

Evolution of Capitalism and Portrayal of Shylock: A Study in Present Context

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Abstract

The present paper accentuates that The Merchant of Venice is an illustration of William Shakespeare's critique to the newly emerging economic system of his own time. The portrayal of Shylock, in this drama, is the embodiment of a new born bourgeoisie system in which, money is used as the key tool for dominating, exploiting, victimizing, and making commodification of the weaker sections of the society, who are vastly in majority. Shakespeare, being a meticulous observer of the society, demonstrates how mercantile activity was emerging in his days and how the actors of commerce maximize their interest exploiting the masses. This paper is an attempt to demonstrate Shakespeare's view on the economic system of his own time, as we come to see through his presentation of Shylock and we argue that Shylock represents an economic system which resembles very much with the core features of capitalism. And as the leading critic of capitalism, Marx comes to a significant extent in our analysis.

Keywords: Actors, Bourgeoisie, Capitalism, Emerge, Exploit

Introduction

English society, during the time of Shakespeare, was undergoing a significant transformation. Twentieth century historians such as R. H. Tawney and Christopher Hill have demonstrated that a profound economic, social, and cultural revolution was taking place in England during Shakespeare's life time (Hatlen, 1980). Shakespeare in The Merchant of Venice portrays a society, that cherishing a modern

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life, moves towards capitalist ideology. Feudalism that flourished in the middle age was in the last period of its decline while capitalism was in its early stage of flourishing. The tide of Renaissance that began in Italy in the 1300s, gradually spread over different parts of Europe including England in later centuries notably in the 16th century. And in England, the Renaissance was marked with the touch of notable writers like William Shakespeare, Christopher Marlowe, Francis Bacon, Edmund Spenser, Sir Philip Sidney, John Donne, Ben Jonson. Again creative scholars from other fields including Inigo Jones (introduced Italianate architecture to England) and composers like Thomas Tallis, John Taverner, William Byrd, contributed in a big way during the English Renaissance. Peoples' inclination towards new form of life, that is a new born bourgeoisie capitalist society, was one of the key areas to focus by almost all the scholars in the creative fields. The Jew of Malta of Christopher Marlowe, Of Riches, of Francis Bacon written during that time, symbolize the undue importance of 'capital' where the writers illustrate the basic intentions of the traders, and the impact of money, as the most driving force of the society. Capitalism, both the writers argue, cause humiliation to people in different scales. Bacon, for instance, in Of Riches states that a money-lender fattens upon the labor of others and he does not take anything-ethical or religious perspective - into consideration. As he says, "Usury is the certainest means of gain, though one of the worst as that whereby a man doth eat his bread in sudore vultus, alieni and, besides doth plough upon Sundays" (Cited in Lall, 1997). Barbaras in the The Jew of Malta is a money lender like Shylock, who is involved into all sorts of deceptive deeds including stealing, cheating, to execute his interest. Shylock in The Merchant of Venice is the mouthpiece of the capitalist society, portrayed superbly by Shakespeare. Shakespeare due to his prolific genius could have visualized the dominating and exploiting nature of the emerging economic system and depicted Shylock, as the money lender who by dint of his economic solvency succeeds to commodify his fellow people. The triumphant march of capitalism in the present era, thus got a significant speed during Renaissance in Europe (1300-1600) and The Merchant of Venice is a unique illustration how social structures gradually moved towards capitalist ideology with the portrayals of all the major characters, most importantly with Shylock and we argue that Shylock is the reflection of modern capitalism.

This paper consists of three sections. The first section spells out briefly the chronological background of the advancement of capitalism from feudalism keeping some light on its previous stages (primitive and slavery) and the features of capitalism relying on a significant extent to Marxism. The second section explains our point of justifications about why Shylock is termed as the portrayal of capitalism based on the characteristics of capitalism that we tend to discuss in the first section. And the third section seeks to find out the contemporary capitalist characteristics that are apparent in Shylock followed by a conclusion.

