

HAMLET AND GJORG BERISHA: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF CHARACTERS

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ABSTRACT: The art of literature has brought together the experiences of human society and foregrounded various artistic values. The effort to examine the elements of universalization in literature through the perspective of juxtaposition is an innovation of this study. The purpose of this paper is to highlight this type of universalization, recognizing two characters from different literatures, genres, and cultures. The work is based on the main theme, which is revenge, but it also deals with some key elements such as life, death, justice, honor, love, passion, etc., through which the characters are compared as a whole. The study provides a comparative perspective, where systematic juxtaposition assists in identifying shared and distinctive elements throughout the logical flow of the narrative. The compared elements are of different natures and different in contextual and social aspects (events, situations, psychological aspects, space-time, etc.). For the comparison of these elements, a blend of comparative methodology, juxtaposition, as well as methods of variation and inclusion have been employed. The study holds a novel scientific value, as it extensively delves into comparison through juxtaposition, and aims to explore universal literary issues by recognizing two characters, *Gjorg Berisha* and *Hamlet*.

KEYWORDS: revenge, comparison, contrasts, juxtaposition, universalism

Introduction

The destinies and experiences of human society serve as the source of artistic creations worldwide. Some artistic works of literature have reached the pinnacle and have been awarded various prizes. These works have entered the human heritage and are part of every culture. The art of literature transcends borders, even though it can be created in different languages and periods. This is the case with William Shakespeare's tragedy *Hamlet*, whose main theme is revenge and calamity of their royal family. This literary work is universal as it delves into a phenomenon that has been widespread throughout human society for ages.

The reoccurring motif of revenge can also be found in Albanian literature. The concept of the ethics of revenge, namely of blood feud, interrelates Albanian literature directly with *the law of the Kanun*, the constitution that regulated life in the Albanian highlands. The theme of blood feud in Albanian prose (Grishaj, 2022), which originates from the *Kanun*, has been addressed in literary works in different periods of Albanian literature and by different authors (Koliqi, 2011; Kadare, 2015a; Kadare, 2015b; Vasa, 2017). This paper will analyze the novel *Broken April*, which is associated with the theme of revenge. Since the theme is common to both works, we have outlined some of the most prominent aspects of the characters and their fates through the scope of juxtaposition of internal and external elements.

The comparison of literary works encompasses various dimensions, worldviews, and perspectives, thus resulting in a diverse array of elements brought together for comparison. Comparing a novel with a tragedy from two different literary traditions is possible, thereby allowing for comparisons of characters, events, and overall structure. This idea is reinforced by a study by Akhter et al. (2015), which compared the characters of Hamlet and Oblomov based on their class milieu. Whole works have also been compared. For example, Aadhitya (2021), draws similarities between the tragedy of *Hamlet* and the novel *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* by Ken Kessey. From various perspectives, certain characters from *Hamlet* can be compared to characters from *Gjorg*, based on shared elements which present in the overall structure of the works. However, the challenges that emerge along the way may involve theoretical and, to some extent, practical issues. They are theoretical because they raise questions about whether the conditions for a comparison between literatures are met, as well as matters regarding genres and other aspects that are being compared, and the mutual influences between them. Here it is worth mentioning *Carre's* opinion on

comparing works, as he highlights in his preface: “Comparative literature is a branch of literary history; it is a study of international spiritual relations, of 'subject affinities', which have existed between writers and works, belonging to many literatures” (Chevrel, 2016, p.14). The case at hand involves comparing two works of different genres, languages, cultures, and literary periods. Here we will not deal with literary influences, according to the French school, i.e., the influences suffered, exerted and those mediated (Lopopolo, 2019). However, an initial point of comparison (even though insufficient) can be derived from the author's stance, as expressed through the character Besjan Vorpsi, who says: “What are Hamlet's hesitations in front of the doubts of this Hamlet of our mountains?” (Kadare, 2015b, p. 64). Another element that can be compared is the appearance of the ghost in the work *The Ghost Rider* (Kadare, 2014). Protagonists like *Hamlet* and *Gjorg* are compared based on their shared elements and their differences. These are derived based on three points of orientation, as per our perspective: the plot, the setting, and the action. The plot connects the protagonists as they seek revenge. The setting interweaves the landscape, the people, the society, and the dynamics of the plot. The action encompasses the deeds performed by the protagonists, the paths they pursue, and the trials they face on their way to achieving their goals.

