

Shakespeare | Othello

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William Shakespeare
Othello, the Moor of Venice

Herausgegeben von Lutz Walther

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Table of Contents

Othello, the Moor of Venice 6

Appendices

Critical Approaches to the Drama 163

Racism and Violence Against Women Today 185

The World of William Shakespeare 194

Editorial note 201

Bibliography 202

Dramatis Personæ

OTHELLO, a noble Moor in the service of the Venetian State

BRABANTIO, a Senator of Venice and Desdemona's father

CASSIO, Othello's Lieutenant

5 IAGO, Othello's Ancient

RODERIGO, a Venetian Gentleman

DUKE OF VENICE

Other Senators

MONTANO, Othello's predecessor in the government of

10 *Cyprus*

GRATIANO, Brother of Brabantio

LODOVICO, Kinsman of Brabantio

Clown, Servant to Othello

DESDEMONA, Brabantio's daughter and Othello's wife

15 EMILIA, Iago's wife

BIANCA, a Courtesan

*Sailor, Messenger, Herald, Officers, Gentlemen, Musicians,
and Attendants*

Scene: Act I, Venice; Acts II–V, Cyprus.

1 **Dramatis Personæ:** list of characters. | 2 **Moor:** Muslim from North Africa. |
4 **lieutenant** [leɪ'tenənt]: *Leutnant*. | 5 **Iago:** short for: (Sp.) Santiago. | **ancient:**
i. e. ensign [ˈɛnsən]: flag-bearer (*Fähnrich*). | 7 **duke:** *Doge* (chief of state in
Venice). | 9 **predecessor:** person who had the same job in the past. |
12 **kinsman:** relative. | 14 **Desdemona** [ˌdezdə'məʊnə]: (Gr.): δυσδαίμων
(dusdaimon), i. e. unfortunate one. | 16 **courtesan:** *Kurtisane*. | 17 **herald:**
messenger. | 18 **attendant:** servant.

Act I

Scene 1

Venice. A Street.

Enter Iago and Roderigo.

RODERIGO. Tush, never tell me, I take it much unkindly
That thou, Iago, who hast had my purse,
As if the strings were thine, shouldst know of this.

IAGO. 'Sblood, but you will not hear me.

If ever I did dream of such a matter,

Abhor me.

5

RODERIGO.

Thou told'st me, thou didst hold him in thy hate.

IAGO. Despise me if I do not: three great ones of the city,

In personal suit to make me his lieutenant,

Oft capp'd to him, and by the faith of man,

I know my price, I am worth no worse a place.

But he, as loving his own pride and purposes,

Evades them, with a bombast circumstance,

Horribly stuff'd with epithets of war:

And in conclusion,

Nonsuits my mediators: for "Certes," says he,

10

15

1 **tush**: expression of irritation or impatience. | 4 **'Sblood**: damned (short for: God's blood). | 6 **to abhor s.o.**: to hate s.o. | 8 **to despise s.o.**: to have no respect for s.o. | 9 **suit** [su:t]: request. | 10 **oft**: often. | **to cap to s.o.**: to take off one's cap/hat politely. | 13 **to evade s.o.**: to avoid s.o. | **with a bombast circumstance**: with exaggerated behaviour. | 14 **to stuff s.th.**: to fill s.th. | **epithet**: *Fachbegriff, Ausdruck*. | 16 **to nonsuit s.o.**: to reject s.o. | **mediator**: *Fürsprecher(in)*. | **certes**: certainly.

“I have already chosen my officer,”
And what was he?
Forsooth, a great arithmetician,
One Michael Cassio, a Florentine, 20
A fellow almost damn’d in a fair wife,
That never set a squadron in the field,
Nor the division of a battle knows,
More than a spinster, unless the bookish theoretic,
Wherein the toged consuls can propose 25
As masterly as he: mere prattle without practice
Is all his soldiership: but he, sir, had the election,
And I, of whom his eyes had seen the proof,
At Rhodes, at Cyprus, and on other grounds,
Christian and heathen, must be lee’d, and calm’d, 30
By debitor and creditor; this counter-caster:
He, in good time, must his lieutenant be,
And I, God bless the mark, his worship’s ancient.

