

## REVIEW ARTICLE

## TO INTERPRET HAMLET AS AN EVERLASTING ROLE IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF “RESONANCE” AND “WONDER”

Sifan Gao\*

Foreign Language School, Lanzhou University, Lanzhou 730000, China

\*Corresponding Author Email: [gaosf19@163.com](mailto:gaosf19@163.com)

This is an open access journal distributed under the Creative Commons Attribution License CC BY 4.0, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

## ARTICLE DETAILS

## Article History:

Received 14 October 2021  
Accepted 19 November 2021  
Available online 15 December 2021

## ABSTRACT

The studies on the play Hamlet has been numerous since the play occupies a most special and important place in all Shakespeare's plays. The focuses of all these studies can be divided into the analysis on the theme, personalities of male and female characters, the reason of the tragedy and so on. In this essay, many evidences and interpretations will be provided to illustrate Hamlet as a “Wonder” in this play. The word “Wonder” is first put forward by Stephen Greenblatt in his essay titled, “Resonance and Wonder”. This article will mainly focus on the interpretation of the wonders in Hamlet's lines addressed to these three male characters, Claudius the King, Polonius, Hamlet's only trusted friend Horatio and his school fellows Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. All those wonders will be divided into three categories, the discussion on dualism, individualism and the disorder of the time, which as a whole will present Hamlet as a role leading reader to wonder and to resonate. The last part will serve as a conclusion of the above and try to provide a deeper understanding of the reason causing this tragedy.

## KEYWORDS

Resonance, Wonder, Hamlet, Everlasting Role.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Stephen Greenblatt is Congan University Professor of the Humanities at Harvard University. Also, General Editor of The Norton Anthology of English Literature, he is the author of eleven books, including the Swerve: How the World Became Modern (winner of the 2011 National Book Award and the 2012 Pulitzer Prize); Shakespeare's Freedom; Will in the World: How Shakespeare Became Shakespeare; Hamlet in Purgatory; Marvelous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World; Learning to Curse: Essays in Early Modern Culture; and Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare. He has edited seven collections of criticism, including Cultural Mobility: A Manifesto, and is a founding co-editor of the journal Representations. Stephen Greenblatt is most noted for his theories of New Historicism and Cultural Poetics. In his opinion, the history is discontinuous and contradictory, and it is necessary for critics to bear in mind the Textuality of History and the Historicity of Texts when interpreting literary works. In his short essay Resonance and Wonder, Greenblatt explains the importance to understand these two basic concepts in New Historicism, which also leads to his claim on more attention to anecdotes in history.

The first chapter of this essay will include a literature review of the general studies on the character of Hamlet and a classify of them, then the thesis of this essay---Hamlet serves as a Wonder in this play, and the theory applied will also be introduced. The second chapter will mainly focus on the interpretation of the wonders in Hamlet's lines

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

There is no doubt that the studies of Hamlet have many focuses and the analysis of Hamlet as an important character is one of the most commonly talked topics. According to most of the illustrations, the identities of Hamlet can be mainly concluded into these five kinds which are humanist, realist, romanticist, modernist and postmodernist. In “HORATIO'S HAMLET” by J. Duncan. Spaeth, Hamlet appears as a young man of fathomless deeps of thought and a truest image of human nature (Spaeth, 1949). The author also mentions that the soliloquies of Hamlet are the most passionate and most penetrating ones to reach the depth of the relationship between seeming and being. The similar understanding of Hamlet as a humanist can be found in “Hamlet and Counter-Humanism” by Ronald Knowles who, through careful interpretation of Hamlet's words, shows readers an image of Hamlet as a good thinker concerning the great of human beings made by God, a pious Christian who would believe in the design of God (Knowles, 1999), and a true lover suffering so much from the revenging task put on him.