The purpose of this paper is to throw further light on the elements that demonstrate contrasts and common universalities. It endeavors to discern the universal elements through systematic comparison, where one or more components are juxtaposed according to their opposites or oppositions. Elements of the narrative, such as revenge, life, death, honor, freedom, slavery, love, passion, etc., serve as reference points from which universal similarities and differences or contrasts are derived. The elements that are placed in front of each other are of a general nature, including situations, events, psychological states, internal monologues, etc., which aim to present the universal world of characters and literary works at the same time.

1. Methodology

In this work, several research methods have been employed to achieve the results, including comparison, juxtaposition, variation and inclusion methods. The method of comparison is widely utilized when examining certain literary works, owing to their spiritual and material affinity (Chevrel, 2016). As comparison involves contrasting elements to better understand their similarities and differences, the method facilitating the discovery of these points of contrast is juxtaposition, which we have systematically employed. The method of contrast and conflicts in literature (Eagleton, 2017) shows the difference in themes constructs which generate conflicts in the narrative structure of the metanarrative. These social contexts often cross boundaries and become universal (Larson, 1976; Damrosch, 2014, Tiwari & Damrosch, 2019, Ryan, 2020). Reviewing these comparisons in the context of culture, revealing the relationship between literature and the social context, political and cultural context is essential, if we are to elucidate on the similarities of these elements. Given that the socio-political contexts, which will be partially examined in this paper, the work by Progni & Peci (2023) has provided valuable assistance in this regard. The comparison of two literary works of different languages, cultures, and periods is based on the method of detecting variations and inclusion (Tilly, 1984). This perspective helps us identify variations in the systematic and logical exposition of the elements under examination, while inclusion aims to emphasize the similarities or connections between works, despite their apparent differences, such as universal themes, cultural influences and interactions, as well as motifs and symbols. Based on this, we intend to throw further light on the structure, events and characters by comparing them to key elements from the micronarrative of the two works (environment, situations, actions), which are interwoven in the structure of the work and in the play of the main protagonists.

2. The novel *Broken April* by Ismail Kadare

2.1. From the code of the *Kanun* to literary works

The *Kanun of Lekë Dukagjini* served as the constitution governing the Albanian societal structure for a significant period. Given the unknown origin of the *Kanun*, its impact on Albanian culture has been profound. Scholars of comparative law suggest that the antiquity of the *Kanun* predates even the *Twelve Roman Tables* themselves. These same researchers compare the *Kanun* with *The Hindu Manusmriti*, assuming that they have a common origin (Rushani, 1997; Yamamoto, 2005). Edith Durham, who studies the tribes and the law of the Albanian customs, sees the origin of the *Kanun* in the Bronze Age (Arsovska,

2006, p.10). The codification of this *Kanun* was done by Father Shtjefën Gjeçovi, who left his mark on the subsequent studies of Albanian customs. So, the *Kanun* (Gjeçovi, 2015) is a customary code consisting of 12 books, which contain rules for different areas of life and the regulation of its system, in the Albanian highlands. Scholar Yamamoto (2002, p.164) drew parallels by comparing the *Kanun* with Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, which encompass ethical concepts of social structure in the absence of state administration. These concepts include faith, honor, blood, revenge, hospitality, resembling similar customs found in Albanian tribal society governed by the *Kanun*.

The living system governed by the *Kanun of the Mountains* or the *Kanun of Lekë Dukagjini* has accompanied Albanian families throughout history, giving rise to diverse life experiences. These experiences have not only been subject to cultural studies but have also inspired various literary works.

2.2. Broken April

Honor and faith (alb.: *besa*, Eng.: *pledge of honor*) were one of the main ethical concepts of Albanian society. Kadare (2015b) brings one of the stories, where the influence of the *Kanun of the Mountains* regulated the Northern Albanian life system. Ismail Kadare's novel, *Broken April*, was first published in 1978, then it was republished in a work with a collection of short stories entitled *Cold Bloodedness* (Kadare, 1980). The novel was adapted into a screenplay by the author himself and was subsequently made into a film titled *The Uninvited* in 1985. Additionally, it was adapted into another film with an international cast titled *Behind the Sun* in 2001.

