

The Ideological Fragmentation and its Impact on Social Relations & Behavior in Shakespeare's The Merchant of Venice

Instructor: Majid Masad Hamdan

majidmasad28@gmail.com

Directorate General of Education in the Holy Kerbela

ABSTRACT

Every community whatever its components is bound to certain laws and commitments that must be above one's personal benefits and interests. The most important two things among all others are the commercial transactions and political obligations which flow in the estuary of patriotism. But this patriotism is contaminated when the individual lives in a country to which he pays no homage other than trying his best to fulfill his aims as far as his hatred and egocentricity dictate. The present study highlights an individual's deviation from the natural course of righteousness, and to what extent this deviation influences his social and familial relations. It also gives an impression of the kind of hatred and selfishness that blinds his sight and insight and, at the end, leads to total loss and failure exemplified by losing his reputation and his daughter who converts to another religion– Christianity– after a long conflict with herself being a Jewish lady. In addition, the study tries to show up the reasons behind the moral fragmentation of the Jewish merchant, Shylock, and how such a state exacerbates due to the social alienation and estrangement, let alone contempt and insults he receives from all those he is in continuous contact all the time.

Key words: personal benefits, egocentricity, deviation, moral fragmentation, alienation.

التشظي الأيدلوجي و تأثيره على العلاقات الاجتماعية في مسرحية شيكسبير: تاجر البندقية
م. ماجد مسعد حمدان

مديرية تربية كربلاء

الملخص

ان كل مجتمع مع تعدد طوائفه و نحله يخضع لقوانين و التزامات من المفترض ان تتعدى المصلحة و الفائدة الفردية. تعد الالتزامات السياسية و المعاملات التجارية من اهم الأشياء التي تصب في المصلحة الوطنية. و لكن هذه الوطنية تتلوث عندما يعيش الفرد في بلد يكون ولائه ليس للبلد قدر ما يكون لحقه و انانيته. ان هذه الدراسة تسلط الضوء على افراد خرجوا عن المسار الطبيعي للسلوك، و على مدى التأثير الكبير لهذا الانحراف عن المسار على العلاقات الاجتماعية و العائلية. اضافة الى ذلك فانها تعطي انطباعا عن نوعية الحقد و الأنانية التي تعمي الأبصار و البصيرة و تؤدي في النهاية الى ضياع و اخفاق تام كما حصل لأبنته عند اعتناقها لدين غير دين ابيها، فحالة كهذه هي مصدر كل عزلة يعاني منها طوال حياته.

الكلمات المفتاحية: المصالح الشخصية، الأنانية، الانحراف، التشضي الأخلاقي، العزلة.

Introduction

Irrespective of the aims of ideology and on what accounts it emanated, ideological fragmentation is a term used to refer to split and absence of individual and communal ideals whose disappearance or absence leads to the disconnection of the social fabric and helps make the unified social community but individuals struggling for existence only. In addition, it leads to flaws and imbalances in all fields of life including the political, ethical, epistemological, social and so on. The people who speak about the ideological fragmentation see it "as a reflection of social dislocation and the disintegration of conventional social structures" (Freedon, 97). That state weakens the ties of social relations and leads to subjugation and servitude due to fragility and, so to speak, the disappearance of the horizontal bonds which connect them together.

In line with the general sense of the term goes many people's propensities to dominate and subjugate others to their wills due to the difference of religion, policy, social and commercial accounts. The ensuing battle between the two sides takes the form of annihilation if it breaks between two countries or revenge and retaliation if it happens between citizens inside a large community. People of such kind are

usually compelled to be Janus-faced to the end so as to conceal their aggression for the purpose of achieving certain targets. Or stay in a permanent attitude – the apparent policy– but so attentive to snipe the target soon whenever given the opportunity. Martin Breaugh asserts that implicit and explicit differences between people inside large communities have their roots in the confirmation of those communities of their partition and conflict. Besides, any accordance of the whole does not withstand due to the contrasting orientations and tendencies and the non– apparent visions as well (Breaugh, 240).

