

OTHELLO

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE



EDITED BY EDWARD PECHTER

A NORTON CRITICAL EDITION

A NORTON CRITICAL EDITION

William Shakespeare
OTHELLO



AUTHORITATIVE TEXT
SOURCES AND CONTEXTS
CRITICISM

Edited by

EDWARD PECHTER
CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY
AND
UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA



W • W • NORTON & COMPANY • *New York • London*

For William S. Pechter, my big brother Billy.

W. W. Norton & Company has been independent since its founding in 1923, when William Warder and Mary D. Herter Norton first published lectures delivered at the People's Institute, the adult education division of New York City's Cooper Union. The Nortons soon expanded their program beyond the Institute, publishing books by celebrated academics from America and abroad. By mid-century, the two major pillars of Norton's publishing program—trade books and college texts—were firmly established. In the 1950s, the Norton family transferred control of the company to its employees, and today—with a staff of four hundred and a comparable number of trade, college, and professional titles published each year—W. W. Norton & Company stands as the largest and oldest publishing house owned wholly by its employees.

Copyright © 2004 by
W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.

All rights reserved.
Printed in the United States of America.

The text of this book is composed in Fairfield Medium
with the display set in Bernhard Modern.
Composition by Binghamton Valley Composition, Inc.
Manufacturing by the Maple-Vail Book Group.
Book design by Antonina Krass.
Production manager: Ben Reynolds.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Shakespeare, William, 1564–1616.

Othello : authoritative text, sources and contexts, criticism / William
Shakespeare ; edited by Edward Pechter.
p. cm.—(A Norton critical edition)
Includes bibliographical references.

ISBN 0-393-97615-7

1. Othello (Fictitious character)—Drama. 2. Shakespeare, William, 1564–1616. Othello. 3. Othello (Fictitious character) 4. Venice (Italy)—Drama. 5. Jealousy—Drama. 6. Muslims—Drama. I. Pechter, Edward, 1941– II. Title.

PR2829.A2P43 2003
822.3'3—dc21

2003054117

W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 500 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10110
www.wwnorton.com

W. W. Norton & Company Ltd., Castle House,
75/76 Wells Street, London W1T 3QT

3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

Preface

Here are four things that happened during October 2001, the month that I began systematically putting together this book: 1) *O* was playing at my local cineplex, in Victoria, British Columbia. The film is set in a southern American high school where Odin (called “O”), a black basketball star, is driven to murder his girlfriend, Desi, by his teammate, Hugo (“white girls are snakes, bro”), himself motivated by jealousy (his father, the team coach, pays more attention to O than to his own son). 2) The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation aired a stylish made-for-television film in which, when John Othello becomes the first black commissioner of the London Metropolitan Police, his best friend and fellow officer, Ben Jago, is so furious at being bypassed for the job that he goads John into murdering his (of course white) girlfriend, Dessie. 3) The local bookstores were featuring the new Salman Rushdie novel. Focused on the India-born Malik “Solly” Solanka, *Fury* opens in New York, to which Solanka has fled from London after finding himself poised with a knife over the sleeping body of his English wife, Eleanor. The first chapter includes a reminiscence of their steamy first night together, during which Eleanor had talked out her honors-thesis interpretation of *Othello*. 4) The student newspaper at the University of Victoria, my home university, carried an opinion piece about the events of 9/11. In the accompanying photograph, the author, a Ugandan-born Indian Muslim in the Education Faculty, holds a clearly visible copy of *Othello*.

We might dismiss these events as accidents of time and place. *O* had been scheduled for release years earlier, but the Columbine shootings worried the distributors into a delay. British television audiences had seen the police drama months before Canadians, while U.S. audiences had to wait until 2002, when it was aired by PBS. Few people would have seen the 9/11 piece who weren’t connected with my home university. Then too there is the subjective element: buy a Mazda and you’re amazed to see how many Mazdas are on the road. As someone with a long professional career devoted to literary interpretation, I may be overly given to imposing coherent patterns on the blips that happen to coincide on my radar.

