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Dignity and Vengeance in a Selection of Shakespeare's Plays *Titus Andronicus* (1592), *Hamlet* (1600) and *Macbeth* (1606): A Contemporary African Perspective

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Dedication

To my beloved children: Elrika, Calid and Ange-Maurille

and

Nieces and Nephews: Godwill, Eméline and Amos.

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This dissertation would never have been achieved without the help and assistance that I received from my father and mother, and from friends, colleagues and relatives of mine.

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Abstract

Most of the social conflicts happening around the fifteen century are related to the human nature. The relevance of dignity, which is an aspect of human nature, and regarded as a source of vengeance in three of William Shakespeare's tragedies *Hamlet, Macbeth* and *Titus Andronicus*, is my concern. The way the playwright makes his characters act along the three plays offers some useful suggestions as if there were no better way to save one's dignity without bloodshed.

This study thus, involves the plotting of the context that provides the setting in which the thoughts of the playwright of the three tragedies are to be understood. Trying to understand the thoughts of Shakespeare in the exordium required an exegetical analysis of each play and its characters' behavior. The necessity of this exegetical analysis allows me to view the theoretical foundation that sustains the plays and what scholars have already written about Shakespeare's three tragedies. This was followed by the understanding of the dimensions of dignity and its emergence in different forms of vengeance.

The psycho-analylitical theory and semiotics were used for the understanding of the acting characters. These theories have led me to underline the behavioural impact on the society, which gave ways to comments and lessons in accordance with the fact that if there is a need of bloodshed in the defense or protection of one's or groups' dignity.

Resumé

La complexité de la nature humaine est la cause de la plupart des conflits sociaux des années 1500. En ce qui concerne l' objectif de la présente étude, la dignité de l'homme, en tant qu'élément de la nature humaine, est la cause des meurtres commis dans les pièces de théâtre étudiées (*Hamlet, Macbeth, Titus Andronicus*), écrites par William Shakespeare. L'attitude des personnages des trois pièces soumises à notre étude nous amène à nous demander s'il n'y aurait pas d'autres moyens que le meurtre pour défendre sa dignité humaine vu ce qui se passait au cours du règne de Elisabeth I.

Ainsi, cette étude retrace le contexte historique des pièces choisies pour examen de même que les termes développés par l'auteur dans ses œuvres. Et pour mieux appréhender ces concepts ainsi que le caractère des différents acteurs, une analyse de la forme de même que du fond a été faite. La psychanalyse et la sémiotique ont été les théories utilisées pour conduire les analyses et interprètations qui entrent dans le cadre de ma recherche, avec un regard sur les critiques qui ont précédés celle-ci.

De même, les commentaires de cette étude ont conduit à la conclusion selon laquelle « Blood calls Blood » (le sang appelle le sang) et qu'il urge que les parents, les dirigeants politiques, les religieux commencent à inculquer à la génération naissante la protection et la défense de leur dignité par la culture de bonnes mœurs.

Acronyms

IFRI	:	Institut de Formation et de Recherche en Informatique
CEO	:	Chief Executive Officer
ColF-Motif		Collective face-saving Motifs
KJV	:	King James Version
KMMA	:	Key Murders and Murdering Acts
SDM	:	Self-Defense Motifs
UAC	:	University of Abomey-Calavi (Université d'Abomey-Calavi)

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General Introduction

I would like to begin this introduction with the pronouncement below advocated by K. R. Srinivasa Iyenga & Prema Nandakumar, both scholars of English literature.

> There are social, political, and institutional changes over periods of centuries. Even the physical environment could change, although this is more difficult. The 'frontier' region of one century becomes central to a civilization in subsequent age[1].

A literary work is not only based on form, the way the writer organizes his or her characters and the words he/she uses, but it also refers to the moment, period or the epoch. It is what Hippolyte-Adolphe Taine, a French literary historian in the 19th Century called 'Moment[2]' when she explains the origin of literature in *Histoire de la Littérature anglaise* (*History of English Literature*). She means by 'Moment' the Zeitgeist, the spirit of the age which is very variable according to the current wind. This variable was in the time of Elisabeth I, the period of poetry where authors make their characters act in the presence of the audience, is well known under the name literature renaissance time[3]

So, the term Renaissance borrowed from art history, has used and captured the idea of the re-birth from the Middle Ages in various art forms of the 14th century. The idea behind the Renaissance is in the fact that the period brought many changes in key areas such as art (music, painting, dance, etc), literature, science, technology,

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[1] K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar & Prema Nandakumar, *Introduction to the study of English Literature* (New Delhi : Sterling Publishers Private Ltd,.1992), p. 9.

[2] Hippolyte A. Taine. « Histoire de la littérature anglaise » in www. Britannica.com/EB checked/topic/580776/Hippolyte-Taine, retrieved on 24/10/2014.

[3] Op cit.

architecture, and in many other cultural activities. A lot of imaginative and art productions are performed and the English Renaissance starting later in the 15th Century, bore the same characteristics in cultural and artistic movement and will continue up to early the 17th Century. Many topics are shared with audience during the performance of the scenes for example. And most of them are about social conflicts caused by love, honesty, pride, incest, and dignity…

Shakespeare as a Poetic playwright also contributes with his plays to that period by his tragedies. In Platonic dialogue, *Ion*, Socrates is heard saying: "The poet is a light and winged and holy thing, and there is no invention in him until he has been inspired and is out of his senses, and the mind is no longer in him[4]". The Socratic view, then, is that as poetry, drama is the creation of sundry inspired individuals. The conscious mind is in abeyance, and a sudden frenzy takes control. And this period was so important in English history and also particular as it is the first period to be named after a reigning monarch. Therefore, it is called the Elizabethan Period or Elizabethan Era after Queen Elisabeth I (1558 – 1603). This period became famous because of the changes noticed in literature. Literature was the best field that boosted its reputation and it was led by great literary figures of the time: Edmund Spencer, John Milton, Christopher Marlowe, Francis Bacon, John Done, John Fletcher, Thomas Dekker, Sir Thomas More, Ben Jonson, and William Shakespeare, also called "the Bard of Avon or the National Poet[5]".

Among these figures, William Shakespeare is the most dominant. His fame or notoriety has crossed centuries, and his contributions in drama and in poetry are

[4] K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar & Prema Nandakumar, Ibid, p. 9.
[5] Marget Webster, *Shakespeare Today* (London: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd, 1957), p. 189.

unmatched and unreacheable. Shakespeare's works are surprisingly outstanding and have allowed him to become an eponymous figure. Some of his literary works share out the dualism in some concepts like dignity of an individual and vengeance. This dualism is considered as trouble in the mind of somebody and causes doubt and hesitation in his or her taking a decision. The duality of humankind can also be described as two fundamental entities such as mind and matter that exist in the world. So the ideas or the perceptions of facts and the reasons or the considerations that justify and support them in a view of people are the subjects that must be taken into account while defining dignity. In the present case, the duality is considered as the antagonistic forces of good and evil, physical and spiritual that coexist in the life[6] of human beings as friends or foes. That may be more understood through the words of young Hamlet when is preparing himself to avenge his deceased father. He says:

> Now might I do it pat now he is praying
> And now I'll do't…and so he goes to heaven;
> And so am I reveng'd?.... that would be scanned
> A villain kills my father and for that
> I, his sole son, do this same villain send to heaven
> O' this is hire and salary, not revenge
> Up sword, and know than a more horried hent,
> When he is drunk asleep, or in his rage[7]

Here the respect for the supernatural force are seen as the matter of dignity and the honor of the whole family or for the hero. The murder has come and destroyed the whole kingdom. It is therefore seen as the solution to solve or correct damage caused

[6]http// www.wikipedia.definition of dualism. com, retrieved on 15/07/2014.
[7] *The Complete Works of Shakespeare* (Mumbai: A Wilco Book, 2011), p. 570.

by someone. The commitment in conflict directly and indirectly resulting in egoism or pride, honor or prestige, and obedience as observed in the three plays by throwing away the good nature of human beings. So this accomplishment of the dignity will be counted in the aspects and dimensions as far as honor and obedience, pride and selfishness are concerned.

In fact, the political dimension of the topic will be taken into account by comparing the writer's age regime with the contemporary one. When I refer to the character Titus Andronicus who avenged the Roman nation against the Goths and came back with the captives, it shows what a dignified warrior he was. However when the son of Tamora is sacrificed in the ritual for the Roman deceased soldiers, it demonstrates how, because of the so-called soul sake of the dead person, human blood can be shed.

> **Lucius**: […] Give us the proudest prisoner of the Goths,
> That we may hew his limbs, and on a pile
> Ad manes fratrum sacrifice his flesh,
> Before this earthy prison of their bones;
> That so the shadows be not unappeased,
> Nor we disturb'd with prodigies on earth
> **Titus Andronicus**: […] I give him you, the noblest that survives,
> The eldest son of this distressed queen[8].

Shakespeare's characters, in the selected plays, act in such a way to point out the negative aspects of humankind. How painful it is to see the killing of one's own son! Only the author detains the secret of the use of his words and expressions. These have

[8] *The Complete Works of Shakespeare.* Ibid, p. 446.

earned him the title of 'Landmark[9] in English literature. He has performed tragic plays in order to correct the mind of leaders of countries practising violence on their citizens because of their selfishness or egoistical ends as an aspect of dignity, they seem to protect.

Shakespeare's famous plays *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, and *Titus Andronicus*, which are in my view the masterpieces among his tragedies as far as the topic of this dissertation is concerned, will help to understand more the psychology and the information that the author wanted to convey through the use of small Hamlet, Orphelia, The Ghost, Claudius in *Hamlet*, Macbeth, Lady Macbeth, Macduff, the witches in *Macbeth*, and finally the King Saturnius, Titus Andronicus, Tomora, Aaron in *Titus Andronicus.*

Shakespeare's *Hamlet, Macbeth,* and *Titus Andronicus* written around 1600, are the most exciting texts in literature because of their conception, the philosophy behind the language structure. With the exception of certain Biblical texts, no other works have produced such a continuing, lively, and contentious debate about how we are supposed to understand them. Based on that and taking into account various topics that can be risen out in Shakespeare's literary productions, I have decided to center my research work on dignity-saving which leads to the various tragic events happened along each of his selected plays with a contemporary african's analysis of these events (conflicts) in the concern of this dissertation. Therefore, my critical analysis will be centered on Dignity and Vengeance in a Selection of Shakespeare's plays *Hamlet, Macbeth,* and *Titus Andronicus*: A Contemporary African Perspective as my research work's topic.

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[9] *The Complete Works of Shakespeare.* Op. cit, p. 189.

In this research work, my prime interest is to show how a human being through his misconduct or Self-Image can be dangerous or annoying for his own family or for the whole society. Therefore, it is intended that a thorough examination of three Shakespearean revenge tragedies has been carried out. The work shows how revenge is relevant to Shakespeare's time or the Elizabethan Era through the behaviour of people. The theme of vengeance as a consequence of dignity-saving will also be examined as related to tragedy whether in English context or the African one. Somehow, the way a playwright draws his ideas to make his piece of art attractive for the reader will also be my concern. In her book *To The Lighthouse*, Virginia Woolf defines the role of any writer in life by saying:

> Life is not a series of gig lamps symmetrically arranged;
> Life is a luminous halo, a semi- transparent envelope
> Surrounding us from the beginning of consciousness to the end (…)
> It is not the task of the novelist to convey this varying,
> This unknown and uncircumscribed spirit, whatever aberration
> Or complexity it may display, with as little mixture
> Of the alien and external as possible?[10]

The matter here is how exactly a playwright as a novelist can make us become aware of this delicate production which combines the thoughts, feelings, passions, hopes, fears, terrors, frenzies and ecstasies of the physical man. The characteristic features and importance of revenge tragedy are discussed through its exposition of actions, counter actions, climax, anti-climax and denouement. The convention tragedy, the

[10] Virginia Woolf, *To The Lighthouse* cited by Michael Alexander in *A History of English Literature* 2nd ed (London: Palgrave Foundations, 2007), pp 354-359.

concept of dignity through the tragic hero, the villain, vengeance, and how effective they have been employed in the three plays are also examined.

The three plays are examined in detail with a view to prove that they are revenge tragedies as far as the protection of dignity is concerned. The way Shakespeare has conceived the theme of Dignity and Vengeance will be revealed. There will be a comparison between the three plays with the aim of bringing out their similarities and differences with the lessons to the new generations of people and leaders. Then a conclusion will be drawn based on the observations above, bearing in mind that the present research work is divided into three core parts with subtitles based on the three tragic plays written by William Shakespeare, the bard of Avon.

Part One:

Setting, Culture, Tradition and the Concept of Dignity in Shakespeare's Plays

Chapter One: Dignity and Vengeance in English Context.

This chapter comes to pinpoint and shed light on the problematic which informs the readers about what they can expert or what not to expert in this research work.

In this perspective, it traces the scope and the limits of the topic, the flowshart and the reasons that sustain this study. Chapter one is plotting the related works which have already been done about some aspects of this research topic, the theories which are used in order to reach its purposes. And finally, this chapter points out also the core parts and the different sections related and significant for the quality of the whole document.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

Human beings born in society, grow in it and take part in its development as a component of it. So, they live in social goups and in these social groups, there are sub-social groups with their different behaviors that they exhibit differently. Some of these differences include wealth or lack of wealth, power or lack of power, respect or commitment, respect of the supernatural force and customs. In the world, there are people with different sets of beliefs, people who act or react differently and others who seem to see the world in a different way more than we do. sometimes, we come to realize that what we want in life, our most heartfelt interest and desires, are not only different from those of others but they often come in serious conflict with other people's interests.

For instance, a husband who does not consider the opinion of his wife or those of his children and imposes all his decisions, will be one day confronted to their

reactions. As a consequence of that, the relationship of the members of the family can be broken or jeopardized. The kids can lose the development of some skills and good habits society needs.

In political domain the same thing can be observed, mainly in most of African countries which are ruled as kingdoms. As example, only those who come from their region or people who are familiar to them, to their parents or friends are appointed by the presidents who consider themselves as kings. Moreover, they maltreat any opposant to their opinions and only presidents' activities or their governments' ones can be visibles everywhere (only the government's activities are mostly shown in public televisions, the non-governmental ones are blamed and hidden to the public). So, everything coming from the King's mouth i.e. president's mouth is an order and as such it must be respected.

It is also observed that people claim their dignity as far as their family name is concerned and use to advise their children not to damage it no matter what and no matter how. The problem of prestige of the whole family which must be defended no matter what and anyhow is pointed out. And when they were offended, they should react vigorously even though it is to commit mass murder. In reality the problems caused by dignity are beyond culture and custom of a given society. Accordingly one's behavior should be related to the image of one's parents.

There is a general assumption that a vengeance occurs when a heart is hurt or broken down. And vengeance is used to correct injustice in the society at the individual and collective levels.

Paradoxically and in line with the culture of self-glory, dignity and vengeance are not contradictory. Both concepts play fundamental roles in the society where selfworth takes precedence over collective sense of justice.

1.2. Purpose of the Study

This dissertation is examining the different ways in which Shakespeare has plotted his characters in the plays under study, in order to shed light on how one's individual dignity saving, can bring physical tragedy as well as verbal violence, misunderstanding and insecurity in this recreated English society. Readers intention are drawn on the quality characters have to associate with the concept of dignity to humanize the society of murder, idleness, honesty, egoism and self-glory people are facing with in their daily lives. In other words, this work will shed light on how selfishness ends up creating tragedy for self and others. After all, vengeance is caused by identity saving, conservatism or maintenance of privilegies people think they are entitled to by all means. The study will be conducted by comparing dramatic scenes and events of life in the three selected plays by Shakespeare.

1.3. Scope and Limitation of the Study

This research work is centered on dignity saving as source of vengeance. Indeed it is going to focus on the aesthetics of the plays that unveils tragedy inherent in the malicious name saving, egoism and pride of individual human beings which as a whole leads to the destruction of humankind.

The characters' thoughts are going to be explored through scanning character behaviors alongside their performative actions and reactions in their respective plays.

Because it is seemed that the giving of worship to the celebration of self-worth substantiates and galvanizes criminality in Shakespeare's tragedies. For instance young Hamlet was reminded to commit the murder of his uncle for the honor of his deceased father by the ghost.[11] Moreover, essays will also contribute to enlighten the rationale of the topic alongside English Great tradition within which, dignity and vengeance take various and relevant meanings in the concern of this research work.

1.4. Rationale of the Study

The choice of this research topic stems from two dimensions:

- The first concern of this study is a cultural and traditional one. The Elizabethan Era is a period of suicides and killings based on one's dignity saving. That is the reason why it is considered as the era of terror by many writers (that I will be enumerated later with the relevance of their works) who contribute a lot with their literary works, to denouncing and extending the centers of vengeance as motif of selfglorification.

Indeed, dignity appears as one of the key essence concepts of the division between families, generations and people. By explaining the role of education inherent in any literary production in society, Shelley said: "A poem is the very image of life, expressed in its eternal truth[12]". In other words as a poem, a play is based on the realities and the behaviors of people living in a society at given time in order to correct some wrongdoings.

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[11]Taofiki Koumakpai, "Revenge Tragedy in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and *Titus Andronicus,"* 20, *Revue du CAMES-Nouvelle Série*. Vol 007-N°1-2006 (1er Semestre), p 234.

[12] K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar & Prema Nandakumar. Op. cit, p.19.

• Secondly, playwrights, poets or scholars very often and for some ideological reasons, accept to examine social facts while taking into account the socio-cultural and ethical visions of their people. In this context, an African perspective stands as the way an African reader takes advantages of Shakespeare's plays in the assessment of his society. This research work shows that the tragic events observed in Shakespeare's selected plays have their origin in the concept of dignity regarding the saving of the family's name through selfishness and pride. The named vices affect politics and human relations even in Africa. In that perspective, Shakespeare seems to be in phase when he uses English symbols to appeal to the consciousness of people in connection to false dignity and its impacts on the life quality.

That is what I am going to point out in my critical analysis of the three selected plays of Shakespeare by using psychoanalytical approach and semiotics which will be more explained in the part below.

1.5. Theoretical Framework

In order to account for the psyche of the characters amounting to the motifs of their actions and interactions and to explain the symbols and their narrative roles in Shakespeare's plays under study, I am using psychoanalytical theory and Semiotics.

Psychoanalytical theory explores the inner motifs of the characters, the forces behind the actions and interactions of characters. So, the interpretation explores the intentions of characters and possibly those of the writer's reacting characters, assigning them roles to play and the narrative orientations that readers receive from the

playwright that affect the criticism they produce.[13] In other words, psychoanalytical theory teaches us the mental realities that need to be considered in the production of criticism like feelings, desires, cognitions, reasonings,[14] and decisions making.

Semiotics is the second theory used in this study. Semiotics is the study of signs and symbols of all kinds, what they mean, and how they relate to the things or ideas they refer to. It appears as the theory which studies the systems of signs, symbols, representatives and their meaning in contexts. In that order, it goes beyond Semantics and Pragmatics as a branch of Linguistics, because it connotes these signs, symbols, representations and even expressions used by acting characters in plays. So, Semiotics goes deeper in situation, fact, event plotted by an author to analyze and understand what is hidden for its better understanding. In that case, Jean Piaget in *Épistémologie des sciences de l'homme* says:

> […] l'apparition de la représentation dans le développement individuel n'est pas due au langage seul mais à une fonction sémiotique bien plus large, comprenant en plus le jeu symbolique, l'image mentale, le dessin et toutes les formes différées et intériorisées d'imitation (celle-ci constituant le terme de transition entre les fonctions sensorimotrices et représentatives). [15]

> The existence of symbols in an individual growth is not only due to the language but also to the internal imagery, the variety in pictures and the imitations within the semiotic function (which is the transitive term between representative and sensorimotor functions). (My translation)

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[13] James George, "Literary Theory Manifesto," 4, From www.enotes.com/topics/william-shakespeare/critical, retrieved on 07/05/2014.
[14]. http://psychclassics.yorku.ca/James/Principles/index.htm
[15] Jean Piaget, *Épistémologie des sciences de l'homme* (Paris : Gallimard, 1967), p 277.

Thus, beyond the ways and the simplest meaning of Shakespeare's characters, it will be a duty for me along this research work to depict what is hidden in his words and makes this research topic relevant for readers.

According to Damodar Thakur in his *Linguistics Simplified: Semantics*, there are people, for example, who seem to believe that many of the misunderstandings that come out at individual, national or international level are caused by a lack of adequate interpetation of the speaker's or the writer's intentions through his or her expressions[16].

These people seem to think that a study of semiotics beyond semantics will enable the readers to have a proper understanding of one another and will therefore, help to reduce tension and confusion. The French writer Artaud explains this fact well while he wrote in *Le Théâtre et son double, idées.*

> Il faut d'ailleurs, avant d'aller plus loin, remarquer l'affection étrange que tous les livres traitant de la matière alchimique professent pour le terme de théâtre, comme si leurs auteurs avaient senti dès l'origine tout ce qu'il y a de *représentatif*, c'est-à-dire de théâtral, dans la série complète des *symboles* par lesquels se réalise spirituellement le Grand Œuvre (…) et aussi dans les écarts et errements de l'esprit mal informé, autour de ces opérations et dans le dénombrement on pourrait dire « dialectique » de toutes les aberrations, phantasmes, mirages et hallucinations par lesquels ne peuvent manquer de passer ceux qui tentent ces opérations *avec des moyens purement humains.*[17]

[16] Damodar Thakur, *Linguistics Simplified: Semantics* (Bharati Bhawan: Publishers and Distributors, 2011), pp 2-6.
[17] Antoine Marie-Joseph Artaud, *Le Théâtre et son double, Idées* (Paris : Gallimard, 1938), pp. 72-73.

> First and foremost, it is necessary to note this affective way in which the books plotting mysterious facts, speak of the concept of theatre, and as if the representative and symbols within theatre are known by their writers, in these symbolic serials are spiritually performed in relevant books (…) and also in indiscretion and wrongdoings observed with unshaped spirit surrounding those functions and in the count known as "dialectics" of deviations, phantasms, mirages, and hallucinations through which those with fair human means can only pass by. (My translation).

Thus, in play each sign, symbol, representation leads to a message that the author wants to share with his or her readers. It is in that way Shakespeare has plotted his acting characters and his three selected plays.

Obviously literature scholars, though not being specialists of languages, use semiotics to depict and denounce socio-political realities by using these procedural methods and theories.[18].

1.6. Research Methodological Procedure

To reach the target of this research work, various library materials are used. Most of the relevant documents I have read while researching on the topic under discussion allowed me to bridge and grasp the problem to the issues regarding the topic. Both English and French previous scholars' research works have helped me to understand the concept of dignity, its polysemantic nature taking into account people's apprehension of the concept.

[18] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/English_literature#mediaviewer/File:Shakespeare.jpg, retrieved on 03/09/2014..

To conduct this research, I have read books and previous studies related to the issue of vengeance and dignity in their various forms, i.e. symbols, signs, expressions' interpretations in a play in connection to the topic. And most of those documents come from libraries and bookshops. Among these I can list the library of University of Abomey-Calavi and the American Cultural Corner in Benin, of Legon University and Alliance Francaise in Accra (Ghana), Legon Bookshop and Accra Mall bookshop in Ghana. I have also the privilege to use the personal library of my supervisors who provide me with documents related to signs and symbols in literature. These preresearch activities have shaped my understanding of tragedy; revenge, vengeance while analyzing Shakespeare's plays. Moreover, the new technologies, mainly the internet has played and been a great support for me when I was in need to buy some books that are not available in my immediate environment.

However, it is necessary to note that my critical analysis is focused on the study of the tragic events based on dignity in Shakespeare's plays. The development I'm suggestting here for my study is first to set culturally and traditionally the concept of dignity in the plays under study. Next, I will illustrate how murders, vengeances, revenges in Shakespeare's selected plays are rooted in the saving of dignity, selfishness and pride of people. Lastly I will share with my readers Shakespeare's design articulation of symbolism in *Hamlet*, *Macbeth* and *Titus Andronicus* in line with vengeance and dignity.

1.7. The Major Divisions of the Study

My research work is divided into six chapters arranged in three major parts as cited in the last paragraph of the section above. Each part contains two chapters which are further divided into sections.

The first chapter is the introductory one and includes the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, the scope and the limitation of the work. It also includes the research approaches, the theory and methodological procedure of the study and finally major divisions of the work. The second chapter is related to vengeance as means of self-defense in English culture and tradition and gives a clear understanding framework in connection to the topic on the selected plays and their author, William Shakespeare. It also talks about the meaning of the two core concepts of this study, vengeance and dignity, by shedding light on previous scholars' critiques on them. The third Chapter focusses on the manifestation of vengeance having root in human dignity in *Hamlet*, *Macbeth* and *Titus Andronicus* while the fourth one underlines the motifs of dignity and self-defense in Shakespeare's plays under study.

In the fifth chapter I talk about the symbolism in the selected plays whereas in the last chapter I focus on socio-political impacts of Shakespeare's vision in the concept of dignity by establishing a link with our contemporary world. Then comes the conclusion which ends the whole document by retaking the purpose of the study, and gives a brief summary of each part and results combined with the impacts of the research on the society in terms of influence, ethical and philosophical orientations.

Chapter Two: Vengeance and Means of Defense justice in English Culture and Tradition

In this chapter, the existing critiques that connect to my topic are going to be outlined and assessed briefly regarding their importance to this research work. Indeed, some issues are the core of the work and they need to be discussed in order to stress the topic. The first issue is related to the theoretical foundation of the author's selected plays. The second is about his biography, and the brief notes of traditional and cultural contexts of his writings. The last one will take into account the definition of the two major concepts which are dignity and vengeance in the framework of this study.

2.1. Theoretical Foundation of Shakespeare's Plays

As a scientific work this research work is supported by theories that enable to follow the chronological organization and discussion of the selected work. Shakespeare creates and supports his rationale in his dramas by using many approaches that give the impression of reality to his readers. Some of them will be mentioned here to show how the author has organized his characters and their roles.

The Formalist Criticism as an approach regards literature as "a unique form of human knowledge that needs to be examined on its own terms"[19]. The statement implies that all the elements necessary for understanding a work are contained in the work itself. Elements such as style, structure, tone and imagery found in the text are of particular interest to the formalist critics. So the use of prose, verse, idoms,… were common in the selected plays of Shakespeare. And as such, a primary goal of the

[19] Joseph Charles Kennedy and Dana Gioia, *Literature: An Introduction to Fiction, poetry, and Drama* (New York: Happer Collins,1995), pp 1790-1818.

formalist critics is to determine how such elements work together with the content of the text to shape its effects upon readers.

While considering the under study plays, Shakespeare arranges the words in verse in such away to keep the reader in touch with the flow of events up to the end. The succession of actions in each scenario (scene) of the acts of the studied plays convince more in that case. For instance, the apparition of the ghost to the small Hamlet, reminds him his mission of murder in *Hamlet*. The letter sent by Macbeth to his wife Lady Macbeth to announce her, the visit of the king Duncan in *Macbeth* is talkative. The plotting of events such as the jealousy manisfested by Tamora against Lavinia, and the rape, removing of the tongue, and the cutting of the hands of Lavinia by Chiron and Demetrius in *Titus Andronicus* shows the cultural and traditional values of English language and its style.

From the same cultural and traditional perspectives, Shakespeare has written his selected plays according to the events that were prevailing in Elizabethan Era. In this period, crimes such as treason, adultery, murder, suicide, fraud, rape were common in his society. That is why the public punishment (beheading) becomes one of the means to shape or change the minds of people. Similarly, the historicism becomes the useful means of the author to educate both politicians and citizens of that era. In fact, this approach "seeks to understand a literary work by investigating the social, cultural, and intellectual context that produced it – a context that necessarily includes the artist's biography and milieu."[20] Therefore, Shakespeare used it in order to allow his original readers and audience to understand the effect of a literary work upon.

[20] Joseph Charles Kennedy and Dana Gioia. Ibid, p. 18.

Coming to the Gender Criticism as an approach used by Shakespeare in the three plays, it "examines how sexual identity influences the creation and reception of literary works."[21] Lady Macbeth has played a great role in the killing of King Duncan by Macbeth the warrior of the kingdom. The ordering of killing of sons of Titus Andronicus by emperor Saturnius is influenced by Tamora his new empress. Similary gender criticism today includes a number of approaches, including the so-called Masculinist approach recently advocated by poet Robert Bly. The bulk of gender criticism, however, is feminist; and this was taken as a central precept of the patriarchal attitudes which have dominated Western thought. This, consciously or unconsciously becomes the outcome in literature the"full of unexamined 'male-produced' assumptions."[22]

Feminist criticism attempts to correct this imbalance behaviors by analyzing and combatting them by questioning, for example, why none of the characters, in Shakespeare's play *Othello* ever challenge the right of a husband to murder a wife accused of adultery. Other goals of feminist critics include

> Analyzing how sexual identity influences the reader of a text" and "examining how the images of men and women in imaginative literature reflect or reject the social forces that have historically kept the sexes from achieving total equality.[23]

[21] Robert Bly, *Iron John : A book about Men* (New York: Happer Collins, 1990), p 34.
[22] www.jstor.org retrieved on 22/09/14
[23] Ibid, retrieved on 22/09/14

This critical standpoint substantiates the tendance of critics to make the readership behave one way or the other, fairly or unjustly, which makes this ethical study worth undertaking.

Indeed, the Reader-Response Criticism is an approach which takes as a fundamental tenet that "literature exists not as an artifact upon a printed page but as a transaction between the physical text and the mind of a reader"[24]. This attempts to describe what happens in the reader's mind while interpreting a text and reflects that reading, like writing, is a creative process. It underlines that "literary texts do not contain a meaning, but the meanings which derive only from the act of individual readings. Hence, two different readers may derive completely different interpretations of the same literary text; likewise, a reader who re-reads a work year later may find the work shockingly different"[25].

The reader-response criticism, then, emphasizes how religious, cultural, and social values affect readings. This also overlaps with gender criticism in exploring how men and women read the same text with different assumptions. Though, this approach rejects the notion that a single[26] correct reading exists for a literary work and which does not consider all readings permissible; that is why "each text creates limits to its possible interpretations"[27]. Taking into account the three related dimensions of dignity announced above, one can say that, Shakespeare arranged words in such away to affect the minds and the behaviors of everyone who chooses to read his tragic plays.

[24] Op cit, p. 20.
[25] Joseph Charles Kennedy and Dana Gioia. Op. cit, p. 19.
[26] Ibid.
[27] Op cit.

Moreover, the symbols, the pathos used by Shakespeare in these tragic plays are so affectable and call for a close look at his intention and at the meaning of the different terrified events that he was the only one having the secret of their pisting as components of the plays. To conduct such analyses, the psychoanalytical and semiotic theories are the most appropriate ones in order to combine and set the cultural, traditional and custom values of dignity saving.

These two theories are the most useful and adequate to understand psychologically behaviors of Shakespeare's characters in the framework of my dissertation. The actions and reactions of each of them will be deeply analyzed in upcoming parts according to British traditions and cultures. This will serve also as a bridge between the old era and the contemporary societies.

Many writers thought about the concept and the perception of the concept of dignity. Yet it appears that their research work were limited to its definition and some of its aspects in that specific era.

Mette Lebech, for instance, in her article under title "Towards the Difinition of Human Dignity"[28], tried to give a meaningful definition of Human Dignity. By contextualizing human dignity upon different aspects, she demonstrated that humankind is the masterpiece or agent of peace building of his/her living society. The different accounts were identified and analysed in different historically-based frameworks such as the cosmo-centric, the Christo-centric, the logo-centric and the polis-centred frameworks. Using empirico-systematic structure as approach, Mette Lebech comes down to the conclusion that all the explanatory factors of the various frameworks indicate

[28] Lebech Mette, "Towards the Difinition of Human Dignity", 13, Ed Vaticana, in Charles Taylor's *Sources of the Self* (Ireland, Maynooth: Citta Vaticano, 2002), p. 243.

essentially that human and none of them taken, in isolation provides us with a sufficient condition apprehension for human dignity. Therefore, the experiences of love and friendship, in which the constitution of the person enjoys the most favourable conditions are the content of the idea of human dignity. As an expression, human dignity refers to, beyond criteria, the fundamental value of the existence of individual human beings.

2.2. Some Biographical Notes on Shakespeare and Background to the Selected Plays

For all his fame and celebration, William Shakespeare remains a mysterious figure with regards to personal history. There are just two primary sources for information on the Bard: his works, and various legal and church documents that have survived from Elizabethan times. Naturally, there are many gaps in this body of information which tells us little about Shakespeare's personalities.

William Shakespeare was born in Stratford-upon-Avon, allegedly on April 23, 1564. Church records from Holy Trinity Church indicate that he was baptized there on April 26, 1564. Young William was born of John Shakespeare, a glover and leather merchant, and Mary Arden, a landowner's daughter. William, according to the church register, was the eldest and the third of eight children in the Shakespeare household – three of whom died in childhood. John Shakespeare had a remarkable run of success as a merchant and in 1568, he was high bailiff of Stratford. But Shakespeare's father " John, lost his municipal positions in the 1580s"[29].

[29] Michael Alexander, *A History of English Literature*. 2nd ed (London: Palgrave Foundations, 2007), pp. 107-108.

There is great conjecture about Shakespeare's childhood years, especially regarding his education. Scholars surmise that Shakespeare attended grammar school in Stratford. While there are no extant records to prove this claim, Shakespeare's knowledge of Latin and Classical Greek would tend to support this theory even though he probably left school at 15 age, because "education at Stratford school was based on Latin grammar, rhetoric and composition; to speak English was forbidden in the upper forms"[30]. In addition, as the records do not exist, it is difficult to know how long William may have attended the school, but the literary quality of his works suggests a solid educational foundation. What is certain, is that William Shakespeare has never proceeded to university schooling, which has contributed to the debate about the authorship of his works but was and is still a 'University' to many such as the contemporary Ben Jonson (1572-1632), and 18th century writers like Joseph Addison (1672-1719), Jonathan Swift (1667-1745), and Alexender Pope (1688-1744).

Ben Jonson, a playwright, a great poet and a great dramatist knew well Shakespeare and they acted in each others' plays. He even wrote that Shakespeare was the greatest of writers, and he 'loved the man, this side idolatry'; he also mentioned his 'small Latin and less Greek' and his carelessness. Ben Jonson is great self-defenser who was charged of recusancy because he refused to submit to the claims of the church of England; he worked with his step-father, a bricklayer and served as soldier in the Low Countries and killed an enemy champion in single combat. He was also known through his moral satire, criticism, social verse and self-portraits:

[30] Ibid.

> Jonson's ridicule of the deformation of contemporary life is ferocious but farcical: although he held that comedy does not derive from laughter, we laugh more, and harder, at his comedies than at Shakespeare's . Jonson has the Renaissance idea that comedy laughs us out of vices and folies[31]

Ben Jonson is a bit the contrary of Shakespeare in side of his comedies; even though "Comedy is an imitation of errors of our life, which he representes in the most ridiculous and scornful sort that may be, so as it impossible that any beholder can be content to be such a one" - Sidney[32].

