Beyond the Religious and the Secular: The Hybrid Nature of Forgiveness in Early Modern Drama

Salim Eflih Al-Ibia

Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Follow this and additional works at: http://knowledge.library.iup.edu/etd

Recommended Citation
http://knowledge.library.iup.edu/etd/921

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by Knowledge Repository @ IUP. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses and Dissertations (All) by an authorized administrator of Knowledge Repository @ IUP. For more information, please contact cclouser@iup.edu, sara.parme@iup.edu.
STUDENT HAS RESTRICTED ACCESS TO FULL TEXT OF THE DISSERTATION.

ONLY COVER PAGES AND ABSTRACT ARE AVAILABLE AT THIS TIME
BEYOND THE RELIGIOUS AND THE SECULAR: THE HYBRID NATURE OF FORGIVENESS IN EARLY MODERN DRAMA

A Dissertation
Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy

Salim Efluh Awwad Al-Ibia
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
December 2013
We hereby approve the dissertation of

Salim Eflih Awwad Al-Ibia

Candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

__________________________
Christopher R. Orchard, D.Phil.
Professor of English, Chair

__________________________
Thomas J. Slater, Ph.D.
Professor of English

__________________________
Michael T. Williamson, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of English

ACCEPTED

__________________________
Timothy P. Mack, Ph.D.
Dean
School of Graduate Studies and Research
This dissertation provides a comprehensive definition of forgiveness and presents a theory of reading forgiveness as it applies the proposed theory to early modern drama. Forgiveness, as I define it, is a relationship of two singularities; a victim and guilty party, in which the decision of granting forgiveness becomes an exclusive right of the victim or the person offended. I theorize that we can separate out this relationship into either secular or religious categorizations based on the motives or the manner in which forgiveness is granted by man to man or withheld from one by another; if forgiveness is granted or withheld due to a humane sentiment rather than divine sentiment or commands, we are speaking of a secular relationship of forgiveness; if forgiveness is granted due to a theological sentiment or commands, we are speaking of a religious relationship of forgiveness. However, there are some other cases in which forgiveness can be seen as neither secular nor religious. But rather, we can see it as hybrid form of forgiveness which embraces both theological and secular aspects of forgiveness. Thus, I develop three main categories of forgiveness: secular, theological and hybrid. Then, I define four secular models of forgiveness and two main theological models of forgiveness in an attempt to define secular and theological forms of forgiveness. I also define three hybrid forms of forgiveness, which can be located within a continuum of both secular and religious motivations. Chapter one deals with forgiveness from a theoretical perspective.
It defines forgiveness as a concept and presents my theory of reading forgiveness supported with textual examples from early modern drama. Chapter two rereads forgiveness in William Shakespeare’s comedies. It discusses the false, true and absolute forms of forgiveness in *All’s Well That Ends Well*, *Measure for Measure* and *The Tempest*. Chapter three analyzes forgiveness in Shakespeare’s *Othello* and *King Lear*, and Thomas Heywood’s *A Woman Killed with Kindness*. Chapter four discusses the hybrid motives of withholding forgiveness from the other in Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice* and Christopher Marlowe’s *The Jew of Malta*. Chapter five summarizes and concludes the previous chapters.