

## THE IDEA OF INTERNALIZATION IN HAMLET:

### A SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF KNOWLEDGE IN LITERATURE

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#### ABSTRACT

Based on a previous sociological theory of knowledge reconstructed from Max Weber's writings, the main purpose of this paper is to analyze how knowledge is possible in literature and how the process of creation of ideas works through some sociological concepts. We define knowledge as an attempt of stating something true about reality, requiring two different elements: a *semantic context* and a *positive interpretation*. Following different Shakespearean scholars, the concepts were applied to Shakespeare's *Hamlet* in order to demonstrate the constitution of the idea of internalization, expressed by the main character Prince Hamlet.

In order to grasp the idea, the *semantic context* was divided in three different and interconnected levels. The English and Elizabethan theater's background, the context of the play and its influences and, finally, the proper constitution of the idea of internalization, viewed as a product of a *positive interpretation* made by Shakespeare himself because of his own dramaturgic development. We concluded that the *referent* of the "internalization's" hardcore was the emotional, existential, or psychological state of the loss of the meaning of the world, caused by a religious. crises, i.e., the catholic worldview declined and the Protestantism worldview upraise.

**KEYWORDS:** Elizabethan Theater, Sociology of Knowledge, Sociology of Literature, Shakespeare

#### INTRODUCTION

Since literary works do not essentially commit themselves to true statements about reality, they raise interesting and challenging questions for knowledge analysis. Some of these questions are, "is there in these works any knowledge other than self-knowledge?" "Is it possible to exist a true committed knowledge in literature?" If yes, "under which circumstances would it be shaped?" moreover, "How would it behave?" Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to investigate how and under which processes "knowledge" can arise from literature.

In order to do that, we analyze the formation of the idea of "*internalization*" of character (or simply *internalization's idea*) in some plays written by William Shakespeare – especially in *Hamlet*, where the idea was completed developed. The existence of this idea was strongly suggested by the American Shakespearean scholar Harold Bloom, who coined the term; though we can notice other scholars, such as Stephen Greenblatt, Andrew Gurr, and James Shapiro, suggesting the existence of the same idea in a lesser degree. Our theoretical framework for knowledge analysis is a sociological theory of knowledge, which we have constructed from the methodological (see WEBER, 1922) and religious writings (esp. WEBER, 2001) of the German sociologist Max Weber.

Analytically, we define knowledge as an objective cognitive product (an *objective idea*) intended to be a true/valid

representation of human or nature reality, which is the outcome of a cognitive process called *positive interpretation*, inserted into a *semantic context*, which is composed of several other ideas interrelated (see NERI, 2014).

The *positive interpretation* is a sequence of acts composed by the following steps: comprehension, revision, reorganization, systematization, and finally objectification of some cognitive product into a specific semantic context. In addition, the positive interpretation is subordinated to an internal, an external factor, and a lateral factor. The internal factor depends on the ideas' *hard core*, i.e. the symbolic referential relation to reality. The external factor depends on the individual's general pragmatic interests, i.e. biological inclinations, emotional responses, and relational and social desires in general. The lateral factor depends on the relation that this idea will have to other already established and interrelated ideas within a semantic context. Due to a socio-dynamics, the positive interpretation generates the *semantic context* and modifies it through the time.

As a hierarchically web of shared (symbolic) meanings by certain individuals in certain group(s), any semantic context could be analytically divided in three different levels: a *pragmatic*, an *intertextual*, and an *ideal-objective level*. At the *pragmatic level*, what it is considered is the individual's actions, beliefs, and interests at the time of the objectification of a cognitive product, once these factors guide the steps of the positive interpretation. In other words, the content of the interests, beliefs, desires, as well as the entire symbolic repertoire of an individual are his perspectivation of a specific *semantic context*, where he belongs (see SCHUTZ, 1967). Therefore, it is important to know the process of socio-historical constitution of a specific semantic context and the individual's position in it.

Even though knowledge and symbolic elements in general came from the *semantic context*, we have to understand the positive interpretation as a singular contribution of an individual or a group of individuals to the shared cognitive products available in a *semantic context*. In order to analyze the *internalization's idea*, we must briefly reconstruct its semantic context, i.e. the reconstruction of where the Elizabethan theater was developed, in order to allow the plays analysis and the constitution of the idea itself. We can say in advance that the Elizabethan theater was a result of a concurrency situation, which enabled the emergence of these high sophisticated plays. However, they cannot be reducible only to these factors. Although the plays were adapted to the public, it had limits. For example, in spite of the adaptation to the theatrical speech form directed to a broad audience, Shakespeare in his *Hamlet* has created several new words to express what he wanted/needed.

