

A Tragedy of "Hamlet": intrinsic Analysis

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***Abstract:** The plot of the play begins with the exposition: the introduction of the characters, the political situation, and the death of the late king hamlet. In complication the major characters had conflicts with others and reached the climax when hamlet and Laertes played in the fencing match proposed by the king. Here, Finally Gertrude, the king, Laertes, and Hamlet died. The falling action come when the young Fortinbras came with his army and the ambassadors to tell the death of Hamlet's friends, Rosencrantz and Guildenstren in England. In the resolution, Horatio, Hamlet's best friend, told the truth about the tragedy and the election of young Fortinbras as the king of Denmark. Hamlet and Claudius were major ond round character and the rest were minor and flat characters. The setting of the play was in the castle of Elsinore, Denmark and its surroundings, for example, the guard platform, the queen's closet, and in the churchyard. The events also took place in the room of Polonius' house. They took place in winter night and daytime.*

Keyword; play, tragedy, plot, Character, and setting

1. Introduction

Literature is one of the human creations in writing. It can tell us a someone's attitude, social life, culture and events which may occur in the other part of the world in different time. Roberts and Jacobs (1989:1) state that literature refers to written (and also spoken) composition to tell stories, dramatize situation and some thought and emotion, and also, more importantly to interest, entertain, stimulate, broaden, and ennoble readers.

Robert and Jacobs (1989:2) stated that through cumulative experience in reading a great literature shapes our goals and values by helping us helping us clarify our own identities, both positively, through acceptance of the admirable in human beings, and negatively, through the rejection of the sinister. It helps us shape our judgments through the rejection of the sinister. It helps us shape our judgments through the comparison of the good and the bad. Literature is usually classified into the following genres or classes: prose fiction, poetry, and drama. Valency (1975:333) defined drama as follows: drama is form of literature which is made in the purpose to be performed by actors. In general the subject matter is narrative in character and in the type of story traditionally considered suitable for presentation on the stage; the interplay of opposite elements usually result in a conflict.

While prose fiction and poetry are written simply to be read, Robert and Jacobs (1989:2-3) state that; drama(or play) is the form of literature designed to be performed by actors. Drama may focus on a single character or small number of characters, and it present fictional events, as if they were happening in the present, to be witnessed by a group of people composing on audience.

One of the greatest English dramatists and poets in all of literature is William Shakespeare. He was the great English playwright in the Elizabethan age(1485-1625). He was born in Stratford-upon-avon, the son of a prosperous and ambitious tradesman who was a leader in his town, John Shakespeare.

He was born in Stratford-upon-Avon, England on 23rd April 1564. His father was a dealer of grain and his mother was the daughter of a prosperous farmer. It seemed that he got a good education and this was perhaps gained at King's New School, a local Grammar School. However, there is evidence that the family decreased and that Shakespeare was not able to complete his school.

He married Anne Hathaway in November 1582. And about six months later they had a daughter, Susanna. They had twins named Hamnet and Judith. Unfortunately,

Hamnet died at the age of eleven.

Little is known about Shakespeare's life between 1585 and 1592. Some scholars considered that he might have been a soldier. This probably may be found on the detail in Henry IV and Henry V, concerning the corruption of his life in army. He also employed as an actor and this led him to the literature world in London.

By the year 1599 it is clear that Shakespeare became a wealthy man because he proposed to the College of Heralds for the living of his family. He also involved in purchasing an important property in Stratford.

In the middle period, he wrote an experiment with Roman material in Julius Caesar that led to the great tragedies Hemlet, Othello, King lear, and Macbeth. It is considered that the drama „Hamlet“ was written around 1602. It is said that the story was similar to the Spanish tragedy by Thomas Kyd, which was performed around the mid 1590's. Hamlet decorated by Shakespeare's eloquence of verse. There are many well-known quotations in Hamlet. Many of which are still used in English language today.

After reading the drama, which the writer took from the book “An introduction to literature: fiction, poetry, Drama “ edited by Barnet and Burto, she is interest in analizing the drama Hamlet by William Shakespeare. In this case the writer focused on the plot, characters, and settings of drama.