RODERIGO.

By heaven I rather would have been his hangman.

IAGO. But there’s no remedy, ’tis the curse of service, 35

19 **forsooth**: indeed. | **arithmetician**: mathematicians were highly regarded in the military. | 20 **Florentine**: from Florence (since Venice and Florence were independent states, a Florentine was a foreigner). | 21 **damn’d in a fair wife**: based on the Italian proverb *L’hai tolta bella? Tuo danno* (‘you married a beauty? that is your own fault’). | 22/23 **squadron, division**: military units. | 24 **spinster**: here (pej.): unmarried woman. | 25 **toged**: wearing a toga (i. e. not being a military expert). | **to propose**: to debate. | 26 **prattle**: chatter. | 30 **heathen** [‘hi:ðn]: *heidnisch*. | **to lee s.th.**: *etwas in den Windschatten stellen*. | 31 **debitor**: person who owes money to s.o. | **creditor**: person to whom s.o. owes money. | **counter-caster**: *Rechentafelschieber, Erbsenzähler*. | 33 **God bless the mark**: God help me. | **his worship’s**: *seiner Ehren*. | 34 **hangman**: *Henker*. | 35 **remedy**: help. | **curse**: *Fluch*.

Do themselves homage, those fellows have some
soul,

And such a one do I profess myself, ... for sir, 55

It is as sure as you are Roderigo,

Were I the Moor, I would not be Iago:

In following him, I follow but myself.

Heaven is my judge, not I for love and duty,

But seeming so, for my peculiar end. 60

For when my outward action does demonstrate

The native act, and figure of my heart,

In complement extern, 'tis not long after,

But I will wear my heart upon my sleeve,

For doves to peck at: I am not what I am. 65

RODERIGO.

What a full fortune does the thicklips owe,

If he can carry 't thus!

IAGO.

Call up her father,

Rouse him, make after him, poison his delight,

Proclaim him in the street, incense her kinsmen,

And though he in a fertile climate dwell, 70

Plague him with flies: though that his joy be joy,

Yet throw such changes of vexation on 't,

As it may lose some colour.

54 **to do s.o. homage** [ˈhɒmɪdʒ]: to show respect to s.o. | 55 **to profess s.th.:** *sich zu etwas bekennen*. | 60 **peculiar end:** private purpose. | 61 **outward:** *äußerlich*. | 62 **native:** here: true, natural. | 63 **complement extern:** visible appearance. | 64 **to wear your heart upon your sleeve:** to speak your mind. | 65 **dove:** pigeon. | **to peck:** to pick. | 66 **fortune:** luck. | **to owe s.th.:** to own s.th. | 67 **to carry s.th. thus:** here: to be successful. | 68 **to rouse s.o.:** to wake s.o. up. | 69 **to proclaim s.o.:** here: to call s.o. a traitor. | **to incense s.o.:** to make s.o. angry. | 70 **to dwell:** to live. | 71 **to plague s.o.:** to annoy s.o. | 72 **vexation:** annoyance.

RODERIGO. Here is her father's house, I'll call aloud.

IAGO. Do, with like timorous accent, and dire yell, 75

As when, by night and negligence, the fire
Is spied in populous cities.

RODERIGO. What ho! Brabantio, Signior Brabantio, ho!

IAGO.

Awake! what ho, Brabantio! thieves, thieves, thieves!
Look to your house, your daughter, and your bags. 80

Thieves, thieves!

(Brabantio at a window.)

BRABANTIO.

What is the reason of this terrible summons?

What is the matter there?

RODERIGO. Signior, is all your family within?

IAGO. Are all doors lock'd?

BRABANTIO. Why, wherefore ask you this? 85

IAGO. Zounds, sir, you are robb'd, for shame put on your
gown,

Your heart is burst, you have lost half your soul;

Even now, very now, an old black ram

Is tupping your white ewe; arise, arise,

Awake the snorting citizens with the bell, 90

Or else the devil will make a grandsire of you,

Arise I say.

BRABANTIO. What, have you lost your wits?