Chronological Advancement of Capitalism

The world Shakespeare creates in the Merchant of Venice is more likely to be inclined to a modern life and modernity, argues Marx, (1818-1883), is synonymous with capitalist community production (Ahmed, 2007: 48). Capitalism, for Marx, is a political economic system based on the ownership of private property driven by the chief motive of infinite search for profit (Ibid, 48). Capitalism, has however, been exist in the society in one form or in other in the ancient times. Aristotle, in his Politics argues regarding the basic intention of the traders or merchants that people belonging to the trading class have the sole goal of searching money and hoarding infinite wealth (Karim, 2015). Whenever people came to the practice of exchanging goods, they came to experience about 'profit' and the desire of gaining 'profit' stimulated them to save whatever they could and as such the primary accumulation of capital began to flourish. As alluded to earlier, capitalism as a concept, was inherent in the ancient periods but fully fledged capitalism is usually accepted to have emerged in the sixteenth century in North Western Europe including significantly in England and gradually, it becomes the dominant economic system throughout the world.

As an attester of the evolving economic system (capitalism), Shakespeare writes The Merchant of Venice depicting having all the key components that are explained later specially by Marx as the sole components of capitalism too. The chart explained in the following is the chronological history of the evolvement of capitalism.

Table 1 : Chronology of Social Dynamics and Political Economy-based Reflections

SL	Social Change	Type	Functional Nature	Production System	Economic Expansion and Transaction Limit	Statecraft	Governance
1.	Primitive : Egalitarian /Communism	Classes: Equality, Equity, Social Justice	Social Property, Equal and Equitable efforts, Just Distribution, Simplest Economic and Political Structure	Procuring Economy; Subsistence Level	Rudimentary Market, Barter	No State	Head/ Leader; Military Chief; Elected / Selected by Community
2.	Slavery	Class-based; Fundamental Classes-Master and Slave	Surplus Value Exploitation, Private Property, Class Division, Uneven, Conflict, Leisure and Labor, Master and Slave	Private and Local Consumption, Mercantilism	Mercantile Transaction; Affluent Slave Market	Class State ; Antagonism, Instrument of Coercion and Oppression	Slave-Master Controlled Regime
3.	Feudalism: Primary and Advanced	Class-based; Fundamental Classes- Feudal Lords and Serfs	Land-based Economy, Minor Transaction	Agriculture -based production, Landed Gentry Controlled	Private and Local Consumption; Small Local Markets	Feudal Aristocracy -based	Kingship
4.	Capitalism: Commercial/ Business/ Mercantile, Industrial, Finance	Class-based; Fundamental Classes- Bourgeoisie and Labor/ Proletariat; Non-fundamental Class: Petty Bourgeoisie	Capital, Wage Labor and Bondage. Market, Demand -Supply, Private Profit Motive Orientation	Manufacturing, Factory and Industry and Large Scale Trade	Market-based ; Local, Indigenous, National, Regional, International, Global	Bourgeoisie- Controlled: Liberalism, Neoliberalism Free Market Economy	Commercial Capitalism: Absolutism, Authoritarianism; Industrial Capitalism: Democracy; Finance Capitalism: Pseudo Democracy, Tyranny, Military Dictatorship, State Terrorism

Source: Choudhury, 2017

Illustrated in the light of Marxian perspective, the graph cited above, we argue, is relevant in terms of our basic intention to make out the core principles of feudalism and capitalism. The analysis of the graph reveals the existence of four types of society - old communist, slave society, feudal society, and capitalist society. In the old communist society, belief of the Marxists, the existence of the state was absent, as there was no practice of private property. The state, according to Marxism, for all practical purposes was set up in slave society because in slave society there were two classes - the owners of the slaves and the slaves themselves and the formers needed to establish an organization (state) to protect their riches from the later. Following slave society, emerged feudal society dominated by the land - owners, church, kings. Liberty of people, in the feudalistic society, was extremely controlled. Inclination towards individual freedom therefore fostered and Renaissance is a transition in values, a transvaluation between feudalism and modern capitalism. Usury, abhorred once by the feudal church is now revalued as appropriate to the time (social acceptance of Shylock's usury). According to Burke (1937) the casuistic stretch of the church was revaluation, its "anti - business fiction" became an embrace of the organization of business". The Popes gave their revenues to the Italian bankers for investment (Boje, 2002). Greenbaltt (2004) states that the English officially though declared by statute that usury was illegal under the law of God, the newly emerging mercantile economy could not function without the contribution of money lenders (Nahvi, 2015). Capital thus appeared to be the key player in the game of economics and capitalism evolved with a dynamic stand in different shapes - commercial/business/mercantile, industrial/ finance and Shylock is mostly viewed as the representative of finance capitalism.

