

Speaking Muslim Subaltern through the Ethical Agent in Shakespeare and the *Holy Quran*

Fahimeh Khalili Teilami ¹

Ph.D. Student of English Literature, Faculty of Humanities,
Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran

Jalal Sokhanvar (Corresponding Author) ²

Professor of English Literature, Shahid Beheshti University, Tehran, Iran

DOI: <https://www.doi.org/10.34785/J014.2021.914>

Article Type: Original Article

Page Numbers: 125-140

Received: 7 July 2020

Accepted: 16 October 2020

Abstract

William Shakespeare, the English bard of Avon, inaugurates a Feminist approach in *Love's labour's Lost* which is comparable with the *Holy Quran's* mandate and Hadith. He reminisces Muslim association (including Ethiop, black, moors, Africans, and so on) through deeply-seated words of the Elizabethan era in order to signify in his work the Islamic concern for the Muslim women in terms of respect, love, and revival of rights. Riffat Hassan's theology of honor killing and progressive Islam could be argued to be in thematic affinity with Gayatri Spivak's concepts of the ethical responsibility of the agents and subalterns. The area of concern in Shakespeare's plays encompasses men's sanction in shunning women, intellectual men vs. slave, black and inferior women, and love, marriage, and infatuation with women. This is in line with Quranic principles namely poor Muslim lifestyle vs. the affluent pagan hegemony, Muslim's faith, migration to Ommat, and reception by the hegemonic pagans. The major objective of the present paper is to read Shakespeare's dramatic works in terms of Riffat Hassan's Islamic feminist approach.

Keywords

Islamic Feminism; Ethical Responsibility; Agent; Muslim; Speaking Subaltern; Limited Access.

1. Introduction

As Jerry Brotton remarks, the life of Britain's most celebrated bard, William Shakespeare (1564-1616), coincided with significant diplomatic relations between Protestant England and Muslim dynasties in Morocco, the Ottomans, and the Safavids of Iran. As trade routes opened up and Queen Elizabeth demanded new alliances, dramatic ideas regarding Muslims seeped into society. Britons were fascinated and alarmed simultaneously. In more than 60 plays staged between 1567 and 1603, Muslims (featured in the guise of Turks, Moors, Blacks, Ethiop, Persians, Ebony, African, etc.) all appeared as black on London'

¹ fahimehkhali2013@yahoo.com

² jsokhanvar@yahoo.com

stages. Shakespeare's Muslim characters appear almost in all his plays directly or symbolically. Brotton confirms the affiliation of Queen Elizabeth I with the religion and culture of North Africa, including Islamic. Some of the believers in different religions such as Christianity and Islam regarded each other as pagan in those days. A number of the Christians, especially the Catholics, affronted the religion of Islam and the Prophet as being the violent Termagant.

As far as all religions are concerned, they are collectively considered as the revelation of God's words (Riches 7-8). Reynolds holds that the connections between the sacred texts of Islam, Christianity, and Judaism run deep. *The Quran* and *The Bible* are intrinsically linked, and knowing *The Quran* depends on the knowledge of *The Bible*. There are excerpts from Jewish and Christian texts which are organized according to *The Quran's* contents and not *The Bible's*. The shared contents and themes are far more extensive to the extent that *The Quran* is regarded as a significant work in the history of Biblical literature. Milward holds that Shakespeare's plays "conceal an undercurrent of religious meaning which belongs to their deepest essence" (*Shakespeare's Religious Background* 102). Shakespeare, in his dramatic works, demonstrates "the universal relevance of *The Bible* both to the reality of human life in this 'harsh world' and to its ideal in the heart of God" (*Biblical Influences* 207). Marx notes that "Shakespeare regarded his own role of playwright and performer as godlike, his book as 'The Book'" (*Shakespeare and the Bible* 12-13). Religious views of Shakespeare are the subject of scholarly debate dating back to more than a couple of centuries. His birth, marriage, schoolings, family's religions, will, and tombstone etchings all are of diverse religious affiliations (Wilson 34).

Gayatri Spivak, a feminist deconstructionist critic and of Indian origin, is considered as one of the most influential postcolonial intellectuals. Her philosophy of uttering black (women) subaltern and her notion of the ethical responsibility are challenging. Hinging on the conception of othering, limited access or voice, and agents, Spivak's terms and concepts consolidate the framework of the theories involved. Spivak has gained prominence and trumpeted for her "Can the Subaltern Speak?" (1988) and for her translation of Jacques Derrida's *De la grammatologie* (1976). Spivak, employing the deconstructionist method, holds that identity is decentered, incoherent, and essentially not static ("Can the Subaltern Speak" 273). It is such a belief which, as demonstrated in Shakespeare's and the *Holy Quran's* Narratives, provides the possibility for the subaltern to speak.

