S's workmanship.
by Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch
1912.

Ch VIII – X. Hamlet

(Hamlet) with Notes
The Penguin Shakespeare
Ed by G.B. Harrison.

Mansfield: William S.
& his Plays: Hamlet p. 157.

"Hamlet is the most baffling
of the great plays." p 158

"The action consists in the
baffling of action." 159.
Boring? "He is an image of the

A companion to Shakespeare Studies
Ed. Harley Granville Barker
1934. CUP.

Shakespearean criticism from Dryden to Bridges
by T S Eliot.

"For those who have experienced the full horror of life, tragedy is still inadequate. Sophocles felt more of it than he could express, when he wrote Oedipus; The King; Shakespeare, when he wrote Hamlet, and Shakespeare had the advantage of being able to employ his paradigms. 295

Johnson thought Shakespeare's ~~comedy~~ Tragedy often "written at last with little polish" / "with great appearance of (but 2 study) – i.e. labouured.
Coleridge: he "Philosophizes" S.

world has intellect is
made to feel it
a society governed by
the enemies of intellect,
by the sensual & the
brutal, by dead souls
& the philistines of the
bread and cheese. The
King is a drunken incestuous
murderer, who fears
intellect. The Queen is
a false woman who
cannot understand intellect.
Polonius is a counsellor
who suspects intellect.
Ophelia is a sick infant
intellect. Laertes is a boy
who destroys intellect. The
centurions are parasites
who flourish in the
decay of intellect.
Fortinbras, Capt Smith

marching to the drum to
win a dung hill, goes a
clown to Jolly. The only
friends of the true man
are Horatio, the school-
fellow, & the leader of
a cry of players.
The King:
"If it be so, he must die."
104.

"In the play, nothing is
simple & direct." 166.

"The baffling of Hale's purpose
may be a metaphor for life
like the "slack water
between tides." 166.

From:
Masefield: Harvard University
Library. 1911

(Often reprinted)

Mrs Jameson: H's Heroines
1901

Ophelia / character of Rosa
& Imagination

footnote p. 129.
In the original history of Amleth
he dane here is ~~a woman~~
a woman introduced as an
instrument to seduce Amleth
but not even the germ of
the character of Ophelia.
129.

What I need
Granville-Barker's
Companion
Dickens - Cuel: S's work.
manuscripts
J Marchfield: W.S.

W. Hazlitt: Elizabethan Literature and character of Shakespeare.

Lectures 1820

(Lectures on the Age of Elizabeth & character of Sh's Plays) ~~1817/8~~ 1820

Hamlet: "This play has a prophetic truth ..."

"It is we who are Hamlet."

74

a character marked "by refinement of thought & sentiment".

note of "where he has no time to reflect" .. Romeo (!) / Romeo & good students

" His control to B. is quite natural under the circumstances 79.:
no "regular controls".
Hs: might have been excused for not carrying the reg. controls —

" It would have taken him years to have come to a direct expl. on the point " (!!)

" There is no law that suffers so much from being transferred to the stage " (!)
84
H. himself is hardly capable of being [illegible]

In Grenville-Baker's
From Coleridge to the Present Day
by J. Isaacs (1934)

Summary of Russian have their
"Hamlet Period" — "a
mirror & symbol of the
national growing-pains."
300

Belinski + Pushkin
Herder + Goethe

R.C. Bradley's books — in
the "margin of Hell."
"magnificent, influential & dangerously
wide tracking-
studies written as I have,
on the margin of Hell." 302

Ernest Jones: Rebelais —
Amplex as an explanation of
Hamlet's mystery. (1910)
G.R. Biber, under the influence

of Schücking, discussed the "melancholy type" as it pervaded Elizabethan society for light on Hamlet. 303

Sir W. Raleigh "measure for measure" as S.'s nearest approach to the presentation of a moral problem."

