How down Shurk of all Subjects the free Marshick in the most

The surmise is correct. I was serving as an officer in the Austro-Hungarian Army, a little short of thirty years ago, The Russian winter and the blackish-yellow steppe made metaick at heart. In my desolation I had for companion a volume of Shakespears's plays. One of them I found myself reading and re-reading: The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Danemark. Altogether I must have gobe through it some thirty times. My personal life had taken a turn towards darkness. Baylight seemed bounded in a narrowing minute disc which was growing dimmer and dimmer. The cold was so intense that when my horse stumbled and fell, I was too apathetic to get out of the saddle. Emmanmented Fortunately - though I myself might not (a: the time have thought so whe gaunt stiff creature, a Cossack mare we had picked up, jerked -1 herself an again, and I was saved from being crushed under-her, had she rolled over. .. At that period of my existence my soul was numbed and fell under a spell of a recurrent day-dream. I read my "Hamlet' and every word, phrase and intonation seemed plain and clear to me.

For many years the memory of these bleak months haunted me. I could not rid myself of the idea that by some weird chance I had possessed myself of Hamlet's secret. I knew why he did not kill the King. I knew what it was he feared. I knew why he did not kill the King so gleefully when he at last did with him, I knew why he so swiftly stabled Pelonius when he mistook him for the King and pretended fil an that a rat. I knew what his apparently confused words to Ophelia meant. But while I still, felt I knew, I was already fast forgetting. By days were clearing up and as light broke in, knowledge passed into shadowy recollection, which in its turn faded into a mere intellectual understanding. I was any happy graden and could only faintly remember v what had once formed part of my being: Hamlet's inhuman sufferings. Yet something in me insisted that my theories on Hamlet -- for that was all my former certainties now amounted to -- were not metely the morbid offspring of my late ailing.

I hope I will be pardened for this lengthy digression. Actually, I merely propose to recount to you my reactions to that great English critic's opinion -- I mean the late Andrew Cecil Bradley, of Merton College, who died almost twenty years ago. His views on Hamlet's character, when I came across them, struck me greatly by their resemblance to my own. But he had not southor; Hamlet of the player Hadd in under the influence of 'profound melancholy'. That is why he detart revenge for his father. All other ingredients of his character -- intellectual genius, moral sensibility, temperamental instability, -- were either the cause or the or Le accou the expressions of this melancholy. It along Course mis aluch of the play taken together with the spates of normalcy, a Mamiet's virice personalitys 'healthy impulses' been forth my town town rot in Hamles's benavious. eccount for the

A sensibility and intellectual faculties, is shocked by his mother's gross sensuality and moral shabbiness into utter disgust of life. It is in this frame of mind that his father's command reaches him together with the awful revelation of his foul murder.

I was thrilled; I recognized in Bradley's Hamlet my Hamlet. But his infight, ist I realised also that Bradley had not made full use of the Hamlet, the Hamlet, the man and the play.

At the heart of the play, it is a secret of the human character, weevet problem of the play. It is a secret of the human character, weevet

> But there is also an entirely different problem. It is artistic function function for esthetic. How could a good play be written about a person who

and a second and a second and the se

fails to do the one thing we are morally and psychologically intera ested in his doing? Whatever the reasons of his, indicating the King, it remains a mystery how/successful pity could and have been pritten endles fination. This is the secret of Hamlet, the play.

One key serves both locks; The secret of Hamlet the person restly to the secret of Hamlet, the play .- The best play is my argument. dat the That, in ond mittion. (Handat) a idese destant of any se Bradley's answer ma to the second Antto al th siplain all that is needed. He THE GALLER any thing but passize. ωv SC 18 immilsest - ---theal thy quick decided as tive ... Int the play shows us Hamlet in a state of profound melancholy in which he is averse to any kind of decision. The not it does not natter', 'It's not which. Ritcheve.> worth while ': For Hamlets his expresses a kind of paralysis of inner life. Mechanica answers , a sort of back-chat suit his condition well; many he returns the words of the speaker, without wit or irony, in leny er; like a man too benumbed to think or -STORE Yet Hamlet's is a virile temperament. He to

c long slotted lify in his hand. This allegedly shrinking flower-like youth, says Bradley, 'rages through the major part of the play, murdering and destroying human lives, ruthless, flerse, a terror to the court'. Bowden remarked on his impulsive contents, "...he suddenly conceives of the possibility of unmasking the King's guilt, on the accidental arrival of the players, and proceeds without delay to put the matter to the test, suddenly overwhelms Ophelia with his reproaches of womanhood, suddenly stabs the caveadropper behind the arras, suddenly as if under some irresistible inspiration, sends his companions on shipboard to their deaths, sudienly beards the pirates, suddenly grapples with Laertes in the grave, suddenly does execution on the guilty King, plucks the poison from Horatic's hands', and gives his dying voice for a successory to the throne."

> In his <u>lucida intervalia</u> Hamlet is unable to understand the paralysing pressure, which his melancholy exerts at other times. This would account for another puzzling flature of the plays Hamlet, inability to find reason for his own behaviour, maction,

the designed

Indeed, Hamlet's intellectual genius and moral mensibility do not account for his behaviour. These qualities tend to reinforce both his irresolution and his overresoluteness, his inaction, and his hyper-activity. Norah sensibility is at the robt of his inaction in th the prayer scene, when theological niceties intervene at the wrong moment, to par automation of his outburute of hotivity Polobius or the final-scene of revenge," genius is the mainspring of his hesitation as in the solilogy about after-life, or his sophisticated, if somewhat belated, doubts concerning the veracity of the ghost, Met genius also precipitates (action those thin wa cui Rosencrantz and Guildenstern when a adroit r heists with their own petard. While genius and passion often prompt accupies attan obstruct decision, they also give wings to action. Hamlet never seems to doubt his ability to master any situation, however difficult, once he in tene fe feeling of a wizard ... But had genius and sensibility prolour The does, including fraction. They can not explain inaction. interpretation of Hamlet's character Market explains too much. (Hamlet is not inactive all aspinan it. In is he too irrethe time, not even most of the time, One action make soluce to carry out, while, the Presimentan dres away will Polonius, sends Rosencrants and Guildenstern to hell, boards the

pirates (beats Lasrtes at his own craft and in the end, restrictions) the King and forces poison down his threat. Voltaire dubted this last gasge acene as worthy of - butcher-boy's imagination. Why then the endless delay before Hamlet kills the King?

Bradley's theory of the calls healthy impulses fail over by preferred metanomy breaks down at point. Why do the healthy impulses arise ap frequently as to make Hamlet into a person of almost terrible ruthleseness in action and yet prevent him from doing the me deed which he has sworn the spirit of his musdered father to do? He has almost depopulated the court having caused the death of at least four persons in the King'se entourage - Folonium Ophelia, Resencements and influencements and still he does not acem to have con any nearer to the performing of his ene supreme duty. Why does the 'veil of melancholy', as Bradley calls it, never lift when he has an occasion of filling the sing? Is this a mere accident? The play would then appear to derive its structure from a long series of accidents. That would be hardly satisfactory. The audinece from a sector that this is not so, otherwise it would lose interest. There must be some hidden reason for Hamlet's hesitation to do the required deed, a reason Hamlet himself vainly seeks to discover, and which perhaps will be revealed only through his own death.