But with all allowances for coincidence and subjectivity, *Othello*

seems to be in the air. It was certainly in the air during 1994 and 1995, when Americans (indeed, people all over the world) were obsessed with the O. J. Simpson murder trial: many people, academics and otherwise, were intrigued by the resonance they heard between *Othello* and the “crime of the century,” as it was then breathlessly called. Moreover, *Othello* has generated powerful interest independently of—and earlier than—the Simpson story. During the past twenty-five years or so, *Othello* has become the Shakespearian tragedy of choice, replacing *King Lear* in the way *Lear* had earlier replaced *Hamlet* as the play that speaks most directly and powerfully to current interests. Robert Scholes, helping to design a new capstone English course for grade twelve, selects *Othello* as the one obligatory Shakespeare play because “the issues of cultural conflict are in the foreground” (136). Writing without direct pedagogical interests and for a different audience, Mitchell Greenberg sees much the same thing: *Othello* has a peculiar power “to haunt us as an uncanny projection, from the past, of our conflicted present” (1).

Conflict, though, is not unique to *Othello*; we need to be more specific. During the period of *Othello*’s ascendancy, literary and cultural analysis has been transformed by feminist, African American, and postcolonial critics, to whose central concerns the play seems directly to appeal. *Othello* focuses on marriage as a domestic relationship, where the most intimately private experience is nonetheless shaped by the pressures of society and political power. The play is preoccupied with questions of gender difference, the expectations of men and women for themselves and about each other, including those that underwrite and undermine marriage. It is preoccupied with racial difference as well. Its protagonist is an alien to white Christian Europe, what we would now call an immigrant, whose visible racial difference seems to be the defining aspect of his identity, the source of his charismatic power to excite interest and to generate horror. As a result, according to Thomas Cartelli, “*Othello* is well on the way to replacing *The Tempest* as a favored field of debate and contention both for scholars and critics of Shakespeare, and for the increasingly numerous workers in the field of postcolonial studies” (124). Or as Mythili Kaul puts it, introducing a collection of new essays by black writers on the play, “all the contributors” see *Othello* as “of utmost relevance today in terms of” a variety of “pressing contemporary issues,” including “politics, colonial exploitation, cultural relativism, and, above all, race” (xii). These concentrations on gender and racial difference coincide with appalling intensity in the play’s final image: Othello and Desdemona, the “old black ram” and “white ewe” Iago summoned to Brabantio’s imagination at the beginning, locked in a perverse embrace on the marriage bed revealed finally as the place of murder.

This book inevitably reflects the intense current interest in *Othello*—in fact, enthusiastically embraces it—by including many critical commentaries that emphasize our concerns with race, sex, and gender. But this edition also includes a generous selection of earlier commentary and is designed to represent the continuities as well as significant ruptures between recent and traditional interpretations of the play. Earlier audiences of *Othello* would not have understood, let alone shared our kinds of interests in the play, and we have generated these interests in most cases without much conscious knowledge of critical or performance traditions. But these traditions matter, perhaps more than we think; they shape our desires and our understanding in ways of which we may be imperfectly aware. Current audiences and readers of *Othello* cannot exercise their interpretive freedom “just as they please,” but “under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past.” Marx, whose remarks about history near the beginning of *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* I have just quoted, concludes from this argument that the “tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living” (15). This gloomy claim may be especially relevant to *Othello*, which is in large measure about the dead weight of inherited prejudice. But *Othello* furnishes glimmers of transcendence as well, and this edition provides readers with historical material that is not only grimly determining but also “edifying” in Richard Rorty’s sense of the term—that is, useful for building new kinds of ideas.

The book follows the standard format of Norton Critical Editions. After the text of the play comes “Sources and Contexts,” which prints the sixteenth-century narrative Shakespeare used for the plot of *Othello* and for many of its details. This section also includes a detailed discussion of various topics—Moors, Turks, blacks, Venetians, marriage and domesticity, fathers and daughters, female sexuality, and so on—through which the original audiences would presumably have engaged the play. Then comes “Criticism,” including substantial excerpts from interpretive responses to *Othello* from its origins to the present. The book ends with a group of bibliographies for readers who want to go into greater detail about material included earlier in the book, or to expand their critical interests into related territories.

