



CONTEXTUALIZATION OF BLOODSHED IN *OTHELLO* AND *TITUS ANDRONICUS* WITH AN ETHNIC HINDSIGHT VIEW

Casimir Comlan SOEDE

cacoss12000@yahoo.fr / csohede@gmail.com

Université d'Abomey Calavi, Bénin

Biava Kodjo KLOUTSE

biavaland8@gmail.com

Université de Kara, Togo

Dyfaizy Nourh-Dine AKONDO

akondonouhr@yahoo.fr / akondonouhr@gmail.com

Université de Lomé, Togo

Abstract

The diversities in languages, origins and differences in skin-colour seem to be the source of many socio-ethnic conflicts on the planet. In that vein, the concept of ethnicity reads as the safeguarding of group unity or interest and thus implies a maintaining of a tradition of secrets and group supremacy over other ethnic groups. This appears to hinder the smooth progress that needs to be revisited in most human communities. Through the formalist lens, the present article contends that a re-reading coupled with a redefinition of the "I" and "we" becomes peremptory with individual persons and groups in order to lay the foundations of a harmonious world.

Keywords: Ethnicity, Unity, Secret, Supremacy, Dominance

Résumé

La diversité de provenance, de langues, et les différences de la couleur de peau semblent être la source de nombreux conflits socio-ethniques dans le monde. De ce fait, le concept de l'ethnicité se lit comme la sauvegarde de l'unicité ou l'intérêt du groupe et implique le maintien de valeurs codées et une suprématie de groupe sur d'autres groupes ethniques. Cette situation constitue un frein au progrès harmonieux de l'humanité qui reste à repenser. Dans une démarche formaliste, le présent article soutient qu'à travers la mise en scène des personnages dans *Othello* et *Titus Andronicus*, une relecture couplée d'une redéfinition du 'je' et du 'nous' s'avère péremptoire autant au niveau de l'individu que du groupe en vue de mettre les bases d'un monde harmonieux.

Mots clés : l'ethnicité, l'unité, le secret, la suprématie, la dominance

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, the stigmatization of a human being by his/her counterpart based on the difference in the language s/he is speaking, his/her culture and tradition, religion, community, or his/her socio-educative group, seems to be at the origin of much violence spread worldwide. William Shakespeare makes such a state of things outstanding in *Othello* and *Titus Andronicus*. In these plays, Shakespeare dramatizes

disputes between Venetians and the Moore Othello who was on his way to get married the Venetian Desdemona on the one side and the clashes between Aaron the Black, the Goths led by Tamora, the ruling Romans group and Romans warriors clans whereby the Emperor arrived to end up the direct descendants of Old Titus, the Romans warriors chief on the second. In that regard, this work aims at highlighting the concept of ethnicity from a traditional angle of view, with an emphasis on unity or group-interest, standing as features of ethnicity without which divisions and strife take over the harmonious life in every human communities. Therefore, this work elaborates on ethnicity and sheds light on the socio-religious, political and cultural groups dramatized in order to empower individuals or groups for the overall welfare of the community. Through the reader-response approach as one of formalists theory, we are going to bring the different ways in which Shakespeare has sought to re-conceptualized the "I" and "we" on purpose of better social transactions that will contribute to a life of mutual understanding and peaceful relations. In that prospect, the perception and the manifestation of ethnic actions of people in communities regarding the plays will be depleted in the first point. And in the second, the undergoing on clashes within people in a community rooted on ethnical stigmatizations will also be uncovered and sharpened with educative assets for peace in community.

1. Perception and Manifestation of Ethnicity in Shakespeare's Plays

Most people are prone to advocate their personal and group origins in the way they speak or refer to others in actual life situations. Yet, there are many languages, clans and as many nations or communities as groups that thrive to make life easier for their members. These better lives and conditions that people claim privilege, peace, liberty and prosperity on have to be the societal keypads that unlock human welfare and breakthrough. Accordingly, and regarding group unity, it is recurrent to find people who share the same "values and feelings in a coalition that allows them live together as a body and organizations functioning the benefit of all of them", Peter Ratcliffe (2014:1). This perception on Ethnicity is more declined by Max Weber who uses the term ethnic group to connote the human communities that 'entertain a subjective belief in their common descent because of similarities of physical type or of customs or both, or because of memories of colonization or migration" (Weber, 1968: 389).