Britt counters more to it

Hexanory there is . Ramlet's spate of action and inaction are not the freaks of an unstable temperament, which make alternates between feverish exploits and slothful lethargy. Hamlet often does one thing instead of another, we a combination winter demanda an altogether different explanation; since the one can be resolute and i irresolute, temperamentally active and passive at one and the same tip time. Hamiet does not only refrain from the king in the prayer scene, but almost immediately afterwards the Polonius mistaking him for the King and, incidentally, shouting 'a rat's. He could not have been too melancholy to make a thrust at the King, yet sufficient. ly healthy to stab Polonius. 'Healthy impulse' could not have intervened too late to make him act rightly, yet in time to make him ast wrongly. That is not possible. No one can be prevented by pave-Lysis of widipower to actuin ore may write being uninhibited to act eagerly in another way Similar is the situation in the last acty Hamlet makes no preparations whatsoever to king and then trust be him and poisonsplim in an instant. He thus performs with zest rget his glowing account of his a variety of actions -- de the me the except required day, mitil audienadventures at sea -- instead ly he performs the deed without any sign of hesitanay. "he riddle of the delay in killing the King the still there states no in the face.

Bradley missed the right answer by a hair's breadth. He adduced instances of Hamlet's proneness to action, adding, he acts in these cases since it is not TER one hateful action on which his merbid self-feeling had centered. We because of contact the addition of the instantion of the did not follow up the clue. Let we had found and confuterers of character and situation his melanchely has some to be centered on this action. life, that is, while continuing to live, he is unable to decide for life. He can live on as long as he is not challenged on this point, that do, as long as he is not forced to decide to do so. Should he by any mischance be constrained to take and a decision, it would be his cha, since he could not not deliverately decision, it would be road of life. This is, in terms of drame, the meaning of Hamlet's melancholy.

Poer this mean diret the should (take Hamlet's frequent professions of wishing to die a la lettre . Second state are ners phrases who he merely hates to live. A dramatic here, who sincerely wishes to Lolling (tolen) be dead wette ladad our sympathy we our interest. There would be no conflict and no play for who would or could prevent him from having his way? mamlet's elaborations on the theme 'I wish I were dead' should mislead no one. All it is mean's target is that he Ser mor would refuse to settle down top the tasks of life, if he had to decide need of no Actually he to prepared to fight for his life in the and perhaps (the more bravely, because he does not set has Tife tat a pints feel

Here lie the roots of Hamlet's tragedy.

When the play opens, Hamlet is already 0'ercast with melancholy, on account of his mother's shame. But it is the appearance of the ghost which starts the tragedy, for fate itself is now pushing him towards a anayonin decision. Kanlet merely wished to withdraw from the court, and retire to Wittenberg, though at his mother's entreaties (and perhaps also for Ophelia's sake) he post poned his duarture. Now his father's ghost commands him to kill the King. To obey would. involve all that living involves. His fate is to be taken out of his hands. Killing the King most probably would make him Ming himself, may be with Ophelia as his dueen, how would ene the princely ruler of the Court at Elsinore, a radiant sun amongst a host of Rosencrantzes and Guildensteres. Hamlet knows in his bones that he will tak into his Set to te with setting the (jointe) - the world Sk never comp A. His that it fould mean becoming part of a world he now detests more bitterly than ever. He will period before he fulfills that command and he knows it. His father's ghost has attered Hamiette death sentence. The rest of the play consists in Maclet's vain advanced Mart and the faire for

14.0 al evals the execution of that sentence. In delaying the killing of the King at his father's bidding, or, killing the King if possible, while not doing it at his father's bidding, Hamlat is fighting for his

and the second second

life,

The second second second second

the King and thus became for Hamlet -- oh cursed The killing of the King Ame spite -- the symbol of deciding to live. This one act on which his morbid self-feeling centers ' ha can not perform. Not the mechanical act itself -- that is irrelevant; but the act as an act of revenge, an act of filial duty enjoined upon him by a dread command, an act in the fatal sequence of human obligations, [a symbolic and forme: involving him in the mill of life. Hamlet could will the King with ease -- by mistake, off the record, under the coverof an alibi, oy a disowned gesture under the pretence of chance, there some emphatically unsymbolic deed -- or, when the decision had already fallen, and he (was himself) dead. ()

Actually, he attempts both -- to do it, pretending he did not intend it, and to do it when it monther affect his TAKEL BICOL Midanne He stabs Polonius in a trice, when he mistakes him for his better' while derying even this supposed knowledge in the very act by staging a rat-hunt. And again, even more decisively, in the last Act when he broumphantly, almost as if he exulted in his final safety repeats to Horatio his. 'I am dead'. The sceptical dreamer is sestionly no more thin transformed into the outcher-boy , once action is much mechanics cal action, signifying nothing, since be, Eamlet, 18 now securely dead.

2 Lety

This throws some light on Hamlet's feigned madness, and its man role in the there . I do not mean in the plot, which is obvious, but in the fulfillment of Hamlet's fate. Given his situation , his antica when an immediate outcome of his melancholy. The horror of his position after the encounter with the ghost chouse robs him of his gris. He isin the course of passionately moving away from the scenes of social all that which obligation, from the court, from conventions, from the world of 'seema', which is inpurdly dealand in thatis and custom Fate in the shape of his father's ghost stops his stangede from life and hurls him back right into the centre of damnation. He almost loses his mind and is genuinely

both afraid of not being able to recover his balance. Yet as soon he gets it over as this wears off -- and there i very quickly -- an entirely different anxiety designates bis henevious and determines the use he is going to make of his discovery mining leaning towards me anhea appourance of rudiand. This new anxiety springs from fear to be pushed to take antion, Wenter instanting to provide some of secretive and, lest he cease to be master of his fate. The det Marcello, or Bernardo, an maybe even Horatio know of what happened, and the trat decision would broad have fallen. Only as long as he alone knows of the ghost's revelation -- or maybe loratio, whom he learne to trust as his alter ego -- manfinante distante is Hamlet safe. With the end of the first act the battle for his life thasbigun. . It has been the noticed that towards the end of the play Hanlet's assumed derangement becomes less abvious. and composed. His velanchely is Lifting, Louid it be otherwise? 1641857 I beauties, of the play. this constitutes one of the great It has been also worked by the beginning imagined the wish to die. It has been also worked by the beind dered the property to della the been be propertions to kill the King and yet stone more and more certain that the toaching . Wet again, aproachi hour of revenge is an Hamlet in grown - Carling and the iter iter of death, not any more Swelansholy out of a confused mood, which denies the meaning of life, but from and 1 me a preserve recognition of the meaning which we hich he had gained through his own involvement in guilt and suffering. He strikes down the King when he himself is already 'dead'; but his one death comes ig for it. The accidents which seem to to him owing when he is me a tha regulate the course of the play are a more, semblance. Its progress is as clear and simple as Calvary. No wonder that the figure of Hamlet could be interpreted as that of a saint. And yet, no worse misundersta ding was conceivable. It is a pure tragedy, a story of gilt and expiation.

The second second second

A server a fight a first to dear the server

For he who turns away from life is by that very action guilty. in the end Hamlet, is purified through suffering which comes to him as a retrioution for his own deels. We will try and unrevel the rery played by his feigned manness in the trajecty.

أستند معجدته

non The second and third Act are Eamlet's innings. He is the Saudi he would be, stage manager rin directs the events as he h bis intention at the end of the first act, With the dumb scene, states beginning of the second with Hamlet takes bard; nothing happens hence Jorth ary mild except by his will; (his intellectual genius handaharaoans) reputh and he makes muse of m, without let and hindrance. Ry the end of his innings he has maltreated and lost the guiltless Ophelia, has killed her father, a milloore (fool but innocent of Hamist is father's brown;" K any conspiracy againet Kamlets himself, for this be has gained his mother's remorse and proof against the King, who & however to now athlats forwarned of the dearer and takes steps to get rid of Haziet. Westever in the balance, in the eyes of objective morality, Marchie part Hamlet has inextricably involved himself in guilt.