Shylock-Mouthpiece of Capitalism

The Merchant of Venice, as a play, argue critics, is the story of the rise of the modern bourgeoisie capitalism. The intention of creating Shylock, raises a strong ambiguity, and it is impossible to definitely know what Shakespeare's intent was in creating the character of Shylock (Ibid). It is nevertheless, understandable that the features with which Shylock is endowed (exploitation, commodification, alienation, unethical victimization), resemble very much in the way that Marx criticizes the modern capitalist society in the Communist

Manifesto. Kenneth Muir (1947), thus put stating "Shakespeare was one of the spiritual god parents of the communist manifesto" (Royanian and Omrani, 2016). Shakespeare uses Shylock to expose his critique to the system of feudal usury but he is more acute to criticize the methods of commercial capitalism that readers find deliberately in explanation of Shylock's character. Alluded to in the prior, as the key intention of the present paper is to find out the elements of capitalism in Shylock's character, we tend to move towards Marxism for sorting out the basic features of capitalism, and in doing so, we will move towards presenting Shylock as the mouthpiece of capitalism.

Characteristics, uttered mostly, inherent in capitalism as Marxism argues, are deliberately brought into analysis by Shakespeare in his several creations including King Lear, Hamlet, two of his most classic dramas. Class oppression, commodification, exploitation, profit-motive, alienation, that are portrayed by Shakespeare in his art of different characterization, have been the key grounds of Marx to criticize the capitalist ideology. Marx reads Shakespeare's plays to create his own philosophy and with a critical point of view presents the negative effects of modern capitalism and its false ideologies through representation of commodification and exploitation. Marx, according to Christan Smith (2012), in his writings, quoted from or alluded to Shakespeare's plays frequently and many of these quotations and allusions occur at significant points in the development of Marxism (Ibid). In King Lear, for instance, Shakespeare shows, how the poor people are punished and the rich cloak their crimes and vices by the power of money. The upper classes enjoy the scope to do so, as they hold the power by dint of money and wealth. Lear says to Gloucester:

"The great image of Authority
A dog's obey'd in office" (IV, vi, 57-58).

In Hamlet, similarly the representatives of the lower classes like Horatio, Barnardo, Marcellus, Guildenstern, Rosencrantz symbolize how people like Hamlet, Claudius, ranking high position, threat and use them to execute their own interest. This is in fact, a trend constructed by the upper class as says, Abraham (2005) "in any

historical era, the dominant ideology embodies, and serves to legitimize and perpetuate, the interests of the dominant economic and social class (Royanian and Omrani, 2016). Shylock, in *The Merchant of Venice* is, of course, without much doubt, the most illustrious delineation, where the salient features of capitalism have almost clearly been demonstrated. He possesses all the key aspects of capitalism that we have so far tried to try point out in the lens of Marx to a great extent.

Money

The investment of money to make profit (Fulcher, 2004), is one of the core characteristics of capitalism. Shakespeare's Shylock, acts throughout the play, keeping a basic intention in his plan and that is to gain as much profit as he can in any way and under any pretext. He is by profession, a money- lender. He tries to enrich himself by lending money to other people demanding high interest. He is obsessed with money- making and does not want money to be spent anyhow but gets pleasure in spending other's money. He is obsessed always with thinking how to gain more profit hoarding more riches and at the same time wasting the money of others as people will come to take loan providing high interest when they fall in the scarcity of money. He exhibits his intention in accepting Bassanio's invitation of dinner to Jessica:

"But yet I'll go in hate, to feed upon
The prodigal Christian" (II, v, 14-15).