The writer and the play

It is undoubtedly impossible to speak about William Shakespeare (1564– 1616) the poet and the dramatist who wrote– as it is said– about one hundred fifty four sonnets, five long poems, and thirty nine plays of all types without the use of the superlative. "Critics never tire of saying that he is the greatest in all world literature" (Inglis, 125). He came to the theatre as actor, playwright and even shareholder concerning theatrical undertaking. He had a very wide reading of world cultures that gave him a strong artistic authority and linguistic power of mingling his and others' matchlessly with a great concentration to get benefit to his art. He had a great ability to compromise reason and emotion and the result of reason when all its signs are totally removed. His genius as a playwright was a combination of wide experiences of societal affairs especially what he shared with people and, more important, of what marked him off from them. He was very vigilant in his adaption, and competent in keeping up with discontinuity and diversity (Evans, 104). Shakespeare excels almost all playwrights in using language so beautifully and effectively. His figurative and poetic dialogue in addition to arousing specific moods, emotions and ideas, it also "creates a network of complex associations and connotations that links the immediate dramatic situation with all creation" (Farahbakhsh, 101).

The Merchant of Venice is one of his plays. It narrates the events of a Venetian merchant whose name is Antonio (who lends money without any interest) and a Jewish usurer and a social outcast whose name is Shylock (who lends money with a very large interest). Shylock's fermenting hatred towards Antonio and all other Christians makes him as a sniper looking for any occasion to catch the prey in his trap. This opportunity is available when Antonio needs three thousand ducats to help his friend Bassanio compete with other suitors to win Portia the rich and beautiful lady in Belmont. Shylock does not charge any interest on the loan he lends to Antonio. Instead, he prefers to exact another interest which is to cut off a pound of flesh from Antonio's chest near his heart. Shylock's ecstasy is at the top at the moment he commits Antonio to the trial for not paying back the loan on time. He is offered a ten-times interest instead but he refuses insisting on applying the law of Venice. His dreams disperse when the intelligent lawyer– the disguised Portia– finds out loopholes in the bond that lead to Antonio's survival.

The Merchant of Venice is one of the romantic comedies Shakespeare has ever written in addition to *As You Like It*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Twelfth Night* and others later on. It is a romantic comedy because it incarnates the theme. Although there are sad incidents in the play, all the characters live till the end and no one dies. The conflict that the writer gives is solved by the characters and it imparts a special kind of suspension till the end of the play. Sir Ifor Evan indicates that romantic comedy was there living in its world and as soon as it confronted reality it lost some of its values which seemed, to an extent, brittle and false. Thus, in *The Merchant of Venice* Shylock slips smoothly out of Bassanio's fairy world, and a marriage based on caskets lottery, and the attempt to gain the love of the rich and beautiful lady of Belmont, and Jessica, and goes up to a tragic position as the unkindly tormented Jew (Evans, 113).

Attraction vs. Expulsion

Attraction is a series of actions the purpose of which is to make a rapprochement between two entities different in viewpoints. Homi K. Bhabha (b. 1949), one of the most famous and influential cultural and literary critics as well as a theorist of postcolonial culture, states that the feeling of alienation, estrangement and, at the end, homelessness in the Other or the second class citizen comes as a result of the clash between two cultures to neither of them he belongs: his own culture and the culture of the society he is living with (Bressler, 240– 241). Consequently, in order to get rid of side effects and provide stability and secure life to insiders and outsiders, prevention is one of the most effective methods followed in dealing with thoughts and actions that are compatible with humanity in general. Good dialogue leads to correcting misconceptions because it creates a correct and valid psychological and social upbringing which plays a great part in avoiding falling into misguidance and deviation. Dealing objectively with deviant acts is a divine process that aims at spreading justice and equality as well as demolishing injustice and inequality among members of society regardless of religious or social affiliation, and away from extremism and exaggeration, taking into consideration that religious and social fanaticism gnaws souls because it is a result of the imbalance of justice and with such concepts absence of security, lack of tranquility and permanent psychological tension will prevail.

