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Dr. Bapu G. Gholap

'developing' to 'developed' all citizens of our country should support economic, environmental, political and social development of the country.

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Psychological complexity of Hamlet's Character

Dr. Prahlad Das
Assistant Professor,
S.Y.G.College Saktiashram

The typical tragic character of Shakespeare is, to some extent, an unusual type, possessing great complexity in mental make-up and personality – even to the extent of abnormality or pathological defects. It is seen that when Shakespeare wished to create a great character of tragedy, he made that character a psychological problem with conflicting elements of personality which provoke an inner conflict.

A Shakespearean tragic hero is an exceptional being – a person of high degree of public importance. The hero has one predominant passion or feeling. As Bradley puts it,

"A marked one-sidedness, a fatal tendency to identify his whole being with one interest, object, passion or habit or habit of the mind."¹

This is for Shakespeare the fundamental tragic trait. It contains the seed of the hero's ruin though it touches with it.

Hamlet is a character of extraordinary complexity and no simple formula can serve to solve his mystery. Hamlet has been marked with melancholia and indecisiveness. Shakespeare was aware of the melancholy man as outlined by Elizabethan psychologists and made use of them in portraying Hamlet. When we first meet Hamlet in the play, we see him mourning – mourning over his father's death:

But I have that within which passeth show;
These but the trappings and the suits of woe.

Act-I, Scene-II, Lines: 85-86

He expresses before his mother that the grief in him was deeper than those outward shows and external signs – tears, sigh – which are supposed to indicate man's grief and sorrow. The King Claudius, and the Queen have urged Hamlet in the open court to cast off the deep melancholy:

.....throw to earth

This unrevealing woe

Act-I, Scene-II, Lines: 106-107

Which, as they think has taken possession of him as a consequence of his father's death. We find a clear picture of Hamlet's misery in his first soliloquy. Here, Hamlet reveals the grief that has been growing at his mind.

O! that this too solid flesh would melt,

Thaw and resolve itself into a dew;

Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd

His canon 'gainst self-slaughter! O God! God!

How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable

Seem to me all the uses of this world.

Fie on 't! Ah fie! 'tis an unweeded garden,

That grows to seed; things rank and gross in nature

Possess it merely.

Act-I Scene- II Lines: 129-137

The moods expressed by Hamlet through these lines are patent and also brings into light Hamlet's state of mind. To him the light has been extinguished from the things of the earth and in this world, all kinds of useless activities are going, and all kinds of harmful actions are being performed, so that the world seems to have passed into the hands of the most unscrupulous people. It also tells us of the severe shock that Hamlet's high moral idealism has received as a result of the hasty, and incestuous marriage of his mother with his uncle, which he has hardly recovered himself from the grief of his father's death. He is profoundly shocked by Gertrude's marriage to his uncle in less than two month after his first husband's death. "These two

concrete embodiments of Hamlet's misery are closely related. He suffers from misery at his father's death and agony at his mother's quick forgetfulness: such callousness is infidelity, and so impurity, and since Claudius is the brother of the King, incest. It is reasonable to suppose that Hamlet's state of mind, if not wholly caused by these events, is at least definitely related to them. Of his two loved parents, one has been taken for ever by death, the other dishonored forever by her act of marriage. To Hamlet the world is now an 'unweeded garden'¹. Hamlet is profoundly shocked by Gertrude's marriage to his uncle in less than two months after her first husband's death. He longs for death and contemplates suicide; he compares the world to Eden after the fall. Since then, he has been brooding sadly on the shameless conduct of his mother and the result of this brooding melancholy is a 'world-weariness', a disgust of life. The melancholy and disillusionment apparent in these are not part of his abnormal state of mind.

Again, we find Hamlet keeping himself away from the course action to avenge his father's murder. There are a lot of thing that contributed to it. His main difficulty may be regarded as being internal, something that is part of his mental make-up. It may, for instance, be supposed that Hamlet is restrained from action by his conscience or a moral scruple. Of course, this approach is not supported by any evidence from the play itself. Hamlet habitually assumes, without any questioning that he ought to avenge his father's murder. Even when he doubts the honesty of the Ghost, he expresses no doubt as to what his duty would be if the Ghost has spoken truly.

He reproaches himself for neglecting his duty in the two soliloquies where he examines his position,

O what a rogue and peasant slave am I:

Act-II, Scene-II, Line: 543

And,

How all occasions do inform against me?

