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## THE INTERPRETATION OF METATEXTS IN SHAKESPEARE'S TRAGEDIES

Annotation

This article will discuss information about what a metatext is, their use, types, and place in literature. In order to be more elaborative pertinent pages pertaining the different episodes about meta-texts of Shakespeare's tragedies have been cited. Moreover, this article aims to explore the presentation of metatexts in Shakespeare's tragedies, analyzing their significance, purpose, and impact on the overall narrative. Through an examination of specific examples from his tragedies, such as "Hamlet," "Macbeth," and "Othello," we will delve into the various ways in which Shakespeare employs metatextual elements to enhance the dramatic experience for the audience.

**Key words:** Metatext, purpose, narrative, tragedy, elaborative, pertain, self-referential, deception, fiction, reality, reflection

## SHEKSPIR TRAGEDIYALARIDA METATEKSTLARNING IFODALANISHI

Annotatsiya

Ushbu maqola metamatn nima, ulardan foydalanish, turlari, va adabiyotdagi o'rni haqida ma'lumotlar muhokama qilinadi. Batafsilroq bo'lishi uchun Shekspir tragediyalarining metamatnlari haqidagi turli epizodlarga oid tegishli sahifalar keltirildi. Bundan tashqari, ushbu maqola Shekspir tragediyalaridagi metamatnlarning taqdimotini o'rganish, ularning ahamiyati, maqsadi va umumiy hikoyaga ta'sirini tahlil qilishga qaratilgan. Uning "Gamlet", "Makbet" va "Otello" kabi tragediyalaridan aniq misollarni o'rganish orqali biz Shekspirning tomoshabinlar uchun dramatic tajribani oshirish uchun metamatn elementlarini qo'llashning turli usullarini ko'rib chiqamiz.

**Kalit so'zlar:** Metamatn, maqsad, hikoya, fojia, batafsil, tegishli, o'z-o'zini aks ettiruvchi, aldash, fantastika, haqiqat, aks ettirish

## ИНТЕРПРЕТАЦИЯ МЕТАТЕКСТОВ В ТРАГЕДИЯХ ШЕКСПИРА

Аннотация

В этой статье речь пойдет о том, что такое метатекст, их использовании, видах и месте в литературе. Для большей информативности были процитированы страницы, относящиеся к различным эпизодам метатекстов трагедий Шекспира. Более того, данная статья призвана изучить презентацию метатекстов в трагедиях Шекспира, проанализировать их значение, цель и влияние на общее повествование. Рассмотрев конкретные примеры из его трагедий, таких как «Гамлет», «Макбет» и «Отелло», мы углубимся в различные способы, которыми Шекспир использует метатекстуальные элементы для усиления драматического опыта зрителей.

**Ключевые слова:** Метатекст, цель, повествование, трагедия, разработка, отношение, самореференция, обман, вымысел, реальность, отражение.

**Introduction.** What is meta-text? Our modern day literary term meta comes from the classical Greek meta meaning with, among, between, after, beyond, above, higher it is a sort of amalgamation lots of different meanings for beyond on the boundaries. The word meta-text simply means a secondary text that talks about a main text.

William Shakespeare, the renowned English playwright, poet, and actor, is widely regarded as one of the greatest writers in the history of literature. His works, particularly his tragedies, continue to captivate audiences worldwide, exploring complex themes and emotions. One fascinating aspect of Shakespeare's tragedies is the presence of metatexts, which refer to self-referential elements within a text that draw attention to the artifice of the work itself. This article aims to explore the presentation of metatexts in Shakespeare's tragedies, analyzing their significance, purpose, and impact on the overall narrative. Through an examination of specific examples from his tragedies, such as "Hamlet," "Macbeth," and "Othello," we will delve into the various ways in which Shakespeare employs metatextual elements to enhance the dramatic experience for the audience.

Metatexts are commonly regarded as the most important aspect of the classical literature. They are often referred to as "texts about texts," are literary devices that self-

consciously draw attention to the medium of storytelling. In Shakespeare's tragedies, metatextual elements serve multiple purposes, such as challenging the audience's perception of reality, highlighting the theatrical nature of the play, and inviting the audience to reflect upon the nature of art and its relationship to life.

