

Elizabethan Theater: A Brief History

In the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, English theater blossomed in London. Elizabethan theater – or more properly, English Renaissance theater – flourished between the years of 1562 and 1642. (This spanned the reign of three monarchs, in fact, and not just that of Queen Elizabeth the First – hence the broader term is more accurate.) This is the time when **William Shakespeare** was writing and performing, along with other legendary playwrights of the era.

The era of early modern theater begins with “Gorboduc,” a play about civil war and succession to the throne of a kingdom. (These were topical and sensitive issues at the time, coming on the heels of the **English Reformation** brought about by Elizabeth’s father, Henry VIII.) “Gorboduc”, which was written by both Thomas Norton and Thomas Sackville, is significant for being the first dramatic work to be written in blank verse. Blank verse is metric poetry that uses unrhymed iambic pentameter. An iamb is a chunk of a line that contains an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable. There are five of them in each line of iambic pentameter blank verse. (The meter gives it poetic structure and makes it easier to memorize, as well.) As a natural extension of this writing, playwrights like Christopher Marlowe and William Shakespeare were also known for writing poetry, such as their well-known sonnets.

Within the early modern era when drama flourished, there are three periods named after each of the monarchs at the time. Elizabethan Theater only spans, properly, from 1562 to 1603. Jacobean Theater runs from 1603 to 1625. And Caroline Theater extends from 1625 to 1642.

The English Renaissance theatrical era came to an end in 1642, with the Puritanical parliament banning the performance of plays. During the interregnum, or this period between kings, public theater was not allowed by law. When Charles II returned to the throne, theater flourished in a new era dubbed the Restoration.

Elizabeth I's View of Theatre

During her forty-five year reign, Elizabeth I battled many problems facing her nation. Religious intolerance, threat of foreign invasion and plague were all omnipresent, but in the face of these concerns, Elizabeth tried to improve conditions in England and led the country through an age of prosperity. Elizabeth was a very educated monarch, with a deep respect for Greek and Latin texts in addition to being able to speak French, Italian and Spanish. She was also tutored in the art of public speaking which was a useful tool later in her rule. As a princess she was exposed to court performances by scholars from Oxford and Cambridge. Indeed, it is said, "Her learning and her tastes ensured that the English court would be a center of intellectual sophistication where the high literary culture of the age could flourish."³⁸ Elizabeth's level of education is indicative of a wider trend regarding literacy rates. In London, it is noted that the city had "markedly higher"³⁹ literacy rates than the rest of England.

Although most women did not receive as thorough an education as Elizabeth, she served as a role model for bringing educational equality to women. Being a role model allowed Elizabeth the chance to not only govern over her subjects, but to inspire them to get involved in the emerging forms of entertainment.

The popularity of plays had steadily been on the increase during the early years of Elizabeth's reign. The move towards the establishment of permanent homes for

theatre is indicative of this. Therefore, Elizabeth's involvement in the performing arts was not as much a way to encourage people to attend but more a means of supporting and advocating the theatre industry as a profession and literary genre. One way in which support was given was through the patronage of a theatre company. Patronage was granted by a nobleman or family who wanted to support the arts, "such patrons ensuring by their prestige the acceptance of the new art form as part of the social and cultural fabric."⁴⁰ In addition to providing the acting company with financial resources, being a patron also allowed the nobleman to gain favors with the Queen because they were both supporting the same cause and the troupes were used in court entertainment. This vying of the Queen's attention led to "rival displays of ostentatious nobility"⁴¹ and it was due in part to this element of competition that Queen Elizabeth intervened and created her own company of actors.

The Queen's Men

The Queen's Men was a company of 12 actors who were brought together in 1583 by Sir Francis Walsingham, one of Elizabeth's espionage specialists. It has been argued that the Queen's patronage of an acting group was in part to, "make a broad cultural assertion about England's position in a European world"⁴² and to "prove that England had a literature and drama that could stand among those of the continental nations."⁴³ In addition to Elizabeth's policies regarding international relations and the strength of her military it is apparent that portraying England as a culturally rich power to other nations was also important to Elizabeth. Elizabeth also planned for her acting troupe to travel extensively around the country in order to expand "the cultural influence reaching into the countryside from the court."⁴⁴ By using the medium of drama to spread propaganda, Elizabeth and her advisors

were more easily able to disseminate information to those outside of the main towns such as London and Norwich.

This is an important part of a nation's centralization and aided in the assertion of the monarch's power. At this time, other nation-states in Early Modern Europe were also aiming to centralize their power through the same means. Indeed, when other acting companies were looking to assert their position in a permanent playing house the Queen's Men were in fact more of a touring company. In 1583 it is noted that, "The first tour by the Queen's Men had lasted for some four or five months with no sign of London performances during that time." Elizabeth's personal interest in theatre and court entertainment is evident through the number of plays that were performed in her court and also, her willingness to lend her countenance – and the modest wages of twelve men."⁴⁹ It is clear that Elizabeth was a great contributor to the theatre industry and through her support of twelve actors, she approved of the company's development despite the later attacks that threatened its existence.

Venues: Inns and Theaters

The first plays of this era were not performed in permanent theaters – there were none at that time. Instead, shows were put on in the courtyards of inns by traveling troupes of actors. A permanent theater, The Red Lion, opened in 1567. It was on the outskirts of the city of London, and only hosted troupes of actors as they were passing through. Unfortunately, it did not succeed due to its remote location. It took until 1576 and the establishment of The Theatre in Shoreditch for the building boom to blossom. The Theatre would host a company of actors on a more permanent basis, as they performed different shows in repertory in the same location. Other theaters soon followed, such as The Rose, The Swan, The Fortune,

The Red Bull, and most famously, The Globe. All were located outside the city limits due to laws that restricted congregations and establishments like theaters in order to prevent the spread of the plague.

All the theaters had certain attributes in common. They were three stories tall and tended to be roughly circular. These buildings had an open space in the center, and the stage extended out into this area. Thus, three sides of the stage were open to view by the audience, and only the rear was used for entrances and exits. There were no roofs and plays were performed during the day so lights were not needed. The first theater with a roof was the Blackfriars Theatre. As such, it was among the first theaters to use artificial lighting during productions. These many different theaters offered thousands of Londoners each day the opportunity to see plays for sometimes as little as a penny.