At the *intertextual level*, we should consider every objective idea interrelated, regardless if they are considered magic formulas or scientific work. These kinds of labels belong to the pragmatic level, referring to the individuals and its interrelations. Once knowledge become objective and sometimes objectified (in writing, for example), it does not depend on its creator anymore. However, during the time of the creation of an idea (through the *positive interpretation*) the creator relates the inner content of his work to lateral correlated elements in the semantic context, referring to other works or specific elements within those works.

At least, at the *objective idea's level*, we try to isolate an idea to demonstrate its process of constitution. As we know, ideas are the outcome of a *positive interpretation* during certain period. The objective ideas are constituted by a hardcore, which normally is its main referential representation. The hardcore is somehow determined in the origin of an idea. Some other elements are added to the hardcore because the adjustment to a specific context that could be, internal, external, or lateral to the work.

Outlining the course of the analysis, we divided it in three sections that correspond to the three levels of the semantic context. At the *pragmatic level*, we reconstruct some macro sociological factors that structure the semantic context and its specific part, the Elizabethan theater. From the widest to the narrowest, it involves the problem of religion in the late XVI century, the urbanization, the city of London, the theater market, the companies of actors, and the plays. At this level, the *concurrency* is what promotes the development of the plays. At the *intertextual level*, there is the internal context of a specific work and its relations to external elements. These can be elements present within other author's work or even works produced by the same author in question. At last, at the objective ideas level, we demonstrate the process of constitution of the idea of internalization caused by this the process of different *positive interpretations*.

### **PRAGMATIC LEVEL: ELIZABETHAN THEATER'S BACKGROUND**

In the last two decades of the sixteenth century, when Shakespeare went to London and established himself as a playwright and poet, the Catholic Church had collapsed in England by both a state reform and a religious reform. Religion was considered the basis of a well-ordered society, and the religious unity preservation was presumed as being essential to maintain the State. This fracture could lead to Civil War, as well as episodes such as the Night of St. Bartholomew, occurred in Paris in 1572 (the plot of Marlowe's play "*The massacre at Paris*"). According to Greenblatt, "in a matter of religious beliefs, families in the early sixteenth century England were characteristically fractured, and many individuals were fractured inside" (GREENBLATT, 2004, p.85). The metaphysical meaning to the world, provided hitherto by the Catholic Church, was not anymore evident to everybody. Thus, a crisis of meaning reached many, which increased in proportion with the advance of Protestantism. The religious reform promoted by the Tudors oscillated between the old and the new faith. However, in the end Protestantism prevailed. It was the religious *background of the context*.

Although England of that time was essentially rural, both the Protestantism and the Elizabethan theater were products of cities. By the 1520s, it had begun in England a significant urban growth, particularly in London. In 1564, London had 80,000 inhabitants, whereas it changed to about 200 thousand people in 1600, while the estimate population of England was four million people. However, only about 20% of the population was born in London, transforming it into a city of immigrants. Shakespeare himself along side many others playwrights were immigrants. Simultaneously, there was a large growth of urban artisans, of a class of merchants and manufacturers in both major and harbor cities, as well as the growth of a literate class (schoolteachers and scribes). These classes often expressed the increasing possibilities of social mobility, by which some of them achieved a *gentleman* degree. An example of this social elevation (i.e. the achievement of gentry's status) was the rise of John Shakespeare (Shakespeare's father), as a reflection of economic prosperity; in this case, John was an artisan, a glove maker, in the town of Stratford-upon-Avon. As Gurr states: "Almost all of these different classes in middle *stratum* can be found among the regulars parts in Shakespearean theater" (2004, p. 58).

The theater consisted of companies of actors. These companies followed the more general migration from the countryside to the city, which happened during this period. In 1572, one saw the "theater *turning point*" mainly caused by the declaration of a Protestant based law, which attempted to combat vagrancy. This law decreed the obligation to the companies of actors to be under the patronage of some noble, declaring that "'Common Player in Enterludes & Ministrrels, not Belonging to any Baron of this Realm or towards any other honorable Personage of greater Degree' to be deemed

rogues and vagabonds" (The Society for Theatre Research, 1970, p.20). Thus, the companies that did not fit this requirement were prohibited of acting. Before the declaration of this law, the companies were a group of itinerant actors who went to the cities and villages to act out without ties to any establishment. Itinerancy resulted in the absence a loyal and fixed audience that caused a lack of competition, resulting in the low number of plays, and the low incentive for improvement of the performances. The plays of that period were of two types: the Catholic morality plays, in which characters were usually moral figures such as Vice, Lust, Sloth, etc., and the courtiers entertainment clowns' performances. On the one hand, the Reformation destroyed the morality plays, leading to the *secularization of the theater*. On the other hand, the Puritan opposition sought to end the theater. Paradoxically, the Puritan opposition was minimized by the nobles' patronage. The companies' competition was an effect of the theater legislation, because every theater production had been concentrated in a few highly competitive companies, leading to a discriminatory selection of theater professionals. In few decades later, the theater became a very profitable business; Shakespeare for example got enough money to buy the biggest house in Stratford-upon-Avon and a family crest. In sum, *competition intensifies the possibility of positive interpretations*, leading to dramaturgical improvements both in content and writing style.