One of the most prominent examples of metatextual elements in Shakespeare's tragedies can be found in "Hamlet." The play within the play, commonly known as "The Mousetrap," serves as a metatextual device that allows Shakespeare to explore themes of deception, appearance versus reality, and the power of theater. By having the characters of "Hamlet" put on a play within the play, Shakespeare blurs the lines between fiction and reality, forcing the audience to question their own perceptions and the reliability of what they see. This metatextual device not only advances the plot but also invites the audience to consider the role of theater as a reflection of life itself.

Another example of metatextual elements in Shakespeare's tragedies can be seen in "Macbeth." In this play, the witches' prophecies function as metatexts that comment on the nature of fate, free will, and the art of storytelling. The witches' prophecies, which guide Macbeth's actions throughout the play, raise questions about the power of

words and their ability to shape reality. By incorporating these metatextual elements, Shakespeare prompts the audience to reflect on the influence of storytelling and the choices individuals make based on the narratives they encounter.

It is commonly believed that there are a lot of Metatextual Elements in Shakespeare's "Othello". In addition to "Hamlet" and "Macbeth," "Othello" also presents several metatextual elements that contribute to the overall complexity of the play. One such element is the character of Iago, who frequently breaks the fourth wall and directly addresses the audience. This technique, known as soliloquy, allows Iago to share his inner thoughts and motives, providing the audience with privileged information that the other characters lack. By engaging in these metatextual moments, Iago establishes a connection with the audience, almost turning them into co-conspirators. This not only heightens the sense of dramatic irony but also challenges the audience's allegiance and moral judgment.

Furthermore, "Othello" includes a play-within-a-play scene, similar to "Hamlet," where Othello demands proof of Desdemona's infidelity. He asks for a handkerchief, which becomes a crucial metatextual object throughout the play. The handkerchief serves as a symbol of fidelity, but its significance extends beyond its material value. Shakespeare uses the handkerchief as a metatextual device to explore themes of trust, jealousy, and the power of objects to shape human relationships. By emphasizing the importance of the handkerchief, Shakespeare highlights the fragility of trust.

Shakespeare's tragedies are known for their complex characters, intricate plotlines, and powerful themes. However, what is often overlooked is the way in which Shakespeare presents metatexts within his plays. In his plays a lot of metatexts are frequently used to enhance the meaning.

One of the most common metatextual devices used by Shakespeare is allusion. Allusion is a reference to another text, such as a myth, a historical event, or another play. In *Macbeth*, for example, Shakespeare alludes to the story of Adam and Eve when Lady Macbeth says, "Had he not resembled my father as he slept, I had done't" (Act 2, Scene 2). This allusion highlights the theme of temptation and the consequences of giving in to it.

Another way in which Shakespeare presents metatexts is through the use of soliloquies. A soliloquy is a speech given by a character alone on stage, and it allows the audience to see into the character's thoughts and motivations. In *Hamlet*, for example, the famous "To be or not to be" soliloquy is a metatextual device that references the philosophical debate about the nature of existence and the afterlife. This soliloquy not only reveals Hamlet's inner turmoil but also adds depth and complexity to the play's themes.

Shakespeare also uses metatexts to comment on his own plays. In *Julius Caesar*, for example, Shakespeare has Brutus say, "There is a tide in the affairs of men, which taken at the flood leads on to fortune" (Act 4, Scene 3). This line is a reference to a similar line in his play *Richard III*, where Gloucester says, "Now is the winter of our discontent made glorious summer by this son of York" (Act 1, Scene 1). By referencing his own play, Shakespeare is drawing attention to the similarities between the two characters and their struggles for power.

Finally, Shakespeare uses metatexts to create dramatic irony. Dramatic irony occurs when the audience knows something that the characters do not, and it adds tension and suspense to the play. In *Romeo and Juliet*, for example, the audience knows that Juliet is not really dead, but Romeo does not. This creates a sense of urgency and desperation in Romeo's actions and adds to the tragic nature of the play. Shakespeare's tragedies are full of metatextual devices that add depth and complexity to the plays. Allusions, soliloquies,

self-referential comments, and dramatic irony all serve to enhance the themes and meaning of the plays and make them enduring works of literature.

