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Preface

"An investment in knowledge always pays the best interest."
-Benjamin Franklin

Over the past seven years, the Amalgam has proudly served as a platform through which students may share the fruits of their investments in knowledge at the University of Southern Indiana. Regardless of the field of knowledge invested in, the returns on students' scholarly investments, year after year, continue to be great. However, without the direction and support of many people within the USI College of Liberal Arts, the sharing of knowledge through the Amalgam would not have been possible. The faculty advisors—Dr. Kearns, Dr. Harison, and Dr. Hitchcock—are once again extended great thanks and appreciation for their work with this year's submissions. We would also like to extend our continued gratitude to Dean Aakhus and the Liberal Arts Council for their support and the funding of the Amalgam for the seventh consecutive year.

In the seventh issue of the Amalgam, students of various disciplines within the College of Liberal Arts reveal the returns on their investments in knowledge of various fields at the University of Southern Indiana. The fruits of Cody Matsel's study of history are shared through his essay titled "Sustainable Energy, Women, and the Modern World." In "The Role of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in Defining a New Era of Justice in International Humanitarian Law," Stephanie Deig shares the result of her investment in political science knowledge. Finally, Kasey Burns shares "Between Two Worlds: the Transcendence of Hamlet," a product of her study of English, in this issue of Amalgam.

Many thanks are extended to students who submitted essays for publication. The Amalgam continues to serve as an exemplary representation of students' outstanding scholarly growth in the College of Liberal Arts. We look forward to continue facilitating the sharing of the fruits of students' investments in knowledge through the coming years.

Erin Schmitt
Sustainable Energy, Women, and the Modern World

Introduction

On November 1st, 2011, The General-Secretary of the United Nations, Ban Ki-moon, stated, “From job creation to economic development, from security concerns to health and the status of women, energy lies at the heart of all countries’ core interests... Energy is the golden thread that runs right through all” (“Ban Launches High-Level Group”). Despite the importance of energy, one-fifth of the human population remains without access to modern forms of electricity. These populations are concentrated in the global South, and consist of countries once under European colonial rule. Implementing modern, clean forms of electricity provides a means for those in these areas to spend less time on labor-intensive routines and more time generating income, raising their political and economic status within their communities, creating an impetus for innovation, and ultimately, reducing their level of poverty. Modern, reliable, and efficient sources of energy are crucial for attaining high levels of human development through sustainability, empowering women, and relieving extreme poverty.

Overview

Energy plays an integral role in a modern industrial society. The Western paradigm of hyper-consumption of sophisticated technologies would not exist nor continue to be possible without tremendous amounts of consistent electricity. The table below provides a sample of countries from both the global North and global South and the amount of electricity in billion kilowatt hours (BKWs) they produced in 2008 in relation to their population levels (U.S. Energy Information Administration). These countries and regions were chosen as a representative group in order to illustrate general production trends within the global South and Global North. The global South countries were chosen according to population and geographic region. These countries illustrate the comparative differences between global North and global South.

A comparative analysis of the current levels of human
development across the global North and global South in relation to their electricity production and consumption levels reveals an interesting correlation. The global North countries produce a tremendous amount of electricity in relation to their respective populations. Conversely, the global South countries generate significantly less electricity in relation to their populations. India, with the second largest population in the world, 1.2 billion, produces 785.53 BKWs. The United States, with the third largest population, 312 million, produces nearly 4 trillion BKWs.

In the global North there exists a very high level of human development while in the global South there remains a low level of development. According to the Human Development Index (HDI) 2011, published by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the United States, Canada, Japan, and Western Europe rank in the Very High Human Development category with the U.S. Canada, and Japan ranked 4th, 6th, and 12th respectively out of 187. Additionally, the 47 counties in the Very High Human Development category, includes Western Europe in its entirety (United States Development Program (UNDP), "Human Development").

In addition to the first category of Very High Human Development, the HDI breaks down countries into three other categories: High, Medium, and Low Human Development. The global South countries from the list above all fall within the last two human development categories. They are ranked accordingly: Medium—Bolivia 108, India 134, and Low—Pakistan 145, Bangladesh 146, Nigeria 156, and Ethiopia 174 (UNDP, "Human Development"). Given the amounts of electrical generation in these countries, the data suggests that there is a direct correlation between the levels and consistency of electricity produced and the levels of development that any state can achieve ("Energy, Society, and Environment"). This is not to say that developed nations do not differ in the amount of energy they consume. Over the past three decades, trends reveal that Japan and Europe use less energy than the United States ("Energy, Society, and Environment"). Nevertheless, these trends suggest that a high level of electrical generation is a prerequisite for attaining high levels of human development (UNDP, "About Human"). Knowing and understanding these correlations provided the motivation for the United Nations and other Intergovernmental Organizations to help countries in the global South significantly increase access to the resources necessary to generate high levels of electricity.

United Nations Development Program: Energy Priority Areas

According to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), energy is the glue that holds together the future development progress:

Energy is central to sustainable development and poverty reduction efforts. It affects all aspects of development—social, economic, and environmental—including livelihoods, access to water, agricultural productivity, health, population levels, education, and gender related issues. None of the Millennium Developmental Goals (MDGs) can be met without major improvement in the quality and quantity of energy services in developing countries. UNDP’s efforts in energy for sustainable development support the achievement of the MDGs, especially MDG 1, reducing by half the proportion of people living in poverty by 2015. Through an integrated development approach, UNDP works to help create enabling policy frameworks, develop local capacity and provide knowledge-based advisory services for expanding access to energy services for the poor. (UNDP, "Sustainable Energy")

Without modern energy, the UNDP’s current understanding of sustainable development cannot be achieved, nor can the MDGs be reached. The UNDP strives to promote programs and policies that combine energy with the other aspects of development.

In 1996, the UNDP established its Initiative for Sustainable Energy to examine the role energy plays in regard to socioeconomic development and “give guidance on how energy activities can become important instruments for eliminating poverty, regenerating the environment, creating employment opportunities, promoting sustainable livelihoods, and advancing the
status of women" (Karlsson and McDade 9). The initiative established the importance of energy and its connection to development strategies.