The word subaltern was first used by Antonio Gramsci to identify the cultural hegemony that excludes and displaces specific people and social groups from the

institutions of society to deny their agency and voices in colonial politics (Ludden *Reading Subaltern Studies*). The term subaltern is described as the other social group displaced to the margins of society and denied the human agency often defined by one's social status (Young *Postcolonialism* 25). Spivak defines the term subaltern as the oppressed other with limited or no access to the hegemony, a space of difference ... (De Kock "Interview" 33). The subaltern talk does not achieve the dialogic level of utterance, while "speaking" is a transaction between the speaker and the listener (*Spivak Reader* 269). Another postcolonial critic, Homi K. Bhabha, emphasizes the significance of social power relations in defining subaltern social groups as oppressed, racial minorities whose social presence was crucial to the self-definition of the majority group. The subaltern social groups, nonetheless, are in a position to subvert the authority of the social groups who hold hegemonic power (Garcia-Morena et al. 191-207). In the name of East, Barbarity, blackness, or Brownness, the colonizers intended to civilize and dominate over them by force or by hegemony (Walia 77).

Spivak's othering, which substantiates Lacan's both concepts of the Other and other, is strictly incorporated into the play "Rani of Simur" as well. The term "othering" was coined by Spivak for the process by which hegemonic discourse creates its "others" through a dialectical process with the colonized which can occur in all kinds of colonialist narratives (Ashcroft et al. 134). Spivak contends that such a dialectic process of othering fabricates the binary oppositions of superior other/inferior other. (153). The alternative to cease such a process of othering is to bring about some changes in order not to be regarded as the other—what affects identity formation accordingly (153).

The conditions that make up the subaltern are having no agency and not recognizing the resistance of the subaltern for what it really is. That is, to be without agency constitutes being without access to social mobility due to a lack of resources (those in poverty), opportunity (social status), and recognition (both cases). If the subaltern does not have agency and their voices cannot be heard, their protests are not seen as urgent either and, therefore, subaltern resistance is not recognized for what it truly is. When resistance is not recognized, their oppression becomes undermined and is not taken as seriously as it should be. This further restricts the subaltern from being heard and allows their resistance to become more ingrained into the system (Hernandez "Conditions of the Subaltern"). Spivak holds that the philosophy of ethical responsibility, being similar to the dialogic understanding of "speaking," is a mutual transaction between the speaker and listener, an ethical stance for the other to exist. Spivak's

use of the term “responsibility” is also of central significance to the argument of the present research.

Riffat Hassan (1943-), the Islamic feminist and scholar of the *Holy Quran*, substantiates theology of progressive Islam based on hermeneutics and honor killing based upon what she calls the Magna Carta of human rights in the *Holy Quran*. Shakespeare illustrates how the women’s rights as determined by the ethical responsibility of the agents – such as the kings and his men’s infatuation with women who have been deemed of the low and base rank of slaves – are retrieved as defined through what Hassan designates as the Islamic feminist’s approach in the *Holy Quran* and Hadith. The major objective of the present study is to provide a reading of Shakespeare’s works with reference to the Islamic feminist notions presented by Riffat Hassan.

2. The Holy Quran and Love’s Labour’s Lost

William Shakespeare, the composer of *Love’s Labour’s Lost*, sets forth the King of Navarre and his three comrades as they attempt to swear off the company of ladies to focus on study and fasting. The ladies are regarded as diversions befitting low-class and baser slaves possessed of dark skin, black, Ethiop, Moor, African, Ebony and a lot more to indulge with, hence a hindrance to the intellectual men’s desire for fame and immortality. Later in the play, however, these men’s subsequent infatuation with the ladies make them forsworn their earlier pledge against women. In an untraditional ending of a comedy, the play comes to its close with the death of the Princess’s father – an event that calls off all the weddings for a year despite the men’s insistence on and demand of a fast bond. The play draws on masculine love and desire, reckoning, and rationalization.