So, Ethnicity implies a huge bond and prerogatives among community allies or members. It is therefore perceivable that, a given ethnic group has its existence on principles built on protection and safety of the identity of the members'. Richard E. Blanton's (2015: 2) holds that, "I take a different direction, with the goal to bring Barth's ideas into the light of collective action theory. To do that, I emphasize Barth's suggestion that intragroup signalling allows a group's members to demonstrate they

are, in Barth's terms "playing the same game". Indeed, to Richard ethnicity brings about unity and solidarity around the same perspective as the group-interest. People from the same ethnicity have to gather and reinforce themselves as a non-dissociable and dynamic entity with a same target. In that vein, Peter, (2014: 3) makes the observation that "ethnicity is not a static entity...". In other words, ethnicity has to do with movements in the image of principles or rituals in traditions and cultures. Thus, it is not a secret that any tradition is based on some principals or rituals that only the initiates can have access to.

The principles governing such groups are read as secrecies or social contracts that bind people into the same ties. Such values survive time and become perpetuated through generations and protected against those who do not belong to the same ethnics even though they are living in the same communities. Shakespeare displays a deft dramatization of such secrecies in traditions and cultures while developing the concept as his plays evoke ethnicity in the action of the plays. In *Othello, the Moore of Venice*, Shakespeare plots Othello character as a humble Moore, the Black serving with devotion Venice State. He is apt to deal with military affairs. He has the craft to secure the state from any dangerous attack menacing its safety. Most armies that fight Venice get subdued owing to the loyal services of Othello but has remained on the fringe of the Venetian society and cannot be integrated because he is different and not a Venetian by origin. In the words of one protagonist named Iago, one finds illustration of how Othello stands as the *other* in the Venetian community. When Iago says:

Call up her father,
Rouse him! Make after him, poison his delight, [...]
plague him with flies: though that his joy be joy,
Yet, throw such changes of vexation on't,
As he may lose some colour (I, i, 629)

He actually sees some threat in Othello's association with a white lady. Iago makes clear how it is unacceptable to accept a man of another ethnic origin into their cultures. Othello is a black person and this is a difference enough to cause the adversity of people bred in a Venetian tradition. If Othello gets married with Desdemona he will have access to the secrecy. So, Brabantio cannot bless his daughter's desire with the Blackman since this is "so opposite to marriage that she shunn'd the wealthy curled darlings of our nation" (Ibid, 629). Desdemona's father disapproves her daughter's marriage for preconizing Venetians' secrecies in tradition.

The concept of Ethnicity is a sing along with race issues that prosper with the search for supremacy or dominance. Race as well as ethnicity is a common practice social clarification, (Diego, 2015: introduction). So, the language spoken and the skin-colour

play a great role somehow in determination of ethnical rate and dominance in a nation as an ethnic group may populate many areas of a country. In this context, Othello's racial and ethnic origin makes him stand as an outsider categorized by the colour of his skin. Iago takes advantage of his position of Ancient to initiate the tragic destruction of Othello. Being well trained in the military profession and qualifies as Othello's lieutenant. He even claims greater experience than Othello. For him it is not admissible to let an alien govern state affairs in Venice. He mentions it to the Duke who has appointed Othello. He says

[...] preferment goes by letter and affection,
And not by old graduation, where each second
Stood heir to the first. Now, sir, be judge yourself,
Whether I in any just term am affined
To love the Moore. (I, i, 629)

Iago is against Othello's appointment to the state-affairs because the latter is a 'Moore', a native from another ethnics. He seems to say that someone originating from an underrated group cannot hold a key position in state affairs of Venice. Brabantio's words evoke it is unbearable that a black man hold the position of an army general in a white dominant group. Brabantio equally adheres to the biased views of Iago and Roderigo; and conjures the desire of Othello, the Moor who was at the edge to get married Desdemona. He exclaimed before his daughter:

Fall in love with what she fear'd to look on!
[...] I therefore vouch again,
That with some mixture powerful o'r the blood. (I, iii, 631)

Brabantio does not want his daughter to be in couple with a black man. This racial prejudice becomes relevant in the plays. Shakespeare is pinpointing here to which extent one's group of appurtenance has to be saved. Othello defends his ethnic origin before the Duke of Venice by granting to the whole nation honour and prestige through his honesty toward Duke and endowments during battles against Venetians enemies. This forces the Duke to recognize his ethnics' values and appoint him as the state-affairs' officer. Othello's prowess as a warrior is overwhelming enough for the Duke employ him. And at that point, things are done on basis of how different Othello is, of the other in him.

Valiant Othello, we must employ you
Against the general enemy Ottoman [...], (Ibid)

The Duke knows therefore that Othello belongs to a valiant person and unavoidable soldier of his troop which merits rewarding and dignity. For him, the Moore's ethnicity is rooted in a courageous one which does not fear anything and is capable to overcome challenges, but Othello is far greater than that in his human qualities.

