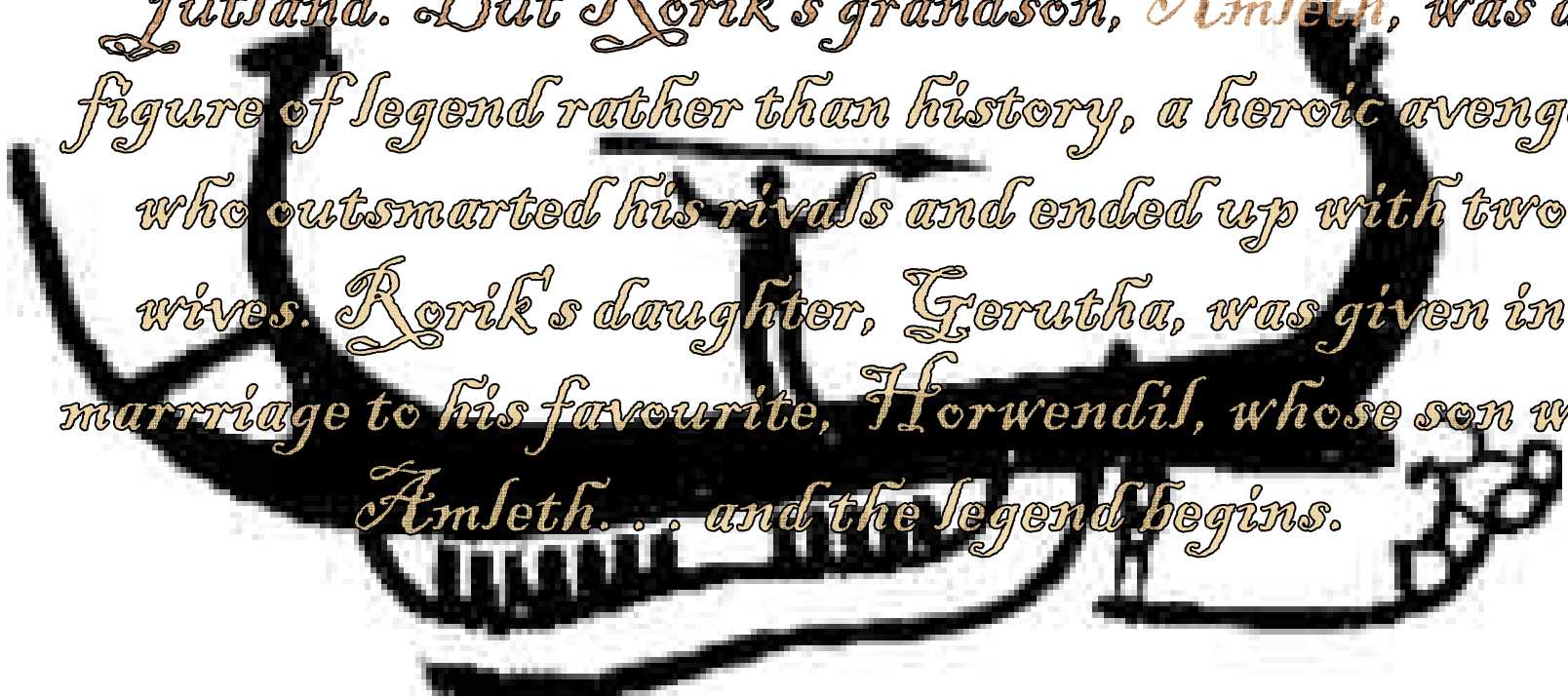


A detailed illustration of an ancient scroll. The scroll is unrolled, showing its aged, yellowish-brown parchment texture with some staining and frayed edges. It is tied with a red ribbon that forms a bow at the bottom. A large, circular red wax seal is visible on the right side of the scroll. The text is written in a stylized, cursive font with a red outline.

*The story
of Hamlet is
ancient...*

The story on which Hamlet is based was an ancient one; versions of it are found in Byzantine, Greek and Roman myth. The Danish story probably came to Shakespeare through an earlier play, now lost.