Oskar Walzel: Shs dramatische Bankrott. 1916 (St. Jahrbuch)

5. IV Laertes asks for revenge on all foes

"No trope, no sword, no hatchment o'er the bone,
No noble rite, nor formal ostentation –
Cry to be heard, as 'twere from heaven to earth
That I shall call'd quietus"

6. IV. Hamlet's letter to Horatio: well covered, no mention of compromising facts –

Laertes & the King: problem
(a) ~~the tooth~~ appearance of real passion & hatred towards

Laertes & Ophelia: ~~cured~~ ~~hatred~~ ~~then~~ their wits and ... duels' personal revenge ... it cried not more than ... K: "... pursued my life"

7. IV "Fair Treasure": (a) Queen's passion for H, the loose lax regard words,
(b) the great love the general gender bears him
boomerang

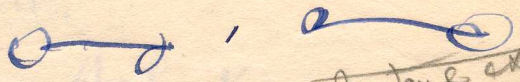
Hamlet's letter to the King very clever.

2. V

A: the bravery of his grief.
put me into towering passion

"... the madness in' ab

H to Horatio:
... in the harsh world
draw thy breath in pain
Horatio: let me speak
to the yet unknowing world...



Companion: p.67.
Granville-Barker:

The true explanation lies in the plot: the danger of discovery & the ordeal of facing them!!

"... How fitly comes — given
that subject & the hero —
to have made Hamlet a
hoper, & Lear a
also. There was no risks
There."

(half a dozen devices = fresh character appearing, short scenes, swift flying verse, change between verse & prose!!)

T. IV

The King's solitude, unknown:
He cannot bear the
talk about Hamlet!

Plan of murdering Hamlet
without ever his
mother should know of it

King: "How much I had
to do to calm
my rage ..." to the Queen
[End]
New intrigue started:
the Queen to be used
misled.

Act V

"...the hand of little
employment hath the
daintier sense."

The Death theme

{ Giant self
Hamlet
Hot-headed flash
knock out of their

Interrupted Notes

grave yard scene's
theme

1/v.

"seems"
appearance

Jania & purpose

---

2 | V Hyperthanshd have her
my H's wife
Hamlet's word: awakened
"What wreck thou grief
remembering that he is"
similar: in the Ophelia scene
"He he and thou knowest"
Yet have I in me something dangerous

Companion SS
Granville-Barker

p 69
Re illusion only in the actor.

"... an other world of drama.
the first entrance of in full"
Confidence, with Hamlet

Bradley. p 145

V. Ch. And endeavoring B.
misunderstood by
"... a slight lining of the
dark cloud of melancholy"
— Yes. But why? Because
Hamlet is now "empire
vide".
... "he is in the hands of
Providence
the "presentiment"
And thus he has a
presentiment of evil
about the fencing — makes
therefore to yield to it:"
— No.. He accepts it precisely
~~it because~~ as an account
of his presentiment ...
"... a kind of
... "religious resignation"
— but he mistakes it for
fatalism! "sad or
indifferent self-abandonment"
... "to have his duty to some thing
than his own." x)

x) Yes. But it is his conscious humanity
Providence which "the path to
real action"

pl 45

"The interim is mine" ???

"Hi J Hamlet the Dane"

Or has Hamlet now given up the will to act and is therefore ripe for death (but then, he knows, he will 'kill the King')

146 "... and not the one hatchel within" says Bradley (How near again he has to the true solution!)

"And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest."

Why the reference to ending of the life? Br's answer: the life has been too unhappy...

My answer: To assure H's disturbing doubts about after-life.

p 148 149

Melancholy: repetition
Drama: Paralysis
called: a habit. Reds
culmy. It is a symptom
of this state (condition)

Why suitable?

"Methought she, ~~when she~~ was
ten times fair and
wise: it is ~~not~~ strange
her ...

into my grave ...

— . —

Ophelia

Always at one time sweet
and sadness in madness
Ophelia

— —

Re doubt H's friendship
115 — 7 M. Role in O's
unhappiness!!

close

Ophelia is upset
W Edgar (the
"sympathetic" member
the ancillary family)

Hamlet:

Under the influence of the shock of his Mother's crime he cannot act "for I must hold my tongue" (There is in fact, nothing to do about it. His ~~cause~~, the real cause of his melancholy, is not such that action could relieve it; that is why it leads to melancholy. Yet it is this state of mind which forces him away from life and thus decides him ~~from~~ in taking action on his uncle's crime. (The letter and calling for a chair)

Antonio fortunate as he is in Antonio the Merchant of Venice: "Poor melancholy" "sadness... that will never do anything to suicide..."