Famous Playwrights

William Shakespeare still towers over the era as a literary giant. But other playwrights of the era are also significant talents in the history of the English language and drama. Christopher Marlowe, Ben Jonson, John Webster, Thomas Kyd, Thomas Middleton, and Thomas Heywood all stand out as writers with merit who were Shakespeare's contemporaries. (Marlowe died young in a bar brawl, stabbed to death. Shakespeare's *Rosalind* quotes an unfinished Marlowe poem in "As You Like It" as a tribute.) Writing plays was not at the time considered a lofty literary achievement. It was common entertainment for regular people, and the works were not oft published or publicized, even. In fact, the rights to the plays usually belonged to the theater company that had paid the writer, and not to the writer himself. About 600 plays from this era remain, although plenty more were written and performed.

The Plays of William Shakespeare

William Shakespeare (1564-1616) is considered to be the greatest writer in English Literature. He composed over 150 sonnets and wrote some of the most famous plays in the English language. His plays are generally categorized as Comedies, Tragedies and Histories. There is some debate about which category some of the plays should be included in as there are often crossovers between the genres. So, which plays did he write and what are the features of the different genre?

Shakespeare's Comedy

Comedy is not necessarily what a modern audience would expect comedy to be. Whilst there may be some funny moments, a Shakespearean comedy may involve some very dramatic storylines. Usually what defines a Shakespearean play as a comedy is that it has a happy ending, often involving a marriage. The main characteristics in Shakespeare's Comedies are:

- A struggle of young lovers to overcome problems, often the result of the interference of their elders
- There is some element of separation and reunification
- Mistaken identities, often involving disguise
- A clever servant
- Family tensions that are usually resolved in the end
- Complex, interwoven plot-lines
- Frequent use of puns and other styles of comedy

The Shakespearean plays which are usually classed as Comedy are: *The Merchant of Venice*, *Twelfth Night*, *All's Well That Ends Well*, *The Tempest*, *Taming of the Shrew*, *The Winter's Tale*, *As You Like It*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *Love's Labours Lost*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Measure for Measure*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Pericles*, *Prince of Tyre* and *The Two Noble Kinsmen*.

Shakespearean Tragedy

Tragedies may involve comedic moments, but tend towards more serious, dramatic plots with an ending that involves the death of main characters. The main features of a Shakespearean Tragedy are that:

- Characters become isolated or there is social breakdown
- Ends in death
- There is a sense that events are inevitable or inescapable
- There is usually a central figure who is noble but with a character flaw which leads them towards their eventual downfall

The plays which are generally classed as Shakespearean Tragedy are: *Macbeth*, *Hamlet*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Titus Andronicus*, *Julius Caesar*, *Troilus and Cressida*, *Othello*, *Coriolanus*, *King Lear*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Timon of Athens* and *Cymbeline* (this is debated, with some scholars classifying it as a Comedy)

Shakespeare's Histories

Shakespeare's Histories focus on English monarchs. They usually play upon Elizabethan propaganda, showing the dangers of civil war and glorifying the queen's Tudor ancestors. The depictions of monarchs including Richard III (an enemy of the Tudors) and Henry V (one of the great Tudor monarchs) have been influential in creating a perception of these kings which has persisted throughout the centuries. Many historians point to inaccuracies in the depictions, but the plays have been very powerful in presenting a particular image which it is hard for many people to see past.

The Histories are: *King John*, *Richard II*, *Henry IV (parts I and II)*, *Henry V*, *Henry VI (parts I, II and III)*, *Richard III* and *Henry VIII*.

The plays, *Coriolanus*, *Julius Caesar* and *Antony and Cleopatra* are classified both as Tragedies and as Roman Histories.

In his plays Shakespeare uses many different types of language techniques to create his plays. Such techniques include: rhythm, rhyme, alliteration, repetition, assonance and onomatopoeia.

The theatre in Shakespeare's time

In Shakespeare's time there were no female actors. This was because acting was not considered an honourable job, so no woman would be seen doing such a thing. The role of women had to be played by young boys who had not gone through puberty. This was because they had higher voices. Shakespeare himself even acted in some of his own plays, but because it was such a long time ago, it is not known which ones.

The plays of this period of time were very last minute. Some actors received their lines just before the play. Some even got them as they were performing. They used a technique called "cue acting". This was when someone sat behind the curtains and whispered the lines to the actors. This then led to a technique called "que scripting". This was where the actors got only their lines, instead of the entire play. Most of this was because there was very little time for the actors to practice their lines before giving the play.

The Globe Theatre attracted many different types of audiences. It brought the young and old, male and female. This was mainly because of the variety of plays that were performed there. At times some of the audience members would 'boo' at the bad characters and cheer for the good ones.

The spectators had a range of seating options available. They could choose to pay the cheapest ticket and be a "groundling". Groundlings stood the entire duration of the play. They crowded around the stage. The next cheapest option was to pay a bit extra and sit in the galleries. If they wanted, they could have paid an extra penny to get a cushion to sit on. The most expensive choice was to sit on a

chair on the actual stage. This may have been the most expensive, but being right up close to the action made it all worth it.

At The Globe Theatre, it is believed that two plays were done every day, and that both of them were done in the afternoon. They were not done earlier because the sun was too bright. It was not done at night because there was no artificial lighting. This is why the plays were done during the afternoon. In his plays Shakespeare uses many different types of language techniques to create his plays. Such techniques include: rhythm, rhyme, alliteration, repetition, assonance and onomatopoeia.

Hamlet – William Shakespeare

About the Author William Shakespeare (1564-1616) is one of the greatest men of genius who have ever been born in the world. The bulk and richness of his plays are wonderful. He has been for four centuries as are perpetual source of delight and knowledge. His works have been read and studied with great interest even after four hundred years. There are 37 dramas. Two long poems and 154 sonnets to his credit. This certainly makes Shakespeare the emperor of the realm literature.

About the Text Hamlet is one of the greatest tragedies of the world. It has been described as one of the world-books. It is one of the most popular plays in the English language. The play is highly interesting. It has remarkable characters. The play is so great that T.S. Eliot seems to be wrong when he says that the play is an artistic failure.

The Title of the Play The play is aptly entitled after its hero Hamlet.

Characters in the Play

1-Hamlet- Hero- the prince of Denmark- student at the Wittenberg University- finally dies wounded in a fencing match (duel).

