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# Sequel Writing and Its Contours: A Paradigmatic Study

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***Abstract:*** **Writing is an art sprang from time immemorial. Cunieform to digital print is an immortal process. Each art is both a successful and a desolate experiment with contemporary ideologies. Sequel writing has matured beyond leaps and bounds inviting and sabotaging new literatures. Colonial ideologies have striked from neo colonial versimilitude to 'theoritical' framework and vice versa. Geoffrey Chaucer's Prologue to the Canterbury Tales experimented with Boccacio's Decameron or William Shakerpeare's Anthony and Cleopatra against John Dryden's All for Love and many more fervently establish the thoughts of continuum in the sequel. The three megalopolis text i have chosen to sue bare the ideas will help me probe through my paper a series of creativity, over arched thought process and repetitive histography in the writings of cannonical history.**

***Key Words:*** **Cunieform, Colonial, Neo-colonial, Sabotaging, Contemporary Ideologies.**

## I. INTRODUCTION

Images are word pictures. Writers often use them to add to the concreteness and set a completely different appeal. When such images occur any homo sapien is tend to certainly feel and say ' I Love You'. This thought emerges into two. Firstly, the experience of falling in love is specifically a sex-linked erotic experience and secondly its a temporary problem. Since time unforgotten a strong emphasis has been laid on reading and re-reading of culturally significant arts which has overwhelming influence on skills. A good reader strikes a closer nexus between reading, writing and speaking. Ferdinand De Saussure in this regard states:

"*Language has an individual aspect and a social aspect. One is not concievable without the other."*

He furthers his statements as :

"*A language system, as distinct from speech, is an object that may be studied independetly. Dead languages are no longer spoken, but we can perfectly well acquaint ourselves with their linguistic structures. A science which studies linguistic structure is not only able to dispense with other elements of language, but is possible only if those other elements are kept seperate".*

I have chosen Shakespeare's *Anthony and Cleopatra,* Dryden's *All for Love,* Bronte's J*ane Eyre*, Rhy's *Wide Sargasso Sea* for a thematic and language study in the current article. Introducing Shakespeare is an art in itself. He belonged to a succesful theatre company, its resourcefulness, magnificient adaptability and aesthetics of appeal was successful even to those who followed the same art. Pre-Christmas or Advent, Christmas and Post-Christmas is a regime which has showcased life in the form of plays to all classes of people. As the characters of Shakespeare go through life, they grow through life. Elizabethans are so tireless in their judgement, assumption, public proclaimation and many such others that they tend to charge a penny or find a penny even in / for accusation. Elizabethan audience as A.J.Cook ousts it, " would afford a penny admission only if his interst was genuine." Shakespeare the bard has risked more than was prudent in buying his way into the Globe which was like an alchemical dream fired more than the gullible. Elizabethan citizen by way of public proclaimation went to law, tirelessly 'hear' but never 'see' a judgement. They even knew very little of comparision as they never inteneded to waste their penny. *Anthony and Cleopatra* on Thames is the most inviting ever, though *Othello i*n Venice on Thames might have supported a similar spark. Elizabethans might have taxed no ones ingenuity to publicise *Anthony and Cleopatra* with the Thames as the main road to approach to his theatre. If 'the barge she sat in' did not appear on the Thames when *Anthony and Cleopatra* was scheduled for performance at either the Globe or the Blackfriars, it was a missed opportunity. The entry begins with the 'aloft' of Cleopatra, Charmian and Iras. They heave Anthony aloft to Cleopatra and contains the important last conversation of Cleopatra and the dying Anthony.

## II. BACKGROUND

Shakespeare's play Antony and Cleopatra portrays a culturally exotic queen plainly ruled by both her passions and the men in her life. Joseph L. Mankiewicz's immortalized film Cleopatra uses the scandalously renowned Elizabeth Taylor to display the queen as a fair sexual object capable solely of political manipulation. The bestselling videogame Dante's Inferno represents Cleopatra as a discolored beastly creature capable of seducing her victims for the gains of Lucifer himself. Each of these works present the figure of a foreign queen in divergent historical contexts. Considering these various forms of media, this study argues that each of these representations has in some way contributed to Cleopatra's iconicity in western culture as an image of uninhibited female sexuality.

While Shakespeare portrays Cleopatra in many different ways, her primary portrayal in the text is as a sexual object. In Cleopatra's soliloquy (Act V Scene II) she assesses her political future if she were to turn herself over to the Romans. In this 14 line monologue, Shakespeare inserts selective imagery to mirror the queen's possible transformation into a sexual object without agency. She addresses her attendant with "Thou, an Egyptian puppet, shalt be shown In Rome, as well as I mechanic slaves," (5.2.

