

# Abstract

This thesis analyses the differences and similarities in terms of gender in the revengers in Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* (1594), *Othello* (1604), and *Hamlet* (1602). The first part of this thesis focuses on the different types of traumatic injuries that Tamora, Lavinia, Othello, Iago, and Hamlet experience and the way gender and its social and political constraints affect their processing of trauma and the way through which this leads to vengeful violence.

Additionally, this thesis explores the link between Shakespeare's revenge tragedies and modern cinematic revenge narratives by filmmaker Quentin Tarantino. The female revengers in *Inglourious Basterds* (2009), *Kill Bill, vol. 1* (2003), and *Kill Bill, vol. 2* (2004), Shosanna and Beatrix, share similarities with Shakespeare's female revengers in *Titus Andronicus*. This second part of the thesis is also concerned with the way in which gender continues to affect the revenger's response to traumatic injuries, and the changes in the resolution of these narratives when compared to Shakespeare's. Finally, this thesis provides suggestions for further research in the field of female revenge in modern revenge narratives.

This thesis draws on trauma theory, gender studies, and revenge studies in order to analyse the role that gender plays in the processing of a traumatic injury and the obtaining of retribution. Additionally, this thesis analyses the many ways in which the characters of female revengers subvert patriarchal norms both in Elizabethan society as well as in modern society. The main secondary sources this thesis engaged with are the monograph *Revenge and Gender in Classical, Medieval and Renaissance Literature* (2018), edited by Lesel Dawson and Fiona McHardy, and articles such as "The Gnawing Vulture': Revenge, Trauma Theory, and *Titus Andronicus*" (2002) by Deborah Willis and "Cannibalism and the Act of Revenge in Tudor-Stuart Drama" (2004) by Raymond Rice.

Keywords: Revenge Tragedies; William Shakespeare; Postmodern Cinema; Quentin Tarantino; Gender Studies; Trauma