Reflection on Ingroup and outgroup on Shakespeare’s Works

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Reflection on Ingroup and outgroup on Shakespeare’s Works

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Abstract: - This article examines concept of the xenophobia in Elizabeth I and its reflection on Othello, the Tempest, Titus Andronicus, Antony and Cleopatra and define its social roots by focus on history and sociological theory. By analysing the events in these dramas, it is made clear that business and religion of Judaism are the most sensible element ingroup conflicts, making xenophobia to manifest in drama characters. Likewise, findings indicate that characters in those mentioned dramas are capable to classify by using the definitions of ‘insider and outsider group’ and theory of ‘integrated threat’. Shakespeare’s target in reflecting this phenomenon is to critic the racism and dogmatic behaviours. As a matter of fact, he desired equality and justice himself in Elizabethan society.

Key-Words: xenophobia, ingroup, insider-outsider group, Othello, integrated threat.

1 Introduction
WILLIAM Shakespeare faced different events including the outset of England commercial relationship with Moslem countries, discovery of new lands in the America and immigration of different nations along with political events [1]. Strangers of different nations, entering London in Shakespeare’s time from many countries, experienced various reactions from the people and Elizabeth, reflected in Shakespeare dramas [2]. Such reactions resulted from negative presupposition toward different nations, historical background or lost economic and social opportunities and protests to foreign immigrants, were all comprehended by the English writer [3]. Creation of characters such as Caliban (see Figure 1), Othello (see Figure 2), Shylock (see Figure 3), Antony and Cleopatra*1(see Figure 4) reflected the sense of fear amongst the British towards strangers. However the term Xenophobia was not as important in Renascence Theater of England as what it is today, it was referred to in Shakespeare dramas and even referred to in 17th century in England [5].

2 Historical Events
Xenophobia is based on ethnic, national, religious and ethnocentric prejudice and can be defined as preventive behaviours, fanaticism, removing and calumniation of others and prejudices toward the community or stranger’s national identity [10]. Xenophobia and racism, despite their interference, are considered as two different phenomena. Racism is usually classified on the basis of differences in physical characteristics such as skin colour, facial expression. However, xenophobia is based on behaviours in which “The other” is an individual different with the community, came from another country. Therefore, some dramas by Shakespeare such as Othello, the Tempest, Titus Andronicus and Antony and Cleopatra reflect xenophobia and racism toward stranger nations. The thing in common by all characters in these mentioned dramas is being of different nation with the European.

3 Ingroup and outgroup
Ingroup is a group of people having common interests and activities, do not let members of other
groups to enter theirs and protect their security. Outgroup is a group of people separated from their own group and usually receive rage and dislike a group of people deleted from their group or do not belong to it, especially when they are humiliated for their differences. This theory extended by Tajfel and Turner suggests that ‘people categorize themselves into groups which Tajfel and Turner called ‘ingroups’, and categorize everyone else into other groups, called ‘outgroups’. This categorization helps to promote a sense of identity but this leads to unfavourable comparisons between the in-group and the out-group and the enforcement of boundaries between the groups which can result in conflict in various guises [11][12].

4 Integrated Threat Theory
‘Integrated Threat’ theory was first come up with Walter G. Stephan & Cookie White Stephan in 2000. The theory emphasizes on conditions and situations ending on threat and fear in group behaviour and formation of prejudice. Such threats are there at any time, challenging ingroup behaviour and beliefs, considering outgroup as a danger for group security. Members of ingroup can project and indicate evil aspects of outgroup in order to improve their image. According to the theory, threats result in xenophobia are as follows: Realistic threats, Symbolic threats, In-group anxiety, and Negative stereotypes [13].

5 Roots of xenophobia in Shakespeare period
With Spain’s defeat from England in 1588 and Elizabeth I power in Europe, tendency to discover new lands in the America, relationships with Ottoman Empire and Arab countries, some type of nationalism started to form amongst British settlers [14]. For Elizabeth I power and authority, immigration of different nations such as Jews, Moslems and even gypsies increased to Britain. This brought with it the anxiety from being stricken from strangers and losing newly obtained power. Based on the events recorded about bloody struggles and abuse of immigrants which resulted from incorrect prejudice and economic competition between native settlers of England and strangers roots of xenophobia is identifiable in Shakespeare period [15]. Deportation of Jews and Moslems form Spain and continued abuse during inquisition in the country which had been intensified with recapturing Granada from Moslems and initiation of Reconquista, were endeavors toward harmonization of different nations with the majority Christian community and inception of racism. The idea was prevalent in most European countries like Spain and Portugal but in England, for the power of Protestants and their inclination to develop Britain sovereignty, Jews and Moslem immigrants and settlers of North Africa experienced better treatment. British public opinion about different nations formed by reading different itinerary and books and historical-religious background. However, such small immigrant groups were living in isolation and considered as the Other-Alien [16]. Jews being deported from European countries, immigrated to Africa and especially Asia in a manner that sometimes more than 250 thousand Jews were living in Ottoman Empire, where they not only were successful merchant, but could occupy governmental authority. They were non-compliant competitors for English merchants who were trying to stabilize their position in the region. Many English merchants believed that having Christianize such merchants (Baptism of Shylock in the 4th scene, stage 1, Merchant of Venice) their objectives are fulfilled. Many Jews of Venice were in fact the merchants of Ottoman Empire. place to reflect all common events in the community and the governing sensation [17]. As referred earlier, immigration to England brought with it the xenophobia feedback and theatre as a media was reflecting this event. Factors of xenophobia are seen in some dramas of Shakespeare, including Antony and Cleopatra, Titus Andronicus, Othello and the Tempest. In order to implement aforementioned dramas, there are strangers of different religious minority or skin colour, consider as threats against social or political situation or danger for survival of majority group (in-group). Fear from immigrants and stranger rulers’ power (out-group) are the feedback for true events in Shakespeare period. In Antony and Cleopatra, Roman power is endangered for the sorcery of Egypt Queen, Cleopatra. The Eastern (Egypt) power is overborne by Western power (Rome). This threat could be negated by Cleopatra suicide only as symbol of sexuality and political deception. In Titus Andronicus, Aron character, a black Arab, and Tamora the Queen of Goths, enemies of Rome are displayed as subversive and revengeful persons. Aron feels no regret of his evil plot against Titus and his family and is displayed as a savage person more inferior than Roman citizens and the threat is negated finally by killing him.
As common in Shakespeare period, marriage of a black and a white was despicable. It is reflected in Othello. So, Othello and Desdemona’s marriage was considered abnormal and said to be based on carnality. Therefore, the marriage was a threat against social values of the community and starting point for xenophobia in characters such as Iago and Barbantio.

5-1 Figures

Figure 1. Fyodor Paramonov as Caliban in The Tempest, Maly Theatre (Moscow), 1905 [6]

Figure 2. Suzanne Cloutier as Desdemona in Orson Welles’ 1952 film, Othello [7]

Figure 3. The Death of Cleopatra by Reginald Arthur (1892) [9]

6 Conclusion

Based on the definitions and analysis above regarding xenophobia, we may conclude that reflection of this phenomenon is subjected under the influence of different alternatives including Judaism, economy, and power of stranger religious minorities. From the three dramas (Othello, Antony and Cleopatra, Titus Andronicus) of Shakespeare referred to earlier, partly represent all elements of prejudice and xenophobia upon integrated threat theory.

Finally, it needs to note that William Shakespeare, reflecting this defensive approach toward strangers tried to critic the racism behaviour in his society while studying the characters like the Jewish Shylock we easily find that they are not prototypical characters and Shakespeare demands for equality and justice in Elizabethan community.

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