In the fall of 2001, the UNDP launched the Thematic Trust Fund on Energy for Sustainable Development to “mobilize resources and promote coherency across UNDP in its approach to energy issues” (UNDP, “Thematic Trust”). This fund set forth four priority areas in order to achieve the above mentioned goals. These priority areas are: Priority 1—Strengthen national policy frameworks to support energy for poverty reduction and sustainable development; Priority 2—Promote rural energy services to support growth and equity with special attention given to women; Priority 3—Promote clean energy technologies for sustainable development; Priority 4—Increase access to investment financing for sustainable development (UNDP, “United Nations”).

With the first priority area, the UNDP strives to incorporate sustainable energy concerns into effective policy dialogue focusing on macro-economic reform, reform of energy policy at the national and international level, energy sector reform, reform focusing on how national and private energy producers operate, sustainable development planning, and planning that emphasizes creating dialogue for sustainable development among all agents. As a group, these three must be developed and improved upon in order to provide those in poverty with energy services (UNDP, “United Nations”).

The UNDP’ s second priority area focuses on providing heating, cooking, and electricity needs to rural areas. The main effort is to provide energy efficient options through both conventional and renewable energy, with special attention given to the role of women (UNDP, “United Nations”).

Of those that live in extreme poverty, women make up the majority (Karlsson and McDade 9). Women and the very poor are disproportionately and more acutely affected by a lack of energy. In many rural areas, people still rely on traditional solid fuels such as wood, dung, and other biomasses for cooking and heating their homes. They rely on their physical energy for tedious and labor-intensive activities such as lifting and transporting water, irrigation, and subsistence farming. Most of the very poor engage in subsistence farming, selling what little surplus remains as a means of generating revenue. In many areas of the world, women, due to cultural roles placed upon them, are forced into labor-intensive roles. Women are often excluded from activities that could increase their status in society. In Bangladesh, for example, women are barred from public markets, leaving them and their children without the resources they require (Karlsson and McDade 9).

The UNDP’s third priority strives to promote clean energy technology. The UNDP strives to promote clean energy technology to support its other focus area, environmental protection. In this aspect, the UNDP takes a win-win approach by supporting and implementing clean energy programs. These modern forms of clean energy include modernized biomass, solar photovoltaics, wind, and hydrogen. Knowing that an end to the world’s dependency on fossil fuels is in the distant future, there is also a push to promote high-efficiency, super-clean carbon-based energy systems (UNDP, “United Nations”).

In correlation to priority three, effort is made to “support the introduction and adaptation of low emissions technologies that can support economic growth, social development, and environmental sustainability” (UNDP, “United Nations”). In order to accomplish this goal, the UNDP-Global Environment Facility (UNDP-GEF) implements grants to developing countries and countries with economies in transition (UNDP, “United Nations”). Furthermore, the Thematic Trust Fund on Energy for Sustainable Development continues to work closely with the UNDP-GEF to provide countries with funding (UNDP, “United Nations”).

The UNDP’s final priority area focuses on increasing access to financing for energy. This is due to the fact that the countries requiring higher levels of electrical production lack the economic development and infrastructure to provide the resources necessary. For countries that are developing, extending the electrical grid is not an economically viable option. In most cases, it
is the preexisting lack of development that hinders the extension of the existing grid and keeps countries from investing in modern clean forms of energy (Waddle 75).

Throughout the development community, there is an effort to promote financing from non-official development assistance (non-ODA), and away from traditional financing from the UN and towards the private energy sector. Although there exists a push toward non-ODA, the UNDP still plays a role in energy financing by "enhancing developing countries' ability to attract investment financing for sustainable energy options" (UNDP, "United Nations"). According to the UNDP, this is facilitated by the current international attention on climate change issues, including the Kyoto Protocol and similar mechanisms promoting environmental conservation. As a result of more countries, corporations, and individuals becoming aware of the effects of climate changes, the UNDP estimates that "new energy financing opportunities from both the public and private sectors are emerging" (UNDP, "United Nations"). Additionally, the UNDP maintains that it will "support developing countries efforts to shape, learn about, and participate in new energy financing mechanisms including the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM)," as defined under Article 12 of the Kyoto Protocol (UNDP, "United Nations").

Compounding these financial difficulties are other factors that affect electrification efforts, which include low population densities and geographical barriers. In many areas, due to low population densities, the resources (capital and time) necessary to extend the grid cannot be recovered by either the national government or the private corporation providing the electricity (UNDP, "United Nations"). Additionally, in many countries in the global South there exist geographic barriers preventing the extension of the grid. These included remote regions of the country, mountainous regions, archipelagos, and seismically active regions. This is not to say that it is not possible to access these regions by the grid, only that these regions create unique challenges for both national and private energy producers, which, in turn, exacerbates the lack of resources and unstable political and economic structures existing in these countries (Foley and Logarta 46).

Case Study: Bangladesh and the Role of Women

The main obstacle to rural electrification in Bangladesh is its underdevelopment. Bangladesh has one of the highest population densities of any country with nearly 2,496.4 people per square mile, but has one of the lowest levels of development (Waddle 75). Although the Bengali government and the international community have made great strides in reducing poverty, 35.6 percent of Bengalis still live in poverty (Waddle 75). The majority of Bengalis, 80 percent, live in rural areas, and 63 percent work in an agriculture based economy (Waddle 75; Kahn 30). According to the Human Development Index 2011, Bangladesh ranks in the low human development category at 146 (UNDP, "Human Development"). With a population of nearly 130 million, the country's infrastructure struggles to maintain the current population. According to Daniel Waddle, vice president of NRECA International, "Of the country's 201,182 kilometers of highway, only 19,112 are paved; access to potable water is limited, and water-borne diseases are prevalent; use of commercial pesticides results in water pollution, especially in fishing areas. Water shortages are common, caused by falling water tables in the north and central regions, deforestation and overpopulation" (Waddle 75). The infant mortality rate in 2000 was 71.66 per 1000 live births, and life expectancy was 60.4 years for men and 59.9 for women (Waddle 75). This underdevelopment illustrates the relationship between a population's ability to attain higher human development through access to modern forms of reliable energy.

Within Bangladesh, there is an unequal distribution of commercial energy. The 80 percent that live in rural areas only consume 20 percent of the commercial energy produced within the country (Waddle 75). The other 20 percent of Bangladeshis, who live in the cities, consume the remaining 80 percent. In the rural areas, most people still rely on traditional biomass to heat their homes and to cook their food. Biomass constitutes 70 percent of all energy generation within Bangladesh (Waddle 75). Of the commercial electricity that is used, the majority goes to pumping water for Bangladesh's number one crop, rice, which is
needed to maintain the country’s booming population. Due to this lack of economic development, beginning in the late 1990’s the UNDP began gathering research and implementing simple energy projects in Bangladesh to reduce poverty and raise the status of women (Karlsson and McDade 7).