Hamlet as a realist can be seen in “The Theory of Hamlet” by James Feibleman. In this essay, Feibleman first illustrate the situations in England at the time in which the corruptions of a declining feudalism began to manifest themselves (Feibleman, 1946). Shakespeare as an observing playwright has the talent to demonstrate that declining scene in a most proper way. The choice of Hamlet can also be the choice of Shakespeare himself when facing such a time out of order and a dilemma

## Quick Response Code



## Access this article online

Website:  
[www.ccsj.com.my](http://www.ccsj.com.my)

DOI:  
[10.26480/ccsj.01.2021.32.36](http://doi.org/10.26480/ccsj.01.2021.32.36)

requiring a choice between the evils. It is the necessity of choosing between equally distasteful alternatives that has made Hamlet delayed in his revenge. Proofs of Hamlet as romanticist can also be found in his questioning of death, love, thoughts and so on. Hamlet is a man of thoughts and reasons who holds it is necessary to discover his own situation in this depressing time and make a proper choice from no choice.

The modern features can easily be found in Hamlet, in "Damnéd Custom ... Habits Devil": Shakespeare's "Hamlet", Anti-Dualism, and the Early Modern Philosophy of Mind (Cefalu, 2000). The character of Hamlet in this essay, after a relatively deep discussion by the author of the relationship between seeming and being, is presented as a thinker who claims that there exists no clearly causal nexus among physical, mental, and behavioral happenings, which in nature indicates that Hamlet's rejection of dualism.

As for Hamlet's role as a postmodernist, it can receive its voice from a research that "Hamlet" and the Minesis of Absence: A Post-Structuralist Analysis' Hamlet in which Hamlet is considered standing in opposition to a sequential chain of substitutes for the absent Claudius, Polonius, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern (McDonald, 1978). And the reason for Horation being there is to trace Hamlet's story and retell it to those unsatisfied. Hamlet has also implied his understanding of the world as a stage and of man playing his life which is made of accidents and been an earliest introducer of Mise-en-abyme.

### 3. HAMLET AS A WONDER

Because there are so many interpretations of the role of Hamlet, one may wonder what is the real position of Hamlet? Harold R. Walley, in "Shakespeare's Conception of Hamlet", writes "Hamlet is not at all an esoteric mystery, but rather the normal product of a competent playwright" (Walley, 1933) which illustrates clearly that Hamlet may be thought strange and unique in all Shakespeare's plays, but it is the product of that time and the questions posted by Hamlet are never out of imagination, or it should be put in another way, those questions or wonders has always been there and questioned generation after generation. Some critics also think that the whole life of Hamlet is like a circle which begins with youthful ideal, then struggles, suffers, and in the end meets true understanding of life and returns to peace again. Shakespeare here in this play seems to try to strengthen the human nature of Hamlet and try to indicate that the circle of Hamlet's life is also the circle of human beings' circle of life as a whole. Based on the understanding above, it may be proper now to give the answer to the position of Hamlet. Hamlet serves as an everlasting human type. J. Duncan Spaeth in "HORATIO'S HAMLET", writes that "Ivan Turgenev in which he contrasts Hamlet and Don Quixote as the eternal Human Types." (Spaeth, 1949).

However, this answer is not so satisfying concerning the concept of "everlasting", since it is hard to say what is everlasting and what is the standard of being everlasting. A better answer can be that Hamlet serves as a "Wonder".

### 4. "WONDER" AND "RESONANCE", TWO IMPORTANT CONCEPTS IN NEW HISTORICISM

In order to illustrate the position of Hamlet, it will be necessary to understand these two important concepts put forward by Stephen Greenblatt in his essay Resonance and Wonder. At the very beginning, Greenblatt tells a story of a round, red priest's hat which is exhibited in a small glass case in the library of Christ Church, Oxford. This hat belongs to Cardinal Wolsey. It is very appropriate that this hat should be exhibited in Christ Church, for the college attributes its existence to Cardinal Wolsey who decided to found a great new Oxford college in his own honor when his reputation was on a high level. The hat is first wearing by its owner Wolsey and witnesses the process of his success from a poor little boy to a widely respectful Cardinal. The travelling stations of this hat, in this way, first is a company of players in which the hat may be used a curious stage property for the actor who plays Wolsey in Shakespeare's Henry VIII. For

at the time, historical forces take the form of Henry VIII intervenes and cuts off many colleges or institutions from their original benefactors, such as Christ Church, Hampton Court Palace and so on. At the same time, many properties and items that belong to churches are scattered, either threw away or bought by some companies of players to be used as stage costumes. Later this hat is kept in a museum for visitors to memorize that time and past happenings. Finally, as the last station of this small hat, it arrives at its home, Christ Church. In the church, in the museum, or even on the stage, this hat can first make visitors or audience surprised, then wonder. After reading some references or enjoying the play, they may to some extent, understand the whole process and get some resonance.