On the other hand, safeguarding ethnicity might lie in sacrificing the outsider, the stranger to the group even if s/he is a beloved one. The group of appurtenance saving or protection overpasses self-interest. In this case, Brabantio does not want to lose his daughter neither does the Duke of Venice. Both Duke and Brabantio are Venetians. They belong to the same ethnical tie So, the Duke of Venice has to believe in Brabantio, the 'Signor' words in detriment to the ones of Othello, the one from another ethnical group. Duke emphases:

I think this tale would win my daughter too.
Good Brabantio,
Take up this mangled matter at the best:
Men' do their broken weapons rather use
Than their bare hands. (I, iii, 632)

The Duke's words denote that the truth comes from Brabantio, the so called Signor's mouth since he seems to consider Othello as a murderer who can poison his daughter too.

The issues of Ethnicity are also well depicted in Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus*. The conflicts are opened successively, between Goths and Romans, ruling ethnic group and warriors' clans and Black and White people.

Indeed, Romans fought against Goths under the Old Titus responsibility several years and they won. Romans are proud of the honour wrought on them by Titus the warrior. They stand out as people marked by bravery, and victory over their enemies and people around. But this victory on Goths ethnics will be avenged by the losers' ethnic group. In fact, Tamora, the Empress of the Goths and Roman captives who quickly start making her wicked secret plans into actions against Roman. Her adversity and regard of her origins justify her readiness to destroy Rome and its citizens when she declares:

And so supplant you for ingratitude,
Which Rome reposes to be a heinous sin,
Yield at entreats,
And then let me alone: I'll find a day to massacre them all,
And raze their faction and their family,
The cruel father and his traitorous sons,
To whom I sued for my dear son's life (I, i, 449).

Group interest regarding ethnicity is its attitude and the forces involved in the defending one's identity and values. Shakespeare's dramatization of stigmatised ethnicity is outstanding in *Titus Andronicus* through the loyal character of Tamora the Queen of Goths and her relatives in defending their community values.

Tamora's performances have best depicted Shakespeare's conceptual case of the concept of ethnicity. As a matter of fact, the character has to defend her ethnic group. She lost her group members and her position of Goth's kingdom Empress. She takes this opportunity of being alive for standing against her enemies of her community. Yet, her ethnic origin is from now dominated by the Romans one but Tamora and her relatives have to preserve their cultures and traditions, in other words their ethnicity and its principles. They were captured as Empress and princes of Goths and as such will be treated basing their background. So, the lady makes her best to become a roman Empress although she is not from that ethnic origin so as to implement Goths ethnic principals to Romans community. She challenges Lavinia and gets married to the Emperor Saturninus.

This is to show that the minority regarding ethnicity deserves also a position in leadership of an Empire. In the completion of ethnical supremacy, group-interest appears and is put into actions. The ethnic group in power, makes sure to have monopoly over power and it not want to share it with non-royal ethnic groups at all. A strife broke in that case between warriors group led by Old Titus and Royal group led by Saturninus about who should be emperor of Rome. Therefore, Marcus urges his countrymen to vote for them as represented by the Old Titus. When he says:

The people of Rome,
For whom we stand a special party,
Have by common voice,
In election for the Roman empery Chosen Andronicus,
Surnamed Pius", (I, i, 445)

Marcus actually expects Titus Andronicus to become the king by the vote turnover. However, he cannot be appointed, as he is not from royal blood. This well-known stigmatisation based on ethnicity makes Old Titus deny the sovereign wanted. The speech of the Duke of Venice, in *Othello*, tackles also the matter of negligence attitude toward an ethnic group in community. Duke of Venice says spelt the fact:

Let it be so [...]
If virtue no delighted beauty lack,
Your son'-in-law is far more than black (I, iii, 633).

Focusing on the domination and supremacy in the concept of ethnicity, someone is right to say that even though the Black ethnic is skilful and courageous, it is no longer a White ethnic. Othello, the Moore is an example of braveness in detriment to Iago and Brabantio. Othello is a precious treasure won by Venice. But he is 'far more than black'. Shakespeare makes his/her readers to witness the phenomenon through the behaviours and performances of his characters. From Tamora, Aaron, the Goths and Romans in *Titus Andronicus* and Iago, Brabantio and Othello in *Othello*, *The Moore of Venice* social backlashes are evident. Banton, (2000: 481) while quoting

Brogan (1989: xi) said that “the engine that powers most of the wars in today’s world is ethnic hostility.” The nowadays conflictual situations seem recurrent nowadays. The secrecies or principals in tribe, clans, ethnics and communities are other matters to deal with as far as ethnicity is concerned.

