shakespeare did not invent inwardness by himself as Bloom and Fineman propose in their works. Like Dante, Augustine and Montaigne, he introduced a mimesis of inwardness specifically in the *drama* and that was his greatest achievement in literature. These authors depicted inward feelings, sensations, thoughts and anxieties in their work. Shakespeare developed the mimesis of inwardness in an on-going process of the development of inwardness, which probably started in the Middle Ages.

After that, the thesis started the discussion of the play, observing the awkward development in the criticism of the play. This research also discussed the main critical essays about the play and how there is a rupture and an inversion in the development of the play's criticism. The 18th and 19th centuries' criticism analysed Shylock as a tragic figure and the Christians as cruel and disdainful to Shylock. However, it is awkward that 20th century criticism changed this point of view and interpreted Shylock as a villain and the Christians as good characters of the play. Maybe 20th anti-Semitism strongly influenced the reading of the play and the critics did not acknowledge such an astonishing influence on their reading.

The other chapters of the thesis proposed to read the play based not on only one point of view, but considering the ambiguities implied in the texture of the play. Such ambivalent reading is the result of the ambiguities of the play created by Shakespeare. Chapter 2 and 3 analysed Antonio's sadness and his ambiguous relationship to Bassanio and Shylock. It suggests Antonio's submissive attitude towards the characters in the play, such as Bassanio, Salerio, Salanio and Portia. Thus, it was suggested that Antonio's feelings are sort of floating in this undistinguished state. He does not acknowledge the causes of his sadness, just as he does not accept any explanation to them. Shakespeare depicts Antonio's inward floatation, confusion and contradiction by the oscillation implied in images of sea and tempest. Though Antonio acknowledges that he does not know the aetiology of his sadness and inward state; though he acknowledges that he has much to learn; and though Salerio and Salanio try to discover Antonio's inwardness, the first scene is the only moment in the play when the characters try to unfold the inward disposition of the mind and try to scrutinise their inwardness. However, Shakespeare presents this problem apparently unsolved in this scene, but he constructed clues suggesting the traits of inwardness in the play.

Antonio's inwardness, expressed in his sadness and anxiety, represent his inner self floating in indefiniteness and awkward instability. He cannot control his feelings and he cannot recognise them, since they are controlled by some *mysterious forces* in his inwardness. Even if he tries to define them and search for their cause, such indefiniteness continues obfuscated and floating in his mind. Shakespeare introduced the mimetic device of indefiniteness to signal the obscurity, ambiguity, and floatation of inwardness. He uses aesthetically the inward dimension to construct this mimetic construction of a self whose inwardness appears in his bodily feelings at moment of crisis. Thus, in **The Merchant of Venice**, *sadness* and *weariness* are symbolic motifs, which weave the constellations of inward characteristics which represent Antonio's and the other characters' inwardness, such as Portia's and Jessica's. By enhancing feelings as sadness, weariness and discontent he represents the characters' inward dimensions and dispositions of his mind through the mirroring device in the play.

Janet Adelman (2008) suggested that Antonio's fantasy is to be circumcised and castrated by Shylock as he seals the bond. Also, for Adelman Shylock symbolically represents the *ur-father*, the primordial father of the play. Shylock's bond promises the accomplishment of Antonio's fantasy of opening his heart to Bassanio. Shylock plays such a role as he tries to open up/circumcise/castrate Antonio. What is more, the merchant's fantasy is reinforced when he willingly takes Shylock's bond. As Shylock represents the primordial father of the play,

Antonio fantasmatically represents his paternal figure re-imagined in Shylock. His sadness is not only due to his fear of losing Bassanio, but also because he re-imagines the paternal figure whenever he faces Shylock. Shakespeare represents Antonio's inward feelings by suggesting his inward masochistic fear and desire of circumcision and castration.

His unconscious foreclosed the symbolic menace of castration, which comes from the real as a hallucinatory spasm. Antonio's relation to his paternal figure, projected on Shylock, is seen in his hatred to him. However, Antonio's paternal figure is completely absent in the play. Thus, his unexplained anger to Shylock hits on the primitive anger to the father. In that sense, Norman Holland states that Portia and Antonio make a couple that symbolise the incarnation of the oedipal or phallic stratum which is shared by every child: the loving mother, Portia, who protects and saves Antonio from his castrating father, Shylock. Also, his masochistic desire and fear of castration, which can be potentially accomplished by Shylock, enhance his anxiety towards the paternal figure. He accepts the idea of castration, and he sees himself as a 'tainted wether' – a castrated ram. However, the cause of such anxiety is constantly denied by Antonio. Therefore, the other characters play the role of correlative figures of Antonio, mirroring similar feelings felt by him.