Rorik was real enough, a viking who was King of Jutland. But Rorik's grandson, Amleth, was a figure of legend rather than history, a heroic avenger who outsmarted his rivals and ended up with two wives. Rorik's daughter, Gerutha, was given in marriage to his favourite, Horwendil, whose son was Amleth... and the legend begins.



The saga of Feng and Amseth

The original story of Amseth is very similar to Shakespeare's play in broad outline: Feng murders his brother out of jealousy and marries Gerutha (Amseth's mother); Amseth pretends to be witless to save himself; his sanity is tested by the suspicious Feng; he is sent to England guarded by two of Feng's retainers, who carry a death letter; Amseth alters the letter to order the deaths of the retainers and his own marriage to the King's daughter; he returns to Jutland and, after a celebratory feast, burns the Great Hall full of drunken nobles and murders his uncle, avenging his father.



The Spanish Tragedy

Thomas Kyd

The source for Shakespeare's play was probably a Hamlet play by Thomas Kyd, now lost, which scholars refer to as the Ur-Hamlet. Thomas Kyd also wrote the first famous revenge tragedy, The Spanish Tragedy; It was first played around 1590...



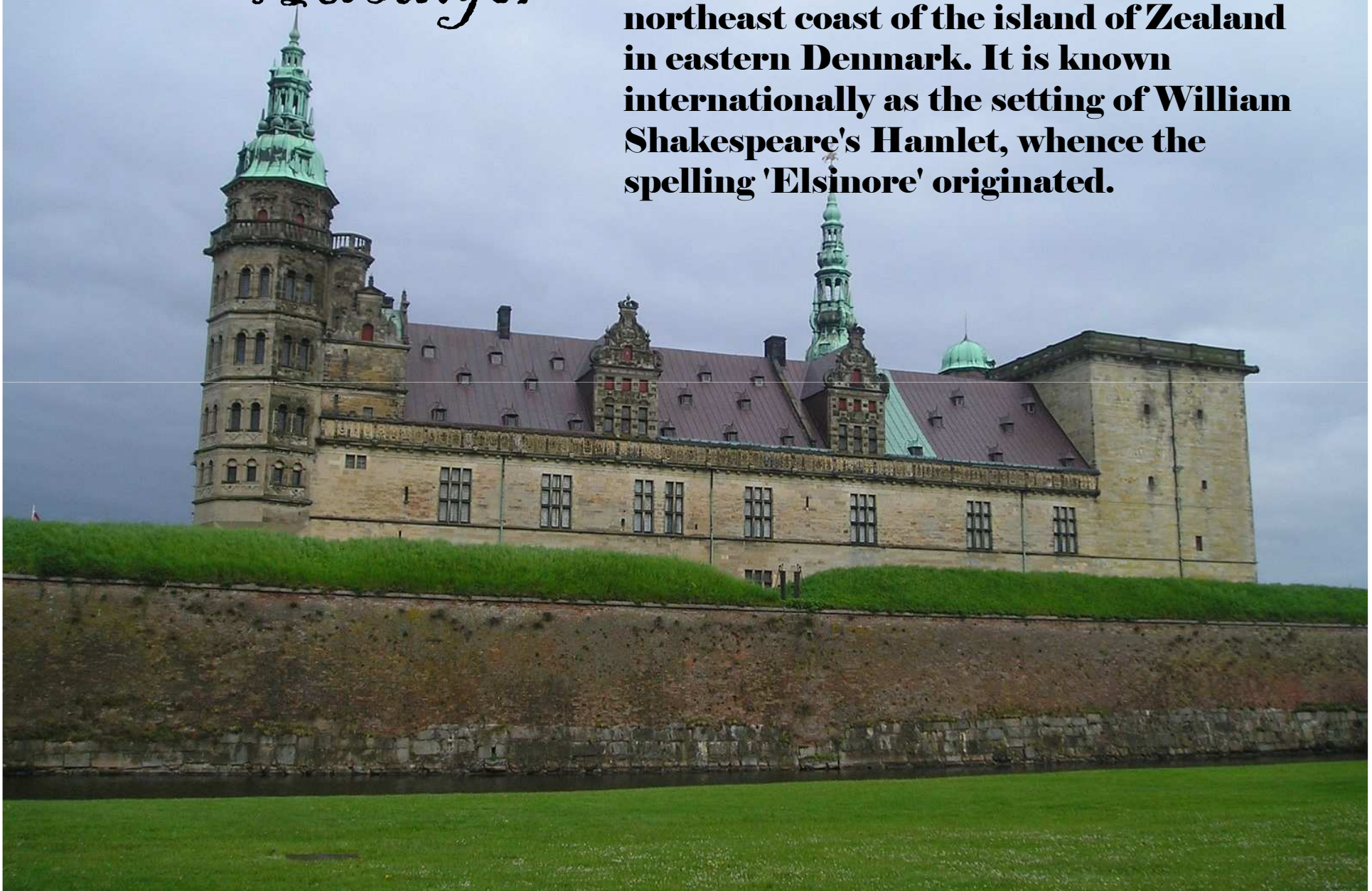
"Wissenschaft
Hochschule
O: Fachbereich"