For Joseph Addison human intelligence could do and relay these achievements to the new middle class in a prose which Johnson thought 'the model of the middle style'. His *The Spectator* (1711) introduces himself:

> I find, that I…was always a Favourite of my school-master, who used to say, *that my Parts were solid and would wear well*. I had not been at the university, before I distinguished myself by a most profound Silence: For during the space of eight Years, except in the publick Exercises of the college, I scarce uttered the quantity of an hundred words; and indeed do not remember that I ever spoke three sentences together in my whole life, Whilst I was in this Learned Body I applied myself with so much Diligence to my Studies, that there are very few celebrated Books, either in the Learned or the Modern Tongues which I am not acquainted with (…)[33]

[31] Op cit, p. 136.
[32] Michael Alexander. Ibid.
[33] Op cit, p. 184.

The above notes on Shakespeare indicates that he owes his writing style and ideology to his people's culture and tradition, to his formal education as well as to his own desire to achieve synthesis of how life has treated him and his people in order to offer new chances to human existence.

Joseph Addison throught writing, the prose became a very popular poet and tragedian of the 18th century and his essays were taken as a model for more than century.

Jonathan Swift's concern, was characterized by his opposition to the Whig government which were banishing religion through his literary productions: *The Battle of the Books, A tale of Tub, Drapier's Letters*. Swift believed that 'we need religion as we need our dinner, wickedness makes Christianity indispensable and there's an end of it'. He writes from different point of view:

> The system of the Gospel, after the fate of other systems, is generally antiquated and exploded; and the mass or body of the common people, among whom it seems to have had its latest credit, are now grown as much ashamed of it as their betters (…) I hope no reader imagines me so weak to stand up in the defense of real Christianity, such as used in primitive times (if we may believe the authors of those ages) to have an influence upon men's belief and actions… every candid reader will easily understand my discourse to be intended only in defense of nominal Christianity, the other having been for some time wholly laid aside by general consent as utterly inconsistent with all other present schemes of wealth and power.[34]

[34] Michael Alexander, Ibid, p. 186

Alexander Pope as the first professional non-dramatic English poet, was known through his *Epistle to Dr Arbuthnot* in which he was saying that Self-defense is the 'retrospective' and found that 'the life of wit is a warfare on earth'[35].

The next documented event in Shakespeare's life is his marriage to Anne Hathaway on November 28, 1582. William was 18 at the time, and Anne was 26—and pregnant. Their first daughter, Susanna, was born on May 26, 1583. The couple later had twins, Hamnet and Judith who were born on February 2, 1585 and christened at Holy Trinity. Hamnet died in childhood at the age of 11, on August 11, 1596.[36]

For the seven years following the birth of his twins, William Shakespeare disappeared from all records, before turning up again in London some time in 1592. This period, known as the "Lost Years[37]," has sparked as much controversy about Shakespeare's life as any period. Rowe notes that "young Shakespeare was quite fond of poaching, and may have had to flee Stratford after an incident with Sir Thomas Lucy, whose deer and rabbits he allegedly poached[38]". There is also rumor of Shakespeare working as an assistant schoolmaster in Lancashire for a time, though this is circumstantial at best.

It is estimated that Shakespeare arrived in London around 1588. He began in the same year to establish himself as an actor and playwright. Evidently, Shakespeare garnered or gathered some envy early on, as revealed by the critical attack of Robert Greene, a London playwright, in 1592, who said that:

> [...] an upstart crow, beautified with our feathers, that with his Tiger's heart wrapped in a player's hide,

[35] Op. cit, p. 189.
[36] Op cit, p. 107.
[37] Robert Greene, *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* quoted by Michael Alexander, Op. cit, p. 113.
[38] Ibid

> supposes he is as well able to bombast out a blank verse as the best of you: and being an absolute Johannes fac totum, is in his own conceit the only Shake-scene in a country[39].

Robert was expressing his disappointement about Shakespeare's empressement around the country as the famous and excellent poet. By using the words such as 'heart wrapped' and 'bombast out, Robert there are other performers who can write and perform facts more than Shakespeare and for that reason he cannot be taken as the shake-scene in the country i.e. the reference in the concern of play.

Greene's bombast notwithstanding, Shakespeare must have shown considerable promise. By 1594, not only was he acting and writing for the Lord Chamberlain's Men (called the King's Men after the ascension of James I in 1603), but he was also a managing partner in the operation as well. With Will Kempe, a master comedian, and Richard Burbage, a leading tragic actor of the day, the Lord Chamberlain's Men[40] became a favorite London troupe, patronized by royalty and made popular by the theatre-going public.

Shakespeare's accomplishments are apparent when he is compared with playwrights of this age. His company was the most successful in London in his days. He had plays published and sold in Octavo editions, to the more literate of his audiences. He has enjoyed the income/fruit of his work, only at the middle of his literary career. In addition, Shakespeare's ownership share in both the theatrical company and the Globe itself made him, not only as an "entrepreneur but also as an

[39]Op cit
[40] Ibid.

artist"[41]. While Shakespeare might not be accounted wealthy by London standards, his success allowed him to purchase New House and retire in comfort to Stratford in 1611.

William Shakespeare wrote his will in 1611 which bequeaths his properties to his daughters and to his wife Anne . William Shakespeare allegedly died on his birthday, April 23, 1616. This is probably more of a romantic myth than reality, but Shakespeare was buried at Holy Trinity in Stratford on April 25. In 1623, two working companions of Shakespeare from the Lord Chamberlain's Men, John Heminges and Henry Condell, printed the First Folio edition of his collected plays of which half were previously unpublished.

William Shakespeare's legacy is a body of work that will never again be equaled in Western civilization. His words have endured for 400 years, and still reach across the centuries as powerfully as ever. Even in death, he leaves a final piece of verse as his epitaph:

> Good friend, for Jesus' sake forbeare
> To dig the dust enclosed here.
> Blessed be the man that spares these stones,
> And cursed be he that moves my bones.

Based on that, it is not useless to mention that the three plays written around 1500s are still vivid in style. From *Hamlet* to *Titus Andronicus* passing by *Macbeth,* dignity saving is observable in the three aspects that this study is focused on: face-saving or family name saving; egoism or selfishness and pride or honor. These fundamental

[41] Taofiki Koumakpai, Op. cit, p. 234.

factors defended by an individual to whom they cannot be spoiled but must be protected no matter what, seem to be the reason that drive people into social conflicts.

In *Hamlet* for instance, the little Hamlet was obliged to save his father's nobility and has to follow his deceased father's ghost instruction. And Laertes avenged his sister and father in law by killing young Hamlet. These are the accomplishment of face-saving while considering dignity-saving. Claudius, the uncle of the little Hamlet killed his own brother, the young Hamlet's father, because of his selfishness.

In fact, committing the murder of his brother drives from his personal glory which is his hurry will to be the emperor or the king. The phenomena of selfishness can therefore be attribuated to the remarriage of Gertrude, the little Hamlet's mother. She thought only about herself and threw away the pains of his orphan son. Whereas in *Macbeth*, Macbeth's ego and pride justify the various vengeful events happened in the play. The killing of King Duncan is the achievement of the self-glory of Macbeth and the respect of the weird sisters prophecy: the accomplishement of his soul. But Macduff disagreed with the terrible and horrific nature of the assassination of King Duncan and decides to avenge him for the honor of the kingdom.

For Titus Andronicus, the killings for the glory and face-saving of a nation is not negotiable and he was able to sacrify his own life in the battle with Goths for that. Moreover, the misbehaviour of Saturnius with him, frustrated and damaged his dignity in such away that he committed a lot of muder for his own and family sake. The captured Tamora, to save her sons, nation and own dignity, committed several killings. After, she had gained the sympathy of Saturnius, whereby she started carrying out her vengeful plan against Titus Andronicus her capturer, the killer of her elder son in ritual and the father of her challenger Lavinia in the concern of gender empowerment. Her

sons, Chiron and Demetrius for the selfishness, pride and face-saving, cut the hands and removed the tongue of Lavinia. For Aaron the Black race, nothing can spoil the value of human dignity. This was shown by him through the rejection of the killing of his child. This led him to take away the lives of the nurse and the midwife.

2.3. Definition of Dignity and Vengeance

The concept of dignity and vengeance cannot be understood without a reference to the past and the context, here English. It is established that new ideas and the attitudes they generate in human beings are buried in tradition. In this perspective and according to Michael Alexander, "Tradition implies participation and communication: it grows and fades, changing its aspect every few generations."[42] As tradition changes and takes up new meanings, it is important to look at the concept of dignity in the English culture and tradition and consequently at the related meaning suggested in Shakespeare's tragedies.

2.3.1. Meaning of Dignity

The concept of dignity is better understood when placed in connection with race, ethnicity and nationalism which suggest collective consciousness of a group of people. Thus, dignity suggests belongingness and, when individuals feel they are denied their rights, privileges, frustration is the result. Therefore, dignity is the celebration of belongingness or its claim by people. Saint-Exupery defines dignity

[42] Michael Alexander, Op. cit, p. 2.

with a religious lense, with an emphasis laid on brotherhood. He does this when he writes:

> Durant des siècles ma civilisation a contemplé Dieu à travers les hommes. L'homme était créé à l'image de Dieu. On respectait Dieu en l'homme. Les hommes étaient frères en Dieu. Ce reflet de Dieu conférait une dignité inaliénable à chaque homme. (Saint-Exupéry, *Pilote de guerre*, xxvi, p. 222)

> For centuries, through humans my cultures and traditions worship God. Human is God's creature and looks like him. God was respected through human side. Humans were living in divine brotherhood. This leads to a fair dignity which resides in each people. (My translation).

Here, the concept of dignity has been religiously advocated and adopted since many years by writers according to Exupéry's settlement. For him, human dignity appears as something precious which deserves respect, protection and probably worship as well as it must be done to God. In this order but pointing the ambiguity its protection can raise out, Proudhon in his *De la justice dans la resolution et dans l'Eglise* quoted by dictionary *Le Grand Robert* adds to Exupéry's description of human dignity the following:

> C'est *(la justice)* le respect, spontanément éprouvé et réciproquement garanti, de la dignité humaine, en quelque personne et dans quelque circonstance qu'elle se

> trouve compromise et à quelque risque que nous expose sa défense (…)[43]

> This is (justice) the respect, spontaneously known and reciprocally kept, of human dignity, which exists in some people and in a circumstance where it is compromised and some risks we are exposed to (…). (My translation)

Proudhon like Exupéry shares with his readers how importance dignity is for people regarding justice and its defense. In this vein, human dignity cannot be defined *ex nihilo* but according to English tradition, culture, and context which is prevalent in Elizabethan and Jacobean time. The concept is defined based on scholars' literary works.

Indeed, the word 'Dignity' is an ambiguous concept which needs to be defined according to its contexts for the relevance of this research work. In fact, it focuses on human dignity which generates the savage social and vengeful conflicts because all the controversial issues do not always lead to the death of human being. This assumption leads to certain number of questions like what does human dignity mean? What constitutes human dignity and what violates it? Peter Singer answers to those concerns through the words of Mychal Wynn in 2007 when he says that:

> Dignity is the ability to stand strong and tall in face of adversity while being able to bow to the elderly and crawl with children. Dignity is taking a stand for your beliefs without closing your mind to another's opinions.

[43] Pierre Joseph Proudhon, *De la justice dans la révolution et dans l'Église* (Paris : Flammarion, 1858), quoted from Dictionary *Le Grand Robert*, p. 220.

> Dignity is being an example by your deeds, and through your words by avoiding gossip, anger and lies. Dignity will manifest itself in the warmth of your smile, the depth of your love and kindness for your fellowman[44].

Singer is advocating the skills, the aptitude of someone whose thoughts has something or doing something others cannot do. For him, a dignified person is an individual who has confidence in himself or herself and who does not reject others. In other words, he or she pays respect to his or her neighbours, minds also his or her words and avoids gossiping, anger and lies. This shows the openness and maturity of the person. So, human dignity resides fundamentally in the respect and the consideration of one's neighbours. This explanation given to the concept of dignity by Peter Singer is another way to compare human dignity to a kind of golden cover or a precious stone which belongs to someone that cannot be stolen or spoiled, and when it damaged, that becomes an offense. Because it is strictly related to what identifies someone's happiness and his or her values in his or her neighborhood. Having drawn on the point of view of a critic, it is important to find out the meaning from the dictionary.

In this regard, the word on the one hand, means "calm and serious that deserves respect" and on the other hand, refers to "a fact of being given honor and respect by people"[45]. And finally it is "the sense of the own importance and value of somebody".

From the perspective of these definitions, my research work is taking into account the second and the third definitions which seem very useful and meaningful for the main aspects or dimensions of this doctoral dissertation.

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[44] Peter Singer, "A Convenient Truth", January 2007, http//www.nytimes.com/opinion/26singer/html, retreived on 03/09/2014.
[45] *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, New 7th Ed, p. 429.

For Ben Jonson quoted by Michael Alexender the honor of someone in the concern of dignity, is someone's 'integrity' through despising vices such as 'fraud, personal, moral and social'[46] behoaviours. So Jonson related the concept of dignity to self-portraits, someone's pride only taken out of his environment. Such a conderation does not take into account the aspect that man cannot live lonely; he or she lives in a society and his or her behavior or life is related to the group he or she belongs to.

More, Johnson integrity resides in the killing of the enemy in self-defense as he shows it in the performance of the play to the 'fellow-player'. In the same way and considering John Houseman's conception of moral integrity and longing for dignity, Eric Bentley has this to offer:

> Now, though our folly is by no means confined inside theatre walls, our humanity is very easily left outside them. For we are wholly foolish when our individuality is lost in mob emotion, and any crowd of people – including an audience – can become a mob. (…)
> The dignity of John Houseman's production derives from taste, intelligence, and discretion – most of all, discretion. […] mr Houseman is a man of integrity, and has resisted the temptation to slant a masterpiece whose greatness is all vertical. The people – about whom Shakespeare is so 'undemocratic' – are presented in all their moral ambiguity. No attempt is made to white wash the enemy leader, Aufidus.[47]

For Eric, one's dignity is synonymous with heroic attributes one earns from one's community. Whereas for Richard Hooker, the self-defense in the concept of dignity

[46]Michael Alexander, Op. cit, p. 136
[47] Eric Bentley, "Shakespeare's Politics", 6, in Laurence Lerner's *Shakespeare's Tragedies: An Anthology of Modern Criticism* (New York: Penguin Books, 1968), p.258.

resides in the research of truth. For that reason, he fought and defended the apostolic episcopal order and doctrine of the Church of England while they were attacked by Puritans, appealing a natural law as well as the Bible. His closely-reasoned moderation is suggested in this passage:

> The best and safest way for you therefore, my dear brethren, is to call your deeds past to a new reckoning, to re-examine the cause ye have taken in hand, and to try it even point by point, argument by argument, with all the diligent exactness ye can; to lay aside the gall of the bitterness wherein your minds have hitherto over-abounded, and with meekness to search the truth…[48].

The search of truth which is synonymous with the inclination to justice extols the ultimate value individual people and societies should consider for social welfare in the British context and beyond. It is in this vein that Paméssou Walla deems that it is important to call on so many people living in the "abnormalities and horrible secrets"[49] to revisit their ethical option.

Relying on the socio-educational background, the educational product becomes the factor of honor and prestige for the members of the family because he/she dignifies his/her family, his/her tribe group, or his/her nation. The example of a poor family in which a child succeeds in his or her exam with distinction better clarifies the context. His or her parents are happy for the honor he or she brings them and consequently leads to an upward looking of their social environment.

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[48] Michael Alexander, Ibid, p. 106.

[49] Paméssou Walla, "Morality and Victorian Hypocrisy in Oscar Wilde's Drama" pp.59-78, in *Littératures et Civilisations*, N° 1 (Université de Lomé : Faculté des Lettres et Sciences Humaines, Décembre 2014), p.74.

It is also obvious to hear parents who owe their dignity to their children's achievement say "*My child is…*"[50] to substantiate the need for human dignity saving and the call for vengeance where it is compromised. Dignity stands here as an individual people's selfworth, notoriety and nobility people hold on to. It becomes an obligation when it symbolizes the identity of the group. In this situation members of the group agree to save it no matter how and no matter what. Sometimes to the detriment of, Paméssou Walla refers to as the "refinement in their moral conduct,"[51] that is the sharpening of ethical sensitivity.

From the political view, the phenomenon of prestige (face-saving) for human dignity is observable and obvious when someone is appointed or elected. People from his or her ethnic and constituency or his or her friends used to say "our child is… or we are…" likewise they know how the one who is appointed parents suffer in the process of climbing the social ladder. It is in that perspective that Mary Ann Shaffer said: "Think of it! We could have gone on longing for one another and pretending not to notice forever. This obsession with dignity can ruin your life if you let it"[52]. So, the defense of the members of the group becomes the sacred duty.

Moreover, the concept of human dignity is also associated with the 'Cult of Personality[53]' or 'Self-Glory'. The terms mentioned here arise when an individual uses mass media, propaganda, or other methods, to create an idealized, heroic, god-like public image often through unquestioning flattery and praise. For the first time, these themes did not have the political connotations but were closely related to the

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[50] *My italics*
[51] Paméssou Walla, Op. Cit, p.75.
[52] Joseph Stalin & Gandhi Claims, http//www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cult_of_Personality_(song)/2014, retrieved on April 21st, 2014
[53] Ibid.

loveliness Cult of genius[54]. The political use of the phrase was concrete in 1877 by the monarchs and other heads of state for well-being of offices according to the principle of 'the divine rights of kings.[55]'

The sociologist Max Weber developed a tripartite classification of authority; the cult of personality holds parallels with what Weber defined as charismatic authority[56], i.e. someone who represents a whole group, who incarnates the image of group and for that reason, someone who symbolizes socially commendable values. Therefore, a cult of personality is similar to the face-saving, the selfishness and the pride of someone among others. And it is to sustain these dimensions of cult of personality related to human dignity that Stalin and Ghandi document the cult of personality in the following terms:

> Look in my eyes, what do you see?
> The Cult of Personality
> I know your anger, I know your dreams
> I've been everything you want to be
> I'm the Cult of Personality
> The Cult of Personality
> The Cult of Personality
> Neon lights, a Nobel Prize
> Then a mirror speaks, the reflection lies
> You don't have to follow me
> […] A leader speaks, that leader dies
> You don't have to follow me
> Only you can set you free
> You gave me fortune
> You gave me fame
> You gave me power in your own God's name
> I'm every person you need to be
> Oh, I'm the Cult of Personality[57]

[54]Op. cit,.
[55] Ibid, p. 35.
[56]. Max Weber, February 2011, http://www.biography.com/articles/, retrieved on September 2nd, 2014.
[57] From Joseph Stalin & Gandhi Claims' song, Op. cit.

Considering the first question of this song, the author is focusing on the authority of an individual, his charistimatic personality. This aspect of the question prompts the discussing of the components of the cult of personality as announced so far. The authority of an individual suggests at first place the saving of the face. Referring to, it implies not only the respect that an individual deserves but also that leads to how, as an individual or as a group, are perceived by others. In this perspective, Roman Luigi Pirandello in his book *Six Characters in Search of an Author and Other Plays* (1921) says: *"*Each of us, face to face with other men, is clothed with some sort of dignity, but we know only too well all the unspeakable things that go on in the heart[58]."

Through this speech, the author is reminding that human being deserves dignity but its keeping depends on us regarding its dimensions considered in this research work notably the egoism. In other words, it means the greed of someone whose aim is to all the time keep everything for himself or herself and nothing for others. That was what madam Moderata Fonte deconstructs while saying in *The Worth of Women: Wherein Is Clearly Revealed Their Nobility and Their Superiority to Men* in the version published by University of Chicago Press in 1997:

> [M]en, though they know fully well how much women are worth and how great the benefits we bring them, nonetheless seek to destroy us out of envy for our merits. It's just like the crow, when it produces white nestlings:

[58] Luigi Pirandello, "Six Characters in Search of an Author and Other Plays," http//www.goodreads.com/works/quotes/15468851, retreived on June 7th, 2014.

> it is so stricken by envy, knowing how black it is itself,
> that it kills its own offspring out of pique.[59]

This quotation justifies the reasons why women hit back and bring to the fore one of the reasons why one can use vengeance as a means to justice. The contribution of women is not acknowledged out of envy for their merits. Men in the context show ingratitude towards them.

The human pride, the final dimension of cult of personality while considering human dignity in the context of my research work, is how someone feels happy, pleases or satisfies himself or herself to have or do something more than others. It is similar to a haughty attitude shown by somebody who believes, often unjustifiably, that he or she is better than others. So, it is a satisfaction of one's own value. In contrast to Fonte's conception based on man's supremacy on woman, Bradley, Professor of poetry at Oxford University in his critique thinks that human dignity is based on mutual relationship and respect. For him "Nothing is good without respect, i.e. out of relation"[60]. It is obvious from Bradley's pronouncement that dignity resisdes also in the entire acceptance of one another. And referring to 'relationship' that must guide mankind, Bradley was calling humanity to know that the banishing of one from his or her society for the so-called reason, i.e. unstanding reason can generate a solid and stricter tension.

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[59] Moderata Fonte, *The Worth of Women: Wherein Is Clearly Revealed Their Nobility and Their Superiority to Men*, Ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), p 36.
[60] John R. Brown. *Shakespearean Tragedy: Introduction to the Third Edition* (London: MacMillan Education Ltd, 1992), pp. 95-96.

The violation of human dignity is related to the manifestation of one of the constituents of human dignity advocated above such as nobility and notoriety in the concern of face-saving, selfishness and pride of people. If one of these aspects is damaged, the offended person vigourously reacts and the outcome of his or her reaction can be fatal for himself or herself or can affect his or her family and others. In young Hamlet's carelessness there is something noble because even though it is his duty to save his deceased father's face in the respect of English customs, he shows his courtesy by fencing at the beginning the combat with Laertes planned by the King Claudius. Yet, small Hamlet had to confine his will to the traditional rules. For Bradley,

> Not only is his task at last accomplished, but Shakespeare seems to have determined that his hero should exhibit in his latest hour all the glorious power and all the nobility and sweetness of his nature[61].

These nobility and sweetness shape the notoriety of small Hamlet as human being. He is noble and sweety. He is a hero who knows his duty to his people. He knows that his father's murderer must be killed later on. This plotting of small Hamlet by Bradley lightens on the hero's dignity and the one's of his family mainly his deceased father.

In the same vein, Macduff's beheaded Macbeth in the last fatal combat. His deed determined his love before his country in the scene with Malcolm whereby he decided to face the enemy and danger, Macbeth. "He is noble, wise, judicious, and best knows,

[61]Ibid, pp. 122-123.

the fits o' the season[62]. Macduff's fight was 'wise', 'judicious' beyond his nobility. In fact, Malcolm was not in age to fight against Macbeth the warrior and cawdor of the court. Only a skilled user of the sword can defeat him, thereby he has decided to take the lead. By quoting Ross, Bradley shows that for him one's dignity stands on how he or she is wise and judicious in the taking of decisions which engage the welfare of the whole kingdom. Regarding the concept of 'love' as the marker of dignity, Ben Jonson plotted Shakespeare like a "playwright, poet, critic and man of letters who 'loved the man this idolatry'"(…) and "he is also carelessness"[63]. So, the relation of 'man' towards his neighbor is an area where people can show dignity through showing fairness.

2.3.2. Meaning of Vengeance in Shakespeare's plays.

I would like to read vengeance in close connection with the following terms: *avenge* and *revenge* that shed light on the desire to do justice for self. In this regard, the victims are given the opportunity to righten themselves. When discussing the concept and its identified collocations, Michael Alexander provides the readers with the characteristics of the plays written with vengeful emotion. He does it when he writes:

> The revenge plays are successfully frightening, but their forty-year popularity suggests a fascination with human malignity which calls explanation. Old ideas of human nature had been shaken by the imposition of four religious regimes in four decades. If comedy is social,

[62] Op. cit, 346-347.
[63]Michael Alexander, Op. cit, p.135.

> showing the challenge to old social values from new mercantile values, tragedy is metaphysical,[64]

This excerpt substantiates the destructive pride that mars human nature. In this vein, tragedy reveals the nature of human beings in his society by taking into account his time and space. The character's mind, speech, and behaviors are greatly relevant in revenge plays and are closely considered regarding human 'malignity'. In that focus, this research work belongs to the tragic plays of Shakespeare. This section scrutinizes the harmful motive and the body degeneration through physical voice accountable to vengeance. Thus, it will be necessary to give a brief explanation of the moral aspect of vengeance.

Thomas Aquinas (1225-74) had thought that man is good but stupid, Martin Luther (1483-1546) found that man is bad but clever, i.e., a human being deserves intelligence and interest in his or her deeds. Beatrice-Jaonna, an heiress hires De Flores to kill her unwanted fiancé but the killer in return and after the accomplishment of the deal claims her as his reward. Repulsed, he replies: "Push! Your forget yourself!/ a woman dipp'd in blood, and talk of modesty!"[65] she finally admits the attraction of the repulsive De Flores, and she succumbs to him. In the context of the play, vengeance reads through the moral appraisal and bodily movements connoting agreement or disagreement with the counterpart.

Beatrice sees his unwanted fiancé as an obstacle on her way to self-fulfillment and for that, she commits a killer to end his life, while Tamora in *Titus Andronicus*,

[64]Ibid, pp. 141-142.
[65] Op. cit.

asks to the Emperor Saturnius to be his Empress[66] in order to destroy Titus Andronicus' family completely. So, the body damage in the concern of human dignity reads as "the act of punishing or harming somebody in return for what he or she has done to you, your family, or friends"[67], i.e. a revenge or vengeance. Thus, 'Vengeance' comes after an offense[68]; and it can be similar to revenge because a vengeful act can be considered as an offense and then can call for another vengeful act which becomes in that case a revengeful act.

In Shakespeare's tragic contexts of *Hamlet*, *Macbeth* and *Titus Andronicus*, to avenge somebody also means to rescue that person who is too weak to defend himself or herself. Lady Macbeth's "efficacious and destructive strategy of attack upon" Macbeth's "masculinity, his male identity[69]", saves the husband in his defense of his weak manhood. In this perspective, Suzanne I. Wofford levels criticism on *Macbeth*.

> You make me strange
> Even to the disposition that I owe,
> *When now I think you can keep the natural ruby of your cheeks*,
> When mine is blanch'd with fear,[70]

Indeed, a damage of human dignity can be a cause of ethnic, racial, or political conflict within people of the society. To spare the injury created by his wife he cannot

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[66]*The Complete Works of Shakespeare*, (Mumbai:. A Wilco Book, 2011), pp 571-575.
[67]*Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, New 7th Ed. Op. cit, p. 489.
[68]Ibid.
[69] Susanne L. Wofford. *Shakespeare's Late Tragedies: A Collection of Critical Essays* (London: Prentice Hall, Inc, 1996), p. 92.
[70]Ibid, p. 93.

kill himself, Macbeth takes revenge upon and kills King Duncan. This deed will spread havoc on the kingdom.

Down in the selected plays, revenge or vengeful act is a form of tragic fact in which someone (usually a hero or a villain) takes revenge for a supposed sin committed against him or her or a relative. In that way, there is always an element of pretexts which hides the fact that there is a revenge action in motion. The ghost comes to remind small Hamlet his father's soul sake, the apparition of Banquo's ghost to Macbeth alone during the dinner plots that he is asking for revenge through driving Macbeth in the presence of his guests. Avenging the kingdom and the King, Macduff kills Macbeth mad in a bloodied battle. Tamora like Saturnius avenges her humiliation towards Titus Andronicus'family while Titus Andronicus takes revenges on the criminals of his daughter Lavinia.

Thus, the revenge comes to end the wrongdoings or the wretches of someone else. In this context, Shakespeare uses revenge as a dramatic tool to achieve social justice. Most definitely, vengeance as well as revenge is individual natural inclination to render self-justice also known as wild justice which, in the context, connotes doing self-justice. To the society where legal law leads a people, this is not a commendable policy. For Alphonse Sambou people who use vengeance for egoistical end have a "conscience troublée[71]"/ troubled conscience; i.e. the state of a person who fails to make good use of his or her intellectual capacities to create for his or her society peace and understanding for communal life.

[71] Alphonse Sambou, "La conscience malheureuse dans *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* de James Joyce pp . 253-263 in Mamadou Kandji ed., *Education, societies et enjeux internationaux* (Dakar: Les Editions Diaspora-Academie 2014),p. 253.

It is worth noting that anger and emotion are used instead of reason. As a result, the strong are given way to make use of their strength to do justice for themselves. This is not a good approach in a society where people are meant to live together despite their moral and physical differences.

Ironically enough, Shakespeare opens a series of revengeful actions for the implied English society to sense the need to set up norms people should resort to in case of conflict.

Other writings of Shakespeare have variously approached the concept of vengeance or revenge. The play of Marlowe *The Jew of Malta* is a form of revenge tragedy in which the main character Barabas is a vengeful Jew. *Othello,* and *Romeo and Juliet* are also other types of revenge tragedies in a sense but "*Romeo and Juliet* and *Antony and Cleopatra* are more love-tragedies in away that the heroine is as much the centre of the action as the hero."[72]

Though, the tragic facts do not all centre on the revenge motif, Iago takes his revenge on Moor and this leads to the tragedy of Othello. Romeo like Antony will finally kill Tybalt and Cleopatra respectively and argue this wrongdoing by cleaning the stain on honor. Romeo's action is underlined by Macduff's words when he hears what he had done towards his family's members. So, the tragic actions are performed for the sake of personal glory. John Greene, in this vein said:

> The matter of tragedies is haughtiness, arrogance, ambition, pride, injury, anger, wrath, envy, hatred, contention, war, murder, cruelty, raping, incest, ravings, depredations, piracies, spoils, robberies, rebellions,

[72]John R. Brown, Ibid, pp. 2-3.

> treasons, killing, hewing, stabbing, dagger, - drawing, fighting, butchery, treachery villainy etc…[73]

This quotation points out foils and foibles that call tragedy on characters in the plays and human beings in actual societies. This connotes the thirst for evil that haunts human beings. Shakespeare enables people to see evidences of vengeance in those various evil acts people perform.

Therefore, the villain becomes increasingly prominent[74] in such away that, the motives of revenge stand as complexity. The complexity is nothing more than the expression of what Douglas Hoey refers to as "community" in English context of the study. In his own words, "communities are an intrinsic part of social life but they contain all the contradictions, joys and dangers that social life brings."[75] The interaction of values and counter values, heroes and anti-heroes in Shakespeare's tragedy are all flavours that keep the story of vengeance flowing and the sense of dignity worthwhile. Thus in *Macbeth* , the ghost's apparitions, incest, insanity, adultery, rape, murder, infanticide, suicide, poisoning and treachery are common elements sources of revenge and vengeance that shed light on the culturally pregnant concept of dignity. The apparition of the ghost of Banquo to Macbeth among his guests during the banquet in *Macbeth*, and the one of young Hamlet's father to his child stand to illustrate the fact that vengeance sometimes is the only one way to defend and save oneself where law fails to rule.

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[73] Edward Hubler, *William Shakespeare's four Great Tragedies* (New York: The New American Library, 1982), p. 13.
[74] Lily B. Campbell, *Shakespeare'sTragic Heroes* (London: Methuen & Co Ltd, 1977), pp. 248-249.
[75] Douglas Hoey, "Belonging:Community"pp. 399- 419 in Steve Matthewman et al eds. *Being Sociological* (Palgrave :Macmillan, 2007), p.415.

Behaviourists such as Douglas, Steven and Rullaney have been able to prove that there is really no difference between happiness and sadness. It is so, because sadness brings tears; and an extreme case of happiness brings tears also. Revenge is important, not because of the revenge action but because of the lessons which are derived from the action.

In relation to the option of the traitor being hanged on the platform of public execution in order to moralize and dissuade potential wrongdoers' psyche, Steven Mullaney has this to offer:

> It is not a treason that speaks from the place of execution, and in a sense it is no longer the body of the traitor that is painstakingly subjected to the law, and so shown to be human and natural once again. Confession and execution mark the return of the traitor to society and to himself, even in death. [76]

Rullaney marks vengeance and death sentence as a means to moralize a culprit. Vengeance does justice to self while death sentence excludes the culprit from the society forever. Neither of two offers alternative for repentence. Seemingly punishment in English tradition aims to help the criminal to repent from his wrongdoings. Thus, punishment is not intented to make a criminal suffer in vain, the pain he or she endures is meant to teach him a lesson towards the improvement his or her behaviour. But there is no evidence as to whether the culprits will turn into more criminal offenders against the people or the society that humiliate them.

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[76] Steven Mullaney, "Lying Like Truth: Riddle, Representation, and Treason in Renaissance England", 12, in Alan Sheridan's *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Pantheon, 1977), p.62.

Generally, in human life, the tendency to take revenge when offended, is natural and a protective measure. As result, people do not trust divine punishment because it takes a relatively longer time[77]. In the context of Shakespeare's tragedy, it is not out of place to seek revenge while offended. But what is important to mention, is that revenge can also be negatively or positively inclined. In this vein and referring to the religious' conception of vengeance in Elizabethan time, Lily B. Campbell gives legitimacy to the legislative and the executive bodies to carry out public justice. Thus,

> To rulers and magistrates he delegated the execution of public justice, but private revenge was forbidden to all and was sure to bring God's vengeance upon anyone engaged upon it, even though the avenger might be used as the instrument of God's vengeance. That Shakespeare's *Hamlet* followed the pattern of what we have come to call the revenge play is not disputed by anyone. From the ghost crying for revenge to the play within the play the dramatic and theatrical devices were familiar to theatergoers when Shakespeare used them. But the ghost which Shakespeare presented was an Elizabethan (…) Like Macbeth, Claudius acknowledges his sin as a violation of eternal right, a sin that 'hath the primal eldest curse upon 't[78].

In substance, it is safer to have legal body to administer justice than individual persons to render self-justice. Thus, in accordance with English culture, only lawyers and magistrates are allowed to sentence offenders to avoid cosmic's anger spreading on the countrymen.

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[77] Lily B. Campbell, Ibid, p. 46.

[78] Lily B. Campbell, "Theories of Revenge in Renaissance England" in *Shakespeare's Tragic Heroes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1930-31), p. 253.

Besides this conception, revenge is seen as positive when the revenger has been offended. In order to repair this wrong deed, the revenge takes place. But it is negative when it drives to the mass killing for weak motifs mainly when the avenger is just out to destroy the other persons because of jealousy or personal dislike wishing in process to display his or her heroism. Iago in *Othello* and Chiron and Demetrius in *Titus Andronicus* illustrate well that negative aspect of vengeance. Whether, vengeance is positively or negatively inclined, is important to human existence, and no one can deny from such a societal reality.

One of the important aspects of revenge is that the drive for revenge exposes the sins committed by another. It is as a result of revenge that we see the sin of the offender whom the avenger sets out to destroy.Vengeance therefore, shows the discrepancies in human dignity relations. Another important reason why revenge is relevant is that it helps in maintaining the "cosmic" order in nature regarding dignity. In this connection, Tracey McIntosh is right when he opines : "Religious beliefs inform social structures, even in modern secular societies. Legal codes are a good example of this."[79] Religion tells people where to stand on the social scale regarding spirituality as source of power. It is established in the English cosmogology that because there are some sins which unless punished may cause disruption in the cosmological order of nature, religious authorities should regulate individual people's actions and interactions. An example is the murder of a brother by his younger brother and an unholy marriage to his widowed wife. This kind of sin is regarded as a disruption of the cosmological order in nature and is considered as an offense to one's

[79] Tracey McIntosh, "Believing:Religion"pp.275-293 in Steve Matthewman et al eds. *Being Sociological* (Palgrave :Macmillan, 2007),p.275.

dignity. In order to clean the polluted English social environment of such a disorder, there must be shedding of blood as it is the case in Shakespeare's tragedy. From the traditional point of view and given the religious burden people, it is a must to wash these sins away.