In addition to the above examples, we can understand the metatexts, as literary devices, offer intriguing layers of meaning within a text, allowing authors to engage with their audience on multiple levels. In the realm of drama, William Shakespeare stands out as a masterful playwright who skillfully employed metatextual elements to enhance the dramatic experience. This essay delves into an exploration of the interpretations of metatexts in Shakespeare's plays, examining the diverse forms they take and the significant contributions they make to the overall understanding of his works. By analyzing metatexts through the lenses of comedy, history, tragedy, psychology, and meta-theatricality, this essay uncovers the rich tapestry of Shakespeare's metatextual creations and sheds light on the various ways they have been interpreted and appreciated by scholars and audiences alike.

To fully grasp the interpretations of metatexts in Shakespeare's plays, it is crucial to establish a clear understanding of what metatexts entail. Metatexts are self-referential elements within a literary work that call attention to its own status as a text. They can manifest in various forms, including but not limited to overt discussions about the nature of storytelling, references to other works of literature or theatrical traditions, and characters directly addressing the audience or acknowledging their existence as fictional beings. Metatexts greatly contribute to the layers of meaning within a play, often serving as commentary on the play itself or the world within which it is situated.

It can be seen some metatexts in Shakespeare's Comedies.

Shakespeare's comedies abound with metatextual elements that enhance both the comedic and thematic aspects of the plays. In works such as "A Midsummer Night's Dream" and "As You Like It," metatexts take the form of self-aware actors, play within a play, or characters breaking the fourth wall to speak directly to the audience. These metatextual devices not only generate laughter but also provide opportunities for reflection on the nature of love, identity, and the transformative power of theatre. Interpreting such metatexts requires an understanding of how they contribute to the underlying messages and character development within each comedy.

In some Shakespeare's Histories – such as "Henry IV" and "Richard III," metatexts come and they are given in the following paragraph.

Shakespeare's historical plays, including "Henry IV" and "Richard III," also feature metatextual elements that add depth to the exploration of power dynamics and political intrigue. Through metatextual devices like soliloquies, Shakespeare invites the audience to directly engage with the ethical decisions and moral dilemmas faced by his characters. Metatextual interpretations of these historical dramas extend beyond the confines of the plays themselves, connecting with the socio-political climate of Elizabethan England. By analyzing these metatexts, scholars gain insight into the ways in which Shakespeare's plays both reflect and challenge prevailing ideologies and power structures.

Metatexts in Shakespeare's Tragedies

Shakespeare's tragedies, such as "Hamlet," "Macbeth," and "Othello," are renowned for their exploration of complex human emotions and the consequences of unchecked ambition. Metatextual interpretations within these works often revolve around themes of madness, self-reflection, and the nature of evil. The play "Hamlet" exemplifies this with its famous "play within a play" scene, where the metatextual device reveals the power of theater to capture truth and expose guilt. These metatextual elements

amplify the psychological complexity of the characters, inviting audiences to grapple with profound questions of morality and self-identity.

#### Psychological and Metatextual Interpretations

By delving into the psychological dimensions of Shakespeare's metatexts, scholars have shed light on their potential significance in understanding the inner lives of characters.

Metatextual interpretations on the psychological level identify connections between the characters' thoughts, emotions, and their expression of those inner worlds through metatextual devices. This psychological reading also establishes links between metatexts and broader human experiences, highlighting universal themes and concerns.

Meta-Theatrical Interpretations Shakespeare's plays often embrace meta-theatrical elements, which draw attention to the artifice and performance nature of theater itself. Interpreting these metatexts involves examining how

Shakespeare used self-awareness and theatricality to engage his audience. Such devices can include actors explicitly referencing their roles, characters pretending to be other characters, or Shakespeare's inclusion of playwrights within his plays. Through these metatextual techniques, Shakespeare encourages reflection on the nature of truth, illusion, and the transformative power of storytelling.

The interpretations of metatexts in Shakespeare's plays reveal the remarkable depth and complexity of his genius. From the comedies to the histories and the tragedies, Shakespeare employs various metatextual devices to engage audiences, provide commentary on the human condition, and reflect on the role of theater itself. Whether through psychological readings or meta-theatrical analysis, scholars have explored the myriad interpretations that metatexts offer. By recognizing and appreciating these metatextual elements, we gain a deeper understanding of Shakespearean drama and the enduring impact of his works on literature and theater.

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