

Shakespeare's Creative Writing: Biblical Allusion & Literary Imagination - Focusing on *The Merchant of Venice*

In-kyung Hwang

Research Professor

Dept of English and Literature

Sungkyunkwan Univ. Seoul, South Korea

Abstract

In Shakespeare's The Merchant of Venice, we can see his creative process. He tried to persuade the Elizabethan Compromise to harmonize division of England being supported by Queen Elizabeth I. Even in Shakespeare's day, the language of biblical allusion & literary imagination was beginning poetic drama. Analyzing the speeches of The Merchant of Venice, we assume that he created and imagined from the biblical text. Although the play is not Protestantism mentos, it is written expressions of the character who speaks to them. The theories of pragmatic in Christian allegory will help us to see through the discourse of the narrator, a form of the political liberation from Jesus's birth. Shakespeare must create his comedy, The Merchant of Venice to harmonize the disruptive in political and religious. We cannot interpret literal meaning but presume the contexts.

keywords: Biblical Allusion, The Elizabeth Compromise, literary imagination, The Merchant of Venice

Introduction

William Shakespeare was born when Protestantism had been established as a national religion by Tudor Dynasty. Religion was a powerful influence on daily life throughout the sixteenth century. We can see the century into which Shakespeare was born confronted with the drastic split within Western European Christianity into opposing largely two churches with 'Catholic' and "Protestant" Christian. "Over 225 Marian priests who saw themselves as Roman Catholics were active in Yorkshire and Lancashire before 1571 despite losing their positions in the established Church, supported by a fifth column within the official Church that remained willing to proselytize for Rome. . . . Moreover, Elizabeth and Cecil persecuted Catholic clergy, sometimes ferociously, the more so as fears of a Spanish or papal invasion increased.

Over a hundred Catholic priests were barbarically handled in one way or another. (Morgan, p.302) In addition to, although Elizabethan politics were dominated by Elizabethan Compromise, she was a woman, unmarried, heretic, bastard, and challenged as her title and right of succession to the English throne by Mary Stuart, Queen Scots. It was focused on Protestant evangelism, rather than occupying forcibly Catholicism. Elizabeth politics had been dominated for thirty years by the issues of the queen's marriage threatened by the Catholic from Europe because of unfit rule as the Protestant succession.

Above all, we can have assumed the study of Shakespeare's imaginative ability derived from the Bible which is a monument to intertextuality, according to the Gospels with Protestant evangelism. It is not a surprising that Shakespeare's biblical allusions were not remarked on by his earliest critics. He created the characters from the Biblical heroes in rhetoric skillful language depending on the Bible messages. "William Shakespeare was born into a biblical culture. His generation of English men and women born into the 1560's was the first to be able to take the reality of an English bible for granted. (Debra Shugger, eds, 1997:15-45,17). In 1564, the most recent version was the Geneva Bible first printed in 1560's and English version of the Bible was translated secretly by English Protestants during the reign of Catholic Queen Mary. The Geneva Bible was the most popular and English bible was to become the most popular of the next century. It seems that Shakespeare had a copy of English version that he would read. "Shakespeare here alluding to the Geneva Bible translation, since it was the first to use the word husks in this passage¹. The Bishop's Bible was the other most common translation in Shakespeare's lifetime, published in 1568 for the official use of the Elizabethan Church. (Hamlin, p.10). Shakespeare was a user-friendly to Geneva Bible, but he sometimes made use of Bishop's Bible translation. "Not merely had the translation of the bible and the nature of the printed word irrevocably changed the languages where it had occurred, but it had also altered the nature reading itself. No longer was it merely the specialist skill of the cleric; it was now become almost an adjunct to salvation.

¹ "I take this example from Shaheen, 593-4. Shaheen also lists the eighty-odd references that he determines to be translation – specific, i.e., to Geneva, Bishops, or coverdale (pp.38-48). Like any scholar studying Shakespeare's Use of the Bible, I am in constant det to Shaheen. " (Hamlin,p.10)

Reading the bible was not a luxury or an optional extra, but to ‘search the scriptures’ was the plain duty of every Christian person . (Patrickett, p.23) The theme of *The Merchant of Venice* has largely three Christian mottoes: forgiveness, mercy, and charity being derived from the Latin *caritas* (the word used in the Vulgate Bible) is used only in the Bishop’s bible: Geneva, following William Tyndale, would make him create his own style texts. His imagination put the versions of the Bible into creative writing strategy on the surface of the stage. Shakespeare probably favored the Bishops’ in this instance because it allowed him to play within (or have Berowne do so) with the difference between “love” and “charity.”²