Although playwrights reviewed their plays according to audience response, they learned the adaptation boundaries of their plays to the theatrical form and the expectation of the audience. At that time, contemporary politics and religious matters were not allowed to be performed on stage. Then, dramatists who wished to portray these themes should use metaphorical subterfuges such as historical reenactments or the adaptation of popular old stories. These old stories commonly gave to the dramatists the material to operate their *positive interpretations*, which produced their new plays.

Elizabethan theater had roughly two phases. The first one was from 1583 to 1594, starting with the forerunner of the first generation, John Lyly, until three great dramatists' death: Thomas Kyd, Robert Greene, and Christopher Marlowe. They influenced later Elizabethan dramatists; including Shakespeare. Thomas Kyd created *The Spanish Tragedy* (1587), the first modern tragedy. Up to 1590, Marlowe had already completed his *canon* with two volumes of *Tamburlaine: The Great, Dr. Faustus*, and *The Jew of Malta*. These plays were polemical and all of them contained strong individualities an abnormal trait at that time. Marlowe contributed decisively with all Elizabethan theater especially because the *blank verse*, the style he had adopted that fitted perfectly to the Elizabethan playwrights' writing needs. Most likely, Marlowe influenced the early years of Shakespeare's career, which had a late started compared to others, since Marlowe and Shakespeare were born in the same year. Nonetheless, until 1594 Shakespeare had already composed some of his famous plays as *Richard III* and *Romeo and Juliet*.

The second phase of the Elizabethan theater corresponds to Shakespeare's elevation to the position of the main English playwright. This period lasted virtually until he retired to his hometown, in 1614 (two years before his death). Until 1597, there were less important competitors such as Dekker, Marston (involved in the War of the Theaters), Chettle, Haughton, Chapman, and Heywood. A single exception was Ben Jonson, who sought to compete with Shakespeare. From 1594 to 1599, Shakespeare's dramaturgical production matured, producing famous plays and characters, such as *Richard II* (Richard), *The Merchant of Venice* (Shylock), the two parts of *Henry IV*, *Henry V* (Sir John Falstaff), and *Julius Caesar* (Brutus). In 1594, the Privy Council declared the assignment of two suburban theaters (*The Theatre* and *The Rose*) to the two main companies, a factor that play a role in the emergence of all these plays was the assignment.

We can summarize the background of the *semantic context* with a Greenblatt's assertion:

*In the late-sixteenth-century London, those circumstances included the phenomenal growth of the urban population, the emergence of the public theaters, and the existence of a competitive market of plays. They included too an impressive, widespread growth of literacy; an educational system that trained its students to be highly sensitive to rhetorical effects; a social and political taste for elaborate display; a religious culture that compelled parishioner to listen to long, complex sermons; and a vibrant, restless intellectual culture (2004, p.208).*

## INTERTEXTUAL LEVEL: SHAKESPEARE'S HAMLET

### The Basis of Hamlet

Shakespeare's *Hamlet* was the outcome of the sequence of acts of positive interpretation. Greenblatt suggests something similar when he argues "as a writer, he [Shakespeare] rarely started with a blank slate; he characteristically took the materials that had already been in circulation and infused them with his supreme creative energies" (GREENBLATT, 2004, p.8). At the end of the 1580s, there was an unknown authorship version of Hamlet known as Ur-Hamlet, which is now lost. "The origins [of Ur-Hamlet] are as unclear as they are confusing their textual issues.

We are aware of the existence of an earlier, revised and superseded by Shakespeare's play Hamlet, however we do not have the alleged work and we know too little about who wrote it. Most scholars believe that the author of that play was Thomas Kyd, who wrote the Spanish Tragedy, archetype of the 'play of revenge'" (BLOOM, 1998, p. 479). Bloom's hypothesis follows an earlier literary critic, Peter Alexander, who said that Shakespeare himself had written the Ur-Hamlet early in his career, until 1589. Bloom develops this hypothesis even further saying "Shakespeare never stopped reviewing Hamlet, since the first version, circa 1587-89, until the time of his return to Stratford" (BLOOM, 1998, p. 488).