In 1999, UNDP implemented a project titled “Opportunity for Women in Renewable Energy Technology Utilization in Bangladesh.” This was a joint program between the World Bank and the UNDP funded by the Energy Sector Management Assistance Program (ESMAP) (Kahn 29). Working with community leaders and non-governmental organizations, the project completed an initial needs assessment within many of the rural areas of Bangladesh, specifically remote islands outside the energy grid. The project discovered that there was a tremendous demand for electric lighting (Kahn 29). In rural areas, most people used kerosene lamps that were inefficient given the unit of kerosene consumed to the light produced. In areas of extreme poverty, lighting consisted of using kupis (Kahn 30). These devices are little more than small cans of kerosene with a wick sticking out the top. This type of lamp is a fire hazard, and the air quality in the home becomes polluted as a result of their use. Lamps that are sturdier and encase the flame do exist, however they are more expensive and only accessible to those with higher levels of income (Kahn 30).

The UNDP decided that the area of Galachipa District (Upazila) had the necessary conditions needed for a successful project. These conditions included, “the potential market for DC lamps, household income distribution in the region, commercial and rural markets for sales centers, entrepreneurs interested in becoming agents for selling DC lamps, NGOs involved in other development activities in the area, support for the project from elders and the local elite, and support of the local administrative bodies” (Kahn 30). The project created an innovative solution that not only provided households with modern forms of light production, but also gave women the opportunity to generate income and engage in commercial activities.

The project consisted of training women to build battery-operated lamps in a micro-manufacturing process, which included modern manufacturing and distribution processes. Initially, with the support of a local NGO, the project secured a lamp factory location in one of the NGO’s buildings. Once the building was renovated for the needs of the project, training began. The technical training consisted of teaching women to recognize electronic components, use tools necessary in the construction of DC lamps, assemble printed circuit boards, and engage in quality control and testing (Kahn 32). The business training for those in managerial roles included instruction in accounting and bookkeeping. The project resulted in a large group of skilled workers with training not only specific to the energy sector, but in general manufacturing processes which can be extrapolated and transferred to other sectors.

Due to the high demand for the lamps, and the business training that many of the women received, they established an extensive lamp market within these rural communities. In order to establish the market, marketing and advertising techniques were utilized. This included “organizing public meetings, distributing handbills, [and] setting up billboards and posters. In addition, demonstrations of the lamps were conducted at several locations, including shops and residences” (Kahn 32). Through advertising at the local markets, boat landings, and administrative offices, the project generated awareness among the community, linking the women with potential retailers and consumers (Kahn 33).

Ultimately, the women’s micro-enterprise lamp construction project was a success. On the technical and functional side, this included that the lamps use small batteries that can be charged either with diesel generators or with photovoltaics, and that the lamps be made locally, if maintenance or replacement parts are required. The lamps use fluorescent bulbs generating much more light than kerosene. The lamps are high efficiency with low consumption, are affordable, and greatly reduce the risk of fires and improve the quality of air inside the home (Kahn 33).

On the social and economic side, the project raised the
standard of knowledge, and produced a source of income for the women involved, shifting them away from their traditional role in society. In Bangladesh, it is usually not acceptable, and often not allowed, for women to pursue positions at the supervisory level. As a result of the project, Bangladeshi women in the Galachipa region were able to establish themselves within the community as productive workers, innovators, and leaders. With backing from the community, the project established and maintained a modern alternative to the kerosene lamps.

**Conclusion—Sustainable Energy for All 2012**

For those living in poverty in the global South, access to modern, reliable, and affordable energy is scarce or unavailable. Today, one-fifth of the human population is dependent on biomass to cook and heat their homes. Women are disproportionally affected by a lack of energy due to cultural norms within many societies. Providing alternatives to biomass and electrifying rural areas can greatly reduce the burden on those living in poverty. Recognizing this fact, The United Nations, through the UNDP, strives to help countries acquire the resources necessary to meet their energy needs. The UN implements programs, such as the micro-manufacturing lamp plant in Bangladesh, in areas where energy services are the least developed. Furthermore, these programs train people in technical and business skills that they can use to make their work more productive and efficient. These programs lessen the burden of poverty and create frameworks that ensure continued progress towards reaching higher levels of human development.

High levels of energy production and consumption are prerequisites for achieving a high level of human development. In order for countries in the global South to transition from low and medium levels of human development to high and very high levels, they must address their energy infrastructure and allocation of energy resources. In December of 2010, the United Nations General Assembly declared 2012 would be the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All, identifying that "access to modern affordable energy services in developing countries is essential for the achievement of ... the Millennium Development Goals and sustainable development" ("Sustainable Energy for All"). The Sustainable Energy for All Initiative hopes to "double the rate of improvement in energy efficiency, double the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix, and ensure universal access to modern energy services" ("Sustainable Energy for All"). Achieving high human development in the global South will take energy production on an unprecedented scale, especially considering the UN projects that the global population will be more than 10 billion by the end of the century with the greatest increase occurring in the global South ("World Population"). The United Nations, the global South, the global North, private energy corporations, and other nongovernmental organizations must work together to achieve the goals of the Sustainable Energy for All Initiative and increase the level of human development worldwide. The single greatest challenge that faces humanity is balancing energy production and human development.

**Works Cited**


I. Introduction

It is stated in the United Nations Charter under Article I that the United Nations will work to promote and encourage "respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion." Over the last half-century, the international community has seen tremendous advances in the field of human rights as the United Nations has worked tirelessly to promote this goal. The United Nations has not only managed to create a universal expectation of human rights through the International Bill of Human Rights, but has also established a legal framework with which to defend and uphold humanitarian laws. This legal framework began with the International Court of Justice, which is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations; however, an issue arose after World War II during the Nuremberg Trials as it was realized that the International Court of Justice is only allowed to hear disputes between states and was therefore unable to rule on atrocities committed by individuals. It became evident that it was necessary to create special tribunals or courts in which the United Nations and member states could try individuals of committing atrocities and bring justice to suffering states. (Fasulo, 2009)

In this paper, I will discuss how the creation and implementation of The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia shaped international and humanitarian law. I will examine the background and establishment of the court. I will then continue by defining the resulting issues and precedents of the court. I will conclude my paper with a cumulative summary of how these cases have created a new era of justice in humanitarian law based on judicial diplomacy, individual accountability, and international cooperation.