¹Shakespeare alludes to the same passage from Romans, again in the Bishops’ translation, in *The Merchant of Venice*, when Portia says facetiously of the Scottish lord that “he hath a neighborly charity in him.” (1.2, 74). Most of the time, however, when the specific translation can be identified (and many passages are indeed identical among the various translations), Shakespeare had the Geneva in mind.” (Hamlin,p.16). It is sure that Shakespeare should know the Bible very well, regardless of Shakespeare’s inner conflict between Catholic and Protestant Church. The battle of Shakespeare’s mind would keep going to believe in Catholicism gaining the ascendancy or a Protestant having been dwindling around Shakespeare. The literary critics continue discussing integration of the Bible into his words from the speeches of his works with the biblical allusions. William Shakespeare would write about allusion and allegory to access to biblical universalism in his comedies: *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *As you Like It*. Under the historical background as English Reformation. Each of these plays ends with solving the conflicts and with happy forgiveness. Although they would have the complex reasons, above all, according to Acts 15:47, “For the Lord gave us this command when he said, I have made you a light to the Gentiles, to bring salvation to the farthest corners of the earth.” Above mentioned before, the motivation of Shakespeare’s creative writing would be derived from the bible message. We have assumed the biblical allusion as follows: “What is everywhere evident is Shakespeare’s awareness of the inevitability of religion in his England. He is attentive to the fundamental, if sometimes fiercely debated terms in which people sought to understand their own lives and their relationships to their families, communities, and God; and he is equally mindful of its sheer ordinariness, as, say, with the reflexive “God b’wi’you” in leaving taking.” (Scott,p.7). Shakespeare created another romance from the biblical analogy in his comedies. His creative heroines solve the entangling problems or cut off their ancestors’ sins as forming the romantic love line with the descendants respectively from the hatred-family or other class family in the hierarchic society between upper and lower class like drawing the courtly love-line in the medieval romance.

England in the period of Shakespeare’s day was a land contrasts largely: Protestant and Catholic Church. They say that Oxford and Cambridge University in London would play a significant role in the early campaign against Luther. However, Henry’s personal affairs” privately breaking down his marriage life with Catherine of Aragon. All of Catholicism had been reformed when Henry made a decision of the divorce with Catherine believed in Catholic, in the absence of a male heir for the future of his dynasty. Parliament which passed through the legislation in England appointed the King as Supreme Head of the Church. Shakespeare’s play followed the turn of events, English style Reformation: Elizabeth had supported Shakespeare who was, ironically, defended Elizabeth Compromise toward *Solar Scriptura*. “Long before Shakespeare’s time there had been religious controversies surrounding those who urged Christians to return to the Bible as a source for beliefs and practices.” (Engel, p. 28) The faith of Protestant Europe would become so deeply ingrained in Shakespeare’s imaginative and creative thinking to help Shakespeare to write his own style texts. He would have the adoption of Protestantism by the standards of the turmoil that had gripped much of Europe in this period, remarkably smooth those days of England although Roman Catholicism remained a powerful religious life from the private man and gentry to aristocracy. Luther’s works were imported into England at an early stage against Aragn Family of Roman Catholic in Henry VIII. The Protestant reading of *The Merchant of Venice* is for a figure of “community” whose cries of Antonio of suffering and protest looking forward to a universality in the roots of the Reformation in England. It is Queen’s England that showed us the appearance of her wisdom in Portia’s wisdom in *The Merchant of Venice*. The cultural context of Christian humanism: individual salvation for respecting free-will appealed for religious reform supporting strongly in Tudor Dynasty. Many of Shakespeare’s key concepts and terms are understandable though process of differentiation from free-variation with the Bible in his imagination.

² This was one of those translation choices that had featured in the battle between Tyndale and Sir Thomas More. Tyndale preferred words, like “love” which were both plain and free of associations with the Established Church. More defended the traditional language, based on the Vulgate, and thought “love” would encourage lasciviousness, from a dayloge of syr Thomas More knyghte. . . . Wyth many other thyngys touching the pestilent sect of Luther and Tyndale by th lone bygone in Sarony[sic], and by tother labored to be brought in To England ([London:J. Rastell], 1529,fo. 80.