 

208-209). By this she means that they will no longer have control over their own bodies, but instead they will be "puppets" of Rome and "mechanic slaves" to the Romans' desires. When she continues, "with greasy aprons" and "rules" she is referring to how she will be forced to assume the expected role of a woman, to cook and follow rules (5.2. 210). There is also the implication that this is the role of women in Roman society.

There is physicality in the queen's words when she says she will be "forced to drink their vapour," (5.2. 213). By this she means that she will not only lose control over her body, but she will be forced (both figuratively and literally) to "drink" as in absorb the Roman ideology. The physical implication is of a sexual nature, implying that they may do as they wish with her physical form and she will no longer have the ability to make sexual decisions on her own. The bodily imagery supports her realization that surrendering her body to Rome will also mean the manipulation of her reputation to appear as Rome sees fit. That is why she ends the monologue by referring to herself in this possible future as "I' th' posture of a whore," (5.2. 221). It is her admittance that once she is portrayed however the masses of Rome wish her to be, she will have lost both her individuality and regal authority.Beyond her sexual objectification, she is still objectified as something physical to be fought over and used for political gain. She is a literal sign of what the male powers desire, fight over, and attempt to control.

There is a parallel drawn between her body and her nation, beyond the implication that as a female leader she has a maternal connection with her country. It is no mistake that Julius Caesar, Gneius Pompey, and Marc Antony colonize both her body and her nation sequentially. She herself affirms this parallel when she refers to herself as a "serpent of old Nile" (1.5. 26). Here she is describing herself as a direct projection of her country's main source of water, nutrients, and overall health. The phrase seems a contradiction since the Nile is such a prolific water source, being the longest river in the world, yet a serpent is something so lowly and untrustworthy. She uses this contradiction as an assertion that she is aware of how she is objectified by the men in her life. She directly quotes Marc Antony and his pet name for her, before describing how even while "wrinkled deep in time" she has caught the eye of three different powerful men over the years much like how a sculpture of art engrosses the admirer (1.5. 30). She continues on to describe herself as such an enrapturing object in connection with each of the men. Instead of saying that she has a darker complexion, she alludes to the sun God Phoebus, claiming that the "black" of her skin gains its color from his "amorous pinches" thus implying that there is yet another man who has loved her (1.5. 29). She adds that while Caesar was still alive, she was "a morsel for a monarch" (1.5. 31). The use of the word "morsel" implies that she is both something small and consumable, though somehow elevated by Caesar's monarchial status and not her own. While Caesar would consume her, Gneius Pompey "would stand and make his eyes grow in" her face, thus admiring her intently like a piece of art until he would "anchor his aspect, and die" (1.5. 33-34). So once again, even while she is minimized to the likeness of an inanimate object, she is emphasizing her authority over men.In addition to Cleopatra's objectification as a representation of her country and a piece of artwork, she is also portrayed as a belittled keepsake.

Antony and Caesar quarrel over her more so than their skirmish for political power. It is in this way that "Cleopatra serves as both an object of acquisition and as an instrument of revenge," which Cristina León Alfar asserts in her work *Fantasies of Female Evil: The Dynamics of Gender and Power in Shakespearean Tragedy* (148). Caesar says cruel words about Antony only by comparing him to Cleopatra. After describing Antony's frivolous activity, he describes Antony as "not more manlike / Than Cleopatra, nor the queen of Ptolemy / More womanly than he" (1.4. 5-7). Here the insult is infused with gender associations, claiming that Antony does not have qualities that distinguish him in "manliness" from Cleopatra. There is also the message that Antony has no true claim to Cleopatra or anything of hers since she is still Ptolemy's widow. Yet he issues a similar insult to Cleopatra in the same breath, saying that she is no more "womanly" than Antony is manly. These polarized and engendered insults seem to mirror an overarching theme in the play of defining what is masculine and feminine. Later in the play when Cleopatra plans to go into battle at Antony's side, Enobarbus dissuades her by explaining why the battlefield is not a fit place for a woman. He says "if we should serve with horse and mares together / the horse were merely lost...The mares would be bare / a soldier and his horse" (3.7. 8-11).

The Roman goddess Vesta is the personification of female purity, often associated with her Vestal virgins. When Caesar says that even the most chaste of virgins will still give in to sexual desire because of their femininity itself he is rendering that purity impossible.In addition to the feminine being defined by weakness, effeminization is also associated with emotion throughout the text. In Act 3 Scene 2 when Caesar and his sister Octavia have an emotional goodbye, Agrippa and Enobarbus fear that Caesar will "weep" because he "has a could in 's face" (3.2 51-52). Enobarbus says this show of emotion would make him "worse for that, were he a / horse" and indeed the same goes for men "so is he, being a man" (3.2 53-55). Caesar doesn't cry, but the mere tearing up and showing of emotion instantly has numerous people asserting that he'll decrease in value as a human being and be essentially less than a man. None of this negativity is remarked about Octavia when she begins to weep a mere 9 lines earlier. So it is acceptable to the men that "sweet Octavia" show emotion, but not their male leader for he would be instantly devalued (3.2 61).