... The Globe Theatre
was a theatre in London
associated with
William Shakespeare.
It was built in 1599 by
Shakespeare's playing
company, the Lord
Chamberlain's Men,
and was destroyed by
fire on 29 June 1613. A
second Globe Theatre
was rebuilt on the same
site by June 1614 and
closed in 1642.



Helsingør

Helsingør is known by the name Elsinore is a city in Helsingør municipality on the northeast coast of the island of Zealand in eastern Denmark. It is known internationally as the setting of William Shakespeare's Hamlet, whence the spelling 'Elsinore' originated.



The main theme of the play is



DEATH
TAKES ON
MANY
DIFFERENT
FORMS:



REVENGE

"Revenge is a kind of wild justice"

Francis Bacon



During his quest for revenge, Hamlet accidentally murders his lover's father, Polonius, sparking Polonius' son Laertes to seek vengeance against him. A circle of retribution with Laertes begins, as he teams-up with Claudius to avenge Polonius and Ophelia while Claudius is also anxious to be rid of the melancholy Prince. In essence, where do the killings end? If for every murder there must be a retaliatory killing, the vicious circle would never end. This is a notion that Shakespeare may have been commenting upon in the writing of *Hamlet*.

TEEN ANGST

“Teenage angst has
paid of well...

Now I’m bored and
old”

*Serve the Servants,
Nirvana*

NIRVANA
FINDING
NEMO



One of the reasons that Shakespeare remains so popular, even in today's modern world, is that it holds universal themes. Teen angst is as recognised now, if not more so, as it was in Elizabethan times.

The pondering of death usually comes during the teen years, as teens become less certain of their own mortality and that of the people that they love. Hamlet faces both of these when he loses his father. He realises that life does not last forever, prompting questions of his own death. As do most teens, Hamlet thinks about suicide, contemplating whether it could be justified as legitimate in such a miserable world. He is however, afraid of what lies beyond life, as are many who are in the same situation. A most famous soliloquy voices these thoughts:

Hamlet: ***“To be or not to be: that is the question.”***



LOVE CAN SO EASILY TURN TO HATE...

LOVE

For as long as human kind have existed so too have the troubles of love, for love can so easily turn to hate which can be just as passionate. Hamlet is seen to go through these same trials as his love for Ophelia is put to the test. Unfortunately their feelings for each other are dulled by Hamlet's disillusionment with women-kind, as a result of his mother's indiscretions. Ophelia is destroyed by her loss of Hamlet and essentially the future throne, driven by madness to suicide. Hamlet must now deal with another loss, that of his love. A classic story of unrequited love.