Besides that, the thesis highlighted the ambiguous relationship between Antonio and Bassanio. The problem was not Antonio and Bassanio's homoerotic relationship, but that two men from different classes had such a relationship: a merchant, pertaining to a lower class, and a bankrupt Gentleman. Thus, differences of social class in such a relationship were more repudiated than amity. As a result, the merchants' reputation could provoke the audience's suspicion of their inward dispositions. By such characterisation, Elizabethan audience would not feel comfortable hearing that a sodomite merchant, criticising Shylock for usury, was identified as an exemplary and well-respected Christian. They could reject Antonio as a Christian because of his evident hypocrisy and cynicism.

Similarly, the representation of dissemblers and flatterers as Venetians and Italians in the age contradicts Bassanio's image. Bassanio's representation which echoes reports in Shakespeare's age hints at the Christians' behaviour as deceitful, flatterers, hypocritical, cynical, and dissemblers. What is suggestive is that before presenting Shylock as stingy, villainous, comic and revengeful, Shakespeare suggested Bassanio's image as a fortune-hunter and dissembler, just as Antonio's image is suggested to be a Puritan merchant.

Moreover, both Antonio and Bassanio confuse wealth and affections. Antonio confuses purse/person, money and feelings; Bassanio also confuses and exchanges feelings, affections and love for wealth. He describes Portia as *richly left* and his speech is full of

monetary terms to describe Portia and his intentions. Likewise, other characters confuse money and affections. For example, Lorenzo also measures Jessica's love in fiscal terms.

The thesis analysed Portia and her reaction regarding the casket test and her father's will. Though she assumes that she cannot choose a husband due to her father's will, she asks to play a song wherein Bassanio can hear in the rhymes *bred, head* which echo *lead,* the right casket, which contains Portia's picture. Shakespeare enhanced some important *leitmotivs* of the play: treason, suspiciousness, mistrust and the revealing of inward thoughts, feelings and desires. Also, Bassanio's speech in the casket test alludes to his rhetorical abilities of decoding the right casket in the test. Thus Portia enables the fantasy of outwitting her father's will, in a way that she can marry without being blamed of dishonour. There is a fantasy implicit in the core of her discourses, which is just slightly suggested. Shakespeare represents her inward dispositions of the mind by suggesting Portia's purpose of tricking her father and outwitting his will.

This research focused on the issues of conscience, shame and the relationship between fathers and daughters. Launcelot's first speech presents an ontological representation of inwardness. He fights his conscience which wants him to run away. When Launcelot fights his own conscience, he is not just opposing an abstract representation of the bad dimensions of the soul. In fact, he fights against something deeper in his inwardness, his conscience. Conscience is an essential element to the determination of inwardness in the age. In a deeper level of his inwardness there are incrusted elements of social, cultural, and theological constructs which determine it. They were imposed on the individual's inwardness by the ideas of order, a sort of superegoical mechanism in early Modern England. Conscience is an essential issue which constantly interferes in feelings, thoughts and gestures of the characters of the play. Therefore, inwardness is pervaded by the conscience of the self. Shakespeare intuitively perceived such traits of inwardness and portrayed them in the drama.

Launcelot's debate with his conscience consists of a theatrical representation of some processes of the conscience of the individual. Even though conscience is something apparently absent in the play, it pervades many decisions, acts, and attitudes of the characters. For instance, Jessica's elopement is influenced by her conscience and shame. She first feels ashamed of being dressed as a boy, but then runs away from her father's house. Conscience is therefore a rather determining dimension of the characters' inwardness, because it reveals incrusted traits rooted in their inner-self, and it is a psychological dimension used by Shakespeare to represent inwardness in the play.