We find him possessing this type of mentality again when his servant Launcelot comes to him for telling him to work for Bassanio. He does so, as Launcelot is idle and spends his money eating too much. He is rather happy to see Launcelot squandering away the money of Bassanio who has borrowed money from him. We find him saying:

"Snail-slow in profit, and he sleeps by day
More than the wild-cat: drones hive not with me,
Therefore I part with him, and part with him.
To one that I would have him help to waste
His borrowed purse" (II, v, 46-50).

Accumulation and hoarding money is the prime mission to him. Money, he believes, is the best tool of investment to gain money and he makes the best uses of it, "And all for use of that which is mine own" (I, ii, 108) and dislikes those who come to his way as an obstacle to gain interest. As, he hates Antonio for lending money without interest and thus brings down the rate of interest among the money-lenders in Venice. We get Shylock's soliloquy when Antonio comes to him with Bassanio to lend money:

"I hate him for he is a Christian;
But more, for that in low simplicity
He lends out money gratis, and bring down
The rate of usance here with us in Venice,
If I can catch him once upon his hip,
I will feed fat the ancient grudge" (I, iii, 37, 42).

His hatred towards Antonio is therefore, solely due to clash of monetary interest. Like the typical capitalist, where, profit-making is the core aim to develop relationship with the other people in the society, Shylock is related to the world only through money. According to Mahon, J and Mahon, E (2002) Marx himself condemned Shylock's behavior (Royanian and Omrani, 2016). In the lens of Marxism, Shylock, being a usurer, evaluates every relationship based on money even his own daughter Jessica. When she flies away with gold, money and other things he becomes frantic. His lamentation seems more for money than to his daughter or even at least as much as his ducats. Solanio reveals how Shylock laments after Jessica being escaped:

"My daughter! O my ducats! O my daughter!
Fled with a Christian! O my Christian ducats!
Justice, The law, My ducats, and my daughter" (II, viii, 15-17).

His shock for Jessica might raise pity to the readers but his lamentation and begging for justice to get Jessica back seems questioning to us, when he exposes his core intention of finding her to restore his precious stones and ducats:

"Find the girl,
She hath the stones upon her, and the ducats!" (II, viii, 21-22).

The reaction that we experience in Shylock after losing Jessica widens space for evaluating him more as a typical merchandiser than a hopeless father. He would satisfy himself not getting his daughter back at the cost of everything but his lost money even at the state of her death. He says "I would my daughter were dead at my foot, and the jewel in her ear: would she were hearsed at my foot and the ducats in her coffin" (III, i, 80-83). This sort of exposure reminds us the core feature of capitalist society where relationship of any type is measured from monetary outlook. Marx considers the bourgeoisie as a commercial society where each of its members is a merchant stating "The bourgeoisie has torn away from the family its sentimental veil and has reduced the family relation to a mere money relation. It has converted the physician, the lawyer, the Priest, the poet, the man of science into its paid wage-labourers" (Marx and Engels, 1970).

Commodification

Commodification, one of the core elements of capitalism, is deliberately found in the characterization of Shylock. He is portrayed as a typical merchandiser who possesses an infinite goal to earn as much money as possible. And to do that, he makes relentless exertion to commodify other characters considering them as his own properties. The profit motive inherent in capitalism exerts too much pressure on the human's natural instinct (Ahmed, 2017) and this very feature of capitalism is clearly inherent in Shylock. The way he behaves towards Antonio and others represents that he is a usurer who mostly communicate with people for their exchange value. Even in case of his own daughter, his maltreatment to Jessica makes it clear that she is like his other properties and things (Royanian and Omrani, 2016).