II. Background of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia
Following the collapse of Communism in the Soviet Republic in 1990, intense political instability and economic issues began to plague the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The central government became weak and ethnic divides became stronger between the six republics, which led to calls for independence. These circumstances culminated in bloody conflicts in Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, and the Former Republic of Macedonia. The international community quickly began to take action and in 1992 the United Nations established a commission to investigate the atrocities. After discovering horrible evidence of rampant human rights abuses the United Nations Security Council took action (About, 2011).

III. Establishment of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia

On May 25, 1993, the United Nations Security Council passed Resolution 827, which formally established the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia due to the need to address: "continuing reports of widespread and flagrant violations of international humanitarian law occurring within the territory of the former Yugoslavia, and especially in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, including reports of mass killings, massive, organized and systematic detention and rape of women, and the continuance of the practice of 'ethnic cleansing', including for the acquisition and the holding of territory" (Resolution, 1993). The resolution established the jurisdiction of the courts, the organizational structure, the criminal proceedings, and enumerated the various reasons under which one could be brought before the court (About, 2011).

IV. Issues of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia

The first issue that court addressed was its inherent lack of guidance or structure. The resolution that established the court, its jurisdiction, organizational structure, and the criminal proceedings had only thirty-two articles and left many issues up to interpretation. A primary issue they faced was determining what elements composed a crime that was within jurisdiction of the court. There was no official definition of "genocide" or "mass murder" in the statute. This was left up to the court to decide on a case-by-case basis. Also, the courts had little precedent on which to look to for their rulings. As well as having little to no precedent, the courts had no guidance on procedural rules of evidence or sentencing guidelines. In many cases the court used a combination of international law and custom in order to come to an understanding on these issues (Pocar, 2006).

Within its first year of existence the court indicted 46 people; however, it produced very few tangible results or decisions. Many questioned how an ad hoc court, which was so disconnected from the actual conflict could make an effective difference, especially with the little funding it was provided. (Upcher, 2005) The following table illustrates the costs over time and the amount of personnel involved. The International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia is completely dependent on the voluntary contributions of member states and has continuously come under fire for its large costs relative to the actual results; however, the results are difficult to quantify.

In addition to monetary problems, of issue was the court's establishment before any actual peace was achieved in the Balkans. Many criticized the court as a fruitless endeavor and questioned which should come first - justice or peace? Many wondered how the court could be effective when the conflicts had yet to reach their ends.

Another difficulty was the fact that in order for the court rulings to be accomplished and enforced, member states had to comply. Under Article 25 in the Charter, member states are bound by international law to follow the directives of the Security Council. As a directive of the Security Council, Article 29 of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia required that all states provide judicial assistance; however, it is evident throughout the history of the United Nations that many countries will decide to overlook international law unless there is a direct economic or political benefit to them. This began to change in 1997, when the Italian Prime Minister signed the first agreement to comply with the enforce-
ment of sentences delivered by the court. The agreement signed by Italy’s Prime Minister signaled the beginning of an effective time period of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. More and more countries began to acquiesce to the rulings of the courts and it marked a transition from symbolic measure to effective institution as many war criminals were indicted and removed from their respective countries. (Upcher, 2005)

An issue that is still being dealt with today is the sheer amount of time that these tribunals require in order to conduct their investigations and carry out the trials. For these courts time is money and it seems that they require a lot of both: the costs of this court have drastically increased each year with the exception of 2011. The court has arrested and indicted 161 people thus far, and estimates that it will finish hearing appeals on its last case in 2014.

V. Precedents of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia

Resolution 827 and establishment of the court “marked the beginning of the end of impunity for war crimes in the former Yugoslavia.” (About, 2011). The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia became the foundation for the way in which these types of conflicts were handled in the future. It shifted the focus from “collective responsibility” of an area to individual responsibility for human rights violations. It demonstrated that senior officials would be held accountable for their actions, gave victims an opportunity to fight back, and documented the atrocities that occurred.

The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia also established a framework for the following tribunals and special courts created by the United Nations. It marked a new era in international cooperation for the United Nations in international and humanitarian law. This new era was created due to uses of previously unutilized powers within the United Nations Charter. The first of these uses was Articles 29 and 41 of the Charter in order to create subsidiary judicial bodies. Article 29 simply authorizes the United Nations to create subsidiary bodies and article 41 gives them various non-military methods by which they can “effect their decisions,” such as “partial interruption of economic relations and of rail, sea, air, postal, telegraphic, radio, and other means of communication, and the severance of diplomatic relations.” This was important because it was the first time that they utilized non-military powers in order to enforce international law regarding human rights. It expanded the view of how these powers could be developed and employed in the following international conflicts.

In addition to utilizing non-military powers, it was also the original use of “judicial bodies under its powers found in Chapter VII of the UN Charter as a means of maintaining international peace and security among sovereign States.” (Pocar, 2006). These uses set precedents for the following tribunals and special courts, demonstrating that the United Nations would no longer have to rely on peacekeeping missions or armed forces in order to enforce international law.

Another precedent that this court set was the enforcement of the full gamut of international laws that had been created: The four Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949; The Hague Convention (IV) Respecting the Laws and Customs of War on Land and the Regulations annexed thereto of 18 October 1907; The Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide of 9 December 1948; The Charter of the International Military Tribunal (at Nuremburg) of 8 August 1945.

For the first time in United Nations history they were able to successfully intertwine the vast and varied laws that had been established in the international humanitarian community and provide a cohesive application (Pocar, 2006).

VI. Culmination in a New Era of Justice in International Humanitarian Law

One of the greatest changes in international humanitarian law that was provided through this court was the shift in attitude between collective and individual responsibility. In previous instances, areas of conflict were generally given blame for the atrocities that occurred within their borders. The establishment
of this court in order to prosecute individuals for their crimes completely altered this mindset and created the concept of individual accountability in these war-torn countries. Victims were given voices, protection, and the opportunities to regain a small portion of the power that these leaders had taken away from them.