In addition to the above– mentioned ideas, nature and normalization are two conflicting forces which have a great influence on the human behavior depending on the triumphant one in that conflict. As long as the human being is the basic criterion for everything in the universe; he is the fountain of knowledge, evaluation of things, the starting point of movement and creativity, he must rise to the heights of the human perfection to be an example for others to follow. In other

words, man should exert himself to strike a balance between his inside and outside to be a source of radiation. The rationality of man, his emotions and his various bodily capabilities, are the focal point of his entire existence. So, there should be a compromise between the nature of that man and the effect of that nature on another person having diverse features and, consequently, diverse behavior. Strictness and stubbornness as a way to call for goodness always bring bad effects instead of reform, righteousness and cohabitation.

Although we are aware of Shylock's inner intentions and outer behavior in the play which cast a shadow of dimness and melancholy on the whole atmosphere even on his daughter Jessica, there is something to say about the consensus of society on the filth of the Jew and its reflection on him and his behavior as an outsider citizen. Wilbur Sanders says: "For many Elizabethans the very word 'Jew' was a term of miscellaneous abuse" (Sanders, 41). It was associated with hatred, usury, revenge, treachery, hard-heartedness and so on. It didn't come out of nowhere. Londoners would have been familiar with the Jewish merchants who used to come to London for mercantile— the Venetian ones— as well as what they had about the small community living in London at that particular time. So, Shakespeare was no stranger of the whole scene. He might have made the characters of Antonio and Shylock out of a combination of the two categories. It is noteworthy to mention that calling the minority by the ethnic name arouses a feeling of contempt and belittlement in the hearer— the Other himself. And when we trace the events and speeches of the play we find much of that. Guinevere is Shylock's servant. She, throughout her career, relates that on

Another day of his railing at me, beating me,
Paying less than nothing, and working me too hard,
And I'll be a Jew myself, for all the Christians parts

Will have worn away. (*Merchant, 19*)

At the core of this depiction lies a very firm belief that when mentioning the word 'jew' immediately pops onto the scene a combination of bad features the least of which is 'usurer'. What Guinevere comes out with proves she is not in an easy state of mind. On the contrary, she is very tense and what she says is what is really rambling in her mind. Such a kind of prejudice is seemingly peeping out throughout the play before and after the Jew. Everyone is akin to the other with intent to disparage the odd conduct as far as greed in moneylending is concerned. Shylock's construction of what his status means , however, privileges him an escape from the people he is living with and overall the resulted deficiency he suffers from. So, in order to escape the offensive torture falling upon him as the center of disparagement and hatred he tries to trap others in his net and inflict the most heinous acts against them. Before we come to analyze the characters' attitudes as far as the antagonist being rejected by all is concerned, we have to have an historical background about the inextricable overarching mindset the Jew has towards himself and others.

According to a decisive governmental decree issued by The Ten Venetian Committee in 1516, the Jews were driven out of the city to take an isolated area– previously a foundry– as their permanent residence. That action was deemed a turning point in the public relationship between the Jews and the Christians at that particular time. Moreover, the Jewish merchants although were allowed to pursue their contacts and contracts in the city, they were disallowed to take a residence there. Even the ghetto (a poor urban area occupied primarily by a minority group or groups) where they lived succumbed to certain penalties. Notwithstandingly, they had to pay extra rent more than the Christians used to pay. In addition, the ghetto where they lived succumbed to hard procedures concerning time of opening and closing,

fees of guard and the borders of the place. It was walled to be guarded by Christians, opened at sunrise and closed at sunset, and more than that to be paid by the Jews themselves. Besides, there were other restrictions concerning trade, dress, and their identities. Jews were excluded from the assembly of merchants which included members from different countries. They had to resort to mediation in case of practicing any business. As for their dress, they had to take care of the general public meaning to wear normal clothes in order not harm other inhabitants as well as to put up badges for easier identification (Cerasano, 15– 16).

