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Research Article

A RELIGION OF ACCOUNTABILITY AND THE ANNIHILATION OF DIVINE PROVIDENTIALISM IN THE LAST SCENE OF *HAMLET*: A CDA PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

This article tends to study the subversive Shakespeare's religious discourse in the Renaissance England. An adaptive multi-disciplinary dimension of Critical Discourse Analysis (henceforth CDA) is applied to lay bare the discursive strategies appropriated by William Shakespeare to safely express his political and religious philosophy in the last scene of the play of *Hamlet*. This study attempts to bring together linguistic, sociocognitive, and critical metaphorical aspects in one single CDA framework. Serving methods and tools of analysis from various well-known CDA approaches such as Fairclough (1989 and 1995), Van Dijk (1993 and 2001), and the Critical Metaphor Analysis (CMA henceforth) model (e.g. Lakoff and Johnson, 1980) are selected to fulfil the aims of analysis.

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INTRODUCTION

Driven by an inspiration to read about Shakespeare's politico-religious conceptions in drama, Jackson and Marotti (2011) are read to claim that intellectual elites who are uncomfortable with religion find it hard to take a fresh look at manifestations of the religious in the work of William Shakespeare as a dramatist whose openness to interpretation has facilitated modern secular understanding of his plays. Jackson and Marotti (2011) blame these intellectual elites for the way they deal with religious subject matter in Shakespeare's drama; they believe that when the intellectuals refer to the religious in the dramatist plays, they prefer to historically analyse it as a mere feature of the cultural context of his drama. The problem with this approach is that it does not allow taking seriously the religious thought, beliefs, or crises that energised and disturbed Shakespeare when he wrote. Jackson and Marotti (2011) state that in the wake of the current "turn to religion" in literary studies, and in response to the writings of postmodern theologians and philosophers, starting from Jacques Derrida in the final phase of his career, Shakespeare scholars have been more responsive to the presence of the religious in the author's work (pp. 19-20).

In a similar vein, this research tends to contribute to the scholarship current review on Shakespeare and theologies. It

works on Shakespeare's last scene of *Hamlet* to read through the way the author discursively determines his stand against the way religion is inculcated in the time's minds. Relying on CDA, this research undertakes a critical study of the way the religious is appropriated to outlined forms and practices adherent to the time politics and ideologies. Although few would be able to state exactly what religious and hence political positions Shakespeare adopted, no one would dispute that his plays are communicated by contemporary political ideas, events and ideologies.

This research draws selectively on recent advances in CDA models ambitiously to explore the ideological relevance of the Shakespeare's on stage religious discourse to the time social and political structures. Reading through *Hamlet's* Act five Scene two, this work proposes a critical analysis of the religiously inflected discursive representation of the contemporary rule.

METHODOLOGY

The section of Methodology is designated to the *Description*, *Interpretation*, and *Explanation* stages of Fairclough (1995) merged with the Discourse, Cognition, and Society triangulation of Van Dijk (1993, 2001, and 2014) with some borrowing from the CMA of Lakoff and Johnson (1980). It provides a detailed illustration of the application of these

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methodological steps. For more practicality, this research has merged the *Description* and *Interpretation* stages into one stage; *Description* and *Interpretation* are supported by the *Event* and *Context Models*' procedure of Van Dijk (1993, 2001, and 2014). The *Description* stage is the semantic analytical level; it describes the linguistic features; whereas, the *Interpretation* level is concerned with the language use; it represents the pragmatic side of language. Finally, the *Explanation* stage is related to the macro social dimension of language. It is methodologically supported by the *Sociocognitive Model* of Van Dijk (1993, 2001, and 2014).

This first level of analysis is framed within the *Mental Model* called *Event Model* of Van Dijk (1993, 2001, and 2014) - relevant to the *Description* stage of Fairclough (1995)-The event models are arranged into textual titles called *Semantic Macrostructures* or *Topics*. These topics are the pragmatically targeted headlines of the text. These arranged topics are analytically developed relying on selected textual semantic, grammatical, phonological, morphological etc., micro structures.