The events of the novel take place under the rule of the Albanian Kingdom of the late 1930s. The basic idea is blood feud (revenge). The plot of the novel *Broken April* revolves around a young man named Gjorg Berisha, who is forced to take revenge for the murder of his brother. The narrative of this novel paints a vivid portrayal of life in the mountains, blending together different worlds, and perspectives. Throughout the novel, we have juxtaposed worldviews according to their opposites, while also noting common elements between the works. These contrasts illuminate the psychological complexities and distinct traits of the characters, as well as the structure of the narrative and its intricate interplay.

Kadare's novel attracts us for its contrasting systematic structure and for the powerful nature of the character's psychology. The psychological aspect of the character appears simultaneously fragile and strong. Therefore, when viewed through juxtaposition, the structure of the novel is complex as a whole. It is complex because we encounter expected parallels within the narrative, and it is precisely from this intersection of parallels that contrasts emerge. These include themes such as death and life, isolation and freedom, knowledge and ignorance, love and hate, strength and vulnerability, the mundane world and tradition, conquest and liberation, desire and impossibility, and so forth. This mode of observation underscores numerous elements that aid in deciphering the psychology of the character. The narrative, as previously stated, evokes several parallels that intersect with and diverge from the main character, imparting and extracting elements from his life and central event – revenge.

In the novel, we observe a family seeking vengeance, alongside a young urban couple on their honeymoon in the northern regions of Albania, amidst a power structure sustained by blood tribute, a populace subjected to absolute authority, governed by customary codes rather than royal decrees, comprises individuals with varied destinies – some wandering aimlessly while others are deprived of their freedom. The narrative in the novel contains a social hierarchy, where the king, and the so-called prince, stand at the top, followed by their subordinates, and the families that are in blood feud with one another. What is put to the test here is feudal political power and divergent interests. Life, power, and the *Kanun* unfold against the backdrop of an endless cycle, commencing with a family's honor and culminating in the perspective of a writer. Besjan Vorpsi, a writer, regarded the *Kanun* as an inherent aspect of the people. For Besjan, the *Kanun* is immutable, as the people have not replaced it with any other *constitution*, thus preserving its antiquity intact.

The *Kanun* also dictated the fate of the character Gjorg Berisha, who, torn between shame and honor, and pressured by his family, environment, and circumstances, is compelled to commit a murder in order to restore his family's honor. In the psychology of the protagonist, Gjorg's nature is fragile compared to the act, because the act is the murder that Gjorg must commit, while his nature is soft and indecisive (this is better observed from the inner monologue). Gjorg kills Zef Kryeqyqe not because he wants to, but

because he is forced by the whole cycle of a system (obligation versus willingness). The murder is carried out according to the rules dictated by the *Kanun*. The story continues with Gjorg's temporary freedom, until his confinement (*imprisonment versus freedom*).

The story of the Berisha family, in blood feud with the Kryeqyqe family, begins with honor and faith (alb.: *besa*). These ethical concepts served as the catalyst for conflict, a scenario echoed in the experiences of numerous other families. This underscores the influence of living according to the principles of the *Kanun* constitution. This driving force turns out to be a vicious cycle, starting with one murder and followed by many more. The murder of *Zef Kryeqyqe* by *Gjorg Berisha* brought a new situation for both families (*one possesses freedom but lacks honor, while the other holds honor but lacks freedom*). The *Kanun* states that the murderer must attend the funeral of the victim and the lunch of the deceased, if he is allowed the *short truce* (alb.: *besa e vogël*; a temporary one-day freedom, after the murder has been committed). The envoys (delegates) of *Gjorg Berisha* receive the 30-day *truce* (alb. *besa e madhe*, Eng. *the long truce*). For the next 30 days, the *Kryeqyqe* family does not take revenge. These 30 days of freedom, the last for *Gjorg*, are fully committed. He has a few tasks to do before he is isolated in his tower (alb. *kulla*). First, he is to pay the *blood tribute*, at the Tower of Oroshi (the prince's tower, the place where the payment was made). *Gjorg's* journey to the Tower would introduce him to new experiences. His encounter with *Diana* would also mark the fatal turning point for *Gjorg*. (*pleasure versus pain* and *desire versus impossibility*).