I am grateful to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada for a grant that facilitated the work for this book. A fellowship from the Folger Shakespeare Library, in Washington, D.C., allowed me to do much of the final research in the rich and friendly environment for which that institution and its staff are well known.

My thanks go to David Pechter for lending me his laptop, to Lesley Pechter for line editing and proofreading, and to Alan Galey for research assistance beyond my requests or expectations. Conversations with Farouk Mitha, in the Education Faculty of the University of Victoria, helped make this book less parochial. My English Department colleagues—especially Kim Blank, Evelyn Cobley, Arnie Keller, Terry Sherwood, and David Thatcher—provided encouragement and useful suggestions. Andrew Hadfield kindly sent me advance proofs for his *Literary Sourcebook*. Michael Neill let me see draft discussions of *Othello*'s date and text for his forthcoming Oxford edition of the play. Holly Carver, executive director of Iowa University Press, gave me free access to material in my "*Othello*" and *Interpretive Traditions*, where some of the discussion in this Norton Critical Edition is developed at greater length. Finally, thanks to everyone at Norton for their professionalism and helpfulness—especially to Carol Bemis, who was there with me from the beginning, and to Kurt Wildermuth, whose intelligence and diligence are everywhere present in this book.

Works Cited

- Cartelli, Thomas. *Repositioning Shakespeare: National Formations, Postcolonial Appropriations*. London and New York: Routledge, 1999.
- Greenberg, Mitchell. "Shakespeare's *Othello* and the 'Problem' of Anxiety." In *Canonical States, Canonical Stages: Oedipus, Othering, and Seventeenth-Century Drama*. Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1994, 1–32.
- Kaul, Mythili. "Preface." In Kaul, ed. *"Othello": New Essays by Black Writers*. Washington D.C.: Howard University Press, 1997, ix–xii.
- Marx, Karl. *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*. New York: International Publishers, 1963.
- Scholes, Robert. "Pacesetter English." In *The Rise and Fall of English: Reconstructing English as a Discipline*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998, 128–42.

A Note on the Text

This edition is based on the text printed in the First Folio (1623). Additions and emendations adopted from the First Quarto (1622) are not signaled in the text, but are specified in the Textual Notes printed after the Textual Commentary at the end of the play. All other interpolated material is placed within square brackets. The footnotes specify many of the earlier editors to whose learning and intelligence I am deeply indebted, keyed to the bibliography printed below—but perforce not all. Working on Shakespeare entails obligations beyond practical acknowledgment and (standing on the shoulders of sometimes anonymous giants) beyond even conscious knowledge.

Readers who want a sense of the complications involved in editing *Othello* and Shakespeare in general will want to look at the Textual Commentary (p. 119). A preliminary word is in order here, though, about two matters—stage directions and scene locations. In many cases where an action seems to be called for, the early texts include either no stage directions or imprecise generalities located indifferently somewhere in the vicinity of what appears to be the appropriate line. Beginning with Nicholas Rowe in 1709, editors have expanded upon these perfunctory practices, systematically repositioning, elaborating, and inventing stage directions to serve the needs of readers for whom the ability to think in terms of theatrical performance could not necessarily be taken for granted. I have continued in this tradition of editorial intervention, reproducing (and sometimes relocating) the stage directions added by earlier editors and inventing some of my own, as well as calling attention occasionally in the explanatory notes to stage actions that might seem to be suggested by the text. “Suggested” is the key word: “here are some things that might be done on stage at this point, among many other things—including nothing.” Reading theatrically means acknowledging a long and continuing stage history in which Shakespearean texts have generously accommodated performers who have felt free to shape them to the exigencies of their particular situations.

