



Email: editorijless@gmail.com

Volume: 4, Issue 4, 2017 (Oct-Dec)

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF LAW, EDUCATION, SOCIAL AND SPORTS STUDIES (IJLESS)

<http://www.ijless.kypublications.com/>

ISSN:2455-0418 (Print), 2394-9724 (online)

2013©KY PUBLICATIONS, INDIA

www.kypublications.com

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DESDEMONA AND THE CRITICS: NEW APPROACH

SADDIK GOHAR

Professor of English Literature, Translation and Criticism
UAE University



ABSTRACT

In their studies of the feminist issues in Shakespeare's *Othello*, critics have adopted major approaches- psychoanalytical, socio-historical and moralistic- in their analysis of the character of Desdemona. Scrutinizing the criticism of *Othello* the paper aims to uncover the elements underpinning the three critical perspectives mentioned above in order to come to terms with the reality of Desdemona's character and her significance in the tragedy of *Othello*.

The advocates of the psychoanalytic approach focus on the Oedipal complex in Desdemona's character which unconsciously makes her a partner in her own death. Stephen Reid, in his article "Desdemona's Guilt", argues that Desdemona elopes with Othello in order to take revenge on her father who prefers her mother to her. As a child, Desdemona's love for her father was frustrated because he ignored her and preferred her mother. Reid argues that Desdemona's elopement with Othello in the beginning of the play implies her subconscious desire to repay the infidelity that she had so long ago felt when her father ignored her love and preferred her mother. Desdemona's famous speech to her angry father in the senate in Venice may be taken as an evidence of Reid's argument:

My noble father,
I do perceive here a divided duty.
To you I am bound for life and education,
My life and education both do teach me,
How to respect you,
You are lord of my duty,
I am hitherto your daughter,
But here's my husband,
And so much duty as my mother showed,
To you, preferring you before her father,
So much I challenge, that I may profess,
Due to the Moor, my lord. (Act I, scene iii, 27).

In her speech, Desdemona carefully avoids any direct charges against her father; however, there are obvious implications of the Oedipal complex, particularly in the last three lines of her speech. Desdemona is aware that she is justified in eloping and marrying Othello, despite her father's disapproval. As the play proceeds, the subconscious guilt of these actions makes her behave as if she were guilty of infidelity which intensifies Othello's jealousy and inevitably leads to her tragic downfall.

A similar approach is adopted by Robert Dicks in "Desdemona: An innocent victim?", in which he interprets Desdemona's character from a psychoanalytic perspective. Dicks' interpretation

of Desdemona is based on the Oedipal complex in her character which actively contributes to the events which lead to her own tragic death. Dickes argues that the Oedipal complex in relation to Desdemona is clear from the beginning of the play. For example, in the first act of the play Iago and Roderigo go to awaken Brabantio, Desdemona's father, in order to tell him that his daughter has eloped with the devil (Othello), Iago, consequently addresses Brabantio saying:

Zounds, sir y, are robbed for shame
put on your gown.
Your heart is burst, you have lost half your soul.
Even now, now, very now, an old black ram.
Is tupping your white ewe.
Arise, arise, awake the snorting citizens with the bell.
Or else the devil will make a grandsire of you.
Arise I say (Act I, scene i,5)

Approaching Iago's utterances from a psychoanalytic perspective, Dickes argues that the word "devil" which is mentioned above and which is associated with Othello is a symbol of the father. Thus, the utterance of Iago has symbolic references to the Oedipal complex. Dickes also states that Shakespeare uses the horse in *Othello* to signify the Moor. The horse, in this sense and according to Dickes is also "an unconscious representative of the father" (280). Thus, in two different ways, Othello is symbolically represented as the father. Dickes points out that Brabantio, the real father, responds to the accusations of Iago with an immediate acceptance of their truth because Iago's allegation is an unconscious symbol to "an incestuous object choice" (281).

Dickes' conclusion underlines Brabantio's own unconscious wishes to sleep with Desdemona, when he discovers that his daughter has eloped with the Moor, Brabantio becomes angry and his response comes in Act one, scene one, as follows:

Strike on the tinded, ho.
Give me a taper. call up all people.
This accident is not unlike my dream.
Belief of it oppresses me already.
Light, I say, light. (9)

Dickes argues that the Moor, a symbolic representative of Brabantio, does what Brabantio dreams of doing (sleeping with Desdemona); therefore, Brabantio is angry. Dickes argues that the introduction of dreams, in Brabantio's speech, as a means of psychological verification, emphasizes the hidden factors referring to the Oedipus complex "which so powerful motivates Desdemona's behavior, both to seek Othello as an object choice and to seek atonement in death" (281).