The aim of this paper is to offer insight on literary, religious and political background of Shakespeare's England as well as on his play,

The Biblical Allusion: Creative Writing in The Merchant of Venice

According to Literary Director of the Royal Historical Society, Andrew Pettegree, "despairing at the Queen's obstinacy and at the apparent indifference of broad sections of the population to the call to a godlier lifestyle, evangelicals took refuge in brotherhoods and congregations that became increasingly detached from the mainstream church. The frustration of reform measures in the Parliaments of 1571 and 1572 led some into formal separation. In the latter years of Elizabeth's reign Puritanism gave way to sectarian non-conformity, and eventually into outright confrontation with the established church." We can guess Shakespeare might allude that charity and mercy should be fulfilling of the God's law. Coming true the human being's reality. The Protestantism is deeply related to the Reformation as a Solar Scriptura, especially, after epiphany of Jesus Christ. *The Merchant of Venice* starts Antonio's shipwreck at the sea against the storm relating to the story with Paul's shipwreck in *Acts* in New Testament. Scoenbaum's William Shakespeare: A Documentary Life says as follows: "In the name of God Amen William Shakespeare. . . . in perfect health & memories god be prayed doe make & Ordayne this my last will & testament in manner & forme following: that ys to saye ffirst I assuredie believing through thonellie merittes of Jesus Christe my Saviour to be made p[ar]taker of lyfe everlastynge. And my bodye to the Earthe whereof yt ys made³." William Shakespeare began with an expression of faith in his plays. This is a friendly-expression of his own belief to approach the readers or audience. There is a conclusive evidence of New Testament in his own style language. "The transformation of the languages of penance and repentance were at the very center of an unprecedented, astonishing revolution in the forms and conventions of speaking, hence of modes of human relating. Confessing, forgiving, absolving, initiating, searing, blessing, baptizing ordaining - these are a mere few of the speech acts so transformed in the English Reformation. "(Beckwith, p.4)

In Shakespeare's corpus, there are forgiveness, reconciliation, joke and disguise. His language might operate magically rhetoric discourses of the object of much Reformation polemic. He would focus on New Testament; whereas Old Testament consists of Jewish history, Jesus Christ was betrayed by Jewish people because Shakespeare needed to justify Elizabethan compromise and explain the Birth of Jesus the Messiah. In *Acts* in New Testament, during Paul's missionary journey, he confronted with the trouble. "Men", he said, "I believe there is trouble ahead if we go on - shipwreck, loss of cargo, and danger to our lives as well." (*Acts* 27:10.) Whereas, in act 3, scene 1, in *The Merchant of Venice*, *Solanio*. *Now what news on the Rialto?/ Salerio*. *Why, yet it lives there unchecked that Antonio hath a ship of rich lading wracked on the narrow seas.*----- (3.1.1~4). Especially, the Christian reader may recognize that Antonio was a Christian after Paul's missionary journey and Paul arrived at Rome. *Solanio*. . . . *that the good of Antonio, the honest Antonio - O that I had a title good enough to keep his name company! -----(3.1, 12-13.)* Antonio already listened Paul's although each purpose of Paul and Antonio is different journey: Paul's journey is missionary trip. It seems that Antonio is commercial journey, however, if Antonio makes money, he does philanthropic work. *Salarion*. I would it might prove the end of his losses. *Salanio*. Let me say'amem' bedtimes, lest the devil cross my prayer, for here he comes in the likeness of a Jew (3.1., 17-20.) Antonio's friends are worried about his bankrupt because he is generous, honest and confident, and is loved and revered by all the Christians like Paul who wrote thirteen letters: Letters: *Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Phillipians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon*.in New Testament. In *The Merchant of Venice*, we can summarize the brief story telling about Paul in *Acts* and Antonio in that the lady to whom Bassanio has and already told Antonio that he has sown 'a secret pilgrimage' (1.1. 120) will also be the means whereby the prodigal aristocrat Bassanio will pay off his debts to Antonio, to whom he already owns 'the most in money and in love'(1.1. 131). The situation, above in 3.1. is similar with background of *Acts* 27:10~33. Paul confronted with shipwreck on the storm at sea as Antonio's shipwreck's coincidentally, parallels to the Bible. "Likewise, though Paul's epistles were written a generation before the four gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, which recorded the events in Jesus's and Paul's lives, those letters were positioned after the first five books by the editors of the New testament. Paul's epistle to the Romans explores the relationship between Jews and Christians in the course of a theological reflection on the significance of events recorded in the Hebrew Bible and later in the four gospels. (Marx, .p.103) There are allusions activation meanings at the level of communication between author and texts from the Bible.