Prophet Muhammad was an Arab religious, social, and political leader and the founder of Islam. Muhammad united Arabia into a single Muslim polity with the *Holy Quran* forming the basis of Islamic belief. The word Quran as “reading, revelation, Kitab” is exposed to a variety of readings and interpretations (Jaffer and Jaffer “the Comprehensive” 11). Muhammad’s teachings were all accompanied by Hadith and Sira upheld as complementary to the Islamic religion. For further discovery of the era of Muhammad and his teachings which is helpful for our study, it is required to refer to Ibn Ishaq’s *Life of God’s Messenger* written in 767 CE. Another important source is written by Al-Waqidi and Ibn-Sa’d al Baghdadi who relate the history of Muhammad’s campaigns. The *Holy Quran* has penetrated most aspects of human life. It defines the rights and law in the Islamic community (Nasr) and encourages beneficence and kindness

for the poor, desolate, and indignant people whose rights are demolished (Campo 572).

3. Literature Review

There seems to reside a myriad of research attempting to demonstrate a variety of approaches to Shakespeare's *Love's Labour's Lost* some of which are by way of illustration listed underneath. It should be noted that although the researchers may not have applied the Islamic perspective directly into their works, still the Islamic idea can be evoked through their approaches by means of a similar thematic pattern as accomplished by the authors of this research.

"To teach a teacher ill beseemeth me': The Dynamics of Teaching and Learning in *Love's Labour's Lost*" (2015) is written by Delphine Lemonnier-Textier. The thematisation of the process of teaching and learning in *Love's Labour's Lost* is used as a tool of contrastive characterization to show how the male characters professing ideals of virtue and knowledge are those least able to enforce them. Ironically, the key to their redemption lies precisely in those whose company they banish, i.e. the women. As the play develops and the women are shown as able in using the men's rhetorical weapons much more effectively as they are, the satirical vein of the play grows into an effective denunciation of the flaws of Navarre. This, together with the strongly meta-theatrical last act, culminates in a lesson on the cathartic potential of comedy.

"Living Art Lost: The Arden 3 *Love's Labour's Lost* and Shakespeare in Higher Education" (2008), written by Tetsuhito Motoyama, is of central significance to the present study. His attempt to "re-appropriate" Shakespeare (Sinfield 137) arises from an awareness of "resources being cut," and "students being forced "into practical studies intended to prepare them directly for the labor market" (153). He brings down capitalism with Shakespeare just as unforeseen forces undermine Ferdinand's "little academe" and its vow to shun "the grosser manner of these world's delights, women or slaves...included" (1.1.29). This study is also aligned with the present research as long as the idea of precluding women which paradoxically result in submitting to women is unavoidable. The whole idea is concomitant to the Islamic approach if affiliations are linked and re-appropriated.

Another article entitled "Eulogizing Black in *Love's Labour's Lost*" (2015) by Armelle Sabatier aims at exploring the varied senses and shades of the black in *Love's Labour's Lost* through its chromatic opposites embodied by white and fair. By taking into account the diverse conventional speeches on colours – shaped, among other things, by rhetoric, science, Petrarchism, and treatises on the art of painting – this study of black and white throws light upon the ways the codification, or the stylistics, of colours are more broadly challenged and even

dislocated by Shakespeare. This study ventures to evince that women are regarded as black and that being black is fairer than white. The revelatory concept of eulogizing black is reminiscent of the present research in terms of respect and significance to the Muslim community which is deeply accommodated within. Despite such a similarity, however, the Islamic approach is not mentioned in this source.

“The Wars of *Love’s Labour’s Lost*: Performance and Interpretation” (2015), by William C. Carrol, investigates the trope of war in relation to the critical and performance history of *Love’s Labour’s Lost*. The “civil war of wits” has long been recognized as central to the play’s linguistic texture, as has the “war against your own affections” that Navarre urges on his fellow academe-lovers. In addition to these linguistic and psychological threads, the play’s disputed debt between France and Navarre concerns the “wars” waged by Navarre’s father while the four lords’ names point toward historical actors in the French wars of religion from the 1570s to the 1590s. Beyond these well-cited links, the play has an unusual history of being performed in actual war-time. Navarre, the Spanish territory which is conquered by the Muslims as the history of wars records, suggests a close affinity with the present study. Men of Navarre’s submission to the women who enter Spain in order to attract them can be compared to the Muslims’ entrance into Navarre (of Andalusia’s city: the community of Spain and the residence of Muslims) in order to conquer and subdue them.