2-King Hamlet- Ex- King of Denmark- father of Hamlet has been killed by his brother- plays no active role in the play.

3-Gertrude- Queen of Denmark- Hamlet's mother- marries Hamlet's uncle- finally dies as drink poisonous wine by mistake.

4-claudius- present King of Denmark- uncle of Hamlet- has killed Hamlet's father and marries his mother- villain of the play- finally killed by Hamlet.

5-Polonius- Lord Chamberlain and chief counselor to the King Claudius- is killed by Hamlet by mistake.

6-Laertes- Son of Polonius- a student at the University of Paris- Claudius uses him for his purpose- Hamlet is wounded by him in fencing match.

7-Ophelia Daughter of Polonius and sister of Laertes obedient- beloved of Hamlet- becomes insane and commits suicide by drowning- a sympathetic figure like Laertes and Polonius.

8-Horatio- the fellow student and loyal friend of Hamlet helps Hamlet in many ways.

9- The Ghost- Play a vital role in the play- asks Hamlet to take revenge upon his killer, Claudius.

10- Rosencrantz and Guildenstern- Schoolmates of Hamlet- then courtiers of Claudius- Claudius send them with Hamlet to England- Hamlet gets them killed by the king of England.

11- Marcellus and Bernardo- Officers on guard at the castle of Elsinore- see the ghost first and then with Horatio.

12-Fortinbras- The prince of Norway- has lost his father- desires to invade Denmark and conquer the area, which has been won by Hamlet's father from his own father- Hamlet supports him.

Summary of the Play

Act-I: The ghost Asks Hamlet to take Revenge upon Claudius:

The play opens with the scene of the Castle Elsinore. It midnight time and the guards change their duties. Bernardo relieves Francisco from the duty. Just then, Marcellus arrive with Horatio. Marcellus has brought Horatio to witness the ghost of the dead king. Soon the ghost appears but vanishes when Horatio questions it. Horatio tells Marcellus that Fortinbras, the prince of Norway has threatened of

invading Denmark. So, the ghost might have appeared to warn them to be cautious of the danger. The Ghost reappears but vanishes as the cockcrows. Horatio decides to inform hamlet about the appearance of the ghost. He is sure that the Ghost would speak something to Hamlet.

The next scene shows us King Claudius in the court. He sends ambassadors to the King of Norway to suppress the threat of war against Denmark. Soon he allows Laertes to return to the University of Paris. However, he persuades Hamlet not to return to the University of Wittenberg. He tells the court that hamlet would succeed him to the throne. All leave expect Hamlet. Horatio enters and informs him about the appearance of the Ghost. Hamlet decides to meet the ghost that night.

Meanwhile, Laertes leaves for Paris after advising Ophelia to be careful in receiving Hamlets love. Polonius also warns Ophelia to keep away from Hamlet.

That night. Hamlet watches for the ghost along with Horatio and Marcellus. At midnight, The Ghost appears he tells Hamlet that he did not die of the snake-bit but Claudius had killed him by pouring poison into his ear while he was sleeping in the garden. The Ghost asks Hamlet to take revenge upon Claudius but be kind to his mother and leave her to the pangs of her guilt. Hamlet agrees and the Ghost disappears.

Act-II: Hamlet Pretends to be Mad the Actors Meet Him:

Polonius sends Reynaldo to France o give Laertes money and some appears. He also tells him to watch the behavior of his son

and report to him. Ophelia enters and informs Polonius that Hamlet met her in a strange condition. Polonius thinks that he has gone mad, as Ophelia has rejected his love. He calls it “ a love- madness”.

There in the Castle, Claudius appoints his courtiers, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, to see what has brought transformation in the mind of Hamlet. These two courtiers were Hamlet’s schoolmates and were brought u with hamlet. Polonius enters and informs Claudius that the King of Norway has restrained his nephew, Fortinbras for declaring war against Denmark.

Soon Polonius tells the King and Gertrude that Hamlet has gone mad as Ophelia rejected his love. In order to see whether hamlet has truly gone mad, they observe the meeting of Ophelia and Hamlet from a hiding place. Hamlet enters and Polonius asks him some questions and leaves.

Rosencrantz and Guildenstren meet Hamlet who suspects their sudden meeting. Polonius comes again and informs Hamlet that the actors have come and they are the best actors in the world. Four or five actors meet hamlet and speak with him. Hamlet asks Polonius to go with the actors and take proper care of them. All actors leave except one whom Hamlet asks whether they could perform, the play entitled *The Murder of Gonzaga*. The actor prelacies in affirmation. So, Hamlet asks him to arrange the performance of the play on the following night. The actor leaves. The play would narrate the story, which resembles the facts narrated by the Ghost. Claudius reactions to the play would determine whether he has really killed Hamlets father. Hamlet, thus, wants to have more convincing evidence to prove that Claudius is guilty of the murderer of the late King.

Act –III: Hamlets Madness, the play –within the lay, Missing an Opportunity, Encounters with Mother and Murder of Polonius:

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern cannot find the cause of the distracted manner of Hamlet. As per their plan, Polonius and Claudius hide and Ophelia is asked him to pretend to read a book. Hamlet enters and in a soliloquy speaks about life and death. Ophelia speaks about their love but Hamlet says that he does not show that he is in love with her. On the contrary, he advises her not to marry anybody but become a nun. He then mocks at the father of Ophelia. He calls himself proud and revengeful. This makes Ophelia think that Hamlet has really gone mad.

Claudius and Polonius have overheard the conversation of Hamlet and Ophelia. Claudius decides to send Hamlet to England on the pretext that change the atmosphere will cure him. Similarly, Polonius speaks out a new plan. According to the Queen should have a talk with Hamlet to find out the cause of his distraction. Polonius himself would overhear them. Claudius agrees to Polonius.

Hamlet asks Horatio for his cooperation. He has to observe the reaction of the King and the Queen to the performance of the play. That would help them to decide whether the Ghosts account of the death of the King was true. Horatio agree to cooperate Hamlet.

The lay begins on the stage. Claudius cannot bear the scene of pouring poison Horatio learn that king Horatio to the ear of the sleeping king. So, he gets up and leaves. Gertrude following him. Hamlet and Horatio learn that the king is really guilty of killing Hamlet's father. At this moment Hamlet informs that his mother wants him to talk.