75 **timorous**: fearful. | **dire**: terrible. | **yell**: shout. | 76 **negligence**: care-
lessness. | 77 **to spy s.th.**: to discover s.th. | **populous**: populated. |

82 **summons**: call (to appear). | 86 **zounds**: damned (short for: by God's
wounds). | **for shame**: *pfui*. | **gown** [gəʊn]: dress. | 88 **ram**: male sheep. |

89 **to tup s.o.**: *jdn. bespringen, decken*. | **ewe** [ju:]: female sheep. | 90 **to snort**:
to snore. | 91 **grandsire**: grandfather. | 92 **wits** (pl.): mind.

RODERIGO. Most reverend signior, do you know my voice?

BRABANTIO. Not I, what are you?

RODERIGO. My name is Roderigo.

BRABANTIO. The worse welcome; 95

I have charg'd thee, not to haunt about my doors;

In honest plainness thou hast heard me say

My daughter is not for thee; and now in madness,

Being full of supper, and distempering draughts,

Upon malicious bravery, dost thou come 100

To start my quiet?

RODERIGO. Sir, sir, sir, –

BRABANTIO. But thou must needs be sure

My spirit and my place have in them power,

To make this bitter to thee.

RODERIGO. Patience, good sir.

BRABANTIO.

What, tell'st thou me of robbing? this is Venice, 105

My house is not a grange.

RODERIGO. Most grave Brabantio,

In simple and pure soul I come to you.

IAGO. Zounds, sir, you are one of those that will not serve

God, if the devil bid you. Because we come to do you

service, you think we are ruffians, you'll have [110] your

daughter cover'd with a Barbary horse; you'll have your

93 **reverend**: respectable. | 96 **to charge**: here: to command. | **to haunt**: here: to hang around. | 97 **in plainness**: openly, clearly. | 99 **distempering draught**: intoxicating drink. | 100 **malicious**: evil, bad. | **bravery**: great courage. | 101 **to start s.th.**: to disturb s.th. | 102 **must needs**: must absolutely. | 106 **grange**: isolated country house. | **grave**: serious, here: respectable. | 109 **to bid s.o.**: to order, to command s.o. | 110 **ruffian**: person who likes to fight. | 111 **to cover s.o.**: *hier: jdn. bespringen, decken.* | **Barbary**: Berber...

nephews neigh to you; you'll have coursers for cousins,
and gennets for germans.

BRABANTIO. What profane wretch art thou?

IAGO. I am one, sir, that comes to tell you, your daughter, [115]
and the Moor, are now making the beast with two backs.

BRABANTIO. Thou art a villain.

IAGO. You are a senator.

BRABANTIO.

This thou shalt answer, I know thee, Roderigo. 120

RODERIGO. Sir, I will answer anything. But I beseech you,
If't be your pleasure, and most wise consent,
(As partly I find it is) that your fair daughter,
At this odd-even and dull watch o' the night,
Transported with no worse nor better guard, 125
But with a knave of common hire, a gondolier,
To the gross clasps of a lascivious Moor:
If this be known to you, and your allowance,
We then have done you bold and saucy wrongs.
But if you know not this, my manners tell me, 130
We have your wrong rebuke. Do not believe
That from the sense of all civility,
I thus would play and trifle with your reverence.
Your daughter (if you have not given her leave,

112 **nephew**: here: grandson. | **to neigh** [neɪ]: sound made by horses. |
courser: a fast horse. | 113 **gennet**: a small Spanish riding horse. | **german**:
close relative. | **profane**: ungodly. | 114/118 **wretch**, **villain**: bad guy. |
117 **to make the beast with two backs** (fig.): to have sex. | 121 **to beseech**
s.o.: to beg s.o. | 122 **consent**: approval. | 124 **odd-even**: neither night nor
morning. | **watch**: guard. | 126 **hire**: *Anmietung*. | 127 **gross** [grəʊs]: rude. |
clasp: *Umarmung*. | **lascivious**: lustful. | 128 **allowance**: permission. |
129 **saucy**: *dreist, frech*. | 131 **rebuke**: *Tadel*. | 132 **civility**: decent behaviour. |
133 **to trifle with s.th.**: to treat s.th. without respect. | 134 **leave**: permission.