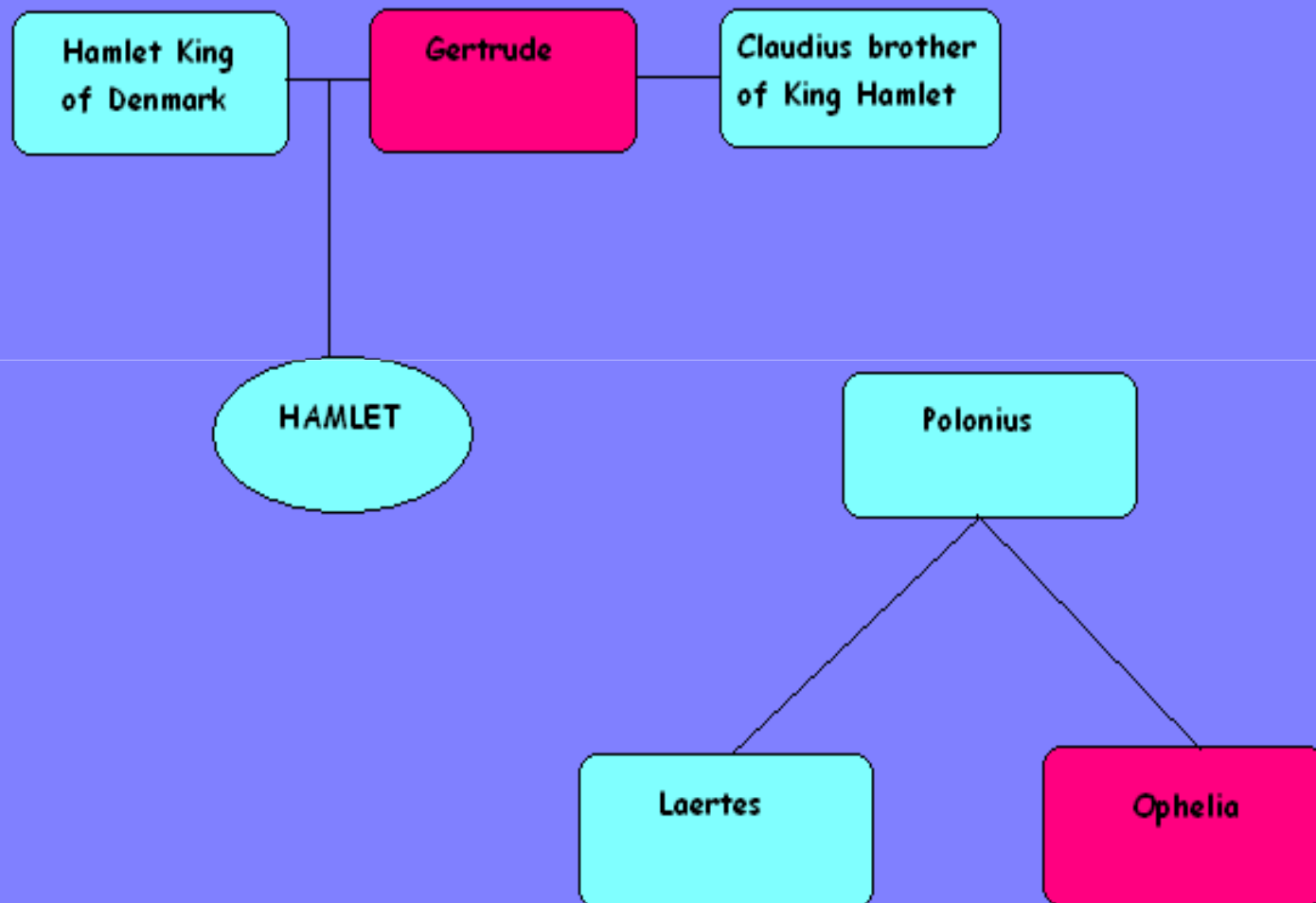


A black and white collage of many eyes, some looking directly at the viewer, others looking away, creating a sense of intense observation and psychological pressure. The eyes are of various shades and are densely packed together.

MADNESS

To many Elizabethans, madness was something to be laughed at, and the mentally disturbed were to be kept in their place by whipping. Hamlet and Ophelia, however, are members of the nobility, safe from such treatment. Ophelia finds that in madness she can think and say things that would be impossible in the sanity of a supposedly ordered society.

GENEALOGICAL TREES





HAMLET

Son of the late king Hamlet of Denmark and nephew to the present king. He changes from a disillusioned young man to one driven to avenge his father's death. He is a man of radical contradictions, he is reckless yet cautious, courteous yet uncivil, tender yet ferocious. He uses the fragile and innocent Ophelia as an outlet for his disgust towards the queen; even if he is full of faults like indecivness, hastiness, hate, brutality and obsession, he is a tragic hero.