The external causes
reasons of the delay
purely imaginary. The
King's official witness
for his father's ghost's
appearance. Why did
he make them swear
as he did if he thought
that their witness would
not be fully convincing?
Nobody ever expects a King's
mere existence to be enough
— and why should they?

Marcellus & Bernardo
are regular army officers
— Horatio, a man of
unimpeachable character.
The ghost appeared 3 times
— the affair went in official
course. Cf. Hamlet's testament
and
~~b~~ parting words to Horatio
about his Report to
~~offi~~ posterity,
p 135: Nobody suspects
murder. Not
the King, even the Queen

of the sentimental
view of Hamlet (Schelling
~~Coleridge~~ view)
Goethe: an heroic theory

or the Schlegel-Coleridge
view: the tragedy of reflection

He plainly weak with
"a man
observed that at any time
and in any circumstances
not be unfitted to the
task assigned to Hamlet.
But then, I must mean that
it degrades H. and transforms
the fact play. For H., acutely
well the situation will
~~pe~~ let, was not naturally
irresolute and a man,
but rather drawn to
action, a man who also any
other time & in any other
circumstances, than those
presented would have been
perfectly equal to his task;
but, in fact the very crucible
of his fate that the crisis of
his life came on him at the
moment when he cannot
meet it ...." p. 107.

"He is a totally different thing from the madness which he feigns" 124
(of the insanity which threatens him...) p 81

On p 124 Bradley should answer the problem:
his melancholy (not an insane) accounts for the madness for the immediate cause of that is simply that his intellectual judging is one of despair of life and everything in it himself included — "... Hamlet, for death "such a state of feeling is inevitably adverse to any kind of decided action..."

(a) It accounts for his sudden spells of activity (really lucidum intervallum)

(b) Hence vacillation, lack of action "There were not the action on which his morbid self-pitying had centred..."

"The interim is mine."

Hamlet is fighting for
his life by trying
to delay the decision.

Why does H. ~~[illegible]~~ drop his "antic
disposition" in the act when
"Preposterous is a lie" pending greater?
If he has reached the
stage of indifference
to his own death
the killing of the king
is only a ~~a [illegible]~~ way
~~[illegible]~~ "Out".

premature
gain-giving
Not in order to
on account of the
"premature" that he
goes in for it
He has overcome his
melancholy the [illegible] clang about him & feel

A VII Ad

What has happened to
H's author of?

She has le dropped his
"author disposition".
This explains, perhaps,
H's curious change
of tone (surprising
to Bradley) towards
Laertes.

"The Intermediate is mine,
H is what are!
"Reading is all."
~~Reference is all~~
The gain-giving pre-
monition, but as
a spite of it, H. goes
ahead with the pencing.

a man's life is "one"
— it is his own life
he refuses to.

— — —

If all H's speeches were
about suicide — then
clearly all would be.
(i.e. not only the
suicide but also the
murder speeches).
Naturally H's greatest
"machine" speech is
about suicide!

H's theme (H's subject)
(a) custom and habit
deaden sleaden

(b) Seems, appearance
conventions — sound and are —
death in life

→ custom shall make for
least obliv[illegible]
but convention (externals) do
not at all!!

Hamlet problems

① What is the theme of 'Hamlet'?

~~Genius~~

'Saint' –
hero –
genius of what: thought, emotion, ~~feeling~~, action or inaction?

cannot seem { enough it
more comprehensible

or life ~~death~~

② How is a good play on such a subject possible?

I. Analysis of the theme "life."

It is a negative analysis

(a) ~~Contact~~ { career : kingship
love : marriage

He resents the trivial implications of Polonius's ~~author~~ psychology. That suggests his drawing her into the game – ~~not~~ using her as an instrument. Rosi is his tiger ~~came~~ mistake. He makes her responsible for his own fault. He knows here are liniers – to be abused. Other poor fools, and problems provoke opposite ..

(α) dumb scene
(β) ~~[illegible]~~ mime sc.
(γ) play sc.

In the play scene this is even enhanced and accounts for her madness.

