Although the Victorian appropriation of Shakespeare has been explored widely in recent scholarship, less attention has been paid to the specific appropriation of *Othello*, a tragedy, by way of oil painting during the middle-Victorian period. Although Shakespeare's plays were popular literary subjects from which many artists drew, it was during this period that Shakespeare's tragedies and history plays garnered the least amount of appropriation; however, these plays provide the types of striking moments of narrative crisis that many artists frequently modeled their work after. As such, oil paintings derived from *Othello* in particular deserve to be observed as works that both memorialize moments of narrative crisis and provide commentary on the inspired artists' own Victorian society in reaction to the Elizabethan period in which *Othello* was written.

In order to do so, I will analyze Shakespeare's tragedy *Othello* in relation to the oil paintings the play inspired throughout the middle-Victorian period as a cross-period examination of gender politics. As such, focus on the extent to which the Victorian paintings compete with or support the gender roles and domestic values made present in the original Elizabethan text is imperative. *Othello* presents its heroine Desdemona in a way that invites study of woman's submissive evolution from daughter to wife through analysis of the marriage plot and the subsequent treatment of women as property.

In their appropriation, painters of scenes from *Othello* confront how Desdemona deserves to be translated to a visual medium in which she will be forever memorialized in accordance to the ideals from which the artist works. In order to examine the ways in which the Victorian artists supported or competed with Shakespeare's ideals, I will observe how the ideals of Victorian society concerning gender roles may have influenced each artists' rendering of scenes from the play. I have selected three oil paintings from the middle-Victorian period to analyze: Charles West Cope's *The Life's Story, Othello, Act I Scene III* (1868), James Clark Hook's *Othello's Description of Desdemona* (1852), and William Salter's *Othello's Lamentation* (1857). Each of these works were selected due to their title's references to both moments of narrative crisis and to Othello's possession of Desdemona specifically through his actions in which she is forced to react.

The conditions by which women were treated as a result of the period's gender politics will, therefore, become apparent in a manner that suggests the ways in which Victorian society engaged with Shakespeare's plays as a source of moral instruction for women.

Gabrielle Stecher
March 25, 2016

As a student passionate about both the history of art and literature, I was interested in composing a multifaceted research project for a course on Shakespeare that could bridge the gap between both visual and literary expressions of gender politics, as well as incorporate my ever increasing interest in the Victorian period. My creation of an interdisciplinary project was not without intent, as I plan for my future studies as a graduate student to focus on the Victorian period, so I wanted my project to be a reflection of my desire to understand the Victorian period to the fullest extent. As such, I desired to devise a way in which I could link each of my interests, and the study of Shakespeare is such a diverse body of scholarship that I found it to be quite possible. Victorian appropriation of Shakespeare's works is a popular subject within the realm of Shakespearean scholarship, but I found that many of his tragedies are often neglected in such study, especially in relation to appropriation by way of visual arts.

The ongoing research for my project concerning Victorian appropriation of Shakespeare's *Othello* developed from two different branches of research: the first concerning gender politics within the primary text itself and the second regarding Victorian oil paintings inspired by the text. First, however, I chose to consult texts that could provide information concerning Victorian appropriation at large. These books, mostly collections of essays, were instrumental in providing a strong groundwork on Victorian appropriation from which I could work and, eventually, be applied to the more specific branch of appropriation concerning Victorian oil paintings inspired by *Othello*. Many of these first reference texts were found by way of the **GIL catalogue** with keywords such as "Victorian appropriation of Shakespeare" and "Shakespeare and the Victorians," and from there, I consulted each books' bibliography or section of suggestions for further reading. It was through **cited reference searching** that I began seeing reoccurring patterns of authors and book titles, and I made sure to incorporate those texts into my research as I found them to be provide both accurate and comprehensive perspectives on the topics my research requires. In order to double check that I was finding resources that were of recent scholarship and would be specifically helpful to my research, I cross referenced the list of materials found in the books' bibliographies with the **World Shakespeare Bibliography Online** database. Doing so

ensured that each source had been published in the relative recent past and contained information specifically related to my interests before I physically located each book in the library.

Once I created a base of knowledge concerning general Victorian appropriation of Shakespeare, I began researching gender politics within *Othello*. First, I consulted the **GIL catalogue** once more in order to find a scholarly edition of the primary text that combined both quarto and the First Folio versions of *Othello* from which I could search for quotes appropriate for the framing of my interpretation of gender politics within the play. As I needed to find information concerning Desdemona's submissive evolution from daughter to wife, I was interested in consulting scholarly journal articles for *Othello* specific criticism. I initially used both **Project Muse** and **Literature Online (LION)** with success, and I eventually used the same keywords to search for bibliography entries of related sources in the **World Shakespeare Bibliography Online**. Bibliography entries for books that seemed relevant to this strain of my research were then used to locate these books through the **GIL catalogue**.