In fact, another ethnic group is not allowed to easily interfere into the ties and secrecies of another one. The hostility against Othello in his marriage with Desdemona speaks volumes about the stigmatization stemming from race and ethnicity. The same situation is to be derived from the fate of Tamora as connected to regency in Rome just because she is a Goth. Opening such access to outsiders appears to most group members as a betrayal of their ethnic identity that needs to be preserved at all cost. But Lavinia’s refusal changes things into Tamora’s favour.

Shakespeare would like his countrymen to have a hindsight perception on the concept of Ethnicity. Othello represents the Black community and is undervalued and less esteemed by Iago. The strange ethnic presence in Venetians does not sake their cultural and traditional secrecies. Iago’s motion on the community’s prosperity is held on setting barriers against people from alien cultures and of other ethnic origins. It is perhaps in accomplishing such an act of racial disdain that, Othello “may lose some colour (I, i, 629) as Iago has funnily predicted. The ethnical stigmatization centered on group-interest, secrecies conservations and domination or supremacy is recessing and breaking the progress of people, communities and continents. Mohamedzadeh, (2016: 17) claims that, “ethnic conflicts persist on every continent and such violence are a central feature of contemporary social life and have been for centuries in places where heterogeneous population live, or people from different ethnic group come into contact”. People have to avoid ethnic conflicts for their welfare. They would rather have to harmonise their differences in order to succeed and develop.

Aaron is the perfect character through whom Shakespeare depicts the matter of ethnicity. Aaron begot a child with Tamora. But quickly, the child is labelled with an epithet of something as the nurse refers to the child as ‘a devil’ (IV, i, 459). The use of the word ‘devil’ refers to something bad, not desirable in existence. Something, which no one can cooperate with. Aaron and his child are, therefore, characterized useless in the foreign ethnic since they have to be feared. Shakespeare goes plotting this in his plays in order to allow his readers to have a measure of how ethnicity is experienced both from victims and detractors.

In doing this he presents the issue from different angles. He seems to evoke the issues first from the view of supremacists In both plays, Romans and Goths are seen as the greatest ones and more dominant since they are in the top positions. The nurse words in *Titus Andronicus* do illustrate such a state of things when she says:

Joyless, dismal, black, and sorrowful issue!

[...] as loathsome as a toad
Amongst the fair-fac'd breeders of our clime [...], (IV, ii, 460).

Aaron and his relative are considered as being negligible and repulsive. Such considerations are indirectly imparted on their community of origin and shall remain so when it allows their detractors to conserve their privileges. And since they and their clans are 'loathsome', joyless, dismal, black and sorrowful, no one does to their community if they collaborate with them. They do not have anything useful to share culturally and traditionally. Thus, a royal family regarding Romans' one has nothing to do with retarded races and ethnic groups as well as their cultures and traditions. Blacks appear and dramatized as weak communities in Rome. This social and ethnical discrimination shows the clashes that exist in the social strata of the Roman society.

Referring to the safeguard of secrecy in culture and tradition as the second aspect of Shakespeare's performances at this level of the scene, and beyond a simple understanding, one can be right to say that the playwright has his characters use the terms 'joyless', 'dismal', 'black' and 'sorrowful' in order to show the process of stigmatization and how two social groups contribute to deepening the gap of ethnic cleavage. A foreign culture hardly allows another group with a different background to deprive owners from their secrets. Such a hostility justifies what opposes Othello, the Moore with Iago and Brabantio Aaron and his descendant with the Roman Empire. One's ethnic secrecy has to be protected. Blacks are also in the way of protecting their socio-ethnic values. Aaron makes everything possible to save his son's life from his enemies' hands. Othello did his best to defend his position as dignified the Moore during the battle and his love to Desdemona. This is well exemplified in the dialog between the old Titus and Tamora:

Tamora: Farewell, Andronicus: revenge now goes,
To lay a complot to betray thy foes.

Titus: I know thou dost; and, sweet Revenge, farewell. (*Titus Andronicus*,
V, ii, 465).

