Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta* and Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* and the Anxiety of Influence(*)

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to deal with the influence of Christopher Marlowe on William Shakespeare in the light of Harold Bloom's theory of influence. The researcher attempts to study aspects of originality and sameness in the two plays: *The Jew of Malta* (1589) and *The Merchant of Venice* (1596-1598). The researcher tries to understand the character of the Jew in both works and to inquire whether Shakespeare follows Marlowe's characterization of the Jew in order to explore the influence of Marlowe on Shakespeare. The researcher intends to study this theme using the theory of influence approach as discussed by the American critic Harold Bloom in his two books, *The Anxiety of Influence* (1973) and *A Map of Misreading* (1975). Bloom suggests that creativity and authorship are not an appreciation of past writings, but rather an inspiration. Bloom attempts, in these two books, to explore the influence of the predecessors on the descendants. Readers, according to Bloom, attempt to know the relationship between texts. During this process of reading, they interpret the new work as a different work from the earlier one.

The study is divided into three parts: the first part is a general introduction to the theory of influence as introduced by Harold Bloom in his two books entitled, *The Anxiety of Influence* (1973) and *A Map of Misreading* (1975). The second part deals with Shakespeare's anxiety of influence in *The Merchant of Venice*. The third part deals with greed, hatred and revenge in the characters of Barabas and Shylock. The researcher attempts to prove that Shakespeare was influenced by Marlowe in his portrayal of the Jew, but his treatment of this character was different in some aspects the researcher seeks to

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show in this paper. This theme, to the knowledge of the researcher, has not been explored.

Keywords: Harold Bloom's theory of Influence, Marlowe, *The Jew of Malta*, Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice*.

الملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى الاستفادة من نظرية قلق التأثر للناقد الأمريكي هارولد بلوم التي ناقشها في كتابيه "قلق التأثر" الذي كتبه عام ١٩٦٧ ونشره ١٩٧٣، وخريطة للقراءة الضالة' الذي نشره عام ١٩٧٥ باعتبارها مدخلا مُهمًّا للوقوف على مدى تأثر وليم شكسبير بمعاصره كريستوفر مارلو الذى يُعد من مؤسسي المسرح الإليزابيثي، وذلك من خلال دراسة العملين الدراميين "يهودي مالطا" و"تاجر البندقية". يطرح البحث تساؤلًا عما إذا كان شكسبير قد خطى نفس خُطى مارلو في رسم ملامح الشخصية اليهودية أم أبدع في تصويرها. إن نظرية قلق التأثر عند بلوم تركز على تأثر الكتّاب اللاحقين بتراث البارزين ممن سبقوهم؛ حيث يُعد العمل الأدبي السابق هو مصدر إلهام للكاتب اللاحق الذي يكبت قلق تأثره. والقارئ من وجهة نظر بلوم يحاول فهم العلاقة بين النصوص فيفسر النص كأنه نص جديد يختلف عن النص الذي كتبه سالفه. كان شكسبير واعيًا بقلق التأثر فاجتهد أن تكون لـه تجربته الخاصة التي تميزه عن مارلو.

الكلمات المفتاحية:

نظرية قلق التأثر، هارولد بلوم، مارلو، يهودي مالطا، شكسبير، تاجر البندقية.

> Influence-anxieties are embedded in the agonistic basis of all imaginative literature (Bloom, *Anxiety* xxiv).

This paper is dedicated to study the influence of Christopher Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta* on William Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*, according to Harold Bloom's theory of influence as explained in his two books, *The Anxiety of Influence* (1973) and *A Map of Misreading* (1975). The researcher seeks to emphasize the creative part in Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*, and how far it is different from Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta*. Shakespeare is carrying out a process of revising and correction on the Marlovian text. The researcher hypothesizes that Shakespeare had read *The Jew of Malta* and was

influenced by it, but this influence does not mean that the latter copied his predecessor's work. In fact, Shakespeare created a play that belongs to him and to his style of writing. Harold Bloom delineates the anxiety of influence as:

> Poetic misreading or misprision… A poet swerves away from his precursor, by so reading his precursor's poem as to execute a *clinamen* in relation to it. This appears as a corrective movement in his own poem, which implies that the precursor's poem went accurately up to a certain point, but then should have swerved, precisely in the direction that the new poem moves (*Anxiety,* 14).

Bloom argues that the process of writing is a revisionist process; in which the successor corrects, revises and misreads creatively the texts of his predecessors. Bloom's theory of influence is based on the successor's attitude of originality and creativity in relation to the achievements of a strong precursor to affirm his existence and immortality. Hence, Bloom's theory aims to uncover the relation between tradition and creativity where the successor fights to sustain his own vision though he may experience feelings of anxiety to imitate the strong precursor who stirred him to create.

Probably, the success of Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta* (1589) was a stimulus for Shakespeare to attempt a Jewish theme in *The Merchant of Venice* (1596 - 1598). In his book, *Shylock: A Legend and its Legacy,* John Gross indicates that the nearest character to Shylock is Barabas because:

> *The Jew of Malta* offered Shakespeare the precedent of a Jew who was articulate, who dominated the action, who had his own point of view and his own grievances. With such an example in front of him, it would have been a very retrograde step to have gone back to a Jewish villain who was a mere offensive blob, like Gernutus in the ballad (pp. 20-21).

Shakespeare molds Shylock after Barabas of Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta*. Hence, the researcher attempts in the light of Harold Bloom's theory, to show aspects of creativity and sameness in the two texts to come up with the meaning of the anxiety of influence. Authors usually imitate those whom they consider superior predecessors or equals because they are inspired by them, and what they create is a response to their past writings that reflects an obsession with the text and its author. Bloom affirms:

> Influence is a metaphor, one that implicates a matrix of relationships—imagistic, temporal, spiritual, and psychological—all of them ultimately defensive in their nature…. the anxiety of influence *comes out of* a complex act of strong misreading, a creative interpretation that I call "poetic misprision." What writers may experience as anxiety, and what their works are compelled to manifest, are the *consequence* of poetic misprision, rather than the *cause* of it. The strong misreading comes first; there must be a profound act of reading that is a kind of falling in love with a literary work (*Anxiety,* xxiii).