The peregrinations of this small, red hat indicates that cultural artifacts do not just stay there, but they exist in time, and "they are bound up with personal and institutional conflicts, negotiations and appropriations." Based on this understanding, Greenblatt suggests that "The display cases with which I am most involved-books--characteristically conceal this process, so that we have a misleading impression of fixity and little sense of the historical transactions through which the great texts we study have been fashioned." (Greenblatt, 1990). It is by this small hat people can learn something behind the history or something buried, hidden by history. Because there is no such an artifact for readers to read in the literary world consisting of books which actually, only present the "history" for the sake of power, it will be very necessary for readers to find an artifact in which more true histories are born. In the next part, he posts two concepts which are "Wonder" and "Resonance". By "Wonder", Greenblatt means that the objects exhibited in a museum have the power to stop the viewers in their tracts of thoughts, the ability to convey an arresting feeling of uniqueness and to evoke an eager attention.

By "Resonance", he means that these objects have the power to break their substantial boundaries to reach out into a larger world, and the power to "evoke in the viewer the complex, dynamic cultural forces from which it has emerged and for which--as metaphor or, more simply, as metonymy--it may be taken by a viewer to stand." (Greenblatt, 1990). After the explanation of these two important concepts, he claims that the necessity of finding out the artifact or the agency through which more truth will be uncovered. "Indeed, if there is any inevitability in new historicism's vision of history, it is this insistence on agency." (Greenblatt, 1990). The image that Greenblatt has provided is a museum in which viewers can get the wonder and resonance. It is obvious now that, in this story of Cardinal Wolsey, that small, red hat plays the role of an agency that is displayed in a church, evoking wonder and calling for resonance from visitors.

Many instances can be found in Shakespeare's plays, for example, at the end of A Midsummer Night's Dream, the fairy king of Oberon commands that he and all the attendants will bless the beds of the three new couples. This ritual of giving bless will surely endow them with great happiness of everyday and protect them from any moles, harelips and other ominous marks that may disfigure their offspring. The Fairy king declares, "With this field-dew consecrate," "Every fairy take his gait, / And each several chamber bless, / Through this palace, with sweet peace, / And the owner of it blest/ Ever shall in safety rest." (Bale and Rasmussen, 2008) While Oberon himself will bless the bride-bed of the ruler Theseus and the queen Hippolyta. This ceremony, according to Greenblatt, is clearly the sanctification of ownership, caste, and marriage. It is also a witty allusion to the traditional Catholic ceremony of blessing the bride-bed with holy water, which is fiercely attacked as pagan superstition and prohibited by Protestants.

"Here, as with Wolsey's hat, I want to ask what is at stake in the shift from one zone of social practice to another, from the old religion to public theater, from priests to fairies, from holy water to field dew, or rather to theatrical fairies and theatrical field dew on the London stage. When the Catholic ritual is made into theatrical representation, the transposition at once naturalizes, denaturalizes, mocks, and celebrates. It naturalizes the ritual by transforming the specially sanctified water into ordinary dew; it denaturalizes the ritual by removing it from human agents and attributing it to the fairies; it mocks Catholic practice by associating it with notorious superstition and then by enacting it on the stage, where it is revealed as a

histrionic illusion; and it celebrates such practice by reinvesting it with the charismatic magic of the theater.” (Greenblatt, 1990). From this illustration of the ritual, it will be easy for readers to find more examples in the plays. The handkerchief in Othello can be another good one. That token of love is first sewed by an Egyptian sorceress in a mysterious way, then it is given to Othello's mother to be kept as an amulet to maintain her husband's love for her, and it is left to Othello for his future wife Desdemona, and finally the meaning of this delicate handkerchief is tainted by Iago and is regarded as the lost chastity of Desdemona, which in the end, leads to the tragedy. That keepsake bears its own history and it surely surprises viewers at the first sight of its incredibly embroidery of strawberries, however, after the reading of this play, the tragedy it bears will definitely lead people to reflect upon the harsh opinions their forefathers held toward the chastity of women, the false fates of honourable and honest men, and the tragic love between men and women of different races.

