

الميتادراما بوصفها منهجا لفهم الدراما

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ملخص

تسعى هذه الدراسة إلى استكشاف التقنيات الدرامية التي تتضافر لجعل المسرحية ميتادراما. الميتادراما هي دراما تدور حول الدراما، أي عندما تستمر المسرحية في جذب انتباهنا إلى ذاتها كعرض مسرحي، وبالتالي، تجعلنا ندرك أننا نشاهد مسرحية. تكمن خاصية الانعكاس الذاتي للمسرحية في أدوات الميتادراما مثل المسرحية داخل المسرحية، أو المسرحية القصيرة التي تشير مسمياتها إلى هويتها. تشمل أدوات الميتادراما الأخرى لعب الأدوار، والطقوس داخل المسرحية، والإشارة الأدبية، والإشارة الذاتية. تختتم هذه الدراسة بالتأكيد على الدور الحيوي الذي تلعبه أدوات الميتادراما هذه في تعزيز هوية المسرحية ككل متكامل، أي عمل متماسك يتناغم فيه الشكل والمضمون. ويتضافر كلاهما للتأكيد على القضايا الموضوعية للمسرحية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الميتادراما، الانعكاس الذاتي للمسرحية، المسرحية داخل المسرحية والشكل

والمضمون

Metadrama as an Approach to Appreciating Drama

Abstract

This paper seeks to explore the dramatic techniques which collaborate to make a play a metadrama. A metadrama is a drama about drama, that is, when a play keeps drawing our attention to itself as a performance, and hence, makes us realize that we are watching a play. The play's self-reflexivity or self-referentiality lies in such metadramatic tools as the the-play-within-the-play, or meta-play or playlet whose very names indicates its identity. Other metadramatic tools are role-playing, ceremony within the play, literary reference and self-reference. This paper concludes by emphasizing the vital role these metadramatic tools play in re-enforcing the play's identity as an organic whole, that is, a coherent work where the form and the content are harmonious.

Key words: metadrama, self-reflexivity, the play-within-the-play form and content

Definition of Metadrama

As terms "metadrama" and "metatheatre" use the prefix "meta" which indicates "a level beyond the subject that it tackles", in order to refer to their function and nature (*Oxford English Dictionary*). This prefix has an active role in literature and language, for example, metafiction, metahistory, and metanarrative, metatheatre. The use of metatheatre term returns to a long history; initially since 1963, the critic and playwright Lionel Abel in his work *Metatheatre* uses it where he collects many essays to talk about the incidents and things beyond the theatre. He uses this term to refer to modern theatre and he discusses the importance and the dominance of this modern theatre. Abel's view of metatheatre depends on two sides, life and theatre. His theory is built on two postulates: the first postulate deals with the world as a stage, the second one supposes life as a dream. Moreover, Calderwood defines metatheatre in "Shakespearean Metadrama" where he states that its function is to go beyond drama, and there will be no boundaries between the play as a work of self-contained art and life. The perspective of this term spread and reached to 1986 when Richard Hornby published his work *Drama, Metadrama and Perception*.

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Hornby defined this term, as drama about drama (13). This implies self-awareness, self-reflexivity, and self-knowledge. In general, there is a difference between metadrama and metatheatre. The focus of metadrama usually tended to be with references to texts – such as referring to earlier plays while metatheatre is connected to aspects of performance. Therefore, the plot of the play derives its features from another play in metadrama. As a result, the play within a play represents a dramatic device. This device is used by the characters through narrating.

Self-reflexivity

Metadrama is the new interpretation of the dramatic works that equipped with the demands of postmodernism and has the qualities that can go along with the modern age with its new insights through literary genres in general. Moreover, this new genre can stand alone with its new techniques of interpretation and its unique tools of recreating drama far from the classical mind that often dealt with traditionally. Therefore, it can be said that metadrama is a new genre where drama can recreate itself in a new and distinctive shape by means of recalling upon an intellectual awareness.

Richard Hornby (1986) argues that metadrama can create its distinctive elements when new subjects, themes, and turning points occur while the action is progressing. He states that "whenever the subject of a play turns out to be; in some sense, drama itself" (Hornby 31). Furthermore, Hornby considers metadrama as a type of commentary that deals with separate segments within the total body of the dramatic work. Moreover, such an investigation on the narrative style can result in revealing new elements regarding the text and can serve as a revoking tool of new textual familiarities. The result of the new investigations inside the original body of drama could be considered the most notably feature of the postmodernism theory with its focus on self-reflexivity. However, this same notion is what Jeffrey Nealon asserts by his comment that there is a new reviving process that occurs by literature itself. He states that **it is** "literature which writes itself" (Nealon 84). Consequently, what matters for the new interpretation of literary genres in general, and dramatic works in particular, is self-reflexivity.