Shakespeare would make allusion to link his character; Antonio and biblical character, Paul. Paul was bitten by a snake Oct Ad. 59-Feb., Ad 60 (*Acts* 28:1) and, in according to *Acts* 28:1~10, "a poisonous snake attacks and bites him, but he suffers no ill effects, to the amazement of the onlookers."

³ W.J. Lawrence says it is "sheer absurdity" to make Hamlet speak the line after he has spoken with the Ghost, and speculates that the speech was originally written to be delivered "where" "O that this too solid flesh would melt" is now to be found, which would allow the reference to "the undiscovered country" to be "informed with rich dramatic irony" since soon Hamlet would be given evidence of a such a return. (Lawrence, p.57.59)

And in addition to, “Antonio is represented as ‘the very embodiment of Christian love, and Shylock functions as one. . . . antithesis to it.’ Antonio’s carelessness regarding things of this world is founded upon a trust in God’s providence. His self-forgetfulness and humility is based on recognition of man’s common sinfulness. For the sake of love, he is ready to give and risk everything, willing to forgive injuries and embrace enemies.” (Marx, pp.. 107~109). In *Acts 27:13~28:10*, Paul, also confronted with the predicament for shipwreck and snake’s biting the Paul’s hand on the Island of Malta. According to *Acts 28:6*, “Paul shook off the snake into the fire and was unharmed.” Everybody who enjoys reading Shakespeare’s plays know the Merchant of Venice is the remake of *The Jew of Malta* by Thomas Marlowe. Although there was a difference between *The Jew of Malta* and *The Merchant of Venice*, Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice* is similar to it. Not only were Jesus and his followers stripped of their Jewish identity and transformed into anachronistically Christian figure, but also, on the rare occasion that Jews were actually depicted in Renaissance art, their portrayal was far from complimentary. It is sure that *The Jew of Malta* affected *The Merchant of Venice*, however, Shakespeare might not depict anti-Semitism but would like to describe the identity of Protestantism and the Englishness supporting Elizabeth policy, focusing on the individual salvation for Jesus Christ, not Catechism or penance for the Priests from Roman Catholic with the analogy of *Acts 27:13~28:16* in New Testament. The scene of Antonio’s trial has a dramatic climax like that Paul’s episodes have the background of *Acts* with biblical allusion.

The story of the Gospel tells us about celebration, friendship, betrayal, death and resurrection. In *The Merchant of Venice*, there is/are friendship, or/and seemingly like-betrayal, manage to death and revival for Antonio. Above all, the bromance between Bassanio and Antonio is more splendid than any other text. In summarizing some literary criticism, “Bassanio is Antonio’s best pal and the lucky guy who lands Portia, the richest and cutest girl in Belmont. The thing to know about Bassanio is that he loves his lavish lifestyle, but he’s really bad with money, which is why he ends up borrowing from Shylock. When we meet Bassanio, one of the first things out of his mouth is: Bassanio. T’s not know to you, Antonio. How much I have disabled mine estate by something showing a more swelling port. Than my faint means would grant continuance (1.1., 122-125). Antonio’s sufferings could be seen by Bassanio’s betrayal of him, however, Bassanio would try to solve Antonio’s problem: his loan. Bassanio’s life floats up the benefits of his rich friends. Bassanio gets everything he wanted. He predicts the rich wife who is devoted to his happiness and his best friend is saved from Shylock’s vengeful lawsuit. The four Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John are all eyewitness accounts of the life and ministry of Jesus and Paul in New Testament. Each of Books in New Testament record the last of Jesus’s life for the expressed purpose of helping the reader connect with Jesus. Shakespeare took the material of Saul’s being transformed by Jesus Christ’s story and Paul’s believing that Jesus is the savior of the world. *The Merchant of Venice* had been written during the reign of King James’s predecessor, Queen Elizabeth. Antonio is bound to Shylock’s contract. Shylock wants to cut off a pound of Antonio’s flesh if Antonio’s doesn’t repay Shylock such a day. *Shylock. . . . Go with me to a notary; seal me there/ Your single bond, and in a merry sport,/ If you repay me not on such a day/, In such a place, such sum or sums as are/Expressed in the condition, let the forfeit/ Be nominated for an equal pound/ Of your fair flesh, to be cut off and taken / In what part of your body pleaseth me./ Antonio. Content, in faith. I’ll seal to such a bond, / And say there is much kindness in the Jew. (1.3, 140-150).*

