

Persistence of Baroque Trauerspiel in Tom Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* as a Postmodern Literature: Rejection of Metanarrative

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Abstract—Metanarrative is a conventional style of narration in literature which features tragedy in Greek model's sense. In this type, metanarrative follows the conventions set by Aristotle; these conventions range different ones; time, one of the most important elements of narration, is linear. Therefore, in this regard, tragedy follows succession of events based on chronological orders. Moreover, metanarrative signifies stability of human deeds and meanings; therefore, what human beings do or say is stable and truthful. Moreover, in metanarrative, death is considered to be the ceasing moment of life in which continuation of life takes place in afterlife. This means that there is no ending or beginning since life is just a confusing cycle. Melancholy is used in Freudian sense that signifies suffering from hallucination and paranoia. These key concepts have composed metanarrative in conventional sense, and consequently metanarrative has been the base of tragedies in Greek sense. However, by emergence of Benjamin's ideas regarding Trauerspiel, the fundamentals of metanarrative were challenged. Therefore, postmodern narrative started to take the place of conventional metanarrative, so that the ideas of time, language, melancholy, and death approached postmodern features. The failure of metanarrative and approach to postmodern literature can be traced in Tom Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* in which there is no chronological order within the play. Moreover, conveying meaning through language fails, and life as an endless cycle, dominates the whole play. Consequently, the metanarrative and tragedy genre of Tom Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* can be replaced by postmodern narrative and Baroque Trauerspiel.

Index Terms—tragedy, metanarrative, Trauerspiel, language, time, melancholia

I. INTRODUCTION

In literary sense, tragedy is not “everyday disasters in newspapers, on television, or on the internet” (Bushnell, 2008, p. 52). On the contrary, Aristotle establishes principles, according to which “the horrific accident, random violence, or mere unhappiness are not ‘tragedies’ in themselves, even though they make us profoundly sad” (Bushnell, 2008, p. 53). It means that “when Aristotle speaks of” tragedy, “he is” actually “referring to” the question that how the story is told: plot”; not that how much the incident was harrowing (Rush, 2005, p.31). From this viewpoint, indeed, plot becomes the most important element in genre of tragedy.

Considering Aristotle's idea of the proper structure of narrative form, Aristotle especially deals with “the closure and configuration” which in his thought should be “given to the sequence of the events” through establishing a beginning-middle-end structure (Carr, 1986, p. 118). To Aristotle, plot as a narrative form, in which the action is accomplished time, “a synthesis of heterogeneous in which disparate elements of human world_ agents, goals, means, interactions, circumstances, unexpected results, etc._ are brought together and harmonized” (Carr, 1986, p. 15) is considered a “mode of comprehension and a cognitive instrument” (Carr, 1986, p. 11). In other words, the narrative practice as the only form of cognitive and perceptual structure “should have [a] beginning, [a] middle and [an] end”; an accomplished time. There are five basic component of dramatic structure which follows Aristotle's theory on the unity of dramatic plot_ beginning, middle and end; namely State of Equilibrium, Rising action, Climax, Falling action, and New State of Equilibrium.

In 1964, Tom Stoppard, a Czechoslovakian-born British playwright, wrote “a one-act verse burlesque” (Bloom 139) entitled *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Meet King Lear*. Stoppard in June of that year described the work to Smith like this: “Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, and Hamlet are joined on the boat by the Player, and since the Player represents the Hamlet-figure in *The Murder of Gonzago*, the Player is made up to look like Hamlet ... He is a man stuck in space, a man caught out of the action. It is a bit screwy, but fun” (Fleming, 2002, p. 30). Then in 1966, Tom Stoppard introduced a revision of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern* (henceforth *Ros* and *Guil*), *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* that put

him among the great playwrights as Samuel Beckett and Eugene Ionesco. In *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*, Tom Stoppard assumes two marginal and inconsequential characters in the plays of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* to tell the whole story of Hamlet from the perspective of the two.