The idea conveyed in these lines is that the successor cannot get rid of a deep feeling of anxiety that stems from reading a strong precursor that may be interpreted as a kind of envy. Madelon Gohlke confirms, "It is not influence per se which condemns us to the state of imaginative poverty but the anxiety generated by the realization of one's indebtedness, one's ultimate unseparateness, and one's formation out of the matrix of another" (*The Wordsworth Circle Review,* 247). This means that the successor suffers a feeling of anxiety of imitating an earlier writer. He reads a literary work and admires its author and his influence may either lead to imitate or to deviate because "influence is simply a transference of personality, a mode of giving away what is most precious to one's self and its exercise produces a sense, and it may be, a reality of loss. Every disciple takes away something from his master" (*Anxiety,* 6). The successor is an alert receiver or a careful reader in his

field; echoing what he perceives of an earlier writer. Robert Logan argues that, "For Bloom, writers are the most powerful readers of previous writers; their creativity functions by means of what he calls 'strong misreading" (*Shakespeare's Marlowe,* 6). Bloom's concept of misreading is the principle concern of his theory of influence. Bloom states:

> Poetic influence – when it involves two strong, authentic poets,— always proceeds by a misreading of the prior poet, an act of creative correction that is actually and necessarily a misinterpretation. The history of fruitful poetic influence, which is to say the main tradition of Western poetry since the Renaissance, is a history of anxiety and self-saving caricature, of distortion, of perverse, willful revisionism without which modem poetry as such could not exist (*Anxiety*, 30).

This means that the successor suggests new direction and significance for his new text based on that of his precursors. The successor misreads the former writer that he admires and corrects according to his vision because "Most poets, poetic precursors (individually) and the Tradition (collectively) are deeply, fervently admired as sources of inspiration" (Pearce, 47). In this sense, Bloom puts emphasis on the successor's creation that is a direct influence of an earlier writing. The influence of the precursor helps to form the author's perspective because the successor's reading of the precursor inspires him and therefore, what he writes is a combination of his sense of the tradition and his own experience that reflects an anxiety of influence. Bloom affirms that "every reading is an act of 'influencing', that is, of being influenced by the poem and of influencing any other reader to whom your reading is communicated" (*Kabbalah and Criticism,* 97). Bloom means that there is no writing which comes from vacuum; literary texts are reflections of previous texts. On the other hand, Foucault argues that no work is identical to the other because:

> If representation did not possess the obscure power of making a past impression present once more, then no impression

> would ever appear as either similar to or dissimilar from a previous one. This power of recall implies at least the possibility of causing two impressions to appear as quasi-likenesses (as neighbours or contemporaries, existing in almost the same way) when one of those impressions only is present, while the other has ceased, perhaps a long time ago, to exist. Without imagination, there would be no resemblance between things (*The Order of Things*, 76).

For Foucault, authors present dissimilar works unless they are able to restate a past impression. The assimilation between texts is conceived by the informed reader while reading. The reader interprets literature that originates from repressed anxiety and attempts to infer the relationship between texts. The reader is pleased with the novelty as he is pleased with the tradition. In *A Map of Misreading* (1975), Bloom claims:

> Influence, as I conceive it, means that there are no texts, but only relationships between texts. These relationships depend upon a critical act, a misreading or misprision, that one poet performs upon another, and that does not differ in kind from the necessary critical acts performed by every strong reader upon every text he encounters. The influence-relation governs reading as it governs writing, and reading is therefore a miswriting just as writing is a misreading (3).

Bloom argues that influence is a critical act as well as a reading act. The creative writer performs the same role on the text the reader does. Both practice their judgments, and changes on the text. The successor writer creates a perspective based on his personal experience and his own response. The presence of the creative writer is fundamental to the success of the literary work. Presumably, the creative writer seeks to create his own text according to the previous one. This process is not only a process of reading but a process of criticizing as well. The successor experiences this feeling of anxiety because "The paramount

threat to the self is, of course, death; in avoiding this, the poet searches for his own voice, his own individuality, his own immortality, and his own name" (Berman, 268). This explains "the way poets war against one another in the strife of eternity" (Bloom, *A Map of Misreading,* 5). In this respect, writers strive to remain immortal as stated by Shakespeare in the concluding lines of sonnet 18 in which he writes: "When in eternal lines to time thou growest: / So long as men can breathe or eyes can see, / So long lives this, and this gives life to thee". Shakespeare means that the everlasting lines of a great poet assure his eternity. His works are undying and unforgettable after the poet's death to guarantee his immortality. Bloom affirms: "If the dead poets, as Eliot insisted, constituted their successors' particular advance in knowledge, that knowledge is still their successors' creation, made by the living for the needs of the living" (*Anxiety,* 19). The efforts of the successor writer is fostered by the precursor's contribution.

Marlowe is a master and a main modernizer of the Elizabethan drama that set the stage for the Renaissance theatre as indicated by Allardyce Nicoll, "This was precisely what the age had been waiting for; the stage in 1587 needed a man sure of his aims and deliberately intent on dramatic reform" (*World Drama* 269). This means that Marlowe was a dramatic reformer, whose plays began the real Renaissance drama in England. He wrote mature tragic plays. He renovated not only in dramatic technique, but also in dramatic diction and themes. William Empson et.al. see Marlowe as "a Renaissance hero questioning traditional morality and reaching out to new possibilities of human endeavor and experience" (Qtd. in O'Neill, 8). Marlowe contributed to the moral tradition in drama, taking it to new prospects of human expression. Marlowe's characters were more passionately human than the characters of the mystery, miracle and morality plays before him. His "treatment of ethical and political themes is closely bound up with the Renaissance interest in education, particularly the education of princes" (Daiches, 219). Marlowe innovated in action in the sense that "time and place often shift rapidly. Tone also may vary frequently from serious to

comic" (Brockett, 115). Marlowe was the first writer to see that the tragic flaw of the tragic hero is a result of his choices and not from divine determination. Brockett argues, "Most of the plays are shaped in part by the belief in a moral order that allows us free will, but holds us responsible for the choices we make" (*History of the Theatre*, 115).