Scene locators also begin with Rowe, again to accommodate readers; but the situation here is much more complicated because—as Peter Holland argues in a piece to which I am much indebted—Rowe

was trying to accommodate his playgoing contemporaries as well. Theatrical performance had come to differ significantly from the kind Globe (or Blackfriars) audiences experienced when *Othello* was new, and scene location was one of the most significant of the changes. Where the eighteenth-century stage had developed a fairly sophisticated set of scenic properties and conventions in order to localize the action, distinguishing between inside and outside and between various external environments, Shakespeare's stage had effectively no scenery at all. The action took place in an unspecified place that could be inferred from the circumstances and that would (when required) be specified in the dialogue. The resulting flexibility allowed for "split scenes," where the action could shift back and forth between different places. In 3.4, for example, the "place is nowhere specified, only implied by character and action. Thus although much of the dialogue seems to assume an 'interior' and private setting, there is no discrepancy created when Cassio is told to 'walk here about' . . . and Bianca enters 'going to [Cassio's] lodging' " (Ross). In 4.2, similarly, the "scene starts indoors (cf. 28), and in some productions in Desdemona's bedroom. Later Roderigo wanders in [172], and it seems to be outdoors: one of the advantages of unlocalized staging" (Honigmann). "The truth is," as Edmond Malone puts it, after describing in detail the "great difficulties in ascertaining the place" of 4.2, that "our poet and his audience, in this instance as in many others, were content, from want of scenery, to consider the very same spot, at one and at the same time, as the outside and inside of a house."

A devoted and accomplished historian, Malone understood that scene locators were misleading. Nonetheless, following the practice of all his predecessors going back to Rowe, Malone included them in his 1790 edition (4.2 is said to take place in "A Room in the Castle"), as have most subsequent editors to this day (though often hedged about with square brackets or apologetic explanations, or relegated to the notes). This may be editorial inertia, against which many current editors, one following the other, like to inveigh; but inertia can be good as well as bad, and the reassuring familiarity provided by scene locators, especially in a text designed (as is this one) for a nonspecialist audience, might be argued to outweigh the disadvantages.

But this is by no means clear. Is it strictly true, as Lawrence Ross claims, that "no discrepancy" arises from Desdemona's "walk here about"? To be sure, since the earlier impression was not fixed or definite (we see no scenery, read no "A Room in the Castle"), the words are not experienced as a *contradiction*. Nonetheless, the exterior location does come on us as a new and surprising—discrepant—discovery. Shakespeare could have easily enough written his way out

of this situation, but didn't, I believe, because he wants us to be emphatically aware of the exterior location: that Bianca emerges on her own into public space defies what we now call gender norms—a topic of paramount importance in the play. The play thus does more than take advantage of a convenient flexibility—it exploits the flexibility to achieve a significant dramatic effect.

There are many other instances in which Shakespeare has taken advantage of the unlocalized stage (perhaps better called the variously localized stage); here are three early on in the action. *One*: at the beginning of the play, we discover the location, a Venetian street at night, as part of a brutally sudden process that also locates the play's subject as bestial intercourse. The alarming effect is thrust upon us in the same way as it is on Brabantio, "with like timorous accent and dire yell / As when, *by night and negligence*, the fire / Is spied in populous cities" (1.1.72–74; emphasis mine). The emphasized locution bothered William Warburton in 1747 (see note to line 73), as well it might (eighteenth-century discomfort is frequently worth respecting): the phrase conjoins a sense of time and place with a sense of unpreparedness, as though merely to find oneself in a Venetian night scene entails anxiety and some inexplicable culpability—arguably the effects reinforced by the withheld and precipitously revealed location. *Two*: an audience at the beginning of act 2, not yet knowing it is in act 2, since the continuity of the action would create no decisive break between the simultaneously exiting Iago and the entering figures, would, before it can determine that it is located at (say) "A Seaport in Cyprus," be likely to hear the violent sound effects of the storm as produced by Iago's final words in act 1: "I have't! It is engendered! Hell and night / Must bring this monstrous birth to the world's light" (1.3.394–95). *Three*: Having failed (apparently) to tempt Cassio into salacious thoughts about Desdemona, Iago tries a new tactic: "Come, lieutenant, I have a stoup of wine, and here without are a brace of Cyprus gallants that would fain have a measure to the health of black Othello" (2.3.24–27). "Here without" must come as a bit of a surprise. There has been no reason to assume a change from the Herald's speech just earlier in 2.2, with its strong effect of exterior location. (In fact, 2.3 is, in all editions of the play prior to Theobald's in 1733, printed as a continuation of 2.2 rather than as a new scene.) To be sure, the fact goes by too quickly to have much significant consequence, but the play isn't done. "Where are they?" asks Cassio about the same gallants only a moment later (39). He can hardly have forgotten; apparently he is trying (desperately) to buy time before agreeing—against his better judgment, but he seems to have no choice—to what we know to be Iago's plot to destroy him. And now, in Iago's response, the play reminds us with renewed emphasis of the interior location: "Here at