9-

for What happens in these two Mets? And what must them happenings

signify to Hastet?

and an and a state of the state

Hamlet aims his antion with deadly precision. The dumb scene sends Ophelia crying into her father's arms, who ruphes post-haste to the King, who thereupon sets monthing as I lawful espial, the to arth squid whethereupon sets monthing as I lawful espial, the to al. the trag antight / inamining the aministration h1mee which is the rited diadannismanadeabinanamaha budanting managanufulbanmadannah Tahlet, as a producer shows grim humour. He himselfs met set the prize-question/, the state and and the same of his undress bet He knows his phanaphersmanning mains makes then guess true to character. Poionius, thel the companyion ridion constions self-assurance of the shear synicism. Hamlet ment on seducing whows the Sphelia, will being thwarted in hisnpassion, which we teason The queen and is this weaper the Ruch; feels guilty of her own over-hasty marriage; the King alone is on a par with Hamlet and refuses to be duped by his mathematic foiled lover's frenzy. He Genda for Rosencrantz and Guildenstern , arranged for the trap , put Hamlet under guard , sonts him to England. set Laertes on his trail, concoct the murder plot. Except for the King all parameters Hamlet's puppets, an enjoye his cruel superiority; - the chastisement of that solemn mediocrity, Polonias, the self-debasement of those slimy gigglers, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, the anguish of the King trapied of For the ominous finches Around in them lets conversationed blinkes the clinex is a standard when Hargen out

Hamlet, in staged andness, stages a play in the play, the effects of which on the King send him into transports of joy. And ye, all the time his helpless self is more and more enmanded in guilt. Handabdertargeire in daarbatice big abie a skewa ad maa bie de bie daarbe ad an a bie daarbe abie a bie daarbe Aphracture in the glamorous actics, in his decity sensitive heatt he knows that he has lost his way. Hardet's Crucedy. is provide intertwined with his love for ophelia, I whom he has save find has tointed pincelf with the virus he losined, "I loved Ophelia, he cries when all is over ... The grave scene is one of the few pecasions when external events penetrate the anroad of Mamlet's melancholy. It is a long way from outside to indide. Listen to his ranting, and to the subsequent averening, recollection the hearth and he to Dierces when the point of nell a that is he, show gridt ma a Hamlet: deal pres Bears such an emphasis? whose phrase of sorrow Conjures the wandering stars, and makes them stand Like wonder-wounded hearers? This is I, Hamlet the Dane!

10 -

(He leaps into the grave)

His love for Ophelia was sincere and ardent. It was romantic love, driven to a platonic frenzy by his mother's the debasement. This must love for opacity like a chasm between him and the g others. He knew the putrid atmosphere of the court. "e knew his Lacrtes, this youthful lecher, who depraved his sister's mind. "e knew his smutty Polonius who instilled filthy suspicions into her conitding spirit, he knew his Rosenwrants and Juildenstern whose Lasainanda horizon was opunded by) and with the king and guess have the king and guess have here the should Uvan here who set their hopes on Ophelia's physical beauty of tempting become untrue have mission. He hates them for their calumny of all that is and truly pure and noble. Not one of them but debased Ophelia's love for him and Hamlet's love for her into a conventional counter , if not into a calculated instrument of 1000 Hait human frome. the policy, relying on what there is of meanness

Unsephasical and an and a second seco

Prime Minister to the backneyed diagnosis: 'Mad for thy love'? Who but Hamlet nurtured Polonius' with suspicionan, by harping on his daughterat every turn of their ambiguous consistent and who So confirmed the suspicions in the nunnery scene by his obscene insults to Ophelia ? Who, but Hamlet the Bane?

- 11 -

effects At every turn of theuscrew Hamlet's suffering feeds on the manufact sot he of his own actions, Was manname himself slandering O phelis to her father? Was not he, himself dragging her through the mire of court introgue? Bid not he himself prompt the idea that she should be made decoy in the scene of eavesdropping, in which he the the bar most out at bor with, thus taking unjustificerenge on her for a part which he himself had period her? And yet, it is in this scene that Ophelia is most true to him. In his inadination the prestituthe enemies, a worthy ----ting herself ally of his debauched mother. While all the time Hamlet knows only too well that he, he alona is to blame. That the stand bear to bear out his accusations of Francheod, is in truth of his own joing, and. No better than a chime against his pure and beloved child. Ophelia a contion in the namery ander-

the normal self. Beauty and honour, love and marriage are for once in concord. The loves Hamlet and knows not of the danger that threatens and He never confided his burgen to her. Her task is to charm him back to life and happiness, to exercise the demons that are darkening his spirit.

In the presence of her father and the King himself the Queen Soud to Ophelia:

Queent

3

Allehos none lainled un

'And for your part, Ophelia, I do wish That your good deauties be the happy cause Of Hamlet's wildness; so shall I hope your virtues Will bring him to his wonted way again, To both your honours!

contraction i Wistry dit may ...

Schelis.

And ta Act 74 she says at Ophelia's graver, not knowing of Hamlet's

presence

I hoped thou shouldst have been my Hanlet's wife; I thought thy bride-bed to have deskid, exect maid, And not have strew'd thy grave.

- 12 -

In the nunnery scens the t Ophelia is met by the

knowing Hamlet. He winces at the thought that Ophelia in the base 'let loose' to seduce him -- turn him from allegiance to his dead father, from the path of honsur/ and honesty, building on her feminine attractions.

His behaviour is as much to the point as it is then to

Ophelia:

- H.: 'Ha, ha are you honest?
- 0.: My lord? H.: Are you fair?
- What means your lordship?
- 0. What means your lordship? E.: That if you be honest and fair, your honesty should admit no discourse to your beauty. O.: Could beauty, my lord, have better commerce than with
- honesty?
- H .: Ay, truly, for the power of beauty will sconer transform honesty from what it is to a bawd than the force of honesty can translate beauty into his likeness: this was sentime a parader, but new the time given is proof. I did love You pres wint so ont _

Hamlet alone knows that he must choose between love and honour; that to turn to for Ophelia's sake from the course of Thete gives his words duty would dishonour him and her. To the this wist revengeful of Polonius and Laeries ' low suspisions, and resentful of Ophelia's warmandy mission. But in the matter itself the is clear and concise. If Ophelia tried to appear to hish honour, and make him marry her, she would merely appeal to his lust, and deprave him; if she follows him in the path of honour, she would have to satrifice their love. In this will are the part She should go to a nunnery - which is also along for brothel for that is where she b belonged. But she not give/proof of this burget by prost think here Cane in the secret presence of an adulterous murderer and a bawd?

Yet every particle of this is the work of HamletSpresently . he will insult her maping in the presence of the Court and even worse use her as a smoke-screen in his hunt for the murderer. Insidentifity he will will her father, whom she adores. By the time Ophelia drownes herself Hamlet has deserved more than one death. Inwardly, he must have died a hundred deaths.

Bat how could the mere delaying of revenge, which is the matter of the plot, heap such mountainous guilt upon Hamlet's head? of his quilty wala nadness is the answer. , it breeds guilt. Hamlet's feigned It tempts him into using not only his enemies but also his friends as tools; it traps him Into primerity by making insincerity appear as a duty; it confuses him about himself to the point of making him a riddle to himself. After his public confession of his lave man for Ophelia at her grave, he plays the fool no mora. He is preparing i for the end. There is only a short interin whill the news from the his court Suildensterne & deaths must arrive. England of E Hamlet'spilet composure in this last part of the play is of infinite beauty. Ready to die, there is no reason to hill the King. That he no more utters the wish to die shows how wars great is the difference between the Eamlet of the first and the last Aut of the play. Then he thought he windled to die and often said so; now he wants to die and keeps silent, In his quiet readiness. It is the King whose hours are now counted.

