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Anatomization of Shakespeare's Deuteragonists and Tritagonists



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ABSTRACT :

Shakespeare's plays have long been a subject of study for many intellectuals. No matter how many times his works are analyzed and dissected, they never cease to captivate and leave us in awe with their timeless brilliance and profound artistry. In this research paper, I have attempted to comprehend how Shakespeare utilized his deuteragonists and tritagonist in his plays. While studying Shakespeare's works, I observed how creatively he employed these secondary characters, to the point that they

sometimes overshadowed the protagonists.

The aim of this research is to explore the author's intention and technique in employing his deuteragonists and tritagonist throughout his plays.

KEYWORDS :

Shakespeare, plays, protagonists, deuteragonists, tritagonist

INTRODUCTION

While studying Shakespeare's plays, I observed that Shakespeare has created his characters with great insight. His keen observation of human nature is commendable. He not only worked hard on his protagonists but also on his secondary and tertiary main characters, i.e., the deuteragonists and tritagonists. Shakespeare's observation of humanity is so conspicuous in his characters. His characters reflect universal traits, flaws, and emotions, making them relatable across time. If we try to fathom the psychological depth of his plays, we can see how he gave his characters multi-dimensional personalities. Shakespeare worked hard on all his characters, but in this research, I have attempted to analyze his deuteragonists and tritagonists. To conduct this research, I have taken a few examples from his plays. The characters I have chosen are often victims of the protagonists' misfortunes, entangled in the tragic consequences of their choices and actions. While they may not be the primary focus of the narrative, they are deeply affected by the protagonists' internal struggles, moral dilemmas, and fatal flaws. These characters frequently serve as collateral damage, caught in the ripple effects of the protagonists' downfall. Despite their loyalty, innocence, or good intentions, they suffer as a result of being closely connected to the central figures, highlighting the far-reaching impacts of the protagonists' fate on those around them. This dynamic not only adds complexity to the story but also deepens the tragedy by showing how personal failings can devastate the lives of others.

MERCUTIO (Romeo and Juliet)

“To strengthen my presented statement, I studied some of Shakespeare's deuteragonists. First, I tried to analyze **Mercutio**, a deuteragonist in Shakespeare's tragedy **Romeo and Juliet**. Mercutio is a close friend to Romeo and plays a significant role in the play. Unlike Romeo, Mercutio doesn't live in a quixotic world; he is portrayed as a pragmatic personality. He is also shown as a free spirit, able to mingle with both the Montagues and the Capulets, despite the families' feud. His wit, humor, and sharp intellect add depth to the play's dynamic, often serving as a counterbalance to Romeo's romantic idealism.

Outspoken and bold, Mercutio doesn't hesitate to speak his mind, no matter how controversial his opinions may be. His role, though secondary, is crucial to the unfolding

of events. His death, in particular, acts as a turning point in the play, setting off a chain of tragic events that eventually lead to the downfall of both Romeo and Juliet. Mercutio's cynical view of love and fate contrasts sharply with Romeo's idealized vision, and this contrast heightens the dramatic tension in the narrative. His untimely demise not only seals his own fate but also seals the tragic destiny of the two lovers."

EARL OF KENT (KING LEAR)

Another important deuteragonist is **Earl of Kent** from **Shakespeare's tragedy King Lear** in the Play Kent is presented as a loyal and a brave nobility his loyalty and love for King Lear is immeasurable.

Despite King Lear's deep anger toward Kent, the numerous times he chastised him, and ultimately banishing him from his kingdom, Kent's unwavering loyalty and love for the king never faltered. Fearless of the harsh punishments that could have been inflicted upon him, Kent bravely stood by Cordelia's side, speaking out in her defense.

Following statements by Kent is after when King Lear had spoke his anger out on Cordelia.

*"Whom I have ever honored as my king, loved as my father.
As my master followed as my great patron thought on in my prayers"*

*"Let it fall rather those of fork invade the region of my heart.
Be Kent unmannerly when Lear is mad."* (Act 1 Scene 1)

His sole concern was to prevent King Lear from making any grievous mistakes, driven by a steadfast commitment to protect the king from his own misguided judgments. Kent's devotion transcended personal cost, reflecting a bond that remained unbroken even in the face of rejection and exile.

BANQUO (MACBETH)

In the play, Banquo is presented as a man of great insight who engages in metacognition. At the beginning of the play, both Banquo and Macbeth encounter the weird sisters. What is

notable here is that the three sisters prophesied about both of them, but only Macbeth falls for every word of the witches. Unlike Macbeth, Banquo's thought process is more critical. While Macbeth is overly ambitious, Banquo thinks pragmatically and reasonably, like Shakespeare's other deuteragonists. Throughout the play, I noticed that Macbeth continues to tantalize himself with the lust for power, which ultimately leads to his destruction. Banquo's ability to think critically is evident when he reacts to the witches' prophecy.

“And oftentimes, to win us to our harm
the instruments of darkness tell us truths,
win us with honest trifles, to betray's in
deepest consequence.”

(Act 1, Scene 3, lines 123-125)

Above statement by Banquo proves that he thinks realistically and is also aware of the ramifications of immoral actions. While analyzing Banquo's character, I observed that his role remains active throughout the play, either directly or indirectly.

Horatio (Hamlet)

In Hamlet, we see Horatio in the beginning of the play, which is one of the most important scenes. It is observable in the play that everyone else has some agenda. Hamlet is betrayed by most of the characters, but Horatio is the only one who listens to Hamlet's problems and stays by his side. Horatio serves as a rational guide to Hamlet. It can be distinctly observed that Shakespeare's deuteragonists often possess more discerning attributes; they are more rational than the protagonists themselves. From the very first scene to the last, we see Horatio's presence, which gives a sense of continuity and coherence to the narrative.

FOOL (KING LEAR)

Another and final analysis of a character I consider a tritagonist is the Fool in King Lear. The Fool is a character archetype who appears in many of Shakespeare's plays. Shakespearean

Fools are not only confined to the role of jesters, but they also possess intelligence. They often make witty remarks. In King Lear, we see the Fool as a commentator when King Lear is making wrong decisions and being unjust toward his loved ones. The Fool, when he sees King Lear dismissing Cordelia, acerbically criticizes Lear's actions and tries to make him realize that his mistakes are dangerous. However, throughout the play, it becomes clear that King Lear is not a just ruler, and his decisions are irrational. To one's amazement, the supposed wisdom of the king is absent, while the Fool, traditionally meant to amuse the nobility, is instead presented as insightful and empathetic."

CONCLUSION

The analysis presented above concludes that Shakespeare's deuteragonists and tritagonists possess such remarkable qualities that they sometimes outshine protagonists' roles. This paper also demonstrates how minor roles can alter the entire course of the work. Shakespeare's powers of observation are outstanding. Even in real life, we witness how others can profoundly influence and shape the course of an individual's journey.

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