Therefore, the way of conspiracy against others and revenge regarding social groups is made outstanding. By acting in such a way, Shakespeare sheds light on stranger interaction within ethnic or social groups or communities because during his time and before, socio-ethnic group divisions were prevailing, (Alexander, 2007: 107-136). Indeed, communities based on ethnicity are all targeting the saving of their groups' interest. The Goths, Warriors and Royal families as well as Venetians and Moore' have all been defending the same principles of together living and safety of their respective groups. Tamora defends the honour of the Goths by challenging the Romans. She destroyed them. Aaron defends the Black ethnic group against the

Romans aside of Tamora and he kills all those against his affairs. For all these reasons, Tamora says to her accomplices:

Remember, boys,
I pour'd forth tears in vain
To save your brother from the sacrifice;
But fierce Andronicus would not relent.
Therefore away with her, and use her as you will;
The worse to her the better lov'd of me, (II, iii, 452).

Tamora conspires to destroy Rome on the grounds of ethnicity as connected to Old Titus. The initial alibi has been to accuse the sons of Titus for the murder of Bassianus. But as the plot unfolds, it transpires that the adversity is rather moved by ethnic differences that pushed for open conflicts through the hurting of Lavinia and Bassianus' murder. On that issue, Titus' hand has been cut in begging pardon for his sons. Unfortunately, Titus' sons have been blamed and executed by the court. It lately derives that Tamora mostly desired this course of events because she has lost the crown and therefore has nobody under her command.

The emblematic consequence of Tamora's conspiracy against the Rome has resulted in the division between Andronicus and Rome's royal family. On that ground, Titus finds himself left with the duty to protect the Andronicus and all the other relatives. In the same way, Tamora has to protect her clansmen while Saturninus has to spare the royal blood he could claim everywhere he is. These roll plays tell of the fundamental responsibilities of members in any tribal community. In the light of this one can see the use of revenge as a means of defense and protection. In short, Shakespeare is telling his reader about the fundamental principles that govern each community and that serve as their identity that they need to preserve.

Thus, people sharing the same values are gathered under a national unit that they have to safeguard as a common identity. That is what Shakespeare is showing through the last scene of *Titus Andronicus*. Thereby, Titus, Saturninus and Tamora turn out to be doomed to death. As for Lucius and Andronicus, they become the kings and promise "[...] To heal Rome's harms and wipe away her woe!", (V, iii, 467). Therefore, one can be right to say that Ethnicity has never been fixed in terms of consent, it moves through generations and through social interactions. Blacks seem to be aware of the issue of humanlike relationship. Aaron in *Titus Andronicus*, as a man at the service of the Empress Tamora, helps her in reaching her goals somehow. Tamora leads the whole Roman Empire with Saturninus thanks to the help that Aaron granted her by keeping aside and away the Warrior Titus and his descendants. Aaron's was proud and his words illustrate this state of things case when he affirms that:

If one good deed in all my life I did,

I do repent it from my very soul, (V, iii, 468).

Thus, people from enslavement, ill-treatment and over sorrowful situation will always claim for freedom until the end. And as said by Othello before dying:

“I have done the state some service, and they know’n’t.
No more of that.” (V, ii, 657)

These words lay emphasis on the fact that nothing is over before the socio-ethnic justice establishment. Okamura, (1981: 3) in that perspective said that: “the one thing that all of these characterizations of ethnicity have in common, however, is that they all assume that, at any given time, we can identify and define distinct ethnicities and ethnic communities. In other words, it is a call for a rethinking the concept of ethnicity which will not be of any use if it is governed by a vengeful attitude.

2. Clashes’ Reading with an Ethnic Hindsight

Since the concept of ethnicity refers to the societal identification of people sharing the same background, language, faith or believes, it is therefore imperative to setting up a resolution of people inquest for safety with good regard. These allow anyone to opine on the best living conditions. We are born equal as human beings. So, we share the same blood and so many other human attributes compelled to live on the same earth. Based on that, people’s basic concern stands the same of their relationship and societal cohesion no matter what. The concept of ethnicity has to be considered in that line for a better society. while rethinking the concept of Ethnicity Mohammadzadeh, (2016:157) said: it “[...] results from interethnic relations, whenever two different groups or societies come into contact and establish various modes of spatial, political-economic, cultural and social relations”.

For Mohammadzadeh, cohesion in social interaction may contribute to betterment in people’s living conditions and facilitate socio-cultural, political and economic progress for their own sake. It is certain that, this aspiration to a new life will chiefly get people around establishing new politics, laws or any entities that improve the quality of their life. But, this revolutionary vision is sometimes welcomed with inequality on behalf of clans or the leadership of social groups by powerful elites.