However, in Hamlet, what will be able to serve as a museum, or a “Wonder” to evoke people's thought? The answer is Hamlet himself. Hamlet, as the foremost character in this play, surely leaves a deep impression on his audience. He identifies himself as a mad man and poses many strange and astonishing questions not only to Claudius the king, Polonius the great councillor to the state, his most trusted friend Horatio, but also to his audience. The “mad” talking and questions of him can best illustrate his role as a “wonder” and the “Resonance” that he evokes in people's hearts.

#### 4.1 “Wonder” and “Resonance” for Claudius the king in Hamlet

At the beginning, when Hamlet first talks to his uncle who is now the king and should be his father, he says, “A little more than kin and less than kind” (Bale and Rasmussen, 2008), “Not so, my lord: --I am too much i'th'sun.”, which indicate that Hamlet actually doubts the sudden death of his father, and he has the proper judgement of how things might have gone. Also, when he finally learns the reality from the ghost of his father, he claims that “O, my prophetic soul! Mine uncle!” when it comes to the recent death of the old king, his mother, the queen consoles him by saying that death is a common thing, and asks “Why seems it so particular with thee?”. To this question, Hamlet answers, “‘seems’, madam? Nay it is: I know not ‘seems’/ ‘Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother, / Nor customary suits of solemn black, / Nor windy suspiration of forced breath, / No, nor the fruitful river in the eye, / Nor the dejected ‘haviour of the visage, / Together with all forms, moods, shows of grief, / That can denote me truly: In Hamlet's opinion, there is no such a word as “seems”. The mourning cloak and the grievous visage are not what the seeming of act but the true feeling in his heart. And all together these forms, moods, and shows of sadness still cannot express the grief he bears in mind. Hamlet here claims that there is no boundary between seeming and being. What a man feels inside will be surely and truly presented outside. This understanding of the relationship is actually contrary to the western minds which have been affected by the idea of dualism for a long time and that is why his mother, when hearing this assertion of her son, can only treat those words as mad talk. Another example of dualism is between man and woman. When Ophelia is so desperate to find that her sweet lover now turns into a mad, rude man, she says with a broken heart, “O, woe is me, / T' have seen what I have seen, see what I see!”. Considering another two women that appear in this play--Gertrude the queen and Hecuba wife of Priam--it seems that women have always been in a role of witnessing all things. They are just onlookers making no difference, while men are always the important elements that can make great change. Or can this situation be interpreted in this way, that since men are in the center of power, so the center of history is the history of men?

When Hamlet is left alone, he utters, “O, that this too solid flesh would melt, / Thaw and resolve itself into a dew! / Or that the Everlasting had not fixed / His canon against self-slaughter! O God, O God! / How weary, stale, flat and unprofitable / Seem to me all the uses of this world! / Fie on't! O, fie, fie! 'Tis an unweeded garden / That grows to seed: things rank and gross in nature / Possess it merely.”. These utterances are said to himself, but they also question the readers and audience the relationship between God and men. Hamlet, as a Christian, questions the design of God, which is

in fact a begging for help from the Almighty One, and seemingly rebellious talk only demonstrates his poor situations but shows his helplessness in the overwhelming grief and disappointment of this world. Hamlet understands that men are created by God and should be ready to be put to make a choice. Facing the disorder of the time, things can be subverted so often that all the uses of the world could seem to Hamlet as unprofitable. However, even if now the world becomes a garden filled with evil weeds, Hamlet still needs to choose, for that is the reason why God makes men able to think, and to tell between good and evil. Although men for Hamlet should have the ability to reason and men are endowed with perfect frames, reasonable minds and great dispositions from God, Hamlet still warns Ophelia that “You should not have believed me, for virtue cannot so inoculate our old stock but we shall relish of it: Men at the same time unreliable and their dispositions by no means can be changed. “I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious, with more offences at my beck than I have thoughts to put them in, imagination to give them shape, or time to act them in. What should such fellows as I do crawling between heaven and earth?”.