As far as natural instinct is concerned, any one tends to love himself/ herself more than any other thing on both individual and collective levels. On the individual level, the person has naturally a great affection towards himself/ herself, while, on the lowest level, the groups are much satisfied with self– glorification on the collective level. In case of rejection, abuse, humiliation, degradation, or disdain whether on a familial or a societal level, any person, regardless of his/ her age, finds himself/ herself forced to develop a destructive sense of self– disgust and self– hatred (Falk, 53– 54). Naturally, as a means to escape the tension and the feeling of loss and deficiency, the underprivileged takes a stand on a promontory descrying what is there in the farthest and nearest as a hawk does when it takes the position of a sniper before pouncing.

Actions and Reactions

Man, in the general sense, is the slave of his tongue. Everyone remains a secret before revealing what is there in his mind. In order to legalize his existence any person has to be his own guarantor, so, he must avoid ups and downs whatever and whenever thrown in the arena of rhetoric. In other words, his duty is to come to terms with the two worlds of his existence. Portia, the rich lady of Belmont, in a

conversation with her maid Nerrissa likens the Neopolitan prince to a stallion and suspects "his lady mother played false with a smith" (*Merchant*, 7). Such a kind of dehumanization underscores the lady's arrogant look towards other people and represents a breakdown of the internal censor the result of which is the release of judgments consistent with personal social pressures. But when mentioning the Prince of Moroccow Nerrissa seems to be discontent with a divine creation. By using public symbol in her words "he's as dark of skin as a funeral costume" (*Merchant*, 9) to, apparently, make fun of his outer appearance, she conceals hypocrisy and discrimination towards people of a different race and identity. Coining such a name and the like is unhealthy for social, ethnic or class diversity throughout the world.

Directing pejoratives at certain social groups do not go in vain. They have immediate as well as delayed social effects. Irving Lewis Allen states that name-calling is a speech weapon directed against particular outsiders in addition to their individual members. The overall and accumulative effect results in weak and unhealthy social relations. It also demarcates the boundaries between insiders and outsiders and, at the end, afflicts justice of these boundaries (Irving, *Us & Them* 9). One of the effective men whose actions have a great negative impact on Shylock is the generous merchant Antonio. He is the center around whom revolve the events of the play and also the center of Shylock's attention for two reasons: He does not charge any interest on any amount of money he lends. Secondly, he always reproaches and blames the Jew whenever and wherever he meets him for his severity and malice as a human being and greed as a moneylender. As the Jew, knowingly or unknowingly, decides to take money a source of isolation Antonio takes another direction which is the main trait in his personality that is the attraction of people through help and consolation. But there is a central weakness in Antonio's personality dealing with the whole

mechanism of reconciliation of action and reaction as far as call– names and direct animal metaphors used against the Jew are concerned.

Countless names and expressions, positive and negative, are used to compare people to animals or, metaphorically, call them animals. Each has its own connotation according to the features which make some of them greatly offensive and objectionable. Such affronts, intentional or unintentional, have a large part in the segregation of classes and a foretaste for an everlasting deep conflict on all levels since human existence is built on morals, honesty and conformity of intention and behavior. So, in all communities comprised of different identities as well as different sects "there arises a great need for a kind of emotional security and understanding which only the shared intimacies of personal relationships can supply (Watt, 192). As soon as he feels short of himself and others as well as of not carrying out his duty as a Christian member, Antonio pathetically and honestly confesses at the end of the play his hatred and disgust towards the Jew which is the main cause behind this outrageous and appalling internecine conflict. At a particular moment when he is lawfully strong and free of any charge or debt Antonio admits that he treated the Jew cruelly and irresponsibly. Before the judge puts the last touches of the verdict, the merchant of Venice confesses his sins, saying:

And witness this for me as well, that I
Repent the malice that I showed the Jew.
I offered only hate, and he returned
The loan with usury. But Jesus said
To love my enemy, and I did not.
This doctor's words of mercy struck me hard,
Reminding me of what a Christian is.
My labor should have been to bring his heart,
By reason and example, unto Christ,

Not goad him till he sought my own. (*Merchant*, 67)