The event model is a key textual event controlled by the author to be pragmatically transformed into a second level of mental models called by Van Dijk (1993, 2001 and 2014) a *Context Model*-relevant to the *Interpretation* stage of Fairclough (1995). This context-bound mental model is created or invoked by the author to textually bear ideological dimensions contextually serving a given plan of action.

The third level, which corresponds to the *Explanation* stage of Fairclough (1995), is referred to, in Van Dijk (1993, 2001, and 2014) as *Sociocognitive Model*; this super macro mental model projects the author's devised personal context model onto the social cognition. This sociocognitive mental model acts on the social mental repertoire either to remove old inculcations and infuse new ones or to fix and reassert old creeds.

Below, are explanations and illustrations of Key concepts related to Van Dijk (1993, 2001 and 2014) and Fairclough (1995) models:

Local and Global Forms

Global forms or superstructures are overall, canonical and conventional schemata that consist of typical genre categories, as is the case for arguments, stories or news articles. Local forms are those of (the syntax of) sentences and formal relations between clauses or sentences in sequences: ordering, primacy, pronominal relations, active ± passive voice, nominalizations, and a host of other formal properties of sentences and sequences. (Van Dijk, 2001 p. 107)

Van Dijk (2001) argues that local meanings are related to the "meaning of words the structures of propositions, and coherence and other relations between propositions." The local meanings are the result of the selection made by speech makers in their mental models of events or their more general, socially shared beliefs -- global meanings. The kind of selection directly influences the mental models, and hence the opinions and attitudes of the recipients (Van Dijk, 2001 p. 107).

Local and Global Contexts

In addition to local and global meanings, Van Dijk has distinguished between local and global contexts. Local context

is defined in terms of properties of the immediate interactional situation (situational setting, participants., etc.) in which a communicative event takes place (Van Dijk, 2001, p. 103). Global contexts, on the other hand, are defined by the social, political, cultural and historical structures in which a communicative event takes place (p. 108).

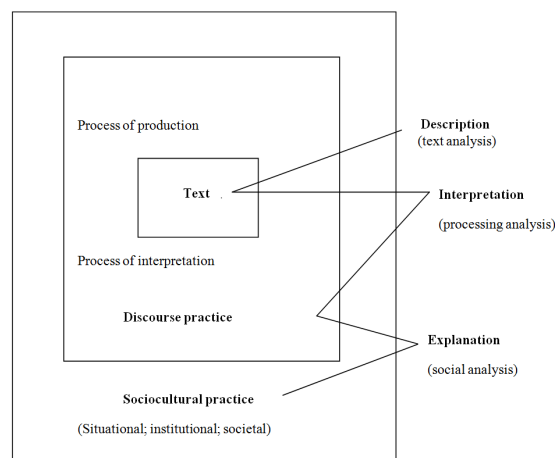
Event and Context Models

Van Dijk (2001) states that "Models form the crucial interface between discourse and society, between the personal and the social. Without such models, we are unable to explain and describe how social structures influence and are affected by discourse structures" (p. 112). Event and Context models are mental representations in episodic and long-term memories. Episodic memory is a part of long term memory in which people store their knowledge and opinions about episodes they experience or read or hear about (ibid). Event models are individual experiences of life events stored in episodic and long-term memories. Context models are mental models "people construct of their daily experiences from getting up in the morning to going to bed at night (Van Dijk, 2001, p. 109). In a rough sense, context models control the 'pragmatic' part of discourse and event models control the 'semantic' part (p. 112).

Social cognition/Sociocognitive Models

Discourse, communication and (other) forms of action and interaction are monitored by social cognition. Social cognitions or sociocognitive schemas of shared knowledge, experience, attitudes, ideologies, etc. (Van Dijk, 1993). Social cognitions influence and are inferred from micro event and contextual models. Resnick *et al.* (1991) claim that:

Social cognitions mediate between micro and macro levels of society, between discourse and action and between the individual and the group. Although embodied in the minds of individuals, social cognitions are social because they are shared and presupposed by group members, monitor social action and interaction, and because they underlie the social and cultural organisation of society as a whole. (as cited in Van Dijk, 1993, pp. 257) Fairclough (1989, 1992 and 1995) claim that each discursive event has three facets or dimensions (a) it is a spoken or written text (*Description*), (b) it is an instance of discursive practice involving the production and interpretation