"The legal precedents set by the Tribunal have expanded the boundaries of international humanitarian and international criminal law, both in terms of substance and procedure" (Achievements). One such substantive development was the creation and expansion of judicial diplomacy. Judicial diplomacy is simply the idea that judicial reasoning or action can be used to pacify turmoil or help end a conflict within a region (Fasulo, 2009). The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia was the first time the United Nations implemented subsidiary judiciary powers in order to address a conflict. This court set the tone and gave precedent for the further actions in additional conflict-ridden countries. In following years the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda was established, followed by special courts in Sierra Leon and tribunals in Lebanon. The idea of judicial diplomacy greatly expanded the actions that the United Nations could take in order to address international human rights abuses, provided a standard definition of said crimes and the methods that were to be used to prosecute, and determined international criminal law procedure for these types of crimes (Achievements).

Finally the creation of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia defined a new era of justice in international humanitarian law because it developed and improved international cooperation. This court was established a few years after the end of the Cold War. This time period was infamous for its cooperative failures within the United Nations. This court brought into existence a way for countries to cooperate with the United Nations that would not require the commitment of military forces (beyond those used to execute arrest warrants) and provide concrete solutions to the seemingly never-ending conflicts within their countries. This demand and appeal of this type of conflict resolution is demonstrated and embodied in the creation of the International Criminal Court. The International Criminal Court was brought into existence in 2002 under the Rome Statute. It is a permanent and independent court. It was created because it became evident that there was a need for a permanent court to address these types of conflicts. The International Criminal Court currently has 119 members who are parties to its decisions. One could argue that without the original establishment of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia that the international community would have never had the opportunity to coordinate in such a manner and continue their work and cooperation today (About the Court, 2011).

VII. Conclusion

It is obvious that the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia was not without its challenges and issues; however, since its conception, a new era of justice in international humanitarian law based on individual accountability, judicial diplomacy, and international cooperation has existed and completely altered the way in which the world seeks justice. The International Criminal Court for the Former Yugoslavia provided the framework, precedent and inspiration that the international community needed to effect and continue these changes.

Works Cited


Kasey Burns

Between Two Worlds: the Transcendence of Hamlet

Some scholars and many people would say that Hamlet is hands down the best known and most recognizable of Shakespeare's works. In typical discussions of Shakespearian literature, people almost always make some reference to Hamlet. Even when the work of Shakespeare is mentioned at all, in many modern cultural contexts it is usually the work of Hamlet that is mentioned. Hamlet is the longest of Shakespeare's plays and very well may be one of the most powerful and influential tragedies in the English language. It has been the subject of much critical scrutiny and analysis and what seems to be an endless series of retellings and adaptations by others occurring throughout history and across a wide range of cultures. Shakespearian scholar Marjorie Garber writes concerning the popularity and prominence of Hamlet:

It could be said that in the context of modern culture... one never does encounter Hamlet "for the first time." Instead the play provides a resonant cultural echo, both forming and reflecting concepts - turns of speech, types of character, philosophical ideas - that seem to preexist any single experience of the play, and at the same time to be disseminated from it. (466 2004)

She goes on to question why exactly Hamlet is the "most famous of all English dramas and the most admired and quoted of literary documents" (467 2004). Garber points out that we have unknowingly adopted phrases from the play and have even added alternate meanings, but those meanings still relate to and refer back to the context of the play as well.

Consider the influence Hamlet has had in the cultural context, both historically and in modern society. In the discipline of film, there have been over fifty adaptations of Hamlet since 1900, including several theatrical releases starring actors such as Anthony Hopkins and Mel Gibson ("Hamlet on screen"). Even the classic Disney film The Lion King is said to have underlying references to the plot of Hamlet. Beyond film, the references to Hamlet in pop culture are endless. They occur in theatre, tele-
vision shows, literature, poetry, music, comic strips, and even video games (“References”). Scholars say that this sort of acclaim is what makes a work a classic: “This capacity to require reinterpretation and to be sufficient in its own complexity and subtlety to the changing ideas of different periods is one of the defining features of a classic” (Wofford 181).

In light of Garber’s point and the remaining evidence of Hamlet’s fame, the fact is that we know who Hamlet is even before we encounter him for the first time. More than that, we know what Hamlet is before we read the play for the first time. Our cultural response has enabled both the play and the character to transcend Shakespeare’s script. Furthermore, Hamlet’s situation - namely, his uncertainly about revenge - has also enabled the play to transcend the time and place of its composition and maintain a wide appeal. Hamlet is caught between the Anglo-Saxon culture of revenge and the Christian influence of his education. According to values of the Renaissance, he should take revenge on his father’s murder. But on the other hand, the Christian standard holds that vengeance belongs to the Lord, along with the clear injunction not to murder. We know Hamlet is well aware of this, as he has been studying at the University of Wittenberg - the site where Martin Luther began to establish the Protestant Reformation. But it is here where we can relate to Hamlet’s dilemma: the idea that we want revenge at certain times, and that we know we don’t have the moral authority to take vengeance for ourselves, transcends Hamlet’s specific historical moment. This resonates with us, and helps to keep the play relevant, transcending its time of composition. In fact, I suggest that Hamlet both dramatizes transcendence and reveals to readers their own tendency to cross boundaries. In this way, the play continues to resonate with our own lives.

One interpretation of Hamlet in particular came about at the time of the remarkable shift in the intellectual world from the focus on plot as the chief mark of drama to an emphasis on a dramatist’s power to depict character. This change may not seem very significant, but it is in fact what triggered much of the philosophical, psychological and critical study of Hamlet. The result was an apparent jump in progress of a better understanding of the play’s actual meaning and message. One influential figure in this process was the Romantic poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who emphasized “in Hamlet not ‘sensitivity’ of mind, but intellectual power, and [Coleridge] gives us the Hamlet still found today on many stages and in many classrooms, the Hamlet who thinks too much and cannot bring himself to act” (Wofford 186). Coleridge himself once wrote,

In Hamlet I conceive [Shakespeare] to have wished to exemplify the moral necessity of a due balance between our attention to outward objects and our meditation on inward thoughts - a due balance between the real and the imaginary world. In Hamlet this balance does not exist... (34).

This proposition suggests that Hamlet - both the play and the character - are much more complex than we may initially think. It is this idea that sparked a number of questions and the launch of the extensive amount of critical inquiry that still continues today.