Dignity-saving, is also an avenue for us to see the extent to which people can go in order for it to carry out revenge or vengeance. The case of Aaron in *Titus Andronicus* who kills half of the country is a key example of revenge.

Though, revenge might be looked at, as negative ways of avenging oneself, there are certain instances when revenge is inevitable in order to get sanity. There are some sins which, when not avenged, give the impression that one is not caring enough. Even delay, it is regarded as a sin. An example is the case of small Hamlet who delays the revenge of his father's death. An additional important reason for vengeance is that, some dead persons'spirits; ghosts may refuse to live in peace unless their deaths are avenged.

For instance, in *Hamlet*, the Ghost of young Hamlet's father, instructs the small Hamlet not to kill his mother because that will be another sin, but to kill his uncle, the usurper of power. Therefore, the supernatural being gives this information because ordinarily it would be impossible for the living to come by this information. This is what happens when the Ghost of young Hamlet's father tells young Hamlet of the cause of his death. By this, I mean that certain forms of revenge are justifiable while others are mainly as a result of jealousy, hatred and the like. In *Hamlet*, Claudius kills his brother, the senior Hamlet and marries his wife. In *Titus Andronicus*, Aaron makes them rape and mutilate Lavinia in order to avenge himself. Tamora is unfaithful to the

king. Even though she is the queen to him and she is at his mercy, she also takes part in the murder of the brother of the king.

Since the key concepts of this research are clearly explicated, it will be useful to make a quickly review about what other scholars think of them regarding the topic of this research work.

2.4. Review of Theories and Scholars' Views about the Topic

In this section, my first concern is to identify the relevant works already done by scholars which are related to my topic. This comes as a milestone which will lead to the main objectives of my research work. Thus, the works that are most significant to my dissertation will be selected according to the usefulness of human dignity. Secondly, I will briefly comment on the selected theories used by previous scholars. From that understanding, a comparative analysis needs to be done in order to find out the weaknesses of those who have undertaken the concept of human dignity as a complex topic worth exploring.

Talking about scholars, I can mention Reuben A. Brower who thinks that human dignity resides in the achieving of one's villainity through nobility. In his article about *Titus Andronicus*, Reuben shows that the heroism of the character (Titus Andronicus) stands for his dignity "the only victory is to lose himself to find himself"[80]. The words of Titus Andronicus exemplifies the speech of Reuben: "For now I stand as one upon a rock, Environ'd with a wilderness of sea (…)"[81]. It is the standing of man as a rock in front of social challenges that justifies his strength and

[80]Reuben A. Brower, "*Titus Andronicus* : Villainy and Tragedy", 8, in *Shakespeare: The Tragedies New Perspectives* (New york and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), pp. 194-203.
[81] The Complete Works of Shakespeare, Op. cit, p 553.

power in mankind. He wrote also about the question and has assimilated it to a murderer who becomes victim[82] because of his ambition. So, people are victim of their own selfishness. But G. K. Hunter related human dignity to the accomplishment of the heroism. In his publication "Shakespeare's Last Tragic Heroes", Hunter, in contrast to Reuben, is saying that man dignity resides in his strength of controlling his world, leading the world through reconciliation[83] of protagonists. Clifford Leech, in the same way, while making a link between tragic situation and human life whereby the character is forced to achieve his heroism or manhood, said:

> Words of peace are spoken, and we are conscious that the evil situation no longer exits: the forces of evil have worked themselves out (…) because we have seen men like ourselves yet stronger than we could expect to be, we fell also Pride.[84]

If heroism and dignity were in the above excerpt, it is on the moral fiber that they stand. Words of peace drive the evil away. Giving the context of William Shakespeare's three plays, it is observable that human beings expect more than what must be because of their Pride. The writer in the use of the concept of Pride, relates it to the evil situation that man focuses on when he or she is attached to his or her 'to be' as an dimension of the current research work regarding the spectator's mind which may more fully respond to the vision of evil and human strength in defeat, while

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[82]E. A. J. Honigmann, "*Macbeth*: The Murderer as Victim", 13, in *Shakespeare: The Tragedies New Perspectives* (New York: Barnes and Noble Books, 1976), pp. 1-3.
[83]G. K. Hunter. "Shakespeare's Last Heroes", 14, in *Shakespeare: The Tragedies New Perspectives* (London: Edward Arnold Publishers Ltd , 1966), pp 203-215.
[84]Clifford Leech, *Shakespeare's Tragedies and Other Studies in Seventeenth Century Drama* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1950), pp. 16-18.

portraying heros in the tragic play. Leech thinks the readers or spectators may learn through the pictures or writings that:

> If evil men come to the stage, they ever go out (as the tragedy writer answered to one that misliked the show of such persons) so manacled as they little animate folks to follow them.[85]

Substantially, this statement of Sidney quoted by Leech connotes that evil drives from the circumstances of the time and it is some unfair actions that impelled to commit in response to the evil, i.e. revenge.

For Madelon Gohlke Sprengnether humiliation is a harm to dignity. He argues about Hamlet's attitude towards the behavior of his mother during his deceased father's mourning time:

> Obsessed as he is with sexual betrayal, the problem of revenge for him is less a matter of killing than one of not killing his mother. Hamlet's anger against woman, based on his perception of his mother's conduct, finds expression in the language of prostitution in his violent outburst against Ophelia, [86]

Through this quotation above, the author wants to share young Hamlet's deception about womanhood which drives him to avenge his deceased father since his mother's incest is an humiliation to his deceased father's dignity.

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[85]Ibid, p. 23.

[86] Madelon G. Sprengnether, "Murder in the Bedroom: Hamlet and Othello", in Theodore Lidz's *Hamlet's Enemy: Madness and Myth in Hamlet* (New York: Basic Books, 1975), pp. 170-87.

Modern French writers talk also about the concept and try to refresh the readers' mind with their new conceptions and perceptions of human dignity:

> Les évènements malencontreux dont l'être-vie est responsable ou non, ne doivent pas avoir raison sur lui. Ils sont des circonstances dans lesquelles il doit redoubler d'efforts pour triompher de la mort sous toutes ses formes en faisant preuve de ténacité, d'inventivité, de sobriété, de convivialité fraternelle et de dignité dans tous ses rapports au monde.[87]

> Unfortunate events created or not by human beings cannot overtake him. But these events must be a situation which should lead human beings to put more efforts on oneself in order to overcome the death's obstacles by being tenacious, creative, sober, faithful in the relationship, and being someone who takes in account various forms of human dignity as pattern of the world. (My translation).

Nathanaël Y. Soédé infuses the idea of determination and courage in human beings so that they can take up the challenges they are faced with. Based on his perception of life, the idea of dignity must reads like a constant struggle against forces that seek to humiliate human beings. Hardships are not divine so that human beings find themselves weak before their Moral death which is a symbolic death and needs serious attention because the physical beings is fed by the psychic reality and moral balance.

Soédé's opinion here, indicates that the concept of human dignity is rooted in ethics which sees human developments through education, tradition, custom and culture.

[87] Nathanaël Y.Soédé, « Anthropologie de l'homo novus de St Paul et la renaissance chrétienne », 2, in Revue *Théologie Africaine , Eglise et Sociétés*, (Abidjan 13 : CFMA, 2012), pp 158-159.

Therefore, ethic appears as the guidance of fair relationship between man and his society by establishing bidirectional communication within the group.

As such, the concept of ethic assimilated to human dignity, allows people to avoid harmful situation among individuals and within nations. From that understanding, Nathanaël Soédé seems to focus on being realistic approach to the concept of human dignity. Since it is also a subject of motivation of all readers to update their knowledge in the literature, Frank Raymond Leavis in this vein, suggest in *The Great Tradition* (1948), the duty of literary production when he says:

> The business of literature critic is to attain a peculiar completeness of response and to observe a peculiarly strict relevance in developing his response into commentary, (…). He must be on his guard against abstracting. Improper from what is in front of him and against any premature or irrelevant generalizing of it or from it. [88]

In this pronouncement, the response resides in relevant commentary of the literary. In other words, the critics' work is beyond the first impression he or she i.e. the writer gets from texts critiques.

Though 'Vengeance' holds a significant part in Shakespeare's tragic literary production, the author seems to reveal in his works that the tragic actions of his plays have their origin in the human dignity saving which is Face-saving, Selfishness and Pride proned.

[88] Frank Raymond Leavis, *The Great Tradition*, quoted by Michael Alexander, Op. cit, pp. 307-336.

In *Hamlet*, the evil events were obvious and small Hamlet, an idealistic college student seems to be given a morally complex task. In Act I, the ghost of small Hamlet's father appears to the young boy to ask for revenge. This moral complexity can be seen as the accomplishment of dignity through the rescue of his deceased father. Regarding face-saving, this demand on dignity is intensified until small Hamlet commits the murder of Claudius, his uncle, his new step-father and the new king of Denmark.

Moreover, killing is considered as the breaking of powerful social, ecclesiastical and political taboos, a sacrilege against God's anointed representation[89]. This unfair fact gives way to social conflicts i.e. the rise of revengeful drives in people. As a whole, giving the context of Shakespeare's plays in this study, revenge "is both an appeal against a denial of rights and an assertion of an individual's right to their position and entitlement to punish those who try to take away their rightful place. Revenge may operate in one-to-one relations as private retaliation for wrongful treatment."[90] As such, revenge is a manifestation of Conflicts.

Vengeance or revenge is human and not of particular race or people. The African novel, *The River Between*, written by Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1980), depicts the theme of conflict regarding revenge actions. This novel dramatizes the antagonism between two rival factions within the same clan, a rivalry which has its origins in promises made to Gikuyu people in their Creation. Myth as the promise is modified in the prophecy of a legendary seer of the tribe. The novel pinpoints the conflict between Makuyu people and Kameno people. The rivalry has its origin in history of the tribe in part of

[89] Op cit, p 43.
[90] Catherine Lane West-Newman, "Feeling: Emotions" pp.253-273 in Steve Matthewman et al eds. *Being Sociological* (Palgrave :Macmillan, 2007),p.263.

detaining the European knowledge in the small community[91]. For that reason, Achebe will define tribalism as the "discrimination against a citizen because of his place of birth"[92]

For the writer, preventing someone from enjoying socio-political privileges because of ethnic boudage, is an instance that drives the victim to blind violence. It is a right "to live and work anywhere in the country, or from participating in the social, political, economic life of the community in which he or she chooses to live is another matter altogether. (…)"[93]. So, human dignity is innate in every person and the rewarding interpretation of it, stresses. The acceptance of one another in a group for its strength and sustainability is recommendable. And each member of group of individuals of a society, has his or her role to play for the well-being of mankind. In this vein, cultural, racial and ideological differences are far from breaking the affectionate and ethically proned life style.

For Chinua Achebe, "Though tribe and tongue may differ /In brotherhood we stand"[94]. Brotherhood is a value of dignity in the African context of Achebe's critique. Surely, through this value, one can reasonably see the utility of dignity in political and social togetherness.

When division, war, hatred and selfhood are proned in a society, a responsible person has to claim for it as a value that entertains life.

Unfortunately, the Ghanian female writers Comfort Owusu in 2007, in her book entitled *Commentary on Hamlet and Non-African Poems for Literature in*

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[91] G. D. Killam, *The River Between*, 1980, http// www.kirjasto.sci.fi/ngugiw.htm, April, 20th, 2014
[92]Chinua Achebe, *The Trouble with Nigeria*, (England: Heinemann Educational Books, 2012), pp. 5-8.
[93] Ibid.
[94]Op. cit, p. 6.

English, and Amarchoe Ashitey in *William Shakespeare's Macbeth in Modern Prose*, suggest that saving of dignity is the bedrock of the bloodshed in Shakespeare's play respectively *Hamlet* and *Macbeth.*

In fact, through Comfort Owusu's portrayal, young Hamlet was undignified by Gertrude, his mother who remarried very quickly his uncle Claudius after the death of his father, i.e. she remarries Claudius during the mourning time.

The selfishness of Gertrude coupled with being deprived of his legal right to the throne upset and made the prince suspect his mother to have helped Claudius the King to kill his father. Why had Gertrude plotted so? The writer, passing by Gertrude's behaviour, is touching the moral of all women in society through the respect of the image of people that surround them. For instance, the Ghost of Hamlet's father instructs the young Hamlet to save the face of his deceased father. This saving poses the problem of the dignity saving of the family, since the culture and the tradition are patriarchal. Claudius' selfishness and pride, channel and nurture the murder of the young Hamlet. Therefore, the death of Polonius is a fine opportunity for Claudius to banish the young Hamlet from the kingdom of Denmark with the pretext of saving him from the charge of murder. He arranges for the young Hamlet to be put on a ship bound for England. He sends a letter through his two courtiers escorting young hamlet for the English court, with the request that small Hamlet must be put to death as soon as he arrives in England.

In the same vein, the wicked King tells Laertes to poison his weapon against all rules of fencing. But finally, Laertes was the one who failed into the trap, because the Queen was the one who accidentally drinks the poison prepared by the King and Laertes. The queen dies and small Hamlet suspects once again treacherous which will

be later confessed[95] by Laertes, who has ordered the blocking of doors of the chamber and has begged young Hamlet for his wrongdoing.

Similarly, in *Macbeth,* Amarchoe Ashitey confirms this conception of dignity in her book *William Shakespeare's Macbeth in Modern Prose* (2011) while she quotes one of Malcom's speeches addressed to Macduff in these words:

> With my greedy and unbalanced nature, if I were made a king I would kill the nobles and take their lands, wealth and houses and I would have such a desire to possess more and more wealth, land, women and all, that I would pick unjust quarrels with the good and loyal citizens in order to destroy them and take possession of their property[96].

For Amarchoe Ashitey in *Macbeth,* the selfishness and pride are more prominent in couple Macbeth and Lady Macbeth. In fact, the non satisfaction with the social position conferred him by the king Duncan, Macbeth takes advantage of Duncan's visit to him to kill him. This achievement of selfishness and pride of Macbeth is confirmed by the prophecy that reveals that he will become the king before his death as the weird sisters have advocated it in the play. Also the pride saving of Lady Macbeth is the cause of the killing of the king by Macbeth. Her will or desire was to be looked up to as the queen among the womenfolk of the kingdom.

On the other hand, the face-saving of the royalty will force Macduff to plan the murder of Macbeth after discovering that Macbeth was the person who commits the

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[95] Comfort Owusu, *Commentary on Hamlet and Non-African Poems for Literature in English*, (Accra: His Grace Publications, 2007), pp. 1-4.
[96]Amarchoe Ashitey, *William Shakespeare's Macbeth in Modern Prose* (Accra: Innolink Limited, Kokomlemle, 2011), pp 73, 74.

horror. For that, Ross quotes a conversation in *Macbeth*'s play in order to restore how honor and dignity of the country are important. Taking into account the dynamism of human dignity, she said:

> Poor country! The people of Scotland do not have social intercourse with each other. It is only those who do not know what is actually going on who would be seen smiling. People sigh, groan and shriek without anyone caring about such suffering. When people suffer deep sorrow no one seems to take notice because it is the order of the day and when a funeral bell is heard nobody bothers to ask who is dead. And good men[97] die before there is up[98].

In the same way, the safeguard for the face-saving of the royalty in the concern of dignity, imposes to Macduff to murder Macbeth who is known as the warrior of the court. He carries out this vengeful act, which is somehow related to him, by fighting; because for him the usurper's head will help the King and the members of his family to live in peace, since he is not directly involved to succeed to the throne. That is why, Amarchoe Ashitey underlined her view through the following assertion:

> Hail king, for king you are. Look at the usurper's cursed head. We are now in a free world. I see you are surrounded by the nobles of your kingdom who are congratulating you in their minds. With their voices I proclaim you King of Scotland! Hail[99]!

[97] Ibid, p 46.
[98] *Macbeth*, p 561.
[99] Op cit.

Alpers, Nancy R. Lindhein, Lisa Hopkins, talk about how the culture and tradition influence this study which focuses on the vengeance as the consequence of dignity saving. Shakespeare's use of pastoral conventions in his tragedies has not received a great deal of critical attention, but the commentary is nevertheless significant.

Alpers discusses the grave-digger scene in *Hamlet* with regard to the clown as a descendant of pastoral shephereds or rustics who are truth-tellers. Nancy R. Lindheim (1974) examines the pastoral elements in *King Lear*. The critic maintains that in the play, Lear comes to understand such pastoral concerns as how individuals should interact with nature and society, and the importance of demonstrating pity and compassion for others. Lisa Hopkins (2000) views *Othello* as a reversal of the pastoral pattern of a retreat to an idealized world where regeneration occurs[100]. Hopkins maintains that in *Othello*, Venice represents a pastoral inversion, a desolate place rather than a setting that fosters self-education and personal renewal.

Moreover, for the relevance of my qualitative research, various writings about the psychological analyses become an awareness for the authenticity of this complexity of how to approach humankind behaviors in his society. That's why, the theory of Sigmund Freud underlined that the "unconsciousness of human beings is the root of human behaviour which reveals all the components of his personality"[101].

Others have also associated dignity saving with the term of honor of nation, patriotism and tribalism through their writings. Among them I can notify the work of Chinua Achebe in *The Trouble with Nigeria* reprinted in 2012.

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[100] http//www.enotes.com/topics/william-shakespeare/March, 2009/critical, retreived on 07/06/14.

[101] C. G. Jung, "The Collected Works: Freud and Psychoanalysis*",* 1985, Vol. 4, http://www.infoplease.com/encyclopedia/science/psychoanalysis-bibliography.html#ixzz3ENitYU5u, retrieved on July 7th, 2014.

In fact, Achebe's work pinpoints the way the Self-image regards as authority and personality causes the destruction of ethnics and nations. Nigerian's trouble:

> Is simply and squarely a failure of leadership. There is nothing basically wrong with the Nigerian character. There is nothing wrong with the Nigerian land or climate or water or air or anything else.the Nigerian problem is the unwillingness or inability of its leaders to rise to the responsibility, to the challenge of personal example (…)[102].

Substantially the development of a country depends on the image worn by its former leader who has to incarnate a dignified behavior through unity of countrymen around a clear vision of development. For him, it is not because Nigerians are particularly evil or wicked that there are reneges on the agreement between citizen and state. Referring again to the problem, he saw that it related to the lack of patriotism which he defined as a state of:

> A person who loves his country. He is not a person who *says* he loves his country. He is not even a person who shouts or swears or recites or sings his love of his country. He is one who *cares* deeply about the happiness and well-being of his country and all its people. Patriotism is an emotion of love directed by a critical intelligence. A true patriot will always demand the highest standards of his country and accept nothing but the best for and from his people[103].

[102]Chinua Achebe, *The Trouble with Nigeria* (England: Heinemann Educational Books, reprinted in 2012), p. 1.
[103]Ibid, pp. 15-16.

As the essence of his thoughts, Achebe is saying that a patriot is a dignified person, when he is able to accept critiques coming from others about his or her wrongdoings. A person who cultivates permanently the happiness, the sustainable peace and well-being among his or her neighbours.

Besides, there are prominent examples of this sub-genre of tragedy which are linked to saving human dignity. They are many and diversified, but a brief mention of some of them is relevant to this work. Georges Champion's *The Revenge of Bussy d'Ambois* (1607), Webster's *The White Devil* (1612) and *The Duchess of Malfi* (1613-14), and finally Middleton and Rowley's *The Challenging* (1622). There are also some minor ones of which John Fletcher's *The Bloody Brother* (1616), Thomas Dave's, *The Bloody Banquet* (1620), and Massigner's, *The Duke of Milom* (1620), are worthy of mention.

However, it is human right to wonder how dignity can be important, talkless of revenge. When a revenge action is carried out, this may be because of a lot of reasons. Revenge comes about because of a wrongdoing towards someone or the disruption of the cosmological order of nature. So, in order to right this wrongdoing, revenge takes place to clean the injuries of somebody or the whole family as it was done by Shakespeare's acting characters in the selected plays.[104]

[104] Clifford Leech, Op. cit, pp. 16-18

Part Two:

Vengeance as an Outcome of Human Dignity Saving in Shakespeare's *Hamlet, Macbeth* and *Titus Andronicus Andronicus*

Chapter Three: Vengeance as Means for Dignity Saving in the Three Selected Plays

The English quotation coming from *Hamlet* "To be or not to be" of William Shakespeare and translated into French "Etre ou ne pas être", has a couple of interpretations regarding the three dimensions enumerated in a previous section and constitutes the core components of human dignity saving as source of vengeance in this research work

Bloodshed has always been a source of worry for people who give it a minute attention. The whole mankind is going through hardships today as a result of moral degeneration. This calls for the reshaping of people's emotions as the foundation of behaviour. According to philosopher Alfred Schutz as quoted, he suggests that the world is a common heritage and individuals have to take care of it. It is established from his pronouncement that human injustice and wickedness are the result of "the social construction of reality"[105]. Say for example that, human beings are all corrupt and spoiled is to suggest that violence, bloodshed and wars are desired and caused by communities of all cultures and traditions. By extension war atrocities caused by social conflicts are human. And vices such as treason, treachery, incest, adultery, jealousy, greed, egoism and pride are shared human heritage just as vision, culture and tradition.

Regarding conflicts going on in the world, Voltaire says: "men will always be mad and those who think they can cure them are the maddest of all[106]." This quotation

[105] Stephen W. Littlejohn, *Theories of Human Communication Sixth edition* (London: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1999), p.175.
[106] Ibid, p. 959.

suggests that, it is needless to hope for the improvement of human behaviour. In contrast to Voltaire, I think that we must not panick yet, there is nothing impossible if there is good will provided. There is a way to overcome humans' emotion in order to establish, to incarnate a sustainable peace in the heart of everyone. There is an urgent need for a change in the way the world grows with the degenerative culture and practices.

However it is not exaggerated to say that vengeful acts appear in Shakespeare's drama as an opportunity to see the unbridled bare nakedness of human nature. In that option, John Greene shows us the concern of tragedies through the following statement:

> The matter of tragedies is haughtiness, arrogance, ambition, pride, injury, anger, wrath, envy, hatred, contention, war, murder, cruelty, rapine, incest, ravings, depredations, piracies, spoils, robberies, rebellions, treasons, killing, hewing, stabbing, dagger drawing, fighting, butchery, treachery, villainy, etc… [107]

This tirade has just listed some of the various evils that tragedies account for. Of course, dignity is a positive pattern of human nature attribution, because as a human beings, you have to be worthy of your acts everywhere you are, if humankind can avoid tribalism by banishing 'discrimination'[108]. People must be honored and dignified by their good behaviors within the group they belong to. In the same perspectives, James Frey confirmed the worthy of human acts in his article titled "A Million Little

[107] Edward Hubler, Op.cit, p.38
[108] Chinua Achebe, Op. cit, p. 18.

Pieces" published in 2013 in which he states: "Be strong. Live honorably and with dignity. When you don't think you can, hold on". So, James is saying that dignity is commitment and fearlessness and someone who goes through difficulties and succeeds is a dignified person.

Macduff beheaded Macbeth in sanguinary fighting to protect the kingdom integrity considered as its dignity from the wretches of couple Macbeth. Macduff speech: "I have no words, my word is my sword" is deeper in sense. Titus Andronicus organized a banquet for the accomplices of the rape and mutilation of her left lovely daughter, during which he killed all of them after he had killed the murderers whose bodies he served as meal in the dinner. How come? if it is not to prove either his own dignity as one who offers all that belong to him for the sake of his country or the one of his boys who had nothing in the murder of the prince Bassianus.

Viewing the complexity of the topic, the problem is how dignity saving is operated. Evil is real in human nature, and both men and women are really wicked. This is what Shakespeare seems to highlight . For the relevance of the studied topic, each of its key words should be considered in all its aspects and dimensions. The concern of dignity saving, as mentioned in the first part of the present work, is to demonstrate that the bloodsheds or hardships which happen in *Hamlet*, *Macbeth* and *Titus Andronicus*, result from the vengeance or revenge and are the consequences of one's or a group dignity saving. For these reasons, the use of the two approaches; psychoanalytic theory and semiotics announced above, is unavoidable for these issues of this research work.

Thus, for the understanding of this research work, I undertake to draw a chart for each play under study which gathers the key killings or murdering acts related to

vengeance or revenge, having dignity saving as the main concern. This chart aims also to give a brief summary of each play by pinpointing the key murdering actions of some acting characters used by Shakespeare to denounce the negative perception of saving one's dignity. Yet, these charts or tables that I prefer to name " Key Murders or Murdering Acts (KMMA)" table because they reveal only the killings or the thoughts and speeches that can excite to kill and drive on committing a hardship against the supposed guilty people, become tools which will help me to shed light on the key concepts of my research topic.

3.1. Revenge, a Means of Dignity Saving in *Hamlet*

I open this section with Catherine Lane West-Newman's pronouncement on revenge in connection with dignity:

> At the core of revenge is a concern to set things right after a (perceived)injury. It has been described as an emotion that works to correct imbalanced or disjointed power relationships. It is concerned with reasserting human dignity and restoring social actors to their rightful place in relationships.[109]

The substance in this excerpt is that revenge is a means to dignity, a tool used by people to correct injustice they think they are victims of. Shakespeare's tragedy illustrates this existential pattern in English literary context.

[109] Catherine Lane West-Newman, " Feeling: Emotions" pp.253-273 in Steve Matthewman et al eds. *Being Sociological* (Palgrave :Macmillan, 2007),p.263.

A chart of the main vengeful acts and killings that I'm going to draw, will permit me to see which aspect of dignity among others was affected.

Key Muders and Mudering Acts in *Hamlet*			
Characters	**Acts and Scenes**	**Actions**	**Observations or Consequences**
King Claudius	I, i.	Claudius,the suspected murderer of Hamlet's father, becomes the new king, and he marries Hamlet's mother, Queen Gertrude	Hamlet's father was killed as Rosencrantz, Guildenstern and Laertes by king Claudius' fault.
	V, iii.	King Claudius organizes a fencing match between Hamlet and Laertes to have small Hamlet killed. He also prepares poison for small Hamlet.	
	II, ii.	Rosencrantz and Guildenstern taking Hamlet to exile in England, die at Hamlet's place since Claudius wanted Hamlet to die while on journey	
	IV, i.	King Claudius exchanged the poisoned drinks and Laertes is wounded in place of small Hamlet	
Small Hamlet		Hamlet kills Polonius by error.	Polonius, small Hamlet's "father-in-law" and King Claudius, small Hamlet's uncle were killed by Hamlet himself but he is
	III, ii.	Ophelia, Polonius daughter in infatuation with Hamlet died because of small Hamlet.	
	V, iii.	The king Claudius was killed by small Hamlet.	

Key Muders and Mudering Acts in *Hamlet*			
Characters	**Acts and Scenes**	**Actions**	**Observations or Consequences**
			indirectly linked to the death of Orphelia
Gertrude	I, i, ii.	Gertrude, the small Hamlet's mother gets married to the murderer of his husband Claudius just after two or three months of mourning.	Gertrude is involved as the matter of the murder of Claudius and small Hamlet.
Hamlet's father's Ghost	I, ii, iii.	It reminded small Hamlet the killing of his father's murderer.	King Claudius was killed.
Laertes	V, iii.	Laertes hurt small Hamlet with the poisoned sword after confessing his small Hamlet's killing plan with king Claudius.	Small Hamlet was killed by Laertes.

Table 1- Key Murders and Murdering Acts in *Hamlet.* (KMMA table)

Through the drawing table, it appears that characters like King Claudius had killed the former, young Hamlet's father, young Hamlet avenged his father, Gertrude got married to the killer of her husband , Laertes avenged his family-in-law and killed young Hamlet, and young Hamlet's father Ghost reminded the killing of the murderer. These are evidences that the killings aim at saving the killers' or their families' dignity. The chart is also showing that there were a lot of killings; and the acting characters murders or murdering acts can be classified into Face-saving, Selfishness, and Pride as aspects in discussion of dignity saving in this research work.

In short**,** generally there can be no revenge action or vengeance or murder without an available and valuable reason.

Considering face-saving in the concern of one's dignity, Hamlet's father has been supplanted on the throne by his brother Claudius, who has a hand in his murder. He also married the queen in an unseemly haste after the death of the King. The queen is the mother of young Hamlet, the only child of the wedlock between her and the former king. Claudius sent small Hamlet abroad in order to stay and keep safely the throne. Added to this, he ordered people by engaging them all the time to kill small Hamlet. In this way, through his wicked thoughts and behavior, the offended person does not have any voice to share. In constrast, and regarding this dictatorial fact, while paraphrasing an African proverb a wise man used to say that it is forbidden to beat somebody and tell him or her not to weep. Claudius ignored that "sin brings inevitably its own punishment to the heart and conscience of the sinner" as affirmed by Shakespeare. And to Plutarch to add "wickednesse ingendering within it selfse (I wot not what) displeasure and punishment, not after a sinfull act is committed, but even at the very instant of committing (…)."[110]

For both the sinner or murderer kowns that the sin will be avenged no matter what and how. Thus, Claudius planned to eliminate those who are directly related to that foreseen revenge, mainly the child of the victim, small Hamlet.

But he forgot that it is obvious and natural for someone who was beaten, to shy. In that way, the ghost of the dead Hamlet, appeared to the small Hamlet and instructed him that he should avenge his father's death, since the murderer is his uncle Claudius.

[110] Lily B. Campbell, Op. cit, pp. 21-22

The small Hamlet's father's ghost is still roaming, because his death is not yet avenged. As a proof, it appears to small Hamlet and states:

> I am they father's spirit,
> Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night,
> And for the day confined to fast in fires,
> In my days of nature
> Are burnt and purged away. But that I am forbid
> To tell the secrets
> I could a tale unfold whose lightest word
> To prink and strip her[111].

Hamlet offers intances that highlight the features of revenges for the sake of dignity. There is the murder of the king by his brother. This is a major feature of the revenge because the murder must be avenged. That is the reason why the ghost instructs young Hamlet to make sure that the wicked deed is rewarded badly. Murder occurs at various points in the play and each murder is crying to be avenged. Young Hamlet has to avenge his deceased father's murder, Laertes avenges the death of his father-in-law Polonius and his so-called beloved Ophelia as well as Fortinbras. The constant urge for vengeance in the play, suggests that in the English society under depiction, vengeance is cherished value. In the words for Catherine Lane West-Newman, this value is culturally oriented by feelings, "named emotions"[112] which importance can be understood differently in different societies.

There is also incest as committed by the Queen and Claudius. They immediately married each other after the death of the king. This brings suspicion on

[111] Comfort Owusu, Op cit, 46.
[112]Catherine Lane West-Newman, Ibid, p.253.

them, because of the haste of their marriage. Moreover, they are not supposed to marry at all, because their marriage will be tantamount to incest. Apart from the fact that this incest makes them easy suspects for the murder, it also gives young Hamlet a psychological disturbance. This comes as a pattern which compels him to vengeance attitude.

> But two months dead: Nay, not so much, not two
> So excellent a king: that was; to his,
> Hyperion to a satyr; so loving to my mother
> and yet within a month-
> Let me not think on't – frailty, they name is woman!-
> A little month, or ere those shoes were old
> With which she follow'd my poor father's body,
> would have mourn'd longer – married with my uncle,
> My father's brother, but no more like my father
> Than I to Hercules[113].

In his way of confirming his dignity, small Hamlet as a young man disagrees with the fact that another person took the place of his father so quickly when they are still grieving. This kind of unholy wedlock[114] can give one emotional trauma that can lead to temporary insanity which means here small Hamlet's dignity.

Along the play, death is a major subject raised out and murder as a recreation for them. So all through the play, there is death and murder and blood. One murder or death seems to necessitate another one. That is the way the vicious circle goes on and on without end. What is remarkable about this play is the way, each of the three young

[113] *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*, Op. cit, pp 571-575.
[114] Op cit, 57.

men, Hamlet, Laertes, and Fortinbras handles grief when it affects them. But each must act according to the dictates of his temperament and his humour.

The fundamental problem which Shakespeare undertook to settle in *Hamlet* is how man accepts the spoiling of his dignity in life. Campbell relates it to evil which is natural in human life and came to the conclusion that "those who do evil are never unpunished, since an unquiet mind is the inevitable reward of evil doing"[115]. In that order, Fortinbras evidently is presented as one in grief but who exercised a lot of reasonings. But young Hamlet and Laertes' grief was so excessive and drove them to death. Even young Hamlet's uncle, Claudius, told him about the harm in excessive grief.

> But to persevere
> In obstinate condolement is a course
> Of impious stubbornness; its unmanly grief
> Why should we in our peevish opposition
> Take it to heart? Fie! 'tis a fault to heaven.
> A fault against the dead, a fault to nature
> To reason most absurd, whose common theme
> Is death of flavius [116].

These three young men have different temperaments; young Fortinbras is of a northern race, of phlegmatic or possibly sanguine humour[117]. He is young, acts steadfastly in pursuance of a plan, and regains lands and honor lost by his father. He is unmoved by danger, but moved by divine ambition and honor. Small Hamlet too, in

[115]Lily B. Campbell, Ibid, p. 23.
[116]Ibid, 571.
[117]Comfort Owusu, Op cit, p 58.

many respect is like Fortinbras, but he has been changed by grief into something different; somebody of melancholic humour. Though, when considered his respectfulness, he appears to be somebody of sanguine humour. Laertes, unlike small Hamlet, is a man of hot complexion (character). He has been in France rather than in Witterberg and he is of choleric humour.

Shakespeare wanted to show through this revenge acts how grief has affected the three young men. Fortinbras is guided by reason; he is not a victim of his grief. Young Hamlet is inconsolable, and his grief is of the sort that renders him dull, that effaces memory, that makes him guilty of the sin of sloth. Laertes is neither to be consoled nor to be appeased in his own grief. His grief converts to anger and it enrages his heart. In that vein, Campbell when she is explaining Wright quotation says:

> Being hot and moist, is natural in those of the sanguine temperament, in children and young persons, and in healthy persons; sorrow, being cold and dry, is natural to those of melancholic temperament… because the passions have their seat in the heart and affect the spirits which are there refined.[118]

Regarding *Hamlet*, passion in combination with grief is what brings about the tragic situation in the play. In youn Hamlet himself, it is passion, which is not moderated by reason, a passion which would not yield to the consolation of philosophy. This is interpreted as excessive grief and small Hamlet's grief, is therefore the grief that makes memory fade, that makes reason fail in directing the will, this makes him guilty

[118]Lily B. Campbell, Op. cit, p. 74

of sloth[119]. He could offend Ophelia, kill Polonius, escape on shipboard, insult Laertes, and even kill the king in moments of unreasonable passion.

Laertes, is a victim of excessive grief too, but his grief is shifted to rage. He acts on passion and not on reason. Even in his killing of small Hamlet, he acts against the dictates of his own conscience, having promised to do so, under the influence of violent passion, moved by grief to hate and to revenge.

> To hell allegiance! vows, to the blackest devil!
> Conscience and grace, o the profounded pit!
> I dare damnation. To this point I stand,
> That both the worlds I give to negligence,
> Let come what comes[120].