The same sentiment is shown later in the text when Antony addresses his troops, wanting to "make his followers weep" (4.2 26). Enobarbus remarks that Antony brings the people "discomfort" making them "weep" "for shame" like "an ass" (4.2 37-38). He begs Antony "transform us not to women" and to cease his tear-jerking address (4.2 39). So yet again femininity is associated with being shameful and uncomfortable in its expression of sentiment.While the play defines femininity by weakness, it also associates the feminine with subservience, particularly in association with Cleopatra and her authority. In Act 3 Scene 11, Eros reports to Antony and remarks that "death will seize her but / Your comfort makes the rescue" (3.11 46-47). This implies not only that Cleopatra is indebted to Antony, but also that she

 

is dependent upon him for her very life. Later in that same exchange, she asks Antony to "forgive my fearful sails" asking him for forgiveness for acting of her own volition and being implicitly emotional (3.11 54). She continues on to beg for his "pardon" like she owes him reasoning for the political decisions she makes as queen (3.11 41). She even seems to slip into the role of a soldier apologizing to his superior or a servant apologizing to his master. The question then becomes why does Cleopatra deem it necessary to be pardoned for retreat in battle when she herself chose to do so while Antony merely blindly followed? This is the first acceptance of her implied subservience. This subservience is stretched to melodramatic proportions for obvious political gain later when Caesar's ambassador relays him a message from Cleopatra in which she "confess[es]" his "greatness" and "submits" to his "might" (3.12 16-17). But by portraying herself as subservient, she is attempting to put Caesar at ease so that he doesn't see her as a threat. She continues buttering him up saying, "He is a god and knows / what is the most right. / Mine honor was not yielded, / but conquered merely" (3.13 62-64).

She is directly stating that she is inferior and has been conquered justly, though the tone of the statement is sarcastic, particularly since she agreed with Caesar's statement that there were "scars upon [her] honor" (3.13 59). Her snarky comments continue when she says that she is no more than "a woman, and commanded / by such poor passion as the maid that milks and does the meanest chares" (4.15 76-78). Here she uses the social status of a humble servant to emphasize the insignificance of women in general. She again emphasizes this subjugation in reference to Caesar, when she tells Proculeius to relay that she is "his fortune's vassal" and that she owes him "the greatness he has got" (5.2 29-30). Here not only is she justifying Caesar's actions, saying he has properly earned his greatness and glory, but she is also portraying herself as a servant to his superior fortune. A vassal, by definition is someone who has entered into mutual obligation to a monarch to serve and support them in return for protection and land of some sort. So the subservient role she rhetorically places herself in is hierarchically higher than a slave or handmaiden, but she is still submitting to the seemingly all-powerful male ruler. She even says in the same scene that Caesar allows her to "hourly earn" the "doctrine of obedience" (5.2 30-31). So while she openly admits that she's not accustomed to being so subservient she still submits "gladly" (5.2 31).

Though she is traded like a horse, she is still spoken highly of, like when Maecenas says "If beauty wisdom, modesty, can settle/ the heart of Antony, Octavia is / a blessed lottery to him," meaning that Octavia is a blessing that may tame Antony's wild heart (2.2 251-253). This also implies that since Cleopatra holds Antony's unsettled heart, she is something wild and exotic, not properly suited for the Roman leader like the virtuous and quiet Octavia. Antony himself even describes the agreement he makes with Caesar concerning Octavia to be an "act of grace" (2.2 156). It is also evident that Octavia is not as outspoken and lively as Cleopatra because when the queen inquires about Octavia's personality the messenger describes her as showing "a body rather than a life / a statue rather than a breather" (3.3 -21). This perfectly characterizes Octavia's role in Rome. She is something to look upon, but she does as she's told and scarcely "breathe" voice to her own personal opinions, contrasting starkly with Cleopatra. Early in the play Cleopatra is described as having the ability to "pour breath forth" even while "breathless" (2.2 242).

A striking similarity as well as an objectivity is drawn with regard to the restoration play *All for Love,* a play by John Dryden, often influenced by Shakespare's great work of artifact is seen on a satirical note. Jeremy Collier's *Profaneness to the English Stage* acts as a judging element to prospect all the restoration plays and *All for Love* in particular. The book is dedicated to the Right Honourable, Thomas, Earl of Danby, Viscount Latimer.