According to almost all sciences including social ones there is a very impressive fact that everything is definitely related to and tied up with everything else. That is the essence of logical premises and the conclusions resulted from them. In addition to that there is the law of action and reaction which says they are equal in magnitude but opposite in direction without specifying the amount of that reaction. For that reason man should take cognizance of the future events depending on immediate situations neglecting not any jot of anything. The good word always grows a good– fruited plant in both giver and taker. In the same way, a malicious word or misdeed may grow myriads of enmities and grudges that might extend to centuries and destroy generations. In a long conversation between Antonio, Shylock and Bassanio when the two friends go to the Jew for a loan he reminds Antonio of his insults and offences of being driven out of the community of merchants, called unbeliever, called a cut– throat dog and spitted upon. According to Freud, the go– between between the mind and the external reality is the conscious which recognizes and reacts to the world outside permitting the mind to organize its own outside world. He adds that in the unconscious memories are kept and then, under license from the conscious, are returned to consciousness bare and clear (Bressler, 145). So, all these expressions and situations are present before Shylock's eyes. His long speech gives an impression of the long suffering and the accumulated rage he has towards Christians in general and Antonio in particular. But, as a Jew, he has "borne it with patient shrug,/ For patience is the badge of all our tribe (*Merchant*, 13). Then he moves to other metaphors and call–names telling Antonio:

You call me unbeliever, cut– throat dog,
And spit upon my Jewish gabardine,

.....

.....
 You, that did spit your mucus on my beard,
 And foot me as you spurn a mangy stray
 Over your threshold– moneys is your suit.

.....
 Say, "Sir, you spit on me on Wednesday last;
 You spurn'd me Thursday; Saturday
 You call'd me dog; and for these courtesies
 I'll lend you all the coin you say you want. (*Merchant*, 13)

Arrogance, self– esteem and religious fanaticism are manifest in his speech following the Jew's. He does not want to understand his arrogance and obduracy. Instead of admitting that he does insult the Jew using the offensive words and expressions given he insists on doing that again and again. In other words, Antonio's internal censor does not operate at the very moment of speaking. The conflict between the desirable and undesirable is going on in him but he succumbs to the forbidden instincts which compel him to behave badly telling the Jew:

I am as like to call you again,
 To spit on you again, to spurn you too.
 If you will lend this money, lend it not
 As to your friends; for when did friendship charge
 A fee for barren metal from his friend?
 But lend it rather to your enemy,
 And if he break the terms, you can with joy
 And no regrets exact the penalty. (*Merchant*, 13)

After this insistence of committing the same sin against the Jew we can justly blame Antonio for failing to defeat the very general trend of unacceptability and overcoming the difficult conflict of race and

identity. The reflection of his rejection of Shylock's apparent offer of friendship has its immediate effect in the following lines when he advises Antonio to be not worried and stormy. Furthermore, he offers to befriend him and forget about the previous insults and offences committed against him. But the Jew's hypocrisy comes to surface immediately after his offer without waiting for an answer of agreement or disagreement. His hypocrisy is a result of inconsistency as far as his inner and constant attitude is concerned. On the one hand, he deceives himself by contradicting the standards of moral behavior whereby he brings to himself troubles and hardships. On the other hand he tries to deceive others but is also deceived by the weakness of will which works harmoniously with his aggressive instinct. So, as soon as he finishes his speech with Antonio, he comes out with what is actually extant telling:

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,

.....

.....

An equal pound of your body's gentle flesh,

To be cut off and by me taken from ...

Whatever part of your body I may please. (*Merchant*, 13)

Neither implicit nor explicit behavior shows up any of the elements of virtue, goodness or even general standards of religion; neither conspicuously nor vaguely. He goes on feeding hostility to the human scale of values being thoroughly dead in the battlefield of conscience thinking not of any moment of glory or honor. It is very obvious that the Jew never asks himself of others' sorrows and joys or be touched with by sympathy at all. On the contrary, he is quite alien from all society that he is unrepentantly excited in his counterpoint between the moral and material considerations which are very absent in the scene. The

humdrum cure he is seeking for which is to forfeit a pound of flesh is nothing and it might happen that magic turns against the magician. Shylock's truth and very open personality can be traced easily from the very soliloquy in the presence of Antonio and Bassanio. He confesses his hatred saying: "I hate him, as I hate all Christian blood,/ But more particularly him" (*Merchant*, 11), so "I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him" (*Merchant*, 11) because he charges no interest on the money he lends to people and always takes them out of his snares of usury. Shakespeare hints at a very important point dealing with the development of the relationship of the Jews and Christians throughout history. "The ancient grudge" refers to the old enmity between the two nations centuries before the writing of the play because 'ancient' has not the meaning of old.