111.

13

So much about the contents of this play which has no less a subject than life and death. Hanlet is in the last Act as near to committing suicide as a play allows which is about suicide. This is no paradox. Othello is about jealonsy, Romeo and Julist is about love; if their heroes commit suicide, it is out of jalouey or love, not out of a wish for suicide. The thir to die is the only passion that is uniramatic, since as one what would be sufficiently interested in the person to watch the vagaries of his fato, copecially if is consisted in entless insuficient. And yet Hamlet is university a good

play there is nothing more puzzling in the whole reals of mannam the drama. There is a standard for the solution of the soluti

well, you all snow the Mastery of the purloined letter. To hide it safely, it was left right in the middle of the table. For no-one would look for it there.

May I quote a fen lines from a france the the play which, one would assume, is too well known to hide a secretty (from the the Day, almost so years ago, when the first stuch me); 'To be, or not to be: that is the question: Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, Or to take arms against a sea of troubles, And by opposing end them? To die, - to sleep,-No more....'

Much has been written about this monologue. Bradley, the greatest of all critics of Shakespeare's plays, fame to the conclusion that the soliloquy was rather irrelevant since it certainly did not refer to the action itself. Mambet was philosophising about life and teath. Bredlefight. 'In this soliloquy Hamlet is not thinking of the duty laid upon him at all. He is debating the question of suicide.' 'His reflections have no reference to this particular moment.' 'What can be more significant than the fact, that he is sunk in these reflections (onfuicide) on the very day which is to determine for him the truthfulness of the Ghost?' (p. 132). Bradlet had come to the surprising conclusion that the great soliloquy was of no dramatic importance. Muce it calling did not 'Millious of feeple have listened to that monologue and did not think so. Hosts of actors have spoken it and they, also, did not

feel so. On the contrary, they all believed, that in some hnaccounfashion table way the very heart of the play is throbbing there.

Bradley was wrong mose that lines give mina away the secret.mm The audience justly assumed that the nero when stating a clearcut alternative at a moment of high dramatic tension is weighing the alternative on which the play hinges: killing the King or not? 'To be' meanSto for which the King; 'Not to be'

means not to kill the King. Yet Hamlet descibes 'To be' as passived 2 suffering and inactivity, not killing him as armed action and forsible opposition. Almost without exception critics colted at this point and did not follow up the implications faces must appear redeed most confusing ustil one remembers that Hamlet. has turned away from life, of which he can now only think in terms of resignation and passivity. Hven if passivity and outforing happensto include a number of so-called actions as killing the Ming, marrying Ophelia, ruling the country, and so on, the only action worthy of the name falls under the heading 'Not to be' . One can perform it with a bare bodkin, were it not that

... conscience does make cowards of us all, and thus the native hue of resolution Is sicklied over with the pake cast of thought, And enterprises of great pith and moment With this regard their carrents turn awry And lose the name of action."

15 -

with the thought of action this soliloguy opens and nightly said closes, Dowden ares, You can call showe lines confused, but in them you have the dramatic truth of the play.

It deals with suicide in forms of killing an enemy. It deals with delay in terms of increased action. Hamlet who feigred madness in order to gain, time is endangered by the effects of his stratagen and thus forced to take action. By delaying the killing of the King Hamlet is prolonging his own life. Fy stabbing Polonius instead of the King . Hamlet fails to free himself from his predicament. And yet when we feel that his end is approaching, we rightly believe that the day of reckoning has come for the King. The whole of Earlet's inner conflict, his hovering on the confines of life and death, is thus translated into external events, into sharply accentuated dramatic action.

All through the play external events are hardly more than a mak reflection or a confirmation of what Hamlet knows by inward evidence. He is a genius who can play on the human soul as Rosencrantz and Suildensterne would have liked to play on his, He foresees Ophelia's report to her father; he is conscious of the eavediroppers in the num numbery scene; he is on the track of the spying courtiers, he guesses A MARCE

and the state of the state of the

their mission, he justly appraises the purpose of the fencing match, he correctly instructs the players, and with the one exception of Polonius behind the arras, whom he mistakes for the Xing, Hamlet is as a person endowed with double sight.

Four times in the play Hamlet's premonitions are translated into reality. He sees his father's figure 'in his mind's eye' even before he is told of the appearance of the ghost; he doubts 'some foul play' before the ghost reveals it to him; his prophetic soul guessed his uncle's guilt, as he knew that the end was coming before it had actually come. You will excase me for reminding you Decon et the passage:

Hauslet : I shall win at the odds. But though would not think how ill all's here about my heart; but it is no matter. Horation: Nay, good my lord, --

Hanlet: It is but foolery; but it is such tind of gain-giving as would perhaps trople a woman.

Horation: If your mind diclike anything , obey it; I will forsetall their repair hither , and say you aronot fit. Hamlet: Not a shit; we defy augury; there 's a susical provisionce

in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, ' tis, not to the cone; if it be not to come , it will be now ; if it be not now , yet it will come; the readinase is all; since no of any of leave the leaves , involut is't to leave betimes?

Let be <u>train for</u> H he trafic here. <u>Beck the track with a state</u> Hanlet Garts willingly from life; he commits suicide. **Set Bramatically he does not**. He is murdered, and, the certainty of his own death releases him to do his duty.

is in wear, Othello, Macbeth, we also in fisher with the first Act the tragedy is set. Lear in his vanity and folly has thrown himself on the generosity of his torreleand daughters: when he fulling his fate. The Moor's conquest of Besdemona was triumph of recence and spiriteness over disparity of age and race which with never stand the test of them brute passion; Othello goes to his doom. Maximum In Macbeth the weird sisters has drawn the circle of tragedy around the hero and his ambition; the end follows as by

gaometrical necessity Similarly in Hamlet. Holeta the opening Act a contains the tragedy in nuce. His mother's shame has robbed Hamlet of the faculty to live. Ehen his father's min tread command reaches him, Kentle that's is sealed. irst--st est 1 with the to my revenge! but with The time is out of joing, Oh cursed spite that ever I was born to set it right! I and begins, u Before the curtain has been decreed, has let will lose his life while trying to save it by feigning to be mad.

Stannang

Saxe Grammaticus' a Amblet pretende n order to on the prepare his revenge on the King. Shakespeare's Hamlet weeks instrument ments of delay. This is the true function of his madness in the plot. Et, But for this trait in the ploy Hamlet could not have put off his decision without a conflict with his friends and supporters. Such an external conflict would have dragged als own invergandlict into the light and westernee been artistically fates. A Hamlet who refuser to obey the behest of the ghout or del COLUMN STORES act beratelyhesitate when pressed by his friends Lucw, would 1086.10 2a au wereau sympathy just as he admiration, 1 would loose gue or real King and tim Court. Ant on the the obstacle both ta decision lecie to take revenge and to the carrying out of the revenge. This raises the the highest levels play of universality NAS INCOL Ata transposed by Shake: arte peare 's art into the blood, fire, and brimstone. allis onterstand Small wonder that it is a good tiavi

Samiet is about the human condition. We all live and refuse to die, but we are not all the time decided to live and be happy certainly not in all the essential reppects in which life invites us. Anonicous To some extent we are all the time delaying mappiness and putting off life, because we fear to commit ourselves to live. Our self-feeling (we should not call it morbid) may then often center on an action which tom our dismay we find ourselves not doing Makes Haulell, star to have the find ourselves not doing

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This, in symbolic. Life is man's missed opportunity.

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reatiness.