Hamlet is going to meet his mother. On his way, he sees his uncle praying God. Hamlet gets a golden chance to take revenge. However, he does not want to Claudius raying as this would send him to Heaven. So, Hamlet would kill him while he has engaged in an activity like drinking or gambling. Hamlet thus delays

the revenge and misses a golden opportunity of killing. This also reveals Hamlet's "inaction".

Hamlet enters the chamber of his mother. Polonius has already hidden behind the tapestry (a large curtain with pictures on it). Hamlet speaks rudely to his mother. She thinks that he intends to kill her. So, she shouts for help. Polonius also shouts for help from his hiding place. Hamlet thrust his sword into the tapestry and kills the person behind it. He thinks that is Claudius but he turns to be Polonius. Hamlet blames his mother for proving false to her husband and marrying a villainous man. Soon the Ghost appears and advises him not to delay his revenge. Gertrude cannot see the Ghost and so thinks that Hamlet is speaking in his state of madness. Once again, Hamlet scolds his mother for her immoral deed. The Queen feels heartbroken. She would not tell Claudius that Hamlet is not really mad as he has scolded her of betraying her dead husband.

Act- IV: Hamlet sent for England, Arrival of Laertes, and Death of Ophelia:

The Queen tells Claudius that Hamlet has killed Polonius in the fit of his madness. (Thus by telling a lie the mother tries to shield/ save the son). Claudius asks Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to bring the dead body of Polonius to the church. He fears that Hamlet's madness can prove to be dangerous to him. So, he should send Hamlet to England immediately. In a soliloquy, he reveals the fact that he intends to get Hamlet killed by the king of England. Hamlet is sent with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to reach England. Ophelia meets the Queen and sings mixed lines from old songs. Claudius enters and concludes that Ophelia has gone mad partly because of the shock of her father's death and partly because of Hamlet's rejection of her love. Claudius then informs the Queen that Laertes has come back to attack Claudius for having a hand in the murder of his father. At the

same time, Laertes comes there. He feels heart-broken to see his sister's miserable condition. Claudius then assures Laertes to provide explanation that he has not killed his father.

In another room of the castle, a couple of sailors give a message to Horatio. It is that the ship by which Hamlet was going to England was attacked by pirates. Hamlet was taken as a prisoner but Rosencrantz and Guildenstern managed to go to England. Hamlet wants Horatio to meet him at the place where the sailors would take him. (Thus, Hamlet is saved from being killed by the king of England and the plan of Claudius of bringing Hamlet's death fails).

When Claudius is explaining to Laertes how Hamlet killed his father, he gets a written message and wonders at Hamlet's return. He suddenly hatches a plan. He suggested to Laertes to lay a fencing match with Hamlet. His weapon will be dipped in deadly poison. Laertes agrees to the suggestion of the king. On the very occasion, the Queen arrives and informs Laertes that his sister, Ophelia, drowned into the brook and died.

Act-V: Ophelia's Burial, the Fencing Match, Death of Major Characters and the Ending:

Hamlet sees the clowns in the churchyard. They are digging a grave. Hamlet associates the dugout skulls to various persons. The clowns do not tell him for whom they are digging the grave. Hamlet wonders to see Ophelia's dead body brought there for burial. Laertes jumps into the grave and wishes to be buried along with his sister. Hamlet too jumps and claims that his love for her was greater. Both start quarreling but are spared by the King's attendants. (The Grave - Diggers' scene serves as the Comic Relief in the tragedy).

Hamlet tells Horatio that on his way to England he discovered his uncle's letter asking the king of England to kill him. Hamlet adds that he replaced the letter by his own asking the king to kill both Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. Now he wishes to take revenge upon Claudius. At this time, Osric, the courtier, informs Hamlet that the he take the King has arranged a fencing match between him and Laertes.

The villainous king is very cunning. He has died the sword of Laertes into poison so that Hamlet would die even with a minor wound. He also manages to put on the table a glass of wine which is mixed with poison. It would be drunk by Hamlet if he is not killed in the match. The match starts and Hamlet wins the first two rounds. The Queen becomes very hay and drinks wine but from the glass which contains poisonous wine. Laerteas wounds Hamlet with the poisoned weapon. In the scuffle (disordered fight), the two exchange their weapons and Hamlet and Hamlet two wounds Laertus with the same weapon which is died in poison. The Queen falls and she tells Hamlet that she has been poisoned. Laertes too falls but before dying, he tells Hamlet that too is wounded by a poisoned weapon. He adds that it is Claudius who has managed all these deadly things. Hamlet kills Claudius who soon dies.

The news come toast Fortinbras has arrived there along with the English amassadord. Horatio wishes to die with Hamlet by drinking poison. But Hamlet prevents him. He wants him to live to make all things clear and save Hamlets reputation. Hamlet asks Horatio to make Fortinbras the king of Denmark. Horatio agrees to do everything told by Hamlet. Fortinbras declares that Hamlet will be buried with all military honors. Thus, the revenge is taken by hamlet but at a heavy cost.

The Important Scene in Hamlet

1-The Opening Scene

The opening scene in Hamlet has great dramatic significance. It certainly serves as the exposition of the theme and of a few minor characters. It strikes the key note

of the play. It keeps the action of the play of the lay into motion. The scene and its relevance in the lay may be described as follows.

The chief purpose of the opening scene is to create supernatural atmosphere. It is the middle of night and it is extremely cold and dark. This is proper time according to popular Elizabethan belief when ghosts come on the earth. Thus, Shakespeare has carefully adjusted the setting and the scene to suit the supernatural element.

Francisco is waiting to be relieved from his duty of a sentry. Bernardo relieves him. The guards have seen the ghost. Horatio being a sceptic young man does not believe it. He comes with Marcellus. The ghost appears and exactly at the stroke of twelve. Horatio wants to know the purpose of the arrival of the ghost. According to him, it may be some hidden treasure or a warning regarding Fortinbrases attack on demarks in future. Horatio takes it as a bad omen as it happened before the death of Julius Caesar. The ghost dose not speaks to Horatio and disappears. It appears again but diapers as the cockcrows. Horatio and the guard decide to inform hamlet about the appearance of the ghost. It may speak to Hamlet. Thus, Shakespeare has used a host of popular Elizabethan superstition regarding the ghost. This has helped Shakespeare to make the ghost credible.

The opening scene has much dramatic significance.

First, it hints at the central theme of the play-the revenge element.

Secondly, it forms the supernatural at the central theme of the play, which was desirable in the Elizabethan period.