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Despite the fact that metadrama can be seen as a revolutionary, newly-born genre, its main domain, self-consciousness, is by so far oriental through previous forms of literature. According to Jim Hunter(1982), Shakespeare was a pioneer in using the technique hundreds of years ago. This occurs when he draws a comparison between God and a playwright. Furthermore, his masterpiece *Hamlet* has many plots within the main plot; or as so-called a play-within-the-play. However, regardless of Shakespeare' use of the technique of a play-within-the-play, neither him nor others before the postmodernism theory made use of self-consciousness for the sake of recreating drama about drama. Hence, metadrama acquires its unique orientation since it resembles the use of revolutionary techniques of creating awareness in the audience the thing that can be seen with scope of didactic drama rather than mere a traditional survey of the cover by tracing the main plot and the construction of the characters on the stage. Eventually, metadrama represents a new way of thinking of drama that was not preceded by whoever before the postmodernism.

Metadrama, Features and Distinctions

Considering metadrama as a new genre by itself, this assumption leads to a recognition the aspects of distinctions that metadrama has the privilege over other literary genres. However, Kristeva (1990) considers the self-consciousness process as being theorized by postmodernists as the search for new findings. She states that "it is the exploration of the limits that no sooner was it used for this purpose". Furthermore, she argues that "it has never been used without religious, mystical, or any other justification" (Martin and Still, 137-141). Therefore, drama was intended for limited dimensions that metadrama can go beyond freely and smoothly through its distinctive feature of the self-consciousness.

Another equal feature that metadrama has over other literary genres is the rejection or, the so-called, the breaking with the restricting rules that dominated classical works. Considering this fact about the nature of metadrama, it is characterized by its exposure of new notions and attitudes that consider life as a central issue and drawing the audience's attention towards an inevitable procedure in the modern era. Rather than that metadrama works as an agent that urges new awareness particularly in the

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changeable world of the time being. Therefore, metadrama has the power of forcing those involved in the theatre activities to rethink in order for regaining new conception of life itself through varied self-reflexivity. Hence, the audience turn to be an element in dramatic production; rather than just being passive. Moreover, contemplation is the result of the matter that stems from the drama and results in new recognition of the world around.

Moreover, Richard Hornby suggests that when being exposed to new materials, the audience can turn to be alert and this in turn helps them review the matters they have earlier assumptions or beliefs in. This same fact is what Hornby calls "dislocation of perception" (Hornby 32). Furthermore, through opening new gates of contemplation, the human mind adapts to new realities and indulges in a process of reception and activation at the same time. Hence, new questions arise into the human mind about the metanarrative and the results can be breaking with what was granted by dictating orders and having new perceptions of matters like meanings, history and religions appear to the surface with new forms of certainties and realities. However, this same point is what Hornby considers

as the process of priorities. He states that "a great playwright conceives his mission to be one of altering the norms and standards by which his audience views the world, and is thus more likely to attack those norms frontally" (Hornby 32).

Since the main domain of metadrama is self-reflexivity, its central result is the doubleness which resembles the technique of the play-within-the-play. Moreover, this technique can work as a device of inserting a new material which is the supplementary plot inside the body of the main plot. Incredibly, the use of minor plots has the power of creating new realities about the world. Hence, the audience come to the fact that what is going on the stage is just a world controlled by illusions and the reality is in other place not found in the written texts or the organized performance as well. Therefore, a break with the traditional way of thinking about drama appears and consequently the audience' perception turns to be of intellectual nature with its didactic prospects to imbibe realities behind the traditional shallow perception. However, this means that metadrama is the

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genre that puts forth the changeable realities as a fact that sees no reality as an ultimate and stable one.

The aforementioned reality of the nature of doubleness is the same notion that Edmund J Smyth (1991) suggests. Smyth considers the responsibility of the writer is to problematize the reality found in drama. He states that "postmodernism should problematize reality, unsettle the reader's sense of 'reality' or unmask or lay bare the process of world-construction... to force constant reinterpretation by 'reframing', or to generate multiple ontologies, a plurality of words" (Smyth 138).