Capitalism makes the individuals unpredictable and unrestrained. Materiality in social milieu, is evident (Ahmed, 2017). People, in the capitalist culture, evaluate every relationship based on material interest and spare none to commodify to execute their interest. Emotion has no place in capitalism and it breaks down emotional bonds within the family; and destroys the sense of community by rendering human relations competitive and aggressive (Ibid). People

being detached from emotional touch that comes from the softness of mind, fail to trust other and try to keep influencing by commodifying their nearest people. This happens to Shylock who trusts none even to his only daughter.

The way Shylock behaves with Jessica seems that she is subjected to be commodified and has to lead her life in the way, he wants. He believes that for getting safety of anything people must bind it fast. And human mind to him, is also not an exception of it .He always tries to exercise this very principle on Jessica confining her into the four walls. We find him saying to Jessica:

"Do as I bid you, shut doors after you,
Fast bind, fast bind,-
A proverb never stale in thrifty mind" (II, v, 52-54).

In trying to shutting the door to restrict Jessica within the four walls to preserve both her and his wealth, he has actually shut the door of love and emotional touch that naturally inherent in the mind of a daughter for her father. Shylock's attempts of commodifying Jessica causes hatred in her mind for him and she was waiting for the opportunity to give it return back to her father. She commodifies Shylock to have his exchange value and 'use' his wealth. By stealing Shylock's money and her elopement with Lorenzo, she like her father, was capable of commodifying and sacrificing others to her convenience (Royanian and Omrani, 2016).

Material prosperity, in fact, demolishes humanitarian qualities from human beings and Aristotle considers people of this type, as greedy who continue earning money through money and desire for unlimited wealth. This greedy class of people deploy all the power of their body and mind to earn money. Earning money is their sole goal in life and tend to commodify everything to achieve their monetary goal (Karim, 2015). In so doing, they spare none to commodify even own children and often lose everything as we come to see in the story of Midas. His excessive greed for gold resulted his daughter to be turned into gold (Ibid, 51). Like Midas, Shylock Considers Jessica an object or a thing and in his attempt to commodify her, he loses Jessica. Modern capitalism in fact increases artificial needs (Ahmed, 2017:48) and instigate people to commodify others for gaining individual or collective profit and this is what we find deliberately in

Shylock and simultaneously, he gets the equal treatment from his daughter, Jessica.

Exploitation and Oppression

It is obvious that every society, every demography would have to go through the process of change of tradition (Choudhury, 2017). But the outcome of the changes goes mostly in favour of the upper classes of the society and on the plea of help and assistance, people having money and power always exploit the lower classes of the society. This is what Marx and Engels put in their Communist Manifesto "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles (Marx and Engels, 1970). They put further "The lower strata of the middle class-the small trades people, shop keepers, and retired tradesmen generally, the handicraftsmen and peasants-all these sink gradually into proletariat party because their diminutive capital does not suffice for the scale on which Modern Industry is carried on" (Ibid, 42). Looking at Shylock, it is noticed that he continues to exploit others due to his financial strength and money, wealth or gold, can only ensure peace and happiness in his life. Referring to the letter of Columbus (1503) who writes "Gold is a wonderful thing! Whoever possesses it is lord of all he wants" (Marx, 1984: 132), Marx illustrates the capitalist inclination to hoard money that comes mostly by exploiting and oppressing other people as we come to see in Shylock in dealing with Antonio.

Shylock, throughout the play, exposes his exploiting mentality and to execute his material interest, he tends to go any extent. When Antonio comes to him to take money for Bassanio, we come to know his motive of exploitation through his soliloquy:

"If I can catch him once upon the hip
I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him" (I, iii, 41-42).

Marx in his Capital states that in a capitalist society "money becomes petrified into a hoard, and the seller becomes a hoarder of money" (Marx, 1984: 131). The capitalist in the lens of Marx, considers money to be the fair tool to increase their wealth. Shylock, too, considers his business of usury sacred as he says:

"My well-won thrift" (I, iii, 45).