Thirdly, we are told about a few characters like the guards and Horatio. Shakespeare tradition of starting his tragedies with minor characters is kept alive here.

Fourthly, the opening scene informs us about the political circumstances of the Elizabethan age.

Finally, the scene has helped Shakespeare to capture the attention of the audiences in the very first scene. Thus, the opening scene is quite important. The following opening of Coleridge is applicable Hamlet too.

2-The Nunnery Scene

It is given this name because in it Hamlet repeatedly advises Ophelia to go to a nunnery, i.e. a brothel. The scene has great dramatic significance. It throws light on the characters of Hamlet and Ophelia. The scene also reveals the shrewdness of Claudius, the villainous king. Above all, the scene advances the action of the play. This is because it hastens Hamlet departure for England. The following study of the scene will bring out the validity of all these facts.

The ghost asks Hamlet to take revenge upon his uncle for murdering his father. However, Hamlet doubts the ghost and wishes to get confirmed about the murder of his father. For the purpose, he assumes madness, which he himself calls “**antic disposition**”. The king wonders at the strange transformation in the behavior of Hamlet. He doubts his madness. Therefore, he appoints Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to spy upon Hamlet and find out the cause of his strange behavior but they fail. However, Polonius tells Claudius with confidence that Hamlet has gone mad because of Ophelia’s rejection of his love. Therefore, the eaves dropping plan is hatched to robe the mystery. Ophelia will be stationed as a decoy and Polonius and Claudius will hide behind curtains and overhear them. Ophelia is in connection and so agrees to lay the role of a decoy.

Ophelia is reading a book as she is asked to do so. Hamlet comes in a philosophical mood with his soliloquy “**to be or not to be that is the question**” on

his lips. He seems to be disgusted with life. Soon he sees Ophelia and raises her as innocent and beautiful. He exclaims:

“Nymph, in thy orisons. Be all my sins remembered”

Nevertheless, Ophelia responds to him in a complains manner. However, she is too good and innocent to practice the deception. She complains that the prince has spurned (rejected) her love. Suddenly, she produces the gift of love Hamlet has given to her. This arouses Hamlet’s suspicions. He suspects that he might be spied upon and someone might be overheard them. Hamlet shocked to see Ophelia joining the lot against him. He has already embittered by his mothers adulterous marriage with his uncle. Now he Ophelia too is going to rove a hypocrite. Thos result in Hamlet’s bitter insult of Ophelia. He angrily her to go to a nunnery i.e. brothel. If she will bring sinners in this world.

Hamlet then changes the subject and asks Ophelia where her father is Ophelia relies that he is at home. The question **“Where is your father”**. Reveals the doubt of Hamlet. He then advises her to marry a cuckold. He furiously says that every woman is double-faces. Telling her to go to a brothel. Hamlet leaves.

The noteworthy factor in the scene is Hamlet’s harsh behaviour to Ophelia. Various critics have given various reasons for Hamlet’s rude conduct.

First, Coleridge is of the view that Hamlet has suspected that Ophelia is laying the role of decay. To Colportage, Hamlet’s comments are more directed to the spies than to Ophelia herself.

Secondly, according to Dover Wilson, Hamlet must have overheard the conversation between Polonius and Claudius of using Ophelia as a decay. Polonius

suggestion I'll lose my daughter to confirm Hamlet's suspicion. That is why Hamlet says to Polonius **“you are a fishmonger”**.

Thirdly, the psychological critics explain the fact through Oedipus complex. He hates all women as his mother adulterously married his uncle. So, he speaks **“daggers”** first to his mother and later to Ophelia simply because she is a woman.

Fourthly, Stopford Brooke is of the view that Hamlet's cruel treatment of Ophelia is due to his agony of betrayal in love. Hamlet concludes that Ophelia has cheated him by joining the enemies. In his respect, Hamlet can be compared with Othello and his heartless words with those of Othello.

Finally, Helen Grander supports the view that Hamlet suspects the plot against him.

Thus, the nunnery scene has much importance in the play.

3-The Gravediggers Scene

Shakespeare goes against the classical rules and mingles the comic and the tragic actions together through the scene of the gravediggers in his play. This scene is apparently comic but it has serious implications. At the same time some of the remarks heighten the tragic effect. The scene and the relevance can be discussed as below.

The gravedigger's scene opens with the two clowns who are assigned the work of digging a grave for Ophelia's dead body. The clowns create much comedy by their malapropism (wrong use of word). Jokes, puns and songs. Ophelia is denied proper Christian rites as she has committed suicide. The manner in which the clowns discuss this point is quite amusing. The use of the word **“salvation”** for damnation, and the expression **“offended”** for **“defendendo”**. One of the

clowns makes an amusing remark about suicide by drowning. According to him, when a person drowns into water, it called suicide. However, if water goes to the person and drowns him, it is not suicide. Another remark made by one of the clowns too is humorous. He says that the gravedigger builds stronger than others do like carpenters and ship-makers. This is because the gravediggers build houses (grave) that last until the Doomsday. The gravedigger then sings a humorous song of love. It reveals that a man's attitude, to love in youth is quite different from that in his old age.

Soon Hamlet and Horatio come there. The gravedigger's interaction with the prince is very humorous. For instance, when Hamlet asks him whose grave he is digging; his answer is "**Mine Sir**". He then describes dead Ophelia as "**but rest her soul, she is dead**". Thus, the indifferent and humorous natures of the gravediggers are in contrast to oversensitive and melancholic Hamlet.

Then Hamlet's comments on the skulls thrown out by the gravedigger are quite ironical and humorous. Looking at one skull, Hamlet says that it may be of a crafty schemer who in his life might be shrewd as to be able seven to deceive God. It could also be the head of a counter who was perfect. Hamlet looks at another skull and speculates that it might be the skull of a lawyer. His quibbling argument are not found. On the contrary, it is being knocked about with the dirty spade of the gravedigger. One more skull is supposed to be that of a buyer of land. All these persons become meaningless after the death. Even the dust of Alexander *The Great* and Caesar might be used for trifle things like blocking holes into a barrel. Hamlet then thinks that one of the skulls might be that of Yorick, the court-jester. His sarcasm also has vanished. Thus, Hamlet's speculative thoughts are ironical and so are humorous. In addition, the gravedigger's comment on Hamlet's madness is

quite humorous. He says that in England, nobody will notice the madness of Hamlet, as all persons in England are mad.