According to Millicent in the essay “Hamlet, Revenge!”, there is the possibility that Hamlet knows the king is also there eavesdropping the conversation between him and Ophelia, these words might also be applied to the king. The love Hamlet bears to Ophelia is a thing for sure. Although the words he says to her are sharp and harsh, it cannot be deemed that they are words from his heart, for the madness he chooses to wear is the disguise of the revenge. The true Hamlet can be best presented in his love letters to Ophelia. Those letters are written before he gets “mad” and what can be found between those lines is his deep love for her. According to him, Ophelia may doubt many things in this world, but should not doubt the love he feels for her. His love will always be there as long as this “machine” or the flesh still belongs to him, which means he will love her forever. In this case, the words to Ophelia are likely said to the king and Polonius behind the curtains. Pride and greed can be regarded as the original sins and before God, no one is free of guilt. The murder done by his uncle and his design of revenge is equally wrong before God. And his disappointment in himself indicates his disappointment of human nature. The king is a smart man who has grasped the essence of Hamlet's questions, saying that “Love? His affections do not that way tend, / Nor what he spake, though it lacked form a little, / Was not like madness.”. However, even if the king can get through the speeches of Hamlet, he refuses to confess his sin or he fails to make a resonance.

#### 4.2 “Wonder” and “Resonance” in Horatio

The role of Hamlet is a complicated one which often presents itself in a situation of self-contradiction, which is also a true feature of human's personality. When Hamlet decides to follow the ghost, Horatio stops him and warns him the danger. Hamlet replies, “Why, what should be the fear? / I do not set my life at a pins fee; / And for my soul, what can it do to that, / Being a thing immortal as itself?” (Bale and Rasmussen, 2008). In this situation, the wonder Hamlet provides Horatio is his belief that the mortal flesh of human beings is of little value, but the soul, or the spirit of men is immortal, for a soul is what is deemed as the most essential part in life. Based on this belief, Hamlet asserts that there is no need to be afraid of losing his life. However, when he and Horatio meet a digger who, in an easiness, throws the skull of Yorick, the old king's favourite jester., Hamlet sighs that, “To what base uses we may return, Horatio! Why may not imagination trace the noble dust of Alexander till he find it stopping a bung-hole?”. Even a man so great like Alexander may end with useless dust that is used to stop a hole. To this reply, Horatio is shocked, saying “were to consider too curiously to consider so.”. The opinion of Hamlet does wonder Horatio and also put him to the consideration of the final ending of men. However, the real issue is not the problem of the same ending, but the relationship between soul and flesh. According to what Hamlet has said about the little value of a man's flesh when compared with his immortal soul, here, Hamlet just goes against himself by claiming that no matter how noble a man can be, or how great his mind can be, he and the base beggars will return to the same end-useless dust. Hamlet, in this case, denies the dualism of the concepts of soul and flesh, which indicates the complicated part in his personalities. “He waxes desperate with

imagination.” (Bale and Rasmussen, 2008). When Hamlet, regardless the warning of his companies, finally follows that ghost into the darkness, Horatio claims that Hamlet now is full of imagination. However, in the later part of this play, Hamlet confesses to Horatio that he is not actually mad, and the madness he shows is merely a way of disguising his plan of revenge.

Hamlet, as what is mentioned before, knows the dilemma of his own situation and has to make a choice from no choice, for they are equally evil alternatives. Maybe pretending to be mad is the most proper way to make sure the carrying out of his plan of revenge on his uncle. On the other hand, the act Hamlet has taken is also of great importance. “The time is out of joint:”. This what Hamlet says when he knows the whole process of the murder and the ghost bids him the heavy task of revenge which Hamlet actually does not want. He presents himself as a mad man and claims many absurd words. It is the madness in him that exposes the madness of the world and the disorder of his mind also indicates the disorder of the time. Proofs can also be found in the lines of Marcellus, “Something is rotten in the state of Denmark.” (Bale and Rasmussen, 2008). The embodiment of a disordered time in Hamlet may allude to the image of Jesus Christ who is considered the incarnation of God’s Words. For like Jesus is rejected by those ignorant men in his country, Hamlet is also expelled because of his “madness”, “It shall be so, / Madness in great ones must not unwatched go.”

