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"Dama Ninao" est une revue scientifique interdisciplinaire qui accepte et publie tous les articles relevant des Lettres, Arts et Sciences Humaines. A cet effet, elle s'intéresse aux études et théories littéraires, linguistiques, sociologiques, philosophiques, anthropologiques et historico-géographiques. La Revue "Dama Ninao", entendu "L'Entente" en langue kabyè du Nord Togo, est créée dans l'intention de matérialiser la mondialisation ou la globalisation qui s'opère avec l'esprit d'équipe et d'échanges et la désuétude du monde autarcique. Le monde scientifique universitaire ne peut échapper à cet esprit d'équipe qui fonde un creuset où « le fer aiguise le fer », les échanges se croisent, puis s'entremêlent pour aboutir à une reconstruction des connaissances scientifiques individuelles dans la collectivité.

La Revue Dama Ninao nous renvoie à la Civilisation de l'Universel du poète sénégalais Léopold Sédar Senghor, qui prône la porosité des âmes avec l'acceptation de l'autre, de ce qu'il dispose d'utile pour mon avancement : sa civilisation, sa culture, sa langue ... Elle se fonde notamment sur la philosophie de Paul Ricœur qui préconise la perception de Soi-même comme un autre. Considérer soi-même comme un autre aux yeux de l'autre, nous amènerait à faire taire nos distensions et ressentiments afin de redimensionner notre espace, reconstruire notre histoire et notre société.

La Revue Dama Ninao s'est inspirée de la nature. Des insectes en miniature nous produisent de bels chefs-d'œuvre architecturaux, conjuguent leur génie créateur et leur force dans la patience et dans la tolérance. Ils créent des œuvres monumentales qui dépassent l'entendement humain, les termitières. A cet effet, la nature semble nous parler, nous guider, nous instruire dans le silence. Seules ces créations nous interpellent sans autant faire de nous des disciples. Comme la termitière qui, pour la plupart du temps, est une composante de maillons surgissant de la même matière, la Revue Dama Ninao se veut une termitière scientifique dont les enseignants-chercheurs en sont les maillons.

Au confluent de diverses sciences, la Revue Dama Ninao se propose de promouvoir la recherche scientifique et universitaire en impulsant le dialogue

interdisciplinaire, le dialogue entre divers champs disciplinaires et divers contributeurs du monde universitaire.

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Volume : 10 à 15 pages ; interligne 1.5, police 12 pour le corps du texte et les courtes citations ; police 11 pour les longues citations, Times New Roman, les références des citations doivent être incorporées dans le texte. Exemple : Guy Rocher (1968, p. 29), pas de référence en foot-notes à l'exception de quelques commentaires.

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- Un **TITRE** en caractère d'imprimerie et en gras. Le titre ne doit pas être trop long ;
- **Nom et prénom(s)** du contributeur ou des contributeurs, **nom de l'institution** d'appartenance, **adresse mail**
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- Une **Introduction** : elle doit avoir une problématique, une méthode et une structure.
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2-1-Pour le **Titre** de la première sous-section

2-2- Pour le **Titre** de la deuxième sous-section

3- Pour le **Titre** de la troisième section (si l'auteur de l'article le souhaite)

-Une **Conclusion** : elle doit être courte, précise et concise en mettant en relief l'authenticité des résultats de la recherche.

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Les instructeurs à qui la revue affecte les articles de leur spécialité, doivent les lire avec rigueur, rejeter tout article dont le contenu est en inadéquation avec le titre et/ou dont le raisonnement n'offre pas une qualité scientifique, faire des propositions pour l'amélioration dudit article, renvoyer l'auteur de l'article à la ligne éditoriale de la revue au cas où elle n'est pas respectée. Ils se doivent notamment de vérifier, par le biais d'internet, si le même article n'est pas déjà publié dans une revue en ligne.

Objectifs et portée

La revue Dama Ninao, de par son nom qui signifie « entente », a pour objectifs :

- de matérialiser le monde universitaire qui est un creuset où « le fer aiguise le fer », les échanges se croisent, puis s'entremêlent pour aboutir à une reconstruction des connaissances scientifiques individuelles dans la collectivité ;
- de promouvoir la recherche scientifique et universitaire en impulsant le dialogue interdisciplinaire, le dialogue entre divers champs disciplinaires et divers contributeurs du monde universitaire.