Through passion stuck with their face-defense and indirected by reason, small Hamlet, Laertes and Ophelia brought havoc into the world, but there is no mortal sin. Small Hamlet fails to do what his conscience decrees that he should do; he fails to kill the king. His grief makes him sluggish, and he allows swift passion to seize him. For, Fortinbras and Horatio, reason sways with passion. Fortinbras is called to grief for a father whose honor was spoiled, but his passion yields to reason and his Poland expedition were undertaken for divine ambition and honor's sake. Horatio too is not a passion slave, but he is one in whom blood and judgement are so well commingled which means that he is not a mere pipe for fortune to play upon.

There is a need for revenge in *Hamlet* because the king is murdered by his own bloody brother; and his ghost cannot rest until his death is avenged. Coupled with this,

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[119]. Ibid, pp. 248-249
[120] *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*, Op. cit, pp 573.

it is the marriage between the usurper of power and small Hamlet's mother. The knowledge of murder and incest are enough to warrant revenge on the part of small Hamlet.

The direct cause of tragedy which had a revenge undertone in the story of *Hamlet* is the killing of the king. This is sacrilegious and an abomination follows it, when the queen married in an unseemly haste Claudius the brother of the king. It is a sin against mankind and the cosmic order of nature[121].

> O. my offence is rank, it smells to heaven;
> It hath the, primal eldest curse upon't,
> A brothers murder
> What if this cursed hand
> Were thicker than itself with brother's blood
> Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens
> To wash it white as snow[122] .

The king is killed and cut off from existence without completing his lifespan. This makes the ghost not to rest and it comes black to disturb and demand for justice from the living, especially young Hamlet, his son. The marriage between Claudius and young Hamlet's mother is incest enough to blind the eyes and so the ghost calls for revenge but it is mindful of any harm coming to the queen[123]. Doing so, small Hamlet in avenging him will not commit another sin. He becomes rhetoric and Melancholous with both the king and his mother. Answering their questions in a satirical manner, he deceives everybody into believing that he is in love with Ophelia. He kills Polonius, a

[121] Taofiki Koumakpaï, Op. cit, p 234
[122] *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*. Ibid, p 60.
[123] Lily B. Campbell, Op. cit, pp. 127-137.

lord chamberlain that did not know anything about the death of his father. He was engaged in a fencing bout with Laertes because Laertes wants to avenge his own people too.

Small Hamlet is a young man of about thirty years of age. He is fat and he is given to sanguine humour "he's fat, and scant of breath, here, Hamlet, take my napkin, rub they brows" [124].

Although this changes small Hamlet to a melancholic humour, when the ghost appears to him. He is an educated person as we were told that, he took a degree in the University of Wittenberg. He is a young prince of Denmark who was not considered to be of melancholic humour while he was at the University. Instead, he was on good terms with everybody; but when he was called to avenge his father, he feigns madness in order to remove suspicion from himself.

The tragedy of small Hamlet can be seen, as one which arises out of biological obligation. He is obligated as a dutiful son to avenge the death of his father; but one must note that, small Hamlet is a young man and he faces the indecision which any young man of his age can face when he was called to perform a similar obligation.

By referring to small Hamlet as young, It gives on the impression of how young Hamlet is; therefore, as a young man, though, he has to avenge his father; but at the same time, he wants to dodge this responsibility if it is possible. This is the reason why, he delays and even at the end, he did not avenge his father but himself. That similar acts occurred in *Titus Andronicus* and *Macbeth* whereby the matter of age was opposed to young Lucius and Malcolm when they decided to take revenge on their

[124] Ibid.

victims' criminals. Young Lucius was refused to kill Emperor Saturnius after he sentenced the two sons of Titus Andronicus to have killed Bassianus, and Malcolm not to combat the oldman Macbeth.

This is happened because his youthfulness prevents him from killing.

> Now might I do it pat, now he is praying;
> And now I'II do't. And so he goes to heaven;
> And so am revenged
> When he is drunk asleep, or in his rage,
> Or in the incestuous pleasure of his bed;
> That has no relish of salvation in it;
> And that his sould may be as damn'd and black
> As hell, whereto it goes[125].

He can be seen as a theoretician, a perfectionist, not yet accustomed to brutality. He has accepted revenge as a sytem antithetical to most of himself which must be carried out in a manner similar to the natural punishment which says every sin is naturally punished[126]. With the knowledge of this, Claudius corrupted courtly the mind of the young Laertes. And they become united against young Hamlet. The avenger in the play now becomes the object or revenge. Young Hamlet grew up and grew dead in the same instant. This arrival simultaneously both at full manhood and death gives the play its dignity and revenge quality. As small Hamlet grew of age, he was called to avenge the death of his father whose ghost cannot rest unless appeased by the murder of his murderer. While, he is at it, he comes to a tragic end himself in his early prime; he is not living his life to the fullest as every young man should do. young Hamlet did

[125] Ibid, p. 62.
[126] Lily B. Campbell, Op. cit, p 23.

not avenge his father like mentioned but he avenges himself. The prince never does revenge his father, he does something more natural and perhaps more terrible, he becomes his father.

The ghost of young Hamlet's father too has played a major part in face-saving of the whole Hamlet's family. The ghost of young Hamlet's father is as important in this revenge as the heart is to the body for its function. Without the ghost, there would not have been any need for revenge. The ghost appears to tell its story, to demand for revenge, to decree that revenge should not touch the queen. Unless this is done, the dead spirit cannot rest. It is the ghost who sets-up the stage for tragedy and the ghost also gives small Hamlet the foreknowledge of what happens to it. Thus, I can come to the conclusion that, it is young Hamlet's father who defends his own dignity, his face through his Ghost. Unlike that, small Hamlet will not come to that end. Small Hamlet have already fed up and retired because of his age, the sorrows deserved him by Claudius. Yet the Ghost does not have hands to fight and kill but without its action, the murderer will still be living.

From whatever perspective the ghost is considered, one thing stands out; and that is, the fact the ghost is the sole cause of small Hamlet's lunacy, if it might be called so. From the first time that small Hamlet speaks to the ghost, he is seen as a mad person and one who goes into lunacy because of his passionate love for Ophelia. the ghost leads also small Hamlet to his tragedy, because he did not appear to be one who will have done any open confrontation with the king or his mother; even though small Hamlet smelled a rat. But propelled by the ghost he took actions which leads to his downfall. Moreover, the delay of small Hamlet in avenging the ghost shows him to be

of a timid heart. Even with the knowledge[127] of murder and incest established, he could not bring himself to avenge the ghost.

So it is just as well to conclude that, without the ghost of young Hamlet's father, there would not have been any revenge action coming from small Hamlet part in the defense of his father at all.

Indeed, the small Hamlet's father's ghost did not ask small Hamlet to kill his mother. But the death of the queen can be justified as it can be seen as a retribution for her sins. She commits the unbecoming sin of incest, a sin which shows that she is not saddened by the death of her husband. In fact, this puts her in an accomplice position in the murder's case. Her death then could be regarded as an atonement for her sin of betrayal, incest and unfaithfulness. If she doesn't die it will be a shame for small Hamlet. How come and she cannot rest and stay more and just after few days of mourning she gets remarried to the murderer of her former husband, whose soul must still be roaming.

Her death comes also to wash the sad and dirty notoriety, she pasts for her family from the incest and her hurry in having a man aside. Even if that was not clearly expressed in the play and it was not the will of her dead husband, the queen death appeased also his soul. Her action spoiled also womenhood dignity and for that offense she must be punished by the nature. Why has she drunk the poisoned wine deserved to small Hamlet?

The playwright wanted to show the existence of the divine law which has the control on every human acts. From this spiritual and legal justice of nature[128], people

[127] Comfort Owusu, Op cit, p 38.
[128] Lily B. Campbell, Op. Cit, pp. 20-23.

must have it during their living time. The killing plan structured by Claudius and Laertes towards small Hamlet has failed.

Small Hamlet is fed up, and decided to end the life of his uncle. But, before achieving his goal, which is a recommendation of his father's ghost, small Hamlet killed Polonius, his father-in-law to be, who he thought was spying him behind the curtain during his conversation with his mother. In that case Polonius should be taken as responsible for the death of Ophelia who felt in love to him. She committed suicide to save her face while she heard the fake death of her dating man. Likewise, the death of Fortinbras, the members of the crew who were carrying small Hamlet abroard can be also attached to the small Hamlet. Even though, they were not involved in the murder of small Hamlet's father.

In the way of group's face-saving, i.e. to save the dignity of his parents-in-law (Polonius, Fortinbras), and taking into account one's Pride in the concept of dignity, Laertes decided to kill small Hamlet; because, he was dating Ophelia. And for that reason, he becomes the spy-maid of king Claudius. He prepared the poisoned wine that must be normal drunk by small Hamlet, but he escaped it. Since his target is to kill him, he woundered the small Hamlet with his poisoned sword after confessing all his atrocities against small Hamlet. Laertes was also woundered by small Hamlet during their mortal fighting. Both of them died finally. But before he died, small Hamlet fulfilled the goal, which was recommended by his father's ghost: killing of the king Claudius.

Through this deficiency, Shakespeare underlines the weakness of Laertes in the play as a gullible tool in the hands of the king who decides to kill small Hamlet. Through that, it seems that Laertes does not have dignity because he is not able to

control all his actions unless Claudius instructs him. For instance, he does not take himself to avenge the death of Ophelia his dating wife, and Polonius his father-in-law. Something which comes to complicate Laertes further the revenge actions, i. e. the killing of young Hamlet.

In the context dignity, the bout as an effective strategy used by Shakespeare to expose and explicate the behavioural acts of the king can be taken as mankind selfishness which is rooted on human nature (good and evil)[129]. Campbell considers that dimension of human dignity as wickedness that inhabits human beings. Claudius wanted to finish with all the descendants of the Hamlet's tribe in a view to keep safe his crown. Therefore, he plans and operates all those hardships within the play as Laertes exposes him before he dies. Small Hamlet too dies, but he instructs Horatio to tell Fortinbras what has happened for the dignity defense of the tribes and how it was spoiled by the tribesman.

Shakespeare by delaying the divulgence of the information concerning the ghost plots the play in way to cause the mass revenge action which happened. This vengeful or violent acts can also be linked to what is traditional, conventional and customary in a father-son relationship.

Indeed, traditionally when fathers were murdered and killed, sons have to bury and avenge their genitors. Because, this is a sin against the cosmic order of the world. So, the son is obliged to avenge the death of his father. That is what happens in *Hamlet*. Shakespeare is showing to his readers that, dignity of one resides in the respect of customs. This accounts for his plotting of the events that show the aversion of small

[129] Taofiki Koumakpai, Op cit, p 65

Hamlet's father. It would have been a negation of tradition, convention[130] and custom if small Hamlet kills his mother, or if he has done anything to hurt her directly even while taking his revenge. Therefore, it can be seen that tradition, convention and custom are related to the theme of dignity. Shakespeare by plotting the play in that way, was trying to show how people carefully protect what is traditional, conventional and customary for the authenticity of the culture. That is why, Laertes dies while avenging his parents-in-law and his so-called love. Small Hamlet dies as a result of his upholding tradition; which demands of him to avenge the death of his father.

Elsewhere, these hardships and bloodshed in *Hamlet* can also be seen as wrongdoings correction of the abnormality in nature or the cosmic order. This means, the saving of natural recommendations for the well-being of people. The cosmic order is the maintaining of the balance in nature or the universe, and the ensuring that, there is no evil acts committed against anyone in the community.

The kind-deed is never lost; someone, who kills by using sword, will similarly pass away. This means that, the wrongdoings, even though they were not avenged, will be rewarded by the cosmic principles. Therefore, since small Hamlet's father didn't do anything wrong, his death causes an imbalance in the cosmic order. So, his death must be avenged to maintain the balance in the cosmic order of nature[131].

These revenge facts, which were caused by the defense of the face of someone, the group, society, tradition, convention, custom and nature order, are forcing my intention to see if there were the same deeds in *Macbeth*.

[130] Ibid, p 43.
[131] Comfort Owusu, Op. cit, p 65.

3.2. Revenge, a Means of Dignity Saving in *Macbeth*.

Macbeth is a tragic play in which, William Shakespeare wants to shape the mind of his readers with the themes such as betrayal, guilty, vengeance, self-defense, pride, egoism. The table below will help me to clearly pinpoint the significant facts and events which drive the interactants to commit murders in order to illustrate the themes enumerated above in reconnection to the concept of dignity.

Key Murders or Murdering Acts in *Macbeth*			
Characters	**Acts and Scenes**	**Actions**	**Observations or Consequences**
Macbeth	II, iii. III, i, v.	Macbeth committed murders by killing Banquo and the king Duncan during his short stay in his residence. He forced Malcolm the king's son to exil in England. He destroyed the whole family of Macduff.	Banquo as Duncan were killed. The children and Lady Macduff were also killed He planned the killing of Malcolm but he failed.
Macduff	IV, ii, iii.	Macduff raised England army against Macbeth and had a fatal struggle with him.	
Lady Macbeth	I, v, vii.	Lady Macbeth was all the time reminding her husband the prophecy of the witches in the concern of his leading of the kingdom. She was often goading Macbeth.	Duncan and Macbeth were killed.

Key Murders or Murdering Acts in *Macbeth*			
Characters	**Acts and Scenes**	**Actions**	**Observations or Consequences**
Witches	II, iii.	At three times, the weird sisters predicted Macbeth as the new emperor of Scottish. They called Macbeth King in the presence of Banquo.	Banquo as Duncan and Macbeth were killed.

Table 2- Key Murders and Murdering Acts in *Macbeth* (KMMA table).

Following the table of *Macbeth,* it shows that the key murders or murdering acts are: the killing of Banquo and the king Duncan, the forcing of Malcolm the king's son to exile in England, the raising of England army against Macbeth and the fatal struggle with him, the recall of the prophecy of the witches in the concern of Macbeth leading of the kingdom, the goading of Macbeth by Lady Macbeth. These actions were completed by many characters among them the keys are: Macbeth, Macduff, Lady Macbeth, and the Witches.

Therefore, unlike in *Hamlet* the focuses of dignity saving in *Macbeth* can be framed or viewed as one's selfishness and face-saving option, which led at end to one's anger through killing, in contrast to Wylkinson who thinks that it is a tragedy of ambition which determines passions in the play, the pair of passions that he called "fear and hardiness", Holland's Plutarch who called them "Cawdorice and rash Audacitie", and Bryskett who thought that they are "fury and fear."

Because in the earlier pages of the play, Macbeth's name comes out as the warrior, as an injured sergeant and confessed Macbeth's braveness during the war against the Moors to the king Duncan:

> For brave Macbeth-well he deserves that name-
> Disdaining fortune, with his brandish'd steel,
> Which smoked with bloody execution,
> Like valor's minion carved out his passage.
> Till he faced the slave;
> Which never shook hands, nor bade farewell to him,
> Till he unseam'd him from the nave to the chaps,
> And fix'd his head upon our battlements[132].

An account of this quotation shows Macbeth as a killing machine in the art of war and as a soldier. He did what is expected from him. He demonstrates that he is courageous, confident and feels no pity for his enemies, opposite to Wylkinson's definition to his fortitude (courage) which he assimilates to "a meane between feare and hardiness", i.e. false courage. [133]He is a professional and strategic soldier, a real fighter who will be admire by every king. On the above-mentioned report, the king Duncan himself sings Macbeth's praise, "O valiant cousin! Worthy gentleman !"[134] He has rejoiced, and he was over the moon to hear that Macbeth has performed such great feat. He killed a considerable amount of people and fixed the Macdonwal's head upon a pole on the battle field. He saved the face of his nation and made his king more powerful in view of people and neighboring countries. Achebe used to call this kind of person 'Patriot' since a patriot according to him is "a person who loves his country… and…its people."[135]

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[132] *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*, Ibid, p 570.
[133] Lily B. Campbell, Ibid, pp. 208-209.
[134] Amarchoe Ashitey, op cit, p 38.
[135] Chinua Achebe, Op. cit, p. 15.

Referring to the English literature tradition, those qualities as displayed by Macbeth are what are expected from the Elizabethan men with adaptation to each situation. Macbeth, seen in this context, is at its best level as far as manliness is concerned. The irony[136] with Macbeth lies in the fact that his wife has found in the core of his glorious characteristics of soldier the fatal arm that will have him tamed and perform her own wills. Despite of these good qualities of the man who defended with all his strength the king and the whole kingdoms' honor and dignity, Macbeth good skills will be spoiled deeply by the prediction of the witches.

The disjunction of Macbeth begins with the prophecy of the weird sisters that informs him about his future good prospects. He has been told that he will become the "Thane of Cawdor and shalt be king hereafter"[137]. With the arrival of this revelation and the realization of it, it will be good to wonder in which circumstances the second prospect will occur? Especially, when it is known that the occurrence of the first comes along in a natural way as post of Cawdor was vacant and he deserves it through the defense of his country. But the throne of Scotland is not vacant; instead, it is occupied by King Duncan a friend and relative to Macbeth. And above all, he is neither sick nor dies.

The witches' prophecy has loaded the gun of ambition in Macbeth; because before that revelation, he has never thought to become king. They were the first who call Macbeth cawdor and added that he will lead the throne. The confirmation of the prophecy is stipulated as followed:

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[136] *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*, Op cit, p 578.
[137] Op cit.

> […] All hail, Macbeth! Hail to thee, the thane of Glamis,
> All hail, Macbeth! Hail to thee, the thane of Cawdor!
> All hail, Macbeth, that shalt be king hereafter *(Macbeth II, iii, 543)*

This saying coming from those believers as Shakespeare portrayed it, forced Macbeth to dread. For Macbeth, to be king means eliminating the potential heirs and the king as well. In *Act I Sc V*, Macbeth for the very first time, he has thought of doing something to quicken the realization of the weird sisters' speech. Thus, he takes his way to accomplish Dignity through Self-glory, Egoism and Pride, passing by abomination.

He knew that he is not deserved to succeed the king to the throne. It is for the king children, Banquo and his descandants whom the throne is reserved to according the tradition and the custom of England. For that, he planned to finish with the life of anyone who he sees as an obstacle for reaching his target. He killed the king Duncan during his short stay in his house after the supper. The king wanted to congratulated and dignify the couple Macbeth because of his fearless and greatest deeds during the battle with the enemies' countries. But, for Macbeth and his wife Lady Macbeth, it is a good occasion to be empressed. King Duncan's affection towards the couple was prominent when is addressing the couple in the following words:

> […] Service and the loyalty I owe,
> In doing it, pays itself. Your highness' part
> Is to receive our duties; and our duties
> Are to your throne and state children and servants,
> Which do but what they should, by doing everything
> Safe toward your love and honor (*Macbeth I, iv,* 544)

The truth to the hard fact is that Lady Macbeth likewise Macbeth desires the throne, which is already treacherous. She planned with her husband the strategy to adopt to become the couple king-queen. So, she is throwing away her woman weakness and call for man spirit to invade her and to metamorphoze her spirit into the one of a fearless man. She says:

> He brings great news.
> The raven himself is hoarse
> That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan
> Under my battlements; come, you spirits
> That tends on mortal thoughts, unsex me here,
> […] The effect and it! Come to my woman's breasts,
> And take my milk for gall, you murdering ministers,
> Wherever in your sightless substances
> You wait on nature's mischief! Come, thick night,
> And pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell,
> That my keen knife see not the wound it makes,
> Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark[138],
> To cry 'Hold, hold'. (*Macbeth I, v, 545*)

Defeating the Honor and Courage hidden behind human dignity, intentionally, Lady Macbeth drags everything that makes Macbeth a man in the mud right before just to have him to prove his manliness. What will be the reaction of a person who is the General of the king's army, a brave gentleman whose courage is obvious to everyone in the country, when his courage is assimilated to the one of woman? Surely, the word was not clearly expressed anywhere in the play, but rousing her husband with a taunt no man can bear, and at least of all a soldier, with the word such as cawdor or to be a

[138] *Macbeth*, p. 546.

'man', she was comparing her husband bravour to the one Wylkinson called 'false courage' in terms of 'fortitude'.

Nevertheless this granted her husband with courage in such away that their plan prospected as predicted by weird sisters and as they wanted. Her conversation with Macbeth lights it:

> **Lady Macbeth**.We fail! But screw your courage to the sticking-place,
> And we'll not fail. When Duncan is asleep_
> (…) Their drenched natures lie as in a death,
> What cannot you and I perform upon
> The unguarded Duncan? What not put upon
> His spongy officers, who shall bear the guilt
> Of our great quell?
> **Macbeth**. Bring forth men-children only;
> For thy undaunted mettle should compose
> Nothing but males. Will it not be received,
> When we have mark'd with blood those sleepy two
> Of his own chamber and used their very daggers,
> That they have don't[139]

For Lady Macbeth, "we'll not fail" and there is no reason to "fail" because all have been done. And that is a unique chance which is offered to them to accomplish their heroism by making in evidence their dignity. She worked on the psychology of her husband to make it vivid and without moral foundation[140] as said by Lily B. Campbell while comparing young Hamlet and Macbeth's deaths. So, She planned everything in the way that nobody can suspect the couple to be the culprit of the murder. She told to her husband that Duncan "spongy officers, who shall bear the guilt Of our great

[139] *Macbeth*, p. 546.
[140] Lily B. Campbell, Ibid, pp. 279-280.

quell.”. Lady Macbeth speaks of cruelties with an astonishing passion and determination that may make her husband question his manly abilities. She reaches the climax of her argumentation when she boldly and eloquently tells her husband that no remorse at all and she will dash out the brain of the baby that milks her.

> What beast was’t, then,
> That made you break this enterprise to me?
> When you durst do it, then you were a man;
> And, to be more than what you were, you would
> Be so, much more the man. Nor time nor place
> Did then adhere, and yet you would make both:
> They have made themselves, and that their fitness now
> Does unmake you. I have given suck, and know
> How tender ‘tis to love the babe that milks me:
> I would, while it was smiling in my face,
> Have pluck’d my nipple from his boneless gums,
> And dash’d the brains out, had I so sworn as you
> Have done to this. (*Macbeth I, v, 545*)

Analyzing Lady Macbeth’s words, and taking into account Selfishness as a dimension of dignity, I can strictly assimilate it to Campbell used of moral chaos in terms of passion which surpasses her words. Bradley talking about heroism says:

> Some like Hamlet, and Cleopatra, have genius. Others, like Othello, Lear, Macbeth, Cotiolanus, are built on the grand scale, and desire, passion, or will are in them a terrible force. In almost all we observe a marked onesidedness, a pe-disposition in some particular direction;… a fatal tendentcy to identify the whole being with one interest, object, passion, or habit of mind…. It is a fatal gift, but it carries with it a touch of greatness, and when there is joined to it nobility of mind, or genius, or immense force, we realize the full power and reach of the soul, and the conflict in which it engages acquires

> that magnitude which stirs not only sympathy and pity, but admiration, terror, and awe.[141]

Bradley is explaning that an hero is a person who reaches his/her goal with greatness and joins to that nobility because he/she engages in dual with all his strength and does not deserve any his/her supposed adversaries pity. In that vein, Lady Macbeth when she says to Macbeth "when you durst do it, then you were a man; and, to be more than what you were, you would*",* demands to Macbeth to be a Hero of the King, to reach the heroism on him predicted by the witches since she is not allowed as a respectful wife to surpass him. She said: "First, as I am his kinsman and his subject, Strong both against the deed; then, as his host, (…)*";* and added that I am :

> not bear the knife myself. Besides, this Duncan, Hath borne his faculties so meek, hath been. So clear in his great office, that his virtues, Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongued, against, The deep damnation of his taking-off; And pity, like a naked new-born babe"[142].

But how come and a kindman can change so strictly and take off the life of his relative friend if it is not being greedy?

Macbeth selfishness drove him to kill several innocents people within Shakespeare's play *Macbeth*. Since he was dignified by king Duncan and weird sisters, Macbeth was in hurry to evidence his heroism . He asked his wife to load just four

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[141] LiLy B. Campbell's quotation of A. C. Bradley's *Shakespearean Tragedy:Lectures on Hamlet, Othello, King Lear, Macbeth*, Op. cit, p. 281.
[142] Ibid.

men as watchmen for the king. And among them; two only will sleep near the chamber of the king. So in the night, he comes back and reports to Lady Macbeth "I have done the deed"; he has committed the regicide. Thus, Macbeth behaviors have changed and he doesn't want to be challenged or to find the throne being stolen by his enemies. He framed Banquo as been the main enemy of the murderers that he committed to kill him. Because, he suspected him to be the only one to hear the witches when they were prophesing him as a cawdor and the future king.

> Both of you know Banquo was your enemy.
> So is he mine; and in such bloody distance,
> That every minute of his being thrusts
> Against my near'st of life: and though I could
> With barefaced power sweep him from my sight
> And bid my will avouch it, yet I must not,
> For certain friends that are both his and mine,
> Whose loves I may not drop; but wail his fall
> Who I myself struck down; and thence it is,
> That I to your assistance do make love,
> Masking the business from the common eye
> For sundry weighty reason (*Macbeth III, I, 551*)

Macbeth asked the murderers to commit the deed but by "Masking the business from the common eye". People must not know that he is involved in this killing. He wants to save his face and that of his wife, like he did by spreading the two chambermaids of the king with blood. They have to kill him "for sundry reason*"* which they cannot know clearly, since the "false face must hide what the false heart doth know". Macbeth afraid of losing his glory because of his selfishness and pride. He says:

> […] Upon my head they placed a fruitless crown,
> And put a barren scepter in my gripe,
> Thence to be wrench'd with an unlineal hand,
> If't be so,
> For Banquo's issue have I filed my mind;
> For them the gracious Duncan have I murder'd;
> Put rancours in the veseel of my peace
> Only for them; and mine eternal jewel
> Given to the common enemy of man,
> To make them kings, the seed of Banquo kings!
> Rather than so, come fate into the list,
> And champion me to the utterance[143]!

Macbeth has "no son of mine succeeding" the throne if he dies. For people who will constitute obstacle for his "eternal jewel" he is able to "put rancours in the veseel for them". He killed Duncan not to let the crown be "given to the common enemy of man, not to make them kings, the seed of Banquo kings"[144]. If that may be, Banquo is on "the list*"* of people that he is going to kill too. For those reasons of his so-called eternal jewel he killed the housemaids of Macduff. The innocents kids of Macduff and Lady Macbeth were killed when their father was not around.

> Time, thou anticipatest my dread exploits:
> The flighty purpose never is o'ertook
> Unless the deed go with it: from this moment
> The very firstlings of my heart shall be
> The firstlings of my hand: and even now,
> The crown my thoughts with acts, be it thought and done:
> The castle of Macduff I will surprise;
> Seize upon Fife; give to the edge o' the sword
> His wife, his babes, and all unfortunate souls
> That trace him in his line. No boasting like a fool:

[143] *Macbeth*, Op cit, p 77.
[144] *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*, Ibid, p. 553.

This deed I'll do before this purpose cool.
But no more sights!_ where are these gentlemen?
Come, bring me where they are (*Macbeth IV, i, 556*)

Finally, Macbeth kills Macduff's "wife, his babes and all unfortunate souls that trace him in line"; because, for him it is the deed to be done before the purpose cools down. So, Macbeth's dread exploits are to kill his potential adversaries and their families to secure his crown.

Therefore, Duncan sons cannot be excluded from his people to be killed. So, he is fed up with the worried rumours about Malcolm the aged son of King Duncan and so, he decides to go and fight with him for the safety of his power. The villainous man will continue his way forgetting that he will be stopped soon. Still being proud of his property, and conscientious of the fact that Macduff cannot beg him for his deed, he said:

Bring me no more reports; let them fly all:
Till Birman wood remove to Dunsinane,
I cannot taint with fear. What's the boy Malcolm?
Was he not born of woman? The spirits that know
All mortal consequences have pronounced me thus:
Fear not, Macbeth; no man that's born of woman
Shall e'er have power upon thee. 'then fly, false thanes
And mingle with the English epicures:
The mind I sway by and the heart I bear
Shall never sag with doubt nor shake with fear (*Macbeth V, ii, 560*)

Nobody told Macbeth that he is not born from a woman. "Fear not, Macbeth; no man that's born of woman shall e'er have power upon thee. The mind I sway by and heart I bear shall never sag with doubt nor shake with fear". Macbeth encourages himself to face the fatal fight ahead. He knew that, Malcolm comes also from a woman's womb. But since he was dignified by the "spirits that know all mortal consequences"; weird sisters, Macbeth, does believe nothing can disturb him, and he will fight "till Birman wood remove Dunsinane*"*. Macbeth is apt to offer his life in the exchange of the throne. It will be a shame, a dishonor for Macbeth seing somebody else wears the crown.

The playwright by depicting his character Macbeth this way, is combining two aspects which exist in each of us. Man is a complex composite of good and evil. And can act in either way. In that way, Shakespeare had portrayed Macbeth as a dignified person in whom resides all goodnesses; the cawdor, the kinsman who defends strongly the whole kingdom like Achebe said about a patriot in his definition as being a dignified person someone who protects his country. So, Macbeth was congratulated by the visit of the king Duncan in his house. Thereby the author, is telling to his readers and audience that when there is an achievement, there is no way not to recognize it or not to decern the merit to the person who did it. For King Duncan, Macbeth "was a gentleman on whom" he "built an absolute trust" and at the same time, he thinks that "there's no art to find the mind's construction in the face"[145]. King Duncan cannot think that his kinsman will plan and assassinate him during his short stay, while he

[145] *Shakespeare The Complete Works*. Op. cit.

pays visit to him at home. He cannot imagine that his killer was aside and he had to mind him.

Macbeth and his wife are painting, having very wicked characters in *Macbeth*. Yet, at the beginning of the play, Macbeth appears as a role model but that image will not stay long. The passion of killing and seing evil in his neighbours, spoiled the good feelings of the man. Very quickly kinsman disappears and gives way to the villainous man. But, in his deed he finds the support of his wife. The couple is, therefore, taken as the wicked couple. The anger, rage and melancholy invade them and transform the man, his face into a bloody one which is the results of their selfishness and pride. But considering each member of the couple, someone can say that Lady Macbeth is more wicked than his husband and she was behind all these atrocities.

Though, Lady Macbeth is not the prototype of 15th century woman, she is the result of the unworthy treatment women of the period received. His relationship with the husband has always been a constant inner conflict. Every inch of her mind is set upon winning a battle; a victory that will help her and her peers to gain more respect and consideration from the male gender. She has grown to be a revolutionary woman just because she no longer wants to cope with the principles that confine woman to childbearing and household chores. She is living in a society where the social attributes to women are to be wife and mother. She wants to challenge the social beliefs that despise women in order to show how far the gender to which she belongs can also excel in many fields, and can express their view points and be more implicated in the society. Her behaviors with Macbeth are to prove that women also are capable of doing whatever men can do and even more. Lady Macbeth as vile as her

intentions may be, demonstrates a woman with power, strength and intelligence. She is a woman born to lead but her society denied women such managerial capabilities.

Kept away the golden round, Macbeth is a virtuous and innocent man devoted to the king. Before the assassination of Duncan, he has never killed anybody for his personal interests rather as a soldier he kills out of duty, to protect his country. But once, he has been instilled with the inhumane version of manliness, he turns to be a ruthless murderer.

Once, he has been lured into killing Duncan as an evidence of his manhood, he becomes a calculating cold-hearted man capable of killing anybody he suspects as threat to his authority. Macbeth's manhood dies with the death of Duncan. He has been made to believe that manhood has nothing to do with good nature of humanity. So to prove his manhood, he engages in a killing activity with no remorse. He has called for murderers to kill his bosom friend Banquo and his son Fleance who is supposed to inherit its current throne. What makes Macbeth vile murderer is the slaughtering operated at Macduff's castle.

On Macbeth's orders, the murderers have killed all the living beings in the castle including Macduff's wife and children. The assassination of Banquo may be reasonable as the latter suspects him for killing Duncan, but there is no reason at all annihilating the Macduff's family. The stark reality behind those killing activities is fear considered in Macbeth side as Pride hidden in his dignity in a difference to what Robert B. Heilman called tragic vision and Pride that reside in man while he was talking about the evil as man nature. Fear of being taunted again by his wife, fear to hear his manhood questioned again. That very fear is the witness that his manhood is on the mat. According to Macbeth, the killing stands as an evidence of his manhood.

But as a matter of fact, he is showing inhumanity rather than a dignified man. Though not aware of those later killings, they have been motivated by the influences of Lady Macbeth's actions on him in previous part. After having enticed him to killing the king, and the implications that it brings afterwards, she abandons him to numerous enemies. She abandoned him when her support is most needed.

On top of his enemies are Macduff, Malcolm and Donaldbain and those people bear nothing in their mind than to seek revenge for their beloved ones Macbeth slaughtered on Lady Macbeth's behalf. At this stage, Macbeth courage is no longer what it used to be at the opening of the play. His courage is based on the witches' equivocal speech that seems to assure him victory over his enemy. But with the evolution of the events, he soon realizes that the weird sisters' words are deceptive. Especially, during the last fight, Macbeth declares that he is not woman born (born from woman). His usual fear and irrational doubt invades him as he declares to Macduff "I'll not fight with thee."(II, ii, 34.)

With such a statement from a soldier, it is sure that the dignity of the man has been sucked in such away that even after his death, his soul will still be suffering. Macbeth indeed refuses to fight against Macduff until he taunts him the way his wife used to do by calling him cawdor. As he is not prepared to see his hopes framed on the witches vanished words, he has become weak and powerless. He realizes that their words leads him astray and bewildered him to his enemies[146].

In England traditions and cultures, man must defend himself till his last breath[147]. Macbeth fights along the play to keep safe the power he stolen from the

[146] Shakespeare's *Macbeth* quoted by Amarchoe Ashitey, Op. cit.
[147] Michael Alexander, Op. cit,p.2.

descendants of king Duncan. He sucked a lot of people: Banquo and Fleance his son, Macduffs' sons, wife and households. He did so because, he never thinks that he will become King. He becomes king by prophecy of weird sisters and doesn't want to share it with others. For that, he kills and loses forever the dignity deserved to him by the kingdom and his countrymen. By joining the group of murderers, he throws away what was deserved to him as merit, and shows also that he is no saint person as people think. Thus, he was saying that man can change at anytime depending on his contextual interest.

Moreover, it is the duty of Malcolm and Donaldbain to defend their father's death. But it is also obvious in England tradition that when your closer friend is offended, it is your merit to come and rescue him. So for that reason, Macduff decides to fight with Macbeth and kills him for the honor of the kingdom. And when he succeeds in beheading Macbeth, he says:

> Hail, king, for king you are. Look at the usurper's cursed head. We are now in free world. I see you are surrounded by the nobles of your kingdom who are congratulating you in their minds. With their voices I proclaim you King of Scotland[148]!

Macduff has also to dignify his wife, children and households that Macbeth killed, if not their cannot live in peace in heaven. It is for him a kind of ritual to appease their souls as it is observed in almost Shakespeare's tragedies like *Hamlet, Antony and Cleopatra, King Lear, Othello* whereby the ghost appears to claim revenge for death.

[148] *Macbeth*, p 562.

In that way of protectionism and to the achievement of Pride behind his dignity, he says:

> I have no words:
> My voice is in my sword: thou bloodier villain
> Than terms can give thee out!...despair thy charm;
> And let the angel whom thou still hast served
> Tell thee, Macduff was from his mother's womb[149]
> Untimely ripp'd.