Accordingly, Stephen Hu praises metadrama as a new genre that has unprecedented achievement. Moreover, for him the play is no more just one frame of work. He argues that "single-faceted, homogenous system of signs" (Hu 7). Moreover, he sees in the play a multiple choice of messages that can be found while the performance is going on. This same point is the didactic prospects or dimensions of metadrama that enlarge the audience's perspectives. Hence, the varied possibilities of both meaning and

form suggest the reflection of writing rather than empirical or applied realities within designated frames.

Moreover, doubleness or the so-called the play-within-the-play technique is not the only privilege of metadrama as a new genre; rather than it offers 'alienation' through the use of estrangement which is the tool used by the playwright to achieve the effect. Therefore, when the audience become familiar with the realities on the stage as fiction, the practices of alienation start. However, metadrama seems crucial in drawing the attention towards ideologies that are considered invalid in the world that is constructed and dominated by uncertainty.

Accordingly, there are many techniques that create alienation. Mostly, the domain of alienation is the characters themselves who realize their reality on the stage as an illusionary presence for intended purposes and messages. However, in some points there are comments done by those characters or there are comments on the work as well. These designated elements serve

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a supposed and solo direction; meanwhile metadrama offers a wide variety of human perception as own interpretations of the world and life.

Another tool to create and enhance estrangement is the 'repetitive pattern'. According to Ruby Cohn (1969) there is a dominant relation that unifies both alienation and repetitiveness within the body of metadrama. Cohn argues that "Awareness of the repetitive pattern leads the spectator from heightened experience to self-knowledge, and in a word, to the revelation of the theatre as ritual. The play's the thing in which the anxiety of repetition acts itself out" (Cohn 14). Therefore, there is a demand for new interpretation for hidden realities that urge new ways of thinking and contemplating about the matter.

Among the realities that metadrama calls about is the 'past'. Therefore, metadrama can stand an agent that recreate previous or classical drama to equip with the dimensions of postmodernism. Hence, past is problematized by metadrama since it does not offer an a granted material in the modern era of human history. This same notion is what Nicole Bourus calls "re-appropriation of the past" (Bourus 14). Bourus suggests that history is not a complete reality; rather than it is a matter similar in its nature to fiction.

Furthermore, there is no single judgement made a member of a certain society to go along with the other. Moreover, Bourus suggests 'intertextuality' as a means used by metadrama to offer plurality and truths about past and history.

Metadramatic Techniques

According to Richard Hornby, there are four main categories that can be traced in metadrama. These techniques can be classified as role-play-within-the-role, play-within-the-play, literary reference, self-reference and ceremonies with the play.

Role-play-within-the-role

Role-play-within-the-role is one of the metadramatic tools that offers more than one just and certain reality. However, this technique has the double effectiveness that results in creating complexity since it has many layers to create realities. Moreover, it involves the interaction of the outer characters that create 'duality'. Consequently, such a duality can bring with ambiguous elements into the play itself. The case is made worse for

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the audience to give a logical judgement when they are offered with many plots; therefore doubleness of portrayal occurs. Moreover, since estrangement increases step by step, the audience turn to be more contemplating and more enthusiastic to judge drama as an illusionary work. Therefore, accurate answers seem a lack that drama by its traditional techniques is unable to unfold.

Furthermore, the audience seem obliged to undergo a challenging process of considering their designated roles in the world, the sources of such roles, and reliability. However, what matters is the role of authorized power as being enforced by the playwright him/herself. This same authority is what controls human life and what classifies human roles totally. Richard Hornby writes that:

From the first instance, the infant gradually learns to define the boundaries of its ego, developing a sense of self. Identity theorists maintain that this process continues throughout one's lifetime because we must continually redefine who we are as we grow older and called upon to take on different roles – boy or girl,

daughter or son, student, adolescent, youth, adult, lover,
worker, parent, grandparent, 'senior citizen', etc....
Identity, then, is something that human beings have to
learn, and the learning is an inherently painful process
(Hornby 69-70).

Accordingly, what seems worth mentioning to Hornby is the fact that
identity is neither innate nor freely chosen. Similar to actors on the stage,
individuals have their roles which are assigned ones. Hence, as
individuals realize this domain as a reality, the result will be a conscious
research for validity, presence and role in life which is not an easy task to
be conducted. For this main reason, Hornby calls theatre as "identity
laboratory" (Hornby 68).