KING CLAUDIUS

The present King of Denmark, Claudius, took queen Gertrude whom he loved as his queen and wife, much to the consternation of Hamlet who believed his mother has betrayed him and his father's memory by doing so.

King Claudius manipulated Laertes into killing Hamlet.





GERTRUDE

Mother to Hamlet, she is resented deeply by Hamlet for marrying King Claudius within two months of king Hamlet's death.

Clearly loving of her son, she realizes her wrong when Hamlet scolds her mercilessly. She agrees to no longer share King Claudius' bed and aids her son by hiding Hamlet's true mental state from her husband. She dies to a poisoned cup of wine meant for Hamlet.

POLONIUS

Lord Chamberlain, father of Laertes and Ophelia. He dutifully serves King Claudius. Worried that Hamlet's intentions for his daughter are dishonorable, he orders Ophelia to keep her distance. Polonius uses his daughter to spy Hamlet.

He is killed when he attempts to listen to a conversation between Hamlet and Gertrude. His death leads to Ophelia's madness.



OPHELIA

There is a willow grows aslant the
brook, That shows his hoar leaves
in the glassy stream: There
with fantastic garlands
did she come. Of
crow-flowers,
nettles,
daisies,
and

long purples. There on the pendant
boughs her coronet weeds
(Flamering to hang, an
anxious shiver broke: Then
down the weedy
trophies and herself

*The daughter of
Polonius, Ophelia is
loved by Hamlet. She
descends into
madness from the
grief of losing her
father. Her funeral is
the location of a fight
between Hamlet and
Laertes that centers
on which loved her
more.*



LAERTES

Polonius' son. His role in this play is minor until the death of his father. Loving of his sister Ophelia, he must watch his sister's cruel decay into madness helplessly following Polonius' death. He dies victim of a wound inflicted upon him by Hamlet with his own poison tipped sword.



The Globe

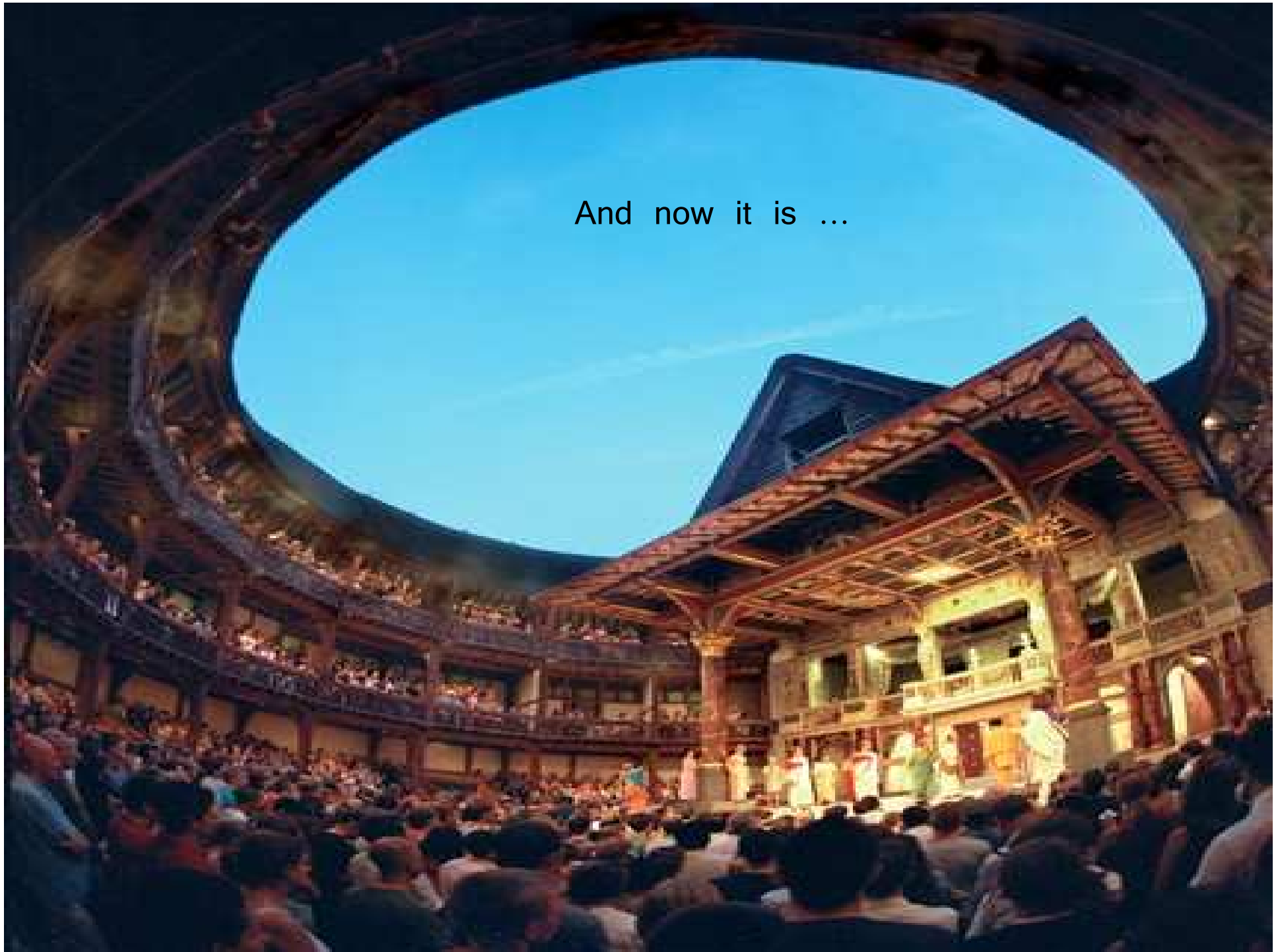
In the Elizabethan times many of Shakespeare's plays were set in the Globe theatre.