(a) Her negativism is at the root of it.
— confusion (3) level (α) poem (β) sung: addr. to listeners
(b) he turns away from the path of life — suggestive Euphuistic (γ) grave scene (comic)

This is the key to the greater play:
He doesn't want to be king, & live.
He is melancholy, not as a ~~mood~~ mood or a trait of character, but as an attitude to fate. He is turned towards death.

II How is a good play on the love of death possible?

Let him kill himself. OK.
The technique of the play is that of melancholia:
~~(a)~~ (a) mechanical repetitions
(b) seemingly involuntary confessions
(c) soaring moods

between 5th & 6th scene

Sc V. Hamlet had 2 speeches in the first scene

Act II | Ophelia: RL.
Friends scene.
Pol. warns him against Ophelia
Reynaldo scene

Polonius asking that Hamlet is mad: Hamlet pulls his leg.
Polonius exits.
I'll love my daughter tonight
making him say they
Hamlet
but wherefore I know not

Act III/1 Nunnery!

"Jeans, maiden"

Act I/I A curtain merchant in the crowd

Costume 1214 Act III Sc IV. Queen's Closet
Mad Mother Hamlet

I Act

Hamlet's first words and his first <u>short speech</u>, in the Room of State scene.
"Seems, madam! nay, it is —

Hamlet's first monologue
"O, that this too too solid flesh

Hamlet's first mention of his father to Horatio
Horatio: My lord, I came to see your father's funeral —
— I: I pray you, do not mock me, fellow student

Hamlet: Indeed, indeed sir, but the troubles me

Bradley

(a) on the "To be or not to be" monologue

"His reflections have no reference to this particular moment..."

(b) On Hamlet's 'longing for death' — his will to commit suicide.

p. 132 "What is he thinking of?" .... totally. He's meditating suicide; a subject quite irrelevant to the issue, which it is not feible in the mind to end its misery — Precisely bad to this first soliloquy, 2 months ago, before ever he heard of his father's murder. His reflections have no reference to this particular moment..." !

(c) a courtesy — not the act of hateful action. p. 146

Bradley missed the one answer by a hair's breadth...

"...not the action in which his world centred" p. 124 → self-feeling had centred

(d) Polonius's end — the deliberate central blow "sparing of his enemy". (very good. Bradley)

p. 137

(e) Antonio's melancholy. (Merch. of V.)

p. 110 footnote

(Pol: True. But what is the source of this feeling?)

(f) V. Stot: Consciousness of power no weariness of life any more

Bradley did not see the meaning of "endurance".

but we feel: it is too late (?)

he sees providence in everything

Quiller-Couch: Shakespeare's workmanship
1918

Hamlet: Same
His delays: Human. In love with his father
Approves of Hazlitt: "It is we who are H."
Yes, but this is exactly the problem:
Why did we believe in this other
way?
Victor Hugo: "He is the sad man we
all are in certain situations.
Hamlet, if you will, H. expressing
a permanent condition of
man". prob

1603

Dover-Wilson: What happens in Hamlet?
1935

H. & Ophelia. (... the greatest of all the perplexities in the play)
It is put pale out of love in his Love
e.g. bedroom scene:
" .... take of Cleave
from the fair forehead of innocent love
that sets a blister there".

" .... loose my daughter to him"
(farm scale - expression ...)
literally brutal
fishmonger: procurer
carrion : "flesh"
" Hamlet must have overheard what Polonius said to the King" 106 (??)
Hamlet actually warns them off the Ophelia plan - in vain.
Her love to O. is "haunted" in the same way as his attitude to the ~~sw~~ crown.
root of her perplexity: behind the "repetition" of a moment past

Bradley: Shakespearean Tragedy (155/6) was
unthinkable if the sight interpolation
of the dumb scene. (While DW's
theory of H's overhearing breaks the
sequence of the H. – O. – Pol. – Q. – King
Cl. – Pol. – Hogh. – H. action.

"out of the question" – that the dumb scene is
acted by H. (and what about the
Play within the Play)?
the dumb scene = an aesthetic pendant
of H! "poem": Doubt thou the stars
are fire ...

play acting? ... "absurd" p 112

Bradley is again right in saying that Claudius
forces H to stay at Court, because he
has no suspicions — at first.

"Denmark – a prison" – A translation
provocation of R. & G.