Furthermore, Jessica's and Lorenzo's dialogue suggests that their love for each other

is probably insincere. In that sense, Jessica's love for Lorenzo is enhanced by erotic and carnal connotations in their relationship, as well as their doubts and questions suggest that their love may not be sincere. If she feels ashamed of being Lorenzo's *torchbearer*, shame implies guilt for the erotic desire implied in this pun. Moreover, like Bassanio, Lorenzo is a fortune-hunter, who runs away with Jessica to get the Jew's money. Lorenzo is a double of Bassanio, who is also eager to get a fortune by marriage. Shakespeare doubles one character's feelings in another character in order to enhance their inward sinister dimensions. The mirroring device is a technique employed by Shakespeare to represent inwardness in the play.

Another important issue in the play is the problematic relationship between fathers and daughters. Shakespeare represents Shylock's and Jessica's relationship in such a distant and awkward way to suggest that Shylock and his daughter share few feelings and respect. In fact, Shylock could not teach Jessica his values and thus she simply disregards what he dears most. Through such distant relationship Shakespeare represents Shylock's blindness about his daughter. Such blindness stigmatises Shylock's inwardness: he does not know himself, likewise Antonio does not wish to acknowledge the causes of his sadness. Shylock's inwardness is portrayed by blindness, which is mirrored in Antonio's inwardness.

This thesis analyses Shylock's inwardness. Shylock's speech *I am a Jew* is filled with alliterations, breaks in language and syntactic turns enhancing his inward floatation and feelings. Moreover, he uses the passive voice as a rhetoric device, whose main effect is to efface the agent of the action. It demonstrates more general and universal ideas of his human condition as well as his similarity to the Christians. The breaks in the grammatical rule suggest his inward confusion and despair. He simply repeats structures with parallelism to demonstrate that he is confused. The grammatical devices depict his inward confused state, signalling his inner rupture and suffering.

Moreover, Shylock's speeches are full of pathos and breaks in language. As Shylock expresses his inward feelings through the pathos he violates grammatical normativity to represent the inward disruption and laceration in his feelings, thoughts, and mysterious dimensions. Such twisted uses of language emphasise strength, depth and laceration in Shylock's pathos. Shakespeare mingles different syntactic forms in order to modulate the rhythm of Shylock's speech, creating ambiguous dimensions pervaded by tension and ambiguity. His feelings make him confused, so that language is disrupted intensifying such confusion. Shakespeare introduced the mimesis of inwardness through breaks in language, pathos and modulated rhythm in Shylock's speeches in order to suggest his inner debate.

The play also depicts Shylock's maternal relationship to Jessica and Leah. Shylock

projects his inward feeling onto Jessica's body, as well as onto Leah's ring is a driving mechanism as a compensation for his loss and frustration. The awareness Shylock experiences is the awakening feeling of loss of his beloved objects, both Jessica and Leah's ring, which symbolises the fusional imaginary state with the maternal body. His relation to his daughter re-presented the love for his wife re-imagined in his daughter. It configures an incestuous-like relationship. Shakespeare intuitively felt that human relationship to others was pervaded by obscure and mysterious forces which determined and configured their affection to them. He represented the mysteriousness of inward human life by perceiving such human traits. In creating Shylock, Shakespeare represented inward dynamic forces which were essential for creating Brutus, Hamlet, Macbeth and Lear.

This research focuses on the trial scene. Antonio's sinister inward dispositions are represented in such frivolous act of sacrificing himself for Bassanio. His innermost desire is to hide his sinister inward dimensions, which he does not wish to see. Thus, he praises only his act of generosity paid with his own life. Antonio's inwardness is depicted in terms of such frivolous act of sacrifice which can be called a masochistic attitude. In a certain sense, by depicting Antonio's inwardness by such masochistic act of sacrifice, Shakespeare anticipates some of important assumptions for modern Psychoanalysis.

It also analyses the twists and turns in the trial scene. In the first moment, Shylock presents human obscure and uncontrolled dispositions of the mind which correspond to Shylock's inward dispositions and feelings. Likewise, he hints at the irrational causes of human dispositions of the mind, inward feelings and thoughts. Shakespeare perceived that there are some feelings and thoughts which cannot be attributed to rational causes. He represents human inwardness as determined by mysterious forces which cannot be controlled and explained.