To justify his suggestions, Hornby writes that:

Theatre, in which actors take on changing roles, has,
among its many other functions, the examination of
identity. For the individual, theatre is a kind of 'identity
laboratory', in which social roles can be examined
vicariously. In a safe environment, detached from

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everyday reality, the audience member can forget his own identity for a while, and identify with the characters he sees. Both performers and audience members are in a sense 'actors' in the theatrical experience, dropping their regular identities and trying out new ones (Hornby⁷¹).

Eventually, when individuals are made aware of their assigned roles in life, they turn to be more alert and more active. Hence, metadrama can work as an agent that has a didactic dimension since individuals can realize, judge, accept or refuse assigned roles in life. Moreover, they can adapt their roles or have certain convenient reactions and attitudes towards them. Contrary to the traditional characters of drama on the stage, metadrama can release characters and in the same context individuals should be released in a postmodernism era that sets the priority to human being as a complete entity.

Play-within-the-play

Play-within-the-play is a dual plot technique which occurs when the audience are to meet another plot while the main plot keeps progressing. Therefore, this technique depends on presenting two plays within one theatrical work. Hence, the two plays can be classified as an "inner play" which is the minimal part of the theatrical work and the "outer play" which is the main body of the work. Moreover, the "inner play" is included within the outer one which has the main message to convey.

However, the interconnection between the two plays; the "inner" and the "outer" is very relevant since there are no different characters to mount the theatre to perform the "inner play"; rather than that it is the same characters on the stage to do the task. Furthermore, it is obvious that the "inner play" serves the main task of the "outer play" or conveys a supporting message to enhance the audience's understanding of the real situation. This same point is what Hornby defends. He argues that "there must be 'some' integration of the inner play with the outer; that is, the outer play must in some way acknowledge the inner play's existence" (Hornby 34).

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Gerhard Fischer and Bernhard Greiner (2007) define the technique of "the-play-within-the-play" and illustrate its dramatic function:

"Dramaturgically speaking it [the play within the play] describes a strategy for constructing play texts that contain, within the perimeter of their fictional reality, a second or internal theatrical performance, in which actors appear as actors who play an additional role... Its most salient feature is that it doubles an aesthetic experience which already presents a dual reality: the actor, who appears on stage both in his/her own physical presence and in the part he/she portrays, assumes and plays yet another role, thus adding a third identity which itself is constructed in the context of a third level of time, space, characterization and action" (Fischer and Greiner 11)

According to Fischer and Greiner's illustrations, the domain of the technique emerges in its presenting of the so-called "dual reality". This "dual reality" occurs by trapping audience into watching or "seeing double" actions in one work. However, there are many ways to conduct the process of "seeing double". Since the characters of the "outer play" are the

responsible ones of performing the "inner play", the result can be a situation of distraction and confusion between both roles in the play and which one represents the "real". Consequently, the audience get the reality that what is being performed on the stage is no more than role for the same characters. Therefore, characters on any stage are to follow the decisions of the playwright who can direct the stage and assign the roles of his/her characters the way he/she finds best. Hence, the great "reality" appears to surface to declare that theatre has its specific nature which is both illusionary and fictional.

Traditionally, the thought of drama as a reflection of life prevailed for so long. Nevertheless, the appearance of the new thoughts and contemplations about theatre and drama changed that since the audience are no more to believe in what is going on a stage as a supreme "reality". This means that the traditional notion of art as a "true" image of life is not what metadrama wants to confirm. Rather than that metadrama makes art and its suggested reality a matter of questioning. Therefore, the nature of reality in life is to be contemplated and questioned in the same way as done by those on the stage.

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Away from traditions, metadrama through the technique of the-play-within-the-play forms a "metaphor" to express life. Moreover, it conveys the message that one cannot reach an eventual truth or a single certainty in both art and life as well. Rather than that it is obvious that plurality and enigmas are domain in receiving certain meanings of life. Such meanings need a lot of reconsidering what is going of the stage of life. Moreover, it is the thinking that reshape realities and consider them through no one angle.

Ultimately, the use of the-play-within-the-play can be traced back since the emergence of drama as an art. For instance, Shakespeare was a pioneer in adopting the technique in his masterpiece *Hamlet*, in particular. However, in the well-known scene *Mousetrap*, Shakespeare used the technique not to divest his audience to inquire about life and its nature; rather it was used to create a kind of "estrangement" for the sake of drawing the attention of the audience about realities of life and the unconquered nature of such realities. Contrary to Shakespeare's use of the technique, "realist drama" rejects the use of estrangement totally. Hornby states that

" ... in realist drama, as it may cause an uneasy estrangement in the audience, play within the play device was not acceptable" (Hornby 33).

