

Hamlet in the film and the play: comparing and contrasting essay

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Shakespeare's Hamlet has been adapted to screen versions and theatrical interpretations. The movie of the same name, starring Mel Gibson as Hamlet, introduces a strong, intelligent, and outright character.

The actor has managed to render the emotions, atmosphere, and experienced endured by the Danish Prince. Despite different contextual feeling, Gibson manages to interact with other characters, as well as how reflect the atmosphere of the scenes directed by film director Franco Zeffirelli. The close relation between Shakespeare's Hamlet and Zeffirelli's version of Danish Prince is still distinguished by depressed mood, extreme violence, and unexpressive representation of scenes.

Unlike Shakespeare's representation of Hamlet in the play, Mel Gibson is presented less expressive, yet depressed and discouraged by her mother and his uncle, who are suspected in his father's murder. The explicit and superficial depiction is particularly represented in the famous monologue of Hamlet that Gibson's hero pronounces with calmness: "To be, or not to be, that is the question: / Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer / The sibilings and arrows of outrageous fortune, / or to take arms against a sea of troubles" (Shakespeare, Act III, Scene 1, lines 63-65). In the play, this monologue could be interpreted as a desperate call because Hamlet is not confident about his decision, whereas Hamlet in the film seems to know the answer to this eternal question.

There is a certain discrepancy in the way Shakespeare's Hamlet and Gibson's hero unveil the tragic style of the play. The revenge tragedy traditionally focuses on the murder of a close friend or a relative followed by

the revenge. In the movie, Gibson's hero deliberates on sense of life in general rather than on the death of his father. He is not interested in investigating the reasons and, therefore, this version "transcends the convention of revenge tragedy because Hamlet contemplates not merely revenge but suicide and the meaning of life itself" (Hamlet, Prince of Denmark 1584). This assumption is justified by the scenes from the movie because many of the dialogues and monologues reflect Hamlet's internal experiences and his searching of the self.

Most of the representations of Hamlet fail to provide the plot line that is similar to Shakespeare's version. This is of particular concern to the depiction of Hamlet's relation to his mother. Specifically, in the play, the Danish Prince expresses his contempt toward his mother and hatred toward his uncle. In the movie, this feeling is amplified by jealousy and, therefore, the prominence of women in life of Hamlet is highlighted. Focus on Freudian representation of the relationships between Hamlet and his mother deviates significantly from that introduced in the play.

In conclusion, it should be stressed that the film representation of Hamlet is brilliant, distinct, and bright. However, this depiction deviates slightly from Shakespeare's version in terms of expression, atmosphere, contextual background, and attitude to women. At this point, Hamlet seems to be less concerned with answering the question To Be or not to Be. Rather, the emphasis is placed on searching of the self, but not searching for his father's murder.

In addition, Gibson's Hamlet represents Freudian frameworks of perceiving women surrounding him, including Gertrude and Ophelia. He feels jealousy rather than contempt toward his mother, which differs much from the representation of these relations in the play. Overall, the film adaptation focuses on a different problem that can be admitted as a variation of Shakespeare's tragedy.