3

155/6

Lawful opinion: It has been sent for:
(this suspicion has been aroused before)

"H. walks into the trap in complete unconsciousness." 127

Re Hamlet's: "To be or not to be —
("Exit to fast monologue!") Oh no.

No — unmediated DW — is the heart of
the play "H.'s mystery."

Rela 128 "interrupted an exciting dramatic
intrigue with a passage like this:"
"nymph" "orisons" — affectation

return of the trinkets
Of course O. acts under her father's
orders (DW doubts this)

"Nunnery" — ~~home~~ house of ill fame
known as Jane

kills Polonius: Crowning treachery discovered
NO: kills him because he is fatally wounded! 272

4)

Hamlet's "purification" = of Macbeth etc. Prime difficulty: What makes H. "abgehalten"? Re Love of Ophelia — suffering. Infinite suffering.
"If it be now, it's not to come"
Rel. Laertes, a very noble youth

"... most generous and free from all contriving" — Re King confident prophecy to Laertes. How can it be explained? How that so little time is left?
No Hamlet is not naïve
— he is generous "Großzügig".

The tournament and "Wager" prove H. a marvellous fencer!

Zpt Ab
No: H. discards his "madness" — for it is purposeless now!

(1) Why does not H. kill the king

(a) External motives & occasion; reason role

(b) he is soft: not a man of action

(c) he is philosophic in temperament

(d) his ~~moral and~~ ethical ~~high minded~~

(e) melancholy profound # in allegorical explanation: delay, but does not explain his extreme pusillanimous behaviour

he does not ponder on any abstraction.

~~Ethical~~ If melancholy causes a wishing to die, then lie & does not explain his actuations

(b) not explain our sympathy

(c) not explain how Shd make a play of it.

(2)

I What does Hly's melancholy mean

(a) cause : His mother's shame

(b) result : he has turned away from life
his feeling life is poisoned
he is paralysed in the enjoyments he cannot allowed to live

(c) the tragic conflict
he must act ; therefore live
this means — behind a death sentence

(d): the play ~~the~~ ! It's just like life,

II Our sympathy & neighbourly
(a) he does not understand himself
— above ourselves
doubt

(b) has been difficulty in the same as ours

(Cambridge)

(3)

W. Suicide made work
here Napoly
— by reversing the dramatic
~~order~~ arrangements
To kill the king is to live
not to kill him is to die

In delaying — Hamlet hopes
(the deception)
for the life
of Rosencrantz
Guildenstern
and
Ophelia

I am dead

① Characters: he has turned away from life

(a) ~~too~~ ~~all~~ too sullied flesh w'd melt – self slaughter

(b) I do not set my life at a pin's fee.
~~my life is not a pin's fee~~

melancholy

(c) ~~the~~ a consummation devoutly to be wished

(d) Readiness is all

(e) "Absent thee from felicity awhile and in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain, (when already dead)

(that lets me tell my story:)

a man of action

(a) the ~~ghost~~ wedding scene: a by Leaven I'll make a ghost of him ~~threatens his priority~~

(b) the pt ~~murder~~ killing of Polonius

(c) the plot against R + G.

(How now? a rat? ~~a rat! A dead~~ dead for a ducat, dead. ~~ducat~~)

d) the grave scene

moral sensibility of ~~moral sensibility~~ ~~romantic personality~~

(e) Fortinbras and Laertes (in revolt against ~~debasing~~ ~~low~~ ~~customs~~ and ~~debasing habits~~ everything that "seems"

the ~~degrading~~ effect of conventions habits ~~customs~~ → (a) external conventions: "seems"

→ (b) habit: bestial oblivion "common"

temporal ~~environment~~ nature ~~environment~~ instability → (c) ~~general~~ cynical suspicions: Polonius

intellectual genius:

(a) he knows ~~can~~ by intuition what he is not told

his father's death
Claudio's secret
Polonius's ~~suspicions~~ calumnies
the King's plans
~~the~~ Ophelia's mission
R + G.'s ~~mission~~, pt role
~~intrigues~~, etc.

this does not help him nor decision hinder him

(b) he directs the whole play: makes the others act according to his will

(c) dominates every situation,

Hamlet's Secret.