The relationship between Shylock and Antonio is counterparts and antagonist. Shakespeare did creative writing for his plays from the Bible, and he especially, his romantic comedies which are always ending happily with good news. He put the plot of these plays into his good news including four Gospels from New Testament. “Shakespeare’s romances bring good news, and they do so in a most immediate sense, as they all have a happy ending. These late plays constitute his good news, his Gospel. Although Shakespeare has constantly in mind the Christian Gospels, he composes, as the supreme and free playwright that he is, a testament (these are his last works) that is truly his: the New Testament of William Shakespeare.” (Boitani,p.1) The relationship between Shylock and Antonio is counterparts and antagonist. Shylock is a bloodthirsty figure and a single-minded pursuit of a pound of flesh for Antonio’s debt whereas Jesus Christ was bleeding for the human beings and has done in dying for all sinned. “I was circumcised when I was eight days old. I am a pure-blooded citizen of Israel and a member of the tribe of Benjamin- a real a Hebrew if there ever was one! I was a member of Pharisees, who demand the strictest obedience to the Jewish Law.” (*Philippians 3:5*) A Pharisee is a symbol of an insincere and logical person without heart. Shakespeare depicted Shylock as a miserly cruel and prosaic figure as Pharisee’s from biblical allusion. “Outwardly you look like righteous people, but inwardly your hearts are filled with hypocrisy and wickedness.” (*Mathew 23:28*). Shylock insists that be real humanistic religion and he likes the phrase, “eye for eye; tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot,” (*Exodus 21:24*) and he calls as the cruelty of Venetian citizens. However, Shylock is changing a primarily positive light after Portia’s wisdom.

Therefore prepare thee to cut off the flesh./ Shed thou no bood, not cut thou less nor more/ But just a pound of flesh, If thou task’st more/Or less than a just pound, be it but so much/ As makes it light or heavy in the substance/ Or the division of the twentieth part/ Of one poor scruple ---- nay, if the scale do turn/ but in the estimation of a

hair ---- / *Thou diest, and all thy goods are confiscate.* (4.1., 323-331). Shylock like a poisonous snake attacks Antonio and would like to cut off his flesh, but Antonio suffers no ill effect. Shylock also fashions himself with biblical allusion. This is an aspect of his identification with 'our people,' the Jews, known by Renaissance European as 'people of people.' His 'ancient grudge' against Christians is expressed by a mocking reference to the gospel account of Jesus exorcizing demons into the Gadarenes swine. (1.3.31-2). He tells a lengthy version of the Genesis story of Jacob tricking Laban with sharp business practice, not only to justify his own collection of interest but to link himself with the namesake of the nation of Israel. (1.3.70-80). (Marx, p.104). The story *The Merchant of Venice* told by Shakespeare ends with Antonio's hardship, friendship, Portia's wisdom, and revenge into forgiveness with mercy. According to the general doctrine of Reformation, "sins were no longer counted against that he was a sinner, and it was in virtue alone of Christ's imputation of righteousness to the undeserving sinner that sin was gratuitously, graciously, divinely forgiven." It is more important to examine the procedure of forgiveness in Shakespeare's comedies. The theme of forgiveness includes a charity which should follow the words of the bible message. Through the telling from the bible Shakespeare retold the moral, social, spiritual and legal aspects by creating the characters' conversation. We can see Portia try to get the charity in *The Merchant of Venice*.

"Forgiveness was declared on god's behalf by his authorized officers. The Priest absolution declared the sinner relieved of the 'culpa' and the 'poena' of sin. but the reformation in Europe began, almost accidentally, as David Steinmetz suggests, as a debate about the word for 'penitence. Penance was to be not so much a set of actions (the agitate poenitentiam of the Vulgate) but repentance, translating metanoia, the turning of returning of the whole mind and soul and life to God. "(Beckwith, p.2). We can also see there are the biblical complexity and variety of the themes and forms that would inspire Shakespeare in *The Merchant of Venice*. *Portia. Why this bond is forfeit./ And lawfully by this Jew may claim/*

A pound of flesh, to be by him cut off/Nearest the merchant's heart. Be merciful./ Take thrice thy money: bid me tear the bond. (4.1.229-233)/ Portia tries to persuade Shylock who is filled with reason. Portia. A pound of that same merchant's flesh is thine. The court awards it, and the law doth give it --- Portia tries to persuade Shylock who is filled with reason.