4. Methodology

Riffat Hassan (1943-) is a Pakistani-American theologian and a leading Islamic feminist scholar of the *Holy Quran*. Her approach to theology is an example of progressive Islam. She states that the *Holy Quran* is the “Magna Carta of human rights,” prescribing human rights and equality for all. She claims the *Holy Quran* upholds rights to life, respect, justice, and freedom among others. She also argues against honor killings which are a distortion of Islam and criticizes the whole idea that women are inferior. The former false idea, she claims, is a result of the mistaken belief among Muslims that Eve was created from Adam’s rib. This, however, is a mistake since, in the Islamic story of creation, they were created at the same time (“Are Human Rights”; “Religious Human Rights” 363).

Samuel Johnson, in *Dictionary of the English Language* (1755), defines honor as “nobility of soul, the scorn of meanness, magnanimity, privileges of rank or birth, respect [... which] places an individual socially and determines his right to precedence.” It is not so much a function of moral or ethical excellence, as it is a consequence of power. Therefore, the victim of honor killing has brought dishonor upon the family, religion ... with an honor culture and should be punished (“Ethics” 1970). Hassan supports a non-rigid interpretation of the *Holy*

Quran, arguing that while it is the word of God, words can have different meanings, hence the significance of hermeneutics. She also speaks of an “ethical criterion” that rejects the use of the *Holy Quran* to perpetrate injustice in that the God of Islam is just (Khalid). Such a method regards specific issues including feminism, human rights, etc. This approach to feminism and the combination of Islam and feminism are articulated within an Islamic paradigm by Margot Badran in “Exploring Islamic Feminism” (2000). The questions of human rights as well promote the equality of all human rights (Khalil). Both of these issues concern themselves with gender justice and full equality of women and men (Ahmed *Women and Gender in Islam* 57).

This research intends to demonstrate in *Love’s Labour’s Lost* the fulfillment of Muslim women’s demands in terms of a reciprocal relationship such as love, adoration, and marriage. Despite having been demolished as lowlife and low privileged and, hence, having been deprived of honor by the fancied-superior men, these Muslim women are permitted to exist. However, it happens as long as they are embraced by an act of love and are received and accounted by the agent king and his men – each of whom commences a mutual transaction (intimate and individual) – with ethical responsibility. Spivak, too, argues that “ethics are not just a problem of knowledge, but a call to a relationship” (*Spivak Reader* 269). The ideal relationship is mutual and intimate. This is what she means by “ethical singularity,” the engagement of the Other in non-essential, non-crisis terms (270). Spivak asserts:

We know all when we engage profoundly with one person, the responses come from both sides: this is responsibility and accountability... The object of ethical action is not an object of benevolence, for here responses flow from both sides (269-270). Ideal relation to the other, then, is an “embrace, an act of love” with care and attention. (269-270)

Spivak’s idea could be observed to some extent in what constitutes the *Holy Quran*’s essence as revealed in many Surah and Hadith as well. It is this same idea which further forms the view that Shakespeare showcases the significance of Islam and the *Holy Quran* in terms of the retrieved rights of the oppressed Muslims. This is also in keeping with Riffat Hassan’s opposition to the honor-killing approach to the *Holy Quran* and Hadith regarding Muslim (women)’s revival of rights in relation to Spivak’s notion of the ethical responsibility of agent(s). Analogously, in the *Holy Quran*, the poor (of low-birth) Muslims accompanied by Prophet Muhammad are identified as the other with no honor. These Muslims, sanctioned by the hegemonic opponents, have been for long tortured and denied of the privileges and equity emigrate. This act, which is later conducive to more conquests, is received by some more, enhances the Islamic

doctrine throughout Arabia, and is endorsed by some agents who embrace and enhance Islam mutually. A prominent scholar of Islam, Leila Ahmed (1940-) argues that Islam speaks for “an ethical structure that advocates the moral and spiritual equality of all human beings” (66). Margot Badran, the Islamic feminist, states that Islamic feminism “derives its understanding and mandate from the *Quran*, seeks rights and justice for women, and for men, in the totality of their existence.” Gender equality consists of an equal ease of access to any resources, needs, and aspirations. The status of women in the course of Islamic history is represented in Islam sacred texts, the *Holy Quran*, and Prophet Muhammad’s Hadiths (Glasse 141-143).