II. METHODOLOGY

In this model of tragedy, loss avoidance is very significant. The avoidance of Loss is considered to be Old_ a state that neither the beginning nor the end of it, is conceivable. Such an understanding does not carry Loss to the end of time because Greek tragic drama is based on *Einmaligkeit*¹; the factor that in Benjamin's viewpoint is directly related to the structure of Greek Tragedic drama. In the other words, the world, which the Greek Tragedy depicts through its five-steeps, is nothing but an attempt to avoid the loss that is Old.

Despite the "certain superficial resemblance" between Trauerspiel and Tragedy (Gilloch, 2002, p.73), for Benjamin Nothing distinguishes Trauerspiel from tragedy more clearly than" (Gilloch, 2002, p.78) its tendency toward loss; indeed, loss is not only presented in the content but also in the structure of Trauerspiel genre and it is because in the Benjamin's view, "history was the source of Trauerspiel" (Gilloch, 2002, p.75). Myth and history are the most significant elements that can distinguish these two genres from each other. Benjamin specifies the tendency to History and "Historical life as" (Benjamin, 1998, p. 62).the most important and fundamental substantial differences between Greek Tragedy and Trauerspiel genre.

Actually, whereas for Benjamin Trauerspiel is located inside of historical time, aforementioned, "Greek tragedy presents the intercourse of mortals, gods and fantastic beings, located them outside of ordinary life", (Gilloch, 2002, p.75) can even impress the common existing understanding of Fate. Namely, in Greek Tragedy Fate _ something that has been written in the past as destiny mostly by gods- is an individual destiny which is placed as an individual responsibility only on the shoulders of a hero. But in Trauerspiel, in fact, the Fate is a communal destiny that tied with the baroque God-forsaken world which abandoned human in a mere material world and its "earthly condition" because the genre is built on history, and historical time as an absolute time (Pensky, 1993, p.80).

From this perspective, Fate is what Man himself has made it during the historical time and intended it as a destination for himself, so that finding liberation from it seems impossible. However, Freudian idea which is accepted as historical fate through Man brings nothing just a false circulation from one object to the other in the abandoned material world.

As it has been noted earlier, the passivity that Freud and the followers of him are accused of by a melancholic person more than anything, imbued his own pathological way, whereas for Benjamin "madness is a form of perception alien to the community" (Bullock, 1996, p. I: 92). Even so radical, the work of mourning which was considered as the only redemptive way to reach the health in Freudian idea, for Benjamin it is nothing but a narcissistic way that leads to narcissism.

A melancholic person inevitably after losing the love-object in a moment reaches a state in which the world with all its natural laws and human laws was depicted as a mask decoration. In fact, he realized that the truth of the world that the loss in the world as a condition of possibility, is prominently deficit not transitory.

Melancholy in Tragedy versus Melancholy Trauerspiel

It is known that plot is more superior to character in Aristotle's tragedy; it makes the genre of tragedy more action based than dialogue based. In tragedy, it is quite obvious and clear that much of the dialogue is in the service of the plot of the play because there is no freedom for characters to express and reveal themselves. In fact, the reason is that gods rule over humanity, so that there would be no will to express themselves. In this mythical world, the physical tension or violence does not come from mental state but the source would be the gods fighting with each other. Accordingly, for Benjamin the mythical violence is "a mere manifestation of gods" (Benjamin, 1998, p. 248) existence; "fate must triumph" (Benjamin, 1998, p. 248) in this challenge. However, the role of mind should not be completely ignored; in other words, the mental features which causes the "self-loath and self-reproach" (Ferber, 2012, p. 17) in the hero and where upon diminishes "the instinct which compels every living thing to cling to life" (Freud, 2001, 264) has been tied vividly with the mental features Freud declares for melancholy. Freud puts these mental features in this way: "The ... mental features of melancholia are a profoundly painful dejection, cessation of interest in the outside world, loss of capacity to love, inhibition of all activity, and a lowering of the self-regarding feeling to a degree that finds utterance in self-reproaches and self-reviling, and culminates in a delusional expectation of punishment" (Freud, 2001, p. 224).

