

Soliloquies in Shakespeare's Plays

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Soliloquy is a useful instrument to reveal a character's innermost self to the audience. Shakespeare's subtle use of this device displays the immensity not only of his imagination but also the penetrating insight into human psychology. He brings into account the guild ridden minds with boiling fears and the existential and ontological enigmas beyond the display of normal reutilized human behavior.

Most of the Shakespearean soliloquies wield existential inquiry of one with oneself. They show the frailty and infirm constitution of human thought and reason. One of his most famous soliloquies in 'Hamlet' seems to pave the very way for 'Albert Camus' existential work 'The Myth of Sisyphus'. Hamlet's psychological struggle to find an answer to the ontological query 'to be or not to be' is the very essence of 'Camus' work. He makes use of a classic story of 'Sisyphus'. Sisyphus is eternally punished to roll a huge rock up the hill and as soon as he reaches the top it gets back to the bottom. It happens over and over again and he is destined to do it for good. Hamlet is aware of this repetitive tendency of existence. One is always faced with the tasks of the same nature thorough out a lifetime. It is very legitimate for one to come up with the question of 'to be or not to be'.

The literary device known as soliloquy becomes a hefty tool for the readers to look at the tremendous psychological turmoil, unspoken thoughts and deep rooted fears in the unconscious mind of the characters in Shakespeare's works. It turns out to be the most reliable and honest dialogue of one with oneself only. Most of the Shakespearean soliloquies carry profound ontological riddles where a character finds itself at a point of existential crisis.

Shakespeare's soliloquies place the characters' mind psychologically naked. The fact that one may evade everyone else but not one's own conscience. It's a loud verbal meditation on different forms of fear and displays the mind in sheer struggle.

It may as well be noticed that Albert Camus's 'The Myth of Sisyphus' is just a detailed expression of Hamlet's soliloquy 'to be or not to be'. In many other ways Shakespearean soliloquies serve as subtle wise cracks. The

psychological insight and the philosophical import fill them with timeless wisdom relevant to everyone irrespective of age and time. The present paper focuses on the soliloquies which take place in Shakespeare's tragedies namely 'Macbeth', 'King Lear' and 'Hamlet'.

A Shakespearean soliloquy courts in the very process of 'the unconscious' turning into the 'subconscious' and finally filters as the consciousness. The unidentified apprehensions taking shape and then a character's struggle to deal with it. It of course, is a stage of agitation where some manage to go across it while the some other breaks down.

Shakespearean soliloquies show up the dramatist's awareness of 'the absurd'. The absurd existential questions are presented in the form of soliloquies. Absurd simply means something beyond logical reasoning. It cannot be understood through logic. This is the real challenge where one finds oneself helpless and at a point of utter confusion. The way Macbeth realizes the absurdity of the time or Hamlet trying to discover the truth of being makes these soliloquies deeply existential.

It is noticeable that these existential riddles actualize in a character's mind. It gives him/her an occasion to have a sincere talk to himself/herself. It is a nice way to be familiar with the fact that the unconscious mind is much subtler and dominant than the conscious one. The conscious mind is just a tip of the iceberg. One always finds it strangely odd to share these existential questions and hidden fears. It is an essential human condition which one discovers one way or the other at a certain point of time. These soliloquies make it verbally loud so the audience can know of it through one's communication with oneself only.

In one of the Shakespearean soliloquies the paradox of the idea of time is expressed. Macbeth's unbound frustration is displayed through his perception of time. Time appears absurd while he thinks of an unending future. The idea of time is also one of the riddles associated with the domain of existential inquiry.

The idea of existence is a prominent factor of Shakespearean soliloquies. Though they seem to extend an enigmatic line of thought but carry a huge space for the exploration of one's existential moors.

Shakespearean soliloquies bring out the hidden reality of his characters' mind. The very process of receiving what one inflicts on the other. We find a schizophrenic 'Lady Macbeth' when she went through hallucinations. We see from very close the hidden fears of a guilt ridden mind when she speaks to herself

and says 'I see the dagger coming'. Through the soliloquy we visualize the actual consequences befell upon her after she had committed the dire crime.

Shakespearean soliloquies defy the idea of logic and present 'the absurd' in the highest intensity. The problem arises when one has a chance to move away from the normal course of reutilized life and gets close to the meaningless and the absurd. The confusion arises when one observes the logic is an ineffective tool to make out the absurd.

Hamlet affects madness and happens to question the very idea of 'beinging'. His famous soliloquy 'to be or not be' leads us to know about the beginning of his new self. Lady Macbeth's madness is consequent upon her ruthless brutality. It turned into a sense of illusionary fears and came with multifold intensity. The difference lies in the way they perceive and deal with the difficult existential urgency. Lady Macbeth is not competent to handle it with the logic as it is overridden by a fear born out of a sense of guilt feeling. King Lear is another example of such realization.

'Tomorrow, tomorrow, tomorrow'; aren't we all go through such confusions at certain times? It lies in our minds but most of us ignore it just in the absence of some logical pretext. As one happens to touch upon such areas of inquiry it always poses a challenge to one's fundamental pattern of thinking. It is said that old habits die hard and to break such a hugely ingrained pattern of thought demands a lot.

Shakespearean soliloquies occasion a moment for introspection. It prompts one to meditate over the way one lives and be in the world. Shakespeare is well aware of the absurd condition of the life and the world. His soliloquies defy the concept of structured wisdom and prompt one to look at the real nuances of the idea of existence. The soliloquies bear a clear suggestion of the discovery of the idea of absurd.

Shakespearean soliloquies serve multiple purposes. They appear as simple personal revealings on the surface but have deep entrenched implications. Most of them are existential in nature and bring in the nuances of the idea if the absurd. Lady Macbeth's fears are too loud to be kept secret. The whole pattern of how the state of madness sets in one's mind is displayed through soliloquy. The intensity of fear and the pathetic condition of a guilt ridden mind is insightfully revealed through them. One of the most important functions Shakespearean soliloquies is that it makes the audience's involvement possible to a viable extent. It makes them experience the elemental state of human thought and perception. At the very fundamental level human

psychology shows the similar pattern of behavior. So it is simply great to give a look at Shakespearean soliloquies and discover the existential wisdom of the dramatist. It finds a good expression in the theatre of the absurd and the philosophy of great existential writers like 'Albert Camus' and 'Jean Paul Sartre'.

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