La revue Dama Ninao a une portée scientifique et sociale. A cet effet, elle publie tous les articles relevant des Lettres, Arts et Sciences Humaines et s'intéresse aux études et théories littéraires, linguistiques, sociologiques, philosophiques, anthropologiques et historico-géographiques sur appel à contribution thématique (colloque) ou varia. Elle est un espace de rencontre, de construction et de reconstruction des réseaux relationnels et scientifiques.

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Université de Lomé

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**FUNCTIONS OF HOMICIDE IN SHAKESPEARE'S TRAGEDIES : A
READING OF *HAMLET* AND *MACBETH***

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Abstract: Tragedies are known for the bloodshed they encompass. It is therefore essential to examine William Shakespeare's tragedies to determine the role of death in resolving and shaping the plot. Two of Shakespeare's tragedies relevant to this study are *Hamlet* and *Macbeth*. Both are characterised by being opened and closed in bloodshed. The current article adopts a semiotic approach grounded in Peirce's observation that an index is linked to its referent. In this view, signs indicate the existence or the process of revealing a matter. In this perspective, signs are predictive elements, and analysing indices leads to conclusions. The current work demonstrates that death has multiple roles in the development of the plays.

Keywords: Crown, Death, Greed, Politics, Revenge, Tragedy.

Résumé: Les tragédies sont connues pour leur intrigue construit autour des effusions de sang. Il est donc important d'étudier les tragédies de William Shakespeare afin de déterminer le rôle de la mort dans l'intrigue, mais aussi la manière dont elle la façonne. Deux tragédies de Shakespeare sont abordées dans la présente étude, à savoir *Hamlet* et *Macbeth*. Toutes deux ont pour particularité de s'ouvrir et de se terminer par des scènes macabres. Le présent article adopte une approche sémiotique suivant l'observation de Peirce, selon laquelle un indice est lié à des référents. Dans cette optique, les signes indiquent l'existence ou le processus de révélation d'une question. Les signes, dans cette perspective, sont des éléments prédictifs, à partir desquels l'analyse des indices conduit à une conclusion. Le présent travail montre que la mort joue plusieurs rôles dans le déroulement des pièces.

Mots clés : Couronne, mort, convoitise, vengeance, politique, tragédie.

Introduction

Discussing death can raise multiple worries over the issue that seems fatalistic. But death is so real in men's lives that it stands as one of the reasons for advice and cautions. The care given to a baby as it crawls or plays aims to ensuring its safety. That is the case for riders on the road that meet at various levels, boards carrying signals and symbols as a call for prudence. All the advice and cautions are about avoiding death, which is the irreversible outcome of an accident.

Death on its trend known as homicide which consists in manslaughter or murder has been used by people since time immemorial for many purposes to advance their hidden agendas. While people wage wars to ensure the security of their properties, others wage wars for dominion and treachery. But beyond the open wars, can be mentioned targeted killings that are generally committed to silence a menace. This raises the multiple uses of death when it is provoked by man. The current article considers Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* in order to analyse the different roles of death in both plays.

The current study centres on the targeted killings as direct consequences of ambitious minds, and revenge, launching thus a vicious circle of bloodshed in both Denmark and Scotland wherein every death rings the death of peace following a semiotic approach, which holds that signs carry the meaning. They can be words, sounds, images, objects, or anything that can be interpreted as standing for something else. Indeed, according to Peirce, references and deduction are all about likeness, symbol, or index, while an index is a sign that has a direct connection to its object. He puts,

In an argument, the premisses form are presentation of the conclusion, because they indicate the interpretant of the argument, or representation representing it to represent its object. The premisses may afford a likeness, index, or symbol of the conclusion. In deductive argument, the conclusion is represented by the premisses as by a general sign under which it is contained. In hypotheses, something like the conclusion is proved, that is, the premisses form a likeness of the conclusion. (C. S. Peirce, 1868, p. 297)

In this perspective, the current article examines both *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* to bring out all the possible uses of death within the interactions of the characters.

The first section of this article focuses on homicide as a means for social ascension, while the second discusses homicide as a means of security, and the third section analyses homicide as a means of justice.