INTRODUCTION.

Introduction.

Why does Hamlet delay his revenge? Why does he not kill the King?
Bradley has shown how unsatisfactory the usual answers are.

External explanations: H. has no chance to do it; he cannot prove his change; he cannot do it with safety to himself.

(a) "Sith I have cause and will and strength and means to do it.." IV. iv. 45.

Bradley:
(b) "When he spares the King, he speaks of killing him when he is drunk asleep, when he is in his rage, when he is awake in bed, when he is gaming, as if there were in none of these cases the least obstacle."

(c) Hamlet never mentions any other form of revenge "Now, am I not justified in using this arm?" — Either his sword or his arm.

(d) Never any mention of the intention of a public arraignment.

(e) No mention of any external difficulty whatsoever. [".. a man's life is no more than to say 'One'."]

Coleridge: "Cannon's "Shelley impelled by more accident to effect his object." S.A.C.: Hamlet in "Sh's swoon and delay" p 202

Internal explanations:

I. Moral scruples concerning murder.
"..if he kills him now, he will send him to Heaven, whereas he desires to send him to Hell". prophetic, humanitarian scruples

II. Sentimental view
"without the strength of nerve which forms a hero".. (Goethe)

Bradley gives a terrible answer.
"This shrinking flowerlike youth.. rages through the major part of the play, murdering and destroying human lives, ruthless, fierce, a terror to the court.
A. the ghost scene (following the ghost threatening horrid
B. killing Polonius

p. 102

p. 102.
"But consider the text.."
".. with one sweep of his arm."

III. The theory of reflectiveness.
Schelling- Coleridge.

(a) "a craven scruple of thinking too precisely onthe event"..

thinking instead of acting;
a philosophers analytic mind;

(b) ".. thus conscience does make cowards of us all, And thus the native hue of resolution Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought ,And enterprises of great pith and moment With this regard their currents turn awry And lose the name of action.

Counter!

Br. points out that it is not even certain whether Hamlet has just returned from Wittenberg.

(The contemporary type of hero à la Essex would not have been the worse soldier for his philosophy.)

(a) Fortinbras: "Let four captains , bear Hamlet like a soldier , to the stage; For he was likely, had he been put on, To have proved most royally. And for his passage, the soldiers music and the rites of war , speak loudly for him"...

(b) Ophelia: "Oh what a noble mind is here o'erthrown ! The courtiers, soldier's , scholar's eye, tongue, sowrd;.."

(c) He himself tells Horatio that he has been at his favourite practice of fencing recently; any keeping fit. he is infact as good as Laertes, who obviously is a first class fencer...
(The fencing scene more important to an Elisabethan audience than to us and Hamlet wins the wager..)

my point:

But the dramatic objection should be decisive: This is just one of the reasons given by Hamlet himself ; it is on the same footing as his abuse of himself as a prating coward, a bastard for his bestial oblivion... It cannot be true. It must be untrue, for H. does not mean what...

(d)

Br: H's reflectiveness is one of the indirect causes of his irresolution; (not the only one); &more of a symptom than a cause..

Q - not worried be Crusader for his religion.
~~for a crusader worried not for his religion.~~

(Hamlet's secret).

Part I: Bradley's Theory & my criticism of it.

Bradley's own explanation : Hamlet 's irresolution is the result of a 'profound melancholy which has been caused by his mothers shameless prostitution; her revolting shallowness of feeling ; her dexterity in speeding to incestuous sheets..." "rank and gross" speeding post-haste to its horrible delight.. Hamlet wishes to die. (Sensuality) Quotations "the bed that this..."

Background of his present melancholy

A. a somewhat unstable temperament ("melancholy")

B. a high degree of moral sensibility

hatred of externality, of superficiality

C. intellectual genius..

" his highest endowments now become his enemies ".. pp. 119 and 120.

p. 107 at any other time H. would have been equal to the task..."

What does this explanation account for?

Br.'s claims.

"witchcraft" "kind of paralysis"

a. for inaction " he is averse to any kind of decided action"...