the door; I pray you call them in" (40). By abruptly revealing and then confirming an interior location, the play produces a notable discrepancy and (my main point) a functional one. Making us suddenly aware of Cassio's physical enclosure, it reinforces the sense that he is willy-nilly enmeshed inside the plot Iago is spinning to destroy him.

In all these cases, we are dealing with effects that (like gender norms) seem central to the play: entrapment, guilt, an irresistibly powerful Iago. In all these cases, scene locators would destroy or (minimally) diminish these effects. The point need not be exaggerated. The meanings reinforced by these effects are amply available without them. Nonetheless, I came in the course of producing this edition reluctantly to the conclusion that scene locators, no matter how qualified or inconspicuous, do more harm than good, so I have not written them into the text that follows.

The following works are cited in the footnotes and textual notes below:

- Bible. Quotations are from *The Geneva Bible*. 1560. Rpt. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969.
- Capell, Edward. *Mr. William Shakespeare: His Comedies, Histories, and Tragedies*. 10 vols. London, 1767–86.
- . *Notes and Various Readings to Shakespeare*. 3 vols. London, 1780. Rpt. New York: AMS Press, 1973.
- Furness, Horace Howard. *A New Variorum Edition of Othello*. 7th ed. Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1886.
- Hankey, Julie. *Othello*. Plays in Performance Series. Bristol: Bristol Classical Press, 1987.
- Holland, Peter. Introduction. In Rowe, 1.vii–xxx.
- Honigmann, E. A. J., ed. *Othello*. Arden 3 edition. Walton-on-Thames: Thomas Nelson, 1997.
- Johnson, Samuel. *The Plays of William Shakespeare*. 8 vols. London, 1765. Notes rpt. in *The Works of Samuel Johnson*. Vols. 7 and 8, *Johnson on Shakespeare*. Ed. Arthur Sherbo. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968.
- Kernan, Alvin, ed. *Othello*. Signet Shakespeare. 2nd ed. New York: Penguin, 1998.
- Kittredge, George Lyman, ed. *Othello*. 1941. 2nd ed. Rev. Irving Ribner. Waltham: Ginn, 1966.
- Malone, Edmond. *The Plays and Poems of William Shakespeare*. 10 vols. London, 1790. Rpt. New York: AMS Press, 1966.
- McDonald, Russ, ed. *Othello*. Pelican Shakespeare. New York: Penguin, 2001.

- Mowat, Barbara A., and Paul Werstine, ed. *Othello*. The New Folger Library Shakespeare. New York: Washington Square Press, 1993.
- OED. *Oxford English Dictionary*. 20 vols. 2nd ed. Prep. J. A. Simpson and E. S. C. Weiner. Oxford: Clarendon, 1989.
- Pope, Alexander. *The Works of William Shakespear*. 6 vols. London, 1723–25.
- Ridley, M. R., ed. *Othello*. New Arden edition. London: Methuen, 1962.
- Ross, Lawrence J., ed. *Othello*. Indianapolis and New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1974.
- Rowe, Nicholas. *The Works of Mr. William Shakespear*. 6 vols. London, 1709. Rpt. London: Pickering & Chatto, 1999.
- Sanders, Norman, ed. *Othello*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984.
- Schmidt, Alexander. *Shakespeare Lexicon and Quotation Dictionary*. 2 vols. 3rd ed. Rev. Gregor Sarrazin, 1902. Rpt. New York: Dover, 1971.
- Shakespeare, William. All non-*Othello* references are to the Oxford edition as reprinted in *The Norton Shakespeare*. Ed. Stephen Greenblatt, et al. New York: Norton, 1997.
- Steevens, George. *The Plays of William Shakespeare, With the Corrections and Illustrations of Various Commentators, To Which Are Added Notes by Samuel Johnson and George Steevens*. London, 1813.
- Theobald, Lewis. *The Works of Shakespeare*. 7 vols. London, 1733. Rpt. New York: AMS Press, 1968.
- Tynan, Kenneth, ed. "*Othello*": *The National Theatre Production*. New York: Stein and Day, 1967.
- Warburton, William. *The Works of Shakespear*. 8 vols. London, 1747.