In tragedy, such tremendous decline of the sense of self-regard which is only present in Freudian idea of melancholy can be seen; in tragedy hero suffers "a loss in regard to an object" as melancholia; and what the suffer "tells us points a loss in regard to his ego" (Freud, 2001, p. 247). Hero internalizes the lost love-object that makes his ego divides in two part, "one part of the ego" which is "commonly called 'conscience'" wildly and dangerously "sets itself over against the

¹ The *Einmaligkeit* literally as singularity is the potentiality of the Greek tragedy idea for the emergence of the new rules, which finally introduces tragedy as an individual singularity. The Singularity of tragedy means that every tragedy differs from each other because each tragedy itself is the new law.

¹ Isaac Newton founded classical mechanics on the view that *space* is distinct from body and that *time* passes uniformly without regard to whether anything happens in the world. For this reason, he spoke of *absolute space* and *absolute time*, so as to distinguish these entities from the various ways by which we measure them (which he called *relative spaces* and *relative times*). <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/newton-stm/>

other, judges it critically, and, ... takes it as its object" (Freud, 2001, p. 247). Moreover, this makes the person to lose his "ego's self-love" and accepts fate-imposed violence which is nothing just death (Freud, 2001, p. 252).

In Trauerspiel, characters' dialogues are entirely in the hands of their inner thoughts. In the other words, such plays are full of dialogue and monologue that portray characters' internal thoughts.

Melancholic person tries to represent "an empty act of what was once meaningful", indeed; he is the one who in Benjamin definition of history as a shock takes on the train brakes (Ferber, 2012, p. 31). Thus, what can be observed in Trauerspiel genre is a dynamic that no other genre has depicted it.

For Benjamin, melancholy does not betray the world of lost love-object, because the truth for him lies in the objects that have been left the Freudian real world, and it explains why he introduces a melancholic person as a philosopher of its own community; someone who has seen the loss as the condition of the possibility of the world. In fact, a melancholic is not a fool but a genius person.

Death and Language in Tragedy versus Death and Language in Trauerspiel

Tragedy as a genre based on myth, in the process of concept making, always functions as the individual fulfilled time "which can be ... defined here than historical time" (Bullock 1996, p. 56). This makes the death_ loss of life_ in the world of tragedy quite opposite to the real world that is drawn by Trauerspiel. In fact, the death of tragic hero is in accordance with time and determinates the play. Benjamin articulates such component of tragedy in Trauerspielbuch: "But in respect of its victim, the hero, the tragic sacrifice differs from any other kind, being at once a first and a final sacrifice. A final sacrifice in the sense of the atoning sacrifice to gods who are upholding an ancient right; a first sacrifice in the sense of the representative action, in which new aspects of the life of the nation become manifest" (1998, p.106-7)

Such sacrifice that in tragedy is a first and final sacrifice of tragic hero, indeed, brings new earth and heaven through eradication of Man's pain and suffering in one hand and in the other, draws a rigid boundary between gods and man through the emergence of new rule. Thus, death in tragedy "mark[s] the end of epoch" (Benjamin, 1998, p. 135); the "break between pre-historical age of mythical laws and the new ethical political community" (White, 2014, p. 21) vividly through forming "new conceptions" (Benjamin, 1998, p. 107).

That is, the Loss-avoidance and gods' desire for victims blend together in the matter of the death of a hero to create meaning for life; a sublime meaning.

However, "to obtain a deeper understanding of" the Greek tragedy's loss-avoidance through the concept making, "we should perhaps look not just at" action like death but also language as human speech (Bullock, 1996, p.56). Indeed, "there is an essential connection between" the tragic action and tragic language for giving meaning to life (Bullock, 1996, p.56). For Benjamin Greek Tragedy genre is based on human speech; "The tragic is situated in the laws governing the spoken words between human beings ... Tragedy is not just confined exclusively to the realm of dramatic human speech; it is the only form proper to human dialogue. That is to say, no tragedy exists outside human dialogue, and the only form in which human dialogue can appear is that of tragedy" (Bullock, 1996, p.59).