The notion of Desdemona's Oedipal complex seems logical because she prefers Othello, the Moor, to the gentlemen of her aristocratic society in Venice. Desdemona prefers Othello despite the differences in age, race and social position. In spite of her beauty, Desdemona was the one who started courtship; consequently, she urged Othello to elope with her, within the Freudian perspective, it seems that Desdemona's Oedipus complex, her elopement and marriage which are against her father's will create a subconscious feeling of guilt. This guilt feeling unconsciously makes Desdemona accept her tragic fate with little struggle and with indifference.

After marrying Othello, Desdemona begins to feel guilty because she has unconsciously betrayed her father. Therefore, she will atone for this incestuous choice by behaving in such a way as to make Othello even more certain of his jealousy which will bring about her tragic fate. Equally, the same feeling of guilt creates in Desdemona a death desire which makes her behave passively, in spite of being aware of the impending dangers which threaten her life. For example, she keeps urging Othello to reinstate Cassio who was dismissed from his job after the Cyprus mutiny, despite knowing that Othello is jealous. She continues on her destructive course in pleading Cassio's jealousy which she deliberately denies. When Othello asks her about the handkerchief, she ignores his question and

keeps speaking about Cassio's problem. Desdemona also disregards Othello's obvious anger over the missing handkerchief, and thus worsens the situation and contributes to the events which set the stage for the final tragic downfall. When Lodovico, the emissary from Venice, comes to Cyprus ordering Othello to leave the island and appointing Cassio in his place, she ignores the whole issue of Othello's recalling and starts discussing Cassio's cause with Lodovico. Consequently, Othello becomes angry and strikes her on the face. Moreover, when Othello orders her to go to bed in Act Four, scene three, she feels that she is going to die and she begins to sing the "Willow song" which creates an atmosphere of sadness and gloominess:

The poor soul sat singing by a sycamore tree.
Sing all a green willow;
Her hand in her bosom, her head on her knee,
Sing willow, willow, willow.
The fresh streams ran by her and murmured her moans; Sing willow, willow willow;
Her salt tears fell from her, and soft'ned the stones,
Sing willow, willow, willow (155)

Othello's order to Desdemona to go to bed seems harmless, but she understands his evil intentions very well; nevertheless, she displays no sense of fear of the coming tragedy. Instead, she goes on singing: "Let nobody blame him, his scorn I approve". The "Willow song" and particularly the above-mentioned lines emphasize Desdemona's expectation of death; however, she makes no effort to avoid it. She even indicates her approval of death, she also sends Emilia away and actually falls asleep. Desdemona awakens only upon Othello's entrance and the final tragedy is played to its conclusion. In her death agonies, Desdemona tells Emilia that Othello does not kill her, but she commits suicide. Desdemona's declaration aims to protect Othello; but, it shows that Desdemona has contributed to her own death.

In his psychoanalytic interpretation of Desdemona's behavior, Dickes argues that Desdemona is a moral masochist who is unaware of unconscious guilt feelings. Desdemona's feeling of guilt, according to Dickes, springs from choosing as a love object a man representative of her father. According to Dickes, the need for punishment due to guilt in Desdemona's case can only be achieved through self-destructive behavior. Thus, Desdemona expends no effort to escape her inevitable murder; instead, she develops a submissive feeling and a defenseless attitude which make her ready to die. In this connection, Dickes concludes that Desdemona's subconscious crime of incest is "monstrous enough for the superego to demand death as the justly deserved punishment" (295).

It is obvious that the evidences I brought from the play, as well as Dickes' argument, demonstrate that Desdemona is not an innocent victim of Othello's jealousy. On the contrary, she is an overt contributor to her own death, both by word and act. But Dickes analysis emphasizes that Desdemona's Oedipal complex is the result of the marked metamorphosis in her behavior which occurs after her marriage. In this sense, Dickes' argument does not move us against Desdemona in spite of our awareness that she is responsible for the play's tragedy. Instead, we sympathize with Desdemona, because we know that she is motivated by unconscious forces operating outside her awareness. At the same time, we feel that Desdemona herself is a victim of these unseen forces which bring about her tragedy.