Two centuries after Coleridge, literary critic Maynard Mack introduces a metaphysical approach to Hamlet. His approach implies that the problem with Hamlet was not necessarily a private psychological or intellectual one, “but rather something in the nature of the universe, and especially of the human position in the universe. By the 1950s, critical interest had shifted toward the poetic and metaphysical, toward the mysteriousness of life and toward a focus on mortality” (Wofford 196). Mack reveals an eye-opening concept that reminds us of how we have continued to attempt to interpret Hamlet in relation to ourselves, and our own world. It seems that we easily forget that this is fiction; Shakespeare created this story - but we still continue to dive into Hamlet’s world and work to understand what it means for us, for our own lives. Mack writes,

We need not be surprised that critics and playgoers alike have been tempted to see in [this opening scene] an evocation not simply of Hamlet’s world but of their own. Man in his aspect of bafflement, moving in darkness on a rampart between two worlds, unable to re-
ject, or quite accept, the one that, when he faces it, “to-shakes” his disposition with thoughts beyond the reaches of his soul... (246)

Consider for a moment what you yourself as a reader do when you read a story. Particularly if it's a good story and interesting to us, without even knowing it we become immersed into that world. For a short period of time, the story becomes our reality, and we lose ourselves in it. Unintentionally, we have made ourselves characters, given ourselves roles of our own, or perhaps even claimed the task of the outside narrator. Whatever we choose, we have become part of that story, and it begins to truly affect us, especially our emotions. Tragedy evokes our compassion and inquiry, mystery our own curiosity, comedy our own sense of humor, and romance our own unfathomable desires. We have mentally crossed over to that alternate universe - the one we assumed only must exist in the story. For true lovers of reading and literature, this is the pinnacle of the practice, though they may actually be unaware of what they're doing.

So if we are to examine Shakespeare's Hamlet from this reader-response critical perspective, while remaining mindful of the opinions of Shakespearian scholars and experts, we realize that Hamlet - both the story within and its possible interpretations - is much more complex than we may initially perceive. After a brief analysis of our own reading experience, we can certainly see the recurring theme of transcendence and illusion as we unconsciously enter into that story, often attempting to discover personal meaning. In this action, we ourselves as readers cross the boundary of reality and fantasy, thoughtlessly and effortlessly walking over the blurry line that separates the real world from the fictional one.

So how does this relate to the story that unfolds in Hamlet? In Hamlet we have one of the most obvious and intriguing examples of this crossing of boundaries, this trend to cross over into another world. What the plot of the story of Hamlet pivots upon is found in the character of the Ghost, and what it says (and doesn’t say) to Prince Hamlet. All throughout the play Hamlet is trying to make decisions, but cannot seem to make up his mind. He cannot decide if the Ghost is good or bad, if it really is his father, and whether or not he should obey it and avenge his father’s death. The Ghost, by its very nature and definition, represents a critical and significant boundary that has been crossed: that of life and death. Marjorie Garber on this theme writes,

The most inexorable boundary possible would seem to be that of life and death, yet the play opens with the appearance of a ghost, a spirit come from the grave... And this leap into the world of illusion, this crumbling of the expected boundaries between the real and the fictive or imagined; is an essential part of the play’s methods. (470 2004).

So in order to comprehend what Hamlet’s significance may be to this idea, we must first consider and examine the character of the Ghost.

The first time we encounter the Ghost is in the very first scene of the play, and frankly its behavior is very perplexing. He does not speak at all to the guards, although they each take turns imploring him to respond countless times: “By heaven I charge thee speak!”, “’Tis gone, and will not answer,” “If though hast any sound or use of voice, /Speak to me.” The scene consists mainly of Marcellus and Horatio discussing the Ghost with each other and bantering about who should do what, while the Ghost is perfectly content with silence and seems to have no intention to humor them with words.

This mystery of the Ghost’s appearance is worthy of a brief consideration. Here we have a major boundary that has been crossed – Hamlet’s father has died, and his life on earth and in Denmark has ended. Assuming that King Hamlet has passed on to the afterlife, whatever or wherever that may be, the people had expected him to never appear again. Once someone dies, you expect that he or she is gone for good, and that person cannot and will no longer exist in your world, so long as you yourself are alive. But Hamlet’s father in the form of the Ghost has violated a significant norm in the universe and breached a strict
boundary. He has returned to the world his death had taken him away from. But he is not alive, he is still dead - he is now a Ghost, in between the two worlds so precisely divided. Just the mere presence and appearance of this ghost has changed all the rules in the world of Hamlet - an imperative boundary has been crossed, that of life and death. What has been assumed to be impossible has come into reality.

Maynard Mack writes, "This is the problematic nature of reality and the relation of reality to appearance. The play begins with an appearance, an 'apparition,' ... and the ghost is somehow real, indeed the vehicle of realities" (247). The Ghost is there indeed, fully present and visible, but yet it is still a ghost - someone who is supposed to be dead and gone, but seems so real and alive, and just as present as Horatio and Marcellus. Garber writes, "And what is a ghost? It is a memory trace. It is the sign of something missing, something omitted, something undone...a ghost is the concretization of a missing presence, the sign of what is there by not being there" (1994).

Now we can take a look at what exactly the Ghost says to Hamlet. In fact, the source of the controversy and debate that surrounds the continuous study of Hamlet lies in the words the Ghost says. The entire plot of the story stems from what the Ghost says to Prince Hamlet: "Revenge his foul and most unnatural murther" (1.5.25). The Ghost commands Hamlet to avenge his death by killing his murderer, Hamlet's uncle, Claudius who is now King of Denmark. This order given to Hamlet, along with his own moral values, serves as the source of his indecisiveness throughout the play.

But what is Hamlet's response to this injunction to avenge his father's murder? Johann Wolfgang von Goethe offers helpful insight into what Hamlet may have experienced after this command from the Ghost:

A lovely, pure, noble and most noble nature, without the strength of nerve which forms a hero, sinks beneath a burden which it cannot bear and must not cast away. All duties are holy for him; the present is too hard. Impossibilities have been required of him; not in themselves impossibilities, but such for him. He winds, and turns, and torments himself; he advances and recoils; is ever put in mind, even puts himself in mind; at last does all but lose his purpose from his thoughts; yet still without recovering his peace of mind. (10-11)

When Hamlet receives these instructions, he has no idea what to do. After all, he has recently been through quite a lot to deal with. His father has just died, and now to his disappointment his uncle has married his own mother. While probably trying to cope with the death of his father and the marriage of his mother and uncle, he has just been told that the ghost of his father has been seen. So he goes to meet this ghost, who does in fact greatly resemble his father. Hamlet does not know what to believe, if this ghost really is his father's spirit, a "spirit of health, or goblin damn'd." Furthermore, this ghost claims to be his father and to have been murdered by Claudius. Now Hamlet must process the thought of his father having been murdered, but on top of that, the Ghost the orders him to avenge his death by killing Claudius. Hamlet has just been commanded, by a ghost, to commit the crime of murder - something he surely never thought he would do. So naturally, Hamlet's reaction consisted of a combination of emotions, but is accompanied with a frustration of being unable to decide exactly how to respond.