But in 1613 a cannon set fire to the thatched roof and destroyed the building.

Although it was rebuilt...



And now it is ...





*Costumes
of
seventeenth century*



One of the first
cinematographic
performances of
Shakespeare's
Hamlet was realized in
1948, acted by
Laurence Olivier.

Hamlet

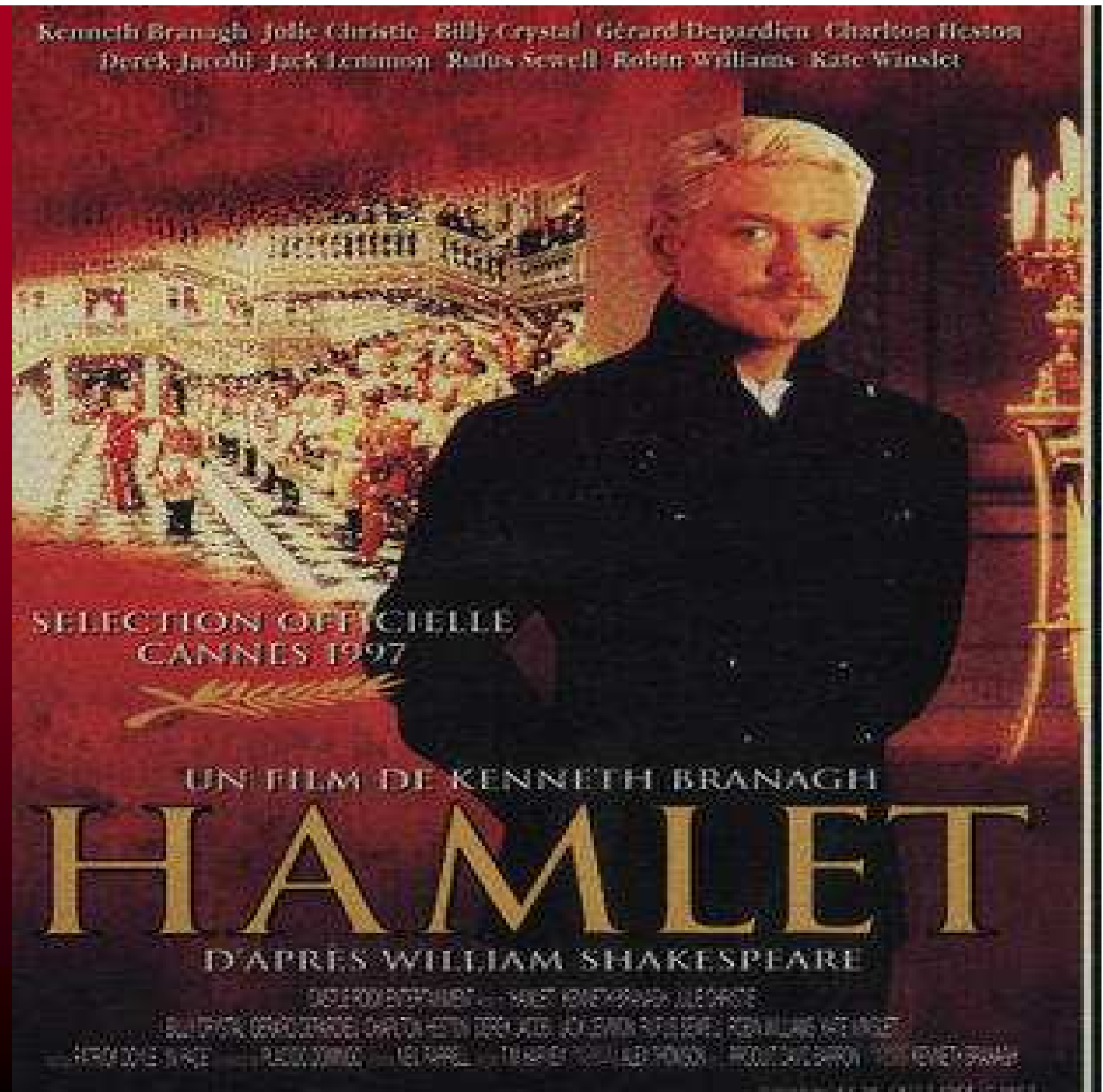
Though this be madness, yet there is method in't
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought
And enterprises of great pitch and moment