Capitalist, according to Marxist ideology, will exploit in any way and under any pretext. Shylock, in this drama, is an exact illustration of this very feature of capitalism. In spite of having sharp hatred towards Antonio, he agrees to provide three thousand ducats. But he lays down the condition that the bond to be signed should contain a clause according to which he would become entitled to cut off a pound of Antonio's flesh from nearest his heart if Antonio fails to repay the loan within a period of three months. He pretends in a manner that this agreement is intended only as a joke because a pound of human flesh can serve no purpose at all and because even the flesh of animals like goats, sheep has greater value than human flesh. So, here too, the question of profit comes. However, he deploys this cunning trick to have the bond signed and he can exploit Antonio, in the way he desires. In case of exploitation, one of the common tricks, most exploiters apply is the citation of religious reference. We find Shylock, citing from Old Testament in favor of his work. When Antonio, comes to his house, we find his motive to take revenge upon Antonio, through his soliloquy that if he leaves Antonio unpunished the Jewish tribe would be cursed. He states:

"Which he calls interest; cursed be my tribe
If I forgive him"! (I, iii, 46-47)

His acute hatred for Antonio, is more for monetary factor than religious one. Antonio lends money without interest which brings down the rate of interest among the money lenders in Venice. But he externally exposes himself to be a good wisher of Antonio. He says to Antonio:

"Rest you fair good signior
Your worship was the last man in our mouths" (I, iii, 54-55).

When Antonio threatens him that he will spit on him again, Shylock maintains a cringing attitude possessing an exploiting thinking in the back of his mind. He says to Antonio:

"Why look you, how you storm!
I would be friends with you, and have your love" (I, iii, 133-34).

While conducting any deal or agreement in business, one party usually is exploited and the capitalists like Shylock thinks, this sort

of act as logical. In Shylock's view, people come to him for getting money and they use their loaned money to achieve any material goal. So, there is no offence to take higher interest and he does not think it as an act of exploitation. His plea is that he earns money with the best use of making his money. He says:

"And all for use of that which is mine own" (I, iii, 108).

To give credibility of the beneficial effects of interest, Shylock explains with the slightly baroque biblical story of Laban's sheep tended by Jacob, where these "wooly breeders" illustrate the way in which money can be bred. To Antonio's sly question "Or in your gold and silver ewes and rams," Shylock replies wittily "I cannot tell, I make it breed as fast" (I, iii, 90-91). Shylock's religious citation to give approval of his interest reminds us the very nature of capitalism which Marx and Engels mention in Communist Manifesto, "The bourgeoisie, whenever it has got the upper hand, has put to an end to all feudal, patriarchal, idyllic relations". They continue saying, "In one word, for exploitation, veiled by religious and political illusions, it has substituted naked, shameless, direct, brutal exploitation (Marx and Engels, 1970: 38).

Alienation

Money seems to have meant everything in developing relationship in a capitalist society. Money, to the capitalists, is a sort of commodity and more they can use it, more they can be able to gain profit. As such, they like to expand the area of their market to invest more regardless the social, economic and religious identities of the people. In the Communist Manifesto Marx and Engels state "The need of a constantly expanding market for its products chases the bourgeoisie over the whole surface of the globe .It must nestle everywhere, settle everywhere, establish connexions everywhere" (Ibid). Shylock represents the person of this type to whom money is everything in life. He hates the Christians but in terms of usury, he does not look at the religious or any other identity of the debtors. Usury, to him, is like other investments of money and apart from gaining profit, he never finds any means of human relationship which ultimately leads him into alienation from other people. Friedrich Schumacher's view (1973) in his *Small is Beautiful*, reflects this very character of

Shylock that, a man driven by greed or envy loses the power of seeing things as they are and suffer from oppression, frustration alienation, insecurity and so forth (Popperl, 2008).