0 I realise shat I have not given you PIRS I PICK intertassurance that ever, understated the Prince in that easy condie vresational manner in which one L agines one understands one alf. a writing down my recollections, I from that it may have all been no more than a arean divort dora. You now the curious fashion in which one imagines one has learnt in one's sleep the secret of life, yet on awakeping finds that most of it has evaporated. I thought I would tell you before it is too late and I find excelf too happy in Life to remember anything of Hamlet's secrets.

hat a man will of all subject that a person must your come from fait hat a man will perform and your after a there is the man will be all subject to the most that a share will be and the week out wor of all man the man the week out out wor of all

Hamlet

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The surmise is correct. I was serving as an officer in the Austro-Hungarian Army, a little short of thirty years ago. The Russian winter and the blackish-yellow stepps made me/sick at heart. In my desolation I had for companion a volume of Shakespeare's plays. One of them I found myself reading and re-reading: The Tragedy of Hamlet, Frince of Dangmark. Altogether I must have gone through it some thirty times. My personal life had taken a turn towards darkness. Maylight seemed bounded in a narrowing minuthe disc which was growing dimmer and dimmer. The cold was so intense that when my horse stumbled and fell, I was too apathetic to get out of the saddle. Mamiananted Fortunately - though I cyself might not (at the time have thought so) the gaunt stiff oreature, a foresack mare wie had picked up, jerked and I was saved from being crushed water har, had herself un activity she relied over...it that period of my existence my soul was numbed and fell under # spell of a "scurrent day-dream. I read my "famlet" and every word, phrase and intenation seamed plain and clear to me. For many years the memory of these bleak months haunted me.

I could not rid myself of the idea that by some woird chance I had possessed myself of Hamlet's secret. I knew why he did not kill the King. I knew what it was he feared. I knew why he **Willer** the King so gleefully when he at last did **wild** him. I knew why he so swiftly **Manuar A. Sont** was only a rat. I knew what his **Sperently** confused words to Ophelia meant. But while I still<u>fel</u>t, I knew, I was already fast forgetting. My days were clearing up and as light troke in, knowledge passed into shadowy recollection, which in its turn faded into a mere intellectual understanding. I was now happy **Manuar** and could only faintly remember w what had once formed part of my being: Harlet's inhuman sufferings. Net comething in me indisted that my theories on famlety - for that was all my former certainties now amounted to -- were ust merely

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the morbid offspring of my late ailing.

I hope I will be pardamed for this lengthy digression, ictually, I meraly propose to recount to you my reactions to that great English critic's opinion -- I mean the late indrew Cesil Bradley of Morton College, who died almost twenty years ago. His views on Hamlet's character, when I came across then, struck me greatly by their resome lance to my own. But he shapped that & R. Hamlet Hamlet In luence of a # 'profound melancholy'. That is why hol delays (reverge for his father. All other ingredients of his character -- intellectual genius, moral sensibility, temperamental instability, -- were either the cause or the expression of this melancholy. It alone es the course during sheers of the play, Caken together with the spates of normaluy with the spates of normaluy with the play of the personality the set of the personality the set of the personality the set of the s ed hir towards selanoisty . contradictions in Maaletta behavioup. Bradley Jan": - diagnosts. Hemlet, a person of exceptional moral wight sensibility and intellectual faculties, is shocked by his mother's gross sensuality and moral chains and into atter disgust of life. It is in this frame of mind that his touther will the avful revelation of the foul murder, 80.20 ty poisoned and paralysed, hence his inaction, his endless hesitations TThis brings about his undoing as well as that of many others, including those he loves best. I was thrilled; I recognised in Bradley's Hamlet my Hamlet usist, I realisedalso that Bradley had not made full ase of the her sand, and that had not unlocked the secret of Hemlet, the man and he play. there is the fact that through five To at the heart of the long, acts lamlet docs not kill the King: This delay of which he will accuses himself, and which he can not justify and for which nothing seems to account satisfactorily, is the psychological problem of the play. It is a secret of the human character, macoret of Hamlet the person. the. problem. But there is also and

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the ambine fails PERSON a mystery how successful play could + have/been about inaction. This is the secret of Hamlet the play. One key serves both Locks; The deal milly 1. radl needed $1 \pm hy$ 78-2 we she play shows ta Jejectio y in which he is averse to a us Hamlet in a state of prof Russian for IT. any kind of deal 'Ttina net, Nitchero is the case eyos In worth while pour has Barl inner life. Machanica this expresses a kind of answers , a sort of back-chat suit his condition well; he returns the words of the speaker, without wit or irony, been lifeless/ like a man too benumbed to think or even to speak. Yst Hamlet M is wwwirite tomperement, Rooit, no Occar Wilde with

a lily in his hand. This allegedly shrinking flower-like youth, says Bradley, 'rages through the major part of the play, murdering and destroying human lives, ruthless, fierce, a terror to the court'. Bowden remarked on his impulsive estimated '... be suidealy conceives of the possibility of unmasking the King's guilt, on the accidental arrival of the players, and proceeds without delay to put the matter to the test, suddenly overwhelms Ophelia with his reproaches of momanhood, suddenly stabs the eavesdropper wehind the arras, suddenly as if under some irrouistible inspiration, sends his comparions on shipboard to their deaths, suddenly boards the pirates, suddenly grapples with Laertes in the grave, suddenly does execution on the guilty King, plucks the poison from Horatio's hands, and gives his dying voice for a successors' to the throne."

In his lacids intervalls Harlet is unable to understand 'the paralysing pressure' which his melancholy exerts at other times. This account for seather purpling future of the property for the pressure of the pressure of

Indeed, Hamlet's intellectual genius and moral sensibility can not account for his schaviour. These qualities tend to reinforce both his irresolution and his overresoluteness, his inaction, and his hyper-activity. Morsh sensibility is at the root of his inaction in th the prayer scene, when theological niceties intervene at the wrong moment to bar action, but also of his outbursts of activity as in the stabbing of Polobius or the final scene of revenge. In the same Manner genius is the mainspring of his hesitation as in the solilogy about after-life, or his sochisticated if somewhat belated doubts concerning the veracity of the ghost. Yet genius also precipitates act action tremendously , e.g., in the case of the players or in that of. those twin deflocrities Rosencrantz and Guildenstern whom with extreme adroitness he hoists with their own peterde. While genius and passion often prompt soluples which obstruct decision, they also give wingo. to action. Hamlet never seems to doubt his ability to meater any situation, however difficult, once he is resolved to do so. He has the life feeling of a wizard ... But mine genius and sensibility scolour all he does, mhering including inaction. They do not explain it.

- 4 -

Rut and Brailey and Interpretion of Femlette character appendix for much to see the lose closes into the matter Hardet's .

welanchalge accounts for his inaction, Bet in the former for his only he is too irresolute to carry out. And for a called part of the former for hell, boards the following, sends Hosencrantz and Suildenstern to hell, boards the firster, heats Laertes at his own craft and in the end rune through the King and forces poison down his throat. Voltaire dubbed this let gory scene as worthy of a butcher-boy's imagination. Why then the endless delay before Hamlet kills the King?

Brailey's theory of haddeally healthy impulses haid over or profound melanobaly breaks down at the point. Why do the healthy impulses arise so frequently as to make Hamlet into a person of almost terrible ruthlessness in this and yet prevent him from doing the set deed which he has sworn the spirit of his murdered father to do? He has slmost depopulated the court having caused the feath of at least four persons in the King'se entourage in following, Spherin, Repensents and Sublessness and still he does not seen to have come any nearer to the performing of his a supreme duty. Thy does the 'veil of melancholy', so Bradley only it never lift when he has an occasion of accillant, the King' is this a mere accident? The play would then appear to derive its structure from a long series of accidents. That would be hardly satisfactory. The addinece from to the some hidden reason for Hemlet's hesitation to do the required work, a reason Hamlet himself vainly seeks to discover, and which perhaps will be revealed only through his own death.