Shakespeare was pleased by Marlowe's writings which broke with the past and started a new literary era in which the stage and text are strongly enjoined. Marlowe is an expression of the Elizabethan age as indicated by Robert Sawyer, "Marlowe, and Marlowe alone, influenced Shakespeare in ways that would forever alter Elizabethan drama" (*Re-Writing the Relationship,* 44). This is what Bloom means when he writes, "Christopher Marlowe is regarded as Shakespeare's prime precursor and rival Ovidian, only two months or so older than Shakespeare but the dominant London playwright from 1587 until his violent death in 1593, aged twenty-nine" (*Anxiety,* xx). Shakespeare makes use of Marlowe's techniques; in his portrayal of characters and "division of short scenes" (Brockett, 115). Shakespeare's characters speak the same language as Marlowe's characters. However, Shakespeare created drama that gathers within it "the notions of indolence, solitude, originality, imitation, and invention" (*Anxiety,* 27). Shakespeare did not only revise past works, but rather, he blended earlier writings with his own experience. His sense of a past tradition inspired him to innovate with a kind of mimic.

Shakespeare, according to Harold Bloom, is a world canon for his profound perception, deep thoughtfulness, and his linguistic supremacy. Bloom argues that, "Shakespeare perceived more than any other writer, thought more profoundly and originally than any other, and had an almost effortless mastery of language, far surpassing everyone, including Dante" (*The Western Canon*, 56). Eliot as well praised Shakespeare as an eminent playwright who "expressed nearly all human emotions, implying that he left very little for anyone else" (*The Sacred Wood*, 79). Shakespeare digs deep in the human psyche to reveal the human emotions. MacCracken affirms that:

> In the creation of character, Shakespeare is henceforth his own master. Having acquired this mastery, he uses it to depict life in its most joyous aspect. For the time being he dwells little upon men's failures and sorrows. He does not ignore life's darker side,--he loved life too well for that,--but he uses it merely as a background for pictures of youth and happiness and success (*An Introduction to Shakespeare,* 136).

Shakespeare's greatness rests on presenting various issues and on depicting various characters by revealing their inner sorrows and emotions. Shakespeare tried his utmost to have his own voice, and character as indicated by Bloom, "The individuation of speech, the appropriateness of speech to character, is one of the Shakespearean miracles in his desire for distinction" (*The Western Canon,* 188). Bloom sees that Shakespeare has a particular style and a distinguished vision that distanced him from Marlowe because "The speeches of Marlowe's protagonists move with such rapidity that we feel they (and Marlowe) are in a great hurry, not necessarily to get anywhere, but to dominate us through the power of their rhetoric" (Bloom, *Anxiety,* xxxiii). Marlowe's style is characterized by its exaggeration and hyperbole unlike that of Shakespeare. For example, Marlowe exaggerates when he depicts Barabas as a cruel father who is devoid of pity; he inhumanly plotted and poisoned his daughter. Marlowe as well exaggerates when Barabas hits friar Barnardine who fell dead at the moment. The crimes that Barabas committed were terrifying and placed him beyond the bounds of human nature. In this sense, *The Jew of Malta* does not arouse pity with the succession of the committed crimes, but rather it appears as though it were a comedy.

Shakespeare's Shylock is painted as a human being, having the human weakness of greed in a greater degree. However, the reader sympathizes with him because of the oppression he encounters. Also, Shylock is painted as a human being in his defense of his humanity, when he admonished the audience about his possession of all the characteristics of a human being like others. Shylock says,

Shylock: 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
villany you teach me, I will execute; and it shall go
hard but I will better the instruction. (*Venice*, III. ii. 57-71)

Shylock's rhetorical questions suggest his internal tension and psychological pain. Shakespeare's Shylock is psychologically different from Marlowe's Barabas; whereas the latter takes revenge on those who took his money, Shylock waited for justice in spite of the fact that losing money drove him to near madness. Barabas's tendency to revenge is clear in his words:

Barabas: And here upon my knees, striking the earth,
I ban their souls to everlasting pains
And extreme tortures of the fiery deep,
That thus have dealt with me in my distress.
(*Malta*, I. ii, 168-171)

This indicates that Shakespeare is carrying out a process of revising and correcting the Marlovian text. He improved upon the character of Barabas, whereas Barabas sought revenge on those who took his properties, Shylock refuges to the law of the city, to be more civil.

Shakespeare, here, is more belonging to the Renaissance by establishing the city of law than Marlowe who consecrates the city of revenge and tribal conflict.

Barabas's and Shylock's Greed

In the prologue to *The Jew of Malta*, Machiavelli introduces Barabas as a greedy Jewish merchant "Who smiles to see how full his bags are crammed" (*Malta*, The Prologue, 31). Barabas got his money through Machiavellian cunning means, "Which money was not got without my means" (*Malta*, The Prologue, 32). The prologue sums up the theme of the play with reference to the Bible, "For the love of money is a source of all kinds of evil. Some have been so eager to have it, that, they have wandered away from the faith and have broken their hearts with many sorrows" (1 Timothy 6 - 10, 263). The prologue to the play prepares the audience for the appearance of Barabas as one of Machiavelli's disciples who follows his teachings and, like Machiavelli, his famous principle is "the ends justify the means" (Spencer, 44). Richard Simpson states that "Marlowe confesses in his prologue that he means his Jew of Malta to exhibit that ideal" (Meyer, 31). Barabas is a Machiavellian ideal, being "a half-beast, half-man to know how to use both natures; and the one without the other is not lasting" (Machiavelli, 69). Barabas is presented as a beast. In his soliloquy, Barabas exclaims:

Barabas: I'll be revenged on this accursed town;
For by my means Calymath shall enter in.
I'll help to slay their children and their wives,
(*Malta*, V. i. 62-64)

The Jew of Malta opens with Barabas "in his counting-house, with heaps of gold before him" as indicated by the stage direction, then he turns to be more revengeful after losing his wealth (I. i. 1). This sudden shift attracts the reader's attention to focus on Barabas's long

soliloquy in which he expresses his happiness to see his wealth increasing, "Infinite riches in a little room" (*Malta*, I. i. 37). Barabas believes that it is a blessing given only to the Jews. Barabas says,