Macduff's voice is in his sword and he is also a woman's born as Macbeth. Thus, he cannot fear Macbeth for any reason even if he is untimely ripped or weak. The playwright said it to show the deed of Macbeth was criminal and such a thing cannot be accepted in human society. The passion of killing because of one's selfishness and pride, which drove on destruction of whole nation except few, must be banished. And people who used to practise it, should be sucked and afforded it with their lives. Therefore, Macbeth killed King Duncan, Banquo and his son, Macduff's wife, sons and maids for his personal glory, face-saving, selfishness and pride. Lady Macbeth helped his husband along the play until she dies, because of her face-defense and pride. Macduff revenged the king for the face-saving of the kingdom and, for the ones of the members of his family who were tragically killed without reasoning.

As it is obvious to say that Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* are meaningful with human dignity saving, is it the same in *Titus Andronicus*?

[149] Ibid, p 562.

3.3. Revenge, a Means of Dignity Saving in *Titus Andronicus*

To talk about the manifestation of dignity in *Titus Andronicus*, it will be useful to draw the following table that will shed light on the murders or the acts of killing.

<table>
<tr><th colspan="4">Key Murders and Murdering Acts in Titus Andronicus</th></tr>
<tr><th>Characters</th><th>Acts and Scenes</th><th>Actions</th><th>Observations or Consequences</th></tr>
<tr><td>Saturnius</td><td>I, i, ii, iii.</td><td>The Emperor Saturnius accepted Tamora as the Queen and followed her advice. He also disapproved Lavinia who preferred Bassianus to him</td><td>Saturnius, Titus Andronicus and Bassianus were killed.</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="5">Titus Andronicus</td><td>I, i.</td><td>Titus Andronicus fought against Goths and won and came back with his captives.</td><td rowspan="5">Titus Andronicus killed and fed the two remaining sons of Tamora; he killed Saturnius, Tamora and his own daughter Lavinia</td></tr>
<tr><td>II, i, iii.</td><td>He obeyed to the decision and the nation ritual by sacrifying his eldest son</td></tr>
<tr><td>I, ii.
II, i.</td><td>Titus Andronicus’s remaining son was banished from Rome. He is overheaded with all the traps of Tamora who promised revenge herself and her sons captured by Titus Andronicus.</td></tr>
<tr><td>V, i.</td><td>Titus Andronicus took advantage from his so-called madness to capture and killed Tamora’s sons.</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>He offered a special dinner to his guests.</td></tr>
</table>

Key Murders and Murdering Acts in *Titus Andronicus*			
Characters	**Acts and Scenes**	**Actions**	**Observations or Consequences**
Tamora	V, ii.	Tamora asked her sons to rape Lavinia, the only daughter left of Titus Andronicus	Bassianus, Titus Andronicus' sons and daughter were killed
	V, ii.	Tamora plotted with her lover Aaron and framed Titus Andronicus' sons' as guilty of the Emperor's brother Bassianus's death.	
	II, iii.	She asked Titus Andronicus to kill his own elder son while back for the dead during the war's ritual.	
Lucius New Emperor	V, i.	Lucius beasted Tamora's corpse and stabbed Aaron.	Aaron and Tamora die.
Aaron	III, ii. IV, i, ii.	Aaron plotted with Tamora for the rape of Lavinia and the murder of Saturnius' brother Bassianus. He assassinated Cornelia and the nurse.	Bassianus is killed and put in the hole. The midwife and the nurse die.
Chiron and Demetrius	V, ii.	Not only did Chiron and Demetrius rape Lavinia but they have also removed her tongue.	Lavinia is wounded and becomes maimed.

Table 3- Key Murders and Murdering Acts in *Titus Andronicus* (KMMA table)

According to KMMA table of *Titus Andronicus*, the Emperor Saturnius accepted Tamora as Queen and followed her advice. He also rejected Lavinia who preferred Bassianus to him. Titus Andronicus faught against Goths and won; he came back in glory with his captives. He abode by the decision and the nation ritual by sacrifying his eldest son. Titus Andronicus's remaining son was banished from Rome. He is

overheaded with all the traps of Tamora who promised revenge herself and her sons captured by Titus Andronicus. Titus Andronicus took advantage from his so-called madness to capture and kill Tamora's sons. He offered a special dinner to his guests. Tamora asked to her sons to rape Lavinia, the only remaining daughter of Titus Andronicus. Tamora plotted with her lover Aaron and framed Titus Andronicus' sons as guilts of the Emperor's brother Bassianus's death. She asked Titus Andronicus to kill his own elder son during the war's ritual for the soul sake of Roman dead people. Lucius beasted Tamora's corpse and stabbed Aaron. Aaron plotted with Tamora to rape Lavinia through the murder of Saturnius' brother Bassianus. Chiron and Demetrius raped Lavinia but they also removed her tongue.

Saturnius, Titus Andronicus, Tamora, young Lucius the New Emperor, Aaron, Chiron and Demetrius have contributed to the atrocities named above.

Thus, taking into account dignity aspect, face-saving, the character of Titus Andronicus stands quite by itself. It is a character marked by strength of will or even of passion and by refinement of thought and sentiment. In this context, Titus Andronicus can be seen as a humble hero as it is recommended by the current society; this kind of behavior shows humility, and selflessness of the man. But he is young and princely novice, full of high enthusiasm and quick sensibility. Later, the spot of circumstances, the questioning of tradition and refining on his own feelings will force him from the natural bias of his disposition by the strangeness of his situation.

In fact, Titus Andronicus is the General of the army of Rome, and the tragic hero of the play. Father of Lavinia and Lucius, Titus Andronicus has spent his last ten years fighting against Rome's enemies and winning honor for his country. Yet, his heroic deeds have taken so much out of him that, he feels incapable of leading his

country despite the fact that he was the person, the countrymen wanted as Emperor. He is a model of piety for his staunch reverence for traditions; but his strict adherence to tradition allows his enemies to take revenge against him. As a Senecan hero, he pursues revenge to the end, and dies in the process. He defended the notoriety of his nation and its inhabitants against adversaries and won for the sake of the tradition of its country.

> Hail, Rome, victorious in thy morning weeds!
> Lo, as the bark, that hath discharged her fraught,
> Returns with precious lading to the bay
> From whence at first she weigh'd her anchorage,
> Cometh Andronicus, bound with laurel boughs,
> To re-salute his country with his tears,
> Tears of true joy for his return to Rome.
> Thou great defender of his Capitol,
> Stand gracious to the rites that we intend!
> Romans, of five and twenty valiant sons,
> Half of the number that king Priam had,
> Behold the poor remains, alive and dead!
> These that survive let Rome reward with love;
> These that I bring unto their latest home,
> With burial amongst their ancestors:
> Here Goths have given me leave to sheathe my sword.
> Titus Andronicus, unkind and careless of thine own,
> Why suffer'st thou thy sons, unburied yet,
> To hover on the dreadful shore of Styx?
> Make way to lay them by their brethren…
> …sleep in peace, slain in your country's wars
> O sacred receptacle of my joys,
> Sweet cell of virture and nobility (*Titus Andronicus, I, i, p 446*)

As a great patriot whose thoughts are all the time focused on the well-being, peace and stability of his neighbours, Titus Andronicus came back with his captives after war and

he resaluted Roman country with tears, the true tears of joy for his safe coming back home. So, he ordered the ritual ceremony, whereby he asked for the killing of Tamora's elder son to appease the souls of the killed Romans during the battle. This will lead the Roman dead people to "sleep in peace, slain in their country's wars". Like Titus Andronicus, there are also Marcus and Lucius as leading characters who are crude and horrific dignity revengers. It is worth noting that Marcus didn't kill directly anyone; and his attitude connotes that the killing is not a social prescription; it is an individual project.[150]

On the other hand, there are Tamora who is the queen of the Goths, her sons Demetrius and Chiron, and her lover or paramour Aaron. Each part vies with the others; by taking into account a ferious and an inhuman revenge which brings about one of the most horrific tragedy ever written.

In fact, Titus Andronicus was the one who started this horrible series of killings with the sacrifice of one of Tamora's sons at his official celebration of his triumph. He did it regardless of all the pleading of Tamora that he should be spared. Shakespeare designs Titus Andronicus in that way to say that man should respect the tradition, the convention and the customs within his society. For that, Titus Andronicus is able to sacrify his sons, his lovely daughter and his own left hand. He obeyed the emperor Saturnius to whom he granted the throne at the beginning of the play to the end. He says: "with all my heart, I'll send the emperor my hand[151]". More, he escaped the countrymen who wanted to elect him as the new emperor of Rome by saying:

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[150] Martin Sullivan and Catherine Lane West-Newman," Being: Identity" pp. 233-251 in in Steve Matthrwman et al eds. *Being Sociological* (Palgrave :Macmillan, 2007),p.248.
[151] *Titus Andronicus*, p 447

Be chosen with proclamations to-day,
To-morrow yield up rule, resign my life,
And set abroad new business for you all?
Rome, I have been thy soldier forty years,
And let my country's strength successfully,
And buried one and twenty valiant sons,
Knighted in field, slain manfully in arms,
In right and service of heir noble country:
Give me a staff of honor for mine age,
But not a scepter to control the world:
Upright he held it, lords, that held it last (*Titus Andronicus I, i, 447*)

He knows that, he doesn't belong to the family who must succeed to the throne, even though, that was the will of Romans. He just wanted his countrymen to give him "*a* staff of honor for his age", "but not a scepter to control the world". Titus Andronicus is not in hurry for anything. For him, it is a duty to defend his country and dignify his emperor no matter how and no matter what. This passion for the dignity-saving of the group will be deeply spoiled by the emperor Saturnius, who forgot in bid, the great sacrifies for forty years of Titus Andronicus as soldier of the empire, while he empressed Tamora. The conversation which occurred between, Titus Andronicus, Saturnius and Tamora is illustrating more how the emperor threw away the dignity of the noble soldier while Bassianus was killed and Titus Andronicus two sons were accused of the murder.

Titus Andronicus: High emperor, upon my feeble knee
I beg this boon, with tears not lightly shed
That this fell fault of my accursed sons,
Accursed, if the fault be prouv'd in them,_
Saturnius: if it be proved! You see it is apparent.

Who found this letter? Tamora, was it you?
Tamora: Andronicus himself did take it up.
Titus Andronicus: I did, my lord: yet let me be their bail:
For, by my father's reverend tomb, I vow
They shall be ready at your highness' will
To answer their suspicion with their lives. (*Titus Andronicus Act II, Sc III*)

His dignity was affected in such a way that he was calling the tribune for rescues. He was fed up and so he was overheaded by this humiliation granted him by the emperor and his empress who had promised to avenge his deceased son. Vengeance stands here as a validated norm of English tradition that aims at dignity because it stands across time. Tradition is also a criterion of validity[152] in social appraisal of characters' lives. Timelessness of some practices in English context suggests the revisitation of the notion of tradition. Vengeance inheres in human beings and motivates some of their actions and reactions. The excerpt below suggests this:

Hear me, grave fathers! Noble tribunes, stay!
For pity of mine age, whose youth was spent
In dangerous wars, whilst you securely slept;
For all the blood in Rome's great quarrel shed;
For all the frosty nights that I have watch'd;
And for these bitter tears, which now you see
Filling the aged wrinkles in my cheeks;
Be pitiful to my condemned sons,
Whose souls are not corrupted as 'tis thought.
For two and twenty sons I never wept,
[…] Than youthful April shall with all his showers:
In summer's drought I'll drop upon thee still;
In winter with warm tears I'll melt the snow,

[152] Louis J. Munoz, *The Past in the Present Towards a Rehabilitation of Tradition* (Abuja: Spectrum Books Linited, 2007), p. 83.

> And keep eternal spring-time on thy face,
> So thou refuse to drink my dear sons' blood
> O reverend tribunes! O gentle aged men!
> Unbind my sons, reverse the doom of death:
> And let me say, that never wept before,
> My tears are now prevailing orators. (*Titus Andronicus I, i, 455*)

This vain soliloquy evidences the spoiling of his dignity in terms of his personality as defender of country. Titus Andronicus "heart's deep languor and" his "soul's sad tears" which he thinks, will "stanch the earth's dry appetite", and his sons' sweet blood will make it shame and blush[153]. Titus Andronicus was invaded by the anger in such a way that he was wondering how come the emperor can prefer a stranger's advice to that of his own sons who suffered during battle in the name of the nation. This melancholy will be at its climax, when he saw his only one daughter, Lavinia who was wounded.

Lavinia, has her hands cut off by her rapists. This savagery will make Titus Andronicus show that he is able to defend alone his family members' dignity. And for that, he is not going to beg either the culprits or their accomplices. So, he killed Tamora's two sons and fed the flesh, piled their bones for the special banquet where he invited Tamora and the emperor. To achieve his vengeful act, he killed his daughter himself. He announced to Saturnius and Tamora that the meat used to cook was the one of Demetrius and Chiron the rapists of Lavinia. His heart is full of languor every time, he sees Lavinia and knows that her attackers are still alive.

[153] *Titus Andronicus*, p. 455.

[…] Hark wretches! How I mean to martyr you.
This one hand ye is left to cut your throats,
Whilst that Lavinia 'tween her stumps doth hold
The basin that receives your guilty blood.
You know your mother means to feast with me,
And calls herself Revenge, and thinks me mad:
Hark, villains! I will grind your bones to dust
And with your blood and it I'll make a paste
And of the paste a coffin I'll rear
And make two pasties of your shameful heads;
…for worse than Philomel you used my daughter.
And worse than Progne I will be revenged:… Lavinia,
come,
Receive the blood: and when that they are dead,
Let me go grind their bones to powder small
And with this hateful liquor temper it;
And in that paste let their vile heads be baked.[154]

Titus Andronicus' deeds of dignity are grounded in English tradition of honor when seen against the background knoweldege of individuals having the right to avenge when they feel offended. Thus, Titus Andronicus' vengeance can be traced to the atrocities plotted by Tamora and his accomplices. The achievement of selfishness in the concern of dignity, drives the captured queen to avenge her son killed by Titus Andronicus after the war. This inhuman act of killing the son in the sight of his mother, touched deeply the dignity, the honor of the Goths' queen. He could have spared the son of Tamora because there was actually no need to kill the boy since already they were slaves to the Romans. But in manner of celebration, he decides to kill Tamora's son.

Give us the proudest prisoner of the Goths

[154] Op cit, p. 93.

That we may hew his limbs, and on a pile
Admanes fratrum sacrifice his flesh.
Before this earthly prison of their bones;
That so the shadows be not unappeas'd
Nor we distrub'd with prodigies on earthly[155].

With this killing, he sows the seed of revenge in the heart of the queen of the Goths. When she starts her own revenge actions, it was most gruesome and horrific to behold. She plans a revenge action which is tragic not only to Titus Andronicus, but also to his entire family. Tamora implicates Titus Andronicus' sons of committing a crime which they did not commit; and she further deceives Titus Andronicus into cutting his hand. Titus Andronicus did this, because he was made to believe that if he can do that; his sons will be released back to him. But, they were slain all the same. Furthermore, the sons of Tamora take Lavinia into the forest and they rape and mutilate her. They cut off her tongue, so that, she will not be able to relate to anybody what they have done to her.

Have I not reason, think you, to look pale?
These two have' ticed me hither to this place:
A barren detested vale, you see it is;
The trees, through summer, yet forlorn and lean,
O' er come with moss and baleful mistletoe:
Here never shines the sun: here nothing breeds,
Unless the nightly owl or fatal raven:
[…] But straight they told me they would bind me here
Unto the body of a dismal yew,
And leave me to this miserable death:
And then they call'd me foul adulteress,
Lascivious Goth, and all the bitterest terms

[155] *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*, Op. cit.

> That ever ear did hear to such effect:
> And, had you not by wondrous fortune come,
> This vengeance on me had they excuted.
> Revenge it, as you love mother's life,
> Or be ye not henceforth call'd my children. (*Titus Andronicus Act II, Sc III*, pp. 452-453)

She allows her sons to rape Lavinia, for the soul sake of her son and the maltreatment, and the humiliation Titus Andronicus has addressed her while she and her sons were captured. She is fed up with Romans' insults like lascivious Goth, foul adulteress attributed to her. This anger pushed her to call her sons to save their mother's face if not, she forbids them to call her, their mother. Tamora's dignity was spoiled deeply, and for that, she cannot pardon and even spare the emperor's brother Bassianus, the innocent dating Lavinia's husband.

> Why, boy, although our mother, unadvised,
> Gave you a dancing-rapier by your side,
> Are you so desperate grown, to threat your friends?
> Go to; have your lath glued within your sheath
> Till you know better how to handle it.
> […] Though Bassianus be the emperor's brother,
> Better than he have worn Vulcan's badge[156]. (*Titus Andronicus, Act I, sc I, 450*).

For Tamora, she had already given the opportunity to his kids to be with the girl that they were dating so long time. It is now their turn to seize it, and take advantage of it, even though Bassianus will stop living. Tamora recounts three murders, the two sons

[156] *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*, Ibid, p 450

of Titus Andronicus, the one of Bassianus and the rape of Lavinia to appease and repair her dignity that was injured.

But she was helped in her actions by the 'Black' Aaron, the tutor of Tamora's two sons. Aaron was the person who plans how things can go for the killing of Bassianus and the rape of Lavinia. He wrote the letter that comdemned the sons of Titus Andronicus.

> […] No madam, these are no venereal signs:
> Vengeance is in my heart, death in my hand,
> Blood and revenge are hammering in my head.
> Hark, Tamora, the empress of my soul,
> Which never hopes more heaven than rests of thee,
> This is the day of the doom for Bassianus:
> His Philomel must lost her tongue to-day,
> Thy sons make pillage of her chastity
> And wash their hands in Bassianus ' blood.
> Seest thou this letter? Take it up. I pray thee.
> And give the king this fatal-plotted scroll.
> Now question me no more; we are espied:
> Here comes a parcel of our hopeful booty,
> Which dreads not yet their lives' destruction[157].

Aaron's heart is full of vengeance and his hands full of death. His head is hammering blood and revenge. So, Aaron appears as a living devil among people. He aims to destroy others and he takes pleasure doing it. Thus, he is also too smart and doesn't lose a minute during his collaboration with Tamora.

In exchange, he got a child from the empress. Aaron, defended his child against all his attackers and died to allow him to live, because the child is not responsible for the

[157] Op. cit.

hardship deeds; he is an innocent. 'Black' bears, has dignity which must be saved for the death no matter what. It is what he did by saying:

> […] Coal-black is better than another hue,
> In that it scorns to bear another hue;
> For all the water in the ocean
> Can never turn the swan's black legs in white,
> Although she have them hourly in the flood.
> Tell the empress from me, I am of age
> To keep mine own, excuse it how she can
> […] My mistress is my mistress; this myself,
> The vigour and the picture of my youth:
> This before all the world do I prefer;
> This maugre all the world will I keep safe,
> Or some of you shall smoke of it in Rome. (*Titus Andronicus IV, ii, 460*)

The black colour is better than another hue, and this is God's gift, and this could not be exchanged or shifted for another. This baby is the fruit of his "vigour and the picture of my youth*"*. Besides, he continues with his conviction by saying that: "this before all the world do I prefers"; and "this maugre all the world will I keep safe". So, for his dignity-saving, he exchanged his life against the one of his baby whom the young Lucius wanted to kill because of the colour of his skin. For them, a blackman is dark and his behaviors too; and for that reason, he cannot live in the same place with the white man. But Aaron, even he has behaved as a wicked person along the play, he has defended black skin and killed both the nurse, and the midwife who heard about the delivery of the baby by the empress. He did this, in view to avoid the spreading of the information. The conversation he had with the nurse gives details about that in such a way that, even the nurse couldn't imagine that she will also be killed.

> […] But say, again how many saw the child?
> **Nurse**. Cornelia the midwife and myself;
> And no one else the deliver'd empress.
> **Aaron**. The empress, the midwife, and yourself:
> Two may keep counsel when the third's away:
> Go to the empress, tell her this I said.
> Weke, weke! So cries a pig prepared to the spit.
> …. Shall she live to betray this guilt of ours,
> A long-tongued babbling gossip? No, lords, no.
> And now be known to you my full intent….
> But send the midwife presently to me.
> The midwife and the nurse well made away,
> Then let the ladies tattle what they please. (*Titus Andronicus IV, ii, 460*).

Titus Andronicus is full of revenge actions. This, simply because of the fact that, one revenge tends to necessitate another revenge. The way Lavinia was maltreated by Chiron and Demetrius forced the young Lucius to be part of the old Titus Andronicus and Marcus in the battle of their children face-saving. Young Lucius' cousins were killed and their sister raped and she had her tongue removed, and the hands cut off. What an atrocity!

Despite her pains, Lavinia arrived to denounce her rapists who will be beheaded by Titus Andronicus before his killing by Saturnius. Young Lucius avenged the death of his grandfather. He says: "Can the son's eye behold his father bleed? There's meed for meed, death for a deadly deed*"*

As English traditions and customs recommended it, the child cannot stand and see people kill his father without reacting. In addition, he was an eye-witness of how Titus Andronicus sacrified his whole life to seek dignity for the whole empire and the emperor. For all those reasons, the young Lucius should save the face of the family

and to appease the souls of the dead persons of the family who innocently died. Young Lucius' murder is justifiable, because his uncle was killed in front of him. And, he cannot accept as a human being such a humiliation. His reaction was natural; and it is the revenge action of Saturnius which calls for his revenge.

Chiron and Demetrius killed the king's brother and testified it. They raped Lavinia, cut off her hands and removed her tongue.

Indeed, in the time of Elizabeth, the rape, the suicide, adultery, murders were numerous and common[158]. And the people arrested for such crime, were killed and their families were banished from the kingdom. For that, they loaded the two sons of Titus Andronicus with the crime of Bassianus and the rape of Lavinia. How can people rape a woman and remove her tongue?

Thus, all the people involved in the series of killing, did it either to save their own image or face, or that of their parents or relatives. They did it also to save the face of their nation like Achebe's patriots.[159] That was the case of Titus Andronicus and his sons who killed Goths during the wars and came back to Rome with their captives like Tamora and her sons. Titus Andronicus, killed and fed the sons of Tamora in front of Lavinia for her dignity-saving.

> The basin that receives your guilty blood
> You know your mother means to feast with me,
> And calls herself revenge, and thinks me mad-
> Hark, villains I will grind your bones to dust,
> And with your blood and it I'll make a paste;
> And make two pasties of your shameful heads;
> This is the feast that I have bid her to,
> And this banquet she shall surfeit on;

[158] Michael Alexander, Op. cit, pp. 1-7.
[159] Chinua Achebe, Op. cit, p. 15.

> For worse than Philomel you used my daughter,
> And worse than Progne I will be reveng'd.
> And now prepare your throats.[160]

This is an extremity of the violent actions which described the atrocities in the play. But the play, no doubt has all the elements and characteristic features of a bloodshed caused by dignity-saving. A revenge of that magnitude is too much for the eyes to behold.

Looking at *Titus Andronicus*, one can see that it is not really ideal for one to seek revenge; this is because in avenging one's sin, one is creating room for another revenge action. The Queen of the Goths, Tamora, in a bid to avenge her sons destroys not only Titus Andronicus, but his entire family. In turn, Titus Andronicus kills her sons and serves them to her at a banquet. In the process of avenging herself, she plots a trap for the sons of Titus Andronicus. This gives an insight that she is willing to do anything in order to get revenge. That is why, she indirectly kills Bassianus who has done no wrong to her and she frames the sons of Titus Andronicus for his murder. As if that was not enough, she organizes for her sons to mutilate and rape Lavinia, Titus Andronicus's daughter. For her, the biblical axiom of an eye-for-eye and a tooth-for-tooth is taken to the extreme. Instead of an eye-for-eye, she took a leg, an arm, two eyes and even the head for an eye. That is "Revenge, which makes the foul offender quake.[161]" She has offended more than she is offended.

In that vein, Aaron is looked at as a killer machine, a natural evil. When he sees an opportunity to avenge himself, he does not waste time in colliding with Tamora.

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[160] *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*, Op cit p, 466.
[161] Ibid, p, 102

That misconduct leads to establish a confused atmosphere which facilitates the revenge action that took place. Even if it is not mentioned anywhere in the play, through his actions, he avenged 'Black' against 'White'.[162] Aaron appears to be a person without any milk of human emotion. He says to himself, how evil-minded he can be, and he regrets no evil done at all.

> Tut, I have done a thousand dreadful things
> As willingly-as-one would kill a fly,
> And nothing grieves me heartily indeed
> But that I cannot do ten thousand more[163]

The course which revenge takes in *Titus Andronicus* is a very fast and swift one. Before one can digest the situation, a revenge action on the part of Tamora leads to series of factions, which include revenge and counter-revenge. This creates a very horrific and sad picture of the extent to which revenge can cause damages. With the first killing, some other killings were done in retaliation of the death of Tamora.

Titus Andronicus paints a picture of bloodbath just because of the drive for revenge. The shedding of the blood is now too much for the eyes to behold. The thirst for revenge also leads to the committing of incest and adultery while considering Tamora and Aaron's relationship. She has an illicit affair with Aaron, and this leads them to have a child.

One major and important consequence of the revenge action of Tamora is that it brings grief, and sadness to the whole Roman Empire. The revenge action spread so

[162] Taofiki Koumakpaï. Op. cit.
[163] Ibid.

much that it affected everybody including the royal family. It is so gruesome and inhuman that people who do not commit any fault, have a share in the serial killing; an example is Bassianus. But basically, the consequences affect Titus Andronicus more than anybody else. He has lost almost everything he lives for and cherishes: his sons, daughter and even part of his body. He has lost all through the gruesome revenge package of Tamora and Aaron. Both losses are physical as they are spiritual and emotional. He is devasted morally, emotionally, physically and spiritually. Titus Andronicus himself is tired of the gruesomeness of the revenge. He openly laments that he wishes for the course of action to stop. He cannot stand it any longer after; he has lost two sons, his daughter is raped, and mutilated; and even himself, lost an arm. He could not stand it any longer, so he says, "When will this fearful slumber ever end".

The killing of Titus Andronicus's sons and the mutilation of his daughter create another revenge action. As a result, the remaining sons of Tamora are killed and serves as a meal to her at banquet, which resulted from the pain and agony. Titus Andronicus decides to undertake this gruesome revenge action.

On the other hand, while regarding the achievement of Selfishness and Pride, Tamora cannot be able to accomplish her aim of revenge without the assistance of an accomplice known as Aaron with whom she has an illicit love-affair.

This leads to incest and adultery on her part. She is married to the King of Rome, Saturnius. The consequence of this immorality on her part in regard to woman's dignity is the child who becomes a disgraceful product of White and Black. Even though the child who comes from the union of White and Black races will never be

black; but an abridger of colours. How can she, a white lady, married to a white king, give birth to a black child? One can see this, as a way nature decides to expose them.

The need for revenge causes the death of the king's brother who is murdered in a gruesome manner and dumped into a pit. As a result, the king kills Titus Andronicus in vengeance for the death of his brother. This happens, even considering the fact that, Titus Andronicus does not know anything about the murder of the king's brother. Tamora starts the revenge actions because she believes that revenge is the only solution to punish an offender.[164]

What is very pathetic about the story of *Titus Andronicus,* is the way in which people, who have no knowledge of the sin committed, are made to pay off for the sins of some other people. The story shows the consequences of one embarking on a vengeful action. This is illustrated by showing that one vengeful action will certainly necessitate another. As you took revenge towards someone, he or she will feel the need to revenge too. And it goes on and on without an end. And this is what happens in *Titus Andronicus*.

The playwright arranged the events in such a way that one revenge leads to another and with each, there is a death which occurs. He plotted them to emphasize on how revenge is important for the saving of one's dignity. In that order, the play has some reference to custom, tradition and convention.[165]

An example of the fulfilment of convention, custom, and tradition,Titus Andronicus slays the son of Tamora. It is customary for them to slay people in any triumphant celebration of victory. So, in keeping up with tradition, he instructs his sons to kill the

[164] *Titus Andronicus,* p 466
[165] Ibid, 462

son of Tamora after she begs for mercy; she said that "Sweet mercy is nobility's true badge.[166]"

Just as it is conventional for mothers to grieve, when they lose their offspring, Tamora grieves and takes revenge for her son. She sees herself as a mother who should protect and guard her sons, and if need be, avenge them. With regard to Tamora, she also commits a sin which is a negation of what is conventional, traditional and customary. Her illicit affair with Aaron is a negation of all this idea, which makes nature to expose her when she gives birth to a black-child. Even when she knows that, the father is black in complexion.

The character of Titus Andronicus shows him to be someone who goes to the extreme in keeping of tradition. He could have spared the son of Tamora, but because, he wants to fulfil tradition or convention, he kills him. Besides, Tamora is depicted as one who neither forgets nor forgives. Shakespeare shows her as one who sees revenge necessary as atonement for any sin. Through her own revenge action, some other revenge actions rise.

Her sons are shown as irresponsible and crude. That is why, they are able to defile Lavinia in such an inhumane manner. They mutilate her as if, there were animals with no iota of human feeling. Aaron too, is depicted as somebody who is treacherous and at the same time homicidal. This character trait, helps him to plot and kill people as well. He is shown as an evil genius, one who has the brain to plan evil in a manner which forestalls any form of escape.

[166] Op cit, 105

Apart from the influence of tradition, convention and customs on the play, the cosmic order is also relevant. Revenge is relevant in order to maintain the cosmic order, if, and only if, the person unjustly dies. This cannot be said to be the case in *Titus Andronicus*. This happens, because Tamora and her sons, would have slained some Romans in the battle. She personally takes revenge, because the person concerned is her son. Thus, her revenge action is against the cosmic order which leads to a bloodshed. This is exemplified in the way all sorts of atrocities were committed in the name of face-saving. The disregard of the cosmic order leads to the farrago of horror which follows the revenge action[167] of Tamora.

In this chapter, it appears that, the three plays are full with struggle actions which are the manifestation of vengeance in order to save one's dignity. So, the playwright draws the readers and his audience's attention on the bloodshed which happened along the plays. He plots and bases each of those events on either the face-saving or the selfishnesses, and the pride of someone or the group, he or she belongs to. The study of those aspects of face-saving will come in the forthcoming chapter.

[167]Taofiki Koumakpai, Ibid, p 234.

Chapter Four - Dignity and Self-defense Motifs in the plays

Based on the characters' various behaviors, it makes sense to say that dignity is related to self-defense motifs in the three plays of Shakespeare under study.

Self-defense motive is meant by one's nobility keeping through the defense of his or her ownership, his or her identity against attackers. So, the self-defense in this case must be read as the protection of one's image from dishonor or disgrace, whereas the collective-defense takes into account the group, the family, the race, the ethnic, the country someone belongs to.

On the whole, either self-defense or collective-defense motifs are the fight for dignity which is connected to conflict over personal implication, one's or group's glory, the protection of one's or group's wealth…. Thus, it is natural for a human being to be ambitious and the latter is also naturally allowed to protect what belongs to him or her, since human beings are inhabited by good and evil as it was said by Campbell while he was talking about the problem of justice[168] in his writing about *Shakespeare's Tragic Heros*. But, the matter here is how this ambition or saving either personal or collective ones is achieved. W. A. Wa Rahmutallahi Wa Barkatahu in his book "100 *Moral Stories",* published in 2005 will say about human nature that "you've just got to take each person for what they are and look for the good in them."[169]

Therefore, dignity is a socio-traditional consideration related to person's moral and his or her notoriety in his or her society, which identifies him or her. And as I said

[168] Lily B. Campbell, Op. cit, pp. 13-17.
[169] Wassalamu Alaikum Wa Rahmutallahi Wa Barkatahu, 100 *Moral Stories* (Akramulla Syed: Islamic Occasions Network, 2005), p. 26.

earlier in this research work, I am considering three dimensions of human dignity, and the specific tables that I'm going to draw below, are helping me here, to explain the perception of dignity, and self-defense of the playwright's characters in the given aspects of human dignity; beside, self-glory and collective face-saving issues, there are other important issues that will be discussed in this chapter.

4.1. Self-glory Keeping Patterns in the Selected plays

I name this specific chart Self-Defense Motifs (SDM), because it is retracing the patterns which guide the murderer. This will help the current analyses that are going to come out for the relevance of the self-glory saving, that the author wanted to notify to his audience and readers.

Plays	Characters	Actions for Self-glory
Hamlet	Claudius	killed young Hamlet's Father. And he was trying to kill small Hamlet
	Small Hamlet	Killed Polonius and Laertes
Macbeth	Macbeth	killed king Duncan, Banquo Lady Macduff, her children and maids.
Titus Andronicus	Titus Andronicus	killed Lavinia his own daughter.
	Young Lucius	refused to swear to Aaron and kills him.
	Chiron and Demetrius	raped and mutilated Lavinia.

Table 4-Self-Defense Motifs table of the three plays

Through the SDM table above, it is observable that the three plays under study are patterned by the self-glory saving. Regarding selfishness and Pride in *Hamlet*, king Claudius, the bloody uncle of small Hamlet, was chasing his nephew; because of selfishness and pride of being alone to manage the throne, and to have control on all the proprieties belonging to the whole family. Whereas, small Hamlet was committed to murdering his father-in-law to be, because he thought the latter he was spying him and his mother while they were conversing. He kills Laertes, to appease his own soul.

In *Macbeth*, Macbeth was in a hurry to accomplish the prediction of the weird sisters. He killed Banquo who was looking for the same thing like him. He destroyed the family of Macduff, because he knew that the latter did not abide his deed, and was also checking an occasion to pass him away.

Titus Andronicus is a more patterned play with the deeds of self-defense. First of all, it was Titus Andronicus himself that killed his daughter. He was fed up whenever he saw his daughter suffering. So he decided to pass her away himself. Very courageous! Chiron and Demetrius raped and mutilated the innocent lady Lavinia, because of their jealousy and fortitude mixed with their pride, lust and selfishness. Defending the race (dignity of his race) he belongs to, young Lucius refuses to swear to Aaron who wanted him to release (not to kill) his kid.

In sum, these negative aspects of self-defense in *Titus Andronicus, Hamlet,* and *Macbeth,* can be assimilated to the evil. And generally speaking , evil is a kind of force that causes bad things to happen. For instance, an evil man is somebody whose behaviour is morally bad, he enjoys harming others. Another similar word is sadism which is the enjoyment or the fact of being pleased when you watch or make

somebody suffer. Self-defense in the concern of face-saving is a cruelty when it becomes the cause of pains, sufferings or death of another.

Shakespeare's perception of self-defense is very pathetic, and it is not even understandable by the human common sense of humanity. People can be tempted to say, his plays are more the product of fiction than reality. Any reader can easily shed tears while watching the presentation of the plays, because of the sadnesses within them. The self-defense takes place at the climax and it is always accompanied with hardships.