5. Discussion

5.1. Islamic Feminism: The Ethical Agent’s Love of Women

The story commences with the issue of women and love identified as an evil obstacle – the other – dead set against men’s wisdom and knowledge. They believe that women as pleasure-some deviation should be left for the lowlife of the world, like slaves (Act 1, scene 1). Biron, one among the three, finds it hard not to see or love women whom he finds more pleasing. This can be taken as the agency to advocate women and stand against the upheld constrictions. It can also be taken as an agent standing for the women in terms of their being the necessary aspect of life to have (Act 1, scene 1). By contract, it reads that no woman will come within a mile of my court, hence an access restriction for women only. The French King’s daughter as a rightful ambassador is commissioned to speak with the king about the political issues. Based on the king’s creed, though, she cannot speak but can only camp in farther away places – a gesture which induce the queen’s resentment (Act 2, scene 1). It should be noted that even the princess does not have any proper name. Soon after the meeting with the women terminates, Boyet tells the Princess that, based on the king’s behavior, he believes the King is “infected” with his love for her (Act 2, scene 1). Boyet acts like a true member of the Princess's party, as illustrated through his response to the three lords' inquiries about the names of the ladies. He gives Longaville precise, literal answers to each of his questions, which is how they start to be infatuated with women gradually explicitly.

Boyet, another one of the three pledged members, is also attracted to the black Rosaline. Consequently, how they grow to deconstruct their mind by respecting women and showing love for women results in the emergence of a speaking subaltern with the aid of the Ethical agents who receive women with care and love. Biron and the black Rosaline have a small parley in the course of which Biron remarks that he is “Sick at the heart” (Act 2, scene 1) for her. Such a

proclamation reverberates not only the voice of the black Rosaline now heard, but also the fact that, despite the pledge alleged against women, Biron can hear her speaking (her heart) based on the evidence earlier made that Rosaline has described him as if in love with him. Moreover, it can also reflect the intellectual Biron as the agent who, contrary to what the king's contract accommodating the lost voices of women established and defined earlier, can hear Rosaline speak about love affair. Now that he feels love for Rosaline, the limited access to men is removed – what perchance might be an open gate for women to enter, a gate with no barricade.

The address to “pitch-black balls” and “Joan” (a traditional name for a woman of lower rank in society) refers to Rosaline – an address which reinforces that the (black) woman is of low status. The Princess and her party go into the woods on a hunt where she mistakenly receives a love letter which belonged to another person (Act 4, scene 1). We read in the letter about the African King Kophetua and the beggar woman who had once tied the knot. As a result of this union not only were her low status enhanced, her poverty eradicated, her title gained, and her life enriched, but also he felt victorious in conquering the lady (Act 4, scene 1). It is undoubtedly for the presence of a mutual transaction of love and marriage that the woman is taken into consideration and embraced with attention and ethical responsibility. The King realizes that they are all in love “and thereby all forsworn” (Act 4, scene 3). He asks Biron to “prove/our loving lawful, and our faith not torn” (ibid). Biron makes a long speech in which he argues that looking at a woman is the best way to learn beauty. He thus decides that their scholarship oath has led them further away from true study. The King seems to accept this argument, and they resolve to woo the women.

The reference to the black beauty eulogized is also maintained when Dumaine is reading a love letter: “... I am forsworn for thee/ thou for whom Jove would swear/ Juno but an Ethiopie were/ and deny himself for Jove ...” (Act 4, scene 1). King Ferdinand asserts to Dumaine that even Jupiter would break a promise to have your love. Biron's love for the black Rosaline as “ebony,” “fair,” “divine,” “Indian East,” and “black,” appraises her dark beauty by swearing the Book (Act 4, scene 3). Ferdinand, too, refers to the black Rosaline as the sun which makes heaven more beautiful. Biron's lauding the black beauty further (Act 4, scene 3) not only deconstructs the Renaissance view of the fairness associated with blonde beauty, but it would also lead him to be contested with his friends too. Even Rosaline's double subalternity is placated when acknowledged and loved by Biron, hence the positive role played by the Ethical responsibility.