Barabas: Thus trowls our fortune in by land and sea,

And thus are we on every side enriched:

These are the blessings promised to the Jews,

(Ibid., 1. i. 105-107)

Barabas is obsessed with his wealth which gives him power. From the outset, he declares the financial position of the Jews as wealthy. He aspires to rule though he affirms that he does not have any political ambitions, "I must confess we come not to be kings" (Ibid., I. ii. 131). The stature of the Jews as wealthy is known to the Christians as indicated by 1st Knight who says to Barabas: "Thou art a merchant, and a moneyed man," (Ibid., I. ii. 54). Barabas's idea, here, is similar to Shylock's words, "Tubal, a wealthy Hebrew of my tribe, will furnish me" (*Venice*, I. iii. 56). Shylock's words concentrate on exchanging money, financial transactions which, from his perspective, give power to his Jewish nation as a minority living among a majority. Flora Cassen argues, "the Jews' history is presented as a long succession of anti-Jewish persecutions, and the Jews as passive victims of their European Christian tormentors" (396). In this respect, Shylock is similar to Barabas in his concentration on the financial aspect which governs the relations among the people of Venice. Both characters reflect their political, as well as social attitudes towards the society in which they live. However, Shylock steps further in reflecting more about the internal nature of human beings. When he lends money, he does not do this for the sake of commerce or trade, he seeks to build a protective fence between him and the hostile people he lives with, to defend not only his possessions, but his religion and his cult too.

The Maltese governor, as a symbol of power, equates money with belief, and threatens Barabas and all the Jewish merchants to either pay one-half of their property to the Turkish invaders or to be converted

into Christianity. As a tyrant, Fernez gives orders to divide the tribute only among the Jews.

Officer *[reads]:* First, the tribute money of the Turks shall all be levied amongst

the Jews, and each of them to pay one half of his estate.

…

Secondly, he that denies to pay, shall straight become a Christian. (*Malta*, I. ii. 71-76)

Gerald Pinciss comments that "Fernez's declaration is the same as that of every tyrant who has ever abrogated the state's responsibility for protecting individual rights; 'the common good' is lost when freedom exists only at the whim of the magistrate" (52). Barabas refuses to fund Malta against the Turkish invaders considering this a religious issue because Fernez excluded the Maltese from taxing. Barabas expresses his resentment of the governor's decision to take his wealth.

Barabas: Will you then steal my goods?

Is theft the ground of your religion?

(*Malta*, 1. ii. 97-98)

Barabbas's rhetorical questions imply his resentment of the unjust treatment. All of his property is taken away and his house is converted into a nunnery. There is a close relation between the trial scene in *The Merchant of Venice* and the governor's meeting with the Jews in *The Jew of Malta* since the Jews in both texts have their wealth stripped away and are forced to convert to Christianity. With the aid of his wicked servant Ithamore, Barabas committed brutal crimes to revenge himself.

Barabas and Shylock are portrayed as greedy usurer moneylenders. Barabas says, "Then after that was I am usurer," (*Malta*, II. iii. 194). Shylock's greed is exemplified in referring to the holy story of Jacob and his uncle Laban's sheep to convince Antonio of his opinion that interest is a quick means to gain money: "I cannot tell: I make it breed as fast,-" (*Venice*, I. i. 95). In the Bible, we read:

> When the healthy animals were mating, Jacob put the branches in front of them at the drinking-troughs, so that they would breed among the branches. But he did not put the branches in front of the weak animals. Soon Laban had all the weak animals, and Jacob all the healthy ones. In this way Jacob became very wealthy. He had many flocks, slaves, camels, and donkeys (Genesis 31: 41-43).

Shylock misinterprets Jacob's story to hide his wicked motives. Antonio resembles Shylock's deceitful nature with "a goodly apple rotten at the heart" (*Venice,* I. iii. 100). Antonio says,

Antonio: Mark you this, Bassanio,

The devil can cite Scripture for his purpose.

(*Venice,* I. iii. 96-97)

Shakespeare makes use of Marlowe's biblical language in *The Jew of Malta*. The word 'Scripture' that is uttered by Antonio in *The Merchant of Venice* is recurrently used in *The Jew of Malta* in the exchange between Barabas and 1st Knight, to imply that the knights of Malta exploit religion to achieve their aims, and to justify usurping Barabas's money. Barabas says, "What bring you Scripture to confirm your wrongs?" (*Malta,* I. i. 113). Barabas expresses his dissatisfaction of the Christians' hypocrisy. Barabas says,

Barabas: Who hateth me but for my happiness?
Or who is honoured now but for his wealth?
Rather had I a Jew be hated thus,
Than pitied in a Christian poverty:
For I can see no fruits in all their faith,
But malice, falsehood, and excessive pride,
Which methinks fits not their profession.

(Ibid., 1. ii. 114-120)

In these lines Barabas establishes the idea of pragmatism, and echoes the spirit of capitalism in the early Renaissance England.

Essential values like hatred and love are measured against property and material possessions. The Jew prefers to be a hated rich man rather than to be a loved poor. He thinks that the Christians' love which is based on their religion is in fact 'malice, falsehood and pride'. Barabas insists on showing the hypocrisy of the Christians, and the difference between their faith and their lifestyle. This insistence on showing the Christian hypocrisy takes the greatest part of Barabas's efforts in the play. In contrary to Shylock whose appearance in the play is not dominant.

The reference to the trade and argosy of Barabas equates the speech about the argosy of Antonio. Barabas's talk about his trade echoes Shylock's speech about Antonio's trade. Barabas says,

Barabas: East and by South: why then I hope my ships
I sent for Egypt and the bordering isles
Are gotten up by Nilus' winding banks:
Mine argosy from Alexandria,
Loaden with spice and silks, now under sail,
Are smoothly gliding down by Candy shore
To Malta, through our Mediterranean sea.