2. Literature Review

Literature

Robert and Jacobs (1989:1) state that literature refers to written and also spoken composition to tell stories, dramatize situation, and several thoughts and emotion in order to interest, entertain, stimulate, broaden , and ennoble readers.

The nature of drama

The word "drama" is often used as a synonym for "play". According to Valency(1975:333) drama is a form of literature intended for performance by actors. In general the subject is narrative in character and, in the type of story traditionally considered suitable for presentation on the stage.

Element of Drama

There are some elements of a drama such as plot, characters, and settings. Barnet et al.(1988:744) stated that, "a plot should have a rising, a climax, and a falling action. Shakespeare sometimes used a pyramidal structure, placing his climax neatly in the middle of what seems to us be the third of five acts.

Plot

Barnet et al.(1988:744) stated that, "A plot should have a rising, a climax, and a falling action. "Shakespeare sometimes used a pyramidal structure, placing his climax neatly in the middle of what seems to us be the third of five acts.

Plot begins with an exposition-an introduction to the situation and basis conflict. Then, it continues through an event or series to climax, highest point in the struggle. Finally, it ends with the resolution-a final comment on the situation(Canavan and Brandon, 1990:154). The following is the summary of the play

Character

A character in play is a person created by a playwright to carry the action, language, ideas, and emotions of the play,(Roberts and Jacobs, 1989:1011).

Furthermore, Brockett(1988:45) stated the appearance of character can be seen in some ways. First, it could be seen through description in stage directions ,prefaces, or other explanation but not the part of the dialogue: second, through what the character in

the play says; third, through what other characters in the play say about the characters: and, finally the most important, through what the characters do in the play.

In drama as in fiction, for instance, we find both round and flat characters. The round characters are fully developed and usually undergo some change in the course of the play. On the other hand, flat characters tend to be undeveloped and unchanging (Robert and Jacobs, 1989:1011)

2.3.4 Settings

According to Cain et al., (1993:141), the action in a literary work takes place in a particular environment—the location, the social and cultural environment, and the time. All affect characters and their behavior.

3. Analysis

The Summary of the Play

The play begins in a cold night of a winter on the battlements of Castle Elsinore. A guard, Bernardo arrives to substitute another guard, Francisco of his watch. After that Hamlet's best friend, Horatio and Marcellus attend and greet Francisco. They talk of the appearance of the ghost they saw when they were on duty. Marcellus asks Horatio attend and see the ghost for himself. Actually Horatio is not sure of the guards' reports. But after he and Bernardo see the ghost for the second time, he believes in the apparition appearance. Horatio then commits that he would like to see the ghost by

himself. He recognizes the ghost as the King Hamlet who is recently died.. the ghost appears and as quickly as possible it disappears. Horatio is shocked at the sight whhe saw ghost the late King Hamlet in his war uniform that he wore when he returned from the war, conquering the King Fortinbras of Norway. Then, he tells Hamlet about what he has seen immediately.

Hamlet is informed by the guards that they saw a ghost. Then, he intends to investigate, and finally he meets the ghost, which is his father, the late King Hamlet. The ghost told Hamlet that he was murdered and was not able to repent his sins. He wanders around the castle in the night for an unlimited period of time. He asks his son, Hamlet, to take revenge. The ghost describes the way he was murdered to his son. He said that Hamlet's uncle, Claudius, poured poison in his ear while he was asleep some time. The ghost of the Hamlet's father does not want his wife, Gertrude to be harmed by Claudius. God knows her fate whether she is guilty or not.

The King of Denmark has passed away. Then, his son, Prince Hamlet returns home from his school in Germany to attend his father's funeral. He is extremely surprised and shocked to know that his mother, Queen Gertrude, has already remarried his father's brother, Uncle Claudius. He took the crown although he knows that Hamlet was the righteous heir of the late King Hamlet. He must be the next King of Denmark. Hamlet is suspicious and feels strange after seeing that his mother, Queen Gertrude, is not upset and seems very intimate with his uncle.

Hamlet pretends to become mad because of the grief in order to observe whatever happens in the castle. However, he starts to be doubtful concerning the appearance of the ghost whether it is the ghost of his father or it may be the devil in appearance of his father, trying to harm him. Hamlet is also distracted by his thought that he may be a coward if he does not fulfill his father's request of the revenge over his death.