Dimensions of Discourse Analysis

Dimensions of Discourse

Figure 1 Fairclough's Dimensions of Discourse and Discourse Analysis.

of text (Interpretation), and (c) it is a part of social practice (Explanation). Figure 1 below taken from Fairclough (1995, p.98) summarises the relationship of dimensions of discourse analysis to dimensions of discourse.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section provides an application of the adopted CDA framework starting from Description and interpretation, relying on the methodological event and context mental models and ending with the Explanation stage relying on the sociocognitive models. Semantic macrostructures are summarized into Macro Topics, and these Macro Topics encompass minor semantic macrostructures called Topics. Topics are textually described, interpreted and explained based on chosen linguistic items in the text.

Super Macro Topic 1: Sins and the Ruin of a Court

Topic 1: Death of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern

Description and Interpretation: Event and Context Models

Hamlet was to be shipped to the King of England and put to a sudden death recommended by Claudius in a sealed letter delivered by Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, but the Machiavellian fox - Hamlet - discovered the plot and reacted accordingly. Thanks to Hamlet's wit and to a fitting sea setting, he mindfully swapped letters. He forged the King's script and sealed the new letter with a seal inherited from his father and luckily held by him. He skilfully transferred the letter of his death into a letter of his enemies' death. The main ground for Rosencrantz's and Guildenstern's devised death is reviewed in Hamlet's narrative to his choicest friend Horatio:

Horatio

So Guildenstern and Rosencrantz go to't.

(*Hamlet*, V. 2. 60)

Hamlet

Why, man, they did make love to this employment;
They are not near my conscience; their defeat
Does by their own insinuation grow:

(*Hamlet*, V. 2. 61-63).

Using sexual metaphoric imagery, Shakespeare's conceptually nears the picture of Guildenstern and Rosencrantz responsibilities for their dispatching and death. He projects the ecstasy of making love on the kind of the emotional relationship between the two men and the task they undertake: "they did make love to this employment;" Their Employment Is A Woman And They Make Love To Their Employment. They are in love with the fact of dispatching Hamlet to the scaffold. They are not in Hamlet's scope of guilt: "They are not near my conscience," said Hamlet; they caused their own defeat by the growth of self-implication in criminal offence. They deserve what they have met. Their flaw is their breaking of the law that dictates that the humbler must keep aside from the crossfire of mighty rivals:

Hamlet

'Tis dangerous when the baser nature comes
Between the pass and fell incensed points
Of mighty opposites.

(*Hamlet*, V. 2. 64-66).

Globally, Shakespeare wants to convey a moral message. The death of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern is doomed by their blind faith to their ruler's orders however these orders are. Executors of malign schemes have, by the end, met their share of retribution corresponding to their share of complicity in evil.

Explanation: Sociocognitive Model

At the age of the Reformation that "destroyed the old religious power of authority, and made the kings equal, if not superior, to the pope (Draper, 1936, p. 61), the Tudors as well as the Stuarts and all the English people had a tendency to make the king supernatural. Shakespeare, on the other side, tries to neutralise this cultural vision by creating Hamlet the scourge who demonstrated virtuoso abilities to be, in Machiavellian words, the lion who can protect himself from traps, and the fox who can defend himself from wolves. Hamlet is, therefore, a fox who recognised traps, and a lion that will frighten wolves. Following Machiavelli, Hamlet managed to employ deceit to secure his own survival when he was shipped to England. Hamlet may be the picture of the Machiavellian prince who might be read about by William Shakespeare. He is the prince fox and lion of virtuoso abilities and not the prince religiously legitimised by inculcated institutional doctrines.