(*Malta,* 1. i. 41-47)

Shylock uses Barabas's language in referring to Antonio's wealth and trade with envy. Shylock says,

Shylock: 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.

(*Venice,* 1. iii. 17-20)

Accordingly, Shylock refers to the geographical trade horizon of that period. Shylock's description of Antonio's spatial movement is broader than Barabbas's. Shakespeare is carrying out a process of revising and correcting the Marlovian text. Egypt in Marlowe's text became Tripolis, Indies, Mexico and England in Shakespeare's.

Barabas mourns the loss of his wealth that is usurped from him saying, "My gold, my gold, and all my wealth is gone….Wherein these Christians have oppressed me" (*Malta,* 1. ii. 263-276). The repetition of the words 'my gold, my gold and all my wealth is gone' is similar to Shylock's crying over his ducats: "My daughter!—O my ducats!—O my daughter! Fled with a Christian!—O my Christian ducats!" (*Venice,* II. viii, 15-16). Barabas decides to revenge, and Shylock also decides to revenge on Antonio by executing the contract against him. All the events which take place before the trial motivate Shylock to be determined to take revenge, until we see him in court full of determination and grudge against Antonio. Barabas is equally stern in his hatred and desire for revenge; an intention that he declares after the governor confiscates his wealth. He seeks revenge to satisfy his anger.

Abigail helped her aged father to retrieve the hidden wealth in his former house "close underneath the plank / That runs along the upper chamber floor" (*Malta,* I. ii. 306-307). Abigail re-enters the house, and introduces herself to the Abbess as "The hopeless daughter of a hapless Jew" (Ibid., I. ii. 326). The words 'hopeless and hapless' are used to reflect Abigail's acute suffering and sadness for her aged father. Abigail succeeded to bring back the gold: "Then father here receive thy happiness. (*Throws down bags*)" (Ibid., II. i. 46). Barabas's happiness makes him confuse both: his love for money and his love for his daughter. Barabas cries: "Oh girl, oh gold, oh beauty, oh my bliss! (Hugs his bags)" (Ibid., II. i. 58). Shylock mourns his wealth more than his daughter. Salanio describes Shylock like a dog who screams in the streets when Jessica flees with a Christian lover, taking his wealth. Salanio utters these lines:

Salanio: I never heard a passion so confus'd,
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!
(*Venice*, II. viii. 12-16)

Through this exchange between Salanio and Salarino, the audience gets a picture of Shylock's sorrow for the loss of his money. The whole scene is dramatized offstage in the street while Shylock is absent. In filial ingratitude, Jessica elopes with Lorenzo because she feels ashamed to be Shylock's child or to belong to him. In her monologue, Jessica describes her house as hell and her father as a 'merry devil'. She distances herself from her father's manners though she steals his wealth. In this sense, Jessica inherits Shylock's greed despite her claims. Her speech arises from her ingratitude towards her father.

Jessica: Alack. What heinous sin is it in me,
To be asham'd 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.
(*Venice*, II. iii. 16-21)

Abigail differs from Jessica because Abigail shows gratitude to her father unlike Jessica who elopes with her Christian lover against her father's will. Abigail decides to defend her father in the Senate-House. Abigail seems to be acquainted with the fact that the Jews were an

oppressed minority in Malta. That is why she decides to go to the Senate and tear her hair in front of its members.

Abigail: Not for myself, but aged Barabas: Father, for thee lamenteth
Abigail: But

I will learn to leave these fruitless tears, and urged thereto with my afflictions, With fierce exclaims run to the Senate-House, And in the Senate reprehend them all, And rent their hearts with tearing of my hair,
till they reduce the wrongs done to my father.

(*Malta*, 1. ii. 232-239)

Jessica's elopement with a Christian lover drives Shylock to near madness. In court, Shylock refers to Barabbas when he remembers his daughter. In an aside, Shylock utters words that denote his anger.

Shylock: [*aside*] These be the Christian husbands!

I have a daughter;
'Would any of the stock of Barabbas
Had been her husband, rather than a Christian'!

(*Venice*, IV. i. 295-298)

Shakespeare subjugated Barabbas in portraying Shylock's character. Shylock wished if his daughter were married to one of the descendants of Barabbas the murderer, better than to a Christian. Marlowe selects biblical names for his heroes. The story of Barabbas in the Bible reflects the deep-rooted conflict between the Jews and the Christians: "All Jews, on this view, bore responsibility for the original rejection of Christ's message, and for the Crucifixion" (Gross 26). The Jews rejected Christ and betrayed him out of pride and arrogance. Abigail is also a biblical character who is described as lovely, smart, wise and brave woman. According to the Bible: "Nabal's wife Abigail was beautiful and intelligent, but he was a mean bad tempered man" (1 Samuel 25: 3, 294). Marlowe refers to the biblical story of Cain when Barabas hears about Abigail's conversion to Christianity. Barabas

poisons Abigail and connects her to Cain's curse by Adam for killing his brother. Barabas says,

Barabas: O unhappy day,
False, credulous, inconstant Abigail!
But let 'em go: and Ithamore, from hence
Ne'er shall she live to inherit aught of mine,
Be blest of me, nor come within my gates,
But perish underneath my bitter curse,
Like Cain by Adam, for his brother's death.

(*Malta*, II. iii. 26-33)

Barabas substitutes his daughter with a Turkish servant Ithamore to be his heir instead of his daughter Abigail. Barabas says,

Barabas: O trusty Ithamore, no servant, but my friend:
I here adopt thee for mine only heir,

(Ibid., III. v. 42-43)

Shakespeare makes use of Marlowe and selects biblical names for his characters in *The Merchant of Venice*. Gross argues that the distinguished mark of *The Merchant of Venice* is the name of the Jew Shylock. Gross suggests that the original name of Shylock is taken from a biblical name "Shelah, an ancestor of Abraham (Genesis 10. 24), and 'shallach' the Hebrew word for a cormorant, and 'Shullock'" (63). In this sense, Shylock's name denotes his greed. Shakespeare refers to another biblical figure, Daniel. In court, Shylock praises Portia for her justice and compares her to the biblical figure Danial in his wisdom and righteousness when she says, "There is no power in Venice can alter a decree established" (*Venice*, IV. i. 217-218). Spurr and Cameron comment, "Satisfied that he will gain his pound of flesh, Shylock cries out, 'A Daniel come to judgment! Yea, a Daniel!-'" (Ibid., IV. i. 222) (180). After the trial, Gratiano uses Shylock's speech against him to mock him.