1. Homicide to Social Ascension

1.1- Murder and Political Ambition

Death as the end of life is a phenomenon that happens to living beings. Religions and beliefs have an explanation of the occurrence of death, but none of them has been able to combat it or to erase it from life as they hold according to (K. Mahmood, 2007, p.15), that “Death is inescapable, a natural corollary of conditioned existence”. Consequently, people live in fear of death which may occur at any moment of life. A French philosopher said that death is so real and present in daily life. saying that everybody is a moving dead person for death is certain for every living being

Que l’être humain soit un être fini, c’est-à-dire éphémère, puisque son existence ne s’étend qu’entre les deux bornes que sont sa date de naissance et celle de sa mort, cela peut paraître au premier abord une évidence. Cette «finitude», que nous partageons d’ailleurs avec tous les vivants, ne va pourtant pas de soi, car nous vivons la plupart du temps dans l’oubli de notre propre mortalité. (F. Dastur, 2009, p.7)

Whether caused by a fellow man or an accident, men are subjected to death. Even though killing a fellow man is prohibited by religions and even secular laws, it happens that, for personal agendas, people venture into the forbidden to murder fellow men in search of social ascension. That is the case in *Macbeth* which plot is constructed around an ambitious captain who kills his king to take the royal seat.

In fact, the idea of regicide was driven by Lady Macbeth, the wife of the captain, who relayed the message of the Weird Sisters to him as he returned from war. He seized the opportunity of the king's visit to his estate to have him murdered. In fact, he became king and had a bloody rule.

The case in *Macbeth*, is similar to that in *Hamlet* wherein jealousy has led a brother to murder his sibling for the royal throne. In *Hamlet*, however, the act is kept secret, and the actual circumstances of the murder are revealed by the ghost of the deceased king saying, (*Hamlet*, I, v, 45 - 47), “But know, thou noble youth,/ The serpent that did sting thy father’s life / Now wears his crown”. The murder in *Hamlet* is disguised as a common death to allow the actual killing to remain unnoticed and unpunished.

In *Hamlet*, the idea of murder represents a double felony namely a regicide and a fratricide. The regicide stands on the fact that, the victim is a king while the felony of fratricide holds on the fact that, it is a sibling who falls victim. Both felonies together highlight Claudius's cruelty moved by a thirst for power.

None of the regicides in either *Macbeth* or *Hamlet* is judicious. While Macbeth kills his benefactor, who honoured him with his visit, Claudius kills his own brother. Both murders share the same motive: seizing the throne in defiance of the legal order.

It is essential to mention that both regicides occurred during times of peace, and none of the victims could suspect the cruelty of the hearts of trustworthy collaborators who against all expectations were envious of the crown.

1.2- Murder for Greed

The motives of murder in both *Macbeth* and *Hamlet* is naturally the ambition to access the throne. However, one can see beyond the royal seat, the longing for collateral advantages. In *Macbeth*, the real instigator of the regicide is Lady Macbeth beside her husband Macbeth the author of the regicide. Lady Macbeth’s longing to become the queen of Scotland fanned the macabre project. Her pushing Macbeth to murder Duncan for the throne encompasses her ambition to become queen beside her husband. In this process to ascend to the highest position of a lady in a kingdom, Lady Macbeth holds the following motivational speech saying,

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 plucked my nipple from his boneless gums /And dashed the brains out,
had I so sworn as you /Have done to this. (*Macbeth* I, vii, 54-67)

This speech by Lady Macbeth to her husband has made Macbeth realise his weakness before his wife. Whence he stood to correct the situation forgetting that his weakness was indeed wisdom. Consequently, the regicide took place under the magnetism of the ambitious Lady Macbeth.

In *Hamlet*, the throne is not the unique reason for Claudius' regicide seeing the speed with which he married the wife of his deceased brother, Gertrude, leaves many things to be construed upon the regicide. Throughout the play, it is not mentioned anywhere that Claudius was married before getting to the throne, so it can be inferred that his new position has granted him a matrimonial status. He married the widow of his brother speedily turning thus the bereaved state of queen Gertrude into a new celebration. This connotes the full desire of Claudius to have the queen forget her former husband quickly and to focus on her new marriage.