Portia debates the bond sealed between Antonio and Shylock. It is quite odd Portia's oscillating and contradicting arguments at the courtroom. Such contradictions in Shakespeare's play represent inward feelings, anxieties and inner debate which create an illusion of lifelikeness in Shakespeare's characters. Moreover, there are some similarities between Portia and Antonio: she was also bound to her father's will, obliging her to marry the man who chooses the casket containing her portrait. Thus, her body was also bound to her bereaved father's will. As a result, in an unconscious level, Portia may re-imagine such situation when she was obliged to accept her father's will and be submissive. Besides that, it was suggested that Shylock symbolically represents the ur-father of the play. Thus, she might re-imagine the absent presence of the paternal figure in Shylock. Imaginatively she may be

facing the symbolic representation of paternal figure while she debates and discusses the bond, which in subtler and unconscious level may represent her father's will. Antonio's anxieties towards the paternal figure re-imagined in Shylock mirrors Portia's anxieties towards the paternal figure unconsciously re-imagined in Shylock.

Though Portia makes a beautiful speech on the quality of mercy, she shows no mercy to Shylock. Portia forges a trial which denies Shylock's bond and money. In fact, Portia's judgement represents the inflexible law in Venice. Though she allows Shylock to have the bond, she denies by claiming that he cannot have a drop of Christian blood. Portia turns out to be as inflexible as Shylock was during the trial. She embodies a hard heart to outwit Shylock's bond and take his fortune. Also, though Portia claims that no power can break Shylock's bond, it is suggested that her conscience interfered in her judgement. Conscience and judgement are intertwined in such a way that there is no possibility of assuming that judgement is pervaded only by rationality, because conscience and the inner dimensions interfere in judgement. Shakespeare represented the relation between judgement and conscience in the play.

Though some assume that **The Merchant of Venice** is a comedy, the problem of the literary genre of play is a complicated issue today. Some critics have pointed out that the play was tragically designed. It is not a comic play, but an uncomic comedy. They criticise the inclusion of **The Merchant of Venice** in the list of comedies, because it is not at all a funny play. The label 'comedy' did not suggest that it was a funny play in the age. If some critics think that it is not a funny play, Shakespeare may have designed Shylock as a tragic character. In fact, the play's effects of Shylock's energy and tragic dimensions deeply influenced the audience in the moment when it was first staged. The play was published in the Stationers' Register with an alternative name: ***The Marchaunt of Venyce or otherwise called the Jewe of Venyce***. It seems that the audience's aesthetic reaction instigated Shakespeare to add a second name which drew attention to Shylock. In fact, Shylock embodies both tragic and comic features. He does not deny the consequences of bond, because he tragically accepts the consequences of his bond and his desire for revenge.

Parting from Dubois's discussion on the problems of representation in the Renaissance, this thesis discussed the mimesis of inwardness in Shakespeare. When Shakespeare represents inward feelings, dimensions, thoughts and ideas, he enables the assessment to an undiscovered space of the self. His technique is to suggest through language the self's inner debate, tensions and anxieties. It is represented by a set of constellations, images, silences, non-said, bodily gestures, breaks in language, qualms of conscience

contradictions, moments of tension and conflict, verbal slips and pathos. Another important device in Shakespeare's mimesis of inwardness is the mirroring device, which is the specular representation of a character's feelings, anxieties and intentions in other character's attitudes and feelings. These constellations of images suggesting the inward space of the self can be defined as rhetoric of inwardness.

Therefore, this thesis defended that Shakespeare deepened and improved the mimesis of inwardness in the drama, just as Dante did it in his poetry, Augustine in his **Confessions**, and Montaigne in his **Essays**. These authors created new aesthetic forms that could represent inward dimensions of the self. In that sense, the mimesis of inwardness in the drama makes clear that, though there are some linguistic traits which suggest the inner-self and thus depict the lifelikeness of the characters, there is an enigmatic endless seek which contradictorily makes the inner-self obscure and mysterious to human scrutiny. Inwardness is pervaded by epistemological gaps which are due to the powerful enigmatic endlessness.

Moreover, this over-determining presence of the paternal figure in Shylock as the ur-father of the play points to the representation of the anxieties towards the paternal figure not only to the characters in the play, but also to someone outside the play: William Shakespeare himself. I suspect that Shakespeare identified something in Shylock, perhaps the paternal anxieties which also haunted him. Thus, he could not kill the paternal figure in **The Merchant of Venice**, but he only silences him in the courtroom. He will literally kill the paternal figure only in **Julius Caesar**, **Hamlet**, **Macbeth** and **Lear**.

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