The idea of love which nourishes a mutual intimate act or embrace of benevolence and accountability between a man and a woman involves women to be heard ethically. This fact is particularly spoken by Biron to his friends when he claims that love is first learned with the lady's eyes, and cannot simply be confined to the mind. (Act 4, scene 3). Therefore, love's association speaks for women's voice which is reinforced by an allusion to precious eyesight: blinding an Eagle, a sharp ear, the soft touch of a snail's horns (in *Venus and Adonis*), taste as a Bacchus, brave love like Hercules, subtle as Sphinx, Apollos' lute, humble tyrants, and Prometheus' stealing fire (gaining knowledge similar to the eyes of the black Rosaline). Biron, the black Rosaline's lover, asks his friends "to love for love's sake to write about these women" (Act 4, scene 3). Biron holds that they all should make an oath to keep the mutual act of love with women. Biron suggests breaking the limitation put forth against women and leading them from parks to their tents first.

The Princess shows her ladies a jewel that the King has sent her, and the four women respectively do so. As a result, a mutual transaction of love and marriage, which was predicted and inferred earlier, is confirmed. This, too, exhibits the women's role of being heard (speaking subaltern) and loved (ethical responsibility) by the men as agents who appreciate them (Act 5, scene 2). The king and his men are on their way to court their loves and even offer to bring these women to the king's court. Even more strongly to women's advocate is the fact that men are mocked and maneuvered by women. As the conversation between Rosaline and princess indicates, this renders the idea that women are speaking subalterns who are exhibited as strongly as possible by the end of the play (Act 5, scene 2). All this affects the identity re-formation of both parties who now are going to be called as fools and stupid creatures and whatnot to be controlled and charmed by women. Ferdinand asserts that 'you should not judge me for what you have made me do since your eyes must make me break my oath' (Act 5, scene 2). This is suggestive of a speaking subaltern along with the mutual responsibility as an act of love. In the end, a messenger announces the death of the Princess' father, which makes her decide to leave fast. Once again, the king entreats her "to stay," and the men once again appeal to their ladies for love. The Princess tells the King that he should become a hermit for twelve months and then should seek her again, and Katharine and Maria tell Dumaine and Longaville that they will receive them again in one year under similar conditions which exhibit further the idea of ethical responsibility.

5.2. The Ethical Agents' Reception of Muslims

In the *Holy Quran*, likewise, as the othering concerning the Muslims and Prophet Muhammad, the marginal elements are identified and ascertained in terms of lost voices of minority associated with the lousy poor, blacks and slaves. Having Islamic faith afflicted even for the bare necessities of life, they were tormented and exiled, with limited access or no access to the social justice. Spivak considers the margin as the "silenced center of the circuit marked out of this epistemic violence, men and women among the illiterate peasantry, the tribal, the lowest strata of the urban sub proletariat" ("Can the Subaltern Speak?" 273). Spivak arguing for deconstructing the center and the margin holds that such binary in which black (women) or others are marginalized would be deconstructed. Spivak attempts to make women or other voices unable to be heard, recognized (307). It is likely to happen if women or others cease to be the other in a process of othering, and when the intellectuals (agents) or some advocates can speak for them. (308).

Prophet Muhammad – Peace be upon Him – and Muslims have endured multitudinous torment, oppression, tyranny, and persecution far and wide their life. The consequential and momentous notion pertains to the fact that how His Greatness was capable of surmounting and exceeding the constraints and barriers – through his successful speeches – dead set against his episteme. The hegemonic fabrication and edifice deep-seated in tyranny made it hard and tough for the Muslims and Prophet Muhammad – as the othering (minority with no power) established – to accomplish their summoning on Islamic calling, which seemed efficient and resolved across time. As the *Holy Quran* demonstrates, such issues have been reconciled and accommodated in terms of the fact that the foes have been affected or succumbed to the Prophet's call and decision (Fosselat 1-27; Raad 31; Alagh 9-19).

The Ghoraysh pagan dynasty, empowered by the episteme and affluent indebted to the commercial caravans and camels to circumambulate Kaaba and worshipping idols from all over Arabia, proved beneficial for the wealthy states of Ghoraysh. Mohammad and Muslims along with destitute, slaves, wretched, blacks, and the needy reckoned inferior and of low life, although they were all faithful in God. Such hierarchical state presupposed by the Ghoraysh lineage rebutted and retorted by Muhammad since he believed that the only higher people were the ones who were more virtuous and pious. Apparently, it was not acknowledged by the Hegemony of Ghoraysh who disgraced Muhammad's black and slave comrades as humiliating, hence anyone who believed in Islam would be tortured. Thereby, Muhammad and his disciples have agonized for

almost thirteen years and later compelled them moved to Medina to establish a nation (Ommat) of Mecca's emigrants and Medina's people who had already enhanced Islam. For another eight years, they were plagued by Mecca aristocratic clans during which Muhammad's disciples, about ten thousands, conquered Mecca, with Abusofyan and his wife the enemies first, later as the agents, who were alleged with Islam and attempted to extend it.