With this regard their currents turn awry,
And lose the name of action - Soft you now!
The fair Ophelia! Nymph, in thy orisons



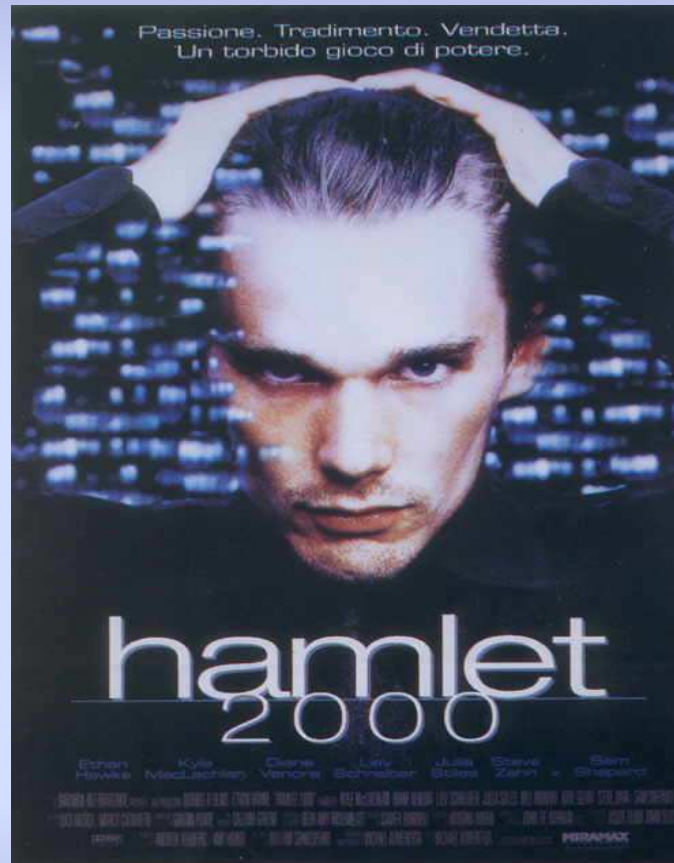


In 1991
Mel
Gibson
acted in a
version of
Hamlet,
faithful to
the
original
setting

*Kenneth
Branagh
directed
and
played
Hamlet in
1997,
setting it
in
nineteenth
century.*



Ethan Hawke played the role of Hamlet in this particular version of the homonym film that was set in New York nowadays.