Hamlet's 1601 version, as well as the Ur-Hamlet, has its plot grounded on the revenge legend of the Prince Amleth of Denmark, which as written down (therefore, objectified) in the twelfth century by Saxo Grammaticus in his book *Gesta Danorum* (Deeds of the Danes), and printed in Latin in 1514. James Shapiro summarized the story as follows:

*His uncle kills Amleth's father (after he had defeated the King of Norway in solo combat) and then marries Amleth's mother. The murder is no secret and to avert suspicion about his plans to avenge his father's death, young Amleth acts mad and speaks nonsense. A beautiful young woman is sent to discover his intentions. Later, while speaking with his mother in her chamber, Amleth is spied on by the king's adviser—whom he kills and dismembers. His uncle then packs Amleth off to Britain to have him executed, accompanied by two retainers, but Amleth intercepts their instructions and substitutes their names for his own. He returns to Denmark and avenges his father's death by killing his uncle. In Saxo's version Amleth survives and is made king. The codes of honor and revenge are clear, and Amleth triumphs because of his patience, his intelligence, and his ability to act decisively when he sees his chance. (SHAPIRO, 2005, p. 285)*

The limits of the plot of Shakespeare's Hamlet are already present therein, including several details. As the literature on the subject says, Shakespeare probably did not have direct access to the Latin version, but a reinterpretation made by the French writer Belleforest in his *Histoires Tragiques* around 1570, who added some other traits to the plot like the romance between Hamlet's mother and his uncle.

The missing elements came probably from the Ur-Hamlet reinterpretation, which added the Phantom and the

death of Hamlet (SHAPIRO, 2011). Shapiro argues that "of all the characters, just Fortinbras, (...) is perhaps an invention of Shakespeare" (SHAPIRO, 2005, p.322).

Besides that, Shakespeare also had added two other important elements: the Poets War (see James Bednarz's "Shakespeare and the Poets' War" 2001); and the most relevant features of all, I call it *the crisis of meaning*. The crisis has such importance because: 1) it is the outcome of the positive interpretation made by Shakespeare guided mainly by the general religious problem at that time.

The Spread of Protestantism seemed to overlap gradually Catholicism and its worldview, primarily the individual's relation to *free will*. As evidenced by Curran Jr: "In Hamlet, as in Elizabethan England, Protestantism always wins, and that victory, in part, is finally recognized" (2006 p.3). Beyond that, the victory of Protestantism would result in a possible future secular world. We interpret King Hamlet as representing Catholicism, murdered by Claudius, his brother, who represents the Calvinist Protestantism (brother of Catholicism). Thus, King Hamlet's ghost is Catholicism expressing its last breath. The queen Gertrude could represent better the English nation, who was married to Catholicism (King Hamlet) and shortly after his death fell in a concubine relationship with his less virtuous brother, Protestantism (Claudius). Completing the family context, Hamlet represents the individual of English humanism, orphaned son of Catholicism who feels a crisis of meaning, "but I have that within which passes show, these but trappings and the suit of woe" (I, ii, 85-6, *HAMLET*). Prince Hamlet also says: "O God, I could be bounded in a nutshell, – and count myself a king of infinite space – were it not that I have bad dreams" (II, ii, 214, *HAMLET*). We can interpret that his dreams express the suppression of free will and the consequent humanist freedom, but also express a sense of ominous fratricidal struggle in which brother would be launched against brother – the fear of civil war, maybe an heritage of being a reader of Machiavelli. Until the third act, the prince defends a Catholic worldview of free will, especially in his most famous soliloquy, "To be or not to be, that is the question" (III, i, 56, *HAMLET*), where he ponders between either resignation or the face of the "outrageous fortune", leading to the argument that "'tis a consummation/devoutly to be wished" (III, i, 63-4, *HAMLET*), i.e. free will.

After the third act, the characters' free actions no longer seem able to take possession of their own destiny; the "outrageous fortune." Everything seems to come to life itself, verging on an inevitable end. Prince Hamlet is the one who is truly aware of this is. The third act ends the presence of the ghost of the king, who no longer returns to the stage in the play, thus marking the end of the Catholic worldview and the beginning of the triumph of the Calvinist worldview, marked by the Doctrine of Predestination.

Prince Hamlet has a problem that predates his contact with his father's ghost (who tells him that he was murdered by Claudius). When Claudius and his mother ask him the reasons of his suffering, he says to be *apparently* hurt by the death of his father. In other words, he was aware of his own mourning enacting, but it was not what he felt. The hurt is not apparent, but the façade of mourning that different characters have to act out. Being aware that the world is a stage for representations, he says: "these indeed seem, for they are actions that a man might play (...); these but the trappings and the suits of woe" (I, ii, 83-86, *HAMLET*).

Prince Hamlet seems to suffer the loss of ability to percept the meaning of the world, turning everything senseless: "How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable/Seem to me all the uses of this world" (I, ii .133-4, *HAMLET*); also maintaining a sense of impending social crisis, which is expressed by what he saw. The main source for this regret is the first chapter of



Ecclesiastes I. Although he has not yet aware of this social crisis, as he has not yet met his father's ghost (not in scene II of Act I), he presages it. Hence, we know for sure that his father's death does not bother him; that is not the death of Catholicism, but something else.