Hate Speech: Barabas and Shylock

Marlowe and Shakespeare were different in portraying hatred through the characters of Barabas and Shylock. Barabas's hatred of the Christians is innate; the reader feels it essential in him. This reduces Barabas to the degree of wild beasts, and does not align him with human beings. On the contrary, Shylock's hatred is based on social as well as on financial reasons the reader understands them. Shakespeare does not create Shylock to be all hatred and detestation, but to be a human character with whom the reader sympathizes. Shylock does not personify only himself; but he personifies his society in which the blame does not fall on usurers only, but falls on the borrowers too. In *Characters of Shakespeare's plays* (1817), William Hazlitt describes Shylock as "A Good Hater; 'a man no less sinned against than sinning' " (209). Hazlitt argues that Shylock's hatred is justified because he is exposed to insult and humiliation. He is a victim of the others' hatred. Hazlitt adds that "Shylock's mistreatment is the reason for his bitterness and revenge rather than an innate evil" (68). Antonio's prejudice is the reason behind Shylock's desire to revenge himself. Shylock was tortured by the social enmity against him and his cult. He has a deep desire to revenge himself from Antonio. Shylock is a good hater as William Hazlitt describes him, but Barabas is not that 'good hater', but hater whose hatred is sometimes unjustified, and exceeding the degree of human hatred. Barabas teaches his servant Ithamore how to be cruel with the Christians. Barabas says,

Barabas: And I will teach thee that shall stick by thee:
First be thou void of these affections,
Compassion, love, vain hope, and heartless fear,
Be moved at nothing, see thou pity none,
But to thyself smile when the Christians moan.

(*Malta*, II. iii. 171-175)

Shakespeare was influenced by Marlowe in his use of the dramatic asides which give the character the chance to speak to himself.

Shylock expresses his enmity to Antonio in an aside. When Antonio enters, Shylock says,

Shylock: [*aside*] How like a fawning publican he

looks!

I hate him for he is a Christian:

(*Venice*, 1. iii. 39-41)

Shylock's hatred for Antonio is not for just insulting; but rather for Antonio's economic transactions that threaten his very existence as well as the existence of the Jewish nation. This quotation reflects the real crisis between the Jews and Christians in the early Renaissance. Shylock says,

Shylock: You call me misbeliever, cut-throat dog,

And spit upon my Jewish gabardine,

And all for use of that which is mine own.

(Ibid., 1. iii. 110-112)

Antonio degrades Shylock and looks down on him. This behavior reflects the conflict between the Jews as a minority living in a European society composed of Christian majority. Shylock's words, here, highlights the tense relationship between the two parties. In *Lectures on Shakespeare*, Henry Norman Hudson argues:

> And such is Shylock; a type of national sufferings, of national sympathies and national antipathies. Himself an object of bitter insult and scorn to those about him; surrounded by enemies whom he is at once too proud to conciliate, and too weak to oppose; he can have no life among them but money; no hold on them but interest; no feelings towards them but hate; no indemnity out of them but revenge (370).

Hudson wants to emphasize the fact that the relation between Shylock and Antonio was based on mutual hatred, and that this hatred was not only due to exchanging money and material benefits, but also to

differences in religion, nature, and social status. It can be said that part of this hatred is inherited; the hatred of a minority to a majority and vice versa; a minority which struggles to protect themselves against the oppression of the majority. This long history of enmity between the two characters resulted in attempts of revenge rather than reconciliation.

Ithamore and Launcelot hate their masters. Ithamore exaggerates to describe the long spoon that he brings for eating to keep away from Barabas due to his devilish nature. Ithamore says, "he that eats with the devil had need of a long spoon" (*Malta*, III. iv. 58-59). Launcelot decides to leave Shylock's service, and to serve Bassanio instead because of his miserliness. Launcelot tells his father, old Gobbo, "I have set up my rest to run away, so I will not rest till I have run some ground. My master's a very Jew: give him a present! Give him a halter: I am famish'd in his service**:** you may tell every finger I have with my ribs" (*Venice*, II. i. 99-104).

Barabas's and Shylock's Attitude Towards Revenge

Revenge is a main theme in the two plays. Barabas's violence is directed towards double enemies: the Christians and the Turks, whereas Shylock directs his revenge only towards Antonio as indicated by Bloom: "The demoniac Barabas, madly exulting in his wickedness, has nothing in common with the bitter Shylock, whose revenge focuses so narrowly upon Antonio" (*The Invention of the Human*, 182). Barabas is presented as an inhuman character who dares to murder, betray, deceive, and poison. He deceived his allies and his enemies, and sided with the strangers (the Turks) against the Maltese. Later, he conspired against Malta and the Turks. His innate evil drives him to commit vicious crimes as he confesses to Ithamore:

Barabas: As for myself, I walk abroad a-nights,
And kill sick people groaning under walls:
Sometimes I go about and poison wells;
(*Malta*, II. iii. 178-180)

Barabas, contrary to Shylock, is a developed character; he changes from a mere merchant to a governor. From the beginning, Barabas is self-confident, arrogant, and proud of his wealth He makes use of the political conditions of Malta and rises to power through cunning and deceptive means. Barabas becomes the governor of Malta, and then falls quickly and meets a horrible end. This striking downfall from power and wealth to degradation and humiliation results from flaws in his personality like hubris and greed. Besides, his materialistic ambition leads to his uttermost ruin. However, Barabas is not an Aristotelian tragic hero because he is not an ideal hero and he does not arouse emotions of pity and fear. In addition, he does not live safe away from his enemies who put him into a cauldron of boiling oil that takes time to heat up to increase his suffering. Before his death, Barabas confesses his crimes to the governor Ferneze. His final words indicate his satisfaction as he revenged himself from the governor and the Turks.