Portia. A pound of that same merchant's flesh is thine. / The court awards it, and the law doth give it ---Shylock. Most rightful judge! (4.1.215-221) Portia speaks out logically to a logical Shylock who is like a legalist. Portia. It must not be. There is no power in Venice. / Can alter a decree established./ 'Twill be recorded for a precedent./ And many an error by the same example/Will rush into the state. It cannot be/Shylock. A Daniel comes to judgement! Yea, a Daniel! / O wise young judge, how I do honor thee!/(4.1.215-221)

Daniel is the young biblical hero who secured justice for Daniel in Old Testament. Shylock, even like a Pharisee recognize and respect Daniel. Portia appeals 'the mercy' to Shylock softly and strongly. *Portia. Tarry a little; there is something else./ This bond doth give thee here not jot of blood./ The words expressly are "a pound of flesh."/Take then, thy bond, take thou thy pond of flesh,/ But in the cutting it, if thou dost shed./ One drop of Christian blood, thy lands and goods/Are by the laws of Venice confiscate/Unto the state of Venice. (4.1., 304-309)./ Portia speaks to Shylock steadfastly with the cold legal not to drop a Christian blood. "We can consider 'no pity; life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.'" (*Deuteronomy 19:21*). There are some kinds of interpretation about *Deuteronomy 19:21* meant pecuniary compensation. The other person asked those who would take the words literally how they would enforce equal justice where a blind man put out the eye of another man, or amputee cut off the hand of another, or where a lame person broke the leg of another. The school of Rabbi Ishmael cited the words "so shall it be given to him' in *Leviticus 24:20*, and deduced that the word 'give' could apply only to pecuniary compensation." It means the words 'hand for hand' in *Deuteronomy 19:21* to mean than an article was give from hand to hand, namely 'money' by the Bible researchers. Shylock makes use of *Deuteronomy 19:21* or *Leviticus 24:20* to Antonio blaming the Christian. *Shylock. [Aside] How like a fawning publican /he looks. / I hate him for he is a Christian; But more, for that in low simplicity, He lends out money gratis, and brings down (2.3, 38-41) In Shylock's speech, publican means that sometimes glossed as a Roman tax-gather, as in *Matthew 11:17, Luke 18:10*, and sometimes as an Elizabethan inn keeper. Shylock may use it as a random but right time and right place of reproach than the Bible. "Fawning publican indicates that probably an allusion to the humble publican, or tax collector, who prays in contrast with the self-righteous Pharisee (*Luke 18:9-14*), with a reference as well to obsequious innkeepers. Antonio may enter sad and downcast." (Halio, p.120).**

Shakespeare would create Shylock who is a Judaist and he would consider the speech of Shylock supporting Elizabethan Compromise. He created the interweaving of politics and passion with the biblical allusion to reconcile the contrast cultures. Antonio takes out a loan from the money lender Shylock. The loan will be repaid when Antonio's ships return to the city (Rome in *Acts* in New Testament).

If they should fail and the money cannot be pay back to Shylock, Antonio shall give to Shylock a pound of his own flesh. And they do fail. Finally, Shylock grasps his bond. We can see 'his bond' under the logical and reasonable principle with the tree-knowledge in the story of Adam and Eve from *Genesis 31:24*. There are the original symbol of committing a guilty against God's promise. The most pastors or priests say from the bible, God is the rule and

humanity is created to live in and rule God's loving authority. We all reject the ruler –god by trying to run life our own way without him. This rebellious, self-sufficient attitude is what the Bible calls 'sin'. The Bible promises that God accepted Jesus's death as payment in full for our sins and raised him from the dead. Our sins can be forgiven through Jesus' death, and we can make a fresh start with God. And then we can experience the joy of a new relationship with God. Therefore mercy is from God's grace. *Portia. The quality of mercy is not strained;/*