Topic 2: The Total Expiration

Description and Interpretation: Event and Context Models

The last event model in the play is a scene of a stopping point. It is the real scene of accountability. The monitor of this ending point is Hamlet who had already put an end to three court men who were driven to death with their own weapons. Polonius, who hid behind the drape to eavesdrop on Hamlet and his mother's conversation, was stabbed to death blind to the source of the thrust. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, who were in love with their mission of sending Hamlet to destruction, had never been conscious that their rope would be tied up around their own necks. The last scene of the last Act (Act 5 Scene 2) is the scene of aggregate judgement of conducts. It is the scene of the deaths of Gertrude, Laertes (the son of Polonius), Claudius the King, and Hamlet. Each of them has correspondingly paid for their debts of sins.

In the fighting bloody scene between Hamlet and Laertes, the word 'dies' occurred five times and once does the word 'falls'; it collocates with Gertrude and the word 'killed' with Laertes's treachery. At each time of occurrence, the verb of event 'dies/die' has its contextual implication and historical justification. Table 1 below arranges inferences from the death paradigm in Act 6 Scene 2.

The global mental event model tabulated above is dramatically a context model revolving around the axis of death of poisoning. The inferred context model is that: what goes round comes round. Gertrude, Laertes, Claudius, and Hamlet of them are proper nouns collocated with the word "dies" or the lexeme "die." Gertrude is accidentally poisoned by the pearl treated by Claudius and thrown in Hamlet's cup of wine as an alleged exaltation of the first Hamlet's hit of Laertes. When Hamlet gave a second hit to Laertes, happy Gertrude insisted to carouse Hamlet's fortune by drinking the cup poisoned by the pearl. This very event model highlights Claudius career in poisoning, but his table was turned on his beloved wife.

Table 1 Act 6 Scene 2: Scene of Deaths

Character	Statement of Death	Cause of Death
1. Gertrude	<p><i>QUEEN GERTRUDE falls</i> QUEEN GERTRUDE No, no, the drink, the drink,--O my dear Hamlet,-- The drink, the drink! I am poison'd. <i>Dies</i> (Hamlet, V. 2. 320-322)</p>	The poison concocted by the experienced man of poison: King Claudius.
2. Laertes	<p>LAERTES Why, as a woodcock to mine own springe, Osric; I am justly kill'd with mine own treachery. (Hamlet, V. 2. 316-317). LAERTES He is justly served; It is a poison temper'd by himself. Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet: Mine and my father's death come not upon thee, Nor thine on me. <i>Dies</i> (Hamlet, V. 2. 339-343).</p>	The most concentrated poison ever. The poisoned sword prepared by Laertes himself.
3. Claudius	<p>HAMLET Here, thou incestuous, murderous, damned Dane, Drink off this potion. Is thy union here? Follow my mother. <i>KING CLAUDIUS dies</i> (Hamlet, V. 2. 334-336) HAMLET O, I die, Horatio; The potent poison quite o'er-crows my spirit: I cannot live to hear the news from England; But I do prophesy the election lights On Fortinbras: he has my dying voice; So tell him, with the occurrents, more and less, Which have solicited. The rest is silence. <i>Dies</i> (Hamlet, V. 2. 372-378).</p>	The poison prepared by Claudius himself.
4. Hamlet	<p>HAMLET O, I die, Horatio; The potent poison quite o'er-crows my spirit: I cannot live to hear the news from England; But I do prophesy the election lights On Fortinbras: he has my dying voice; So tell him, with the occurrents, more and less, Which have solicited. The rest is silence. <i>Dies</i> (Hamlet, V. 2. 372-378).</p>	The sword poisoned by Laertes.

Laertes's conduct has, on the other hand, reaffirmed the theme of falling in one's trap and his poisoned rapier¹ has killed him and Hamlet, and again he is hoist by his own petard. King Claudius, on his turn, got a taste from his medicine, and his plan backfired and died sunk in sins as wished by Hamlet.