" it does not matter" "it is not worth while".. (a favorite phrase)

"...healthy impulses"..

b for the state of his energy ..."those quick decided actions of his being the outcome of a nature normally far from passive , now suddenly stimulated , and producing healthy impulses, which work themselves out before they have time to subside..." p.123

c callousness and insensibility

d his apathy or lethargy (beastly oblivion)

e his own inability to understand his delay.. (unable to understand in his lucida intervalla "the paralysing pressure which it (the melancholy) exerts at other times).

specially accounted for

Four main criticisms of Bradely. It does not account for four points:

a. Hamlets extreme proneness to action; except

b. only one action

c. The keen natural sympathy we feel for him;

d. The dramatic interest of the Play.

The question reamins unsolved: Why does Hamlet not kill the King? Or rather why does he kill the King only when the Play is practically over and he himself as soon as " dead".?

Hamlets "profound melancholy" leaves but little unaccounted for of appear to be the most patent contradictions in his character. Yet the crux of the matter remains:- Why does Hamlet delay killing the King while he stabs Polonius; resolves to foil R. & G. and gives deadlyef effect to his will ; is foremost inthe scuffle with the pirates who make him prisoner; beats Laertes , amasterof fencin at hisown craft; and finally runs the King through and forces poison down the dying mans throat . Voltarie dubbd this story scene asworthy of a buthers boy s pen -.

It is not satsifa tory to argue that at these latter moments the and the pleasure and enjoyment oflife has come back to him. For why does this so frequently as to make Hamlet a man of almost terrible ruthlessnes in action, completely disable him from doing through five long ac acts the one deed which he has swornan oath to the spirit of his dead father to do? He has laready almost depopulated the court by t this time having caused the deaths of at least four persons in the King's entourage andstill he seems to have come no nearer the perfromance of hisone supreme duty. Why does the never lift when he happens to have anoccasionof killing the King? Is this mere accident? This would be a grevious fault; have its chief interest in a accident. However , the audience feels that this isnot so. That there is some hidden reason for this hesitation to do the one required deed, a reason Hamlet himself vain ly seeks for and which will be perhaps only through his death.

(B) But there is also another, evenmore fatal weakness to the explanation, the at will. Hamlets actionand inactions are not unaccountable freaks of unsat able ; Hamlet , in fact, does often one thin instead of another. He kills Polonius when he mistakes him for the King . He kills theking, when he himself is dead. but pretends to make a thrust at a " rat". Thus Hamlet does by mistake ,what he should not, while assuming that it is what he should do, pretending at the same time that he ismerely killing a rat behind the arras. According the veil of melan choly theory this would implies that he is melancholy enough to actinone way and the opposite ofmela ncholy enough to act gleefully inthe other way. That which needs explnatation reamins une: expalined viz. why there is this difference between the two kin kinds of action - those (and they are common) which Hamlet finds no difficulty whatsoever indoing, and that one which he isunable t to do,excpet by pretending notdo it , or when the show is alrady pre practically over and he himself is safely dead?

(D) Moreover, if Hamlet's melancholy meant his wishtodie- why doeshe notkill himself? Surely nobody could prevent him fromdoing so. The apparent reasons for not gommitting suicide- religious compunctio tions- are obviously not the real ones. The monologue "to be or not to be" actually gives Hamlets reasons why he findshimself not wishing to die, intolerable thoughlife to him.

(C) Lastly, if to die were really hisone, true wish , Hamlet would not fail to lose our sympathy.

The answer is, he does not want to ~~kill himself~~ .But what does then his melancholy amount to? It amounts to this: Hamlet does not wish to live. In dramatic terms thismeans that the rfuses to decide to live.

What is life, ~~in a drama? What is it~~ in terms of action? It is simply to do the things of life , i.e. of our normal duties. Hamlet has turned against the convnetionalities of human existence , they seem external and shallow to him andlife unreal for consting in them. He knows in his bones that if he is ever comelled to decide for life, he would have to chose death. ~~mustdie~~. This is what we call Hamlet's Secret.

That is why Hamlet takes the ghosts information as a death sentence . Why he tries frantically to postpone the decision. Why his first thought is secrecy. Killing the king stands in H's mind for deciding to live

That ~~also~~ is why he can do almost anything else ; why he can even try to do the thing , if only it does" not count"; andwhy he actually does the deed, whenit doesnot count any more...