Thus, the gravedigger's scene is quite amusing and comic. So it serves as comic relief in the tragedy. The comedy here is not refined but it is not coarse either.

The gravediggers' scene has serious implications also. Some of the comic remarks have serious significance as well. For example, in a scene, a grave-maker really builds houses, which remain until the doomsday. The song about love also has serious significance. The decline of love in old age is really a saddening thing. Then Hamlet's remarks on the skull also serious significance. Man should not be proud of himself, as death ends everything. The remarks reveal the inevitability of death. Similarly, most of the remarks are related with death, seriousness and skulls. Thus, it is more serious and more general.

4-The play within play scene

This scene has great dramatic significance. So, it has been called the very pivot of the dramatic action in Hamlet. The "play" is called The Murder of Gonzago. It begins with a dumb show which Hamlet calls the Mouse Trap. The crucial significance of the "play" is that he ensures Hamlet that Claudius is really the murderer of his father. The dramatic relevance of the "play" can be explained as follows.

Hamlet has been told by the ghost how his father was killed by Claudius by pouring poison into his ears. However, Hamlet thinks too much. He doubts that the ghost might be a devil tempting him to commit an evil deed. He pretends madness in order to learn the truth. He feels depressed but the news of the arrival of the strolling players cheers him. He suggests *The Murder of Gonzago* the story of which resembles the story of the murder of Hamlet's father. Hamlet's motive

behind the play is to judge the reaction of his uncle to the events of the play and know whether he is guilty or not. Hamlet says.

“The play’s the thing wherein Ill catch The conscience of the king”.

Hamlet advises the actors properly and then asks Horatio to observe the king critically while the show is going on. The king, the queen, Polonius and other courtiers are invited to watch the play. Starts the dumb-show called The Mouse Trap. It is nothing but the silent enactment of the main argument of the play. In the dumb-show, the king and the queen enter, embrace and expresses their love. The king then falls asleep and the queen leaves. A man comes and pours poison into the ears of the king. The queen enters and weeps to see the king dead. Soon the poisoner returns and consulate the queen. He woos her and she accepts her love. This prelude dose not affects Claudius. According to some critics, this is because he does not see the show at all, as he is busy in conversation with Gertrude. Other critics are of the view that Claudius thinks that it is an unfortunate coincidence that the story of Gonzaga resembles his own. Another view is that Claudius doubts that Hamlet has deliberately arranged the play and now is watching his reactions.

Whatever the reason may be but it is a fact that Claudius pretends that he is not concerned with the story of the show.

Then stars the actual play. Here, the king shows that he loves the queen very much. He advises her to get remarried, of he dies. The queen says that she loves him deeply and is horrified event at the thought of a remarriage. The king sleep and the queen goes away. The murderer enters and pour poison into the ears of the king Hamlet comments that the murderer is the nephew of the king. He further comments You shall see how the murderer gets the love of Gonzaga’s wife. At

this, Claudius rises and leaves. Polonius asks the actors to stop the play. All leaves except Hamlet and Horatio.

Thus, through the play, Hamlet confirms the ghost story. In a soliloquy, he furiously resolves to take revenge.

“Now could I drink hot blood,

And do such bitter business as the day

Would quake to look on”.

However, Hamlet does nothing in the direction of taking revenge. He even misses the excellent opportunity when his uncle is raving. Thus, the purpose of the mousetrap fails.

The significance of the play within play is main-folded. It helps Hamlet to know that his uncle is really guilty.

Secondly, as Hamlet does not take any action.

Thirdly, through the play within play, Shakespeare reveals his own theories of play-acting. Hamlet function as a mouth-piece of Shakespeare.

Finally, the play-scene serves as the climax and crises of the whole drama. This is the dramatic relevance of the play within play.

5-The closet scene

It called close scene because Hamlet met his mother in her chamber or closet. The scene is great thematic and dramatic significance. It is concerned with the revenge theme as well as with Hamlet's madness. The sole purpose of Hamlet to meet his mother is awakening her conscience and he succeeds in his mission. Two

more important events that take place here, the death of Polonius and the reappearance of the ghost of Hamlet's father. The scene and its relevance can be explained as follows.

The meeting of Hamlet with his mother takes place just after the show of the play within play. The interview is suggested by Polonius. His purpose is that the queen may diagnose the cause of the madness of Hamlet. The king and the queen are displeased with Hamlet as the play within play arranged by him displeases the king. Polonius then tells Claudius that the Queen has called Hamlet in her chamber. He would hide behind the tapestry and overhear the conversation between Hamlet and the Queen. He would learn more about Hamlet's strange behavior.

Polonius hears the voice of Hamlet and so hides behind the tapestry (colorful curtain). Hamlet enters and his mother says angrily: "*Hamlet, thou has thy father offended*". To this Hamlet replies: "*Mother you have my father much offended*". Thus, there is an exchange of hot words between the son and the mother. The queen amazes at the strange behavior of Hamlet. She rises to leave but Hamlet catches hold of her and forces her to sit. The queen cries for help and Polonius echoes her screams thinking that the hidden person is the king. Hamlet stabs him with his sword.

Hamlet then turns to his main purposes-of awakening the conscience of his mother. He charges her with violation of the sacred marriage vows. He says that she is too old to have sensuous emotions. The queen feels tortured and asks Hamlet: "*speak no more*". She thus starts regretting. However, Hamlet would not stop his scathing words.

Soon the ghost appears. It wants to sharpen the bunted spirit of revenge in Hamlet. It also wishes to prevent Hamlet from his severe attack on his mother. The

queen cannot see the ghost. Therefore, she calls it a mere hallucination. She calls it the result of Hamlet's madness. Hamlet assures her that he is not mad and can repeat everything he has said earlier. He would explain the murderer of Polonius. The queen learns that Hamlet is not mad. She also repents for her guilt. She says: "*O, Hamlet; thou hast cleft my heart in twain*". Thus, Hamlet becomes successful in his mission of awakening his mother's conscience. He hopes that his mother will not tell the king about the ghost and that Hamlet's false madness. The queen promises him to keep everything secret. She later on shields Hamlet. Thus, the closet scene brings a kind of reconciliation between the mother and the son. Hamlet bids good night to his mother and leaves.

The closet scene has much dramatic relevance.