The killing of Lavinia by her genitor is neither acceptable nor conceivable. You suffer to give birth to and take care of your own child, and then you decide to finish with his or her life just in one day. How is it possible, if there are no consistant motives or good reasons that can justify the genitor's sorrows? Before acting that way, one might be fed up with a constant sight of the horrible and terrible sufferings of his fellow man which are horrifying and terrifying to mankind. And for that specific reason, I cannot blame Titus Andronicus. He offered all his life and efforts to the Roman nation, and his emperor, at the end was ungrateful to reward him. In addition, Saturnius participated in the destruction of the whole family of Titus Andronicus. Above the tribune, he has sentenced Quintus and Martus, two sons of Titus Andronicus to death, and he didn't check and assist Titus Andronicus to know the real culprits, who raped his only one daughter left. So for Titus Andronicus, it is painful to see his daughter yelling with pains and overwhelines with shame. She was ravished and mutilated, her tongue was chopped off, and hands cut off. How horrific such an atrocity is! He decides and says:

A reason mighty, strong, and effectual:
A pattern, precedent, and lively warrant,
For me, most wretched, to perform the like.
Die, die Lavinia and thy shame with thee;
And with thy shame, thy father's sorrow die! (*Titus Andronicus V, ii, 466*)

Titus Andronicus has reason to do so in a view to defend himself and to appease his soul, and to lighten his sorrows which were "strong, mighty, and effectual"[170]. The precedent patterns warrant him to kill her, if not the rapists and their accomplices will celebrate their victory over him. For him, the death of Lavinia will make the wretched to bear the shame and the sins their committed.

The author perceived the self-defense like the face-saving of someone. Lavinia, although she got her tongue removed and hands cut off, she defends herself and helps her parents to find her murderers. With her feet and mimes, she described and wrote the names of Chiron and Demetrius.

According to English traditions and customs, humankind must not fear anything[171], making the belief a cultural maxim that people have to defend themselves no matter how and what. In addition, the kingdom is led by females. The determination of females and the care displayed while females are heading a group, justify the character of Titus Andronicus' daughter, Lavinia. Like her father, Lavinia was strong and fearless to support the humiliation and the pains that her rapists inflicted on her. The suffering of people is not so much before committing suicide.

[170] *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*, Op. cit, p 466.
[171] Micheal Alexander, Op. cit, pp 1-7.

Jesus-Christ was a living-proof, enlightened by the new testament.[172] Hence, during his crucifixion procession, he was helped by Simon of Syria and felt three times before he reached Golgotha which means his suffering place (Mt: 26, 27-28). Thus, Shakespeare is calling his audience for courage and hope and he is reminding his readers across the world of the fact that life is full of sorrows, and it is only by defending oneself that one can overcome.

On the other hands, there are Chiron and Demetrius who escaped after their evil deeds. They did that to show that they are matured; and nothing can overtake them. They are the masters of their lives and their desires must be accomplished no matter what. It is an offense for man, while a woman rejects his advance; and that was the attitude of Lavinia towards Chiron and the emperor Saturnius.

Men feel humiliated when they are rejected by women, especially when these women are ready to be dated or go out with over men. Saturnius also manifests it and defends himself but in a soft way by taking Tamora as his empress. The young men Chiron and Demetrius do not have so much power; they run away from their shameful offense to protect themselves against Lavinia and Bassianus, the king's younger brother and rival. They mutilated Lavinia, because she will speak and expose them. And to hide the proof against themselves, they cut her hands off and remove her tongue to make her mute, unable to speak with mouth or write with her hands.

Shakespeare puts those two contrasts just to say that, human beings must defend themselves because of their dignity. But, they must avoid the dropping of blood like Saturnius did it. Shakespeare is also denouncing and demonstrating the way the

[172] Taoficki Koumakpai, Op cit, p 103.

murderers of Elizabethan Era and the world over proceed to destroy the proofs against themselves when they are guilty.

In *Macbeth*, Shakespeare perceives and assimilates self-defense to selfishness and pride. A Human is a product of a society, he/she lives in it and will die in it; but he/she wants to think about himself or herself only and ignore the existence of others.

Macbeth affords the prophecy of the witches and kills King Duncan, Banquo and Fleance his son, and Macduff's sons. More, after the killing of the king, he has shed the blood on the two chambermaids of the king. Later on, he organizes the banquet for his guests to show them not only that has he nothing with the king's death but to tell them also that, he is the new king of the kingdom. Macbeth knew that his deeds could not please his neighbours, mainly to those who were longing for the throne. For Macbeth, the chance or opportunity given by the late Duncan to him needs to be protected anyhow, and he has to take care of it. King Duncan has granted Macbeth with the title of cawdor, the warrior, the great soldier of the kingdom to whom all the countrymen must pay respect. Duncan says that "he was a gentleman on whom I built an absolute trust"[173].

However, Macbeth believes in the prediction of the witches regardless of what must dignify him before King Duncan and the countrymen. Since he believes in witchcraft, if he refuses to follow the prophecy of the weird sisters, maybe he will be in danger. In the same way, people in African cultural and traditional beliefs go to see the soothsayers or the priests of 'Fâ' to know about their future. They are worrying themselves when they didn't purchase yet or make the sacrifices related to the

[173] Ibid, p. 543.

consultation. So, it is in respect of the prophecy of weird sisters that, Macbeth had killed the king Duncan. Doing that, it is a devotion to the tradition, custom and convention in the English context. Because, the self-defense results from the respect of a given tradition.

Macbeth doesn't allow to his wife Lady Macbeth to overpass him. For that, he defended his mankind by being at the front for the accomplishment of his prophecy. He exhibited his courage and strength. His notoriety was valued in exchange for his life. And that was his deed at the end during the last battle he had with Macduff in which he died. And to end, he said: "I'll fight till from my bones my flesh be back'd."[174]

Elsewhere, Shakespeare pinpoints Macduff also as self-defender. Is it possible to have one person who has a control over everybody and forces others to do only his or her wants? Macduff totally disagreed with the way Macbeth was treating them. And despite his oldness, he seeks his own defense but objects to Malcolm to interfere between Macbeth and himself. He said: "I shall do so; but I must also feel it as a man". He is also proving his masculinity through courage and strength but in a negative way. He beheaded Macbeth as a courageous man who doesn't fear anything. Cheer violence is the concern of Macduff as he says: "I have no words: my voice is in my sword[175]". Man must be recognized through his acts and not by the words of mouth. One fact is to say, another is to take action. These words sustatiate the macduff's life.

Moreover, in England tradition, it is forbidden to woman to have control of the house and over her husband. Shakespeare creates Lady Macbeth who offers resistance

[174] Op. cit, p. 561.
[175] *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*, Ibid, p. 562.

to tradition. She was the one who planned King Duncan's murder. And she asked her husband to allow her to act. More, after the deed she asked her husband to go back and throw away the sword stained with blood. But, he wasn't courageous enough to do it. She is still quite even after the murder of Duncan as if there were nothing wrong. She was the one who persuads the guests through appeasing them that there is nothing to consider from the behavior of her husband. She proves that, she is more courageous and intelligent than her husband who has lost his temper to her.

Like in *Macbeth*, Claudius in *Hamlet,* killed the king. But the exception here is that the king is the bloody brother of the murderer. He killed the king, married his wife during the mourning time and sent his son to exile.

In fact, the self-defense motifs of Claudius stem from his desire to take the throne. The matter, is how he can save the power and himself against the real inheritor. Therefore, he sent small Hamlet abroad and committed attackers to kill him during the journey, but he failed. More, he made of Laertes a guilly person (spy-maid) and then asked him to poison little Hamlet. For sure, he didn't do anything himself; he commits other people to do the killing job. This portrayal of Claudius by Shakespeare comes out to enlighten once again on the traditional way, which is the main strategy used by political leaders or monarchy in order to commit murders against those who were ideologically opposed to them. So, many people were killed because of their opinions. Claudius married the widower in order to control her up and down movements; to be sure that she is plotting no evil against him.

On the other hand, the self-defense of Claudius is based on the tradition and custom. It is obvious that in most of societal traditions, when a married man died in a family, one of his brothers has to inherit the widower and take care of the children.

And if it is not done, it proves that men of that family are weak, greed and even wicked. Thus, to take up this social challenge, Claudius stood up and took the widower to show to the people that he is capable.

On top of this conservation or keeping of tradition which shows his self-defense, Claudius' self-defense can be seen as selfishness and pride. He marries his brother's wife. Besides, he kills his bloody brother and sucks far away, the real heir to the throne, he plays the innocent in such a way that no one can imagine that he is the real murderer of his brother. For his dignity, he prefers to be the commender of all the crimes against small Hamlet.

Small Hamlet, has defended himself very strongly against his attackers by using his mind and his sword at the end. He has slipped away the murdered plan of Claudius during the travel. Shakespeare is demonstrating that to be a man is not a matter of age, but a matter of commitment and know-how. Small Hamlet by doing so, defeated king Claudius. More, he has also slipped the poisoned wine. He intentionally did it; that is the reason why he left the bottle on the table until somebody else came to drink it. It is not only adult people who could do so; since he noticed that his uncle was hunting him. Small Hamlet defended himself as a man capable of doing things as a matured person. It is that which justifies the killing of the king Claudius, his bloody uncle. Small Hamlet doesn't fear Claudius because of his age, he affords his vengeful act.

That be done, by killing his uncle after conducting a series of thoughts he comes to the evidence that he has to defend himself as a man in front of his perspective wife: Ophelia. And for that, he is not going to exclude anyone who violates the norms. That is the reason why, he kills his father in law, Polonius. Very often and according to the culture all over the world, people used to say that one's

parents-in-law deserved respect and rewards. And it is also obvious, to note that some parents-in-law affect the lives of their children in newly formed couples for good or bad. Polonius was in love with his daughter, but small Hamlet is suffering for the tragic disparition of his father. And it is his own uncle who killed his father; so he wanted to avenge the father. How will Polonius be an obstacle to his revenge action, which will allow him to appease his soul and sorrow?

Laertes failed in his plan for poisoning small Hamlet. And as any human beings, if you escape the killing, you must affront and defend verbally and physically yourself against the murderer till your last breath. That was the deed of small Hamlet against Laertes. He showed him his masculinity and was telling him that he is not the small boy as Claudius and he thought.

Globally, the three plays show the self-defense as the bedrock of human dignity. And dignity of a man results from his behavior among his or her neighborhood. Titus Andronicus defends himself like a great warrior, he values himself through some courageous acts which prove his mankind. Chiron and Demetrius defeat their adversaries Lavinia and Bassianus. Saturnius proves his own dignity by publishing his relation with his empress, Tamora. In *Macbeth*, Macduff shows to Macbeth that he is capable of killing. Whereas, Lady Macbeth reassures her importance in Macbeth's life and ascension. But, Macbeth demonstrates his self-defense by showing his ego and pride. And in last, neither small Hamlet nor Claudius do not show that they are afraid of defending their dignity. But they are aware that Shakespeare perceives collective face-saving as motif of human dignity saving. The answer or explanation to that concern will be the focus of the forecoming development.

4.2. Collective Face-Saving Motifs in Shakespeare's Three Plays

The table that is known as "ColF-Motif" retraces the patterns that guide the murderer or its commender to do so. More, it will be the subject of the analyses which I am going to conduct for the relevance of the collective face-saving. This is to exemplify the idea which the author wants to share with his audience and readers in the connection to human dignity saving as the key driving force of revenges/vengeances in the three selected plays.

Plays	Characters	Actions for Collective face-saving
Hamlet	Laertes	faught with small Hamlet and woundered him mortally.
	Small Hamlet	killed king Claudius.
Macbeth	Macduff	killed Macbeth.
Titus Andronicus	Titus Andronicus	killed Tamora, Chiron and Demetrius
	Young Lucius	killed king Saturnius.
	Tamora	killed Titus Andronicus' sons and made her sons rape and mutilate Lavinia.
	Aaron	killed the nurse and Cornelia the midwife.

Table 5-Collective face-saving Motifs (ColF-Motif) table

It appears in the three plays that small Hamlet avenged his father's death by killing Claudius and his accomplices. Laertes killed small Hamlet because he was responsible for the death of Ophelia his dating girl. Besides, he had killed Polonius his perspective father-in-law. In *Macbeth*, Macduff and Malcolm defended the death of the king Duncan. Lady Macbeth defends her husband. And finally in *Titus Andronicus,*

there are two major groups: one formed by Titus Andronicus, Marcus, Young Lucius and another which is mainly composed with Tamora, Saturnius and Aaron. Both of these groups' members have saved the face of the group they belong to by defending their partners who were attacked.

In fact, *Titus Andronicus* is one of Shakespeare's famous tragic plays which contains five Acts with a total of twelve scenes. The first one is made up with one scene, the second with four scenes, the third with two, the fourth with four scenes and the last, the fifth contains three scenes.

Shakespeare's main heroic character defends his nation against Goths and brings the captives like Tamora, her three sons and Aaron the Moore back. He saves the face of the whole nation in battle. One of a soldier's aim among others, is to secure the citizens against attackers. He is the permanent guard whose role is to protect people against enemies who always waylay their victims. So, according to the convention that guides the profession, volunteers who wish to join the group must keep in mind that their lives are nothings regarding the ones of the persons they were loaded to protect. That was what Titus Andronicus was conveying in his soliloquy:

> Hail, Rome, victorious in thy morning weeds!
> Lo, as the bark, that hath discharged her fraught,
> Returns with precious lading to the bay
> From whence at first she weigh'd her anchorage,
> Cometh Andronicus, bound with laurel boughs,
> To re-salute his country with his tears,
> Tears of true joy for his return to Rome.
> Thou great defender of his Capitol,
> Stand gracious to the rites that we intend!
> Romans, of five and twenty valiant sons,
> Half of the number that king Priam had,
> Behold the poor remains, alive and dead!
> These that survive let Rome reward with love;

> These that I bring unto their latest home,
> With burial amongst their ancestors:
> Here Goths have given me leave to sheathe my sword.
> Titus Andronicus, unkind and careless of thine own,
> Why suffer'st thou thy sons, unburied yet,
> To hover on the dreadful shore of Styx?
> Make way to lay them by their brethren…
> (…) sleep in peace, slain in your country's wars
> O sacred receptacle of my joys,
> Sweet cell of virture and nobility. (*Titus Andronicus. I, i, 466*)

There is nothing which can be obstacle for Titus Andronicus and refuses him to save the face of the group he belongs to. He killed one of his son called Martus, who refuses while he was presenting his only one daughter Lavinia as the empress to the emperor Saturnius to whom he gave away. More, he proved that his sons Quintus and Martus were innocent in Bassianus killing with the help of young Lucius who depicted the murderers' names. And revenged their deaths by killing the real murderers who not only committed Bassianus' murder, but also raped and mutilated Lavinia. The injuries they caused to Lavinia cannot be accepted by any genitor. Who will still be alive and see his/her child suffering such a way? Naturally and according to England tradition, Titus Andronicus or a member of Lavinia's family must react to avenge her.

Thus, both Marcus Andronicus and young Lucius wanted to cut one of their hands when Aaron, the Moore announced them that it was the price to pay off, before Saturnius released the two accused sons of Titus Andronicus. Titus Andronicus' family members demonstrated through the faked action of Aaron, that they are attacked to the collective face-defense. In addition, they helped Titus Andronicus and Lavinia along the search of the real guilty men, Chiron and Demetrius. In fact, young

Lucius helped to identify the murderers of Lavinia, by reading their names. Marcus was the person who firstly read the name of Chiron and Demetrius.

Later on, young Lucius will stab or sword the emperor Saturnius, because he killed his uncle, Titus Andronicus, and his aunt Lavinia's father. The dialog between Aaron, Titus Andronicus, Marcus and young Lucius illustrates the importance of defending the group someone belongs to.

> **Aaron**: Titus Andronicus, my lord the emperor
> Sends thee this word,_ that if thou love they sons,
> […] Will send thee hither both thy sons alive;
> And that shall be the ransom for their fault.
> **Titus Andronicus**. O gracious emperor! O gentle Aaron!
> Did ever raven sing so like lark,
> That gives sweets tidings of the sun's urprise?
> With all my heart, I'll send the emperor my hand:
> Good Aaron, wilt thou help to chop it off?
> **Lucius.** Stay father! For that noble hand of thine,
> That hath thrown down so many enemies,
> Shall not be sent: my hand will serve the turn:
> My youth can better spare my blood than you;
> And therefore mine shall save my brothers' lives.
> **Marcus**. Which of your hands hath not defended Rome,
> […] To ransom my two nephews from their death;
> Then have I kept it to a worthy end.
> **Titus Andronicus**. Now stay your strife: what shall be is dispatch'd,
> […] As far my sons, say I account of them
> As jewels purchased at an easy price;
> And yet dear too, because I bought mine own…. (*Titus Andronicus, III, i, 456*)

The dignity of a member of the group or of a collectivity is the responsibility of each of its members. It is the traditional way of saving dignity of a group. Pierre Corneille said in *Cid*: "Rodrigue Va et Venge ton Sang" which means "Rodrigue, go and

avenge your blood" (my translation). Belonging to the same group, you are sharing the inheritage together, which constitutes the 'Link' among you as members of the group. And each member has to safeguard it for the sake of the group. Shakespeare shows this extremity of the collective face-saving, just to tell his readers and audience, how significant is the group, family, ethnic or community and nation they are native from. And that, must be protected and kept safe. Therefore, everything people do, have an impact on their societal group. Young Lucius confirmed it in his speech addressed towards Titus Andronicus:

> If Lucius live, he will requite your wrongs:
> And make proud Saturnine and his empress
> Beg at the gates, like Tarquin and his queen.
> Now will I to the Goths, and raise a power,
> To be revenged on Rome and Saturnine. (*Titus Andronicus, III, i, 457*).

That educational message, from young Lucius, was elsewhere confirmed by Aaron's defense of his child. For him, the small 'Black' boy, the new born must be protected. "touch not the boy; he is of royal blood", said Aaron. And for that, "the empress, the midwife, and yourself: two may keep counsel when the third's away*"*. Because the "Coal- Black is better than another hue; in that it scorns to bear another hue, for all the water in the ocean can never turn the swan's black legs to white[176]"

The Black child is the result of the relationship between Aaron and Tamora. So, he is the member of the family and must be defended no matter what and how. More,

[176] *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*, Ibid, p 460.

he belongs to the royal family. According to the tradition and custom in England, the princes are deserved respect everywhere and in every circumstance[177]. Thus, the black child must be deserved the same respect as it recommended by the monarchy and divine law. This is what Aaron was claiming when he says: "(…) the child must live" because "(…) he was born from the Empress". On the other hands, the black child comes from the 'Black' race. It is obvious regarding science that body complexion may differ but human beings remain the same in the classification of God's creatures black or white. That is why, Aaron was comparing and talking about the stay of swan. Besides, he defended his loved empress by killing those who heared about the new born. But he helped her in her revenged plan against Titus Andronicus. He wrote the sad letter that accused the sons of Titus Andronicus. He went to Titus Andronicus house and laid on behalf of the emperor Saturnius by saying that he wants to release Titus Andronicus' sons; and he is asking in turn the hand of one family's member.

> Titus Andronicus, my lord the emperor
> Sends thee this word,_ that if thou love they sons,
> Let Marcus, Lucius, or thyself, old Titus Andronicus,
> Or any one of you, chop off your hand,
> And send it to the king: he for the same
> Will send thee hither both thy sons alive;
> And that shall be the ransom for their fault. (*Titus Andronicus, III, i, 456*).

Elsewhere, Tamora also defends his family and the emperor Saturnius. Since the new emperor of Rome took her as his empress before his countrymen, it becomes the duty

[177] Taofiki Koumakpaï, Op. cit.

of Tamora to save the face of someone who slipped her from the griefs of Titus Andronicus the general of Roman army. She promised to avenge him regarding the public humiliation Titus Andronicus' children Lavinia and Martus have undergone. The sense of dignity take the form rending justice. In fact, Lavinia refused to marry the King who demanded the marriage, and her brother supported her. To the youth, dignity has to do with self-defense, the "self" being the generation they represent against the oppression of the old generation. It is in this vein that Tamora said:

> […] My lord, be ruled by me, be won at last;
> Dissemble all your griefs and discontents:
> You are but newly planted in your throne;
> Lest, then, the people, and patricians too,
> Upon a just survey, take Titus Andronicus' part,
> And so supplant you for ingratitude,
> Which Rome reputes to be a heinous sin[178],

Because of that deed of Titus Andronicus' children, she started hating Titus Andronicus'family in the play. She becomes the shade that follows them everywhere they are. She is the target in the rape and mutilation of Lavinia and the killing of Bassianus the bloody brother of the emperor whom Lavinia prefers to Saturnius.

Using the English tradition in which Kings are semi-gods, Shakespeare is reminding his audience of the fact that the emperor is a dignified person and must be dignified. It is in this vein, generational conflicts are based on the sense of each group's perspection of dignity.

[178] *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*, Op. cit, p. 457.

> Then here is a supplication for you. And
> When you come to him at the first approach you
> Must knell, then kiss his foot, then deliver up your
> Pigeons, and then look for your reward[179],

This statement is addressed by Titus Andronicus to young Lucius when he reaches back the King. The honor and dignity are deserved to the king and the emperor in tradition and custom of England. Everyone who wants to speak to the king or emperor may respect him if not he will be banished from the kingdom or the empire. It is what justifies the killing of the Titus Andronicus by Saturnius "Die frantic wretch for accursed deed."[180] First, Titus Andronicus doesn't respect the emperor if not how can he kill the queen in front of the king? The emperor has to defend the notoriety of the royal family and that of the queen. It is in that context that the notion of self-defense motif unholds the self-being, here the community.

In Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, the collective face-saving was more portrayed by the acts of Lady Macbeth, Malcolm and Macduff.

> What I believe I'll wail,
> What know believe, and what I can redress,
> As I shall find the time to friends, I will
> What you have spoke, it may be so perchance.
> This tyrant, whose sole name blisters our tongues,
> Was once thought honest: you have loved him well:
> He hath not touch'd you yet, I am young ; but something
> You may deserve of him through me, and wisdom
> To offer up a weak poor innocent lamb
> To appease an angry god (…)

[179] Ibid, p. 457
[180] *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*, Op cit, p. 466.

I think our country sinks beneath the yoke;
It weeps, it bleeds; and each new day a gash
Is added to her wounds: I think withal
There would be hands uplifted in my rights;
And here from gracious England have I offer
Of goodly thousands: but, for all this,
When shall tread upon the tyrant's head,
Or wear it on my sword, yet my poor country
Shall have more vices than it had before,
More suffer and more sundry ways than ever,
By him that shall succeed. (*Macbeth, IV, iii, 557*).

Malcolm, the son of king Duncan, is wondering if someone, who owed even his or her life to someone else and a whole, can be so ingrateful? And since the English tradition and the human nature allow him to avenge crimes, he will overstep and defend the face of Macduff's family. Because he is guided by Macduff who is too old to go to fight. For the young as opposed to the old, dignity reads when they struggle to achieve what they are expected to do in life. This varies according to time, place and needs.[181] And they must transmit it to other generations in order to keep safely the collective face-defense as element of culture.

I grant him bloody,
Luxurious, avaricious, false, deceitful,
Sudden, malicious, smacking of very sin
That has a name: but there's no bottom, none,
In my voluptuousness: your wives, your daughters,
Your matrons and your maids, could not fill up
The cistern of my lust, and my desire
All continent impediments would o'erbear
That did oppose my will: better Macbeth
Than such an one to reign[182].

[181] Micheal Alexander, Op. cit, pp. 107-137.
[182] *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*, Ibid, pp. 557-558.

Young people must grant their parents' offender bloody or severe sentence. In that way, the offender is led to regret his or her deeds, because he or she doesn't know when he will be attacked by offended or his or her belongings. This justifies the Waci's tale which means in French: "La vengeance est un plat qui se prend froid" [183] (a vengeance or revenge action is as a meal which should smoothly be eaten). Some people offended can decide to react immediately, others later on and while you, the offender, you were not prepared for. That seems to be what happens to Macbeth. Because, he plots the killing of Malcolm. He knew that, Malcolm is too young to fight with him and for that he was sure to finish with him very shortly. He knew also that, Macduff is older than him and he is not supposed to take the defense of Malcolm weak. So, his weakness doesn't allow him to resist in front of Macbeth.

Macduff has two missions: the defense of his proper family name, the one of the kingdom, and that of all people that Macbeth has killed innocently; because of selfishness and pride. It becomes the duty for Macduff to leave a peaceful kingdom for the youth to inherit. If not, the way Macbeth was behaving doesn't warrant peace. He is not fearing anything at all, and he wants to kill Dunsianes. And more, Macduff is now the only one aged person left, who can fight with him because he knew him more than youngmen. They were closer and chamberlains of king Duncan, and they were great soldiers of the royal court.

> Fell slaughter on their souls.
> Heaven rest them now!
> (…) O, I could play the woman with mine eyes

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[183] *My translation*

> And braggart with my tongue! But, gentle heavens,
> Cut short all intermission, front to front
> Bring thou this fiend of Scotland and myself;
> Within my sword's length see him; if he 'scape,
> Heaven forgive him too! (*Macbeth, V, i, 559*).

Macduff was in a hurry to see Macbeth for the final and fatal combat which will for sure, be ended by the death of one of them. He was praying the heaven and the countrymen dead souls to "bring thou this fiend of Scotland and myself; within my sword's length see him; if he 'scape, heaven forgive him too[184]".

In contrast to Macduff who saves the face of his collectivity with sword, Lady Macbeth accomplishes her collective face-saving with her mouth. The words become the weapon used by Lady Macbeth to defend her husband. By that, Shakespeare illustrates that women are weak physically, but their strength exists and resides in their oral performance only. With their mouths, women can destroy or build. Lady Macbeth helped Macbeth in his plan of killing the king Duncan. She was the person, the masterpiece who activates and drives on the death of the king. In this perspective, Lady Macbeth helps the couple to the stage of King-Queen with her words: "We fail! But screw your courage to the sticking-place, and we'll not fail". Lady Macbeth's pronouncement encourages her husband. She tells him he can overcome if he keeps fearless, because the Duncan chamberlains can bear the guilt; "what not put upon his spongy officers, who shall bear the guilt of our great quell"[185]?

Moreover, Lady Macbeth by acting so was defending the social group she belongs to. As a woman, her opinion is limited in the management of the house and

[184] *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*, Ibid, p. 559.
[185] Op. cit, p. 546.

not in the leading of the country. But, Shakespeare commits Lady Macbeth in that way to sensitize the public opinion about the importance of womanhood in the leading either of the family or the country. Because, people used to say that behind a great man, exists a strong woman. Virginia Woolf in her publication *Orlando* said:

> A woman knows very well that, though a wit sends her his poems, praises her judgment, solicits her criticism, and drinks her tea, this by no means signifies that he respects her opinions, admires her understanding, or will refuse, though the rapier is denied him, to run through the body
> with his pen[186]

In fact, like Shakespeare, somehow,Virginia is inviting women to stand up for their rights, to defend their own face. Because, "as long as she thinks of a man, nobody objects to a woman thinking" and to Coco Chanel to add: "the most courageous act is still to think for yourself. Aloud." A traditional tale used to say if you are under a tree where the birds build their nests and you keep quiet, they will cover your head with their messes. This is because, in Elizabeth time, women are marginalized by men. They didn't take part to the meeting where men were involved according to the tradition and the custom, that were prevailing over that time. All powers belong to men and women must submit to it.

Thus, Shakespeare's appeal is not going to raise womanhood against manhood. Because even in the Holy Bible and following God's recommendation, men have more

[186] http://www.rue89.com/2011/03/27/ rdc-mieux-vaut-tuer-lenfant-sorcier, retrived on 27/12/2012.

power than women. So, he is asking men to consider more women in their duties for the well-being for the countrymen, since "woman's desire or will is a due"[187].

Contrary, to what happened in *Titus Andronicus*, and *Macbeth*, in *Hamlet*, Shakespeare has portrayed his characters just as persons who defend really the image of the family they belong to. Indeed, small Hamlet was loaded the mission to revenge the death of his father. While Laertes for him, it was to defend his parents-in-law against small Hamlet. Once again, Shakespeare is attached to the tradtion, and the custom of the group. And when you are apart of a family, you have to safeguard the image of that family by behaving in a view to avoid its spoiling.

On the other hand, according to the custom and tradition, the dead people are still living. And their spirits can appear to ask for some sacrifices; more often, when it is not their natural death. It is what, he was showing by the apparition of small Hamlet father's ghost to small Hamlet, and the one of Banquo to Macbeth. In both cases, they got a tragic death. Small Hamlet's father was killed by Claudius and Banquo by Macbeth. Most of time, a such death necessitates sacrifices everywhere. And, that is what the ghost comes to ask for to appease the soul of the dead persons.

In sum, it appears that the author is emphasizing on the honor regarding dignity as a major source of all the murders committed in the plays. Because of the honor of the Andronicus family, the father will be obliged to suck one of his own hand. Something very terrible and horrific[188]; and which is not understandable for humankind. The author share here with us, the respect of the 'name' and the image of

[187] *My Italics*
[188] Lily B. Campbell, Op. Cit, pp. 248-249

family, group, tribe and country which someone belongs to. That is something which disappears in todays societies, and it is absence can wreak havoc in every generation.

4.3. Ruin of Dignity: A Critical Outlook from Shakespeare's Selected Plays

The study of the three plays *Hamlet, Macbeth* and *Titus Andronicus,* has shown that almost all the characters involved in them have compromised their moral dignity. Even the heroes Hamlet, Macbeth and Titus Andronicus are not spared by this human alienation. In fact, for mere pretexts, William Shakespeare has got them entangled in the nets of self-destruction and human alienation. In their thirst and struggle to do themselves justice, Shakespeare's dramatis personae have became worse and irredeemable. Although Shakespeare belongs to the English traditions and culture, his dramatis personae have their likes in Africa as a whole.

The same problems that have brought about the ruin of the tragic characters in the plays are encountered in Africa at socio-political and religious levels of life. The thirst for vengeance, revenge, retaliation, fight back is across races and continents. These drives form a part and parcel of human nature; it means that they are inherent in all human beings without the consideration of colour, sex and place of living. The ruin or loss of people's dignity is not peculiar to the English people; there are in Africa people who lose on a regular basis their dignity for the same motifs or human drives as we can notice it in Shakespeare's plays.

Like young Hamlet who wishes the death of King Claudius his uncle because the latter has poisoned his father dead to inherit the throne and the queen, there are similar situations in African families and communities where people fight and curse each other on a regular basis. The same problems that have marred and tarnished the

good image of young Hamlet in English context are also causing nowadays the loss of dignity of many Africans noble or mean. In political domain for instance, the children of people who have been victims of coups d'état, have always avenged their parents' deaths. For a case in point, we have Gilchrist Olympio who has contended for decades with President Eyadéma for power because the latter has been suspected to be a part of the people who have murdered his late father Sylvanus Olympio, a former president of Togo.

Moreover, the ambition that has led Macbeth to his downfall, the same ambition is causing people's tragic end especially in political domain in Africa. Many presidents in Africa today refuse to leave power despite the number of years or decades they have already spent in power; for this reason there are rebellions and revolutions here and there in Africa compromising social welfare.

Therefore, the ambition to remain in power forever leads to social upheavals and turn moil compromising constantly social peace and welfare. Many African presidents are in jail today because they have refused to quit power, some of them have amended their constitutions many times to suit their desire of lasting in power. Some presidents like Muammar Khadafi, are more because they have had tragic ends as a result of people's revolt against their inordinate ambitions.

Admittedly, some African presidents are going through the same experience as Macbeth did. Macbeth initially a good general in army, well praised honored and admired by his people, became scornful and despicable out of his inordinate ambition which has marred all his virtues or good qualities of a powerful, generous and patriotic high-ranked officer. From a protector, a guardian of his people he has become a

murderer, a butcher who will be butchered in his turn in the end: “a butchered butcher” as he is said to be.

Like Shakespeare’s Macbeth, many African political leaders today, are falling from grace to grass. They start their political career splendidly, but they finish it catastrophically.

Titus Andronicus has a similar fate as Macbeth. He has spent his military life fighting for Rome his country, but when he got offended and humiliated by the Emperor’s sons, he became unrecognizable in terms of character strength because he wanted to restore his initial dignified image now covered with shame and disgrace. He has been kind to people who have proved to be wicked to him in turn. Titus Andronicus can realize that he is not fairly treated by the sons of the Roman Emperor; as a result, he is ready to set the Goths who are an enemy people against Romans, his own people because the latter have disappointed him.

Eventually, Titus Andronicus, a noble Roman general becomes a traitor guilty of treason. He has betrayed his country, which is one of the highest crime, one can ever commit.

Likewise, many political leaders fall short of political standards. Some political leaders of the opposition parties in Africa, when they see that they are disappointed, because all their attempts to be in power have always failed, they revert to civil disobedience, a mercenary attitude fighting the other political leaders in power who refuse to lose elections or quit the power. All these things regularly cause instability and civil wars on the African continent. Therefore, our study of the three plays has shown that violence is a bad thing that is very destructive. Umuobuarie’s definition of the concept of violence, confirms this issue: “irresistible tendency to do evil, to kill

and slay [,] to tell lies and to work towards the downfall of the others."[189] This definition shows that violence is a villainous vice that should be shunned in human relations.

On the whole, the performance of these three tragedies by Shakespeare is like looking at the actuality or current happenings taking place in Africa in a mirror, at the atmosphere prevailing in African communities in sociopolitical domains of everyday life. Indeed, Shakespeare's works are timeless and placeless, every generation; every race or culture still corresponds with him. It stands to reason that Shakespeare's tragedies stand as a warning against the dangers of human drives, foils and foibles that plague the worldwide human societies across races and continents. For Shakespeare no one is angel-like, no one is devil-like, all human beings are both. Therefore, all human beings must be careful of that and learn how to control their passions and desires because the consequences of the latter can be tragic. Nothing should cause people's loss of human dignity; nothing can justify an offense or a defense. For Shakespeare, people can dominate and overcome the passionate forces and whatever reasons that can push them to doing justice for themselves. If your fellow human beings offends you, you will have better forgive him or her than fighting him or her back. Indeed, if you fight back you become worse than the latter because the latter might have acted unconsciously by mistake. But, those who retaliate act out of self-will and full consciousness with the sole motivation of rehabilitating or correcting their self-image, they do not want to suffer any kind of injustice.

[189] David O. Umuobuarie, *Black Justice* (Ibadan: Oxford University Press, 1976), p. 127.

Part Three:

Reading Dignity as Socio-cultural Responsibilities in Shakespeare's Plays

Chapter Five: Critical Appraisal of Shakespeare's Approach to Dignity

5.1. Shakespeare's Audience and the Dramatic Texture

Shakespeare's tragic plays are subject to more comments because of how he arranges his acting characters and makes them play those horrific roles. In this vein, this chapter will try to give an apprehension of Shakespeare's approach to human dignity as the basic of socio-political injustice, and it will be ended by his potential moral and educational messages and advice for the new generations in this globalized and contemporary world.

In fact, it is not a confident to say that in a drama, there are five stages in the evolution of actions: the exposition of the story to the audience, the complicating actions stage, whereby the preceded action (s) is or are the cause of dispute between people or characters. This conflict will be emphasized and become a great tension; climax stage. Then occurs an event that delays the final action, which is the accomplishment of the murder; the catastrophe. These stages are also observed, while dealing with tragic plays, and my duty in this part of my research work is to focus on the author's articulation of tragedy and its connection to English culture and tradition.

William Shakespeare in his writings uses some kind of characters to whom he attributes roles in line with his ideological fiber. The analyses of these acting characters' words will allow readers to perceive, and to portray the author's view about dignity-saving linked to the vengeance in each of the plays under study.

Regarding honor in contrast to virtue in concept of revenge, vengeance leads to dignity, here honor is insisted upon yet divorced from ethics and consequences; the

same act is "villainy" [190]or service depending on who performs it; ignorance of intent to murder is sufficient condition for approving the murder after the event.