Considering that a marriage is the result of prior steps, one can deduce that Claudius nourished lust for his sister-in-law and wished to be at the stead of his brother. Prince Hamlet is even surprised by the speed of the consent between his uncle Claudius and his mother upon their marriage; to this situation he declares, "My father's brother, but no more like my father /Than I to Hercules. Within a month,/ Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears /Had left the flushing in her gallèd eyes, /She married. O, most wicked speed, to post/ With such dexterity to incestuous sheets! /It is not, nor it cannot come to good. / But break, my heart, for I must hold my tongue." (*Hamlet* I, ii, 156-163) to which he adds to Horatio saying "Thrift, thrift, Horatio. The funeral baked meats/ Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables. /Would I had met my dearest foe in heaven /Or ever I had seen that day, Horatio!" (*Hamlet* I, ii, 187-190). While the Ghost alarmed saying "Ay, that incestuous, that adulterate beast,/ With witchcraft of his wits, with traitorous gifts— /O wicked wit and gifts, that have

the power /So to seduce!—won to his shameful lust /The will of my most seeming-virtuous queen.” (*Hamlet* I, v, 49-53).

Finally, beside the coronation stands a lustful penchant of Claudius towards his brother’s wife, Gertrude who he succeeded in marrying soon after his coronation as king of Danmark. While beside the devotion to Macbeth’s social ascension, is hidden the ambition of Lady Macbeth to enjoy the honour to be the queen of Scotland. Consequently, both characters chose murder as a shortcut to secure their hidden agendas.

2. Homicide and Stability

2.1- Murder and Personal Security

The issue of stability concerns tranquillity and peace. In a period where conquests are the norms under the influence of the *Lex talionis*, it is natural that people refer to the sword to ensure security.

Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* opens with the war between the kingdom of Scotland and some enemy forces led by Macdonwald in a fierce rebellion against the kingdom. The account in the second scene exposes how the battle scene has been typically bloody with many wounded and dead fighters, wherein the bravura of Macbeth is praised based on his victory over the enemies. The Sergeant accounts,

Doubtful it stood, /As two spent swimmers that do cling together/ And choke their art. The merciless Macdonwald (Worthy to be a rebel, for to that/ The multiplying villainies of nature /Do swarm upon him) from the Western Isles / Of kerns and gallowglasses is supplied; /And Fortune, on his damnèd quarrel smiling, /Showed like a rebel’s whore. But all’s too weak; /For brave Macbeth (well he deserves that name), /Disdaining Fortune, with his brandished steel, /Which smoked with bloody execution, /Like Valor’s minion, carved out his passage /Till he faced the slave; /Which ne’er shook hands, nor bade farewell to him, /Till he unseamed him from the nave to th’ chops,/ And fixed his head upon our battlements. (*Macbeth* I, ii, 9-25.)

The fact of charging Macdonwald of rebellion legally gives the right to the loyal military of the kingdom to fight and kill the rebels in order to prevent them from

destabilising the State. In this perspective slaying is legal for the purpose of security and the integrity of the kingdom.

Still in his pursuit of stability for his reign, Duncan declared the death penalty for his former Thane of Cawdor, who also rebelled against the throne (*Macbeth* I, ii, 55-75). Slaying can be regarded as the ultimate means to achieve peace from the threat of enemies and rebellion. In this case, there is no possibility of imprisonment or banishment, only death. Death is the sole way to silence a threat and ensure it is silenced forever.

After Duncan, Macbeth launches a purge which consists in destroying every potential menace to his reign. In fact, he started by targeting his good friend Banquo, whose children, according to the Weird Sisters, are said to become kings. The egoist desire to keep the throne forever for his offspring made Macbeth to betray friendship. His quest for stability for his dynasty hits the prophecy of the witches to Banquo. As a matter of fact, Banquo and his family stand as the first enemies to his royal ambition for his children. Macbeth declares, “Our fears in Banquo/ Stick deep, and in his royalty of nature /Reigns that which would be feared.” (*Macbeth* III, i,53-55). Hence, to establish stability for his dynasty, the death of Banquo and his family is the unique solution left. To this end, Macbeth recruited murderers to have Banquo and his son killed. And they did so partially in murdering only Banquo, (*Macbeth* III, iii, 22-25).