First, it gives Hamlet an opportunity to reform the queen.

Secondly, the scene confirms the fact that Hamlet's madness is not real but feigned

Thirdly, the scene has importance because the ghost reappears in it. It stops Hamlet from being too cruel to his mother, it also whets the blunted purposes of revenge. The queen does not see it and this fact symbolizes the evil within her heart.

Fourthly, the scene brings the murder of Polonius who meddles in the divine purposes of Hamlet namely to take revenge upon the villain.

Finally, the scene puts the action of the play in motion. Poor Ophelia becomes mad, Laertes becomes mad with anger and the king hastens the dispatch of Hamlet to England for getting him killed.

6-The Fencing Match scene

I explain this scene up u can check

Hamlet's madness

Madness is one of the features of revenge lay. Shakespeare too make sues of madness in his lay. King Lear serves as an example of the fact. In Hamlet, too the element of madness is used. However, madness of Hamlet is a vexed question.

Whether Hamlet's madness is feigned and really one of the problems, which we face in the course of our reading of the play. Opinions are divided on these issues. To some, it appears that Hamlet really becomes mad, as he is suppressed circumstances. To these critics, Hamlet is as mad as can be. To a few critics, Hamlet is half- mad. Others say that Hamlet's madness is feigned. To these critics, Hamlet is the sanest man in all Denmark. In this way, whether his madness is real or not remains a serious problem. Both these facts can be justified or refuted as follows.

Hamlet madness is real

Several critics opine that the madness of Hamlet is real. Certainly, they have given grounds for their thinking.

First, Ophelia distraction of Hamlet's strange behavior to her when he called on her in disordered clothes supports this view.

Secondly, the manner in which Hamlet speaks with Polonius and used the two courtiers, to Ophelia, the king seems to confirm the view. Similarly, the causeless murder of Polonius also is a support to the view; it is true that he does not know who is hiding behind the curtain. Perhaps he thought that the king was hidden there. However, why one is likely to think him mad at this time is that the king was hidden there.

Thirdly, another piece of evidence that supports the theory of Hamlets madness is his behavior at Ophelia funeral. When Laertes, wild with grief, leas into Ophelia's grave. Hamlet steps forward and follows suit. When the two grappling with each other, hamlet warns him that he will kill him and then makes a speech in which he challenges Laertes to complete with him in expressing grief over Ophelia's death. So, the Queen says "This is mere madness".

Finally, the **nunnery** scene and **play** scene also show that Hamlet seems to be really mad. He insults Ophelia. He asks her never to get married but to go to a nunnery. In the play scene, Hamlet makes several obscene remarks to Ophelia. In the nunnery scene, the way he has spoken to Ophelia convinces her that he is mad. She speaks in soliloquy “Oh, what a noble mind is here overthrown”. In this soliloquy, Ophelia contrasts what Hamlet used to be with what he has now become.

Evidences, which prove that Hamlet’s madness is feigned or not real.

Through a few critics have said that Hamlet is really insane, most of the critics today refuse it. Many evidence can be proved to prove that Hamlet’s madness is only assumed.

First, the soliloquies show him as a scholar and philosopher. His generalisation in them shows his wisdom. Take for example the following remarks:

*“Frailty thy name is woman”.

*“That one may smile and smile, and be a villain”.

*“To be or not to be that is the question”.

The soliloquies are not only replete with wisdom but are also remarkable for their ability to “catch the conscience of the king”. Such a plan could not be formed by an insane person. Thus, the soliloquies of Hamlet prove that he is not mad.

Secondly, both Polonius and the king speak that Hamlet is not mad. They do not believe in his madness. In an aside, Polonius comments:

“Though this be madness. Yet there is method in it”

We also hear the king speaking to Polonius

“Love? his affection do not that way tend
Nor what he speak, though it lacked form
a little was not like madness.”

Thirdly, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern do not think him to be mad Guildenstern describes Hamlet’s condition as “crafty madness”. It means that Hamlet is merely trying to create an impression of madness.

Fourthly, the scene in which Hamlet condemns his mother also shows his madness would have brought change in the Queen.

Fifthly, Hamlet’s sound comments on the art and acting could not come from the lips of an insane man. It is as if Shakespeare himself is speaking here. Hamlet remarks and observation in the gravedigger scene also serve as an example of perfectly sane thinking. His comments on the skulls show the wit and wisdom of Hamlet.

Finally, there are many other minor things that shows Hamlets madness is not real, For example, his speeches shows that he is not mad. Similarly, when is with Horatio he speaks like a sane man. Above all, Hamlet himself has once revealed that his madness is only feigned. He calls it “antic disposition”.

Q-Consider Hamlet as a Shakespearean Tragic Hero.

Hamlet is the hero of Hamlet. One of the famous tragedies by William Shakespeare. He remains a perfect Shakespearean tragic hero as possesses all the qualities of a tragic hero. The following study of his character will bring out the truth of the fact.

1- A High Ranked Person: Like other Shakespearean tragic heroes, Hamlet is a high ranked and high-born person. He is the prince of Denmark. Thus, he belongs to a royal family. He has a graceful and charming personality. He is a university student. He is very popular among his friends and also among public and Claudius fears to harm him due to his personality.

2-His Tragic Flaw: Incapability of Taking Quick decisions: in spite of being a royal and perfect young man, Hamlet suffers from a defect which leads him to his doom. The tragedy of Hamlet takes place mainly because of his flaw. It is his incapability for quick decisions. He thinks too much. He is certainly capable of impulsive action but of planned action. (Explain his play *The Mouse Trap*)

3-Conflict: Internal External: conflict is the soul of drama and is present in a Shakespearean tragedy. It is of two types- external and internal. In Hamlet, the external conflict is found between Hamlet (the hero) and Claudius (the villain). Later on, it is also between Hamlet and Laertes who wants to take revenge upon Hamlet who has killed his father. The inner conflict goes on in the mind of Hamlet. It is revealed in his soliloquies. His soliloquies contain mental debate. “To be or not to be”, which reveals the conflict regarding the inaction to take his revenge.

4-Development in Character: In Shakespearean tragedy, the hero generally comes to the realization of a truth of which he is unaware. Aristotle calls this “a change from ignorance to knowledge”. In Hamlet, there is a transformation in the character of the hero. In the beginning, Hamlet is in a state of deep depression. To him, the world is like “an weeded garden”. However, by the end of the play he changes. He no longer appears in a slovenly dress and apologizes to Laertes.