A group of traveling players arrives at the castle. Then, Hamlet decides to use the players to perform a play, which is similar to the way of his father's death. He will look at closely the reaction of his mother and uncle when they watch the performance of the play. The drama is called „The Mousetrap“. It is an adapted play of „The Murder of Gonzago“.

Hamlet's plan seems successful. Claudius' reaction toward the play shows that he seems to be guilty. He leaves the room because he cannot stand watching the play. Hamlet is now sure that his uncle, Claudius, is a villain. He then decides to take his revenge over his father's death. Although he does not want to make his mother harmful, Hamlet wants to find out what her guilt is.

The Lord Chamberlain and the senior adviser to Claudius, Polonius, hides behind a curtain while Hamlet questions his mother. He suspects someone is watching them secretly. He thought that the person is Claudius. Finally, he stabs at the curtain. Unluckily, the man is Polonius instantly, dying. Claudius considers not to punish Hamlet over the death of Polonius, but to send him to England to be killed there. Claudius invites two of Hamlet's schoolmates, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, from Germany to the castle. They are ordered to spy on his nephew, Hamlet. They now accompany him to the King of England for having execution. However, Hamlet knows the intrigue and arrangement for the sealed letter to the King of England. He plans to change it. Unfortunately, when they arrive in England, the two spies are executed instead of Hamlet.

There are three deaths as the effect of Hamlet's delayed revenge. The next death is that of Ophelia, Polonius's beloved daughter. She is in love with Hamlet. She is so distracted and sad by his father's death and the changing of Hamlet's behavior. She feels Hamlet does not love her anymore. Moreover, she thought that this is caused by Hamlet's assumed madness. She drowns while singing sad love songs near a pond. Not long after that Laertes, Ophelia's brother, who studies in France returned home. He is so sad having his father and beloved sister died. He meets Hamlet, who has come back from England at Ophelia's funeral. He would like to have revenge over the death of his father and sister.

Claudius sets a plot of killing Hamlet and involves Laertes in it. A challenge of fencing match is set between Hamlet and Laertes. In addition, the winner will be the one who gets three strikes. However, Laertes' sword is bated or poisoned which will cause the death of Hamlet if he can hurt him. Claudius says that if it does not work in the event of Hamlet winning, he will put the poison in the cup of victory. Hamlet has got two strikes ahead. His mother, Queen Gertrude, is very happy that she toasts her son from the poisoned cup. Unluckily, Claudius cannot stop her. As the fight is going on, she begins to be unwell. Both Hamlet and Laertes get cuts from the bated sword. Unfortunately, Laertes is dead first. Before dying he tells Hamlet the truth about the setting of the poisoned fencing match.

Then, the Queen Gertrude dies and Hamlet convinces that it is Claudius's cruelty. He directly attacks Claudius and hits him with the bated sword and then pours the rest of the poisoned wine into the King Claudius's mouth. He is then dead. Hamlet feels that he is dying and decides to tell Horatio, his only true friend that the throne of Denmark should now go to Norway. He orders Horatio to explain truly the events to the young Prince Fortinbras of Norway so that everybody knows how the bloody events at Castle Elsinore occur. The play ends by having the young Fortinbras as the new King of Denmark who

gives full military funeral for Prince Hamlet.

.Plot

Exposition

The play opened on the night of the ghostly visitation. The three guards Bernardo, Francisco, and Marcellius had seen the ghost who was in the same figure as the late King Hamlet at one o'clock for two nights in their night watch. The conversation of Bernardo, Marcellius and Horatio provide critical information about the political situation in Denmark. Horatio's speech in act 1 informed us the reason of warlike preparation in the state such as the strict and observant watch and the daily fellow student of young prince Hamlet joined the watch and challenged for the appearance. Horatio felt it was very strange, because the ghost look really like the king who wore armor when he attacked the king of Norway. He interpreted this strange appearance of the ghost, as a warning to the state since the young Norwegian, Prince Fortinbras wanted to make an invasion to retake the lands, which were taken by the late king Hamlet about it.