### Unfolding of the Crisis of Meaning in the Climax

When a company of actors arrived at Elsinore's Castle, Prince Hamlet elaborated his plan to "catch" his uncle Claudius by the reenactment of his crime. During the performance Prince Hamlet got the expected effect from the King, who leaves the audience and went to his room, for praying. From this moment, the climax unfolds increasingly quicker, culminating in the dialogue between Hamlet and Gertrude; jointly with the murder of Polonius, the Counselor. Nevertheless, before the arriving at her mother's room, Hamlet finds the King in his chambers in their own soliloquy, which is identified by the prince as if he was praying. For a moment, Prince Hamlet thought of killing Claudius, but after a dialogue with himself he decides not to do it. If he did, he would not get his revenge, since his uncle would be dispatched at a moment in which he was not in sin; following the catholic tradition, he could potentially be redeemed and then go to heaven. In fact, Hamlet cannot justify the *vendetta*, because *there was no obvious ethical and metaphysical meaning in the world* for him.

Prince Hamlet arrives at Queen's room while Polonius is already hidden behind the curtain. The scene is set around a progressively distressing "dialogue" in which both sides do not understand each other. It's like their worlds were distinct and their *semantic context* were not the same. Gertrude tries to convince Prince Hamlet that he is mad, whereas Prince Hamlet wants to show her "the truth": "You go not till I set you up a glass/Where you may see the inmost part of you" (III, iv, 19-20, *HAMLET*); Gertrude, however, listens the words of his son as if they were veiled by a murderous feeling. When she yells for help, Polonius scared himself, showing where he was hidden, and then being murdered by Hamlet who, in turn, was indifferent about his deed. His quarrel, the focus of his attention was Gertrude. The Queen asks Prince Hamlet: "What have I done, that thou dar'st wag thy tongue/in noise so rude against me?" (III, iv, 41-2, *HAMLET*) and he responds to it: "makes marriages vows/as false as dicers' oaths, O, such a deed/as from the body contraction plucks/the very soul, and sweet religion makes/a rhapsody of words" (III, iv, 45-48, *HAMLET*). She cannot understand what Hamlet meant, until she asks again and thence it becomes evident the crisis of Catholic worldview against the Protestant conception. Hamlet says: "Look here upon this picture, and on this,/the counterfeit presentment of two brothers." (III, iv, 53-4, *HAMLET*) i.e., King Hamlet and Claudius, Catholicism and Protestantism, brothers, Christian creeds. The first is marked as bellicose honored by the gods, while the other was crafty, sneaky, vile a rotten spike that contaminates the crop. "A murderer and villain!/A slave that is not twentieth part of the tithe/of your precedent lord, a Vice of kings,/a cutpurse of the empire and the rule" (III, iv, 96-99, *HAMLET*) – and no wonder the "slave" metaphors and "tithe are used." Thus, Hamlet asks rhetorically and then concludes, "Would step from this to this? Sense sure you have, /else could you not have motion, but sure that sense /is apoplex'd, for madness would not err, /nor sense to ecstasy was ne'er so thrall'd" (III, iv, 71-4, *HAMLET*).

Gertrude did not realize, the English nation did not realize, both would be in a state of akrasia or even apathy that Prince Hamlet (and Shakespeare) seems to fear. It was manifested in two feelings; on the one hand, the lack of freedom of existence that everyone would be condemned (a state consummated and represented in the end of the play). On the other hand, it was manifested in the fear of struggle between brothers that threatens the kingdom, i.e. the Civil War

(which indeed happened less than 50 years later in England). This entire clamor causes the ghost of King Hamlet to appear one last time, as if resigned, ready to leave this world. Hamlet tries to show her mother "do not you see anything?" She answers back saying "Nothing, but I see all around us", uttering her diagnosis to his son "This is a creation of your mind." Ancient times, Catholicism and contingency of man would give way to a concrete world and its inevitable fate. This crisis extinguished a way of being. What left was the sense of crisis and the feeling of corruption in the world, "whiles rank corruption, mining all within, /Infects unseen." (III, iv, 148-9, *HAMLET*).

### **The Secular World**

The rest of the play is marked by the tragic autopoietic conjectures. Hamlet is sent to England and escorted by his two colleagues, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, to be executed there; fate decreed that he could save himself, dispatching Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to death instead. Laertes, son of Polonius, returned to Denmark from France to avenge the murder of his father, also with pretensions to the throne itself; ends up allying with the king and soon he knew about Hamlet's return, thus devising a plan to murder the prince. Ophelia went mad and committed suicide. The King and Laertes planned a murderous revenge against Hamlet, who now no longer wants revenge, however the revenge turned against everybody in the play, then we see everyone dying in the last scene, except Horatio and Fortinbras. An inevitable end, but previously envisioned by Hamlet, who could only resign himself.