5-mental Suffering and Death: Hamlet is a tale of suffering and misfortunes of its hero which lead to his death along with the death of a few others. The suffering of

Hamlet is strong enough to arouse the feelings of pity and fear. Hamlet in the beginning is handsome, clever and popular among. But his suffering starts after the death of his father. He gets dejected to know that his mother has married his uncle only two months after the death of his father. He gets dejected to know that his mother has married his uncle only two months after the death of his father. The ghost information adds to his mental suffering. He is asked to take revenge upon his uncle. He thinks and feels much. His delay of action contributes to his misfortunes. He has to pretend madness. He also loses his beloved and rebukes his mother. He has to kill his Polonius. Finally, he has to fight with Laertes and meet his tragic end. The whole life of Hamlet is pathetic.

A Soliloquy

It is a device, which is used as a means of revealing the inner feeling of the mind of a character. It shows the secret thoughts of a character to the audience while at the same time preserving the secrecy of these thoughts from the other characters in the drama. In other words, a character is alone on the stage, thinking aloud for the benefit of the audience in a speech.

In Hamlet, there are a number of soliloquies, most of them by the hero himself.

1- O that this too sullied flesh would melt (act one, scene two).

The first soliloquy occurs after king Claudius and Queen Gertrude have urged Hamlet to get rid upon his melancholy. Therefore, in this soliloquy he expresses his grief and uselessness of this world. He says that the world is lifeless, stale and weary; he compares the world to a weeded garden in which only rank and noxious plants grow in it. That is why he wants to commit suicide to overcome his sorrow, but God and religion are against the idea of committing suicide. Then he starts speaking about his father and how he was a great king as if he was a Hyperion or a heavenly God and compares him to his uncle (the new king and his mother's new husband). Hamlet proudly talks father who was deeply in love with the queen, but what she has done is that she goes after her desires and has married again within two months. He wonders if women are weak "frailty, thy name is women" and that allows her to commit adultery. So, this soliloquy shows how Hamlet is shocked by his mother's marriage, and how he talks in a bad way about his mother and uncle, although he has no suspicion that his father had been murdered.

2-O all host of heaven. (Act one. Scene five).

The second soliloquy occurs after the ghost leaves Hamlet. Now Hamlet is surprised.

With what the ghost has told him about his father's murder, from now and asks him to revenge. Hamlet decides to wipe out and delete everything from his memory and to save the ghost order only. Therefore, from now on he will never deal with books, images and experiences, but he will live the action arises from the ghosts' order. Now he looks to his mother as a wicked woman and to his uncle as

a villain. From Hamlet speech. One feels that he will soon rush into action carrying out the order of the ghost, but then we see him uses generalization, when he says that one smile, and smile and be a villain then he promises to take the revenge seriously and say good-bye to his uncle.

3- O' what a rogue and peasant slave am I. (Act two. Scene two).

This soliloquy occurs after Hamlet has a talk with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, and with the layers. Hamlet starts this soliloquy describing how the player was affected by the story of Hecuba. The player sheds tears to sympathize with the Hecuba grief over the death of her husband. So, that is what makes Hamlet reproach himself for being inactive. He says that Hecuba is not related to the player, but in spite of that, he weeps over her fate. Then, Hamlet wonders about what about what the layer would do if he had the motive, which Hamlet has. He would the stage- with tears. So, he feels a shamed of being a coward, a man of words not actions. Then, he decides to carry out his plan in staging a play by which he would be able to ensure whether his uncle is the responsible for his father's death or not. This play (The play within the play) will show a story, which similar to Claudius, as Claudius watches the play; he must do something, which reveals his guilt. Hamlet makes this plan not only to catch the conscience of the king, but also to ensure that the ghost, which appears to him in the shape of his father, is not a devil. This soliloquy shows Hamlets character as a philosopher not a man of action.

4- To be or not to be. (Act three, scene two).

This soliloquy is the most famous and philosopher one of all. It is sort of a mental debate. Hamlet finds himself in a middle of a very complicated situation "to be or not to be, that is the question". Hamlet starts to ask himself which is the right

choice, to be, it means to suffer silently and accept his fate and live with the murder of his father (king Claudius) ; or not to be, is to kill his uncle and commit suicide, and put an end to the sea of troubles, so death would be the perfect solution in all cases. Hamlet starts to think of death as a kind of sleep, but the reason that prevents man from committing suicide is that no one knows what would happen after death. This soliloquy more than the other reveals the speculative mind of Hamlet and it has a universal theme, since, it deals with the painful feature of human existence, the oppressor's unfairness, the hurts of failed love, the delay. Hamlet again, calls himself a coward. He compared death to the undiscovered, and that what makes this soliloquy special.

5- 'Tis now very witching time of night (Act three, scene three).

Hamlet is about to go to his mother's chamber in response to her summons. He is such a rage that would enable him to drink hot blood. After he has been certain that his uncle had killed his father, in this mood he could even kill his own mother, but he does not want to follow what Nero had done in the past, so he decides to speak daggers, but use none, because, she has done nothing to deserve to be killed; except following her desire.

6- And so goes to heaven (Act three, scene three).

Hamlet enters and finds his uncle praying. He thinks that it is the perfect opportunity to take revenge from his father's murder, but again his speculative mind prevents him. He thinks if he kills his uncle while he is praying; he would send him straight to heaven, so he hesitates and tells himself that he would wait for an opportunity when the king is drunk, asleep or in his rage, in incestuous pleasure, gaming, swearing. The whole soliloquy is nothing but a piece of casuistry to convince himself of being irresponsible against the murder of his father.

7-How all occasions do in form against me (Act four, scene four).

Hamlet last soliloquy occurs just after he has spoken to the Norwegian captain and has known that young Fortinbras's too are about to invade some parts of Poland in order to acquire a small territory. The information was given to him by the captain stimulate his thoughts of revenge and makes him reproach himself for being inactive. Hamlet says that every occasion reminds him of the fact that he is a coward person because he did not achieve what he has promised the ghost. Hamlet says that a man is no better than a beast if he is satisfied only with sleeping and feeding himself. A man is justified in action if his sense of honor demands quarrels even if there is a small opportunity for a quarrel. So, Hamlet decides to be active and to take revenge from the murderer of his father, and that was his final decision.