The murder of Banquo is the first of a list of homicides which includes the Macduffs. Indeed, Macduff’s family has been attacked, according to Macbeth’s vision to have every potential enemy dead. Macbeth declares so sadistically, “The castle of Macduff I will surprise, Seize upon/ Fife, give to th’ edge o’ th’ sword/ His wife, his babes, and all unfortunate souls /That trace him in his line. No boasting like a fool; /This deed I’ll do before this purpose cool.” (*Macbeth* IV, i, 170-175). In this passage, one can perceive Macbeth's ruthlessness in his pursuit to secure the dynasty for his offspring as to murder his friends and massacre their families that he views as threats.

Thus, the quest for security and stability has made either King Duncan or Macbeth to resort to murder to silence their potential enemies. A situation that privileged the death penalty and murder as means to enjoy stability in *Macbeth*.

Murder is also privileged as an ultimate solution for stability in *Hamlet*. Indeed, Claudius manifested a great inclination to the use of poison and sword to keep silent prince Hamlet that he views as a menace to his happiness.

The worry of Claudius grew as he discovered the unhappy mood of Hamlet followed with the unfair behaviour of Hamlet who appears to have gone mad for a number of irregularities such as the mysterious death of his father followed by his uncle Claudius' immediate ascension to the throne and his mother's subsequent marriage to Claudius. These irregularities which cause the unfair state of Hamlet, raise the concern of Claudius who views in Hamlet a serious menace which should be dealt with swiftly. To achieve such a macabre project that consists in murdering the son after the father, Claudius has disregarded his blood line to plan the assassination of his nephew Hamlet who happens to be the son of Gertrude, his wife.

To achieve his goal and still appear innocent, Claudius sends Prince Hamlet to England officially to pursue his studies and find peace after the funeral of his father. However, Claudius' hidden agenda is to keep him away from Denmark and have him assassinated once in England. The king writes to his fellow king of England, (*Hamlet* IV, iii, 71-77): "thou mayst not coldly set/ Our sovereign process, which imports at full,/By letters congruing to that effect,/The present death of Hamlet. /Do it, England, For like the hectic in my blood he rages, /And thou must cure me. /Till I know 'tis done,/ Howe'er my haps, my joys will ne'er begin."

In this context, it is clear that Claudius's anger is aroused after Hamlet's assassination of his Chamberlain Polonius, and this anger is mixed with fear and suspicion regarding the threat Hamlet poses to him. Consequently, he plans to have Hamlet silenced by another hand in England to conceal any suspicion of his involvement in such a death and to secure the love of Gertrude.

Consequently, either in *Macbeth* or *Hamlet*, murder is, therefore, planned and committed to secure private interests. While in *Macbeth*, King Macbeth committed a massacre in killing his potential opponents and their families to secure kinship to his offsprings, King Claudius acted similarly by planning the murder of Hamlet his nephew to secure peace and tranquillity of his reign and marriage.

2.2- Killing for Territorial Integrity

The notion of territorial integrity is the main reason for having armed forces and other services like Coast Guards and Customs Officers, each striving to keep the State's borders and its area safe. From this perspective, rulers are entitled to wage wars when necessary to protect their States' borders from invasion and attack. The aim of this measure is to ensure peace and tranquillity for the inhabitants and have them trust their rulers as the latter prioritise common interest.

The early scenes of *Macbeth* open with a fierce battle led by the Scottish army against the rebellion led by the traitorous Macdonwald from the Western Isles of Kerns, allied with forces from Norway (*Macbeth* I, ii, 1-48). This is a very bloody war with many deaths and injuries, sparing Macbeth and Banquo, the two generals of King Duncan's army.

The recognitions bestowed upon both warriors by the King after the war emphasise the legality of the hecatomb that occurred during the conflict. Therefore, what matters during a war, is the victory, not the death of soldiers. And the winner is naturally the one who has driven the opposing army to resignation.

Killing enemies is a heroic act, and dying in battle for one's country is truly honoured and celebrated as a noble sacrifice. Those who die for their nation are generally honoured and elevated to the status of national heroes or even martyrs. (G. Orwell, 2012, p.37), made Snowball declare, "No sentimentality, comrade!" (...) 'War is war (...)'." Killing an enemy in war is considered heroism. This is evident in *Hamlet*, where the ghost of Hamlet is portrayed dressed in a warlike stance that recalls the victorious war he fought against Norway (*Hamlet*, I,i, 71-75). The

celebration of King Hamlet's bravery in this war highlights how valiant he was and how he defended his kingdom during his lifetime. It also praises the war, which implies the death of many enemies and even soldiers of the Danish army.