In order to find materials that related to gender politics in the period in which Shakespeare was writing, I consulted **WorldCat** in order to find sources of historical information that were not necessarily specifically concentrated on Shakespeare, but that could be helpful in an eventual cross-period analysis concerning the society in which Shakespeare was inspired to incorporate such dynamic gender politics in his work. I also utilized the **GIL Express Request service** in order to request one of these texts that was unavailable for checkout at the library.

The digital media side of my research yielded little overlap between databases, and it was necessary to devise a system that categorized the paintings I encountered in a way that suited my literary focus. I began with the **Folger Shakespeare Library Digital Image Collection (LUNA)**, a specialized digital image collection housing thousands of Shakespeare related images, ranging from photographs of set designs to scans of folio and quarto pages of the texts themselves. In using this database, I was responsible for creating specialized keywords that would narrow my search down to images only of paintings of *Othello* created by English painters during the 19th century. I specifically chose to incorporate

oil paintings into my cross-cultural comparison because of their appeal of being viewed as independent

works, as opposed to prints of engravings that may appear in an edition of the primary text itself. This

way, I am able to approach each painting as the original audience received it as an independent work of

art meant for decorous display, but with a refined literary perspective that is able to understand the

translation of the text from which the artist is inspired to a visual medium that reflects any and all social

influences.

Although **LUNA** was immensely helpful in providing images of Victorian paintings, it seemed to

lack a truly furnished catalogue of Victorian painters' borrowing from *Othello*. I then consulted

Shakespeare Illustrated, a resource devised by the English department at Emory that works to collect

images specifically of artwork related to Shakespeare. Each of these images are organized by play, but the

user also has the option of searching the gallery by artist name. Because I was solely concerned with

paintings of *Othello*, I was quickly able to locate the four works that **Shakespeare Illustrated** has

collected. Interestingly enough, only one of the works listed in the **Shakespeare Illustrated** listing of

Othello was also available on **LUNA**: Charles West Cope's copperplate engraving entitled *Othello*

Relating His Adventures. Unfortunately for my purposes, this work by Cope was not in my preferred oil

on canvas medium; however, my prior studies in art history proved useful as I remembered that often,

artists would often create oil paintings of a scene that were also translated into engravings. My search

then began to find an oil painting of the same subject created by Cope, but neither **LUNA** nor

Shakespeare Illustrated yielded a successful result. I then consulted **ART UK**, a joint initiative between

the United Kingdom's Public Catalogue Foundation and thousands of museums and art collections.

Despite its broad range of subject matter, I was able to refine my search in a way that only resulted in

artwork by Cope concerning *Othello* as its subject. Fortunately, I discovered that Cope also illustrated the

same scene in oil on canvas in 1868. Although it was one of the first databases I utilized, I must mention

that **ARTstor** was not useful in my search for images, as none of the paintings pertaining to my specific

requirements could be located in the database, even with carefully constructed search terms.

Due to the lack in overlap of the digital images found across three different databases, it was

necessary that I create an Excel document that could account for the following information related to each

image: artist name, title of work, year of creation, medium, subject of the work, and the source or

database from which the image was found. After I organized the images in this manner, I began to

recognize patterns across my selection of paintings, despite their various artists and the dates in which

they were created. Many of the titles feature possession of some degree of Desdemona by Othello and are

also indicative of a moment of narrative crisis within the text. After noticing this pattern, I was able to

narrow down the works in which I was to analyze to those that possessed both of these aforementioned

qualities, furthering my intention to discuss the domination of Desdemona and the trials in which she

undergoes within the original text.

In order to aid my technical analysis of the oil paintings, it was important to find resources

concerning styles of Victorian painting and any helpful biographical information about the artists of the

works I chose. I began with "The Arts in Victorian England" bibliography provided by **The Victorian**

Web to generate ideas for sources, which were later refined and checked for validity via the

Bibliography of the History of Art. I also consulted **Art Source** and the **International Bibliography of**

Art, but this search yielded no valuable results pertaining to my specific interests. The **Oxford Art**

Online Encyclopedia was also very helpful in providing biographical information of one of the artists I

selected in relation to Victorian domesticity and the ideals imposed on women.

Although this research endeavor was initially created to fulfill a requirement for my Shakespeare

course, it has proven to be an exciting exercise in independent research in the way that it has encouraged

me to refine my research skills and strategies. The ability to combine the subjects I am passionate about

into one interdisciplinary project has affirmed my love for research, and I am excited to employ my ever

evolving research skills in the future.

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Abstract

Hurricanes have the potential to produce mega mass casualty and mass fatality events in addition to catastrophic structural damage. The state of Georgia is located in an area vulnerable to hurricanes originating in both the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico; however, Georgia's response to a major hurricane has not yet been tested. While forecasting and emergency planning have greatly improved over the past few decades, recent history demonstrates that hurricanes still have the potential to result in catastrophic loss of life. The successful evacuation of coastal healthcare facilities in response to an impending hurricane requires advanced notice, timely decision making, and an unprecedented coordination effort between coastal and inland facilities. However, government planning assumptions do not accommodate the additional challenges faced by coastal healthcare facilities during severe weather evacuations, specifically, the advanced timelines needed, and the limitations of early hurricane forecasting models.