In the other words, tragedy as a law-maker exchanges the gods' action to the human speech_ dialogue. That is why there is no tragedy without dialogue. For Benjamin the linguistic sign is symbol, which brings out new laws from gods' action and inject into the realms of generations.

For Benjamin "Symbol is about identity between the word and the thing, the 'indivisible unity of form and content'" (Broadfoot, 1991, p. 8). In fact, more than ever symbol is in direct contact with the Aristotelian definition of tragedy. Tragedy for Aristotle depicts nature as ideal, the world of gods, goddess, immortals, and demi-gods, and such features have been emerged from interrelation between the idea of the fulfillment of action and time.

For Benjamin, the presence of ghost traces the blurred border between life and death. In this scene the role of ghost is to present death, in one hand as not ending mark of life and in the other, the integration of time. Benjamin in "a mystical-philosophical understanding of language" (Gilloch, 2002, p.61) which is split up into two_ pre- and post-Fall epochs, articulates "the linguistic being of man to name things" (Bullock, 1996, p. 64): "The linguistic being of things is their language; this proposition, applied to man, means: the linguistic being of man is his language, which signifies: man communicates his own mental being in his language. However, the language of man speaks in words. Man therefore communicates his own mental being (insofar as it is communicable) by naming all other things" (Bullock, 1996, p.64)

Such a view translates man as The Namer, the Being that "God created him in his image" and "did not named him" (Bullock, 1996, p.68) has been summoned for naming things. The naming, away from the Bourgeoisie language_ "the language as a mere instrument of communication and arbitrary sign system" (Gilloch, 2002, p. 61), is exactly the mental being of things. But "once man has fallen from the paradisiacal state that knew only one language" namely, the paradisiacal language, "the creative word of God,... in the profound sense in which Kierkegaard uses" turns to "prattle" (Bullock, 1996, p.71). In a word, we can say that "The Fall is the catastrophic end to the paradisiacal state of naming" (Gilloch, 2002, p. 62), and the beginning of the human language in which "thing[s] being misnamed [or better say] overnamed" (Bullock, 1996, p. 62).

Metanarrative

In Meta-narratives a word is composed of two parts, a prefix, Meta- and a noun, narrative; a narrative is a story, story in telling of story, and the prefix meta- before the narrative is from the Greek and it means a comprehensive idea; the

thing that is behind or even beyond a narrative and only through the transcending of a story is accessible. So a metanarrative is this: it is a more comprehensive idea behind a story – something that is more comprehensive. In the other words, a metanarrative is a comprehensive story common to all. Thus every metanarrative would have the matter for all people through drawing a comprehensive idea, a law making.

In fact, this is Metanarrative that through offering a transcending narrative gives legitimacy to what mankind has done or achieved. Thus, what makes a narrative to be a metanarrative is its power in legitimizing or illegitimizing the mankind's deeds and it is clear that this particular feature of metanarrative is not achievable except for shaping a redemptive whole, a "totalitarian thinking" (Spivakovsky, 2015, p. 1360). Moreover, this, by Benjamin, has been named as law making, the prominent feature of the mythical world. Accordingly, a meta-narrative as a form of narrative for being able to continue to be a lawmaking follows the conventional style of narrative organization which has a beginning-middle-end structure (Simon24). Indeed, metanarrative mechanism in narrative directly originates from a "totalitarian thinking" that is common in tragedy, the way in which narrator 'separates the past from the present and reorients expectations toward the future' (Donham, 1999, p. XV).

III. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Death and language in *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*

In *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*, Ros and Guil as Beckett's Vladimir and Estragon in *Waiting for Godot* who demonstrate human life as an absurd waiting, challenge the conventional thought of death. To make the idea Stoppard puts tragedians' troupe on Ros and Guil way who, as the name refers, are the ardent and tenacious followers of dramatic rules:

PLAYER: Act two! Positions!

GUIL: Wasn't that the end?