Contents

List of Illustrations	vii
Preface	ix
A Note on the Text	xiii

The Text of *Othello*

<i>The Tragedy of Othello, the Moor of Venice</i>	2
Textual Commentary	119
Textual Notes	123

Sources and Contexts

<i>Othello</i> in Its Own Time	129
Giraldi Cinthio • [The Moor of Venice]	151

Criticism

<i>Othello</i> in Critical History	165
Thomas Rymer • ["A Bloody Farce"]	201
Charles Gildon • [Comments on Rymer's <i>Othello</i>]	210
Samuel Johnson • [Shakespeare, the Rules, and <i>Othello</i>]	216
Charles Lamb • [Othello's Color: Theatrical versus Literary Representation]	221
William Hazlitt • [Iago, Heroic Tragedy, and Othello]	222
Samuel Taylor Coleridge • [Comments on <i>Othello</i>]	230
A. C. Bradley • ["The Most Painfully Exciting and the Most Terrible" of Shakespeare's Tragedies]	235
T. S. Eliot • ["The Last Great Speech of Othello"]	244
Kenneth Burke • <i>Othello</i> : An Essay to Illustrate a Method	244
G. K. Hunter • <i>Othello</i> and Colour Prejudice	248
Lynda E. Boose • Othello's Handkerchief: "The Recognizance and Pledge of Love"	262
Mark Rose • Othello's Occupation: Shakespeare and the Romance of Chivalry	275
James R. Siemon • "Nay, That's Not Next": <i>Othello</i> , [5.2] in Performance, 1760–1900	289
Michael Neill • Unproper Beds: Race, Adultery, and the Hideous in <i>Othello</i>	306

Patricia Parker • <i>Othello</i> and <i>Hamlet</i> : Dilation, Spying and the "Secret Place" of Woman	329
Michael D. Bristol • Charivari and the Comedy of Abjection in <i>Othello</i>	350
Edward Pechter • "Too Much Violence": Murdering Wives in <i>Othello</i>	366
Selected Bibliography	389

List of Illustrations

- Fig. 1. Act 2, Scene 1: "O my fair warrior. . . ." Engraving by Thomas Stothard (1755–1834), R.A.; pub. Sept. 29, 1799. 177
- Fig. 2. Act 1, Scene 3: "Here's my husband." Engraving by Richard Cook (1784–1857); pub. 1821. 178
- Fig. 3. Act 2, Scene 1: Othello and Desdemona. Drawing by Henry Liverseege (1803–1832); no pub. date. 179
- Fig. 4. Act 1, Scene 3: Othello Relating His Adventures. Engraving by Charles West Cope (1811–1890), R.A.; no pub. date. 180
- Fig. 5. Act 3, Scene 4: "Fetch me that handkerchief." Engraving by Joseph Kenny Meadows (1790–1874); pub. 1845. 181
- Fig. 6. Ira Aldridge's first appearance at Covent Garden in the role of Othello. A playbill of 1833. 187

All illustrations courtesy of The Folger Shakespeare Library

The Text of
THE TRAGEDY OF
OTHELLO, THE MOOR
OF VENICE





THE TRAGEDIE OF

Othello, the Moore of Venice.

Actus Primus. Scena Prima.

Enter Rodrigo, and Iago.

Roderigo.