Literary Reference

Similar to the aforementioned techniques, "literary reference" is one of the metadramatic tools that endows the playwright with a good chance of alluding earlier works but in new versions of understanding and recognition. However, the tool is called "intertextuality" which explicitly refers to the reality that no text to form an original reality. According to Michale Worton and Judith Still, the text that is written for a certain goal can not stand as a "self-sufficient whole" (Worton and Still 1). This is due to the fact that the writer him/herself is no more than a reader of an earlier origin of the assumed text. Moreover, the process of reading is a mechanic one and by so far an action of being affected by what one is reading. Therefore, no one to claim originality through the process of producing the text is a reality that cannot be ignored.

Since any literary writing is not a matter of originality, many ways could be followed to trace to a play reference to other or earlier works. This must

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be done through the audience's recognition of the "allusion". It is the duty of the playwright to refer intentionally and obviously to earlier works. Michael Riffaterre (1990) argues that "the difference of intertextuality from a pure reference explaining that in order to call a text an intertext, the audience or the reader should be aware of the intertext that is being commented on" (Riffaterre 75).

Hornby suggests Chekhov's plays as an example of literary reference to clarify that Chekhov himself does not include the technique through his dramatic works for the sake of criticizing or restudying earlier works with modern perspectives. Rather than that Hornby focuses on the differences found in metadrama. He states that "...when literary citation within the play moves literary criticism, it also moves toward the play as self-reference" (Hornby 92). Therefore, any "literary Criticism" according to Hornby could be seen as a metadramatic device (Hornby 92).

Moreover, any literary reference should work as a divestment tool to enable the audience to recognize the fictional core of the dramatic work performed on the stage. Furthermore, the audience can judge the play in

the same way being criticized or interpreted by the playwright by rather than by their own assumptions.

Hence, depending on the "literary reference", certain imaginary features of the dramatic work should be disrupted. While the play keeps progressing, the audience are supposed to be involved in its action unconsciously.

In same context of the aforementioned metadramatic techniques, "literary reference" works as an agent to inquire about the nature of reality and reliability of both life and art simultaneously. Furthermore, the technique offers new insights of old sources which allows the audience to express opinions about what is going in life totally. Graham Allen (2000) argues that:

"literary meaning can never be fully stabilized by the reader, since the literary work's intertextual nature always leads readers on to new textual relations. Authors, therefore, cannot be held responsible for the multiple meanings readers can discover within literary texts. Barthes views such a situation as a liberation for

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readers; a liberation from the traditional power and authority for the figure of the 'author', who is now 'dead'" (Allen 3-4).

According to Allen's argument, intertextuality enables individuals to create their own recognition of meanings. This means familiarity of literary works turns into unfamiliarity through widening the plurality of things. Moreover, such plurality can be reflected in the audience's perceptions of matters and consequently new questions arise about norms of life that people lead.

Self-Reference

Despite the fact that metadrama has the same message to convey through its techniques, "self-reference" seems a direct one which seeks individuals' attention towards the play itself. Such difference is clarified by Hornby:

"The play within the play has this same ultimate effect of reminding the audience that what they have been watching is actually a play, but such reminders are indirect, while self-reference is direct and immediate, a splash of cold water thrown into the face of a dreaming, imagining audience" (Hornby 104).

According to Hornby, drawing a direct attention can be created by those moving on the stage through commenting on the action itself directly. Rather than that the interference of the commentator, such as the chorus can serve to enhance the process of drawing direct attention. Since art can create a virtual reality for those involved in following the sequences of the performance, Hornby suggests a hypothetical state of existence. He states that, "... we imaginatively shift ourselves from the real world in which we are currently living, into a 'hypothetical state of existence', which we can drop at any time (it is not a state of insanity),but which nonetheless is strangely compelling" (Hornby, 106).