Socio-historical critics have analyzed Desdemona's character within the framework of Elizabethan customs and attitudes toward women. Critic G. Bonnard is perhaps one of the earliest modern critics who approached the play from a socio-historical perspective by focusing on Desdemona's culpability in eloping with Othello and its consequent results on her father and society. In an article entitled "Are Othello and Desdemona Innocent or Guilty?". Bonnard argues that the Elizabethan customs did not allow a girl, particularly among the aristocracy, to marry without her father's consent. The stability of social order depends on marriage; therefore, young people could not under any conditions marry according to their own wishes. Bonnard also states that marriage without

the consent of one's parents during the Elizabethan era was looked upon as "an offense against both divine commandment and law" (176). Bonnard comes to the conclusion that Desdemona's tragic death is just the price she has to pay because she has broken her father's heart and violates the laws of her society.

Jennalie Ann Cook, in "The Design of Desdemona: Doubt raised and resolved", agrees with Bonnard that Desdemona has violated the laws of Elizabethan society which did not allow girls under the age of twenty one to marry without the approval of their parents. Cook points out that Desdemona violates the laws of God by deceiving her father and thus she is punished by the end of the play. Moreover, Cook shows sympathy toward Brabantio who was hurt by the outrageous behavior of his daughter. She argues that modern readers and viewers cannot fully understand the scandal inherent in Desdemona's elopement. Cook adds that Brabantio's outrage, pain and incredulity over Desdemona's behavior might have been expressed by any father or guardian of Shakespeare's own time. (188)

Margaret Loftus Ranald, in her article "The indiscretions of Desdemona", also argues that Desdemona's violation of Elizabethan ideals of feminine and filial conduct gives Iago an opportunity to put the seeds of jealousy in Othello's mind and thus she paves the way for her tragic end. Ranald points out that the canon law of the Church of England in 1604, just before the emergence of *Othello*, condemned marriages without parental consent. (128) Ranald also states that the Elizabethan conventions did not encourage pre-marriage relations because they might lead to adultery. The Church of England also objected to secret marriage; therefore, Desdemona's elopement with Othello and their secret marriage were considered as "a gross revolt" against traditions. Desdemona's elopement with the Moor without her father's consent was an unnatural thing to both the world of Venice and Elizabethan audiences.

It is also obvious that Desdemona's behavior in the play violates the Elizabethan conventions about how good wives should be. For example, Desdemona allows herself to speak with Cassio without Othello's knowledge. She tries to force her husband to reinstate Cassio. She speaks with Lodovico in public about Cassio's problem in order to urge him to put pressure on Othello. Thus, Desdemona's elopement and her violation of the Elizabethan concept of wifely conduct bring about her tragic end. In this sense, Shakespeare wants his audience to know that Desdemona's fate is totally justified. It is significant that the advocates of the socio-historical approach, like most of the critics, throw the blame on Desdemona and consider her responsible for her own fate, as well as the play's tragic end.

In terms of moral criticism, critics are divided into three groups: critics who see Desdemona as a saint, critics who see her as a prostitute and critics who humanize her. The first group is represented in this paper by N.R. Hallstead. In his article, "Idolatrous Love: A new approach to *Othello*", Hallstead argues that Desdemona's carnality confuses Othello's idolatry of her, and therefore it becomes the trigger for Othello's unfounded jealousy which, in one way or another, leads to the play's tragic end (115). There are many evidences in the play which supported Hallstead's notion of Desdemona's interest in sexuality. For example, her insistence on going with Othello to Cyprus despite the dangers of war with the Turks. Desdemona's unnecessary conversation with Iago in Cyprus in the beginning of Act Two reveals her interest in sexual talk. It is significant that a great deal of such conversation revolves around erotic issues as male-female sexual relations. We also notice that Desdemona in the first night of her wedding goes out to public wearing her night clothes in pursuit of Othello who was settling the mutiny in Cyprus. We also notice Desdemona's interest in talking with Emilia about infidelity, prostitution, adultery and other sexual issues. In spite of these evidences, Hallstead's psycho-moralistic argument is not convincing because, like Othello, Hallstead approaches Desdemona as a divine saint; therefore, he condemns her when he discovers her normal sexuality. Hallstead even agrees with Iago that Desdemona is an extraordinary sexual partner who "loved the

Moor with violence." Therefore, I cannot accept Hallstead's argument, because he condemns Desdemona simply for having a normal sexuality.