The parallel drawn by the author in the narrative involves the *Vorpsi* couple (*Besjan* and *Diana*), who embark on their honeymoon trip to the Rrafsh (Eng.: plateau, highland), in the northern regions of Albania. These narrative parallels emerge from the encounter between *Gjorg* and *Diana*. *Diana* falls in love with *Gjorg* and this *silent but impossible love* continues until the end of the story (*desire versus impossibility*). Neither *Gjorg* nor *Diana* give up this love, they see it as a *momentary salvation*. *Gjorg* arrives at the Tower of Oroshi, where the tribute was paid. There, he encounters individuals who were in his predicament—murderers who seek to restore honor and settle their blood debts. *Gjorg* fulfills his obligation and returns home, where he will spend the remainder of his days in isolation. The melancholic moments come when he counts the days until he is confined to the tower indefinitely or until circumstances change. He grasps more keenly than ever the concept of freedom, this fundamental human right (*isolation vs. freedom*). Anticipating his isolated future, he receives permission from his father to spend his last days of freedom in the mountains, with the hope that he might meet his monumental love, *Diana*. He follows endless paths and asks about the black carriage of the *Vorpsi* couple travelling in Rrafsh. His wish would be granted. *Gjorg* would meet *Diana's* carriage for the last time, before closing his eyes forever, as he is killed after the expiration of the truce period (*death vs. life*).

3. Shakespeare's *Hamlet*

According to critics, one of the most renowned tragedies worldwide is *Hamlet, Prince of Denmark* (Shakespeare, 2005). The play was first translated into Albanian (and adapted) by Fan S. Noli in 1926. Historically, it is believed that the origin of this literary work is an epic folk song or legend circulated in the Scandinavian countries during the early Middle Ages. The tragedy is based on a Danish saga and recounts the story of Prince *Hamlet's* revenge against the noble King *Claudius*. *Hamlet* was the son of the king of Denmark, until the king is killed by his brother *Claudius*, who seizes his brother's power and marries his wife. King *Claudius* effectively conceals his brother's murder.

He manipulates people and his brother's wife, portraying the king's death as natural. However, concealing the truth would stir up the ghosts of the past, which, through *Horatio*, reach *Hamlet's* ears about his uncle's crime. Thus, *Hamlet* vows to avenge his father's death and devotes himself to devising a plan for revenge. His strategy involves discrediting King *Claudius* publicly for his actions, making the act of revenge easier as *Hamlet* would then have the support of the people. Revenge, supported by the people, would signify a profound triumph for *Hamlet* and his populace. Executing the plan demanded sacrifice and a keen intellect, qualities which the prince possessed abundantly. Though he faced traps and ambushes, *Hamlet* remained undeterred from his objective. He is a man driven by ideals, yet flawed like any other. In the end, after enduring a prolonged period of hardships, *Hamlet* succeeds in killing *Claudius*, but at the expense of his own life and that of his mother.