Shylock felt a strong sense of alienation from society and his only daughter was also not an exception from it. He fails to develop a relationship with his fellow people where affection, kindness, trust and above all, love becomes the base of relationship among people in the society. Shakespeare's portrayal of Shylock is a person who feels alienated and communicate with others only through money. Marx in *German Ideology* (1887) asserts such a process of alienation, "was already known to Shakespeare better than to our theorizing petty bourgeois (Royanian and Omrani, 2016). Shylock as the embodiment of capitalism runs after unlimited money and in doing so, evaluates every relationship on material perspective. As such, he is alone in spite of living in the midst of many people. Human mind gets alienated from its emotional touch and every bondage is based on monetary interest. Marx considers this sort of alienated capitalists as manufacturers and refers Ferguson (1767) in his *Capital* who states, "Manufacturers, accordingly, prosper most where the mind is least consulted, and where the workshop may ... be considered as an engine, the parts of which are man" (Marx, 1984).

In our deliberation cited above, we have so far, tried to find out the features of capitalism in the character of Shylock, mostly in the lens of Marxist theories. The core characteristics of capitalism like profit motive, commodification, exploitation, oppression, alienation are almost clearly detected in the analysis of Shylock's attitude. In our analysis we have argued that Shylock seems to be the pen picture of capitalism, in general, finance capitalism in particular, who invests money and gets profit in return. Beyond profit, he thinks no other thing, including, for instance, the debtor's religious identity. He has sharp hatred for the Christians and likes to avoid their company. But in terms of business, he is open to all. He says to Bassanio, "I will buy with you, sell with you, talk with you, walk with you and so following; but I will not eat with you; drink with you nor pray with you" (I, iii, 29-32). Antonio, on the contrary, in spite of possessing acute hatred towards Shylock and his act of taking interest, comes to him to take loan for helping Bassanio to reach into his goal. This is,

in fact, to some extent, Antonio's hopeless acceptance to Shylock's financial strength.

Shakespeare seems to have institutionalized Shylock, as a financial institution where people of all classes go to take loan and invest the money in different fields in the hope of gaining any objective. And the state, always provides, favor to these sorts of business communities. In the trial scene for instance, the Duke fails to give any punishment to Shylock for brutality. He cannot go beyond the terms and conditions of the agreement and his responsibility is to help people to follow the terms and conditions that are dealt between the creditors and the debtors whiling taking loan and the result of this sort of agreement mostly goes in favor of the loan providers. Instead punishing Shylock for his cruel act, he deliberately begs mercy for Antonio but emotion has no place in capitalism and mercy is outside the realm of commerce. In the Communist Manifesto, Marx and Engels mention this very nature of the state, "The executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie" (Marx and Engels, 1970).

Looking at the present perspective of capitalism and globalization, where the International Financial Institutions (IFIs) and Multinational Companies (MNCs) are so dominating actors, we come to get the extensive reflection of Shylock over these economic actors. The seed of capitalism was somehow inherent in human society that got an initial speed during the 16th century and Shylock is the representative of that era and IFIs like World Bank (WB), International Monetary Fund (IMF), Asian Development Bank (ADB) are the representatives of the present era.

After the World War II, the capitalist World led by USA, continuously tried to expand the free flow of capital globally which they succeeded finally after the collapse of socialism in USSR in 1990. From January 1, 1995 GATT (General Agreement on Tariff and Trade) was transferred into WTO (World Trade Organization). Different agreements were done including Trade Related Investment Measures (TRIM), Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs). The main purpose of all these agreements is to ensure free flow of capital and establish independence of the business communities (Hossain, 2009).

The poor and developing countries, willingly or unwillingly have to acknowledge the terms and conditions of WTO as 124 countries have signed on this agreement on April 1994 (Ibid, 19) and most of these countries are the representatives of the poor people. The independence of the state has been restricted and the state will try to ensure a favorable atmosphere to expand the market as mentioned into TRIM. The Duke in Merchant of Venice plays, almost similar type of roles in case of Shylock-Antonio agreement.