The life of Hamlet is a full circle which begins with a story and ends with a story. The greatness of Hamlet is his choice of playing a mad man. The madness in him corresponds to the time which is out of joint, and people of the time who confuse the right with the wrong. It is his madness that makes them to think and fear for all the sins they have done. Hamlet realizes the world is just like a stage on which things accidental and absurd happen every day and what a man should do is to find his own role and act in a proper way. The reason he directs the new play is not only an exposure of Claudius’s crime but an imitation of the nature of everyday life. The chaos in his mind is presented in his talk and cation and also presented by the society he is in. Hamlet never reaches the goal he aims to seize, which is to set the world right. He keeps searching and searching to the last minute.

When he is dying, the task he passes to Horatio is to trace his story and inform those unsatisfied. It is clear that “those unsatisfied” are not merely the men watching this play, but also people of every generation. “Horatio’s reason for being, in the end, is to tell the story of Hamlet, to preserve the traces, even as he represents the identity of Hamlet, or the trace, in himself. Judging from the cadences of his rhetoric, Horatio welcomes his new role as the still living voice, the orator (H-oratio), of Hamlet.” (McDonald, 1978). Horatio, as the still living voice of Hamlet, does tell the story in a most accurate and wisest way, that this is a tragedy of “purposes mistake” (Bale and Rasmussen, 2008) which collapse in accidents.

#### 4.3 “Wonder” and “Resonance” in Polonius

When Polonius first sees Hamlet alone reading a book, he accosts Hamlet by asking what he is reading, and Hamlet replies him, “Words, words, words.” Although his reply at the beginning confused Polonius, for it sounds like merely nonsense. However, Polonius is a wise man, and when Hamlet again claims that what he reads is all but slanders, he realizes the real intention of Hamlet. For Hamlet, this world is full of lies, and all things happen with accidents. Men cannot believe in anyone, and it is impossible for them to find out the truth. Hamlet’s opinion about the unreliability of the world can also be proofed in his lines addressed to his lover Ophelia, “We are arrant knaves all: believe none of us.” Later when Polonius suggests that “Will you walk out of the air, my lord?” “Into my grave?”. The quick thought of Hamlet only not surprises Polonius but also pulls him to the consideration of death and life. According to Hamlet, death is just the outside part of life, which sounds unimaginable. Death itself has the power to evoke wonder in people’s mind. However, Hamlet, by breaking the boundaries between death and life, asserts that death is just a part of life and in turn, life is part of death. That is also why, Polonius says secretly to himself “Though this be madness, yet there is method in’t” and “Indeed,

this is out o’th’air. --How pregnant sometimes his replies are!”

#### 4.4 “Wonder” and “Resonance” in Rosencrantz and Guildenstern

“What a piece of work is a man! How noble in reason, how infinite in faculty, in form and moving how express and admirable, in action how like an angel, in apprehension how like a god! The beauty of the world, the paragon of animal--and yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust?”. The opinions Hamlet holds of men are positive considering that a man is a piece of work of God. However, the depression he feels at the time is his thinking of this corrupted society, and Hamlet is trying to find out what is wrong in it. The more he praises the greatness of men, the more disappointment he feels in them. Those praising words at the beginning are often interpreted as Hamlet’s speech as a humanist, nevertheless, they are uttered merely to serve his question at the end. The murder his uncle did is only a trigger which leads Hamlet to see, to observe, to think, and to make an act. He is a man of individual thoughts, for he can accurately find his own situation in this disordered world and make his own decision.

“Ay, sir, that soaks up the king’s countenance, his rewards, his authorities. But such officers do the king best service in the end: he keeps them, like an ape an apple, in the corner of his jaw, first mouthed to be last swallowed: when he needs what you have gleaned, it is but squeezing you, and, sponge, you shall be dry again.” These ironies uttered by Hamlet to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, who are sent by his uncle to find out the reason of Hamlet’s madness and now are the ministers of the new king, is in fact a warning of being not totally subject to the king. On the one hand, Hamlet points out the tragedy of those flattering men is that they live like a sponge, only feeling full when they soaked up the king’s rewards and power. However, those powers and rewards are never theirs because they are just a container of them. They do not generate anything for their own sake or try to fill themselves with their own thoughts, for they merely do not think. At the end, when it is time for the king to take back his properties, they will be squeezed hard, like a man taken away all his vital qi and turned into a mummy, and they will be dry again. The warning can also serve as a real warning concerning their death in the end. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are school fellows of Hamlet and they have been friends for a long time. However, the friendship can easily be changed by the promise of rewards and powers and that is why Hamlet regards them as sponges.