PLAYER: Do you call that an ending? - With practically everyone on his feet? My goodness no - over your dead body...

PLAYER (switching off his smile): Decides? It is written. Now if you're going to be subtle, we'll miss each other in the dark. I'm referring to oral tradition. So to speak. We're tragedians, you see. We follow directions-there is no choice involved. The bad end unhappily, the good unluckily. That is what tragedy means. (58-9)

For tragedian there is nothing but "oral tradition", the particular rules which is shaped on "the only beginning is birth and the only end is death" (Ferber, 2012, p. 28). Accordingly, there is no act unless has a beginning and a place for rest. Then to the Player the questions of Ros and Guil's are intangible and laughable because the death instead of being a help to understand how life is absurd is simply for them a mean to fill it.

For Stoppard the question of existence is located on the analysis and attitude that his characters Ros and Guil express toward the issue of death itself. The issue that at first sight reveals the "hidden fears" (Easterling, 1982, p. 7) that is laid in men like Ros and Guil.

ROS: ...Do you ever think of yourself as actually dead, lying in a box with a lid on it?

GUIL:No.

ROS:Nor do I, really..... I mean one thinks of it like being alive in a box, one keeps forgetting to take into account the fact that one is dead ...

ROS: I wouldn't think about it, if I were you. You'd only get depressed. (Pause.) Eternity is a terrible thought. I mean, where's it going to end? (51)

Unlike the tragedians that for them death is death, the termination of Hardships and in a word "a haven and a reward", for Ros and Guil it is the source of terror and anxiety. Such a reaction to the death makes us face with influx of questions; what approach is selected by Ros and Guil in facing death? Is it a reliable scientific one? Alternatively, is it possible that their fear of death comes from their lack of knowledge about it or not?

Guil as one who has philosophical insight that is visible in his analytical approach toward the world which every coin lands on a head, states the fear of death as:

GUIL: And then again, what is so terrible about death? As Socrates so philosophically put it, since we don't know what death is, it is illogical to fear it. It might be ... very nice. (75)

In such method, "the status of nails and hair in the living body" as part is constructed from inanimate (dead) materials as Keratin in one hand and "in comparison to their status in the corpse" as material is growth after the death (Ferber, 2012, p. 109) in another not only "places this image of being not dead but no longer alive..." (Ferber, 2012, p. 109) but also the image of the growth of fingernails and hair "as hybrid entities" (Ferber, 2012, p. 109) reveals a "bitter truth" (Esslin, 2001, p. 13) that "where life and death meet" (Ferber, 2012, p. 109), before Beginning has been a stream of eternity. Then Death in no longer the end of life.

Such fathom of the profane world condition, "having neither a beginning nor an end" (Esslin, 2001, p. 3-4) makes the real human of the real world, unlike the mythical world of tragedy, that is watered by a fake new state of equilibriums, with thirst of the truth to be abated. So the death of the main characters as Ros and Guil in real profane world is not heroic nor tragic but absurd, a death without the slightest result.

Moreover, in such world not only the "most human endeavor" is absurd and inconclusive but also the "communication between [the exile] human beings is well-nigh impossible" (Esslin, 2001, p. 13) because as Benjamin

says the paradise language lost its ability of Naming and falls in Overnaming; the human language in which human no longer knows as Namer. Guil reminds Ros of the missed duty like this:

“GUIL: We can't afford anything quite so arbitrary. Nor did we come all this way for a christening. All that - preceded us. But we are comparatively fortunate; we might have been left to sift the whole field of human nomenclature, like two blind men looting a bazaar for their own portraits... At least we are presented with alternatives” (34).

As “an only possible namer” (Ferber, 2012, p. 138) who is exiled and departed from the scope of naming, Guil tries to check human language for bringing back the purity of language; however, he knows well that this as a blind man who wants to see himself in the mirror is impossible. Then human language as an overnamed language act more as an assistant to give meaning to human speech, “acts as a barrier to communication, which in turn isolates the individual even more, thus making speech almost futile”(Gordon, 2002, p.55). We can see such features of overnamed language which is “essentially intertwining with loss” (Ferber, 2012, p. 120) in greeting of queen and king of Denmark to Ros and Guil.

