

Drama analysis of hamlet by shakespeare essay

[Literature](#), [British Literature](#)



In the play Hamlet, William Shakespeare who is one of the most influential writers in history has elaborated the contemporary themes in society into a piece of literature as revealed in the drama. Due to his universal way of creating themes, he has been able to influence the western literature. In the contemporary theatre of the western, they still view Shakespeare's work being relevant.

Shakespeare therefore uses the stylistic device of a play within a play to pass his information to the audience as well as helping him develop his plot. Shakespeare has in this case therefore used the main actor Hamlet in portraying this device. Hamlet who is a character in the play is again seen in another play within the play, which he acts in order to be in a position to kill Claudius.

Hamlet is a play that depicts a vivid drama of melancholy and insanity as well as famous of its ghostliness. In this play, Shakespeare has used various elements of literature to develop the plot of the play. In this case, the writer has used characters, settings, symbols, themes, characterization and other elements of literature in the development of the plot. The writer has used these elements correlatively to achieve his plot.

Themes are used to develop characters in the play. For instance, the writer has used the theme of betrayal to develop the main character Hamlet in the play hence the development of the plot. The writer used the name of the play as the name of the main actor while other characters in the play helped in development of the predominant theme in the main character.

Therefore, four main characters have greatly contributed by playing major roles. Hamlet experienced character development through the betrayals of Ophelia with whom he is romantically involved. Gertrude is his mother and Claudius' wife while Guildenstern and Rosencrantz were his friends from the University of Wittenberg.

When the scene begins, there is a very close relationship between Hamlet and the mother, which later fades off when Gertrude remarries his uncle Claudius two months after his father's death. This culminated the distrust in women since his mother was the most important female in his life.

He therefore uses mockery phrases like "such dexterity to incestuous sheets" and "frailty, thy name is woman". Such phrases illustrated how disgusted and disappointed he was towards his mother and women as well as depicting how isolated he was as a young man.

The theme of madness has also played major role in the development of the plot. Insanity was used in many revenge tragedies like in the first revenge tragedy of Shakespeare, Titus Andronicus. Unlike in the case of Hamlet where the madness is ambiguous, other revenge tragedies in the character have been unambiguous.

In the source of Shakespeare's plot in Hamlet, the main protagonist feigns his madness to be in the position to revenge without being suspected by the king (Claudius) whom he plots to kill. In the play, Hamlet's madness tends to distract him from accomplishing his mission as it is depicted in the play as

being with very little interest in accomplishing the mission of the ghost even after proving that Claudius is guilty (act 4 scene 2).

Hamlet therefore acts like a mad person in the play since he is aware in a bizarre manner that he should act as a mad man to accomplish the role of revenge in Hamlet. He knows the role that he is supposed to play even though to some extent he does not attain it satisfactorily.

This in return built Hamlet as a character who wants to revenge. Ophelia is another character who plays the part of a mad person but in her case, she is innocently mad. Ophelia loses her senses of self-knowledge and composure completely and therefore insane.

Suicide is another theme that has been used by Shakespeare to develop the plot in Hamlet. The play has been shaped using Ophelia as well as Hamlet. Hamlet deeply contemplates about the issue of suicide and this is seen in his soliloquies. He keeps on asking himself questions about the act of murder.

Hamlet had the fear to kill because of his social as well as religious morals. He views suicide as a crime in the societal view and even before God who gives life. He also had the fear of what happens to the person after he has departed from this world and going to the world of the deaths.

Ophelia's death also arouses many issues where some people say that she died a natural death while others say that she committed suicide. According to Hamlet's mother, Ophelia's death was accidental because she drowned while on the other hand, the priest and the gravediggers said it clearly that Ophelia killed herself. This therefore left the people feeling that Gertrude's

narration was just a story to cover up the whole issue of murder since it was viewed as an immoral act in the society (act 5).

In Hamlet, Shakespeare has used women characters in the development of the plot. In the play, women are seen to play minor roles but very essential in development of the plot. In the play, Gertrude and Ophelia are the two women in direct relationship with the main protagonist. The writer develops the theme of love in the play using Gertrude who is the main protagonist's mother. This is seen when Gertrude tries to stop the death of his son because Hamlet never loved her as a mother.

This is because; he felt that her mother was involved in the murder of his father. She is concerned about the well-being of her son, which proves the reason why Claudius could not inform her about the plot of killing his stepson. Ophelia is portrayed as loving because after the death of her father she became insane.

This is evident when she started using abusive language in public without fear as she used to behave in the previous scene, where Hamlet could abuse her and she could not respond due to the fear she had as woman who was under the power of a man.

The theme of patriarchal is built around the two women to show how they were not allowed to make decisions on their own. For example, in the case of Ophelia, she is forced by the father (Claudius) and her brother Laertes not to love Hamlet because the brother feels that Hamlet is playing with her feelings.

Trying to satisfy the wants of the father and brother, Hamlet blames her and even insults her, but since Ophelia does not have power to explain to him what was underlying the whole issue, she ends up suffering. The husband on the other hand see Gertrude as a less repressed person but Claudius married her so that he can be able to promptly take over the throne after Hamlet's death and pretend that he is good just like the previous king by remarrying his wife.

Ophelia has been used to develop the stylistic device of symbolism in the play towards the development of the plot. The symbolism of her language in the play increases the range of meanings depicted in the play.

For example, Ophelia is emotional after hearing about the death of her father and throws flowers in every place around her as a sign of purity (act 4 scene 4). On the contrary, this symbolizes her deflowering as a person, on the other scene of her madness.

Lastly, the two characters have contributed in the development of the plot and again helped the writer to portray the fate of his heroes in the play.

When Ophelia rejects Hamlet, Hamlet's disgust his mother's remarriage, taints the opinion about all women hence making him an isolated man. The madness death of Ophelia fortifies her brother's determination of revenging on Hamlet, which results to the final catastrophe in the play. Gertrude cared for his son but could not control the tragedy from taking place.

The writer has used Hamlet who is the main character in the play to build other themes hence the development of the plot. After the death of Hamlet's

father, Hamlet plots on how to kill Claudius after the spirit confirmed to him that Claudius is the one who killed his father.

However, in the play Hamlets avenge on Claudius. "... I, his son, do this same villain send to heaven, why, this is hire and salary, not revenge" (Act 3 scene 3 78-84).

Honor is another theme portrayed through Hamlet the main protagonist. This theme is best depicted when Hamlet takes order from the ghost to revenge on Claudius as if the order came from God. "... With wings as swift as meditation or the thoughts of love may sweep to my revenge" (1. v. 35-37).

The writer develops the plot using Claudius, Hamlet's brother the king who later marries Gertrude his brother's wife. In the play, he is Hamlet's major avenger who is portrayed as lustful because he took his brother's wife, Shrewd. He takes the throne that does not belong to him and allows his son revenge on Hamlet.

Due to these characters, he stands out as a man with contrasting characters from other men in the play. The ideas of Hamlet are just, honest and full of revenge but Claudius ensures that his power is maintained. In conclusion, the writer has also used other elements in correlation like the setting of the play to bring out the meaning in Hamlet.

Shakespeare therefore does not present various elements of literature as single entities in the play but he uses his concept of unity to express them as a single entity. Therefore, in this case, he uses characters in the play to

develop themes and stylistic devices as well as using the themes to create the characters hence the clear development of the play.