ABSTRACT
In “Order of Man, Order of Nature,” Montuschi discusses the smooth transition from Christian doctrine to the new science proposed by Francis Bacon. Bacon places his conception of knowledge and new science within the Christian tradition, proposing that the human race can recover its divine right over nature. New science and knowledge advocate and enhance man’s domination over nature. Fernandez-Armesto finds that the culture-nature dichotomy inscribed in Christianity and in the new science displays the notion that nature exists only to serve man’s needs. He thus blames Renaissance humanism for its “collective narcissism of an entire species.” This study intends to demonstrate that the history-laden value of cultural domination over nature is embraced in Shakespearean plays. Renaissance humanism, characterized by the arrogant notion that man has the upper hand over nature, is embraced in Shakespeare’s King Lear, in which Lear’s acquired humility and Gloucester’s nihilistic recognition disclose ecophobia – the fear of the inconsistency and unpredictability of nature – and illustrate the desire to manipulate nature to decrease its threat. The hierarchy of the culture-nature dichotomy is further consolidated in the anxiety over and contempt for nature in this tragedy.

Keywords: Culture, Nature, New Science, Ecophobia

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