Barabas: I would have brought confusion on you all,
Damned Christians, dogs, and Turkish infidels;
(Ibid., V. v. 87-88)

Barabas's cruel nature makes him close to Shylock when he sharpens his knife in court to cut a pound of Antonio's flesh. Shylock's personal hatred and desire to revenge leads to this calamity. He refuses to show mercy in court or to accept a repayment. Shylock says,

Shylock: …By my soul I swear,
There is no power in the tongue of man
To alter me. I stay here on my bond.
(*Venice*, IV. i. 239-241)

Shylock is depicted as heartless. The Duke compares him with the Tartars in their cruelty. Shylock's envy of Antonio's trade that threatens

his position as a usurer is one of the reasons of his desire to revenge. The Duke, in turn, asks Shylock to have mercy on Antonio who lost his trade and faced bankruptcy. It is not reasonable that the Jew cuts a bond of flesh from his bosom according to the contract. The Duke reminds Shylock of a more important contract signed among human beings; that they should have mercy to prevail their lives and transactions. According to the Duke, human mercy is a sing of civil life which distinguishes the people of Venice from the Tartars and Turks who were callous and hard hearted.

Abigail expresses her dissatisfaction with her father's cruelty who conceives an inhumane plan that lead Lodowick and her lover Mathias to slay each other, and finally, he poisons her. Abigail joined the nunnery and converted into Christianity for redemption. Shylock's daughter also married a Christian lover and converted into Christianity. In her soliloquy, Abigail says,

Abigail: Hard-hearted father, unkind Barabas,
Was this the pursuit of thy policy?
To make me show them favour severally,
That by my favour they should both be slain?
(*Malta*, III. iii. 36-39)

Abigail discovers that 'there is no love on earth', especially when her cruel father destroys her heart, and murders her lover. Before she dies, Abigail confesses her sins to friar Barnardine. Bloom comments: "Abigail reveals her secrets not to punish her father, but only to earnestly confess her own sins" (*Bloom's Marlowe*, 56). Abigail says,

Abigail: To work my peace, this I confess to thee;
…
And witness that I die a Christian. [dies]

Friar: Ay, and a virgin too, that grieves me most:
(*Malta*, III. vi. 31-41)

The Friar's comment that Abigail dies a Christian and virgin alludes to Virgin Mary who said to the Angel: "I am a virgin" (Luke 1: 34, 74). Similar to Abigail, *Portia compares herself to* Diana, the goddess of virginity saying, "If I live to be as old as Sibylla, I will die as Chaste as Diana, unless I obtained by the manner of my father's will" (*Venice*, I. ii. 105-107). *Portia* complains to her maid Nerissa that she will remain as virgin as Diana even if she lives to be as old as Sibylla* unless she follows her father's will and marries accordingly. *Portia complains of her father's unkindness because her* will to marry is confined by the legal will of her father. Shakespeare, here, puns by repeating the word 'will' to give two different meanings. Due to this will, Portia should marry the one who chooses the right casket from three: gold, silver or lead. Portia comments: "—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?" (Ibid., I. iii, 22-26). Marlowe as well uses pun and irony when repeating the word 'foiled' to describe Abigail.

Abigail and Jessica are described as beautiful women with white skin that distance them from the Jews and make them look different from their fathers. Barabas compares Abigail's beauty to a diamond: "Lord Lodowick, it sparkles bright and fair" (*Malta*, II. iii. 59). Shakespeare adopts Marlowe's word "fair" when he describes Jessica's beauty, which indicates her whiteness. From her handwriting, Lorenzo recalls her white hand that is more beautiful than the white paper. So the white paper is a symbolic significance of Jessica's white hand. In *Women in Shakespeare: A Dictionary*, Alison Findlay writes: "Lorenzo puns on the different meanings of hand as writing style and body part to praise Jessica". Lorenzo utters these lines: "I know the hand: in faith 'tis a fair hand; and whiter than the paper it writ on, Is the fair hand that writ" (*Venice*, II. iv.

* According to Greek mythology, Sibyl is a prophetess who is granted a long life, and Dianna is a goddess and an emblem of chastity.

12-14). According to this quotation, Shakespeare humanizes his characters. They are not presented as caricature figures like Marlowe's, but rather as human beings.

Barabas conceives a plan to murder Barnardine who knows his secrets. Barabas ignites a fight between him and Jacomo to hide his crime. Marlowe exaggerates when Barbaras hit the clergyman and he quickly fell dead. With the aid of Ithamore, his counterpart in evil, Barabas puts Barnardine's corpse leaning on a stick asleep outside the house as if he is still alive to deceive Jacomo. Jacomo says,

Jacomo: Barnardine;

Wilt thou not speak? Thou think'st I see thee not;
Away, I'd wish thee, and let me go by:
No, wilt thou not? Nay then I'll force my way;
And see, a staff stands ready for the purpose:
As thou lik'st that, stop me another time.

Strike him, he falls. Enter Barabas [and Ithamore]

(*Malta*, IV. i. 167-173)

In his introduction to *The Jew of Malta*, M. Enani argues that "the story of Friar Barnardine's murder and his dead body that was leaning on a stick asleep outside the door alludes to the story of prophet Solomon in Surat *Sheba*" (*My translation*, 23). In Surat *Sheba*, we read: "Then, when We decreed Solomon's death, nothing showed the jinn he was dead, but a creature of the earth eating at his stick: when he fell down they realized–if they had known what was hidden they would not have continued their demeaning labour" (*The Quran*, 34:14, 273). Barabas and Ithamore waited for Jacomo to arrive and bear the responsibility of Barnardine's murder. This scene relates life to theatre as it happened offstage. The efforts of Barabas and Ithamore to hide and witness the whole struggle, make the scene to appear as if it were in reality.

Barabas disguises himself as a French musician at the end of the play to deceive his servant Ithamore. He schemes to kill him and the prostitute who is sitting with him. After committing many crimes, Barabas is boiled to death. In *The Sacred Wood,* Eliot comments that "the last words of Barabas complete this prodigious caricature" (84). Before Barabas dies, he utters words that completed his caricature depiction.