+ + +

Part II : HAMLET 'S MELANCHOLY.

Hamlet has turned away fromlife. He is facing the wrong way . The veryfeel of life is poisoned by a haunting notion ofunreality , of shallowness, conventionality , externalness , unsubstantiality of existence.

Hamlet cannot imagine himself as committing himself to the business of life ~~as accepting the implications of~~ the wisdom , the rationality , the pretences of life Becoming a King, marrying Ophelia, proceeding tothe jobof living - that he cannot do, that he will not do. As long as he need not decide ~~to do so~~, ghe will go on living; but he knwos instinctively that until ~~on the day when~~ something pushed him into action as would force him to takeonthe normal tasks of life such he would be done for.

This isthe key to the most puzzling & striking ~~striking~~ features of the play:

~~a. That Hamlet knows that his fateis sealed.~~

a. 'My fate cries out...' Premonition;

b. 'The time isout ofjoint,
Oh cursed spite that I was bornto set it right.' Despair!

c. Why Hamlet behaves ever as if he had heard hisdeathsentence..
The terrific effect of the scene on him.. Emotional Shock

d. The strictness of the secrecy. The oaths. The nonimparting of the secret to anybody except Horatio.

e. His delay is simply hesitation in facing ~~to face~~ his own death..

f. His promptness to act, when to act ~~acting would means~~ signifies nothing..
If he could pretend that it wasonly an accident..
Or if the act comes too late to affect his fate..

g. "The interim is mine.."
"A man's life is Only to say " One"

h. "readiness is all" .. the premonition ..
"gain-giving" - the final catharsis . Hamlet 's secret solved.

Part III: THE ART IN THE DRAMA.

A good play cannot have suicide for its subject. (only for an element in it). For no real conflict is possible on this ~~line~~ level.
On the other hand no greater theme is ~~possible~~ conceivable. Goethe's "Faust" Shakespere's Hamlet- the two most discussed characters in literature.

Hamlet is fighting for his life, in delaying to kill the King
The play deals with life in terms of death. viz the King's death. With passivity in terms of activity.

a. To be or not to be.
" sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought
" the native hue of resolution i.e. the most natural act..."

The parallelism of the first lines"...

Bradley actually thought that it was an another proof of Hamlet's lack of purpose; of his bestial oblivion;
He asserted that this monologue did not refer to the central theme at all....(How much better informed the general public was which always attributed special importance to this monologue!)
This shows that the dramatic function is the essential thing, not the contents of a passage...)

Edw Dowden (a) "perhaps" by his own death (b) G. McDonald (c) "Celia": "God in Shak." "construes the opening sentences thus.."

b. The dramatic contrast of H.'s actions and inaction
e.g. the prayer scene and the closet scene.
the Osric scene and the massacre.
positive & negat. climaxes

c. The Polonius family presenting the converse of Hamlet's outlook.
The perfection of and the extreme of mediocrity; they excel in conventionality ;

d. Our sympathy with the hero is abundantly sustained by his virile acts, while his failure to kill the king does not detract from our sympathy on account of our solidarity with Hamlet's sensitive and human personality struggling ~~to avert~~ avoid in vain to destruction.

3/

The artistic Clue to ~~Secret of~~ the Play

The ethic problem: Suicide: Faust, Hamlet } 2 most discussed ~~pts~~ characters & plays

Action Testament is identical

suicide!

killing the king is passivity

going on living — nothing simple about that

The crux be Hel & Nepenthe:

Answer:

(a) "readiness is all"

(b) no man knows what he leaves (many variants)

A — ~~Hamlet~~ Hamlet's Madness

(1) not mad.

(2) anti disposition on accordg to their character

3 theories (a) frustrated love (Marie)

(b) too hasty marriage (Queen)

(c) preparing revenge (King) — only he is right

Hamlet's puppet play: II & III act.

from Dumbshow to the end of the play in the play.

Playing as R. ~~of~~ wished to play him

(B) Polonius Family (incl. Ophelia)

~~Lacks~~ Probing H. } Laertes role;

Lax Grain on Ophelia! } convention habit: two meanings of custom

hateful detraction from moral level

and genuine feeling

"~~Seems~~" Madam!