War is a must, and death is legal when the issue is the defence of one's territory from invaders and rebellion or to assure peace and tranquillity for citizens.

3. Death for Justice

3.1- Blood of Revenge

The idea of revenge involves a prior unilateral reprehensible act committed in total violation of rules or as an abuse of power or authority against a victim, whose offspring or relatives later react to punish the offender.

Revenge recurs frequently in human history. It can be linked to the principle of action and reaction, which suggests that every action causes a response. Whether as retaliation or a typical reply, revenge often ensues. In the domain of kingship, many princes have reclaimed their throne after losing it due to wars or acts of treachery.

One of the peculiarities of revenge is that it usually ends in bloodshed, as if shedding blood is the ultimate price to pay for erasing a bloody offence.

In *Macbeth*, King Macbeth appears to be aware of the possibility of revenge against him. Whence he was such unsatisfied when the murderers reported the flight of Banquo's son. He declares, (*Macbeth* III, iv, 30-35) "Thanks for that./ There the grown serpent lies. The worm that's fled / Hath nature that in time will venom breed, / No teeth for th' present. Get thee gone. Tomorrow / We'll hear ourselves again." Within Macbeth's declaration, his profound dissatisfaction can be seen mixing with a persistent fear that looms over his reign. His dissatisfaction carries along two main fears; the one of a possible revenge from the fled son of Banquo and the possibility to have his offspring disinherited from the throne according to the prediction of the Weird Sisters who announced a kinship destiny to Banquo's children, which may come true since the son is safe after escaping the murderers. Therefore, the flight of Fleance is a complete failure of Macbeth's plan, for when he was planning the murder

of Banquo, it is in fact his offspring that were targeted, since they pose a threat to the emergence of Macbeth's new dynasty.

Deception and a call for revenge can be seen in exclamation of the dying Banquo saying (*Macbeth* III, iii, 25&26): “O treachery! Fly, good Fleance, fly, fly, fly! /Thou mayst revenge—O slave!” By asking his son to run away, Banquo appears to be a good father who prioritises the security of his family. It can also be inferred that he would not like his son to be with him trying to avenge him on the spot, for as a soldier, he cannot know how many enemies are lying in ambush against them there. Secondly, he seems to teach his son that revenge should be prepared off the battlefield. Thirdly, he encourages his son not to feel unworthy of his father, who dies before him, but to pursue a more thorough revenge—one that involves investigating the murder, identifying all the killers and their motives, particularly the instigator.

The fear of possible revenge causes Macbeth to be uneasy, leading him to consult Hecate about his fate (*Macbeth* IV, i, 48-151). Despite the assurances of safety he received from the apparitions, the threat of revenge by Macduff, the princes, and Fleance still persists. Indeed, Macbeth is attacked and slaughtered easily, despite the promise of invincibility given by supernatural beings. (*Macbeth* V, viii, 1-39). Macbeth, the offender, is finally slayed on the battlefield. A place where he formerly gained much honour as a righteous fighter, became the place of his defeat and failure.

In fact, the apparition of the Ghost of King Hamlet to his son was solely meant to urge Hamlet to seek revenge. This process began with the ghost's appearance to his son. During these unusual encounters, the Ghost, through earnest pressure, has persuaded his son of his unnatural death and Claudius's treachery. These revelations, which Hamlet committed himself to investigating, ultimately proved true, opening the way for indignation and bitterness towards revenge. Although revenge is inevitable for the audience, this part of the story remains hidden from the Danes and even the court. However, under the ghost's influence, Hamlet, who appears more contemplative than active, chooses to seek proof before taking any action — a proof that he eventually finds in Claudius's prayer (*Hamlet* III, iii, 70-76).

But the death of Polonius has sparked a parallel act of vengeance from Laertes, his son (*Hamlet* IV, v, 103-176). In fact, this temporary revelation highlights the importance of honour in the education of the Danes. A son is expected to honour a father who was treacherously murdered by seeking revenge regardless of the author. Laertes might even attempt to attack the king, who is falsely suspected of having murdered his own Councillor, as Polonius was killed (*Hamlet* III, iv, 28-30).