CLAUDIUS: Welcome, dear Rosencrantz... (he raises a hand at GUIL while ROS bows - GUIL bows late and hurriedly)... and Guildenstern.(He raises a hand at ROS while GUIL bows to him - ROS is still straightening up from his previous bow and half way up he bows down again. With his head down, he twists to look at GUIL, who is on the way up.)

GERTRUDE: Thanks, Guildenstern (turning to ROS, who bows as GUIL checks upward movement to bow too - both bent double, squinting at each other)... and gentle Rosencrantz. (Turning to GUIL, both straightening up - GUIL checks again and bows again.)(31)

Such overnaming, indeed puts the identity and individuality of the characters, Ros and Guil, at risk of destabilization because this is language that by putting up the name separately, constructs independent identity for people. Therefore, the name of a person is his/her identity which detaches him/her from the others. Moreover, Ros and Guil themselves, through their verbal game, entirely deprives the language of any kind of ability of being meaningful. In fact, their Question and Answer game is based on this assumption that in language every question is a knot and the answer opens it; the efficient system in language that is designed to understand the vague and problematic issues. But in finding out the cause of the melancholic behavior of Hamlet such verbal game ridiculously fails.

GUIL: He's not himself.

ROS: He's changed.

GUIL: I could see that. (Beat.) Glean what afflicts him.

ROS: Me?...

ROS: Who am I then?

GUIL: You're yourself.

ROS: And he's you?

GUIL: Not a bit of it.

ROS: Are you afflicted?

GUIL: That's the idea. Are you ready?...

GUIL (great control): I don't think you quite understand. What we are attempting is a hypothesis in which I answer for him, while you ask me questions. (38)

To obtain a comprehensive understanding of the possible cause(s) of Hamlet's behavior Guil suggests the question-and-answer game in which Guil wants Ros to pretend to be Guildenstern, while Guil himself pretends to be Hamlet, however, such strategy abandons Guil and Ros in confusion and bewilderment. Actually, unlike Tragedy's inquiry-based dialogues that deliver a definitive answer as we see in Oedipus Rex about the issue of the murderer of previous king of Thebes in Trauerspiel there is a disproportion and incongruity between the questions it asked and the answer that is given. Such dramatic difference between Tragedy and Trauerspiel, indeed, directly relate to the law-making and law-destroying function of language.

Melancholy in *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*

The non-pathological picture of melancholy that Benjamin demonstrates in Trauerspielbuch totally stands against the Freudian idea. In fact, unlike Freud's theory of melancholy in which the melancholic not only does not know what exactly has been lost but also he or she cannot demarcate with something that is missing, Benjamin's melancholic has a full acknowledgment of the lost object. This difference in attitude toward melancholy makes the Trauerspiel dramatic structure truly be more consistence with real world than tragic one. And Ros and Guil in Stoppard do not dispose of Benjaminian melancholy. Stoppard's characters, Ros and Guil are completely aware of such loss. They know the initial loss, the loss of individuality. They see themselves as two servants who are summoned by the order of the king of Denmark.

ROS: We were sent for.

GUIL: Yes.

ROS: That's why we're here...

ROS (dramatically): It was urgent - a matter of extreme urgency, a royal summons, his very words: official business and no questions asked - lights in the stable-yard; saddle up and off headlong and hotfoot across the land, our guides outstripped in breakneck pursuit of our duty! Fearful lest we come too late. (24)

In The Middle Ages people were at the service of royal families So that the king was “as God’s holy representative on earth” and disobeying of the King’s orders was equal to defying the orders of God. (Mazur). Because that was a royal summon Ros and Guil didn’t come to Elsinore willingly and even when the king and queen ask them why they are brought here. To Stoppard, Ros and Guil unlike Rosencrantz and Guildenstern in Hamlet are completely two individual characters. They as Stoppard depicts in the first act especially the coin-tossing have two different personality and characteristics; Guild philosophically explores the issue of coin which comes down on the head:

GUIL: It must be indicative of something, besides the redistribution of wealth. (He muses.) List of possible explanations. One: I’m willing it. Inside where nothing shows, I’m the essence of a man spinning double-headed coins, and betting against himself in private atonement for an unremembered past. (He spins a coin at ROS.)