In spite of that, there prevails a chaotic situation in which the community is split into many social groups separated one from another by beliefs that set them apart and open grounds of open conflicts and persecution. In the same prospect, George Orwell (1965: 99) has metaphorically addressed this issue through his animal farm when he states that: “all animals are equal but some animals are more equal than others”. In other words, there are some typical elements that force to differentiate social groups that have defend their attributes and privileges. It is the attempt to preserve ethnic

identity that frustrations occur and accentuate the risks of conflicts in the social spectrum because of the abuse of someone's ethnic identity.

Unlike, the concept of ethnicity does not imply strife among ethnic groups. It is rather prejudice and bias that are: "misleading because it leads to an essentialist conclusion that certain groups are doomed to fight each other when in fact the wars between them are the result of political decisions", (Mohammadzadeh, Op.cit, 257).

In this perception about the concept, some political choices seem to be at some extent at the origin of ethnic conflicts due to the establishment of so-called countries' boundaries that are most of the time done on ethnic differences. People sharing the same languages or ethnicity become divided by a fictive line which abusively forces them to preserve their identities against the other groups. Tamora, the Goth, speaks the roman language just as Othello in Venice. But both and each in his/her case is not welcomed in the host countries. This phenomenon demonstrates the expression of supremacy by the ethnic groups in which they find themselves. Indeed, Othello gets manipulated toward his tragic death because his skin color and origins. Iago contributes to this by ruthlessly referring to him as alien enjoying undue privileges. More precisely, Iago and Brabantio think that, Venice authorities have exaggerated in granting a notable and a higher position to a weak ethnic group people, Othello, the Moor. Saturnius is also blamed by his people because he allowed a captive of war to become an empress in the name of Tamora now turned a Goth. Many a Roman would marvel at the mention of Goth or Moore being entrusted key responsibilities as we can see in the case of Othello and Tamora. People of colour or alien in origin, turn out to be looked down upon by their Roman counterparts.

In addition, the issue of secrecy in tradition and the preservation of ethnic supremacy are here to stay and this can be derived from peoples' attitude in their respective communities. The fact is observable in Brabantio's words once again: "[...] this Moor, whom now, it seems, your special mandate for the state-affairs [...]", (I, iii, 631). Othello, the Moor's ethnic group is stigmatized. Thus, letting Othello to get married to a roman woman is not only a shame but also a vouching of the entire Venice codes of values in cultures and traditions. According to Brabantio, to accept someone from another culture and tradition, who is not a native from their social and ethnic group is unacceptable. Therefore, the attitude of Romans either in *Othello* or in *Titus Andronicus* causes the occurrence of vengeful reactions with bloodshed in defense of their own ethnic group on the part of Blacks, Othello and Aaron.

As fact, any stigmatization about ethnic right or properties leads to social disruptions. One could be right when saying that ethnic lifestyle could lead to civil wars among generations throughout time. But people have to revisit their understanding of the concept of ethnicity in the way perceive the needs of each group, the secrecies they live on and how they seek safeguard the values that enforce

their supremacies. After combining other scientific plottings, Thomas Hylland Eriksen (1993:1) gives a summary of the concept and developed that:

Ethnicity can be seen as a universal social phenomenon, and it can be seen as a modern cultural construct. It can be conceptualised as a peculiar kind of informal political organisation (Cohen), as an aspect of personal identity involving contrastive, mutually exclusive labelling (Epstein), as the reflexive appropriation of a "cultural estate", history and concomitant political rights (Roosens), as a product of colonialism and capitalism (Comaroff, Fardon), or as a functional boundary mechanism separating endogamous groups (Barth).

For Eriksen, it is clearly perceivable that the most important key in understanding the concept of ethnicity is the relational issues that it engenders. Focusing on Eriksen combination of thoughts, The establishment of ethnicity has to go beyond political organization which confines people in communities' boundaries, despite their sharing of same languages, traditions and cultures. Then, come the issues of supremacy and secrecy in the cultural identification of each ethnic group. People are proud of their ethnic rituals and customs and do not want anyone to interfere into their ethnic practices. The cases of politico-economic systems: colonialism and capitalism as suggested by Comaroff and Fardon in in the quotation above.

In short, there are some strong and established sub-groups in the large spectrum of most ethnic gatherings and these groups stand out through the basic values that knit them together and the way the behaving as part of a group. In that vein, Peter Ratcliffe, (Op. Cit., 4) says that: "Ethnicity is an ontologically meaningful concept that does not peer and lead to the conclusion that the same can be said for the idea of an ethnic group". So and due to some reasons, certain social groups overpass the ethnic ties that gather them and want to show their own existence and it is exactly such nonconformities that originate clashes.