The fear for Hamlet, made Claudius to back Laertes revenge against Hamlet as he states, “No place indeed should murder sanctuarize;/ Revenge should have no bounds. But, good Laertes, /Will you do this?” (*Hamlet* IV, vii, 145-147). Claudius’s position is clear as it protects his kingdom and his life from the threat that Hamlet represents. Claudius declares about Hamlet, “His liberty is full of threats to all—/ To you yourself, to us, to everyone.” (*Hamlet* IV, i, 15&16). In saying this, he affirms the necessity to get rid of Hamlet and avoid paying for his crapulous crime.

Finally, Laertes's revenge meets Hamlet's own as they turn against Claudius, who is stabbed by Hamlet after a treacherous game devised by Claudius to assassinate Hamlet. (*Hamlet* V, ii, 351-357). Revenge has led to a carnage, as Gertrude, Claudius, Laertes, and Hamlet perish together at the same place. Death claims its toll, but none are left to enjoy the outcome of the vengeance.

In both *Macbeth* and *Hamlet*, the revenge is bloody with carnage led by the sons of the slayed kings, treacherously murdered. In *Macbeth*, despite the effort of Macbeth to silence all his potential opponents, he finally got slayed by the Princes and Macduff. While in *Hamlet*, the effort of Claudius to hide his regicide has served nothing. His crime got revealed and resorted in the revenge of Hamlet who slayed Claudius.

3.2- Punishment and Death

The issue here is to discuss the trend of death as a form of sanction. Sanction refers to the punishment imposed on an act or reaction that is illegal or prohibited. The concept of sanction and punishment is largely related to criminal law and its

regulations. Beyond the legality of sanctions and punishments, which are under the control of the judiciary, especially judges and magistrates, sanctions and punishments can also be metaphysical and psychological, extending beyond the understanding of the criminal code.

The case in *Macbeth* is the punishment of the regicide neatly planned by both Macbeth and his wife. Considering their social and political standing, they enjoy immunity against any possible crime they might have committed either before or during their reign. This kind of protection is the rule in monarchies. The ruler is a sovereign and the embodiment of law and morality. All that a ruler approves is regarded as right, and no one can challenge him.

Punishing a ruler's evil deed is beyond human capacity but within God's domain. In the context of *Macbeth*, the visible sanction for his regicide and murders of Banquo and the Macduff family can be traced to his uneasiness. His troubles started as he got informed of the flight of Banquo's son, Macduff, and the princes who pose potential threats to his reign. Despite being a king, Macbeth could not enjoy his position openly. The fear of insecurity constantly haunts him, reinforced by apparitions such as the moving dagger (*Macbeth* II, i, 44-52) and Banquo's ghost (*Macbeth* III, iv, 40-176). It is also worth noting the voices Macbeth hears, which ring like a curse.

Methought I heard a voice cry "Sleep no more! /Macbeth does murder sleep"—the innocent sleep, /Sleep that knits up the raveled sleeve of care, /The death of each day's life, sore labor's bath, /Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course, /Chief nourisher in life's feast. /What do you mean? /Still it cried "Sleep no more!" to all the house. /"Glamis hath murdered sleep, and therefore Cawdor /Shall sleep no more. Macbeth shall sleep no more." (*Macbeth*, II, ii, 47-57).

The succession of such paranormal visions and hearings reveals a deep emotional uneasiness in King Macbeth, which prompts his consultation with the witches about his security. (*Macbeth* IV, i, 48-140). This visit seems to comfort Macbeth as his worries about security are addressed, but still linger.

As for Lady Macbeth, her case is profound. (*Macbeth* V, i). Her monologue and actions during the night reveal a deep uneasiness, as she cannot find sleep. The accounts of the Gentlewoman and particularly the doctor, who admits his lack of expertise before Lady Macbeth's troubles, highlight the rarity of Lady Macbeth's case, who ultimately loses her zest for life. She cannot even enjoy the power she fought for, as she is plagued by mental distress. According to the doctor who attends her (*Macbeth* V, i, 62-64), "This disease is beyond my practice. Yet I have known / those which have walked in their sleep, / who have died holily in their beds."

This conclusion by the doctor suggests that the problem is complex and could not be healed. As a result, she dies (*Macbeth* V, v, 19), but it is Macbeth's reaction that reveals more; in fact, he declares after hearing of his dear wife's death (*Macbeth* V, v, 20-31) that he is not surprised, as the trouble had lasted long and created a constant fear of her death. Every day and night were spent in fear of her sudden demise. The death of Lady Macbeth is not surprising, as it came even later than expected.