Ever tell me, I take it much unkindly
That thou (*Iago*) who hast had my purse,
As if y^e strings were thine, shouldst know of this.
Ia. But you'l not heare me: If euer I did dream
Of such a matter, abhorre me.

Rodo. Thou told'st me,
Thou did'st hold him in thy hate.

Iago. Despise me
If I do not. Three Great-ones of the Cittie,
(Is personall suite to make me his Lieutenant)
Off-capt to him: and by the faith of man
I know my price, I am worth no worse a place.
But he (as louing his owne pride, and purposes)
Euaues them, with a bumbast Circumstance,
Horribly Suffi; with Epithites of warre,
Non-sutes my Mediators. For certes, saies he,
I haue already chose my Officer. And what was he?
For-sooth, a great Arithmetician,
One *Michael Cassio*, a *Flourentino*,
(A Fellow almost dam'd in a faire Wife)
That neuer set a Squadron in the Field,
Nor the deuision of a Battaille knows
More then a Spinster. Vnlesse the Bookish Theoricke:
Wherein the Tongued Consuls can propose
As Masterly as he. Meere prattle (without practise)
Is all his Souldiership. But he (*Sir*) had th' elections
And I (of whom his eies had seene the prooffe
At Rhodes, at Cyprus, and on others grounds
Chieffen'd, and Heathen) must be be-leed, and calm'd
By Debitor, and Creditor. This Counter-caster,
He (in good time) must his Lieutenant be,
And I (bless the marke) his Mooreships Auntient.

Rodo. By heauen, I rather would haue bin his hangman.

Iago. Why, there's no remedie.

'Tis the custie of Seruice;
Preferment goes by Letter, and affection,
And not by old gradation, where each second
Stood Heire to th' first. Now Sir, be iudge your selfe,
Whether I in any iust terme am Affin'd
To loue the *Moore*?

Rodo. I would not follow him then.

Iago. O Sir content you.
I follow him, to serue my turne vpon him,
We cannot all be Masters, nor all Masters

Cannot be truly follow'd. You shall marke
Many a durious and knee-crooking knaue;
That (doting on his owne obsequious bondage)
Weares out his time, much like his Masters Aile,
For naught but Prouender, & when he's old Casheer'd.
Whip me such honest knaues. Others there are
Who trum'd in Formes, and visages of Dutie,
Keepe yet their hearts attending on themselves,
And throwing but shewes of Seruice on their Lords
Doe well thine by them.

And when they haue lin'd their Costes
Doe themselves Homage.

These Fellowes haue some soule,
And such a one do I professe my selfe. For (*Sir*)
It is as sure as you are *Roderigo*,
Were I the *Moore*, I would not be *Iago*:
In following him, I follow but my selfe.
Heauen is my Iudge, not I for loue and dutie,
But seeming so, for my peculiar end:

For when my outward Action doth demonstrate
The native act, and figure of my heart
In Complement externe, 'tis not long after
But I will weare my heart vpon my sleues
For Dawes to pecke at; I am not what I am.

Rodo. What a full Fortune do's the Thicke-lips owe
If he can carry't thus?

Iago. Call vp her Father;
Rowle him, make after him, poyson his delight,
Phoclaim him in the Streets. Incense her kinsmen,
And though he in a fertile Clymate dwell,
Plague him with Flies: though that his Ioy be Ioy,
Yet throw such chances of vexation on't,
As it may lose some colour.

Rodo. Heere is her Fathers house, Ile call aloud.
Iago. Doe, with like timerous accent, and dire yell,
As when (by Night and Negligence) the Fire
Is spied in populous Citties.

Rodo. What hoa: *Brabantio*, Signior *Brabantio*, hoa.
Iago. Awake: what hoa, *Brabantio*: Theeues, Theeues,
Looke to your house, your daughter, and your Bags,
Theeues, Theeues.

Bra. Above. What is the reason of this terrible
Summon? What is the matter there?

Rodo. Signior is all your Familie within?

Iago. Are your Doores lock'd?

Bra. Why? Wherefore ask you this?

Iago. Sir, y^e are to be put on your Guard,
Your