In the last scene, Hamlet tells Horatio "Sir, in my heart there was a kind of fighting/that would not let me seep. Methought I lay/worse than the mutines in the bilboes" (V, ii, 4-6, *HAMLET*). He no longer feels it, since the determination of the Calvinistic world view prevailed in Denmark (England). Although he could not escape from that destiny, he utters these words: "When our deep plots do pall, and that should learn us/there is a divinity that shapes our ends, /Rough-hew them how we will" (V, ii, 9-11, *HAMLET*).

### **The Idea of Internalization: the Objective Ideas Level**

The process of setting up a well-finished psychological interiority in Hamlet seems to be an agreement among the most relevant and current Shakespeare experts from different streams. However, there is a strong disagreement with regard to the beginning of this process and its major influences. For example, Harold Bloom (who coined the term internalization process) argues that in Shakespeare's plays, the process of internalization of the characters shows up strong enough with Falstaff in Henry IV. His hypothesis is that, after concluding the characters Falstaff, Hal and Brutus, Shakespeare decided to review their own practice as a playwright, returning to the beginning of his career, perhaps in tribute to Hamlet, his son who had died. According to Greenblatt, the death of his son played an important role in Shakespeare's life, once sadness was for him the key motivation for Shakespeare's revisionism. We can compare Bloom and Greenblatt hypothesis about the source of Shakespeare's sadness well expressed in the following citations:

*The mystery of Hamlet, and the play itself, depends on the notion of grief as the review mechanism, and perhaps the reviewing process itself, understood as a kind of nostalgia for a younger Shakespeare. At 36, Shakespeare seems to conceive be facing a maximum of transcendental moment, and concentrate here all his talent, at the time turns to the revisionist effort of an intensity never seen before (or after) in his career (BLOOM, 1998, p.499).*

*Something deeper must have been at work in Shakespeare, then, something powerful enough to call forth the unprecedented representation of tormented inwardness. 'To be, or not to be': as audiences and readers have long*



*instinctively understood, these suicidal thought, provoked by the death of a loved one, lie at the heart of Shakespeare's tragedy. They may well have been the core of the playwright's own inward disturbance. The Shakespeare's had named their twins, Judith and Hamnet, after their Stratford neighbors Judith and Hamnet Sadler. The latter appears in Stratford records as both Hamnet and Hamlet Sadler; in the loose orthography of the time, the names were virtually interchangeable. Even if the decision to redo the old tragedy were a strictly commercial one, the coincidence of the names – the act of writing his own son's name again and again – may well have reopened a deep wound, a wound that had never properly healed. (GREENBLATT, 2004, p.334).*

Andrew Gurr defends a much wider hypothesis than that of Bloom and Greenblatt, in which the development of the internalization (he called it "personation") had their origin not only from Shakespeare's plays, but rather from three big plays of Marlowe and Kyd, which already showed great individualities: Tamburlaine (Tamburlaine), Faust (Doctor Faustus) and Hieronymus (The Spanish Tragedy).

These characters have contributed decisively to the process that Shakespeare would improve and reach the top with Hamlet. The influence of these plays over other plays after them was prodigious. It progressed with Marlowe in Tamburlaine with the decasyllables blank verse, which was decisive for the theatrical performance, widely used by others, including Shakespeare. In short, for Gurr: "With the development of 'personation' Shakespeare in the interactions between the characters on stage, replacing the dominant emotionalism of powerful lines (verses) of Marlowe, which was increased from evolutionary leap in the 1590s" (GURR, 2004, p.165).

Gurr and Bloom disagree about the contribution of Marlowe and Kyd on the process of internalization of the characters. For Bloom, there was an "inner urge" from Henry VI (first play of the author) series, although Shakespeare has not reached maturity enough to achieve it. Marlowe would not have been able to offer subsidies to Shakespeare in advancing the art of internalization. Shapiro also disagrees with Gurr, but the explanation of the process of internalization differs from Bloom and Greenblatt. For Shapiro "the sense of inwardness that Shakespeare creates by allowing us to hear a character as intelligent as Hamlet wrestle with his thoughts is something that no dramatist had yet achieved" (SHAPIRO, 2005, p.293). His explanation tries to explain the phenomenon without reducing it to the *pragmatic level*, attributing the causes for Shakespeare's deep subjectivity to sadness (Bloom), to its contingent moment of sadness for the loss of his child, and thus his keener relationship with death (Greenblatt), for a general and diffuse effect of the theater environment (Gurr). It takes into account *intertextual* relations with other authors, and a path of internal development and his ideas.