In *Hamlet*, Claudius, who committed regicide and fratricide, ultimately met his end, while his wife Gertrude lost her life driven by guilt over her poor choice in marrying her brother-in-law.

Like in *Macbeth*, the punishment for evil deeds could not be carried out by an ordinary person unless nature intervenes, as both parties involved are crowned. In fact, the case of Claudius is particularly notable because his crime is not overtly committed and is therefore known only to the victim and Hamlet. The first punishment for Claudius is his unease in the presence of Hamlet. Hamlet's behaviour troubles his peace and enjoyment of the throne. Although Claudius is not aware of the meeting between the ghost of the dead king and Hamlet, he could suspect or even sense a threat to his throne from Hamlet, which he could not punish openly since his mother is Gertrude.

The presence of Gertrude beside Claudius weakens his resolve to eliminate the threat posed by Hamlet. His second punishment can be linked to the death of his

trusted adviser Polonius. Polonius, a loyal counsellor to Claudius, was a significant loss when he was killed while spying on Hamlet and Gertrude. His death represents not only the loss of an advisor but also a friend who was entirely dedicated to serving Claudius, even in unofficial capacities such as spying on Hamlet in Gertrude's chamber.

The third setback for Claudius is the death of Gertrude after she drinks the poisoned drink prepared for Hamlet. By losing his beloved wife through his own misdeed, he is left to regret poisoning the drink and is even unable to prevent her from drinking the poisoned beverage, as he had no reasonable justification for refusing. The final punishment involves accusations from both his confidant Laertes and Gertrude, who label him as a villain as they were dying, thus encouraging Hamlet to seek revenge against him.

All in all, death has got its way through both tragedies of Shakespeare in different ways and reasons and the wrongdoers despite their high position have undergone the punishment of nature which in *Macbeth* prevented Lady Macbeth to enjoy her new privileges because of her terrible sickness while her husband Macbeth could not enjoy peace of mind as he was constantly haunted. In *Hamlet*, Claudius the usurper got the same trouble of mind as he could not enjoy his kinship because of the presence of Hamlet who finally slayed him.

Conclusion

Tragedies are often associated with bloodshed. However, through the analysis of both Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and *Macbeth*, it has been found that homicides are multifunctional.

In both plays, death serves a variety of purposes, especially when it is not natural or is provoked. Death throughout the assessment of both plays is caused by a deliberate act for a specific reason.

The first purpose common to the multitude of deaths in both plays is its egotist dimension. In fact, death serves to achieve a hidden agenda. That is the case with King Hamlet and King Duncan, who were assassinated by either their ambitious brother or a fellow collaborator. The trustee carried out the regicide in time of peace. And seized the throne from the legal heirs.

In the same perspective, murder is seen as a means for the usurpers to achieve their coveted desires. As for Macbeth's wife, the murder of Duncan has made her a queen, as the wife of Macbeth, the new king. Similarly, for Claudius, the death of his brother has paved the way for him to marry Gertrude, his brother's wife, and enjoy the pleasure of being with her legally.

The second finding concerns how murder serves security and stability. The perpetual quest of man can be condensed into security, as it ensures prosperity. It has been shown how rulers in both tragedies by Shakespeare have privileged extreme deeds to secure peace, life, and their positions. As sovereigns, they have used their prerogatives to eliminate opponents and threats. This is the case of Macbeth, who murdered his own friends and massacred their families based mainly on the cryptic messages of the Weird Sisters. It is the same case in *Hamlet*, wherein Claudius tried many tricks to have Hamlet killed, as the latter's life stood as a menace to his position and his enjoyment of Gertrude. Beside personal security, territorial integrity is a cause for legitimate wherein martyrs are celebrated.

In both plays, death has also served as a means of justice and punishment that quenches revenge after an act of injustice. Macbeth and Claudius have undergone revenge of the heirs of the murdered kings and families while Lady Macbeth and Gertrude have tasted death for their ignorance or unlawful choices.

Throughout the study, it is found that death is multifunctional and has many causes when it is provoked. Still, it is necessary to mention that every murder calls for another sooner or later. Whence people should promote virtue to avoid the vicious cycle of murder and revenge.

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