Hamlet’s ironies warn them of their bad ending, but they still choose to be numb and make no react to the “Wonder” in his words. For Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, as individuals, their rejection of thinking lead to their own destruction.

### 5. CONCLUSION

“Why this should be so is suggested by a remarkable passage in his Commentary on the Metaphysics of Aristotle by Aquinas’s teacher, Albert the Great ‘So it was in the beginning when men, up to that time unskilled, began to philosophize.... Now the man who is puzzled and wonders apparently does not know. Hence wonder is the movement of the man who does not know on his way to finding out, to get at the bottom of that at which he wonders and to determine its cause.... Such is the origin of philosophy’. (Greenblatt, 1990). “Wonders”, in this opinion, become the natural movement of men’s thought and they exist at the bottom of hearts. The spirit to wonder is actually the beginning of philosophy. Hamlet, by the incarnation of the disorder of the time, presents readers the most comprehensive image of “Wonder”, for his questioning not only pulls them out of their thinking set and leads them to reflect upon themselves, but also evokes in them a significant “Resonance” which brings them to a larger world. Hamlet questions about the dualism between life and death, men and women, seeming and being, words and thoughts, action and discretion, which as a whole cover almost every aspect of people’s life.

Even if Hamlet is a merely a character created by Shakespeare more than four hundred years ago, the advanced spirits of him that go beyond the binary oppositions are still ardently discussed and applied in many ways. In him, the manifestation of individualism can also be found, for he is a man of thought and a master of reasoning. He has the eyes that eagerly



observe the world and the heart that can tell between good and evil, real and unreal. Leading by his own judgement, he makes choices between many choices. His incarnation of this disordered world is the most significant one, for he has the bravery and courage to make himself the target of people's mock and hurt. The madness in him indicates the madness of the time and the disorder of his mind is in fact indicates the subvert of virtues and vices, which are consciously or unconsciously avoided by them.

Hamlet serves as an image of a man's original tendency which questions the most essential issues concerning the existence of human's life in this world. To some extent, Hamlet has his everlasting functions. The vile characters in this play, like Claudius and Polonius, are smart and can reach to the essence of Hamlet's questions. The wonders evoked in their hearts do make them think and reflect, however, they reject the following resonance and the chance to confess themselves. The mistake they make is not only their choice of continuing being numb and cruel, but their attempt to hide and kill this very tendency of "Wonder" in their hearts, which can also be the reason leading to this great tragedy. As space is limited, all the details concerning the "Wonders" in Hamlet's lines will not be interpreted one by one, and the role of "Wonder" can also be found in many other plays of Shakespeare.

## REFERENCES

- Bale J., Rasmussen E., 2008. William Shakespeare: Complete Works. Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press.
- Cefalu A.P., 2000. Damnéd Custom ... Habits Devil: Shakespeare's "Hamlet", Anti-Dualism, and the Early Modern Philosophy of Mind'. ELH, 67(2), 399-431.
- Feibleman J., 1946. The Theory of Hamlet. Journal of the History of Ideas, 7(2), 131-150.
- Greenblatt S., 1990. Resonance and Wonder. Bulletin of the American Academy of Art and Sciences, 43(4), 11-34.
- Knowles R., 1999. Hamlet and Counter-Humanism. Renaissance Quarterly, 52(4), 1046-1069.
- McDonald J.D., 1978. "Hamlet" and the Minesis of Absence: A Post-Structuralist Analysis. Educational Theatre Journal, 30(1), 36-53.
- Spaeth J.D., 1949. Horatio's Hamlet. The Shakespeare Association Bulletin, 24(1), 37-47.
- Walley H., 1933. Shakespeare's Conception of Hamlet. PMLA, 48(3), 777-798.