The following scene was in castle of Elsinore where Claudius presided in the meeting talking about his condolence to his brother's death. He announced himself as a king and his marriage with Hamlet's mother. He also talked about the young Fortinbras's invasion to retake the lands lost by his father. In this scene, Hamlet expressed his sadness over his father's death. He said that

„He is not alone my inky cloak, good mother,

Nor customary suits of solemn black,

Nor windy suspiration of forced breath,

No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,

Nor the objected honor of the visage,(Ach.ii.77-81)

He was also very depressed because of his mother's hasty and incestuous marriage. She married his own uncle, Claudius, in about two months after the death of his father.

Sometime later, Hamlet joined the night watch in the guard platform where Hamlet and his friends did the watch. It was twelve o'clock in the night when they heard a

flourish of trumpets as the sign that the king had a party. Then, the ghost came but Hamlet was still in doubt whether the ghost was good spirit or not.

The Complication

The conflict grew heated when Claudius and other tried to find out the reason for strange behaviour. He decided to send Hamlet to England to save his position because after watching the play which was similar as what he did to his own brother the late King Hamlet.

Claudius thought that Hamlet had known the cause of his father's death. Then Polonius asked permission to eavesdrop the conversation between Hamlet and his mother, Gertrude, in her closet. In the way to Gertrude's closet, Hamlet saw Claudius kneeling as if he was praying. Hamlet decided to kill him but delayed it because he thought that he would send Claudius soul to heaven instead of hell for his sin.

In Gertrude's closet, Hamlet answered roughly to his mother's question why he had much offended his stepfather Claudius. Behind the arras and hamlet directly made a pass with his sword through the arras and killed Polonius whom he thought was Claudius. Later Polonius's death caused his daughter, Ophelia, became mad and finally died.

The Crisis or Climax

The conflicts were found in fencing match between the prince hamlet and Laertes where Gertrude died after drinking from the poisoned cup set for Hamlet. Then he and laertes were wounded by poisoned foil. When Laertes confesses his and the king's guilt, hamlet killed Claudius with the same poisoned foil.

Falling action

A march of warlike sounded far off. Then, Hamlet died. Osric told that young Fortinbras with his army came from Poland. The ambassadors of England also come to tell that Guildenstern and Rosencrantz had already been executed. Before Hamlet died. Horatio announced the election of Fortinbras to the Danish throne.

Resolution and Laertes.

All the major characters died in the fencing match between Hamlet and Laertes.. After listening to Horatio's explanation about the bloody actions, and accidental death of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, Fortinbras asked four captains to bear Hamlet like a soldier's music and the rite of war speak loudly to him.

2. Characters

List of Main Characters

Hamlet

The righteous heir to the throne of Denmark who returns from a university in Germany after knowing about his father's death and his mother married to his uncle, the brother of the late King Hamlet, Claudius, who has taken the crown and declares himself as the King of Denmark. .

Claudius

King Hamlet's brother, who illegally takes the throne of Denmark after he kills his own brother by poisoning him and married his sister-in-law, Queen Gertrude.

Gertrude

She is Prince Hamlet's mother. She marries Claudius, his husband's brother, soon after his husband, King Hamlet died..

The ghost

The spirit of the late King Hamlet who wanders around in the earth at nights until his soul is cleaned from the sins.

Horatio

He is the only Hamlet's true best friend. He is also a colleague of Hamlet in school in Germany.

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern

They are also schoolmates of Hamlet in Germany. They are ordered by Claudius to be spies for watching out whatever done by Prince Hamlet.

Polonius

He is the old Lord Chamberlain of Castle Elsinore and also Claudius' main adviser. He is the father of Laertes and Ophelia.

Ophelia

She is the Polonius' lovely daughter and has love affair with Hamlet. She drowns in a pond and dies after being distracted by the rejection of Hamlet towards her love and her father's death.

Laertes

He is the son of Polonius who becomes an instrument for Claudius in the final duel with Hamlet. He is also the brother of Ophelia who loves her very much. He goes to a university in France.

The characters involved in this play are divided into groups: they are major characters and minor characters. In the play Hamlet, the major characters are Hamlet and Claudius. The minor characters are Gertrude, Polonius, Laertes, Ophelia, Horatio, Guildenstern, and Rosencrantz.

