

Iago's last words:

- 'Demand me nothing; what you know, you know. From this time forth I never will speak a word'.
- The final assertion of Iago's power: he doesn't confess or repent or do anything at the end that alleviates the tragedy, alleviates Othello's desperate search for reasons, or answers our own questions.
- Could it be that Iago's plotting and scheming has reached a stage in which he does not need to actively participate any longer, but in which events will unravel themselves as he wished them to; however, Cassio's survival is a mistake at this point - events aren't unraveling as he wished.
- Isolation from Venetian society: confirms his separation on account of his storytelling, only he will ever know the whole truth.

Iago's motives:

- Works as a symbol of a racist society that cannot bear Othello and Desdemona to be together?
- Keen to upturn the class system that looks down on him? This interpretation gives more weight to what Iago says about his failure to gain promotion.

The question of value:

- Cassio describes his good name as being more important than anything; Iago is fleecing Roderigo; Brabantio and Othello both talk about Desdemona as their valuable property. This system of financial or monetary value seems to be in conflict with other more transcendent values.

How much does setting play into the meaning of the narrative?

- Venice and Cyprus placed the play centrally in contemporary geopolitics. Cyprus was a frontline between Christendom and the Turks - so the settings really speak to broader political dynamic. By heading to Cyprus Othello and Desdemona leave civilisation dangerously far behind - and perhaps that is supposed to influence Othello's behaviour and the general fear of 'turning Turk'.
- Cyprus also had associations of love, the isle of Aphrodite, so the plot ironically subverts that expectation.
- The war establishes an atmosphere fraught with tension, which then compliments the actual events which occur between Desdemona and Othello. The threat is initially externalised, but gradually becomes internalised.

Iago's use of imagery of womanhood and female organs:

- 'Tis engendered', 'there are many events in the womb of time which will be delivered', 'monstrous birth'
- Disturbing set of images given that Iago is planning something so sterile - his aim is to destroy rather than create, which entirely juxtaposes the type of language used.
- Creates an almost inhumane element to Iago's character. It almost feels like he never came from a womb himself, like he's some sort of alien, with no ability to empathise or love.
- Source material - Iago and Emilia have a child. Interesting that Shakespeare removes the child from his play and replaces it with such perverse imagery.
- Lack of respect for women?

The notion of Othello as a discourse:

- Use of initiators, which are used in everyday conversation to engage the listener's attention so that they do not miss an important point: Iago uses an initiator ('my noble lord') when addressing Othello at the beginning of the jealousy scene. He cannot corrupt Othello's mind while Othello is still distracted by Desdemona's departure. Iago's formality towards Othello is maintained, with increasing irony, throughout his manipulation.
- Use of sequencing, which allows the first speaker to set out the course of the conversation, which everyone else will follow: the person who 'sequences' has the commanding stature. Othello does so in his speech to the senate, when he lays out that he will 'a round unvarnished tale deliver/of my whole course of love.' In juxtaposition to Othello's assertion that he is 'rude in speech,' Jacobean would have