Saturninus' and Old Titus' families are both roman communities. They belong to the same prestigious group or ethnic. But they refute the fair collaboration and dive all into ethnic conflicts. The ethnic war gets open between the clan of warriors established on belligerent values and the emperor's side even though both aspire to the throne. In his new position as Emperor, Saturninus is ready to exterminate the warriors in the royal family. Othello, the state-affairs' officer belongs now to the group of decision makers in Venice crew but that does not remove his ethnic and racial label which his detractors use against him. The issue of ethnic group interest and supremacy are at work in Shakespeare's dramatization of characters.

In *Othello, the Moore of Venice* for instance, the relationship between Othello and Venetians is illustrative enough. The new social status of the Moore has nothing to do with his Venetian's ethnic group integration. He belongs to another ethnic class and in the eyes of Venetians, he shall remain as they tolerate him to some extent. And in this conception of an ethnic dominance and sneering against others, anyone who has to stay or handicap the process is banned. In that prospect, Iago kills his wife for

the fact that she does not serve or help and agree with him upon his evil plans against Othello. For Iago, their ethnic class interest surpasses everything; even his own interest. This was embarrassingly the case in Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus*, whereby Saturninus, by considering the Tamora's lies to be true, makes the Old Titus's sons be killed to notify them the supremacy of Roman royal family and relatives that has to be saved.

But it seems useful to mention that the manifestation of ethnic dominance takes various forms. One of them is pacific expression of ethnicity. Sajid, (2015: 1) explained it and said that:

In non-violent ethnic conflicts people do not direct attack on other ethnicity with weapon. This conflict is in term of political and cultural conflict. Mostly this conflict is start for achieving the political offices on the base of ethnicity. And conflict start on the base of ethnicity because leaders wants office on the base of ethnicity but in this conflict minimum chances of causalities and infrastructural destruction.

The non-violence regarding people's ethnics has to be promoted. Although this is not perceived in most of cases where people promote ethnicity by massacring and killing their neighbours to the detriment of cultures, traditions and languages, something has to be done to reverse people's understanding of ethnicity for the sake of social welfare. There is no doubt that somehow people's interests have to do with their reactions before a case.

So, Ethnicity as such does influence individual's decisions on what to privilege or not. It is against his will but for group interest that Saturninus kills warriors from his son's ethnic group. That is why Peter said: "It is worth reflecting on the decision an individual makes whether or not to utilise an exit option because it serves as a reminder that conflicts persist only when individuals invest resources in collective struggles" (Op. Cit, 186). This is an evidence of human being's pride and ego which highlights human nature. This makes it clear that, most of ethnic conflicts are generated by individual decisions mooted by the constructs of one's tradition and culture. Today, these perceptions are extended to religion whereby people join conflicts on the grounds of supremacy and the principles of their religions. In this line of thought, there is rampant strife in congregations built on Christianity, Islam, Protestantism, (Pew Research Center: 2012:10), in which the issues of ethnic dominance are the order of the day.

According to Pew Research Center, Islamic states accuse the United States of America of discriminating Muslims. This illustrates the thoughts of Sajid about conflictual situations in religious when mentioning the concept of Ethnicity. He argued that:

People have the rigid beliefs on religion and they never show any flexibility on their beliefs. And if they realize any threat to their religion they are ready for kill or die. And if the one religion perceives any threat to their survival than people take stand for the

security of religion, than ethnic conflict start on the base of religion. This conflict may be violent and non-violent. Sajid, (Op.cit, 2)

The words in the quote above denote the issue of the interest of ethnic groups and how desired supremacy drive into conflicts when they are not well thought. The whole planet witnesses nowadays terrorism as religious war between Muslims and non-Muslims. In Shakespeare's *Othello* there is also religious strife. The Venice society is also hostile to the faith of strangers. Such an hostility gets dramatized in the way he stands accused of making use of magic which is held as a marker of his race among which most achievements are made "with drugs or mineral that weaken motion [...] "(I, ii, 630).

In considering this religious practice as typical to the Moore, Shakespeare seems to suggest that anyone who belongs to the Black, or Moore's are segregated against by the Venetian society where Othello lives hated to his tragic death. Shakespeare has wrought his play in such way to mention the crucial issue of ethnicity and also to make readers and spectators aware of the aftermaths of mishandled ethnic attributes. Indeed, though believers share the same God who is the supreme, but, because of the difference in the given name to their religion, they do not resist the temptation to clash with one another. Koufman (2000: 6) had a mind to mention this when he says that: "ethnic groups with high levels of exclusivity increase the difficulty involved in creating a common good and overall sense of equality." Kaufman wants to explain to his readers that the race to ethnic identity does prevail in religion too. This exemplifies the setting up of very restrained ethnic groups generally named 'Sects' with their principals, secrecies, ideology and lifestyles.