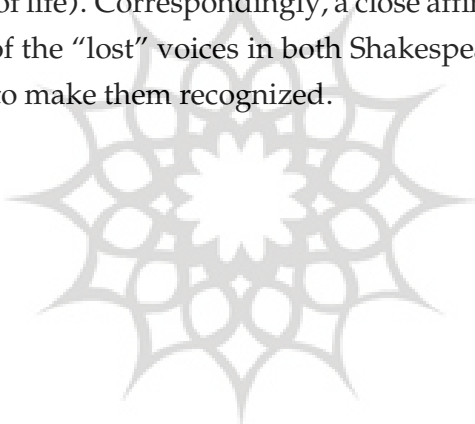
In a phased manner, Islam got disseminated to Arabia by its residents, hence embraced mutually and established Islam throughout. Muhammad was assisted and provided by multifarious agents especially with regard to Hamzeh ibn Abdolmotaleb, Ali, and others to stand firm against the hostiles (*Nahj al-Balaghah* Fourth Prayers). They were assisted by such agents so that His voice could be widely heard. His antagonists have sanctioned him and later ostracized and exiled him to Sh'e b-e Abi Talib so that His voice would be lost and provided with limited access to his requirements. They disregarded Muslims sparing any sort of nourishments containing food and water or the bare minimum necessities of life that is of limited access to general rights even.

When Mecca was conquered by the Muslims, the foes of Muhammad were inclined to His teachings and converted to the Islamic faith and doctrine which triggered the foes with fears, and led them to flee, hence a prospect for His voice heard (Alnasr 2). Muhammad was now capable of gradually imparting His mission to the Muslims and the world as assigned to Him. Occasionally, it seemed that even periodically, His foes approached Him upon hearing Quranic verses (2). This connoted a mutual transaction as long as Muhammad as the other was allowed to exist, to be heard, and to be accounted for. His imparting authority and charm reached far and wide, peculiarly concerning Saudi Arabia, and still extended and expanded to the Persian and Roman empires inordinately. The foes – whose identity, now acclaimed, was thus affected – ruminated deeply about the fact that the Muslim pilgrimage could fabricate a unifying fraternity and coalition in the state of Medina. This imminent danger, they thought, could propel them to their forthcoming sabotage and destruction. The hegemonic pagan's angst, terror, dismay, and unease made them succumb or flee and, thus, comply in attunement to the Muslims.

6. Conclusion

Shakespeare's employment of the Elizabethan long-established words and concepts concerning Muslims – including African, Ethiop, moors, and black – was in association with the connotations of these terms among North African nations. He refers to The King and his men as failing to pledge their vows

apropos of love and infatuation with the slave, black, and inferior women as the other. In his works allusions are made to great figures such as Hercules, Solomon, Samson, the African king, named Kophetua, and the Beggar-maid who marries him. An ethical agent, the king in *Love's Labour's Lost* eradicates all traces of his wife's poverty and low-class status (Act 5, scene 2). That African (black) king pioneers par excellence respect for a woman of low-class origin, a beggar woman, and a woman of black complexion (ebony, dark like the raven, black like the fashion in Act 4, scene 3). In another case, reference is made to a prostitute by the Spanish man. This shows the way they consider the women of any color as the other. In both Spivak and Islamic feminists, it is argued that there should be someone to speak for these degraded women – what is well attested by the agents in the play tenuously. Regarding the *Holy Quran* and Hadith, the poor exiled Muslims and Muhammad as the other are tormented heavily by the affluent hegemonic pagans who deprived them of the general social justice (even the bare necessities of life). Correspondingly, a close affinity is observed between the representation of the “lost” voices in both Shakespeare’s play and *The Holy Quran*, attempting to make them recognized.