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There is more to the . Hanlet's spats of action and inaction are not the freaks of an unstable temperanent, which since alternates between feverish exploits and slothful lathargy. Hamlet often does one thing instead of another (W/a compination with demands an altogether different explanation since no one can be resolute and i irresolute, temperamentally active and passive at one and the same tim time does not only refrain from the King in the prayer scene, but almost i mediately afterwards h S Polonius mistaking him for the King collblooded clays shouting 'a rat). He could not have seen too melancholy to make a thrust at the King, yet sufficiently healthy to stab Polonius. 'Sealthy impulse' could not have intervened too late to make him act rightly, yet in time to make him Gint ta es no preparations whatscever to the King and then in an instant, he thus performs with zest 72 a variety of actions is glowing account of his except the minny required the at sea -s suddenly he performs the deed without any sign of hesitancy. The riddle of the delay in killing the King a still the slates as in the face Bradley missed the right answer by a hair's breadth. we adduced hadded; inor he acts in there instances of handel's promeneous to action, a cases since it is not THE one hateful action on which his moroid self-faeling had centered. -course did not follow up the clue. Eaulst weit with a will the King because by company conjuncture of character and situation his melancholy has come to be centered on this potion.

That we elaborate. Mauled has hered airs if the test is while continuing to live, he is unable to decide for life. He can live on as long as he is not challenged on this point, that is, as long as he is not forced to decide to do so. Should he by any mischance be constrained to take such a decision, it would be his since he could not at deliberately include choose the road of life. This is, in terms of drame, the manage of Hamlet's melancholy.

that is should take Earlet's frequent professions . They are mere parason unit of withing to, die à la lettre, Criminia E does not want to die, ter expression mood president he merely hates to live. A dramatic hero who ai rely wishes to New our interest. be dead hauld loose our sympathy many 100 town time could prevent There would be no conflict no play For Who was him from having his way? Hamlet's elaborations on the theme 'I wish I were dead' should mislead an one. All the means become is that in the even to be the Bul word of the basks of life, if the he to A 111.2 Actually he is prepared to fight 1.0 for the nure bravely because he does . not set the fat a pints feed,

Here lis the roots of Hamlet's tragedy. Then we play opens, Harlet is the away for high the first of high mother's shame. But it is the appearance of the chost which starts the tragedy, for fate itself is now pushing him towards a fundamental decision. Harlet merely withed to withdraw from the court, and retire to Withenberg, though at his mother's entreaties (and periods also for Sphelia's sake) he post-poned his feature. Now his father's ghost commands 'tim to kill the King. To obey would the intolve all that they involves. His fathe is to be princed his father's due of his hands. This is the time to the works due of his would be they have the works that the prince of the court at his note of his father is ghost commands 'tim to kill the King theory would have be been be one of his would be they have the start and the prince of the court at his note, a rediant sur amongst a host of Rosenerantice and Guildensteres, Earlet knows in his bones that he gift.

A Cather

do evade the execution of that sentence. In delaying the killing of the Fing at his father's bidding, or, killing the King if possible, while not doing it at his father's bidding, Famlet is fighting for his life. The killing of the King that thus become for Haulet -- oh oursed spite -- the symbol of deciding to live. This one action which his morbid self-feeling centers ' he cannot perform. Not the mechanical act itself -- that is irrelevant; but the act as an act of reverge, an act of filial duty enjoined upon him by a an act in the fatal sequence of human obligations, involving him in the mill of life. Hamlet could kill the King with ease -- by mistake, off the record, under the coverof an alibi, by a disowned gesture, under the pretence of chance, the some empine -. tically unsymbolic desired -- or, when the decision had already fallen,

Actually, he attempts both -- to do it, presending he did not intend it, and to do it when it has stready lost it for his fate. There is stabs Polonius in a trice, when he mistakes him 'for his better while denying even the compressed knowledge in the very act by staging a rat-hunt. And sgain, even more decisively, in the last' Act when he traumphartly, almost as if he excited in his final safety repeate to Horatio hip 'I am dead'. The sceptical dreamer is transformed into the butcher-boy, once action is **university** rechanics cal action, signifying nothing, since he, Hamist, is now securely dead.

and he was nimeelf dead . -

he threw, so I felty ΞI, throws some light or Hamlet's feigned madness, and its much role in the banking. I do not rean in the plot Directo, but in the fulfillment of Hamlet's fate. divertis attaction with antics melancholy. The horror of his position after the encounter with the ghost a 1.13 1.11 ell his mtely moving away from the scenes of sucial 180 obligation, from the court, from conventions, from 'seems', which is inwardly desdened by the shape of bis father's ghost stops his stampede from life and hurls him back sizes into the centre of darnation. He almost loses his mind and is genuinely

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Suses as this wears off -- and being able to recover his utlength. Yot as soon any quickly -- an untirely different anxiety dertures ny ist determines the use rent autics he is going to make of his discovery of his hearing U. . This new anxiety springs from fear to be only his will. He pushed to take actfon, Jamlat ty turns ton secretive lest he cease to be Marsello, or Lernardo, ar reple syon Horatio, know of what happened, and the dread decision would already have fallen. Only as long as he alone knows of the ghost's revelation -- or mayce Epratic, whom he learns to trust as his alter ego -- immediaminationimmanda io Earlet safe, With the end of the first act the battle for his en tegun A. It has been often not med that towards the end life in the ----hung of the play hamlet spassumed corabrement becomes less abvious and that for some unaccountable reason he geems more placid and composed. His melancholy is 1.1 real it has otherwise ? The t beauties of the The play he wrsheg play . L . Eachet who in the beginning 21 hes been also notize? A sen imagined bentitied withen is now ready to go. The arations to kill the Ming and yet theme more and more certain that the Haulet) hour of revenue is coming Again, how could this be otherwise? now welcomes Hanlet 🛋 the late of death, not any more a confision of moores moors of which denies the meaning of life, but from an in me a recognition of the maning which he he gained through his own involvement in guilt and suffering. We strikes down the King when he himself is already 'dead' the the death comes to him when he is for it. The accidents which seem to Tha one regulate the course of the play are semblance. Its progress is as clear entropy as Calvary. No wonder that the figure of Hamlet could be intergreted as that of a saint. And yet, no worse misunderstading was conceivable. It is a pure tragedy, a story of gilt and explation. tow For he who turns away from life is by that very action gills Gamletno purlied through suffering which comes to him as a retribution for his own deeds, We will try and unrevel the part playod tragedy.