Power structure, class order or hierarchy fix dignity as a tradition, a norm each community tries to save. Thus, logic establishes vengeance as a means to assert or perpetuate the policy established in the society and among people. The society that aspires towards greatness for that has enjoyed all the advantages of social, political and religious power is eager to keep up. The disgrace in this instance is humiliating and can call for vengeance. In this case Shakespeare is experienced in the plotting of his characters.

In *Hamlet*, characters like small Hamlet, Polonius, Reynaldo, Claudius, Rosencrantz and Gertrude's behaviors are going to be scrutinized while in *Macbeth*, I am going to talk about the behaviors of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth, Malcolm and Macduff's ones. Saturnius, Titus Andronicus, Tamora, Chiron and Demetrius and even Aaron are the remaining characters whose appraisal shows that the English audience of Shakespeare and the preestablished tradition of vengeance aim at highlighting dignity.

Shakespeare uses the poetic method to convey messages in the tragic plays. His poetry is built on a skilled arrangement which mixes prose with metaphors. Because for Madelon G. Sprengnether, "It is metaphor that allows us to subread, to read on the margins of discourse, to analyze what is latent or implicit in the structures of consciousness of a text."[191]

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[190] Jonathan Dollimore, "Antony and Cleopatra (c. 1607): Virtue under Erasure" in *Radical Tragedy: Religion, Ideology, and Power in the Drama of Shakespeare and His Contemporaries* (Durham, N. C.: duke Univrsity Press, 1986), pp 204-17

[191] Madelon Gohlke Sprengnether, "I Wooed Thee with My Sword: Shakespeare's Tragic Paradigms" in Schwartz Murray M., Coppélia Kaln, eds. *Representing Shakespeare: New Psychoanalytic Essays* (London: The Johns Hopkins University Press. 1980), pp 170-87.

He boldly transforms historical materials (the events of Elizabeth Era) and makes them the foundation of his overall picture of life; since

> There is no private life which has not been determined by a wider public life (…) Yet the wider life was interesting to George Eliot (the pen-name of Mary Ann Evans) because it shaped the moral and emotional life of single persons.[192]

He has also blended the distinctive features of the past with contemporary understanding of human relations. Dramatizing history, Shakespeare portrays it through the conflict of individuals. Humankind is the focus of Shakespeare's dramatic art; the peak of the playwright's artistic achievement is the portrayal and the perception of the human personality in all its diversity, in its grandeur and significance, and in the complexity and dynamics of its spiritual development.

From *Hamlet* to *Titus Andronicus*, via *Macbeth*, the author is portraying how human dignity or personality is a sacrilege.

Socially, small Hamlet murdered his uncle Claudius, because it is unavoidable to him to avenge his father. Whereas socio-political ambition drove Claudius, uncle of small Hamlet, new emperor of Denmark, to kill his elder brother, father of small Hamlet and gets married to his brother wife, the mother of small Hamlet. Shakespeare organized events by gathering and relating psychological and sociological behaviors of his characters in the option to correct misconducts or wrongdoings in his society, since

[192] Michael Alexander, Op. cit, p. 258.

that is also the mission of a writer as "English literature is the literature of the English as well as literature in English."[193]

Human dignity considered as face-saving, selfishness and personal pride are elements commonly used in poetic way by Shakespeare to share with us how much these can wreak havoc a community. For example, his play *Titus Andronicus* is full of bloodshed. But, through the bloodshed of the play, he is denouncing the disorder that human can create while considering too much the petty details as far as offences are concerned. For their face-saving in the concern of human dignity, Chiron and Demetrius after raping Lavinia, removed her tongue, cut her hands off to avoid her to expose them for being responsible for the crime. The author plots the story in such a way, just to uncover the conception of dimension of human dignity which prevailed in his time. If not, how someone can have her or his tongue removed and hands cut off and that person is still living? Only, Shakespeare has the secret of such a paradox which probably takes shape from the Great English Tradition. This tradition anchors on human nature and human conflicts and the potential values to promote : equity, dignity for the race and possibly for other people's inspiration. This is meaningful to denounce and discourage, the crimes and the atrocities which were committed in the period. This Era of 'eyes to eyes'and 'tooth to tooth' was terrible.

So, there is no pity for the person who spoils the honor of your family. Because, spoiling one's honor leads to his or her dignity spoiling. A such tackle becomes damaging the whole group face-saving motif.

[193] Ibid.

In that perspective and considering the bearer of dignity, Macbeth wanted to prove his masculinity to his wife by his commitment in the killing of the king Duncan. Janet Adelman in this order asserts that:

> The drive toward masculine autonomy diverted in him is in effect defected onto Edmund , who becomes the standard –bearer for masculinity as he orders Cordelia's death; and it is resurrected in Macbeth and Coriolanus , each of whom similarly constructs his exaggerated and blood-thirsty masculinity as an attempt to ward off vulnerability to the mother, [194]

Thus, for Janet Adelman Man's dignity stands in his masculinity. On the other hand, Lady Macbeth wanted to be dignified by the title of queen of the kingdom. She wanted no matter how her husband to become the new emperor, since it was predicted by the witches, but her feminity does not allow her to murder Duncan herself. And she used savages words that frustrate and offend the manhood according to English tradition. Amarchoe in the *William Shakespeare's Macbeth In the Modern Prose* (2011), she quoted Macbeth: "What! Has your foolishness made you forget completely that you are a man?…You must be ashamed of yourself[195]". As human beings, it is not conceivable; and that is very rare to see a man who accepts to be dominated and insulted as such by a woman (mainly in Africa) in contrast to Gender conception. The author used that feminine method to portray the face-saving of manhood in the concern of dignity-saving. But not to talk about women dominance on men.

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[194] Janet Adelman "Escaping the Matrix: The Construction of Masculinity in Macbeth", in *Suffocating Mothers: Fantasies of Maternal Origin in Shakespeare's Plays, "Hamlet" to "The Tempest"* (New York: Routledge, Chapman and Hall 1992), pp 130-64

[195] Amarchoe Ashitey, Ibid, pp 54, 55.

The changeable and many-faceted nature of the human beings, as presented by Shakespeare, is dramatic in its essence, since personality changes are associated above all with changes in the hero's actual situation. In showing the many-sided nature of man's character, Shakespeare often sacrifices logic for the sake of dramatic intensity. Furthermore, his heroes' thoughts and feelings are clothed in poetic metaphors.

> The palace full of tongues, of eyes, and ears:
> The woods are ruthless, dreadful, deaf, and dull;
> There speak and strike brave boys, and take your turns**. (***Titus Andronicus,* II, I, 451)

Indeed, many speeches are poems in their own right. Shakespeare makes the fullest use of poetic imagery. His series of images correspond to the evolution of the Shakespearean hero's character; for example, the images by which Othello expresses lofty ideals at the beginning of the play are later interlaid with mean-spirited images that recall Iago's speech, and Othello's purification which is accompanied by a similar purification of his language. The way he expressed the love of small Hamlet to Ophelia by using the word 'flower' to qualify the beauty of the girl is expressive of the symbolism love takes. Shakespeare's images serve as leitmotifs that correspond to the overall tone of the plays. The expressiveness and variety of his poetic and dramatic devices have placed his work among the world's supreme artistic achievements. The stones are silent as if to conjure up human sufferings.

> […] I tell my sorrows to the stones;
> Who, though they cannot answer my distress,
> Yet in some sort they are better than the tribunes

(…) Rome could afford no tribune like these.
A stone is soft as wax,_tribunes more hard than stones;
A stone is silent, and offendeth not,
And tribunes with their tongues doom men to death (…). (*Titus Andronicus, III, i, 451*)

So, Shakespeare was comparing the members of the tribunes' hearts to the stones. In true parlance, the stones are harder but to Shakespeare, this hardness is softer to the degree where one can place the hearts of the tribunes. It is established in the play that , "A stone is soft as wax,- tribunes more hard than stones*"* and "is silent, and offendeth not", while "tribunes with their tongues doom men to death". This idiomatic use of the language, indicates how much the author shows complexity of life through complex linguistic style. Shakespeare proves his skillful use of the English symbols to describe, convey and educate his audience. Through this style he "negotiates the meaning and a set of [new] values with the readership"[196] for potential understanding and appreciation of the implied society in line with past , present and future.

According to English tradition, Ghost, Blood, and Sword, Purification are symbolic and are connected to danger, war, death; and unhappy events.

Very often, the ghost is assimilated to spirit or something which is uncommon. And, it is not appeared anywhere and anyhow. But mainly, at night and creates fear to the person it has appeared. When something like that happens to you, it is advised to search for the reason that is behind its apparition. Usually, the happening is an omen to an evil event. In the same way, the blood announces the sacrifice of something or of

[196] Nouhr-Dine Akondo, "The Economic and Developmental Meditation of Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* for African Readership" pp.129-143, , in *Littératures et Civilisations*, N° 1 (Université de Lomé : Faculté des Lettres et Sciences Humaines, Décembre 2014), p.129.

someone. It is almost obvious to see that blood is the precious liquid that is spread on and used during the rituals and sacrifice ceremonies. During traditional ritual in Africa, chickens' blood are spread to purify the evil. But how come the author used human blood to take away the souls of the dead people during the war in *Titus Andronicus*?

In fact, Shakespeare suggests that when a person commits murder, he or she has to be purified if not, the soul of the killed person will claim vengeance or revenge. The dead person ghost will appear to you, and trouble you a lot. Again, he is showing that human soul is a precious thing and must be dignified. And, while something is important to a person, that person has to offer in the return, something important for its saving. Similarly, it is to dignify the name of his father that Jesus-Christ offered and sacrified his body and spread his blood on behalf of us.

But, the sword is the tool or device that stands on the bloodshed. Regarding English tradition, the person who holds the sword and manipulates it very well is the "strong" and so he or she must be respected. Thus, they are dignified while it is the case of demonstrating the master of this symbol of strength. Similarly, in Abomey (Benin Republic) kingdom, Hountondji's family were dignified in the making up and the transformation of iron in the useful materials or devices for war. Therefore, Shakespeare reveals vengeance in various way to enable his audience to perceive the hidden fact that sustains its spreading in Elizabethan Era.

For instance, he symbolizes Macbeth's relation with Duncan to evil and vengeful regarding, the way he accomplishes his selfishness and pride. Because, it is not acceptable as a human being to be betrayed by someone in whom you trust while considering Macbeth as the warrior of the kingdom. In addition, Lady Macbeth too, though she rejects her husband's scruples, is entirely aware that the proposed murder is

evil. She avoids mentioning it explicitly, and she cannot bring herself to do the deed. She presents human pride and ego as the weakness of humanity in the face of evil.

5.2.Tradition of English Tragedy and Shakespeare's Art

Shakespeare's merit is not just with his use of tradition in his dramatic art; it is also with his creativity which keeps tradition and newness rolling. Regarding the language and style of Shakespeare, it is worth pointing out that Shakespeare is a matter of style. M. C. Bradbrook writes: "Shakespeare was a master of many styles."[197] Indeed, Shakespeare's diction is varied and persuasive. His language is quite a challenge to dramatic conventions. He does not strictly comply with the traditional rules of drama. For that, Sussan Bassnett argues:

> Shakespeare was a writer who dared to challenge the Aristotelian unities, who created a new kind of powerful theatre in which ghosts walked, and Moors murdered innocent wives, and whose Hamlet, Macbeth and King Lear stood, 'according to Tieck, on the most extreme limits of the possible.[198]

This quotation makes sense that Shakespeare instead of sticking to the traditional unities of place, time and action, has adapted his craft to fit the need of the audience or the English public to whom he was addressing. As far as unity of place is concern, Shakespeare doesn't consider it as sacred gospel news, which is not to be infringed, but he uses it as his will. He often shifts from place to place, from castle to castle, from

[197] M.C. Bradbrook, *Shakespeare and Elizabeth Poetry- A Study of his Earlier Work in Relation to the Poetry of the Time* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1951), p. 40.
[198] Susan Bassnett,. *Shakespeare, The Elizabethan Plays*, (London: Macmillan Press Limited, 1993), p. 3.

city to city, from house to house, from garden to garden, as he wants. In *Titus Andronicus*, the plot or the actions are shared between Goths' city and Romans' one as the larger venues or settings. Within the larger of the place, he feels free in the building of his plays. From a public place, the action is shifted to a street, and from the street it is shifted to the Titus Andronicus' house, so on and so forth.

The violation of the unity of the place, makes Shakespeare lawless, and by the same taken, makes him a great and fearless writer. For, a great and fearless writer, he is not the one who always copies from the existing tradition, but the one who is creative, who can bend a convention to his purpose. For David L. Frost, "The great writer bends a convention to his purpose so that it is at once familiar and unrecognizable[199]". Likely, Shakespeare twists the unity of action developing his own techniques like that of the play within the play as he did it in the case of *Hamlet*. In addition to this device, the author can afford to have more than one plot or one action in the same play.

In *King Lear* for instance, there are two plots; the main plot about Lear and his three daughters and the subplot about Gloucester and his two sons functioning on the basis of complementarity. The main plot instructs us about the relationship between father and daughters, daughters among themselves, while the subplot instructs the readers about the relationship between father and sons, and sons between themselves. Cordelia in the main plot faces the same fate as Edgar in the subplot. Cordelia is betrayed by her elder sisters and therefore, disowned by her father Lear; likewise

[199] David L. Frot, *The School of Shakespeare- The Influence of Shakespeare on English Drama,* (1600-1642) (London: Cambridge University Press, 1968), p. 24.

Edgar is betrayed by Edmund his half-brother and thus disowned by his father Gloucester.

As the concern of the unity of time, Shakespeare's plays can take more than a day or twenty-four hours, which is normal length of time devoted to the performance of a play. The variety of his settings, actions or plots determines, Shakespeare's otherness. In this vein, Rex Cribson in his reasoning argues:

> A powerful argument for studying Shakespeare exists in his extraordinariness, his strangeness, his unfamiliarity. His appeal lies in a unique blend of the familiar and the strange, his relevance and his remoteness. All education is opening doors, extending opportunities and experience. It is concerned that individuals should not be imprisoned in a single point of view, combined solely in local knowledge and beliefs education shows that there is a world elsewhere beyond the familiar and every day[200].

This passage justifies Shakespeare's openness to the acquisition and sharing of new knowledge, strange treatment of the dramatic art. Therefore, he doesn't want to be prisoner of the old traditions, and wants to feels free in his description of his conception of human dignity. His aim is to contribute to building something new to the educational purpose of tradition, and custom in terms of human behavior, by establishing bridge with traditional conventions of drama. He combines them with his own genius to enrich his tragic art. M. M. Badawi states there upon:

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[200] Rex Gibson, *Teaching Shakespeare* (London: Cambidge University Press, 1998), p. 6.

> What we get from Shakespeare's drama is something from which the conventional, symbolical and even ritualistic aspect is not entirely absent, something that has not lost touch with the poetic method. The mixture of realism and conventionalism can be seen not only in the costume and method of acting but also in the poetry of the plays. We find that the dialogue stops and the reaction of the play is frozen while a long artificial speech is being delivered.[201]

This statement above shows the possible flexibility in dramatic techniques, and performance. About the use of language itself, Shakespeare conforms to tradition rules whereby the language of the character should reflect his social position or status. In dramatic craft, Shakespeare combines poetry and prose to reflect social realities, realities being public punishment of guilty person, the power seeking as far as dignity is concerned. Along the same lines, Inga-Stina Ewbank claims in his article entitled, "Shakespeare and the Arts of Languages".

> Shakespeare largely conformed to the stylistic conventions of the drama of the period by giving prose to speakers of an inferior class-servants, clowns and verse (poetry) to their betters, and by marking in prose letters and proclamations entering into the play from the outside world. But he has moulded the convention to his own needs by using shifts from one mode to the other to realize a change in mood in a character, such as Hamlet, or a break down of control, such as Lady Macbeth sleep-walking or Othello generating into nearly-inarticulate frenzy: noses, ears, and lips. Is't possible? Confess! Handkerchief! O devil! '*Othello* (IV, I, 42-43).[202]

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[201] M. M. Badawi, *Background to Shakespeare* (Oxford: Macmillan Education Limited, 1981), p. 114.
[202] Inga-stina Ewbank, "Shakespeare and the Arts of Language" in Stanley Wells' *Shakespeare Studies* (London: Cambridge university Press, 1986), p. 59.

This quotation shows that Shakespeare uses a highly patterned language. Small Hamlet's language reflects his high education. The nurse's language in *Romeo and Juliet* reflects her servile position and shallowness. Titus Andronicus's language reveals his high status of dignity, and power in Roman kingdom, and his good nature, and his submissive character. Tamora's language shows her wicked and vengeful nature.

Shakespeare uses negative terms to show negative behavior. For example, Lady Macbeth asks spirits to unsex her, that is, to make love to her. Sex is positive, and unsex is negative. Shakespeare coins new unusual words to emphasize the unusual nature of his characters' behavior and nature. So, Shakespeare has a great power of coinage to help his audience in order to have the picture of the situation, he is depicting. For Gray: "In truth, Shakespeare's language is one of his principal beauties; and he has no less advantage. Every word in him is a picture[203]".

Moreover, Shakespeare uses free prose and verse to be closer to the reality; he uses poetry to emphasize the tragic tone, and to arouse the emotional tension. As the weird sisters speeches portrayed it :

I'll give thee a wind.
Throu'rt kind.
And I another.
I myself have all the other,
And the very ports they blow,
All the quarters that they know
I' the shipman's card.
I will drain him dry as hay:
Sleep shall neither night nor day
Hang upon his pent-house lid;

[203] D. Nichol Smith, *Shakespeare in the Eigheenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon press, 1928), p. XXXIV.

He shall live a man forbid:
Weary se' nnights nine times nine
Shall he dwindle, peak and pine:
Though his bark cannot be lost,
Yet it shall be tempest-tost. (*Macbeth, I, iii, 543*)

Though, Shakespeare was not a university scholar, his language is quite rich and flexible. Through his language, human nature while considering dignity, as source of bloodshed, is more and more vivid. The quality of the expression makes it possible to see the complexity of gender, whereby coexist good and evil. Language is so essential in literature, thereby it is an efficient tool for the communication of feelings and thoughts. But, the literal use of the words cannot express fully the complexity hidden in social realities. Hence, the use of imagery becomes necessary. Victor Shklovsky argues: "Without imagery there is no art. Art is thinking in images[204]". Literature is art and art cannot work without images, especially in drama, where poetry is highly used. It calls for the use of mental efforts and abstraction. Most of Shakespeare's tragedies are purely poetry. Shakespeare uses the poetic genre to handle his tragedies and therefore, he cannot avoid images. The words he used hide physical images. Shakespeare himself means it, when he gets Warwick confess the following:

My gracious lord, you look beyond him quite.
The prince but studies his companions
Like a strange tongue: wherein, to gain the language,
'Tis needful that the most immodest word
Be look'd upon and learn'd; which once attain'd,
Your highness knows, comes to no further use
But to be known and hated. So, like gross terms,

[204] Victor Shklovsky, " Art as Technique" Robert Con Davis & Ronald Schleifer in *Contemporary Literary Criticism- literary and Cultural Studies*, 2nd ed. (New York: Longman, 1989), p. 55.

> The prince will, in the perfectness of time,
> Cast off his followers; and their memory
> Shall as a pattern or measure live
> By which his grace must mete the lives of others,
> Turning past evils to advantages.
> *(King Lear IV, Part II IV, iv, 67-68*)

Throughout these utterances of the Earl of Warwick, Shakespeare underlines the importance of imagery or symbolism, the uncommon use of language as mimesis. According to him, one's dignity can be revealed throughout the way he or she pictures things. So, imagery allows us to express complex realities to our audience, which will understand better, and this, permits to save energy and time. According to Rex Gibson:

> Imagery is the use of the emotionally charged words and phrases which conjure up vivid mental pictures in the imagination… Such images play a key part in every Shakespeare's play. They are a kind of verbal scene painting which appeals to emotions. They deepen and intensify the imagination and dramatic impact, giving insights into characters' feelings and thoughts[205].

Thus, Shakespeare's use of images and linguistic signs and tropes allows to understand the nature of his characters in deep and profound manner. From that perspective, images give us insights into characters' feelings, thoughts and personality. Through imagery, we perceive better the forces of evil in Macbeth; since "there's no art to find the mind's construction in the face[206]". Lady Macbeth's language is purely imagery. She invites the spirits of evil to possess her, by using the following imagery:

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[205] Rex Gibson, Op. cit., p. 51.
[206] *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*, Op. cit, p 543

Come to my woman's breast
And take my milk for gall, you murdering ministers,
Wherever in your sightless substances
You wait on nature's mischief
Come, thick night,
And pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell
That my keen knife see not the wound it makes
Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark
To cry, 'hold, hold!'[207]

Lady Macbeth's strange use of language is another way to perceive woman dignity through the force and the power of imagery. In this regard, the quotation pictures the realities of Selfishness and Pride in dignity-saving. Lady Macbeth wants to possess man spirit by using the words: milk, gall, murdering ministers, nature's mischief, thick night, dunnest smoke of hell, knife, heaven, the dark. So, she wants the evil spirits to take away all her human meekness and kindness, which she means by 'milk'. Since, Lady Macbeth wants to take people's lives away, she wants to get rid of this virtue in her. She wants the vices to take the place of her virtues, so that she will be easy to commit evil without being sorrowed.

The terms dark, night, knife, hell,...are associated with evil because in dark or night nothing is viewed really though knife, hell associated to fire. So, she wants to commit a selfish, a danger in the society. Thus, the words or terms are powerful with images, and personalize evil, danger, even death. In addition, the imagery of Shakespeare can also be perceived as metaphorical imagery, because of the hidden sense suggested in his speeches. Thus, Theodore Howard Banks has this to offer:

[207] Amachoe Ashitey, Ibid, pp. 47-54.

> An image may be considered as a word that recalls to our minds a sensation, an impression, not merely visual, but belonging to any of the senses: sound, smell, balance, pressure, heat and cold, and the like. Miss Rosemond Tuve's Elizabethan and Metaphorical imagery attacks the problem from this point of view. On the other hands, that is, a smile, a metaphor, or personification. Hence imagery is a highly individual stylistic element. Its difference in intensity and complexity, its force or delicacy, its range of depth and fullness, its rhetorical function as an embellishment or as an integral part of the thought- all do much to illustrate our understanding of a writer's art[208].

To sum up, with regard to this quotation, images are part of our thinking or mental possesses. They are useful in getting our senses into imagination and apprehension of human social realities indeed. Shakespeare's language is full of imageries like metaphors and similes. Taine claims in that matter that, "Shakespeare is profuse with metaphors; every instant abstract ideas are changed into images like a series of paintings unfold in the min[209]".

In that context, Shakespeare has the power of comparing things by using metaphors and similes. For instance, he likens Macbeth to the hunger of a monster in such a way that is always possible in man. Night stands for evil in the form of the ghost. All this chaos of crime, vice, madness, miseries, stand for night. Metaphors are very important in the usage of language and give power to render dramatic situations perfectly. I believe Stanley Wells when he writes that:

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[208] Theodore Howard Banks, *Milton's Imagery*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1950), pp. XI-XII.
[209] Quoted by Augustus Rall, *A History of Shakespeare Criticism*, Op. cit., p. 455.

> Lastly, our speech doth not consist only of words… we express a matter by metaphors, wherein, the English is very fruitful and forcible. Shakespeare's own peculiar force came to be his ability to release, in his metaphors, the energy of the English language and at the same time to render the proper quality, the unique being, of thoughts, feelings, or dramatic situation (sic).[210]

Metaphors give to language its power of persuasion, because of the direct comparison beyond a mere mention of comparative word. The power of persuasion of metaphor lies in its punching on sameness. In this regard, Shakespeare is beyond any rhetorician, and his perception of metaphors as a tool to relate reality to the imaginary world. His use of the English language is quite convincing, empowering for more feats. Aware of the diversity of his audience, Shakespeare uses both the literal language and imagery (metaphors and the common English at his times). As Molly Mahood points out in her book *Shakespeare's Wordplay*,

> When Elizabethan rhetoricians spoke of the power and force of words, their meaning may have been as much literary as metaphorical. Shakespeare seems to have shared with many of his contemporaries a concrete physical perception of language, both as it is spoken and as it is received.[211]

Among other interpretations, it can be understood that Shakespeare dislikes verbosity, verbiage and wordiness; he prefers a direct, straightforward, and precise language.

[210] Stanley Wells, *Shakespeare Studies*, Op. cit., p. 62.
[211] Ibid, Op. cit, p. 52.

That makes sense. As it was noted in the conversation between Gertrude the queen, small Hamlet's mother and Polonius whereby he evidenced the efficiency in the word,

> **Polonius**: (…) I will be brief. Your noble son is mad:
> Mad call I it, to define true madness,
> What isn't but to be nothing else but mad? But let that go.
> **Queen**: More matter but less art.
> **Polonius**: Madam, I swear, I use no art at all
> But farewell it, I use no art. (*Hamlet Act II, Sc II, 92-99*)

Shakespeare made both Polonius and Queen Gertrude speak straightly to each other in order to change the old method used by playwrights to describe and denounce the social facts in their literary production. The beginning of the conversation exemplifies it, i.e. "I will be brief! Your noble son is mad". There is no need to start the sentence with this short interjection. But Shakespeare wants to drive his readers attention on the fact that he masters the English language and dramatic tradition and enjoys the freedom of a writer to orient his creative writings the way he likes it and thinks his audience will value them. Shakespeare is not just a custodian implementing tradition, he is also a reformist of texts and minds.

5.3. Vengeance and Political Dismay across Borders

It transpires from the analysis of the three tragedies in consideration that vengeance follows from political disappointment. This is true all over the world. The history of the mankind has taught us that acts of vengeance and civil wars result from the failure of the political leaders to meet the expectations of their people. The eighteenth century

French and American revolutions can testify to that. Therefore, Political dissatisfaction has always created misery and dissensions within human communities around the world.

It seems that Shakespeare has inherited revenge tragedy or tragedy of blood from Seneca, a Roman philosopher and dramatist. In revenge tragedies like those under study, a near relative of the central character is murdered by a person of high socio-political rank out of the reach of the justice of law. The central character is thus faced with the problem of whether or how to carry out this duty of revenge for the injury. From this background of revenge tragedy, we learn that vengeance comes as a result of being a victim of injustice.

Therefore, as an artist, Shakespeare is concerned with the welfare of all human societies without exception; he rings the alarm bell about political immortality that leads to political contention and violence. Politics as the science of government is very important for social harmony and welfare. Thus, the playwright wants people to prefer good politics to bad politics which is destructive.

As a matter of fact, good politics implies good governance, which means there are many advantages entitled to it. But bad politics is negative and selfish; it is usually based on the individual or minority welfare than the collective or majority one. Leadership based solely on selfish interests can lead to dictatorship and repression that call for vengeance and bloodshed.

Shakespeare wants politicians to understand that political leadership is a heavy responsibility that should be handled with a lot of care and moral sense. As an artist, he plans and orchestrates the downfall of political heroes in his plays because he would like them understand that as leaders they have to be role models, and if they

refuse this duty their fate will be catastrophic. Similarly, Osundare argues, "Leaders are, in the language of psychologists, role models. People look up to them and copy their actions, behavior and even mannerisms. Therefore if a leader lacks discipline the effect is apt to spread automatically down to his followers."[212] The statement suggests that, because leaders greatly affect their people, they have to exercise themselves in self-discipline. If they do not discipline their passions and whims, if they do not control their mannerisms, this can be negatively reflected on people at large.

At times, Shakespeare appears much like a preacher[213] as Harley Barker-Grandville would put it. Like a preacher, Shakespeare has a mission to instruct and educate his audience about the dangers of bad political leadership. For Shakespeare, politicians need to lead a more reasonable political life. It is important to combat political evils and corruption and try to conciliate justice, fairness and equity with politics. There will be no vengeance if there are political fairness and justice. It is commendable that all politicians consider the whole community rather than some fractions of the society. In Africa for instance, communal life is preferable to individual life, traditional African people used to be quite fond not only with their communities but also with natural and supernatural forces. Ejizu highlights this as follows:

> For traditional Africans, community is much more than simply a social grouping of people bound together by reasons of natural origin and/or deep common interests and values. It is both a society as well as a unity of the visible and invisible worlds; the world of the physically

[212] Niyi Osundare, "Freedom and the Creative Space" (pp.63-68) in Hal Wylie and Bernth Lindfors eds. *Multiculturalism and Hybridity in African Literatures*. (Trenton NJ. : Africa World Press, 2009), p. 66.

[213] Harley Barker-Granville. *Prefaces to Shakespeare - Hamlet*. London: B: T Batsfords Limited, 1930, p. 316.

> living on the one hand, and the world of the ancestors, divinities and souls of children yet to be born to individual kin-groups. In a wider sense, African traditional community comprehends the totality of the world of African experience including the physical environment, as well as all spirit beings acknowledged by a given group.[214]

It stems from the quotation above that unity and love of people for people without discrimination is suitable to physical and supernatural worlds that guide human life on earth. Politicians and other people in our societies should not break these existential laws, for breaking them, is jeopardizing human life as a whole.

A politician who is greedy and insatiable cannot be honest and sincere in politics; therefore, there is need for politicians to learn how to control their passions and desires thinking not for their own selfish interests, but for the collective social welfare. Indeed, competition is a reality in politics, but competition is not synonymous with one's fellow's annihilation.

On the whole, Shakespeare would like people to understand that bad politics always has tragic ends or disastrous reverberations among which there is vengeance. However, the playwright advises against the fact of resorting to vengeance to solve political problems; for violence always calls for violence, but tolerance or forgiveness can be a remedy for political misunderstandings.

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[214] Christopher I. Ejizu, "African Traditional Religions and the Promotion of Community Living in Africa" in www.afrikaworld.net/afrel/atr-community.htm, retrieved on *27/10/2014.*

Chapter Six: Symbolism and Socio-political Vision in Shakespeare's Plays

The three plays of William Shakespeare are presenting a particularity in how to educate people. Shakespeare has designed these tragic actions and created symbols to denounce the smoothly destruction of his country. The socio-political situation in the succession to throne was becoming serious, and there is a need to stand and stop the way things get out of hands. Shakespeare makes his characters behaviors speak to the England public and to the world through cultural and context proned symbols.

6.1. Symbolism in Shakespeare's Three Plays

It is impotant to offer the definition of symbolism to allow my readers to understand my critical appreciation in the context.

> Symbolism gives a writer freedom to add double levels of meanings to his work: a literal one that is self-evident and the symbolic one whose meaning is far more profound than the literal one. The symbolism, therefore, gives universality to the characters and the themes of a piece of literature. Symbolism in literature evokes interest in readers as they find an opportunity to get an insight of the writer's mind on how he views the world and how he thinks of common objects and actions, having broader implications.[215]

Based on this definition, it is clear to me that Shakespeare's literary production plays important roles either in refreshing individuals' minds or in pointing to their societal

[215] http://literarydevices.net/symbolism/, retrieve on 27/02/2015

connections, harmony, stability and welfare, in the great context of English tradition, culture and civilization.

Regarding symbols in the three plays, William Shakespeare uses symbols to account for ideas and qualities known to the English context he depicts. In this context, and using his creative acts, the playwright is giving opportunities to his readers to enjoy different meaning with more significant impacts. In various context, he allows symbols to shift from one meaning to another depending on the context in which he has put them. There is every indication that literature is not just a replica of reality because of the symbolic nature of the language which creates imagery, and unsuspected connotations readers come up with. In this vein, Michael Alexander writes: "the belief that literature outlives the circumstances of its origin". The power of symbolic language confers on the form and content in literature reality far beyond human experience in society. Sometimes, "This distinguishing characteristic is at odds with historicizing approaches which have sought to return literature social or political context, sometimes with interesting results."[216] The following examples point to symbols and the meaning one can reasonably associate to them in their contexts.

In *Hamlet*, moral depravity is marked by incest. One can note that young Hamlet's mother, Gertrude marriage only after two months mourning is a telltale mark that her personality is corrupt to her people's culture and tradition. Gertrude symbolizes women in *Hamlet*, only that they are whores, adulterous human beings of easy virtue and loose morals. Her attitude is less of honor, and dignity as far as female characters are concerned in reoriented context of the concept. To make the flaw worse,

[216] Michael Alexander, Op. cit, p.3.

Shakespeare has the woman marry the murderer of her husband. But here again, Shakespeare might have sent the woman on a literary mission of correcting the culprit. Maybe, the woman is empowered to torture the new husband, the murderer of her husband. Which way, one interprets this incident and says that there is evidence that dignity is behind the undertaking. But the play shows the reader the death of woman who could avenge the deceased husband. Shakespeare continues to maintain the ideological suspense only to suggest in connection to the concept of dignity that there is none in killing of a human beings.

Spying and deception are symbols in *Hamlet*. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern spy young Hamlet, thinking that he will revenge his dead father. Besides, Polonius, Ophelia's father spies young Hamlet suspecting him to plot against the king Claudius with his mother.

Most definitely, spying, must have been a moral fiber in people of Denmark. Through young Hamlet who plays all roles for the most crookied and less crookied; he behaved this honesty in all grounds. Given his personality, and the way Shakespeare has documented it, there is no doubt that the playwright has depicted some people of his time to fill his readership with regret.

Revenge, avenge or vengeance seem not to testify of the notion of dignity in the imaginative world of Shakespeare where characters are the representation of human beings. In the creative world of Shakespeare, dignity, unlike the way some of his characters perceive it, can be used to achieve political and social stability and development to the satisfaction of many citizens. In this way, Shakespeare presents characters with flaws in an identifiable style. Through irony for example which is an indication, the famous English playwright has a different opinion about dignity as

compare to his characters. For him dignity must match with social interest, collective welfare, and human activism.

Human dignity results also in the respect of the rules established by the group or the person you belong to. Bradley illustrates it through the following statement:

> She (Gertrude) married again, and married Hamlet's uncle, a man utterly contemptible and loathsome in his eyes; and married him in what to Hamlet was incestuous wedlock…it brings bewildered horror then loathing, then despair of human nature[217].

This quotation is painting women image poorly through the revelation of small Hamlet's mother's adultery, following the murder of small Hamlet's father. Shakespeare is showing to his audience that Gertrude is a woman without morals. Her selfishness blinded her and drove her in the way she acts. It is what this biblical recommendation is pinpointing: "Honore ton père et ta mere". Which means " Honor and Respect your parents"(Mt: 15,4). Not only to say that children should respect and dignify their direct parents, it is also underlined that the family, the group you belong to deserve honor and respect. Therefore, Shakespeare arranged his plays *Hamlet*, to show that human beings sometime does not think a lot before taking his or her decision. It is obvious to note that they used to think about themselves. I mean they misbehave towards one another, and most of the time, it is after accomplishing the deed, they regret their acts. So, everything you want to do or you are doing must take into account your notoriety in society.

[217] A. C. Bradley, op. cit, pp. 98-99.

Most definitively, through having a man, Claudius, and a woman Gertrude's sins against their society, the author wants to show that no female, regarding gender in concept of dignity, is perfect.

The idea of dignity is expressed as the concern of Claudius who uses egoism/selfishness as an adequate tool to achieve his goal. In this perspective, the fratricide he is accused of in *Hamlet* aims to reinforce his position through the leading of the kingdom. He has killed his brother to inherit the throne and the wife of young Hamlet's father. His jealousy as it can be inferred, is a means to secure the character's dignity. Though it is a corrupt way of shaping one's personality.