Ratcliffe (Op.Cit, 7) even provides a relative dimension to ethnicity when he says that: "ethnicity may in successive generations become essentially 'symbolic'". In other words, it will depend on people's devotion to the interests of ethnic groups, the principles and sense of dominance that are involved. Cutting down or remove the sense of pride to one's origins and the desire to impose it on others will obviously result in a better society rid of social hardships that some people experience.

Therefore, instead of focusing on people preference and wants it will be right if "other variables come into play because preferences are rarely static, but to find out more about what powers ethnic conflict it can be helpful to look more closely into preferences for ethnic association." Ratcliffe, (Op. Cit, 486). Ethnicity has to be redefined as cultural identity openness of a group willing to share and acquire to enlarge its cultural and traditional scale for a sustainable development of its community as Shakespeare tried to assert it by depicting the two ethnic and antagonist characters' behaviours in the two plays.

CONCLUSION

People live and gather to seek collective welfare and interact in ways that could change and metamorphose lifestyles. That perception has to make the concept of ethnicity a flexible concept or value to accommodate people from diverse horizons. It is not enough to only limit ethnicity to the sole purpose of demographic labelling but involve it in the processes of social transformations that humanity needs to be balanced and live a life of peace and harmony. In that prospect, ethnicity has to be seen as the process of identification keen on ethnic inputs for people and communities improvement regarding their cultures, traditions and religions. Ethnicity should be associated with pacific actions towards people since the purpose in living together is for the safety of all and not to undermine the lives of others. All this will be possible if priority is given to the human being. The world cultures should endeavour to give priority to the human being instead of ethnic individualities that later result in undesirable situations as observed in the strife that prevail among Venetians and Romans. People as well as conservatives have to well-mind the concept of ethnicity. They have to go beyond the notion of ethnicity that does nothing else but brings collaborators into broil that could be avoided as highlighted in this work.

REFERENCES

- _____ *Othello The Moor of Venice* from *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*, India, Mumbai : Wilco Publishing House, 2010, Pp. 628-657
- _____ *Titus Andronicus* from *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*, India, Mumbai: Wilco Publishing House, 2010, Pp.445-449
- Alexander, M. (2007). *A History of English Literature*. 2nd Ed, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.
- Ali S. (2015). "Types of ethnic conflict", 14041587-044 BS (I.R) 8th in <http://www.researchgate.com>
- Banton M. (2000). "Ethnic Conflict in Sociology", Vol. 34, No. 3, pp. 481-498. United Kingdom: BSA Publications Limited, Department of Sociology University of Bristol
- Blanton E. (2014), "Theories of ethnicity and the dynamics of ethnic change in multiethnic societies", in www.pnas.org/cgi/doi/10.1073/pnas.1421406112
- Caselli F. Wilbur J. (2012). *On the Theory of Ethnic conflict*, London: Duke University, Pp.1-9
- Da Silva Santos D., Barbosa N. et al. (2010). "Race versus ethnicity versus ethnicity: Differing for better application", Rio de Janeiro State: Dental J Orthod Press, University (UERJ), p. Introduction

- Eriksen T. (1993). "The anthropology of ethnicity conference paper: the epistemological status of the concept of ethnicity", Amsterdam: published in anthropological notebooks (ljubljana, slovenia), p.1
- Kaufman, E. 2000. "Liberal ethnicity: Beyond liberal nationalism and minority rights", vol°23 (6): p.1008-1119, in *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, p.23
- Libby k. (2017). "Ethnic conflict, human rights in Russia and the former Soviet Republic" , p.25 in <http://www.docplayer.net>
- Mohammadzadeh H. (2016). The causes of ethnic conflict in Multi-ethnic societies, in <http://www.worldscientificnews.com>
- Orwell G, (1965), *Animal farm*, London: Martin secker & Warburg Limited, p.99
- Pew Research Center's (2010) , Forum on Religion & Public Life, 1615 L St., NW, Suite 700 Washington, D.C. 20036-5610, in <http://www.pewforum.org/global-religious-landscape.aspx>
- Ratcliffe P. (2014), "Ethnic group", UK, Warwick: University of Warwick from Editorial Arrangement of *Sociopedia.isa*, DOI: 10.1177/20568460142, pp.1-7