Moral critics who approach Desdemona as a prostitute are represented in this paper by Neal Osborn, Malcolm Ware, Thomas Bowmax and Julian Rice. Osborn in his article "Kenneth Burke's Desdemona: A courtship of Clio?" discusses many things, among them is his view of Desdemona as a bad woman whose relation with Othello leads to their fatal end. Osborn argues that Othello's moral decline begins after her married Desdemona. Desdemona's suspicious relation with Cassio and her interest in Lodovico are the results of Othello's moral collapse which lead to the tragic conclusion of the play. In order to support his argument, Osborn quotes a famous soliloquy uttered by Othello in act three, scene three when he becomes sure that Desdemona is betraying him. Othello's soliloquy comes as follows:

O, now, for ever
Farewell the tranquil mind;
Farewell content.
Farewell the plumed troop and the big wars.
That make ambition Virtue. O, farewell.
Farewell the neighing steed, and the
shrill trump,
The spirit-stirring drum, the earpiercing fife,
The royal banner, and all quality,
Pride, pomp, and circumstances of glorious war.
Any, O you mortal engines, whose rude throats
The immortal Jove's dread clamours counterfeit,
Farewell. Othello's occupation's gone. (103)

In the light of this soliloquy, Osborn argues that Desdemona's doubtful behavior set the stage for Othello's tragedy when he lost his ambition, virtue, quality, pride, pomp, circumstance, glory and zest in his occupation after his marriage (267).

Malcolm Ware in "How Was Desdemona Murdered?", argues that Desdemona's suspicious conduct, besides a series of coincidences, overwhelm the Moor and turn him at the end of the play into a pathetic figure (178). Ware adds that Desdemona is responsible for her own death because through her doubtful relation with Cassio she drives Othello to murder her by the end of the play. Ware ignores the fact that Othello himself "is equally responsible for Desdemona's savage death" (Ramachandra 84). It is true after the fatal act of strangling her that Othello realizes his folly and stabs himself to death in remorse knowing that "like a base Indian he has thrown the pearl away", but his final utterance 'Think of me as one who loved not wisely but too well' (according to Ragini Ramachandra) marks the final betrayal of a man who has still not overcome his ego and only serves to lessen our sympathy for him" (85). Thomas Bowmax in "Desdemona's Last Moments", points out that Desdemona commits three sins, and she has to pay for them through her death. Desdemona deceived her father when she eloped with the Moor. She behaved suspiciously after her marriage and she gave Cassio false hopes of solving his problem. Bowmax concludes by saying that Desdemona is a bad woman who is responsible for her death, and Othello is just the hand of the divine power (118).

In his article "Desdemona Unpinned: Universal Guilt in *Othello*", Julian Rice starts his analysis of Desdemona's character by emphasizing her innocence. Nevertheless, in his analysis of the boudoir scene, Rice argues that Desdemona's inability to say the word "whore", which Othello has thrown at her, is not due to her ignorance of the meaning of whoredom. But, Desdemona's inability to utter the word "whore", according to Rice, suggests that she "shrinks from the potential whore which exists within all women" (218). In order to support his argument, Rice brought evidences from the boudoir scene. It is noteworthy to know that the boudoir scene takes place in Act Four, scene three after Desdemona's meeting with Lodovico. The incidents of the scene happen inside Desdemona's bed

chamber, while she is getting ready to sleep. When Desdemona was taking off her clothes, she remembered Lodovico and told Emilia that: "This Lodovico is a proper man", then she adds, "he speaks well" (155). Rice argues that Desdemona's comments about Lodovico affirm that her human impulses attract her to him and "make her potentially, if not actually, unfaithful to Othello" (222-223). Rice adds that Desdemona's behavior in the boudoir scene suggests that she is "a descendent of Eve, and, however pure, a sister of the wife of Bath and Emilia" (222). Rice goes on in his argument saying that Desdemona's innocence and saintly virtue (the denial of bodily urges) imply "a self-righteous obliviousness to sin and frailty" (221). By assuming that all women are prostitutes Rice comes to the conclusion that Desdemona's comments about Lodovico undermine her supposed innocence. The problem with Rice's approach is that it reveals an ambivalent attitude toward Desdemona. Rice sees an innocent Desdemona with one eye and with the other he sees a woman with a tendency to sin and frailty.