The key to understand it is the use of the *soliloquy*. Like other experts, Shapiro states "he [Shakespeare] had written memorable soliloquies from early on in his career, but as powerful as these were, even they fall far short of the intense self-awareness we find in Hamlet's" (SHAPIRO, 2005, p.293). As we will see, Shakespeare had already created important soliloquies for the character Brutus in the first acts of Julius Caesar (1599), however he did not develop it. Shapiro's hypothesis is that there was an *objective construction* influence inaugurated by Montaigne in his Essays, the speech form of a personal essay. The first two essays were published in French in 1580 (which Shakespeare might have already read that the area had less instrumental in French), but the English translation has only emerged in 1603. Therefore, it is not possible to establish a direct with Montaigne's influence over Hamlet's construction. What we can safely state is that *there is a certain parallelism in the formulations of self-awareness and internal conflicts*

over ethical and moral dilemmas. That is the *hardcore* of the idea of internalization and we must comprehend it within Shakespeare's own plays.

The psychological and existential interiority of a character is created when a solution is required to resolve an *ethical conflict*, which appears when there is no established truth in the world. In the theater, these inner conflicts would be better captured by the form of soliloquies. Let us compare the soliloquies of Falstaff in 1 Henry IV, Brutus in Julius Caesar, and Prince Hamlet and Hamlet, in order to see how the internalization's idea could emerge only in Hamlet. Before the battle of Shrewsbury, Falstaff questions himself about honor and death:

*'Tis not due yet, I would be loath to pay him before his day. What need I be so forward with him that calls not on me? Well, 'tis no matter, honor pricks me on. Yea, but how if honor prick me off when I come on? How then? Can honor set to a leg? No. Or an arm? No. Or take away the grief of a wound? No. Honor hath no skill in surgery then? No. What is honor? A word. What is in that word honor? What is that honor? Air. A trim reckoning! Who hath it? He that died a' Wednesday. Doth he feel it? No. Doth he hear it? No. 'Tis insensible then? Yea, to the dead. But will't not live with the living? No. Why? Detraction will not suffer it. Therefore I'll none of it, honor is a mere escutcheon. And so ends my catechism (V, i, 125 – 1 Henrique IV).*

Nothing could be so different from Brutus and Hamlet with regard to melancholy and the relationship with the possibility of imminent death. Falstaff has a skeptical position in relation to anything that could justify any action. However, this skepticism is marked more by fear of death (and the desire to avoid it) than the total loss of the meaning of the world. The inner meaning necessity is not a matter for Falstaff, it becomes a matter when death approaches him. When this happens, he just try to avoid it to maintain their usual conduct of life; a life of gluttony, sloth, some trickery, and skepticism about big things. Greenblatt has the hypothesis that Shakespeare transformed all life around him in his art, turning the persons he knew in his characters. In this manner, Greenblatt argues that the formation of Sir John Falstaff, the fat old buck, was the product of literary transformation of Robert Greene, Shakespeare's opponent.

In *Julius Caesar*, although embryonic a new light is shed to the internalization, because it merely comprehends the first scene of the second act. The conversation between Cassius and Brutus in scene two of act one resembles partially the first conversation that Gertrude (the queen) had with Prince Hamlet, when the queen talked about the sadness or melancholy of his son. Let us compare them.

*Cassius, /Be not deceiv'd. If I have veil'd my look, /I turn the trouble of my countenance/Merely upon myself. Vexed I am /Of late with passions of some difference, /Conceptions only proper to myself, /Which give some soil, perhaps, to my behaviors; /But let not therefore my good friends be griev'd / (Among which number, Cassius, be you one), /Nor construe any further my neglect,/Than that poor Brutus, with himself at war,/Forgets the shows of love to other men. (I, ii, 36-47 – JULIUS CAESAR)*

*Seems, madam? Nay, it is, I know not "seems." /'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother, /Nor customary suits of solemn black, /Nor windy suspiration of forc'd breath, /No, nor the fruitful river in the eye, /Nor the dejected havior of the visage, /Together with all forms, moods, shapes of grief, /That can denote me truly. These indeed seem, /For they are actions that a man might play, /But I have that within which passes how, /These but the trappings and the suits of woe. (I, ii, 76-86 - HAMLET).*

Brutus knows suffering, knows that he is in conflict with himself, but he does not seem to be fully aware of the source of his pain. He maintains a sullen conduct that seeks to avoid others. Hamlet, on the other hand, understands the difference between the staging of sadness and recognition of the existence of a melancholy state "from within" before the death of his father. Hamlet has self-consciousness of his acts in the world and his pain, while Brutus seems to express that he cannot get to this point: "No, Cassius; for the eye sees not itself, /but by reflection, by some other things" (I, ii, 57-58, *JULIUS CAESAR*).