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A service of the serv and the second 9 now The second and third Act are Hamlet's innings. He is the as he had a ho stage manager) -announce be . With the dumb scene, intention and the end of the -Actory Hamlet takes charge hothing happens the treatment henceforthe e except by his will this in the except by his will, this in the following reall : the following reall : how make suse of it without let and hindrance. Thy the end of his innings he has maltreated and lost the guiltless Ophelia, has killed cruc . fool but innocent of Tanlet's her father, a m In this taker or exchange and any conspiracy against Hamlet himself. for ained his nother's remorse and proof squinst the Kings (MAD however is now Red Lines But Trivarned at the dancer and takes steps to get rid of Handet. Whatever be the balance in the eyes of objective morality has inextricably involved himself in guilt. That hansens these happenings He aimed Haulet and Acres of her for a his antics with deadly precision, The dumb scene sends Ophelia crying into her father's arus, the rushes jost-maste te King cets up King, to the - the trap helia ON 1 som 57the aai Contraction of the providence of the contraction of the manine man and the second second in the second se dr. de himselfn had set the prize question/, ash what the cause of his madness be. He knows his charactenamandr The cast and makes them die or to character. Folonius he wover risdom whows the convertion self-assurance of his chart cynicism: Hamlet to cent on seducing and Revening Geen the second to the thwarted in The Jucen and is their me 16 feels guilty of her own over-hasty marriage; the King alone is on a par with Hamlet and refuses to be duped by his antics and foiled Lover's frenzy. He sende for Rosencrants and Guildenstern , arranged and him to Ingland, for the trap , put Eamlet under guard , set, Lagrtes on his trail, concocts the murder plot. Except for are Eamlet's pappets, fonjoys his cruel the King all figu superiority, the chastisement of that solemn mediocrity, Polonius. the self-debasement of those alony sigglers Rosencrantz and Guilthe ominous france denstern, the anguish of the King wn ont lamiet's milerareat repartite reacher plaskes. The chi conversational

Manlet, in staged madness, stages a play in the play, the effects of which on the King sent him into transports of joy. And yet, all the time his helpless self is more and more enneahed in guilt. namdetons schnage dat davines der big minie zie inged micht ohne en han Ashadran Tor esta his glanorous antics, in his termin sensitive Astlet's Jul heatt he knows the has lost his way. things antertrined with his love for Ophelis, whom he has fact iud And the second se 21 'I loved Ophelia, he cries when all is over The grave scone the few occashient meet external events perctrate the shroud of with hum, Hamlet's melancholy. It is a long way from outside to Anolde. Listen to his ranting and to the subsequent avakening taking the true ma flash the hearty and , the when the point of . Hacilet: " ... What is he, whose grief Bears such an emphasis? whose phrase of sorrow Conjurce the wandering stars, and makes them stand Like wonder-wounded hearers? This is I, Hamlet the Bane! (He loaps into the grave) Fis love for Ophelia was sincere and ardent. It was the house of driven to explatonic frenzy by his mother's sexual debasement. His me love for Ophelia lies like a chasm between him and the ø others. He knew the putrid atmosphere of the court. "s knew his Laertes, this youthful lecher, who, depraved his fister's mind. "c knew his smutty Polonius who instilled filthy suspicions into her confiding spirit, he knew his Rosengrantz and Guildenstern whose horizon was opunded by Lascivity , he knews the King and queen who set their hopes on Ophelia's physical beauty, bone s, him to become untrus managementaminimum to his mission. He hates them for their calumny of all that is most truly pure and noble. Not one of them but debased Ophelia's love for him and Hamlet's love for her into a conventional counter , if not into antalculated finstrument of) policy, relying on what there is of meanness in either, what to the hate little but he of al men has the least what to The theory test sufferences the mean has the least what to torwho but Hundet hinself conceived of the idea of using Ophelia's feelings for political ends? The but in the garb of the despised lover, so grossly conventional in hish disordered attire that the mere recounting the Ochelia led the

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alled frink from the Frime Kinister in the hackneyed diagnosis: "Mad for thy love"? hd h Mad for the love"? hd h daughteriat every turn of their ambiguous conversations? And who hd will will confirmed the suspicions in the numbery scene by his obscene insults to Ophelia ? The, but Hamlet the Eane? effects

11 -

At every turk of thecacrew Hamlet's suffering feeds on the finate not he ris own actions (was memmunt himself slandering C phelia to her ALher imael, dragging har through the mire of court he nimeclf prompt the idea that she should be made intrague decoy art in the (acono) a cavesdropping in which he wartures her aling unjust revenge on her for a role wits, thus most out of which he himself had devised for her? And yet, it is in this scene avarens her that Ophelia is most true to him: In is prostituting herselfated has become a spy of his vile enemies, a worthy ally of his debauched mother. While all the time scalet knows only too well that he, he alone is to blame. That all which appears to bear out his accusations, distant is in truth of his own doing, and no better than a coime against his pure and celoved child.

Ophelia to presition in the numbery worse is but little understood. She has been promised to marry Haulet if she can resord him to is his normal self. Beauty and honour, love and marriage are for once in concord. The loves Haulet and knows not of the danger that threatens is He never confided his burgen to her. Her task is to charm him back to life and happiness , to exorcise the demons that are darkening his opirit.

In the presence of her father and the King himself the jucen to Ophelis;

Queen;

en; 'And for your part, Ophelia, 1 do wish That your good beauties be the happy cause Of Hamlet's wildness; so shall 1 hope your wirthes Will bring him to his wonted way again, To both your hencurs:

Ochelia:

'Madam, J wish, it may'.

And it Act V. (che says at Ophelia's grave, not knowing of Hamlet's presence

'I hoped thou shouldst have been my Hanlet's wife; I thought thy oride-bed to have deck'd, sweet maid, And not have strew'd thy grave.

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In the numbery scene the **internet** Ophelia is met by the knowing Hamlet. He winces at the thought that Ophelia **internet** 'let loose' to seduce him -- turn him from allegiance to his dead father, from the path of honbur, and honesty, **and honesty**, on her feminine attractions.

His behaviour is as much to the point as it is what to

Ophelia:

- H .: 'He, he are you honest?
- O.: My lord?
- H.: Are you fair?
- 0. What means your lordship? h.? That if you be honest and
- h.? That if you be honest and fair, your honesty should admit no discourse to your beauty.
 O.: Could beauty, my lord, have better connerce than with
- honesty?
- H.: Ay, truly, for the power of beauty will sooner transform honesty from what it is to a bawd than the force of honesty can translate beauty into his likeness; this was cometime a paradox, but now the time gives it proof this data.
 - in his sense

Hamlet alone, knows that he must choose betweer love and

honour; that to turn anite for Schelia's sake from the course of them both. The , he quite to his works duty would dishonour the same has the says this with a twist rewith a twist revengeful of Polonius'and Laertes' low suspicions and resentful eminine of Ophelia's trission. But in the matter itself he is clear (the is returning his tokens) oppealed and concise. If Ophelia, and make ham C tried to marry her, she would merely appeal to his lust, and deprave rim; aligned for the path of honour, she would have to sacrifice their love. The that will never hausen. She should go to -- theorism also slang for brothel for that is where she be a nunnery by offerin celonged. 🔙 she not give proof of 🛁 therse and a pawd? in the secret presence of an adultorous morderer

Yet every particle of this is **The second of the second of**

But how could the mere delaying of reverge, which is the Hamlet's feigned maintes is the surver. Porecde guilt. It tempts him into using not only his enemies but also his Triends as tools; it traps him into by making insincerity appear as a duty. It confuses him shout himself to the point of maxing him e riddle to himself. 🗃 his public confession of his Dave han for Ochelia at her grave, he plays the fool no more. He is preparing : for the end. There is only a short interin with the news from the swo confreis England of te death must arrive. *nildenstern* Serene Faulel'aquiated composure in this last part of the glay is arymone beauty. Ready to die, there is no reason 1 First to kill the King. That he no more utters the wish to die, how the great a the difference between the Eamlet of the first and the last dot of the play. Then he the ht have to did and person of it ofter , now by wanted to die and keeps silent, in his quiet readiness. It is the fing whose hours are now counted.

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So much about the contents of this play which has no less a subject than life and death. Samlet is in the last not as near to committing suicide as - play allows which is about suicide. This is as No paradox. Othells is about jealousy, someo and Juliet is about love; if their heroes consit suicily, it is out of jalcusy or love, not out of a wish for suicide. The pitte only cassion that is undrematic times as one who would be sufficiently ILUTplay. There is nothing more pusaling in the whole realm of manman the drama. where **there's** we seek a colution of the answer? un the to watch the variable of him the Eve low knows the history of the purloined letter. To hide it safely, it was left right in the middle of the table. For no-one would look for it there. assall May I quote a few lines (rom a which, one would assume, is too well known to nide a secret?-/ sul of su remember Resta 20 when it Fish stonet me

'To be, or not to be; that is the question: Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, Or to take arms against a sea of troubles, And by opposing end them? To die, - to sleep,-No more....