HAMLET





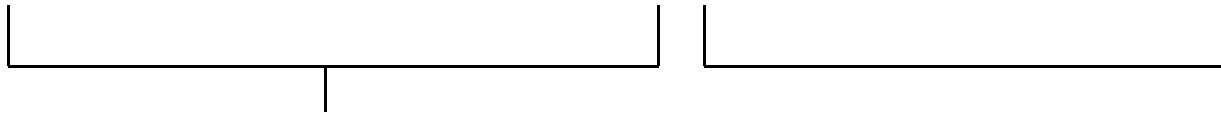
KING HAMLET



GERTRUDE



KING CLAUDIUS

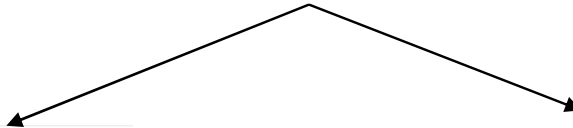


HAMLET

GENEALOGICAL TREE



POLONIUS



OPHELIA



LAERTES



BARNARDO



HORATIO



MARCELLUS

THE GHOST



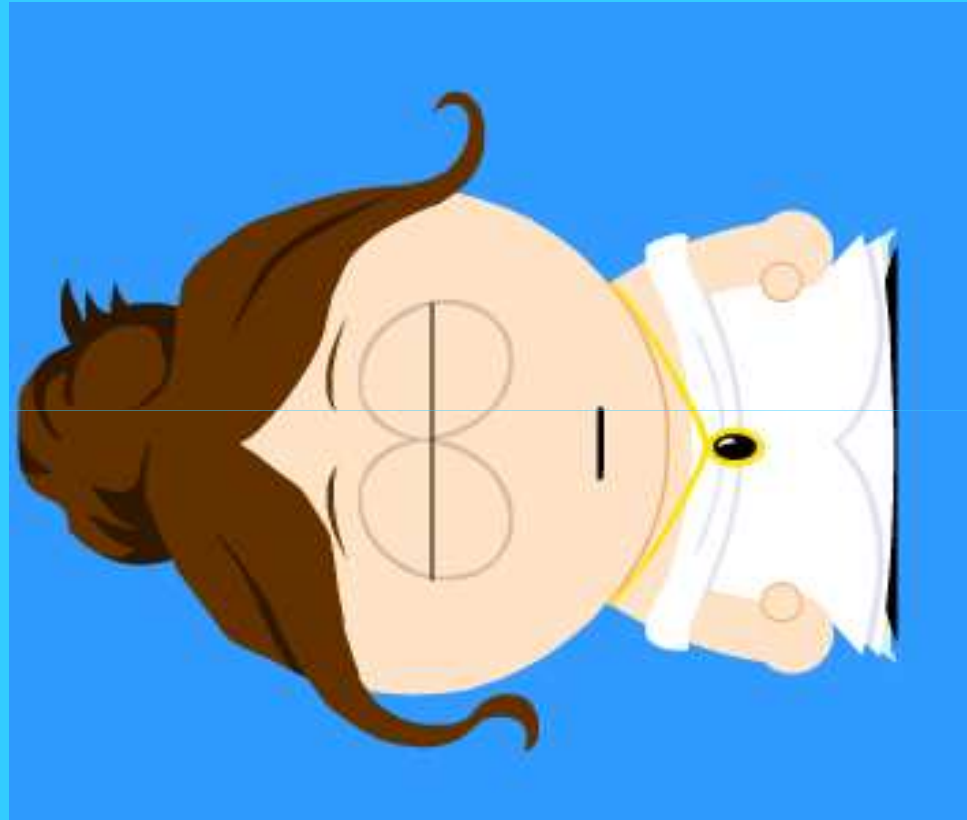
THE WEDDING



THE SOLILOQUY



OPHELIA'S DEATH



THE DUEL





DEATH



THE
END