It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven/Upon the place beneath. It is twice blest;/ When mercy seasons justices. Therefore, Jew/, Though justice be thy plea, consider this,/ That, in the course of justice, none of us/Should see salvation : we do pray for mercy;/ and that same prayer doth teach us all to render/This deeds of mercy. I have spoke thus much/ To mitigate the justice of the plea;/ (4.1, 181-120) To harmonize the contrast cultures is to mercy and forgiveness. It is sure that, those days, the playwrights would like to find out the common feature between Judaism/Catholic and Christian with the political, social and theatrical history. And their plays or texts suggested that they should avoid the conflict between political and religious situations those days. Daniel is the hero of the Protestant and Catholic Church even though Judaism embraces him. Jewish, Protestant and Catholic believers likes Daniel so Shakespeare that would try to find out the universal feature within the English Community.

Portia scolds Shylock with her wisdom from the Biblical message; eye for eye ; teeth for teeth' in Old Testaments, and with her phrase how to forgive, making him have charity. The huge changes in the understanding of the state of being forgiven transformed the offices, institutions, and practices of forgiveness, which is related to the mercy suggested by Shakespeare. *Portia. What merch can you render him, Antonio? / Grazio. A halter, gratis. Nothing else, for God's sake! / Antonio. So please my lord the Duke and all the court/ To quit the fine for one half of his goods, / I am content,/. . . /He presently become a Christian;/. . . /Unto his son Lorenzo and his daughter./ . . Shylock. I am content, . . . I will sign it. (4.1.375-390)*

Mercy and forgiveness belong to the heaven so those who, at least, believe in Jesus Christ bonds to the territory of Kingdom. They are free from the past sins and get eternity. It teaches us *John 17:16~17*: They do not belong to this world any more than I do. Make them holy by your truth; teach them your word, which is truth. “

Antonio would have pushed through his plight and trial. Finally, Shylock deserved punishment and Antonio cuts off a pound of his flesh, however, it seems that they are asking for mercy on the basis of Jesus's death in their place. That is actually submitting to Jesus. Shylock's bond changes into God's bond. Similarly, Paul in *Acts* experienced in his missionary Journey and suffered from ordeal around him: he was arrested in Jerusalem and met the storm at sea and surviving on the shipwreck and snake's biting him on the Island of Malta. Finally, Paul arrived at Rome and preaching; “So I want you to know that this salvation from God has also been offered to the Gentiles, and they will accept it.” (*Acts 28:29*). *The Merchant of Venice* shows us Evangelism: opening the suggestion of Shylock's conversion to Christian. The procedure of Shylock's conversion is similar to the name of Saul changed to that of Paul. Shylock's conversion and persuade make Portia's strong speech activate in *The Merchant of Venice*, which has the similar feature of Queen's Tilbury Speech and Elizabethan Compromise. We have assumed that in order to be successful to preach, “Jesus is the savior of the world,” which were accomplished by the substitute Paul, Antonio. Especially, the Christian reader may recognize that Antonio was a Christian after Paul's missionary journey and Paul arrived at Rome. We have presumed that Antonio already listened to Paul's preach.

Conclusion

It is noticeable that Shakespeare was supporting the Elizabethan Compromise to identify the nation of England and the Church of England with his use of the Bible through *The Merchant of Venice*. Richmond says in his *Shakespeare's Biblical Knowledge, The Merchant of Venice*, contains more biblical allusion s than any other play by Shakespeare. Allusion is usefully defined as a device whereby a speaker or writer explicitly activate[s] an earlier text as part of the new system of meaning and aesthetic value of his own text. Allusion takes place at two levels. One is among characters on stage. They may refer to the Bible simply because its phraseology is so widely embedded in the language of their culture, or they may do it purposefully. . . . The allusion is intended to comfort, flatter, and amuse the older man both with piety and with wit. (Marx, p. 104)

We can keep going to rebel against God and shylock lives to his own way without Him. The end of the result is that God gives us what we ask for and deserve. It seems that God condemns Shylock for his rejection of god's rightful rule over his lives. His sin is forgiven by God. So if we turn back to God and appeal for mercy, trusting in Jesus' death and resurrection, then everything changes: the mood of reconciliation and mercy controlling out of Roman Empire in Tudor Dynasty to identify the Protestant Church focusing on the epiphany of Jesus Christ in New Testament. Ancient liberties would harmonize Catholic Church within the territory of England including Scotland. Turning to the Bible, there is something Gospel in Shakespeare's own style or imaginative creative writing to make the England be independent of the Roman Catholic. Antonio in *The Merchant of Venice* and Paul in *Acts* in New Testament tried to solve the complicated problem in the past sins.