The dilemma of the critical perspective adopted by Ware, Bowmax and Rice is that these critics approach the play with the notion that Desdemona's loyalty to Othello is doubtful. Such an approach is not objective because it makes its advocates ready to accept Iago's obscene slanders against Desdemona. In this sense, Desdemona looks like a prostitute and Othello will also, be justified in murdering her as an unfaithful wife. Consequently, the play's entire structure of meaning will inevitably collapse. Thus, Shakespeare's play will be inverted since Desdemona is considered as a villainous wife and Iago becomes the conscience of the play.

In order to be objective we have to admit that Desdemona is really innocent of adultery because she does not commit the sin, and she does not even think of doing it. However, any other approach to Desdemona will undermine her virtues. For example, S.N. Garner commits a mistake in her article "Shakespeare's Desdemona" when she attempts to humanize Desdemona by saying that Shakespeare portrays her as a mature, sensual and even sexually playful woman. Garner's interpretation brings about possibilities of falling into sexual sins. It also recalls the myth about women's frailty adopted by Julian Rice. Moreover, Garner assumes that Desdemona is "human and therefore capable of treachery" (247). Consequently, in her analysis of the boudoir scene Garner throws blame on Desdemona because she thinks of Lodovico when she is undressing to go to bed with Othello. Garner suggests that Desdemona:

Is still trying to find a way around
the emergency of the moment... since the
man that she has loved, married, and
risked her social position for has
turned into a barbarian and a madman,
she unconsciously longs for a man like
Lodovico - a handsome white man, with
those attributes she recognizes as
civilized. In her heart, she must feel
she has made a mistake. (248 - 49)

Garner falls again into another mistake by emphasizing Desdemona's unconscious longings for Lodovico. In this sense, Desdemona becomes a prostitute who betrays her husband. The problem with this approach is that Garner's conclusion comes into agreement with Iago's wicked image of Desdemona as a "super subtle Venetian whore". Moreover, the "unconsciously longing" reference to Lodovico underlines the claims about Desdemona's infidelity. By taking the side of Iago, a critic as Garner turns Desdemona's "virtue into pitch" and instead of proving her innocence, she confirms her guilt.

Despite Garner's evidence, we have to admit that we are not quite sure of Desdemona's intentions when she mentions Lodovico's name in the boudoir scene. Shakespeare may have wished at this turning point to remind us of the road Desdemona has taken, when instead of a proper and

respectable citizen like Lodovico, she embraces her "storm of fortune" in Othello. In this sense, the Lodovico reference carries pathos, not prejudice. Furthermore, the Lodovico comment is one of many ambiguities in the play. For example, we do not know the real reasons of Desdemona's elopement with the Moor, her deception of her father, her plea to accompany Othello to Cyprus despite the dangers of war, her overseen farewell to Cassio at the opening of Act Three, scene one, and her embarrassment over the lost napkin. These ambiguities, however, are sufficient to make Othello's suspicions dramatically credible to the audience. The ambiguities are also needed to draw the audience part way into Othello's tragic dilemma which results from his suspicions about his wife.

To be objective I will analyze the boudoir scene in order to prove Desdemona's innocence and loyalty. In the boudoir scene (Act four, scene three) the following dialogue is conducted between Desdemona and Emilia when they were discussing women's infidelity:

Desdemona : O, these men, these men: Doth thou in conscience think, tell me Emilia that there be women do abuse their husbands in such gross kind?

Emilia : There be some, no question.

Desdemona : Wouldst thou do such a deed for all the world?

Emilia : Why would not you?

Desdemona : No, by this heavenly light.

Emilia : Nor I neither by this heavenly light. I might do't as well in th' dark.

Desdemona : Wouldst thou do such a deed for all the world?

Emilia : The world's huge thing; it is a great price for small vice.

Desdemona : In troth, I think thou wouldst not.

Emilia : In troth, I think I should, and undo't when I had done. Marry, I would not do such a thing for a joint-ring, nor for measures of lawn, nor for gowns, petticoats, nor any pretty exhibition. But for all the whole world? who would not make her husband a cuckold to make him a monarch? I should venture purgatory for't.

Desdemona : Beshrew me if I would do such a wrong for the whole world.

Emilia : Why, the wrong is but a wrong i'th' world and having the world for your labour, tis a wrong in your own world, and you might quickly make it right.

Desdemona : I do not think there is any such woman (155,157).

