

Why the soliloquy “to be or not to be” is so famous

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Why the Soliloquy " to Be or Not to Be" Is So Famous The essay talks about the reasons why the soliloquy which includes " to be or not to be, that is the question" in Hamlet is discussed so heatedly among people who know it and especially why " to be or not to be" is known to numerous people, some of whom even know little about Hamlet. The essay talks about the analysis of the controversial topic of the soliloquy first and then analyzes other reasons why the soliloquy is so famous by analyzing the position of human being held by Hamlet, the organization of the soliloquy and the various denotative meanings of " to be or not to be". Some people think that in the soliloquy Hamlet is thinking about whether it is better to suffer the ills in the world or take arms against it by killing himself. In the soliloquy, Shakespeare poses a problem which every human being has to face, that is, whether to struggle to live to face all the problems in life or to commit suicide to put an end to all the sufferings. [1] However, through analyzing the soliloquy itself and the whole play, Yuan Yi finds that Hamlet is not thinking about the merits and demerits of committing suicide or not but thinking about the matter of life and death of human being.[2] Moreover, Hua quankun hold the opinion that instead of thinking about the matter of life and death, Hamlet is thinking about whether to fight against the evil or stop fighting by analyzing the relationship among the plots before the soliloquy, during the soliloquy and after the soliloquy and analyzing the development of Hamlet's thinking.[3] Michael Mangan thinks it's impossible for us to decide what the soliloquy actually means because not only the soliloquy but also its context in the scene is mysterious. The language in the soliloquy is full of allusion and hard to understand.[4] From the former points, a conclusion can be made that one

of the reasons why the soliloquy in Hamlet has long-lasting appeal is obvious. Since the exact topic of the soliloquy is controversial, many people try hard to analyze it and find out the real meaning of it. Another reason why the soliloquy is so famous is the position of human being held by Hamlet. "From the beginning to the end Hamlet used 'we, us, he, himself and who', which clearly referred to common people actually. In other words, Hamlet held the position of "man" or "human being" and made the soliloquy instead of them too." [5] He is the representative of human beings to voice their sufferings and confusions. "He was not so self-centered thinking about himself. He was considering human being as a whole. He asked so many questions in place human being." [6] In this way, we feel Hamlet's thinking is our thinking and his question is our question. As a result, it seems that it is not Hamlet on the stage but the audience themselves standing on the stage, facing the dilemma, thinking about the answer to the question. The successful organization of the soliloquy also contributes to its fame. At the beginning of the soliloquy, a question is posed: "to suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune or to take arms against a sea of troubles". It appeals the audience to think about which to choose. And then it points out what may come after choosing "to sleep" and why we hesitate when making a choice. We can "end the heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks that flesh is heir to" if we choose "to sleep". However, we don't know "in that sleep of dream what dreams may come", so we pause to think what we should do. It makes audience in dilemma and find in hard to make a choice. The rest of the soliloquy analyzes the reason why we are in dilemma specifically with sufficient examples. The parallels are used to talk about ills

we have in the world. These parallels are convincing proofs of human beings' sufferings in their lives. And it presents in detail what "the heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks that flesh is heir to" refer to. That's why we want to end them. However, "the dread of something after death" makes us rather bear all these sufferings than take actions to end them. At the end of the soliloquy, the question about which to choose reminds unsolved. And it provides us with enough freedom to find our answer to it in our lives. Under the influence of the successful organization of the soliloquy, audiences are also involved as the main character in the play step by step to think about how to make a choice between "to be or not to be" and try to find an answer of their own. The various denotative meanings of "to be or not to be" is also a factor which helps the soliloquy long-lasting in the history. It can not only refer to the choice between death and life but refer to any situation where we are in a quandary. Any one may have to make some choices in our lives and sometimes we find it very hard to decide which to choose. For example, when choosing majors, some students may find it hard to decide whether to choose the one he likes and the one his parents prefer. When we are faced with this kind of situation, we can find that "to be or not to be" is a perfect expression to express our dilemma. As a result, "to be or not to be" is frequently quoted to describe a situation where someone is on the horns of a dilemma. For example, in the movie King's Speech, "to be or not to be" is quoted by the movie director in the speech to express the main actor Bertie's dilemma. In a conclusion, the reasons why the soliloquy is famous are as follows: the controversial topic of the soliloquy, the position of human being held by Hamlet and the successful organization of the soliloquy