Jesus's Triumphant Entry in *John 12: 12~13* suggests to us that Shakespeare would create the probability for his characters: Antonio, Portia, and Shylock, etc. We will respond with our will to believe in what Shakespeare created. Portia is wise like Daniel in Old Testament; Shylock recognizes Daniel is a good jury. Portia is a witness for Antonio's acts and behaviors like Mary Magdalene and the other Mary in *Matthew 27: 55 ~ 28:19* and Daniel's insight in *Daniel 5:14*, in the Old Testament. Religion does not mark explicitly in his plays; however, the reformers must insist Solar Scripture through *The Merchant of Venice*, reminding as follows:

The next day, the news that Jesus was on the way to Jerusalem swept through the city. A large crowd of Passover visitors took palm branches and went down the road to meet him They shouted, "Praise god!" blessings on the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hail to the King of Israel! (*John, 12:12~13*).

The study of Shakespeare and the Bible overlaps with the study of Shakespeare and religion because the Bible is the center of the Protestant Christianity to compromise the Catholic believers in the England. Tudor Dynasty supported the sound scale of English Protestants by the playwrights who depicted the characters, disciples, apostles, or writers of the Bible. Shakespeare created the characters and his play-texts with more allusion to particular and historical facts with characters' speech than his readers commonly suppose in religious belief and practice from *The Merchant of Venice* He composed the biblical allusions in his literary imagination on the text of them. Therefore, to understand the play-texts of his Comedy, not literal meaning but pragmatics, we can see his historical background and peripheral knowledge and how to create it.

References

- Alter, Robert. 1980. *The pleasures of Reading in an Ideological Age*. New York: Simon & Schuster,
- Beckwith, Sarah. 2012. *Shakespeare and the Grammar of Forgiveness*. New York: Cornell University.
- Biotani, Piero. 2013. *The Gospel according to Shakespeare*, translated by Montemaggi, Vittorio. & Jacoff, Rachel. Notredam: Univ. of Notre Dame Press.
- Hamlin, Hannibal. 2013. *The Bible in Shakespeare*. Oxford: OUP.
- Hiscock, Andrew. & Longstaffe, Stephen. eds. 2009. *The Shakespeare Handbook*.
- Engel, William E. *Historical Contexts for the Age of Shakespeare*. New York: Continuum.
- Jesper, David & Prickett, Stephen. eds. 2000. *The Bible Literature*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Kastan, David Scott. 2014. *A Will to Believe: Shakespeare and Religion*. Oxford: OUP.
- McEachern, Claire & Shuger, Debora. eds., 2003. *Religion and Culture in Renaissance England*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- McMullan, Gordon. 2007. *Shakespeare and the Idea of Late Writing: Authorship in the Proximity of Death*. (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press.
- Marx, Steven. 2000. "Dangerous conceits' and 'Proof's of Holy Writ': Allusion in *The Merchant of Venice* and *Paul's Letter to be Romans*", *Shakespeare and the Bible*. New York: OUP.
- _____, *Introduction: 'Kiss the Book, 'Shakespeare and the Bible*. New York: OUP.
- Morgan, Kenneth O. ed. 2010. *The Oxford History of Britain*. New York: OUP.
- Orgel, Stephen. 1975. *The Illusion of Power: Political Theatre in the English Renaissance* Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Shakespeare, William. 2010. Drakakis, John. ed., *The Arden Shakespeare, The Merchant of Venice*. New York: Bloomsbury Publishing.
- _____. 2008. Halio Jay L. ed., *The Merchant of Venice*, New York: OUP.
- _____. 1998. Myrick, Kenneth. ed., *The Merchant of Venice*. New York: Signet Classic.
- [Bible]
- Kim Wuiwon, ed., 2004. *Korean-English Bible NIV*, (Seoul: Bible House)
- Laurie, Greg. ed., *New Believer's Bible, New Living Translation*, Carol Stream: Tyndale House Publishers.
- The Committee on Bible Translation, 1997. *Application Study Bible, New International Version*. Carol Stream & Grand Rapids, Tyndale House Publishers.