The position of Cassius is very distinct from Horatio or any other character in Hamlet, he stands for Brutus as a mirror, saying "So well as by reflection, I, your glass, /Will modestly discover to yourself/that of yourself Which you yet know not of" (I, ii, 68-70, *JULIUS CAESAR*)." Hamlet distinguishes what is contingent of what is transcendent, as it would have in the chest "Something that is nothing." Brutus could never reach this level within a Roman tragedy, because soon the largest value of the politician, the Roman citizen, speaks inside his mind. Brutus personally loves Caesar, but Brutus knows that he has to die for the public good.

*It must be by his death; and for my part, /I know no personal cause to spurn at him, /But for the general. He would be crown'd: /How that might change his nature, there's the question. (II, i, 10-13 - JULIUS CAESAR)*

Between individual value and collective value, the collective triumphs, because they are first of all Romans. Caesar must die, because he had been becoming increasingly an individual (like Marlowe's Tamburlaine), on the other hand, he has no self-awareness, building an image for himself without limits. It can also be attributed to Falstaff, for he (though does not ask questions about the value of his life in relation to death) fears death knowing that it limits their subjectivity. In other words, Falstaff realizes the limits of his existence in death, so he dismisses the honor as something empty. Brutus says that "honor and cherish not fear death"; Cassius also says not to be afraid of death and repeatedly speaks of suicide. But the relationship itself from self-destruction is very different in Cassius, Brutus, and Hamlet. Death for Cassius' point-of-view is seen as freedom (ancient freedom; to be free of slavery) "So I know how I will use the dagger. Cassius's free himself from slavery." (I, iii, 92-3, *JULIUS CAESAR*). A possible death of Brutus represents the sacrifice for the common good, the good of Rome. Suicide and honor for Hamlet does not have a direct conclusion in this world, we can notice it in his first soliloquy: "O that this too too solid flesh would melt, /Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew! /Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd /His canon 'gainst self-slaughter! O God, God, /How weary, stale, flate, and unprofitable /Seem to me all the uses of this world" (I, ii, 129-134, *HAMLET*). The same question of suicide reappears in the famous soliloquy "To be, or not to be".

Hamlet in a world divided by Protestantism and Catholicism, loses the meaning of his previous world. In short, Shakespeare finally allowed the existence of a protagonist who can dive inwardness. The same would not be possible in Julius Caesar. Although the self-questioning about the act of murder had some ethical dilemma for Brutus, who was the closest to Caesar, the good of Rome was more important. For Brutus and Cassius there was a well-established and non-controversial meaning in their Roman world. In Protestant England we know that salvation is individual; it is not possible to justify an action only in the individual himself. The truth is in God's will. God's will is captured and interpreted personally, either by signs of God in prayer and the word of the Bible. When the ultimate meaning of the world loses its immediate reference, it is now required, all the time, a resolution of the acts. Hamlet could not act with honor, as did Hieronymus Thomas Kyd, the traditional Amleth or anything else that could act morally.

*In locating the conflict of the play within his protagonist, Shakespeare transformed forever the traditional revenge play in which that conflict had until now been externalized, fought out between the hero and powerful adversaries, and in which a hero (like the Amleth of Shakespeare's sources) had to delay for practical, self-protective reasons. This was one of the great breakthroughs in his career. (SHAPIRO, 2005, p.302).*

John Falstaff is the first to question the validity of the moral consequences of the acts (even seen as noble) are clear in Julius Caesar, Hamlet both combine in an individual, who creates awareness of himself and awareness of awareness. Shapiro says that: "Maybe the great secret of the soliloquies is not their inwardness so much as their outwardness, their essay like capacity to draw us into an intimate relationship with the speaker and see the world through his eyes" (SHAPIRO, 2005, p. 299).

## CONCLUSIONS

As we have seen, *Objectivity* is what consolidated internalization in Hamlet. It expressed his transcendent force, causing his readers since then to look at the inner tragedy of the Prince as symbol for tragedy of those that suffer from this kind of metaphysical necessity (the internal necessity). In this sense, internalization could not be contingent, once its hardcore is referential to some state of human being in a particular situation of crisis of transcendent meaning for the world. The loss of the core meaning of the *semantic context*, previously provided by religion, was the most important characteristic of the new modern world. It promoted a thought crisis, a deep change that allowed Shakespeare to create his objective idea, for referring the idea's hardcore to this new human emotional, existential, and psychological state. At the very core of the idea, we can find a statement about something truth in the world. Moreover, it is a result of long process of interpretation, elaboration, and reinterpretation and, finally, a new objectification in a form of a theatrical plot.

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