Moreover, "self- reference" invites audience to be involved in the action through enlarging the increasing awareness and logical contemplation. Hornby argues that "both the process of creating a work of art and of responding to it are examples of intuitive thinking. He thinks that intuitive thought is wholistic and it integrates, synthesizes, unifies; whereas logical thought isolates, analyzes, separates. (Hornby 109). Therefore, watching any play that depends on an earlier source

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traditionally can take the audience away from reality. Rather than that it could captivate individuals in an illusionary state. Consequently, metadrama can make one aware of his real situation through this technique and the result could be advanced steps towards logical thinking about life. Furthermore, Hornby states that "we tend to separate and analyze the real life situations; our thought is fragmentary; not wholistic as in the case of art" (Hornby 111). Hence, metadrama tries to keep those involved in watching a play away from thinking intuitively; rather it encourages individuals to be open-minded towards rationality and fragmentation. Hornby adds that: "whatever we are perceiving always has further aspects of itself that at a given time are unavailable, backgrounds, causes, ramifications, and effects that we do not know about" (Hornby 111).

Another equally important issue is that "self-reference" helps changing attitudes that are earlier or supposed assumptions towards the reality of the situation. This can be achieved through the realization that any play is no more than a play and it should be inquired and questioned rather than being taken seriously. Hornby comments on the process:

"While the dramatic action was moving forward, it seemed to be serious and important, but here the audience is reminded that it is not. It is only a 'playing holiday'. It is interesting that we call a dramatic composition both a 'play' and a 'work,' and here Shakespeare juxtaposes these two apparently antithetical concepts, examining the paradoxical phenomenon that a play can simultaneously be 'sport' and 'work,' trivial and serious, meaningless and meaningful" (Hornby 104).

Hornby considers the state of change that occurs through the increasing awareness a disturbing situation for the audience since it is difficult for people to adopt new thoughts easily. He considers this situation a clash that seeks a compromise between earlier assumptions as order and new contemplation as chaos.

He argues that :

When something seems orderly and comprehensible, whether it is the organization of society, the workings of a piece of machinery, or the behaviour of a person we meet, it makes us feel comforted and pleased. Incomprehensibility in such circumstances can be

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painful and threatening...., an intuitive sense of order yields pleasure, while a sense of chaos yields pain (Hornby 108).

Precisely, metadrama can be seen as the tool of the modern era to investigate deeply in traditions that were seen as vivid at some points of people's lives. Rather it is the modern mind that seeks logical thinking more than just following to life norms. Therefore, the blurring that once occurred between art and its supposed realities is no longer convenient in an era that seeks and cares for certainties in every single area of human life.

Ceremony-within-the-play

The final technique is "Ceremony-within-the-play", which is a common feature that indicates the social congregation for certain incidents whether happy or sad ones. Hornby states that "ceremonies within plays are ubiquitous. In all drama of all cultures at all times we find plays that contain feasts, balls, pageants...funerals, coronations, initiations" (Hornby 49). Anthropologists and theatre historians have long posited a generic and historical relationship between rituals and theatre. Drama had an origin in rituals; tragedy originated in ancient Greece. The word tragedy, of Greek

origin, means “goat song” and may possibly refer to archaic performances in which dancers either competed for a goat as a prize or were dressed up as goats. Drama competition was enacted at the Great Dionysia, an annual religious and cultural festival held in honor of the god Dionysus, the god of wine. As part of the festival, four plays of each playwright—three thematically connected tragedies and a satyr play were played and judged. When Hornby talked about the ceremony, he meant the play involves a formal spectacle of some kind that is separated from the surrounding action; for instance, the crowning of a king, a wedding or a ritual sacrifice. The ceremony offers a communal pleasure that derives from the understanding of things that would otherwise be confusing or ephemeral. Margaret Croyden (1974) gave insightful comments on the validity of “ritual”:

Attempts at ritual seem less successful when actors and audience share no common ground. In actual fact, ritual has always had a moral, religious, practical, or psychological significance, and has never existed for its own sake. Rites were a need. (qtd in Graham-White, 1976, p. 319)

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William Frost lists numerous rites and ceremonies common to Elizabethan drama, such as prayers, formal curses, funerals, marriages, dances, feasts, banquets, ceremonial arrivals and departure, formal oaths, trials, banishments, royal court scenes, etc. (Stroup 139). Dramatists believe in the immense symbolical, allegorical, and universalizing values of these essentially dramatic phenomena.

Hornby argues that despite the fact that ancient tragedies lack such ceremony endings, they have in some phases the same celebration. He states "Ceremonies are so widespread in drama that a full historical cataloging would be impossible" (Hornby 49). Hence, Hornby suggests the social integration for the success of the play. In other words, metadrama acts with the social surrounding that offers a domain for its perfection.

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