The structure of *Hamlet's* tragedy can be examined through the lens of opposing elements. Contradictions manifest in the setting, characters, and actions, distinguished by a symmetrical array of oppositions, such as right and wrong, falsehood and truth, masks and authenticity, correct and erroneous paths, perfection and imperfection, entirety and absence, past and future, and so forth. These points mark the beginning and end of events, characterized by a juxtaposition of opposites, reflecting the entire structure of the tragedy: Exposition, Rising Action, Climax, Falling Action, and Denouement. This story takes place in a Scandinavian country. In this tale set in a Scandinavian realm, the newly crowned king of Denmark, *Claudius*, murders his brother to seize the throne (*greed vs. absence*). He hides the act of killing his brother and misleads his people (*lie vs. truth*). The apparition of the deceased king's ghost (*the living vs. the dead*) appears to *Hamlet*, revealing the sinister truth of the kingdom's past, spurring *Hamlet* to swear vengeance (*right vs. wrong*). *Hamlet* exposes his uncle's guilt as a murderer, and this is understood better through the play performed in *Claudius's* eyes (*truth vs. lies and masks vs. true face*). The revenge plan follows. *Hamlet* acts as a fool to scrutinize the movements, actions, and other matters of his servant, but he has all against him (*alone against all*), except *Horatio*, who stands with the truth and justice (*right versus wrong*). Likewise, *Hamlet* renounces his love, because he considers it an obstacle in the realization of the plan (*love versus hate*). *Hamlet* had a clear mind; he aimed to expose his uncle's true nature to the people by tearing off his mask (*mask vs. true face and truth vs. lie*). However, *Hamlet*, being imperfect, commits a grave mistake by accidentally killing *Polonius*, *Ophelia's* father, leading to the downfall of his plan (*accuracy versus error and perfection versus flaws*). Moreover, the secret conflict against *Claudius* results in the accidental killing of *Laertes*. *Laertes* had plotted to kill *Hamlet* with a poisoned sword, but during their duel, their swords are switched, leading to *Laertes's* death (*chance vs. fate*). *Gertrude* (the queen, *Hamlet's* mother) drinks the poisoned cup (*guilt vs. innocence*). At the end of the bloody scene, everyone dies: Queen *Gertrude*, King *Claudius*, *Polonius's* son *Laertes*, and Prince *Hamlet* (*whole versus nothing*). The sole survivor, entrusted with recounting the tale, is *Hamlet's* righteous and loyal friend, *Horatio* (*life versus death, truth versus falsehood, and right versus wrong*). After the bloodshed, tidings of triumph arrive from England, delivered by *Fortinbras* (*defeat versus victory*). In the end, following *Hamlet's* directive, *Fortinbras* would ascend to the throne (*past vs. future*).

Hamlet embarks on this entire journey with the aim of seeking revenge, yet his destiny is to perish alongside others. He forsakes everything in pursuit of honor and justice, ultimately achieving it through self-sacrifice. His endeavor to restore order, as he lamented: “*The time is out of joint: O cursed spite / That ever I was born to set it right!*” (Shakespeare, 2005, p.6), would become an ordeal of suffering, captivity and personal aspirations of this character. In his personal sacrifice, he attains honor and justice, yet he does not live to see the kingdom's new fate, which *Fortinbras* assumes.

4. Elements of character comparison in the two works

Literature serves as a vast window through which the universal values of human society are illuminated. It captures the essence of life, people, and events, weaving together the diverse destinies of different social groups. Across the ages, literature articulates the various experiences of society, past, present, and future. Through artistic expression, literature imbues common human experiences with uniqueness and authenticity. Society, drawing from a multitude of experiences, has embraced and celebrated the finest literary works, enriching the collective works of literature.

This paper attempts to compare the elements of the characters in two different national literatures, separated by different periods of time. The theme of both literary works is revenge, which lies in two different settings in space-time.

The plot of the tragedy of *Hamlet* belongs to the Middle Ages, while the plot of *Gjorg Berisha* belongs to the 20th century. Although the works belong to two different genres: *Hamlet* is a tragedy and *Broken April* is a novel, the personality of the characters, the setting and their actions, provide opportunities for systematic comparison. The basis of comparison rests on the special and common elements of these works. Comparative analysis is done through several methods, but the closest seems to be what Tilly (1984) says, about individualization, universalization, detection of variations and encompassing. The paper follows the method outlined above, which has two principles of comparison.

Comparison, facilitated by the exploration of variations, aims to highlight systematic and logical differences between phenomena. Essentially, it entails establishing a framework within which cases from different countries are juxtaposed for comparison. Moreover, it necessitates explaining the characteristics within this framework. In the context of all this, we have applied a structural comparison, based on opposites, which we elaborated for the works separately. The differences and similarities are examined within this framework. They are assessed based on what one possesses that the other lacks, and what they both share in common.

Hamlet's tragedy takes place in Denmark (a northern country), as well as Brezftohti (a northern country in Albania), and here the common denominator: *cold places, harsh nature and people who take revenge*. *Hamlet* and *Gjorg* have been raised and formed in the northern countries. The destinies of the protagonists unfold within the framework of their respective systems, which, although both royal, exhibit distinct behaviors and dynamics. The Albanian royal authority, for instance, does not extend its jurisdiction to Rrafsh, where the events occur, leading to the dominance of the *Kanun* over constitutional law. In contrast, the King of Denmark exercises authority throughout the entire kingdom. Consequently, the characters' actions may align or diverge, depending on the plot and setting of the events.

