

The basis of my mandala stems from the Hamlet character Claudius. Claudius can be a very controversial character because of his opposing external and internal personalities, represented by the sun and shadow images of my mandala.

Claudius's external personality can be symbolized by a variety of similar images. Like a snake, he is sly with his deadly actions, killing King Hamlet without a trace of evidence. Similar to poison ivy, Claudius can be deceiving, feigning his innocent role in the scandal of the play. Evil and opaque, Claudius is like the color black, dark and hiding behind a shield no one can seem to see through. He unintentionally places himself in a love triangle, marrying his own brother's wife out of selfish reasoning, bordering the actions of incest. Always second place, and never first, Claudius consistently tries to win the popularity of his people, but never seems to succeed. Claudius can also be represented by a carnelian stone; the gem was traditionally buried with those of nobility and wealth whenever they died. Greedy in his desires and merciless in achieving these desires, Claudius is a never-ceasing fire.

Claudius's internal personality reflects another aspect of him, also symbolized by a variety of related images. Without his claim to the crown, Claudius is actually a small mouse in reality, weak and defenseless. Often acting on impulse and following his desires, Claudius is naïve like a daisy. Claudius realizes his immoral actions in the end of the play, and prays for forgiveness, represented by the purity of the color white on my mandala. Claudius's role is represented by a square, balancing between the four tasks of keeping a close eye on Hamlet, keeping his wife happy, serving his duties as king, and pleasing his people. Despite his constant struggle for first place, in Claudius's mind he is already first place, winning the title of the crown and no longer in the shadow of his dead brother. Without the crown, Claudius is common and invaluable to the general public, represented by the gem, quartz, which can be found in mass quantities (very common). During Claudius's prayer for forgiveness, he attempts to calm himself, represented by the calming qualities of water.

Claudius's external personality reflects his devious side while his internal personality reveals his hidden soft side. Both the sun and the shadow images represent Claudius, but on different levels; the sun images represent the explicit personality of Claudius while the shadow images require a deeper look into his character.