But revenge is not the only thing the Ghost asks of Hamlet. The last thing the Ghost says to Prince Hamlet just before he departs, "Adieu, adieu, adieu! Remember me" (1.5.91). Now after the grave accusations made against Claudius along with this injunction to revenge, Hamlet has to process this command as well: to remember his father. Garber suggests, "Hamlet is indeed a play obsessively concerned with remembering and forgetting" (310). We are reminded of another instance in which this theme occurs. When the Ghost appears again in the Queen's closet, he speaks to Hamlet, "Do not forget!" (3.4.110). Note that the Ghost again only speaks to Hamlet, and even when he tries to urge his mother to look at the Ghost, Gertrude does not see him: "Do you see nothing there? /Nothing at all, yet all that I see" (3.4.132-33). One may wonder too that this imperative from the Ghost alludes to one of two things: do not forget to take re-
venge, or do not forget your father (the Ghost).

But is there a way that Hamlet can accomplish both tasks? Is it possible for him to remember and to revenge — will he best remember as he carries out the act of revenge? Garber offers insight into this idea:

Rather than facilitating action, remembering seems to block it, by becoming itself an obsessive concern, in effect fetishizing the remembered persons, events, or commands so that they become virtually impossible to renounce or relinquish... the hobbyhorse must be forgot in order for action to follow. (315)

Hamlet does indeed become obsessed with the Ghost’s commands, and throughout the entire play simply cannot seem to make up his mind. He does not know which command to obey, if he even has the ability or capacity to obey either one. He is baffled about what it means to remember the Ghost, and is probably terrified at the idea of killing Claudius — of taking revenge.

Now that we have considered what the Ghost has asked of Hamlet and how he responded, we must inquire as to what or who the Ghost represents. Garber first reminds us of the historical view of a ghost: “a cultural marker of absence, a reminder of loss” (300). But in Hamlet, this Ghost, by its very nature and presence, automatically renders Prince Hamlet suspicious. Hamlet cannot know if it is good or evil, if it speaks the truth, or even if it really is his father. For Garber the Ghost is “incompletely a representative of the Law, because both he and the tale he tells allows the son to doubt. He puts in question his own being as well as his message... is this the real Law? Is this the truth?” (301). But what is this “Law?” Is it the law of Denmark — the very law that would warrant severe punishment towards Hamlet for the murder he is commanded to commit? This concept of the law brings us back to what the Ghost says to Hamlet — the two commands he gives him: to revenge and remember. With the law comes the anticipated obedience. But how does Hamlet know this is a law that he should obey?

These inquiries lead us to the critical theory and perspective of Jacques Lacan. A crucial aspect of his theory that is necessary to understand this discourse is what he calls the Name-of-the-Father. This idea was further developed by Lacan from Sigmund Freud’s theory and placed emphasis on the symbolism of the paternal concept: “Freud’s Oedipal, ‘normative’ paternal figure was redefined by Lacan in the first place as ‘the name-of-the-father’, with the emphasis on the Symbolic aspect, i.e. on its effect of linguistic determination (the name, the word, the signifier, the letter)” (Glossary). The Name-of-the-Father functions as a metaphor for the law of language. Lacan attempts to revise Freud’s ideas about the unconscious and treats it as a language, a form of discourse: “he takes Freud’s whole theory of psyche and gender and adds to it a crucial third term — that of language” (Murfin 248).

This brings us to examine Lacan’s theory of the Symbolic. This order is “the realm of the law, language, and society...Its symbolic system is language, whose agent is the father or lawgiver,” (“Glossary”). If we link this theory to Hamlet, and if the agent of the symbolic is the father, then is it possible that the injunctions the Ghost gives to Prince Hamlet are in the form of a type of law — because he is the “lawgiver”? The Ghost commands Hamlet to avenge his death, but to remember him also. But if the Ghost in fact was giving out a sort of law, why would he order Hamlet to do something so obviously against the law of mankind — to intentionally take another person’s life?

Again we come back to that inexorable question: why does Hamlet delay? A.C. Bradley makes the point that Hamlet definitely assumes that he ought to avenge his father: “Even when he doubts, or thinks that he doubts, the honesty of the Ghost, he expresses no doubt as to what his duty will be if the Ghost turns out honest” (61-62). Bradley claims there is a deeper level of conscience within Hamlet, and that is what holds him back from avenging his father:

Hamlet... was sure that he ought to obey the Ghost; but in the depths of his nature, and unknown to himself, there was a moral repulsion to the deed. The conventional moral ideas of his time...told him plainly that he ought to avenge his father; but a deeper conscience in him...contended with these explicit conven-
What the Ghost is asking of Hamlet is not only overwhelming for him, but it opposes the deep foundation of his own morality. Hamlet is torn between the assumed duty to obey his father, the Ghost, and to be resolute in his own moral code that forbids such an act. He wants to obey and honor his father, but also wants to remain true to his morality - to the law. Hamlet seems to be at an irresolvable impasse.

Here again we see the recurring theme of boundary crossing. Let's recapitulate this theme as it has transpired thus far. The Ghost is himself a being of transcendence - he is between two worlds, unable to rest in peace in the afterlife because he longs for his death to be avenged and justice to be accomplished. He has crossed the boundary separating death and life into the world to which he no longer belongs in order to command his son to carry out his own will of vengeance. The Ghost's injunctions to Prince Hamlet have created a new moral standard, a new law. And the Ghost imposes this new law upon Hamlet, who previously had virtuous character and adhered to a traditional moral code. This alternate law is presented to Hamlet and demands that he forsake his own morality, adopt this new standard, and by obedience to the Ghost's commands, actually violate a strict boundary himself by murdering his uncle Claudius to avenge his father's death.