ROS: Heads.

GUIL: Two: time has stopped dead...

ROS: I’ve never known anything like it... (22-3)

Though Ros has not the insight to be as sharp as Guild’s insight, but knows one thing very well and it is that he is at the service of the royal family and could not return home. He does not lose such authority in making decision for going back home. Therefore, Ros and Guil unlike Polonius who naively was the king’s servant begin the process of Natural history. But, such decision means standing in front of Historical Fate. In such world, everything depends on the will of those in power, who not in the least heed human identity and wishes. Since people as Ros and Guil “are non-entities to the King and Queen and even to their former companion, Hamlet (Jenkins41).In fact, for Historical Fate, Ros and Guil are not two individuals but a servant in uniform.

Ros and Guil know well the initial loss, the loss of authority and freewill which is achieved by the lack of attention to individual identity.

GUIL: As soon as we make a move they’ll come pouring in from every side, shouting obscure instructions, confusing us with ridiculous remarks, messing us about from here to breakfast and getting our names wrong. (61)

However, in Elsinore there are people who honestly serve the King of Denmark, people like Polonius:

CLAUDIUS: Thou still hast been the father of good news.

POLONIUS: Have I, my lord? Assure you, my good liege,

I hold my duty as I hold my soul,

As it hath used to do, that I have found

The very cause of Hamlet’s lunacy... (33)

As we see, for Polonius also as the follower of Historical Fate the king of Denmark is the stewards of God while as the advisor and minister of king of Denmark he is regarded as an intelligent man. And such loyalty and allegiance is as Camus says in his essay, “The Myth of Sisyphus” originates from the fact that the characters like Polonius “get into the habit of living before acquiring the habit of thinking” (8).

On the contrary of such thinking, Ros and Guil are rebellions with a blade of Benjaminian melancholic philosophy, Natural History, revolt against the common tricks of society. What they embody, the loss of identity and freewill, through Natural history is the confluence of Benjaminian melancholy and Trauerspiel’s dramatic structure. In fact, to a community as the community which Ros and Guil live in, People like Ros and Guil are considered as melancholic due to their disproportion speech; Guil explains this general principle of community as such: “I think I have it. A man talking sense to himself is no madder than a man talking nonsense not to himself”(49-50).therefore in the perspective of community Natural History is a decaying process which is not adaptable by philosophy but through melancholy. In this regard, such misperception about the Natural History makes that every motion unlike the conventional thinking causes Double-alienation in the target society and such social reaction has not escaped the watchful eyes of Stoppard’s main characters.

IV. CONCLUSION

It is known that a metanarrative unlike postmodernism follows the Aristotelian principles; specially “the Aristotelian perception of time with a pre-kowntelos (an ultimate object or aim.) And [for depicting an] authentic whole” (Nojoumian, 2003, p. 60).Accordingly, Tragedy as a genre is as close to a Metanarrative as possible whose reversal of this relation is also possible: indeed, every metanarrative is a tragedy and every tragedy is a metanarrative. Therefore, in such circumstances, tragedy as a genre cannot be in postmodernism because according to what was mentioned earlier only Trauerspiel is the undisputed genre of postmodern literature. However, through applying different key terms to Stoppard’s *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*, it could be realized that the principle of metanarrative, and consequently the model of Aristotelian tragedy are not employed in this play. The play was non-chronological in which death has shown to be absurd and meaningless. Moreover, the language could not carry any meanings, and the characters have been melancholic who and aware of their loss from both individual and social aspects. Therefore, Stoppard’s *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* is categorized as Trauerspiel.

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