Act-IV, Scene-IV, Line: 32

When he reflects on the possible causes of this neglect, he does not mention among them any moral scruple. When the Ghost appears in the Queen's chamber, he does not plead that his conscience comes in his way. But there is one passage-

Does it not, thinks't thee, stand me now upon-
He that hath kill'd my king and whor'd my mother,

Popp'd in between the election and my hopes,
Thrown out his angle for my proper life,

And with such cozenage-is't not perfect conscience
To quit him with this arm? And is't not to be damn'd
To let this canker of our nature come
In future evil?

Act-V, Scene-II, Lines: 63-70

In which Hamlet speaks as if his conscience were retarding action on his part. He thinks that it is by no means contrary to his conscience to murder the king who has killed his father, whored his mother, and usurped the crown which rightfully belongs to him. If we regard this passage as a correct analysis of his mind, then conscience would appear to be one hindrance in Hamlet's way but not the sole of the chief hindrance.

Again, Hamlet was, to a large extent, reflective and speculative which caused delay in his action through irresolution. From point, the play is a tragedy of reflection. The whole is intended to show how a calculating which aims at exhausting, so far as human foresight can, all the relations and possible consequences of a deed, cripples the power of acting. Hamlet is a hypocrite towards himself; his far-fetched scruples are after mere pretext to cover his want of determination. He has no firm belief in himself or in anything else. He loses himself in labyrinths own words in his soliloquies – such word, for example, as those about “the native hue of resolution being sicklied over by the pale cast of thought”, or those about “the craven

scruple of thinking too precisely on the event”.

The energy of resolve is dissipated in Hamlet be an endless brooding on the deed that requires to be done. When he does act, his action does not proceed from this deliberation and analysis, but is sudden and impulsive. And most of these reasons he gives for his procrastination are evidently not the true reasons, but unconscious excuses.

It seems that the temperament of Hamlet was inclined to nervous instability, to rapid and perhaps extreme changes of feeling and mood, and that he was disposed to be, for the time, absorbed in the feeling or mood that possessed him. This temperament the Elizabethans would have called melancholic; and Hamlet seems to be an example of it. This kind of temperament has something surely to do with Hamlet's irresolution. Further, we would not be wrong in attributing to the Hamlet of earlier days an exquisite sensitive sensibility. Hamlet shows an unbounded delight and faith in everything good and beautiful. Eager enthusiasm he turns to those around him. His adoration of his dead father, his manner of speaking to Laertes, in his affectionate manner of greeting Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, his love for Ophelia all illustrate exquisite or his idealism. And the negative side of this idealism is seen in his disgust at his uncle's drunkenness, his loathing of his mother's sensuality, and his contempt for everything pretensions or false. A man with this kind of moral sensibility would be deeply affected by any great shock that life might bring for him.

Hamlet was a man with a melancholic temperament, an exquisite moral sensibility, and an intellectual genius who received a violent shock. As a result of that, he begins to sink into melancholy; a sudden demand for difficult and decisive action is made upon him. He indulges an endless and futile mental dissection of the required deed. The futility of this process, and the shame of his delay, further weaken him and

enslave him to this melancholy still more. The shock to his moral being comes with the sudden disclosure of his mother's true nature. She has remarried within a month of her husband's death, and she has remarried Hamlet's uncle, a man utterly contemptible and hateful in Hamlet's eyes. This experience brings to him a feeling of horror, then loathing, then despair of human nature. His whole mind is poisoned. He can never see Ophelia in the same light again: she is a woman and her mother is a woman. Now the condition has arisen under which Hamlet's highest gifts, his moral sensibility and his intellectual genius, become his enemies. A man with a blunt moral nature and with a lesser intellectual capacity would not have felt the revelation so keenly.

The tragic heroes of Shakespeare, be they King, Prince, Military General, or Thane, are endowed with psychological complexities – Hamlet is indecisive, melancholic, hesitant; Othello is rash, credulous and hasty. King Lear is rash and impulsive; and Macbeth is weak of will and ambitious. He has a marked obsession to act in a particular way. This obsession is the tragic of his character. It is this dominant tendency to act in a particular way which brings about his downfall. This dominant trait or flaw is fatal to him in the situation in which he is placed or the circumstances in which he was to act. If their situations are interchanged, there would be no tragedy at all. As the action proceeds all non-essentials are shed one after another, till the tragic protagonist becomes a symbolic figure and his struggle becomes the conflict of Good and Evil in the world.

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