Hamlet also has to decide for himself what is real and what is right. Which law should he follow, which law is right? As we all know, during the whole play Hamlet cannot make up his mind and struggles to determine what action, if any to take. Everything baffles him now; he must question everything. Even in his own world everything is put into question. Maynard Mack writes,

But this problem...is presented in terms of a certain kind of world. The ghost's injunction to act becomes so inextricably bound up for Hamlet with the character of the world in which the action must be taken - its mysteriousness, its baffling appearances, its deep consciousness of infection, frailty, and loss - that he cannot come to terms with either without coming to terms with both. (257)

Hamlet is much more conscious now of the fullness of reality in his own world. Whether he wanted to or not, he sees the potential of people towards corruption, and how it, like a disease spreads to infect nearly everyone in your sphere of influence. One instance of a law being broken, one boundary being crossed, has caused some to cross boundaries and others to question and consider crossing them too.

The point is that Hamlet, despite its complexity and reputation, is fiction, yet a fiction we may apply to our lives. It is not real, it was actually thought up by someone else that just happened to write down his ideas. So why is it that we can't seem to get enough of Hamlet? Why do we continue to analyze it again and again, and attempt to interpret time after time?

One logical explanation is that Hamlet says something that for some reason deeply resonates with us, whether we agree upon what that is or not. We see in Hamlet what may be the chief dilemma of all mankind - the question that resounds in every circumstance: how do you know what is right? What is right, what is true, what is real? Are these not the big questions that everyone - no matter your time period, culture, gender, or location - continues to ask over and over again? These are the very questions that burden Prince Hamlet throughout the entire play. They are parallel to our own lives, as we too wonder about their answers.

We must not forget the reading process, either. Recall that when we read a story we unconsciously enter into that story, into that world. We cast ourselves as a character, perhaps one we identify with the most, or a completely new character that we formulate on our own. Whatever we do, we indeed cross that boundary, if only for a moment, into that world. And what do we do when we get there? We become a part of it - we play the part. In this realm of the story, reality is abandoned and forgotten, but just for a little while. J. Hillis Miller writes,

The reader of a novel detaches himself or herself from the immediately surrounding world of real-life obliga-
tions. With the help of those black marks on the page... the reader... comes to dwell in an imaginary world whose links to the real world are more or less indirect. (68)

But when we put down the book, our minds must transition back to reality. Sometimes we even have to remind ourselves that it wasn't real, that it was only a story. But still, you remember it, and you continue to create meaning from it. You try to apply it to your own life in some way. This is why Hamlet can mean so much for us as readers. At some point in our lives, we ourselves face things that expose the world for what it really is. We are confronted with difficult trials, corrupt people, and injustice. At some point, we've become used to it, because we know it is an inevitable part of life.

When the Ghost comes to Hamlet, Hamlet's world is turned upside down, and he doesn't know which way is up. He has no idea how to respond or even what to think. Boundaries have been crossed - both by the Ghost and by his uncle Claudius. The Ghost gives him an alternate law to submit to, and Hamlet comes face to face with a boundary that he is urged to cross. He must come to terms with the reality of humanity and the world as it is. Maynard Mack concludes that Hamlet "has now learned, and accepted, the boundaries in which human action, human judgment, are enclosed" (260). He confronts, recognizes, and accepts the condition of being man.

So why do we need a story like Hamlet? Miller claims that we learn from fictions "the nature of things as they are. We need fictions in order to experiment with possible selves and to learn to take our places in the real world, to play our parts there... with fictions we investigate, perhaps invent, the meaning of human life" (69). The issues addressed in Hamlet and how he deals with them can have major implications in our own lives - if we allow ourselves to learn from it.

This of course does not mean that we all gather the same conclusions and applications from what we read. The fact that there are always multiple interpretations of a text supports this claim. Wolfgang Iser writes,

The literary text activates our own faculties, enabling us to recreate the world it presents. The product of this creative activity is what we might call the virtual dimension of the text, which endows it with its reality. This virtual dimension is not the text itself, nor is it the imagination of the reader: it is the coming together of the text and imagination. (1005)

Our creativity comes into play when we interpret and meditate on what we read. It varies with the reader, and I suspect also with the reader's life experience and circumstances. But we do get a chance to pull meaning from what we read, and what we pull depends on what it is that we read.

Iser gives helpful insight into this phenomenon. He claims that the literary work has "two poles, which we might call the artistic and the esthetic: the artistic refers to the text created by the author, and the esthetic to the realization accomplished by the reader... the work is more than the text, for the text only takes on life when it is realized" (1002). The implication is that it is the reader's response to the text that gives that text and that story real meaning. Furthermore, Iser states,

The convergence of text and reader brings the literary work into existence, and this convergence can never be precisely pinpointed, but must always remain virtual as it is not to be identified either with the reality of the text or with the individual disposition of the reader. (1002)

We must recognize the influence reading truly has on us as readers. Although we do not intend this, a lot of ideas enter our minds as we read. Some of those get stored away in the corner of our minds, and some come to the forefront, begging to be considered and revisited. But what's groundbreaking about Hamlet is that it truly does resonate with us on some very deep levels. We really do face life issues as he does. No, we don't face the exact same things, but everyone to some extent can relate to difficult circumstances. A person's life is a story itself, is it not? And everyone has a story. We all have a history, and we all have faced various trials and hardships. But by the same token we all
have experienced joys and delights throughout our lives too, whatever those may be. However, the story of *Hamlet* teaches us that at the root of our being, we crave to know what is real, true, and right.

Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* is revolutionary because it indirectly addresses and reveals readers’ own deepest questions: What is reality? What is fantasy? What is right? What is the truth? These questions we spend our entire lives asking - as we should. They are so deeply rooted in us that they permeate everything we do - even when we read. The transcendence of *Hamlet* is the mark of a true masterpiece of literature. Something that we read that can convey its embedded resonance through the story, off the page, and into our own “distracted globes,” something that truly crosses that boundary really is worthy of the respect, obsession, and reverence it has so cleverly earned.

Works Cited


Contributors

Kasey Burns wrote her essay "Between Two Worlds: the Transcendence of Hamlet" for Dr. Patrick Shaw's course, The Writer at Work. The paper is an extended and revised version of a previous reader-response critique of Hamlet, and was presented at the 2012 English Department Undergraduate Revisions Conference. Kasey will graduate this spring with a major in English and a minor in Philosophy. She plans to teach or attend law school following graduation.

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