Major Character Analysis

Hamlet

Hamlet was the one and only son of the king. Hamlet and Queen Gertrude. He was a person who always hesitated to do things. He delayed killing Claudius because he was not sure whether he was guilty or not. His hesitation later caused the death of Polonius, Ophelia, Laertes, his mother, and himself. When he got a chance to kill Claudius, he hesitated to do it. He thought that it was not his intention to send Claudius's soul to heaven /why this hire and salary, not revenge(Act.III.iii.II.75).

Hamlet was a smart man. He asked the players to perform The Murder of Gonzago. He used it as a play to prove whether the ghost's words were true or not. The play was similar to what Claudius had done, the murder of his brother. It was his trick to find out the truth about his uncle's guilt. He changed Claudius's letter to the king of England that contained the execution of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.

At the end of the play Hamlet changed before he died from the poisoned sword, he apologized to Laertes for having killed the latter's father, Polonius.

2.2.2. Claudius

Claudius was the brother of the late King Hamlet. He was an ambitious man. He wanted to be a king and married the queen, Gertrude, soon. Thus, he decided to kill his own brother and then took the crown and married the queen. The marriage took place only about two months after the death of the late king Hamlet. He was cunning. He ordered Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to spy on Hamlet. He sent Polonius to eavesdrop the conversation between Hamlet and his mother. He also planned a meeting between Hamlet and Ophelia

in order to know whether the rejection of love was of his strange behavior. When, he felt the Hamlet knew about his sin, he sent Hamlet to England accompanied by Rosencrantz and Guildenstern with a letter commanding the king of England to execute Hamlet right away. But Hamlet changed the content of the letter and that it was Rosencrantz and Guildenstern were executed.

Claudius used Laertes' revenge to his further his plan to kill Hamlet when he knew Hamlet could escape. He set a fencing match between Hamlet and Laerte. The sword bated so that Hamlet would die if he were hit. If this plan was not successful, He set a cup a poisoned wine for Hamlet.

Minor Characters

Gertrude

Gertrude was the wife of the late King Hamlet. She was a weak woman. She married Claudius, her late husband's brother, just two months after his death. Gertrude was a loving and caring mother. She love her son very much so that she was concerned with Hamlet change in behavior. to She tried to find the cause of hemlet's madness.

Gertrude was kind woman who did not have suspicion to other people. She thought that her husband's death was a natural death. She was too innocent and she was not even suspicion to the king for hi husband's strange murder/you know this is common; All that live must die/Passing through nature to eternity(act.I.ii.II.72-73).

She always obeyed her new husband. She did not realize that she was used by King Claudius to further his plan of staying to be king. She did not suspect that the king tried to kill Hamlet so she drank the poisoned wine prepared fo hamlet. She died because of it

Polonius

Polonius was the lord chamberlain in Denmark. He was a caring father. He loved his children and wanted the best thing for his children. He let his son to

continue her study because he knew it was the best for him. He also advised Ophelia not to be too close to prince Hamlet because it was impossible for Prince Hamlet to marry her because she was not a princess. Polonius was also an obedient man. He was faithfully to the King/ I hold my duty, as I hold my soul/both to my god and to my gracious king(Act.II.ii.II.130)

Laertes

Laertes was a loving son and a caring brother. He loved his sister, Ophelia very much. Therefore, he wanted the best for her. Before leaving for France, he advised his sister, Ophelia, to be careful and not to believe in Hamlet's love. In short, he did not like Ophelia to believe Prince Hamlet's love because as a crown prince, Hamlet should marry a princess.

Ophelia

Ophelia was Polonius's daughter and Laertes's sister. She was an obedient. She obeyed her father's and brother's advice not to believe Hamlet's word of love and not too close to him because he was a prince and it was impossible for her to get married with him because she was not a princess.

Horatio

Horatio was one of Hamlet's friends. He was an educated man. He also studied in Wittenberg, Germany. Horatio was loyal and not a superstitious man. He did not believe in ghosts. He would not believe in them until he himself proved it.

Guiltenstern

Guiltenstern was a friend of Hamlet. Guiltenstern was a flatterer. He wanted to please the king Claudius by doing what he told him to do even spying on Hamlet. Guiltenstern and Rosencrantz first told Hamlet about their coming. Finally, Guiltenstern told Hamlet that they were for by the King and the queen.