Desdemona's reiteration "Wouldst thou do such a deed for the whole world?" and "Be shrew me if I would do such a wrong for the whole world", underline Desdemona's innocence in its aspect of naivete, as she tries and frequently fails to understand the way of the world as Emilia comprehends. This cannot obviously be the "self-righteous" tendency to sin and frailty as Rice assumes, because Shakespeare shows us a Desdemona who never thought of committing a sin. Therefore, any misinterpretation of the boudoir scene, or any claim that Desdemona's innocence conceals a tendency to sin and frailty as Rice thinks, will obscure a basic pattern of Shakespeare's art. W. D. Adamson, in an article entitled "Unpinned or undone?: Desdemona's critics and the problem of sexual innocence", argues that probably because of the sharp contrast between the absolute moral innocence of Desdemona and the supple moral relativism of Emilia, that Shakespeare allows Emilia to utter Desdemona's epitaph with an emphasis on her innocence (179). After discovering Desdemona's death Emilia cries to Othello :

May, lay thee down and roar.
For thou has killed the sweetest innocent.
That e'er did lift up eye. (Act Five, scene II18)

If we have a look upon *Othello*, we will see that Shakespeare implies that Desdemona's innocence coexists with a rich sexuality¹. She is neither a "saint" as Othello expects, nor a "strumpet" as Iago claims. Cassio, I think, is the only character in the play who shows a balanced view of Desdemona. In Act Two, scene one, Cassio welcomes Desdemona who has just come to Cyprus. Cassio's speech is as follows:

Great Jove, Othello guard,
and swell his sail with thine own
powerful breathe.
That he may bless this bay with his
tall ship,
Make love's quick pants in Desdemona's
arms.
Give renewed fire to our extincted spirits,
And bring all Cyprus comfort. O, behold.
The richest of the ship is come on shore.
You men of Cyprus, let her have your knees.
Hail to thee, lady, and the grace of heaven,
Before, behind thee, and on every hand,
Enwheel thee around. (34)

Cassio's speech here does not hold a desexualized view of Desdemona. More balanced, his speech contrasts with Iago's bestial vision of the love relation between Othello and Desdemona. Cassio's view of Desdemona is important to our understanding of Desdemona's character and Shakespeare's intention in the play as well. On one hand, Cassio calls her "the divine Desdemona"; however, he does not see her as a desexualized saint. On the other hand, Cassio does not idealize her the way her father does as Garner claims. (139) Though calling her "the divine Desdemona", he finds that she has "aninviting eye, and yet methinks right modest". In this sense, Cassio, according to Adamson, acknowledges Desdemona's "sexiness while leering at it" (180). Thus, Cassio functions to provide an idea of Desdemona's "virtuous sexuality" as the language of his evocation speech in Cyprus may suggest.

Shakespeare shows that both Othello and Iago cannot accept the notion that Desdemona might simultaneously be an innocent woman and a sexually normal one. Like Brabantio, Othello thinks of Desdemona as "a maiden still and quiet". Thus, Othello's desexualized idolatry is contrasted with Iago's sexual nihilism, a notion which recalls the extreme categories of "saint" and "strumpet" adopted by moral critics. Consequently, Cassio is the only character in the play whose idea of Desdemona's sexuality is not erroneous. Therefore, I think that Cassio's view of Desdemona reflects Shakespeare's intention in the play. Moreover, Cassio is the only person who admits Desdemona's innocent, virtuous sexuality. In this connection, I would like to point out that Cassio's character is created by Shakespeare as a flawed one. For example, Cassio is hot-tempered and he quickly loses control over himself, particularly if he is drunk. In this sense, Cassio is not morally or philosophically attractive to Desdemona. By creating Cassio in this way, Shakespeare puts an end to all Iago's allegations about the possibilities of any love relation between Cassio and Desdemona. Consequently,

¹ For more details regarding the issue of sexuality and Feminism see: Saddik Gohar: "Toward a Revolutionary Emirati Poetics: Ghabesh's *Beman Ya Buthayn Taluthin?*" *Nebula* 5.1/5.2 (June 2008): 74-87

See also: Saddik Gohar: "Empowering the Subaltern in Woman at Point Zero" *Journal of International Women's Studies*. Volume 17/Issue 4 (2016): 174-189.

See also: Saddik Gohar: "Narrating the Marginalized Oriental Female: Silencing the Colonized Subaltern" *Acta Neophilologica* (2015): 49-66.

See Also: Saddik Gohar: "Orientalizing the Female Protagonist in Mahfouz's *Midaq Alley*". *Forum For World Literature Studies* Volume 7/Issue 4 (2015). P. 568.

Shakespeare's Desdemona is a virtuous young woman who remains loyal to her husband until she meets her tragic end.

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