In fine, money turns human mind like into a machine and capitalists like Shylock often fails to feel it. Richard Easterlin (1995) thus raises question to the capitalists, "Will Raising the Income of All Increases the Happiness of All?" in the title of his book (Chattopadhyay and Rana, 2016). And Richard Layard (2005) in his book Happiness: Lessons from a New Science states that people in western world could not become happy in the way they became wealthy (Ibid). Aristotle also opposes the search for infinite wealth (Karim, 2015). Shakespeare being a discreet observer of the society, understands the negative outcome of the emerging economic system of his own time and presents Shylock, as the mouth piece of the system which later evolves in the shape of capitalism, particularly finance capitalism which can increase peoples' material riches. But the system itself is discriminatory as it expands inequality in the society and the actors of capitalism are always in the search of peoples' deplorable state to execute their exploitation.

In the present context, when Bangladesh like the rest of the world is in dire distress due to corona virus a sort of greedy businessmen like Shylock, is trying to exploit people raising the prices of daily commodities especially rice. RAB Mobile Court Executive Magistrate who is in charge of monitoring the market, considered this sort of ill motive of the businessmen not as business but an act of robbery, and exploitation (Alam, 2020). And by the same way Shareer Nafis, the former captain of Bangladesh National Cricket Team, called this sort of businessmen as more dangerous than corona virus (Nafis, Ibid). Shylock, too was called as butcher several times in the drama. The capitalists like Shylock, seldom consider any situation apart from their sole goal of profit. Rubana Haq, the president of Bangladesh Garment and Manufacture Exporters

Associations (BGMEA) expressed her deep frustration that the international buyers and companies have not shown any sign of conscience by cancelling the order of goods indiscriminately (Haq, Ibid). They have not taken the deplorable conditions of millions of workers into their consideration though they can never gain riches without the contribution of the poor. Gandhi states, except the assistance of the poor, the rich can never hoard money (Biplob, 2019). This 'gungho capitalism' acts under globalization and influential agencies like IFIs and WTO along with the structure, setting and operational process of centre-periphery, metropolis-satellite, patron - client, dominant - dependent relationship between global centre of capitalism on the one hand, and vast geography of territories and countries having 'crony capitalism' under comprador bourgeoisie, lumpen fragile political leadership and 'kliptocratic bureaucracy' across the continents on the other (Choudhury, 2019).

Conclusions

Above all, capitalism in the lens of Marxist theories and Shakespeare's delineation of Shylock creates pitfalls for people to search for infinite material goals. It shows lame hope of development but mostly exploits people taking more what it provides. The bourgeoisie hardly values the sweat of the labourers; the plights of the working people; the inner feelings of human mind. These labourers are like soldiers whose commanders are of course the manufacturers. Marx and Engels put in the Communist Manifesto, "Masses of labourers crowded into the factory are organized like soldiers. As privates of the industrial army they are placed under command of a perfect hierarchy of officers and sergeants. Not only are they slaves of the bourgeois State; they are daily and hourly enslaved by the Machine, by the worker, and above all by the individual bourgeois manufacturer himself (Marx and Engels, 1970: 42). This is what we use to see in our social perspective and this is what Shakespeare tends to express in the characterization of Shylock for which we have so far tried to illustrate him as the mouthpiece of capitalism.

And finally, even though today the international environment in the acts of capitalist world has changed somewhat remarkably in certain areas, Shylock still seems to be the mere reflection of the

contemporary capitalist culture. He makes restless efforts to increase external prosperity and development for him and his only child as the typical capitalist does, but in so doing, he fails to feel that development does merely not rely on the enhancement of personal income but it rests on diverse factors as Dreze and Sen (2013: 43) say "Development is, ultimately the progress of human freedom and capability to lead the kind of lives that people have reason to value". Instead of understanding what his daughter and other people around him as well want from him, he runs after enriching the storage of his riches that the modern capitalists do, which Marx argues, is nothing but exploitation as he puts in *Capital*, "On the one hand it presents itself historically as a progress and as a necessary phase in the economic development of the society, on the other hand it is a refined and civilized method of exploitation" (Marx, 1984: 344).

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