Hamlet's character epitomizes the educated aristocrat, armed with intellect and noble virtues. Conversely, *Gjorg Berisha* emerges from humble origins, lacking education but possessing a tender heart. While *Hamlet's* quest for vengeance stems from his uncle's lust for power, *Gjorg's* familial loss prompts a similar desire for retribution, albeit within a different social context. Despite their differing backgrounds, both protagonists share a common pursuit of honor and justice, albeit in distinct circumstances. *Gjorg* hesitates and does not want to revenge; this is understood from the inner monologue. The meaning of truth is a complete contrast: *Hamlet's* pursuit involves uncovering hidden truths (understanding the truth through the ghost), *Gjorg's* reality is laid bare before him through tangible evidence—the bloodied shirt of his slain brother, (a symbol entrenched in the *Kanun* tradition dictating that the victim's clothes be displayed until vengeance is achieved). The prominence of the characters and the development of the plot overlap and differ in various elements. Revenge sought for justice and royal power differs from vengeance rooted in ancient blood feuds; however, in both instances, the protagonists are driven by the imperative to restore honor. The main issue of revenge in both *Hamlet* and *Gjorg's* stories does not follow the same lines of action; instead, they often exhibit contrasts. *Hamlet* abandons everything to pursue revenge, whereas *Gjorg* abandons everything after achieving his revenge. In both cases, death serves as a common element as both *Hamlet* and *Gjorg* meet their death. The revenge plan is very complicated in *Hamlet*, whereas it is comparatively straightforward for *Gjorg*. While *Hamlet* encounters pitfalls, traps, and tricks in his pursuit of revenge, *Gjorg* requires only an enemy's error, such as stepping out of his house. *Hamlet* is compelled by extraordinary dynamics toward the act of murder, while *Gjorg* patiently awaits the opportunity to kill the enemy of his family. Despite being ordinary people, both protagonists exhibit high personal values. In their initial attempts to target the enemy, both protagonists make mistakes. *Hamlet* unintentionally kills *Polonius* and *Laertes*, who later faces consequences, losing his mother, but ultimately achieves his goal. On the other hand, *Gjorg* misses the target with his rifle on the first attempt, only wounding his enemy. However, in the second attempt, he successfully shoots and kills the target. For *Hamlet*, revenge was a delayed and complex endeavor on an individual level, but it freed him from the lie that history and his people would be fed. In contrast, *Gjorg* successfully carried out revenge, fulfilling the condition for restoring his family's honor. In the narrative background, the line of love is reversed for these protagonists, as *Hamlet* sacrifices his love for *Ophelia*. On the contrary, in the most difficult moments, *Gjorg* is astounded by his love for *Diana*. *Hamlet's* love implicates him and propels him towards the abyss, as he ends up killing the father and brother of his beloved and indirectly causing harm to the beloved himself. In contrast, *Gjorg* follows the fantasy of love and meets his death while chasing the carriage in which *Diana* was. *Horatio* will tell the true story of *Hamlet*, whereas there is no one to recount *Gjorg's* tale except for the laws of the *Kanun*.

4.1. Discussion on systematic oppositions and elements of universalization in the structure

The structure of opposition between the works is at times similar and at other times different. We can categorize the similarities using the term '*common element*' (c.e.) and compare the differences using the

word 'vs.' in between (e.g., A vs. B, C vs. D, X vs. Y). Below, we delve into the most distinctive features of these works as comparative elements.

The event takes place in northern countries (c.e.). Both *Hamlet* and *Gjorg* seek revenge (c.e.). The protagonists, who are ordinary people, also make mistakes – they hesitate to shoot at the enemy at the first opportunity (c.e.). Ultimately, both protagonists meet their death after the act of revenge (c.e.) The differences are highlighted based on the events. The characteristics of one character are juxtaposed against those of the other, representing the element of *Hamlet* versus the element of *Gjorg*.