Throughout Macbeth, one can note the following symbols: the floating dagger, bloody hands, dead children, fight Kings. As one reads the play, one is informed that Macbeth has seen the floating dagger which symbolizes the throne he tries to grasp in vain by killing King Duncan. It is the symbol of leading that runs away from Macbeth that lounges for it. Out here in society, the symbol represents the power thirst of many leaders. In this vein, bloody hands are the hands of guilt, the hands of Macbeth that killed Duncan. It can also be seen as the symbol of insensitivity of Macbeth who has murdered Banquo, his son Fleance, and Macduff's family.

Again, the sympathy between Macbeth and Lady Macbeth is translated in the dream of Lady Macbeth who thinks she has bloody hands. This explains how she is constantly washing her hands in her sleepwalks (Act V),

It is established through the play that the reader cannot understand the symbol of fight kings if he or she falls to understands that King James was Shakespeare's patron and that is the result he sought to honor him through *Macbeth*

One more evidence is that, one king in the play is holding two orbs, the symbolic representation of King James I in English history.

The witches are the symbols of evil, darkness. It connotes that witchcraft and supernatural powers existed in England as they do in Africa

The fact that Macbeth is willing to murder children to retain his power indicates just how irredeemable he has become. The appearance of dead children symbolize the end of royal lineage and what happens when royal lines are extinguished.

Macbeth's speech to Banquo substantiates this kind of jealousy through Amarchoe's quotation of Shakespeare' play: "We hear our bloody cousins have settled in England and Ireland. They are spreading strange tales they have invented instead of confessing that they killed their father…"[218]. In this quotation, children have killed their father just because they want to inherit his estate. The depiction of the children in the bad light of life indicates Shakespeare's focus on youth education regarding moral in the concept of dignity. In this vein, he also depicts Macbeth's behavior towards Banquo who he thinks, seems to follow him everywhere and anytime. He explained it while he said:

> […] Our fear of banquo is deep. There is something in his royal nature which should be feared. He is daring and with his courageous temper, he has a wisdom that guides his bravery to act in safety. My children and I cannot be kings forever seeing that the witches promised Banquo's descendants the kingship. When I die his children will inherit me which means that I killed Duncan and defiled my hands because of him. He is the one I fear most, his spirit overshadowing mine like Mark Antony was by Caesar. He rebuked

[218] Amarchoe Ashitey, Op cit, p 146.

> the witches when they first greeted me with the title 'king' and asked them to speak to him. Prophetically they hailed him father of kings but put a fruitless crown on my head and a barren scepter in my hand which will be taken away by an undesirable because my children are not to be kings. If this happens then it means the murder, the confusion, and the hatred I have created for myself have all been done for Banquo and his descendants. I will rather fight with fate to the end than accept this situation…[219].

The reader is introduced to a blatant contrast between Shakespeare and small Hamlet on the issue of dignity. Small Hamlet is moved by anger and the determination to avenge his father but Shakespeare uses the text as a mediation between the does and the don'ts of his imaginary world.

The English tradition of small Hamlet empowers him to avenge his father by killing his murderer. So, it is this collective drive of tradition that Shakespeare follows because the child has succeeded in killing Claudius, the murderer of his father.

Small Hamlet has an acute sense of honor, and he is profoundly hurt at the undignified haste with which his mother married Claudius. He then suspects that his mother helps Claudius the king to usurp the crown[220]. So, the prince sees himself alone in the defense of his deceased father, and it becomes unavoidable to him to save the face of his father. His bloody uncle usurped the throne, the power that he had to resume. Portraying Claudius like that, Shakespeare is telling to his readers that one's greedness is source of socio-political instability of his society. This fact is observable today in some of African leaders' behaviors as it was obvious in the England context

[219] Ibid, p 44.
[220] Op cit.

in Elizabethan Era. They used all strategies to secure or keep power during their whole life time and even after by revisiting country's laws to allow their children or members of their families to succeed them to the throne. The recent revolution of October 2014, which has occured in Burkina Faso is more relevant, and has to shape some of African leaders who are still having such a dream. In other words, the wealth of a family, of a group,of a nation must be shared equally among its members. And, there is no way for someone to keep all the wealth which belongs to nation for himself or herself. For the concern of the small Hamlet, someone can wonder the reason for the ghost instructed him only?

The reader is subjected to see the contrast which exists between the concept of betrayal and obedience as patterns of dignity. For sure, Duncan was totally confident in Macbeth, but finally, he was betrayed by him who has planned and killed him; but it will be Macduff who is not his direct chamberlain who avenges him. Shakespeare shows the evidence of dignity through confidence. In contrast to Macbeth's unbelief, Macduff's character lights on the belief as motif of dignity. It is what Amarchoe expresses while quoting Shakespeare's character Macduff, when he beheaded Macbeth:

> Hail king, for king you are. Look at the usurper's cursed head. We are now in a free world. I see you are surrounded by the nobles of your kingdom who are congratulating you in their minds. With their voices I proclaim you king of Scotland! Hail!

Macduff's act is to tell, how the king was important and precious to him, and he had to save his face for the sake of his soul and for the notoriety of Dunsiane. Small Hamlet was likewise, when he swears and promises to the ghost of his father that he will avenge his death. The fact that his uncle Claudius planned to poison him becomes the added water to the ocean which pushes him in a hurry for the murder of his uncle. This manner confirms the social fact, that the source or the cause of someone's problem, is near him or her.

However, some can sacrifice themselves to defend the honor, and the face of others than being at the origin of their problems. Shakespeare tries to undertake the plot of the death of Ophelia who rejects the advances of Laertes. She prefers to fall in love to small Hamlet and died to avoid humiliation, when she heard rumoured death of her love.

Similarly *Titus Andronicus* offers instensis of symbolism. Thus, biological organs such as flesh and bones are used as meal during a banquet offered by Titus Andronicus to his guests Saturnius and Tamora. In this context Shakespeare seems to have recorded cannibals existed in England of his time. So, allusion made to African during colonization was not surprising; they were used to it. Aaron the black in the play is the symbol of evil because Shakespeare has him kill many people. This representation of the Blackman does not call for sympathy.

The idea wine is allegorically criminal. Titus Andronicus has filled the recipient of the blood of his daughter's rapists by way of vengeance to save his family's name and dignity.

Titus Andronicus defends and honors Saturnius and Romans'country against Goths. He faught against them and won. The face of the group from someone belongs

to saving, must be his or her first target. Because, the group face spoiling is yours. Compare to Achebe's patriotism, dignity is an evidence of a noble person who 'loves his country'. Shakespeare expresses it at the beginning of his play *Titus Andronicus* through these words:

> Noble praticians, patrons of my right,
> Defend the justice of my cause with arms,
> And, countrymen, my loving followers,
> Plead my successive title with your swords:
> I am his first-born son, that was the last
> That ware the imperial diadem of Rome;
> Then let my father's honors live in me,
> Nor wrong mine age with this indignity[221](…) (*Titus Andronicus I, i, 445*)

The author aims to tell to his audience or readers that, the group face-saving, must be the duty of each of its members, as it is for a nation face-saving. Thus, the dignity of the nation depends on, how each of its moral or physical constituent is framing internally and abroad its image. When Titus Andronicus said "noble praticians, he was addressing to the authorities or the persons who were leading the kingdom. He is appealing indirectly Leaders of his time to mind their social plans and actions. Because, the forecoming generations have its look at them, and will inherit. Therefore, they should "defend the justice" [222], the tool which preserves equality. His play comes out as an appeal to correct this inegality, which was later on source of vengeance.

Thus, the wealthy people must be examplaries to the youth, who will assume and resume the management of the nation after their death. If not, the offended will

[221] *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*, Op. cit, p 445
[222] Chinua Achebe, Op. cit, p. 16.

defend themselves no matter how and what in the option to change things in their advantages. Meaning that, for justice as an element that reasonably sustains dignity, they kill the culprit. Likewise, the countrymen have to fight for justice. In other words, the first leader of the nation must lead his country in such a way, by implementing justice, which facilitates the harmony within citizens. He is the one who bears the royal power, crown and dignity. It is what he refers to as 'diadem' which is a precious crown that cannot be worn anyhow.

Titus Andronicus, as one of emperor's followers, has a great apprehension of dignity-saving of a nation, and of his king.

In contrast, someone's selfishness and pride can drive him or her to lose control of himself or herself. The anger can draw him or her strickly to commit disorder. So a wicked person in hurry, looses control of himself or herself and can be the cause of the evil, before he or she regrets. In fact, wicked Claudius plans Hamlet's total destruction. He intentionally tells Laertes to challenge small Hamlet to a friendly fencing in the presence of the whole court. The wicked king tells Laertes to poison his weapon, against all rules of fencing. Laertes allows small Hamlet to gain upper hands.

Laertes requests small Hamlet to exchange his weapon with him in order to shift the blame from himself. However, Laertes gets a fatal blow from that sword[223]. Just then, Queen Gertrude shrieks that she has been poisoned. She accidently drinks out of a bowl full of poison prepared by the king for small Hamlet. Similarly, the wickedness in the concern of Selfishness can be also assimilated to Lady Macbeth and Tamora respectively in *Macbeth* and *Titus Andronicus*. Lady Macbeth used all the

[223] Clifford Leech, Op. cit, pp. 59-60.

blatant words to force her husband to kill his lovely King. Human wickedness is manifested through words and behaviors. And, the author's character Lady Macbeth acted in a way to suggest that the wicked nature of human should be tamed, because it can drive to murder. Macbeth's behaviors and words expressed towards Banquo exemplify it to his committed murderers:

> Now, have you thought well of what I told you? It was Banquo who made you miserable by underrating you and giving you treatment below your status and dignity. You thought we did. I made it known to you in our last meeting and I have demonstrated the truth in it to you how you were deceived and your efforts at redress thwarted by this Banquo[224].

As a wicked person, he planned to destroy Banquo to reach his goal regarding selfishness in the concept of dignity. By revealing to them, how dangerous Banquo is to them, the author is showing how the gossiping related to wickedness can be source of psychological illness. He portrayed Banquo in their view as the evil, and like that, he cannot still be living in the society. By arranging the words in a way, the author introduces the reader to relate human's attitude such as selfishness, anger, jealousy in context from dignity to social conflicts, revenge, and Vengeance . If Banquo escaped the trap, he will avenge himself. Then starts an eternal conflict or bloodshed which will be continued from generation to generation.

Similarly, Tamora can be called a wicked woman, because of her behavior against Lavinia. She was the accomplice of the rape and the mutilation against Titus

[224] Amarchoe Ashitey, Op. cit, pp 73, 74.

Andronicus's only daughter. Aaron and she retained the prince Bassianus, loving friend of Lavinia to enable to Chiron and Demetrius to reach their target against Lavinia. All these are to tell to the humanity, how one's dignity saving can spread and include a lot of damages to other people.

6.2. Socio-political Impact of Shakespeare's Vision of Dignity.

Originally the concept of dignity advocated, includes honesty, integrity, loyalty, respectful, wisdom, responsibility, etc…. As such, parents insist on it and try to give better education to their children in order to avoid public shame. But, there are some people who on behalf of that dignity, mislead and don't have fear of God; and even they forget that, life is God's gift. Indeed, they misconduct in the name of the protection of honorability and notoriety.

Regarding the essence in his literary production since centuries as expressed in many critiques such as Lily B. Campbell "Shakespeare's Tragic Heroes*"* (1930), Susanne L. Wofford *Shakespeare's Late Tragedies: A Collection of Critical Essays* (1996), Maynard Macb "The Jacobean Shakespeare: on the Construction of the Tragedies" (1993), Janet Adelman "Escaping the Matrix: the construction of Masculinity in Macbeth and Coriolanus" (1992), Robert B. Heilman "Shakespeare: the Tragedies" (1984), the literary work of Shakespeare, comes out to shape people's minds over the world in general, and those coming from African countries in particular mainly the minds of Africain writers who since the time, start addressing their Leaders misleading through their writings with issue to change a bit their mentalities about their traditional ruling of countries and its citizens. Among these writers we can note Chinua Achebe *The Trouble with Nigeria* (2012), Owusu Comfort *Commentary on*

Hamlet and Non-African Poems for Literature in English (2007), Ashitey Amarchoe *William Shakespeare's Macbeth in Modern Prose* (2011), Koumakpaï Taofiki "Revenge Tragedy in shakespeare's *Hamlet* and *Titus Andronicus Andronicus*" (2006), Magesa Laurenti *African Religion: the Moral traditions of Abundant life* (1998), Soédé Nathanaël Yaovi *Sens et enjeux de l'éthique et l' inculturation de l'Ethique Chrétienne* (2007). The plots of the three plays of Shakespeare under study are revelant in order that they allow to correct the wrongdoing and the inegality that drive people to social conflicts, tools which alienate the well-being of humanity.

Shakespeare's given works are ideological ones referring to human's mind that sustains its behavior in deeds. It acts to balance humankind natures with its environment. In examplaring the equilibrism of human and its society, Léon Homo in earlier age before Christ, says:

> La paix romaine, ce splendide cadeau qu'Auguste, par la création du régime personnel, a donné au monde, apparaît en effet comme un des phénomènes les plus grands, les plus durables, les plus féconds qu'aient enregistré les annales de l'humanité. Ce qu'elle signifie, c'est la fin des guerres traditionnelles, l'ennemi extérieur arrêté aux frontières, les conflits entre cités supprimés, les dissensions intestines abolies. Avec la disparition des particularismes nationaux, c'est l'unité et l'apaisement que la paix impériale apporte à l'ensemble du monde méditerranéen.
> (*Auguste, II, iv, p 111*.)

> The sustainable peace observed with Roman, that wonderful present offered by Auguste through oneself personality's sacrifice on behalf of others, is one of the greatest and sustainable fruitful phenomenon,

> never observed in humanity. It means the result of the end of traditional war people are facing, the arresting of enemy at the borders, the end of social conflicts among banished cities, and finally the end of the internal disagreements. Through this diversity within nations, it is the unity and fairness this imperial peace brings to the whole world. (My translation)

Léon Homo is telling people that peace can be described as a socio-political phenomenon, which acts as a tool that establishes stability, equality, freedom, comprehension, friendship and relationship, mutual aid within people. Thus, it appears as the basis and social trend of development. Similarly, Shakespeare was sensitizing, educating and exhorting people in general and African citizens in particular, to accept contradictions and critiques which contribute to or facilitate human's development and nations' growth. Daniel-Rops, dans *Ce qui meurt…*, mentioned :

> Certaines inégalités et certaines injustices ne seraient pas possibles si chacun ne les consacrait pas au secret de son cœur, pour autant qu'il ne les subit pas (…) On s'en accommoderait moins si l'on mesurait à quel point nous menacent ces injustices, en empoisonnant le corps social tout entier (…).[225]

> Some of unjust and unequal facts observed will not take place if people were not keeping on them although they are subjected to it (…). Its impact on humanity will decrease unless we give up by avoiding to empoison the entire society (…). (My translation)

[225] Daniel-Rops, *Ce qui meurt…,* in Dictionary *Le Grand Robert, 2012,* p. 161

People of a given society should be tolerant and avoid wrongdoings against one another, and must seek peace everywhere there are for the welfare of the city. It is not reasonable that as human beings, we kill one another anyhow. For example, it seems and stands as a selfishness to kill somebody because he or she slaps you or a member of your family. This kind of support or defense that it is offered to one family's member is a barbarism, disorder, madness and selfish. Because "blood calls blood"[226], i.e. war calls war. Moreover and very often, most of Africans assimilate dignity to the prestige and honor; and therefore, they confuse it to their own personality. One's protection and valuation of his or her own personality drive people into armed conflicts. Such things are obvious today in most of the African countries, whereby families, ethnics, nations are detroyed by violence.

In this order, Emperor Saturnius sentences grievously the sons of Titus Andronicus without seeking if they are the real culprits of the sin. Macbeth, unreasonably kills Macduff's children. More the couple Macbeth cannot never inherit the throne because it is not belong to the direct descendants of heirs. So Macbeth's couple cannot lead the kingdom. Macbeth's character forces to see that both the leader (King) and heirs should be killed in option to achieve what was predicted. Shakespeare through these plots, is inviting the reader to see how injustifiable human actions can lead to social conflicts. In this regard of injustice, Achebe related to a tribalism where some people are privileged in Nigeria. For him:

> Social injustice is therefore not only a matter of morality but also of sheer efficiency and effectiveness. "We will

[226] Taofiki Koumakpai, Op. cit, p 234

> buy, hire or steal technology," said one of our ministers. He did not seem to realize that technology was not an assemblage of artefacts stacked conveniently for ease of lifting, but a particular attitude of mind[227].

Like Shakespeare, Achebe literary productions want to erase social injustice based on people's attitude from the cities for the welfare of humankind. The case study of injustice that generates the genocide between 'Tutsi' and 'Hutu' in Rwanda, armed conflict in Tunisia, Lybia,…, and the apartheid in South Africa.

In this vein, communities, nations are destroyed by violence. Our faith is tested by violence. Violence in our homes, our schools, streets, our nation; in brief, the whole world is destroying by violent acts which do not value anymore human lives, dignity, and hopes of millions of people. From the educational view, it is noticed that violence is taught to children through gun toys, media, music and even ponographic video games. All those social factors have to shape and change parents' and political leaders' minds in order to empower the education system. Because, beyond the violence in our streets, there is violence in our hearts, which need to be shifted to the goodness; the only means to establish in nations a culture of peace.

Nowadays, hostility, hatred, despair and indifference are at the heart of a growing culture of violence: verbal violence in our families, communications and talk contributes to this culture of violence. It seems that our society is growing in numb human's characters. A nation born in a commitment to "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness"(Pope Benedict XVI, 2011) is haunted by death, imprisoned by fear and

[227] Chinua Achebe, Op. cit, p.19.

overtaken by the elusive pursuit of protection rather than happiness. A world is moving beyond the Cold War which is caught up in bloody ethnic, tribal and political conflict. But we can build communities of greater peace. We can live in peaceful world in contrast to social conflicts which lead to revenge. For example the conflicts in Central Africa Republic, and the one between Southern and Northern Soudan are the telltale marks of revenge because these wars are opposing ethnic groups. Regarding dignity, human's life as a divine gift needs respect since Marlowe's *Fausus* considered it as a combination of Terror and Pride that co-exist in human nature[228] which must be respected and taken into account. Shakespeare wants us to keep in our mind that one revenge appeals another revenge when one's does not want to forgive. Campbell said when she has quoted Reynolds' method in sixth history, the story of Antonio and Berinthia, where we find lust leading to choler, choler to revenge, revenge to murder. "One sin, I know, another doth provoke; Murder's as near to lust as flame to smoke.[229]"

The advocacy of moral through the logic of cause – effect interpretation of life events in the above excerpt, leads to the search for justice which, when it is safeguarded will enable well-being of nations. It must not be a simple slogan or a program; but a fundamental moral principle flowing from our teaching on the dignity of the human person. It is an approach to life that values people over things.

By behaving so, we are contributing to the well-being of each of us and hence we work for to the growth of the development of our countries. Thus, Shakespeare's writing has opened people's eyes to see that if people should look for dignity, it should

[228] Clifford, Leech, Op. cit, pp. 17-18.
[229] Lily, Campbell, Op. cit, p. 14.

be for life, harmony and collective development. In this vein, African can get inspiration from the playwright.

Socio-politically and economically, Shakespeare's work reduces the vivid blood spreading less than how it was during the old time. Even though, people are claiming their rights or avenging themselves, it is nowadays done in a soft and fair way. So, peace and justice are more abservable in some of the countries on the continent. These visible stabilities in some nations grant them the alternation of leaders through a democratic system into which they were incorporated.

To sum up, as human beings, it is compulsory to parents and educators to teach the good aspect of dignity to children, and to adolescents in order to have a better future life for them regarding their societal behaviors and impacts on nations.

6.3. Negotiating Dignity Rewards from Shakespeare's Tragedy

William Shakespeare has made of dignity a main concern in the tragedies I am exploring because he believes that these tragedies can serve as a fertile ground where the audience at large can develop the moral sense for a peaceful social cohabitation and political fellowship. As a dramatist, Shakespeare would like his audience to be aware of the consequences the yearning for dignity can have on people in social-political domains.

For Shakespeare, the struggle to preserve one's dignity can yield an opposite result. In socio-political context, those who want to preserve their dignity always compromise their moral integrity and destabilize the peaceful atmosphere prevailing. Thus, to have a serene and peaceful atmosphere in socio-political arenas, it becomes a duty for people to learn to sacrifice their own egos on the altar of communal survival.

Shakespeare would like his readership to understand that there is no redemption or salvation in disputes, quarrels, less still in bloodshed. People should cultivate the sense of tolerance and forgiveness in their social and political relationships rather than promoting violence. To our understanding, Shakespeare really wants to promote moral regeneration at the socio-political levels of human communities. In this vein, one can read in professor Pewissi's thesis what follows:

> The disease and deformity around us certify the infraction of natural, intellectual, and moral law, and often violation on violation to breed such compound misery. A lock-jaw that bends a man's head back to his heels, hydrophobia, that makes him eat grass, war, plague, famine, indicate a certain ferocity in nature, which as it had its inlet by human crime, must have its outlet by human [moral rebirth].[230]

The quotation above underlines the fact that all the difficulties the humankind encounters in socio-political life situations today stem from people's failure to live to the standards of natural and moral laws. That means that the breaking natural and moral norms will always create troubles to people around the world.

The three tragedies under study consist of very serious matters leading to the death of many characters. For their eagerness to maintain and safeguard their own and individual dignity, the tragic characters have lost their own lives. That is the reason

[230] Atafei Pewissi, *The Problematics of the Hero and the Notion of Space and Time in Chinua Achebe's Novels*, These de doctorat Unique , Université de Lomé, 2003, p. 29 .

why, it is better to be alive while in disgrace than perish for fame and celebrity. People have always said that, it is better to live a cawdor than to die a brave man.

Moreover, it is written in Philippians 2: 3–4: "Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others". This scripture highlights humility as a virtuous quality in human relationships. If people endeavour to remain humble while in socio-political contests, half of socio-political problems are solved already. But when people are proud they call for social and political disunity and disintegration. Shakespeare really believes that human beings can overcome their socio-political misunderstandings if they learn to mortify their passionate yearnings that overshadow their rationality. He helps us understand that human beings have enough intellectual faculties that can save them from socio-political troubles that are noticeable all over the world.

Reading Shakespeare's articulation of dignity from the characters' various perceptions allows readers to understand that individual critical visions of this concept can bring solace or desolation to the community. There can be solace if our understanding of the related view is built on values such as dialogue, understanding, tolerance and community-centeredness. Here, dignity reads as the way individual members of the society negotiate their lives in their environment without compromising the society or harming other people's lives. In contrast, desolation is the result when instead of deriving honor from services to society and other people, stakeholders engage in the debasement and exploitation of their kinds.

Human rationality requires that people around the world sit together around a table of negotiation to seek compromise and reconciliation whenever a problem rises.

Shakespeare's plays under study are peppered with vengeance, violence and, as such, they interrogate individuals' love for dignity in the negative way it reads in some characters' minds. In fact, what is dignity if it does not save humanity from moral bankruptcy, religious fanatic drive, genocide, intertribal wars? It is my belief through reading Shakespeare's tragedies that the identified vices are caused by 'self-aggrandizement' and self-glory. Unfortunately, this sense of dignity receives the acclaims from governours and leaders of political opinions who rule for themselves in Africa today. Political exclusions, genocides and intertribal conflicts encountered in Africa have this sad episode of political leadership in common.

The deviant interpretation of dignity that unfolds and which imprisons humanity in the bad light of life encourages "hegemonic tendencies"[231] and raises "abusive megalomaniac[s]"[232]. Consequently, as these megalomaniacs think they are super humans, they refuse to humble themselves though this kind of humility can save life to many people in the context. In contrast to this perception, Shakespeare arms some of his personae with vengeance in blatant contexts in order to mock "self/other binary relations"[233] where understanding and collaboration are expected.

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[231] Katherine Farley Galvagni, "Fatou Diome's Black Atlantic: Reinscribing Anti-Imperialism" pp. 103-145 in Walter P. Collins, III ed., *Emerging African Voices: A Study of African Literature* (Amherst, New York, 2010),p.108.

[232] Veronica C. Hendrick, "Negotiating Nigeria: Connecting Chris Abani's *GraceLand* to Africa's Past" pp.75-99 in Walter P. Collins, III ed., *Emerging African Voices: A Study of African Literature* (Amherst, New York, 2010), p.82.

[233] Akinola Oriola, "The Allegory of Self and Other" in Soyinka's *The Lion and the Jewel* and Okesipe's *Professor' Last Death*" pp.219-240 in Walter P. Collins, III ed., *Emerging African Voices: A Study of African Literature* (Amherst, New York, 2010),p. 227.

Conclusion

The purpose in this dissertation has been to show the ways in which the longing for dignity or its saving leads people to violence and the various forms of tragedy it generates through Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, *Macbeth* and *Titus Andronicus*.

The first part has dealt with the setting of the concept of dignity in English culture and tradition**.**

Titus Andronicus, *Macbeth* and *Hamlet*, the tragic plays by Shakespeare, as the raw materials of my research work, reveal vengeful acts during Shakespeare's period. In them, murders are common and occur in various forms, either as a propeller for revenge or as an antidote for the sins committed. And murder generally comes out when someone thinks that his or her dignity is at stake. So, human dignity is a fact which drives humankind into trouble in England in Elizabethan and Jacobean times. The playwright as many writers of his time, wrote his plays in a poetic aesthetics to share out his point of view with his audience and to address the wrongdoing of Elizabethan Era.

It is a tradition in England to present a scene in short time to the people periodically in a view to entertain them. It is also a tradition that people attend the sentence pronounced by the tribunals to those who commit incest, murder, treachery, betrayal, adultery, rape, etc …

Indeed, Shakespeare's approaches to the theme of human dignity saving are pathetic. He has arranged the facts and events to correct people's misconducts, and to show that human beings double facets, is at the origin of his or her problems and the struggle observed in the plays and world. These tragic events plotted, attract my

attention and allow me to scrutinize the three plays as far as the topic is concerned by using psychoanalytical theory and semiotics to conduct my research work which is divided into three core parts. According to English tradition, culture and costom, it becomes a shame for the guilty people to be publicly sentenced and punished. Something that is not easy to digest by him or her and the group, he or she belongs to. Thus, the dignity leads to honor, privilege, respect, heroism devoted to someone. In that order dignity will be avenged until blood's shedding. Thus, the manifestation of revenge becomes patterns on the three plays.

The second parts of my research work has laid emphasis on revenge as an outcome of dignity saving by someone. From *Hamlet* to *Titus Andronicus* passing by *Macbeth*, revenge is pathetic. It impacts all the family members acting in the plays.
One is a triumphant celebration of victory on the others which is a result of his ambition to be on the throne. This target to accede to the throne becomes the attribute to one's dignity or group's dignity. Titus Andronicus comes back to Rome with his captives after a war against Goths. And for souls' sake of the Roman soldiers killed during the war, he sacrificed the eldest son of Tamora, something she cannot spare. This initial murder committed calls a series of revenge actions. The murder committed by Titus Andronicus necessitates Tamora's revenge action; an event that causes revenge and counter revenge. In *Hamlet*, Claudius killed young Hamlet's father. This will make young Hamlet to avenge his father against his uncle Claudius. Laertes avenged his parents-in-law against small Hamlet. And the crimes committed by Macbeth will lead Macduff to avenge the dead King Duncan and Dunsinane kingdom.

Revenge actions are common to the three plays. A revenge action of one person, leads to the revenge of so many people. In *Hamlet* for instance, young Hamlet

takes revenge on his father by stabbing Claudius, Polonius, and Laertes but who fatally stabs first young Hamlet. In *Titus Andronicus* also, the revenge action taken by Tamora is so gruesome that, it affects not only Titus Andronicus, who did the wrongdoing, but all his family members. While in *Macbeth*, Macduff plans with king Duncan's son, Malcolm to avenge the King's death. That will happen during the last battle about the moving of Birnam Wood.

The self-glory and collective face-saving were also the reasons that support the revenge occurred in the three plays. For instance, in *Hamlet* revenge is necessary, because of the death of Hamlet's father. Young Hamlet is not the one directly slighted but he is bonded to revenge, because of his filial responsibility as a son to his father. The Ghost is also a source of inspiration to young Hamlet, because it urges him to avenge unfailingly. Whereas in *Titus Andronicus*, Tamora avenges the death of her son. She is not warranted by the Ghost of her son to avenge his death; but she takes it upon herself as a mother to avenge his death. In *Macbeth,* Macbeth's ambition appears as the source of the murder and the one of his wife.The form which revenge takes in these plays is also different.

Unlike what happens in *Hamlet* where revenge is delayed, it is swift and fast in *Titus Andronicus* but in *Macbeth* it was planned by Lady Macbeth. The particular interest also, is the fact that revenge in *Hamlet* is directed against a particular person unlike that in *Titus Andronicus,* where both the innocents and the offenders face death. Tamora hides her intention of killing the sons of Titus Andronicus as young Hamlet did, when he wanted to kill the King. Macbeth also hides his plan of killing the King the day of fiesta. But small Hamlet's case is justifiable, because he wants time to justify the killing of the King; whereas Tamora and Lady Macbeth hide their intention

because neither of them wants to be associated with the revenge at all. Tamora's employment of Aaron as an adviser and a facilitator and Lady Macbeth's help in *Macbeth* towards her husband Macbeth explain it deeply.

For the importance of respect in English tradition and culture, revenge occurs. In *Hamlet*, for instance, revenge can be justifiable to a certain limit. This is because the murder of the former King by Claudius is seen as a direct action which negates the tradition order. Claudius is not supposed to kill the King because he is his brother and he has done nothing wrong. It is the same with the revenge act of Macduff for the souls sake of his wife, his sons and King Duncan. Titus Andronicus killed the sons of Tamora Chiron and Demetrius to appease the sorrows of his sons Quintus, Martus and Lavinia; and in returm, Tamora had Titus Andronicus' sons killed to purge his son's soul. She must have killed a lot of Roman soldiers or had them killed on her instruction in the war. So, one wonders why she decides against all reasoning to avenge the death of her son. If she is avenging the whole Goth populace killed in the war, probably, her revenge would have been justifiable. But instead, it was a personal vendetta on her part, because of the attitude of an eye-for-eye and a tooth-for-tooth that was prevailing in English tradition of Shakespeare's time.

The last part of my work traces human dignity to motifs that can be reoriented to serve the purpose of development, justice and human relations that are the main challenges of humanity beyond gender, race and other forms of unhealthy relations**.** The differences which can occur in individual characters when he or she is called to avenge himself/herself, and the way he or she uses to perform revenge can be set in self and collective dignity saving. This is necessary in order to show the similarities

and differences of the three dimensions which are considered in human dignity related to this research work.

When I take into account the behavior of young Hamlet, Macbeth and Titus Andronicus, I can conclude that Shakespeare's heroes are indeed extraordinary, because of their courage. So one may say that he was a controversial playwright in his time. Based on that, his plays were considered as inappropriate, because his heroes' behaviors are hard to understand by mankind, but can be admired in concepts of honor and justice. For example, young Hamlet's revenge against his uncle who killed his father; Macbeth's will to complete the prophecy of the three witches; Titus Andronicus as Rome's greatest general, did not allow nothing to compromise his honor, and the one of his family; are cases in point. I can add that, in this life each of our acts must be taken into account because, when you run badly, you pay for it. For instance, when a child does well, i.e. succeeds for example at an exam, his or her parents are happy because they are dignified.

On the whole, this dissertation has found that almost all the characters in Shakespeare's plays under study show vengeance as a means to safeguard their betrayed dignity, their misrepresentations and their stolen pride. It has also been proved in this work that the concept of dignity when seen from the perspective of some characters is corrupt because it is self centered; this vision can be adjusted and translated regarding human rights for all hmain beings to enjoy the fruit of justice, peace and love. Dignity becomes a human undertaking, a fight for fairness and equal distribution of wealth and nation granted opportunities. It is also a strong desire to care for self and the other in the name of collective belongingness to humanity.

In this regard, human heroism must become a model behaviour that harms nobody, that cheats nobody but that defines and teaches the notion of responsibility as individual human beingss which can contribute to the development and welfare of all. In this perspective Africa can take up the challenges of criminality, underdevelopment, idleness and ethnicism.

There is ample evidence through *Hamlet, Macbeth* and *Titus Andronicus* that Shakespeare speaks to us and probably to many upcoming generations to mind the welfare of the society they live in. Though written around 15th century these plays display themes that are still relevant to our time; as sources of conflicts between countries, ethnics or families. William Shakespeare develops in the play what is known in the literary world as the wing of timelessness in literature. It is called so, because Shakespeare's plays depict characters and incidents that depict the germs of contemporary problems that stem from self-glory and self-worth.

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Abstract

Most of the social conflicts happening around the fifth century are related to the human nature. The relevance of dignity, which is an aspect of human nature, and regarded as a source of vengeance in three of William Shakespeare's tragedies *Hamlet, Macbeth* and *Titus Andronicus,* is my concern. The way the playwright makes his characters act along the three plays offers some useful suggestions as if there were no better way to save one's dignity without bloodshed.

This study thus, involves the plotting of the context that provides the setting in which the thoughts of the playwright of the three tragedies are to be understood. Trying to understand the thoughts of Shakespeare in the exordium required an exegetical analysis of each play and its characters' behaviour. The necessity of this exegetical analysis allows me to view the theoretical foundation that sustained the plays and what scholars have already written about Shakespeare's three tragedies. This was followed by the understanding of the dimensions of dignity and its emergence in different forms of vengeance.

The psycho-analylitical theory and semiotics were used for the understanding of the acting characters. These theories have led me to underline the behavioural impact on the society, which gave ways to comments and lessons in accordance with the fact that if there is a need of bloodshed in the defense or protection of one's or groups' dignity.

Résumé

La complexité de la nature humaine est la cause de la plupart des conflits sociaux des années 1500. En ce qui concerne l' objectif de la présente étude, la dignité de l'homme, en tant qu'élément de la nature humaine, est la cause des meurtres commis dans les pièces de théâtre étudiées (*Hamlet, Macbeth, Titus Andronicus*), écrites par William Shakespeare. L'attitude des personnages des trois pièces soumises à notre étude nous amène à nous demander s'il n'y aurait pas d'autres moyens que le meurtre pour défendre sa dignité humaine vu ce qui se passait au cours du règne de Elisabeth I.

Ainsi, cette étude retrace le contexte historique des pièces choisies pour examen de même que les termes développés par l'auteur dans ses œuvres. Et pour mieux appréhender ces concepts ainsi que le caractère des différents acteurs, une analyse de la forme de même que du fond a été faite. La psychanalyse et la sémiotique ont été les théories utilisées pour conduire les analyses et interprètations qui entrent dans le cadre de ma recherche, avec un regard sur les critiques qui ont précédés celle-ci.

De même, les commentaires de cette étude ont conduit à la conclusion selon laquelle « Blood calls Blood » et qu'il urge que les parents, les dirigeants politiques, les religieux commencent à inculquer à la génération naissante la protection et la défense de leur dignité par la culture de bonnes mœurs.