The psychological conflict sometimes rises to its peak when the Jew examines himself objectively and compares himself to other people concerning his isolation which results from his egocentricity. He wants to be like others but he cannot for his fragmentation divides his self concerns to an extent that he cannot return to the systematic order and regain, once again, the sense of joy he captured for a while. This desire which arises for a very short time disappears as soon as Shylock hears Antonio's reply of agreement to the condition. So he addresses father Abraham

what these Christians are,
Whose own hard dealings teach them to 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 useful, profitable neither,
As flesh of mutton, beef, or goat. I say,

- i. To buy his favor, I extend this relationship.
- ii. If he will take it, so; if not, adieu;
- iii. But never say that I refused to lend! (*Merchant*, 14)

That spiritual purity does not live longer than one or two minutes due to the substantial contradiction between the essence and appearance in addition to the evil forces which compel him to behave according to their edicts. Furthermore, as Frantz Fanon states, there is an ongoing mismatch here in this respect that is the clash between the two cultures which creates a sense of dislocation and isolation. Besides, for each step he tries to internalize and understand himself truly he is further isolated because he is using pre-determined terms which only get him further away and serve only that dominating group culture (Fanon, 6-12). As a victim to his cumulating terms, at hearing "Yes, Shylock, I will sign and seal this bond" (*Merchant*, 14) he seems to be different from that person one moment ago hiding his real intention behind an indirect malicious speech

Then meet me forthwith at the notary's;
Give him direction for this merry bond,
And I will go and purse the ducats straight.
Then to my house, which I left in the wretched care
Of a worthless ninny, and within the hour
I will be with you. (*Merchant*, 14)

by which he deceives Antonio who thinks at this particular moment that "The Hebrew will turn Christian: he grows kind" (*Merchant*, 14). But when it comes to repayment the Jew uncovers to a very cruel and brutal beast thinking of nothing other than taking revenge of a helpless man giving orders to the jailer to "look to him: tell not me of mercy;/ This is the fool that lent out money gratis" (*Merchant*, 50). The lines smack of envy built upon a very fragile foundation the aim of which is to spread chaos through monopoly and exploitation. Repeatedly, again and again,

throughout the play as far as the bilateral relations of the Hebrew and other citizens there is an absolutely abiding question that is: What is to be done in order to come to terms with the different kinds of ideologies for a safety and stable community? At the end, Antonio gives up by telling Salarino "I'll follow him no more with bootless pleas" (Merchant, 50) for two reasons: The Jew will not relent at all because he is waiting for such a moment, and

The duke cannot deny the course of law:
For if a stranger noises it abroad
that Venice favors citizens, and thus
refuses justice for a stranger's bond,
it damages the city, for our trade
is almost all with strangers. (*Merchant*, 50)

It seems very evident that patriotism plays a great part in the afore- mentioned speech. Antonio prefers to sacrifice himself for the sake of the Venetian reputation. The court is considered the last moments of fragmentation for Antonio when he admits his shortage of true, honest and would- be behavior toward the Jew.