Barabas**:** Die life, fly soul, tongue curse thy fill and die.

(*Malta,* V. v. 91)

The governor does not even show mercy to Barabas at the end; he increases his suffering as he boils him slowly to death in the same oil cauldron that Barabas was preparing for Calymath. The governor uses biblical words to comment on Barabas's suffering and end. He succeeds to restore his control over Malta and to take Calymath captive. Then, he gives orders to the knights to march slowly offstage.

Governor: So march away, and let due praise be given

Neither to fate nor fortune, but to heaven.

(Ibid., V. v. 127-128)

The open end of *The Jew of Malta* leaves room for the audience to anticipate incidents to happen, especially when the governor imprisons Calymath and orders his Knights to move slowly offstage. Roger Sales remarks: "Some Elizabethan spectators may well have marched away from the theatre accepting such a resolution. Almost infinite room is nevertheless provided for spectators to reject this official script. There is a problem about the way in which Ferneze so openly controls the onstage spectators" (*Christopher Marlowe,* 90). However, the incidents of *The Merchant of Venice* are woven together leading to an inevitable end. Shakespeare gives the audience a sense of satisfaction because the play achieved "poetical justice that rewards the good and punishes the wicked at the end of the play" (Butchee, 224-225). The audience are pleased with the resolution that leads to the defeat of the villain Shylock who misuses the word justice because his insistence to execute law contradicts his real intention to publicly kill a man. His

personal hatred of Antonio is the cause behind his keen desire to take Antonio's life than accept the repayment.

Unlike Marlowe, Shakespeare portrays the Christians as more sympathetic than the Jews. The Christians are represented as merciful, self-denying. In court, Portia begins with a long speech praising the virtue of mercy saying,

Portia: The quality of mercy is not strain'd,

It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven

Upon the place please beneath: it is twice blessed;

It blesseth him that gives and him that takes.

(*Venice*, IV. i. 184-187)

According to this quotation, Portia addresses the human side in Shylock. She bases her defense on mercy using Biblical words that *"Happy are those who are merciful to others."* (Matthew 5:7, 7). Portia attempts to persuade Shylock that our mercy to each other comes from God's mercy to us. John Dover Wilson comments, "all Portia's pleas addressed to Shylock are Christian pleas, with which a Christian audience might be expected to sympathize, certainly not the Hebrew she addresses" (xvii). Shylock insists on carrying out the bond. He sharpens his knife in court, and insists on taking a pound of Antonio's flesh. Portia uses his adherence to law against him. Portia says,

Portia: Have by some surgeon, Shylock, on your charge, to stop his wounds, lest

he do bleed to death.

(Ibid., IV. i. 256-258)

Portia uses two methods of fighting: one is Law and the other is her wit. Shylock finds himself in a plight especially when Portia insists that he must commit himself with what is in the contract but if he sheds a drop of Christian blood, he will lose his own life. Portia says,

Portia: This bond doth give thee here no jot of blood;

The words expressly are , a pound of flesh;

(Ibid., IV. i. 306-307)

Portia orders that half of Shylock's money should be given to the state and the other half to his daughter, Jessica, upon Shylock's death. At the end of the trial scene, Shylock pretends to be ill. Shylock says,

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.

(Ibid., IV. i. 394-395)

In his introduction to the translation of *The Merchant of Venice*, M. Enani writes: "In addition to Shylock, there are other characters in the play whose behavior contradicts with the way they describe themselves. Portia pretends to be an unschooled and inexperienced lady. However, her cruelty predominates this pretense because she puts her husband in a difficult situation especially when she blames him for losing her marriage ring after the trial scene" (*My translation*, 32). In an exchange between Portia and Bassanio, Portia says,

Portia: But the full sum of me

Is sum of nothing; which to term in gross,

Is an unlesson'd girl, unschool'd, unpractis'd;

(*Venice*, III. ii. 157-159)

Portia is a Machiavellian heroine who knows well how to color her nature because she disguises as a male law clerk to defend Antonio. In court, Portia proves to be highly educated, shrewd, and knowledgeable. In *The Prince,* Machiavelli writes*:* "The one who has known best how to use the fox has come out best. But it is necessary to know well how color this nature, and to be a great pretender and dissembler; and men are so simple and so obedient to present necessities that he who deceives will always find someone who will let himself be deceived" (70). The contradiction in Bassanio's character is also evident.

He really loves Portia, though, he is an outright materialist because he confesses that he wants Portia for her money "in Belmont, is a lady richly left" (*Venice*, I. i. 161). Bassano wastes his wealth in ostentation, and keeps getting into debt to marry Portia. His character is completely different from the lovers in Shakespeare's dramas.

Accordingly, Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* represents its author's view that has aspects of creativity and sameness from Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta*. Shakespeare is influenced by Marlowe but has exerted efforts to present something new to confirm his individuality and to declare his existence.

Conclusion

This paper sheds light on the influence of Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta* on Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*. The researcher tries to apply Harold Bloom's theory of influence as conferred in his two books entitled *The Anxiety of Influence* and *A Map of Misreading*. Shakespeare attempted to introduce a different Jew character from Marlowe's, though he found himself attracted to the masterpiece of his precursor. The study focuses on how Barabas and Shylock are represented in both plays, and how they assimilate in certain qualities but differ in others. The researcher attempts to investigate the dissimilarities in the two plays by investigating the similarities. For example, themes of greed, revenge and hatred are present in the two plays, while there are differences in the treatment of these themes. Greed, revenge and hatred are essential traits in the characters of Barabas and Shylock. However, Shylock is not a copy of Barabas.

The researcher attempts to show that Shylock is a more humanistic character than Barabas, more comprehensive in thinking, behaving and expressing the essential nature of man. Shakespeare's language, though influenced by Marlowe, has its own grandeur and sublimity. Shakespeare was influenced by Marlowe in using the Biblical language in *The Merchant of Venice*. The study reaches the conclusion

that Shakespeare's creative vision of Shylock was sparked by Marlowe's Barabas whose dramatic influence is paramount. Noteworthy, there is a vivid difference between the two Jews that reflects Shakespeare's individuality and uniqueness.

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