Rosencrantz

Rosencrantz was also one of Hamlet's friend. Guildenstern was also a flaterer. He was willing to spy on Hamlet's to please the king. He didn't realized that the king had used him to gain his ambition to kill Hamlet. Finally, he wa also executed by the King of England.

3. Settings

In the play Hamlet the setting is divided into two. They are setting of place and setting of time.

Setting of Place

The events happened in the court room as the part of the castle and around it. For example, the guard platform, the court, battlements, and the queen's closet. They play also took place in Polonius' house, in a plain of Denmark, and churtyard.

The beginning on the play took place in platform guard of the castle. There were some soldiers on duty. Here, the ghost appeared for the first time Also in this place did Hamlet meet the ghost.

The setting moved to the castle where the King Claudius presided a meeting to express his condolence on his brother's death and to announce his marriage with Queen Gertrude and also young Fortinbras plan of invasion againt Denmark. The King held some meeting here, to talk about the condition of the state the royal members, and to receive the ambassadors. Here, also was the reenactment of the murder of the late King Hamlet where they play within the play, the „Mousetrap“, was performed. Also in this place did hamlet find Claudius kneeling as if praying and Hamlet delayed to kill him.

The play then took place in the Polonius' house. in a room of polonius' house laertes talked to Ophelia and gave her parting advice before leaving for france. He advised his sister, Ophelia, not to belive hamlet's love. Here, polonius also asked Ophelia to reject hamlet's love because they had different status

The last setting was in the churchyard where Ophelia was buried. And here, Hamlet vowed his eternal love to Ophelia.

3.2. setting of time

In the play Hamlet it did not mention what year the events took place. When Claudius was crowned and married Gertrude, it was mentioned that the late king Hamlet had died for two months.

It said that the ghost appeared when the cock crowed. It happened in the winter night when the ghost appeared. Other things were also set at night like the reenactment of the murder of the king, Claudius kneeling as if he was praying, Hamlet's scolding his mother and his accidental killing of Polonius.

Some of the events of the play were set daytime, for example, the meeting of Hamlet and Ophelia, Ophelia's death due to drowning, the burial of Ophelia and the return of Hamlet to Denmark. The fencing match also took place in daytime when everybody died afterwards. It was also during the daytime when Hamlet made his last wish to ask Horatio to tell what had happened and to elect Fortinbras to be his successor or to be the king of Denmark and Norway.

4. Conclusion and Suggestion

Based on the analysis of the play Hamlet the write draws some conclusion, First, the plot of the play presented by the dramatist began with exposition, the introduction of the characters, the political situation and the death of the late king Hamlet. The characters than have conflicts ,i.e the conflicts between Hamlet and other characters in the play. The complication reached the highest point of tention (climax) when Hamlet and Laertes played in the fencing match proposed by the king. Laertes" sword was bated so that Hamlet would die if he was hit. In the scuffling, they change swords. Both were wounded. Laertes was wounded and did by his own sword. Gertrude was dead after drinking from the poisoned cup. Before dying, Laertes told Hamlet that Claudius before he died. Then, in the falling action young Fortinbras came with his army. At last, the resolution began. All conflicts were resolved. Horatio told the truth and announced the electionof the young Fortinbras as the king of Denmark.

Second, the characters involved in the play were divided in two groups. The major characters were Hamlet and Claudius. The minor characters were Polonius, Laertes, Ophelia, Horatio, Guildenstern and Rosencrantz. The round characters were Hamlet, Laertes and Ophelia because their characters developed during the play. The rest were flat characters.

Finally, the setting in this play was devided in two: the setting of place and the setting of time. The play tookplace in the castle of denmarkand its surroundings. The play happened in the room of Polonius"house. The setting of time of the play was in the coronation of the king Claudius. The Play took place in the winter.

Suggestion

There are many things that we can learn from literacy works, especially a drama or play. We can get more knowledge about human"s life, characters, and event that probably occurred. Based on analiysis of the character in this play we can learn that taking the shortes way to our live. It is a sin to kill other people and we have to be fair to get what we want. Threfore, it is suggested that we as a

person who has religion and education should not do that to gain our ambition. We allowed to be ambitious but we may not do everything especially cruel things, like what claudius had done, murdering his own brother, cunning his cousins, hamlet and other people.

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