The exception is only with Hamlet; he likewise died poisoned but deceived by the plan of Claudius and Laertes. The event globally highlights the shameful ends of the treacherous Claudius and Laertes who chose to cowardly fight against Hamlet who died as a lion wounded by the most villainous and ignoble weapon. However, Hamlet, on the other side, has his own share of payback which is a blowback of his evils. His hamartia is manifested in his excessive contemplation of avenging upon his father's killer. This excessive contemplation led to a delay that ultimately results in self-destruction and to the flaws of the other characters and hence to their destructions. His hamartia is incorporated in his neglect of his loving mother and his beloved Ophelia. By the end, however, the hero has shown a continuation of the exultant self through announcing that Fortinbras has his "dying voice":

Hamlet

But I do prophesy the election lights
 On Fortinbras: he has my dying voice;
 (Hamlet, V. 2. 374-375).

¹ rapier / re pi (r)/
 a long thin light sword that has two sharp edges:
 Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 8th edition© Oxford University Press, 2010.

Fortinbras ordered Hamlet to be buried with military honours. Does this mean that Shakespeare has his hero physically die but spiritually procreated in the young Norwegian crown prince? The traits of a prince real minister of virtue whose only obsession is to fight and find fault with wrongdoers cannot die in absurdity; his struggling spirit, though defective, must be resurrected elsewhere on this earth and Fortinbras - conceived by Hamlet - is the fertile land in which he can plant his grain of vigorous struggle against vice and greed to found More's 'Utopia'.

Other researchers may have other vantage points concerning Hamlet's brand of religion. Battenhouse (1976), for instance, insists that Hamlet's religion is defective, and his killing of Claudius is ruthless itself and indicative of the "darkened affections" which "imply alienation from God" (p.502). Research in the field of Religion in Shakespeare is indeed a new opened window, so further studies may add newer findings in the scope that may reinforce or refute the present research assumptions.

Explanation: Socicognitive Model

Act V Scene 2 is the scene of accountability in aggregation; it is the scene of harvest. Sown sins are ripe and reached the season of reaping. A whole court has perished on account of running after power and revenge. A brother killed his brother King, stole the diadem and married the widow queen; court officers were political climbers following sovereign's schemes and plots of murders, and kings and princes fighting over lands, and so on, can only lead back to Hadfield (2004) who argues

that the over-riding political issue of the time was the question of sovereignty and the legitimacy of the monarch. The Tudor dynasty, according to him, had a disputed right to rule and there were many other claimants to the throne, and Henry VII was a usurper with a weak claim to the throne through his mother Margaret Beaufort, a descendant from John of Gaunt, the son of Edward III (p. 2). Such a political context can lead to assume that Shakespeare has an undisputed will to play on social cognitions that were saturated with scenes of disputes over power.

Queen Elizabeth, for instance, was declared heretic and, therefore, a usurper by the Catholic Church, and confronted considerable opposition to her reign in Europe and in Britain. That was a result of her father's (Henry VIII) break with Rome in 1533 (Hadfield, 2004, p. 2). All that added to a boiling context of non-secular institutional interference in political and social events leading to various religious moves and sects. The Reformation and the Counter Reformation, the Catholics versus the Protestants, The Catholic Church versus the Anglican Church, the Pope versus the King, the King taking the right of representation on earth from the pope; Monarchy was accepted as the form of government most natural, most workable, and most highly approved by Holy Writ; and the ruler actually took the place of the pope as God's vicar upon earth (Draper, 1936, pp. 61-63). Such an atmosphere and alike are enough to stir the populace social repertoire and turn their ears to listen to any convincing subversive discourse of religious conceptions in relation to politics.

CONCLUSION

The present research has clearly given pride of place to the link between the literary discourse and its link to the real socio-political context. Linguistic, rhetorical, and cognitive choices are drawn upon as selected tools of analysis. Adopting a multidisciplinary CDA approach this article has put language into action to read through Shakespearean ideological conceptions about the relationship between religion and politics. The objective of the research is twofold. It tries, on the one hand, to devise a CDA framework that integrates two models of two famous authorities in the domain of discourse analysis appropriating selected lexical and metaphorical tools of analysis, and it attempts, on the other hand, to contribute into the scope of critical studies of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* mainly in relation to religion and ideology.

This paper provides a practical CDA version that reconciles between Van Dijk's analytical Event, Context, and Sociocognitive Models and Fairclough's three-staged CDA procedure: Description, Interpretation, and Explanation.

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