The preface of his book states :

> *"The death of Antony and Cleopatra is a subject which has been treatedby the greatest wits of ou nation, after Shakespeare; and by all so variously, that their example has given me the confidence to try myself . . ."* (Dryden, 1).

Heroic drama flourished after the Restoration because it united popular taste with strategies of political persuasion. All for Love is in blank verse, in deliberate imitation of Shakespeare. But the play is not a direct reworking of Shakespeare's Antony and Cleopatra (c. 1606–07). Shakespeare's love tragedy was not considered an artistic success in the 17th century, mainly because of its sprawling plot, which ignored the Aristotelian unities, and its fairly unhero portrayal of the two lovers. The ensuing dialogue between Antony and Cleopatra shows Dryden's dramatic and poetic skills to their utmost effect, especially in the quick repartee of its opening lines, which imitates the stichomythies of Ancient Greek drama:

*ANTONY : Well, Madam, we are met.*
*CLEOPATRA : Is this a Meeting? Then, we must part?*
*ANTONY : We must.*
*CLEOPATRA : Who sayes we must?*
*ANTONY : Our own hard fates*
*CLEOPATRA : We make those Fates our selves.*
*ANTONY : Yes, we have made 'em; we have lov'd each other Into our mutual ruin.* (2.1.241-45)

## III. CONCLUSION

It has to be noted that, in many respects, *All for Love* is a formal departure from the dominant conventions of English Restoration tragedy: there is no double plot, there are no heroic couplets, no "amorous geometries, tragicomic minglings, and quick turns" (Sherman 2004: 29) that characterised Dryden's earlier plays and many other contemporary tragicomedies and heroic plays. As stated above, it observes the neoclassical unities and thus more closely resembles the French tragedies of Dryden's contemporary Racine, whose Phèdre also dates from 1677. The theme of All for Love is love against the world, certainly, but the force that drives its plot is the difficulty of being emotionally honest, of knowing the heart of one's lover and of knowing the truth about one's own emotional self. In its rather static presentation, it sometimes gives the impression of a drama of ideas. Characters constantly

 

question their own position in relation to others; they also question the medium of language, holding individual words up for inspection – 'love', 'respect', 'friendship'. The falsehood of Alexas – the play's villain – misleads

Cleopatra from the straight path of emotional authenticity to the crooked ways of dishonesty and untruthfulness. In contrast, Antony's self-recognition in act 4 allows the audience to see through him as through clear water. The final act, a spiritual recognition scene in the Aristotelian sense of anagnorisis, culminates in the lovers seeing themselves for what they really and truly are; its tragedy lies in the fact that by then it is too late for them to turn things around. All the lovers can hope for in the afterlife is fame and renown for their unconditional love.

To end the statement of my article with the words of Socrates, a Greek Philosopher and orator, "

*"An unexamined life is not worth living.*
*True knowledge exists in knowing that you know nothing.*
*To find yourself, think for yourself."*

The statement mentioned states the reason for my sequel writing, infact the books chosen depict and ennumerate a similarity in idea and function. These can also be developed froma theoritical perspective as well as a nominative identity. Thus the contentions of the article conjoins the books chosen and identified by greater means and spirituality for all forms and matrices.

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**My First Poem**

- Charles Joseph (Chijero)

The grass for the manger is found in the wild.
The grass for the manger is found in the streets.
The man in the manger was also found in the streets.
Hve you felt, felt, felt,
Will you amek him still lay in the street, hill,
What Life! What Life!
What pleasure? What beauty?
Is this that or that this...!
Where is theLord off the Rings.
Is there the Lord of the Rings.
Touching, touching my long stones of passion.
Makes me a gassion of social convict.
I am in the net.
Am I in the Net.
Christos, Christi, Christi,
Chisti, Masti, Master,
Master builder – of . . . What ?
So happy to see you,
So sad to see you alone and lonely.
Are you the ozymandias again.
Are you the master of dreams or dream master.

Please make my life faster,
Let it touch, feel,
Slicce-not faster, faster but slow, slow – er.

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How long do we live to make it slow?
How far do we live to have it slower.
So sad, so morose, so euclid.
The days taht are there.
The days that are their.

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End Menace

- Charles Joseph

Bit ends or Butt ends.
But ends are sit ends.
Shakespeare, Milton, Gray and Byron.
Took our money, took our understanding.
You men, you White men – What do you take?
What else will you take?
Where ever do you take?
How much have we lost in expecting?
How much is he recieved in speaking?

Is silence the end. . . !
IS menace the end.
Why is menace the end?
For what is money?
Does it change the menace.
Does it metamorphoise the end.
End has to have a menace.
Menace has to have an end.

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