The real wealth of any human being regardless of familial, social or political position is not how much money he has or how many possessions or companies he runs. Man's creative power, dignity, honesty and truth towards himself as an individual and others as a member of a large society are the main standards of the successful personality. In other words, any person trying to apply a familial or a governmental law should link between the past, present and the future for the purpose that he makes something distinct, positive and stupendous out of him for fear that he/ she commits mistakes that live long after him. Regardless Portia's offensive descriptions of the different suitors, she, so that they go astray and do not make the very choice, tells her maid:

Therefore, for fear of the worst, I pray thee, set a deep glass of wine on a wrong casket, for if the devil were inside, and that temptation outside, I know he would choose it. I will do anything, Nerrissa, before I'll be married to a sponge. (*Merchant*, 8)

Such a fragmentation has an echo on Portia herself as a lady of a good social status. Although she follows her father's will in implementing the plan, there is a violation to the norms for she either to refuse the unsuitable person or follow the norms transparently and sincerely. Putting a glass of wine on one of the caskets is a kind of deception and cheating. It evokes a state of vacillation and indecision and creates a critical confrontation full of disorders. Consequently, the suitor will go astray and chooses at random.

Portia's strategies differ in excluding the candidates from the arena of the lottery. It is different with the Prince of Morocco. He is a very gentle and delicate man. In fact, the Prince of Morocco is the reflection of the lottery itself but Portia is not aware of that for she has someone else beforehand. "To be the cloth of black or sable fur/ On which the jeweler sets his fairest stone,/ The better to display its dazzlement" (*Merchant*, 15) gives an impression of the white essence of this man and his true affection towards this lady who tells him that "I have no fear of unfamiliar hues" (*Merchant*, 15) although the black and the white are the most familiar colors because they are the colors of God's creation. He describes his inner self which glitters as soon as he uncovers what is hidden because pearls are in the depths not on the shore. For fear that he chooses the correct casket and to force him to withdraw she puts another unbearable condition if he does not make the right choice. "Then swear, before you choose, if you choose wrong,/ You'll never speak of marriage to any lady" (*Merchant*, 15). In spite of that he shows his true intention and agrees to the condition, adding:

No lady but yourself will do. I swear.

And after dinner, when the choice is made,

I'll be most blest or most accursed of men (*Merchant*, 15).

To conclude, wading in the realm of moral, social or other affairs requires to dispense with some of the personal utility in order to be safe from any kind of fragmentation people of different classes may encounter as far as the requirements of living and coexistence are concerned. As for the play, Shakespeare, wittily, surprisingly and justly treated and manipulated his characters getting away of himself from the bondage of religion and class as a bystander but not a bystander. Throughout the play, he discerned the situation from a high place with an eagle's eye going to and forth to tackle the ideological fragmentation of each character giving reasons and results of that phenomenon. Concerning the main dominant he gave his impression through one word, "ancient", pointing out to a very important fact that such a fracture is traditional and the remedy is not the duty of one individual. Rather, it is the duty of the whole society in all its walks and institutions.

Works– cited

Allen, Irving Lewis. *The city in Slang: New York Life and Popular Speech*: Oxford: Oxford U. P., 1995.

Bressler, Charles E. *Literary Criticism: An Introduction to Theory and Practice*. Fourth Edition. New Jersey: Pearson Education, Inc., 2007.

Cerasano, S. P. *A Routledge Literary Sourcebook on William Shakespeare's The Merchant of Venice*. London: 11 New Fetter Lane, 2004.

Evans, Sir Ifor. *A Short History of English Literature*. Middlesex: Hunt Bernard & Co. Ltd., 1967.

Falk, Avner. *A History and Psychoanalysis of Contemporary Hatred*. Westport: Greenwood Publishing Group, Inc., 2008.

Fanon, Frantz. Frantz Fanon and Racial Identity. In *Self Community & Psychology*. Edited by Norman Duncan. Landowne: UCT Press, 2007. (6-1 – 6-22).

Farahbakhsh, Alireza (ed.). *English Drama for the Students of English Literature: English Drama From the 16th to Mid 17th Century*. Tehran: Tehran University, 2009.

Freedan, Michael. *Ideology: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.

Inglis, Rewey Belle. Donald A., Stauffer. *Adventures in English Literature*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, Inc., 1952.

Sanders, Wilbur. *The Dramatist and the Received Idea: Studies in the Plays of Marlowe and Shakespeare*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980.

Shakespeare, William. *The Merchant of Venice*.
<http://shakespeare.mit.edu/merchant/full.htmls>.

Watt, Ian. *The Rise of the Novel*. London: Cox & Wyman Ltd., 1966.