شروېشگاه علوم انسانی و مطالعات فرهنگی
پرتال جامع علوم انسانی

References

- Ahmed, Leila. *Women and Gender in Islam*. Yale University Press, 1992.
- Ashcroft, Bill, Gareth Griffith and Helen T., (eds.). *The Postcolonial Studies Reader*. London and New York: Routledge, 1995.
- Aslan, Reza. *No god but God: The Origins, Evolution, and Future of Islam*. New York: Random House, 2011.
- Badran, Margot. "Exploring Islamic Feminism" Archived 16 April 2005 at the Wayback Machine, Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding, 2000, Georgetown University.
- Brotton, Jerry. *The Sultan and the Queen: The Untold Story of Elizabeth and Islam*. New York: Viking, 2016.
- Campo, Juan E. *Encyclopedia of Islam*. New York: Facts on File, 2009.
- "The Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon." 2013. <http://cal.huc.edu/noframe/index.html> [Accessed 2 March 2017]
- De Kock, Leon. "Interview with Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak." New Nation Writers Conference in South Africa. *ARIEL: A Review of International English Literature*, Vol. 23, No. 3, 1992, pp. 29-47.
- "Ethics: Honour Crimes." BBC. 1 January 1970. http://www.bbc.co.uk/ethics/honourcrimes/crimesofhonour_1.shtml [Accessed on 23 December 2018].
- Garcia-Moreno, Laura and Peter C. Pfeiffer, (eds.). "Unsatisfied: Notes on Vernacular Cosmopolitanism." In *Text and Nation: Cross-Disciplinary Essays on Cultural and National Identities*. Columbia: Camden House, 1996, pp. 191-207.
- Glassé, Cyril. *The Concise Encyclopedia of Islam*. London: Stacey International, 1989.
- Hassan, Riffat. "Are Human Rights Compatible with Islam?" *The Religious Consultation*. <http://www.religiousconsultation.org/hassan2.htm> [Accessed on 20 March 2008].
- . "Religious Human Rights in the Qur'an." In J Witte, Jr and JD van der Vijver (eds.), *Religious Human Rights in Global Perspective: Religious Perspectives*, 1996, pp. 361-386.

- Hernandez, Nicole. "Conditions of the Subaltern: Examining the Black Lives Matter Movement", 2017. <https://medium.com/when-women-speak-back/conditions-of-the-subaltern-examining-the-black-lives-matter-movement-ba12b4736217> [Accessed on 23 October 2019]
- Jaffer, Abbas and Masuma Jaffar. *Quranic Sciences*. London: ICAS press, 2009.
- Khalid, Hassan. "The Hijackers of Islam". *The Friday Times*. 2003. https://web.archive.org/web/20080321110534/http://www.crescentlife.com/heal%20the%20world/hijackers_of_islam.htm [Accessed on 4 March 2008].
- Ludden, David, (ed.). *Reading Subaltern Studies: Critical History, Contested Meaning and the Globalization of South Asia*. Delhi: Permanent Black, 2003.
- Marx, Steven. *Shakespeare and the Bible*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- Milward, Peter. *Biblical Influences in Shakespeare's Great Tragedies*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987.
- . *Shakespeare's Religious Background*. Chicago: Loyola University Press, p. 102.
- Nahj al-Balaghah*. Muhyi al-Din 'Abd al-Hamid (ed.), with commentary from al-Shaykh Muhammad 'Abduh. 3 Vols. al-Qahirah: Matba'at al-Istiqamah, 1964.
- Nasr, Seyyed Hossein. *The Study Quran*. San Francisco: HarperOne, 2015.
- Reynolds, Gabriel Said. *The Quran and the Bible: Text and Commentary*. London: Yale University Press, 2018.
- Riches, John. *The Bible: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- Robinson, Francis. *The Cambridge Illustrated History of the Islamic World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- Shakespeare, William. *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare*. Vol. 1. W. G. Clark and W. Aldis Wright (eds.). New York: Nelson Doubleday, 1853.
- Spivak, Gayatri. "The Rani of Simur" In *Europe and Its Others*, Vol. 1, Francis Baker et al. (eds.). Colchester: Uessex, 1985.
- . "Can the Subaltern Speak?" In *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*. Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (eds.). Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988.

---. *The Spivak Reader*. Donna Landry and Gerald MacLean (eds.). London: Routledge, 1996.

Walia, Shelley. *Postmodern Encounters: Edward Said and the Writing of History*. London: Icon Books, 2001.

Wilson, Richard. *Secret Shakespeare: Studies in Theatre, Religion and Resistance*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004.

"Women and Islam." In *The Oxford Dictionary of Islam*. John L. Esposito (ed.). *Oxford Islamic Studies Online*. <http://www.oxfordislamicstudies.com/article/opr/t125/e2510> [Accessed on 6 October 2017].

Young, Robert J. C. *Postcolonialism: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.