Hamlet originates from an aristocratic family, in contrast to *Gjorg*'s common family background (aristocratic family vs. common family). The death of *Hamlet*'s father was shrouded in suspicion, with the truth of the murder concealed by *Claudius*. Conversely, in *Gjorg*'s case, the murder of his brother was widely known (the hidden truth vs. the known truth). *Hamlet*'s father fell victim to his own brother, *Hamlet*'s uncle, whereas *Gjorg*'s brother was killed by the *Kryeqyqe* family, (a crime within the family versus a crime outside the family.) *Hamlet*, upon realizing the truth, will inevitably take revenge, while *Gjorg* feels doubtful before making a decision (determined protagonist vs indecisive protagonist). *Hamlet* consciously takes revenge for his murdered father, while *Gjorg* takes revenge because the *Kanun* forces him (revenge forced by conscience versus revenge forced by the law of the *Kanun*). *Hamlet*'s revenge plan is complicated, while *Gjorg*'s plan is simple (complicated vs. simple). *Hamlet* abandons everything to achieve the goal, whereas *Gjorg* will abandon everything after achieving the goal (suffer the consequences and achieve the goal vs. achieve the goal and suffer the consequences). *Hamlet* gives up love, considering it an obstacle, while *Gjorg* is overcome by love, seeing it as liberation (love as an obstacle vs. love as liberation). The act of revenge would bring freedom to *Hamlet*, whereas for *Gjorg*, it would bring isolation (freedom vs. isolation). The truth of the story in *Hamlet* will be told by *Horatio*, while the law of the *Kanun* will speak on behalf of *Gjorg* (the unknown truth to the collective versus the known truth of the collective).

5. Conclusion

The foundation of this comparison lies in the *theme of revenge*. Despite the differences in genres and the complexity of the content layering, these factors have not hindered the extraction of elements and features necessary for comparing characters. In other words, the diversity in genres and the intricacy of the content do not prevent the identification and analysis of key elements and characteristics essential for character comparison. The comparison results, aimed at extracting that universal perspective from these works, were anticipated, given the themes and overall structure.

The plot of both works unfolds in a similar manner, starting with conflict and culminating in resolution; the encountered elements share similarities. We grasp common and distinctive elements more effectively through systematic comparison of characters. Systematic comparison, coupled with contrast, vividly illuminates the traits and qualities of each character individually, as well as in relation to one another. Furthermore, we encounter various limitations in regard to comparing these characters. In regard to comparing these characters, we also encounter various constraints. The limitation of the study reveals the dynamics of events, as well as the psychoanalytical aspects of the characters. The rapid development of the tragedy over time contrasts with the slower progression of the novel due to digression, making it challenging to incorporate all elements for comparison; hence, certain comparative elements or traits may have inadvertently been disregarded. Another limitation pertains to the psychoanalytic aspect of the characters, as it extends beyond our scope and the fundamental premise of this work. Analyzing the characters' behaviors in light of psychoanalytic studies, merging them with anthropological and ethnographic data, could yield new research findings. Thus, let this stand as a recommendation for those wishing to delve further into this subject. This comprehensive study, branching out into other fields of science such as psychology, anthropology, and ethnography, would also present another dimension of universality. It would entail examining details within each element being compared.

The essence of this work is in the method of extracting both common and distinctive elements, resulting from the universality of the central theme (revenge). It would be inaccurate to categorize both literary works as entirely similar or vastly different, as the primary aim was to analyze the characters' stance regarding the act of revenge specifically, which elements draw them to revenge as a phenomenon and where the characters stand in relation to it. Both protagonists (*Gjorg* and *Hamlet*) present common and distinctive

characteristics; both carry the burden of revenge; both are *victims* and simultaneously *culprits* of murder. The cycle of revenge is: *if you kill me, I will kill you*. This cycle begins with a killing and ends with another, with no alternative future until it ceases to exist. Our research indicates that regardless of the circumstances and conditions under which the works are composed, the process of initiating the work, inciting conflict, and resolving it share common formal elements and stem from the mentality of medieval society, yielding similar outcomes. The study provides a comparative perspective, viewing juxtaposition as an opportunity to observe the conceptual development of a theme throughout its logical progression (introduction - conflict incitement - resolution).

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