14

Luch has been written about this monologue. Bradley the greatest of all pritics of Shakespeare's plays, cars that the soliloguy was rather irrelevant since it and did not refer to the action itself. Hamlet was philosophising about life and death ... Pour of the this soliloguy Hamlet is not thinking of the duty laid upon him at all. He is debating the question of sui-Mamlet proceeds to discuss man spossible fortune in another side. * life. And then, gneralising, he sais, (what applies to himself, no coubt, though he shows no consciousness of the fact) that such speculation or reflection makes men hesitate and shring like cowards from great actions and enterprises' (p. 98, fontnote). Brailey lost regaried this we a proof that Hamlet had by this time forgotton about his sacred promise. "His reflections have no reference to this particular moments ! "What can be more significant than the fact, that he is suck in these reflections (onsuicile/ on the very day which is to istermine for him the truthfulness of the Shost?' (p. 132). Bradley had conclusion that the great soliroway was of no dramatic importance.

git in amount

Millions of people have listened to that monologue and did not think so. Losts of actors have spoken it and they, also, did not feel so. In the contrary, they all formation that in some hnaccountable may be very heart of the play is throbbing there.

They were emphatically right. 'To be or not to be! is about hhfmannhodenthan firing or syling, it is about suicide, which is me the problem of the play. But suicide is just and the impossible (subject for a drama as inaction and the unsuitable as a plot. The mystery of the successful play thickens.

Bradley was, of course, wrong. Those five lines give mms away the secret.mm The audience first assumes that the hero stating a clearcut alternative at a moment of high dramatic tension is weighing the alternative on which the play hinges: killing the King or not? 'To be' mean to live and kill the King; 'Not to be' means not to kill the King. Yet Hamlet describes 'To be' as passive, auffering **Mathematic**, not killing him as armed action and forcible opposition. Almost without exception critics bolted at, this point and did not follow up the implications, faces must appear inter most confusing jutil one remembers that Hamlet has turned' way from life, of which he can now only think in terms of resignation and passivity (Even if passivity **Mathematic** happen to include a number of so-called actions as killing the King, marrying Ophelia, raining the country, and so on. **Mathematics** worthy of the name falls under the heading 'Not to be'. One can perform it with a tare bodkin. Were it not that

> '... 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.'

- .15 -

With the thought of action this soliloguy opens and closes, Jowie says. et, actually, it deals solely of suicide. You can call those lines confused, but in them you have the

dramatic truth of the play.

It deals with suicide in terms of killing an enemy. It deals with delay in terms of Abbessent action. Hanlet who feigned madness in order to gain time is endangered by the effects of his stratagem and thus forces to take action. By delaying the killing of the Ming Total is prolonging his own life. By stabbing Folonius instead of the Ming, Wanlet fails to free himself from his predicament. And yet when we feel that his end is approaching, we rightly believe that the day of reckoning has come for the Ming. The whole of instead is thus translated into external events, into sharply accentuated dramatic action.

All through the play external events are hardly more than a maxil reflection or a confirmation of what Hamlet knows by inward evidence. He is a genius who can play on the human soul as Rosencrantz and Suildensterne would have liked to play on high. He foresees Ophelia's report to her father; he is conscious of the eavesdroppers in the mann numbery scene; he is on the track of the egging courtiers, he guesues their mission, he justly appraises the purpose of the fencing match, he correctly instructs the players, and with the one exception of Polonius behind the arras, whon he mistakes for the King, Hamlet is as a person endowed with double sight.

16

Pour times in the play Hamlet's premonitions are translated into reality. He sees his father's figure 'in his mini's eye' even before he is told of the appearance of the ghost; he doubts 'some foul play' before the ghost reveals it to him; his prophetic soul guessed his uncle's guilt, as he knew that the ond was coming before it had actually come. You will excuse me for reminding you "In domain"

Mamlet : I shall win & the odds. But thou would not hink how ill all's here about my heart; but it is no matter.

Moratio: Nay, my good lord, --

0.32

- Mamlet : It is but foelery; but it is such gaingiving as would perhaps trouble a woman.
- Horatic: If your mind dislike anything , aby it; I will_forestall their repair hither , and say you are not fit.
- Hamlet : Not a whit; we defy augry; theme 's a special providence in the fall of a spareon . If it be now , ' tis not to come; if it be not to come , it will be now; if it be not now , yet it will come ; the readiness is all; since no one knows of

aught he leaves , what is't to leave betimes?

From the tragis point of view : Hamlet parts willingly from life; he commits suicide. But dramatically he does not. He is mardered, and, the certainty of his own death releases him to do his duty.

in hear. Othello, Macbeth Too kilo on the with the first Act the tragedy is set. Lear in his vanity and folly has thrown himself on the generouity of his heartless Hauthters: then he interest of heartless Hauthters: then he interest of lesdemona was a triumph of heart and spirit any of age and race which will never stand the test of the brute passion; Othello goes to his docm. Manhaming In Macbeth the weird sisters is draw the circle of tragedy around the hero and his ambition; the is follows as by geometrical necessity. Similarly in Hamlet. Here also the opening Act of the play contains the tragedy in nuce. His mother's shame has robbed Hamlet of the faculty to live. When his father's many dece command reaches him, tentette fate is sealed. The list father's many dece not end with that how to my revenge!' the sith: 'The time is out of joint, Oh cursed spite that ever I was born to set it right!' Before the antein falls on the first Act, this has been decreed: Hami let will lose his life while trying to save it by feigning to be mad.

- 17 -

blat fundes the n order better to prepare his Amblet i PSazo Gramaticus' revenge on the King; Shakespeare's Haulet on the contrary seeks instruments of delay. This is the true function of his nations in the plat. But for his feigned madness Hamlet could not have put off his decision without a conflict with his friends and supporters. Such a conflict would have dragged his own inner satisfies struggle to the light and been arts artistically fatal. A Ramlet who refused to every the behest of the ghost or deliberately hesitated to ast, when pressed by his friends, would lose the sympathy art would equally lose the admiration of the andience if he were defeated in his quest for revenge by the King and the .Court. Actually, Hamlet himself is the only obstacle both to the decision to take revenge on the King and to the carrying out of that decision. Bhis raises the play to the highest level of universality in terms of inner life and this massively external play is transposed by Shakespeare's art into blood, fire, and brimstone. Small wonder that it makes a good play.

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Hamlet is about the human condition. We all live and refuse to die, but (not) we are all the time decided to live and be happy, certainly not in all the essential respects in which life infites us. To contract the are all the time delaying happiness and putting off life, because we fear to commit ourselves to live. Our self-feeling (we should not call it morbid) may then estima centre on an action which to our dismay we find ourselves not doing. This makes Hamlet's delay so symbolic. Life is man's missed opportunity. Let in spite of all, Hamlet's life fulfills itself. For readiness to die is readiness to live.

I will realise that I have not given you what I set out to de, some of my inner assurance that I once understood the Prince in that easy conversational manner in which one imagines one understands oneself. There are moments when I am tempted to feel that it may have all been no more than a dream of to have learned. bad days. Sometimes one imagines one has learned in one's sleep the secret of like, yet on awakening finds these it has all evaporated. It may be that now I am happy I am no longer able to remember the secret of Mamlet.

Karl Polanyi

If an inglish reader should suspect that a man must come from afar indeed to have hit upon that most outworn of all oubjects, "Samlet," that reader's summine will be correct.

I was serving as an officer in the Justro-Hungarian Any some thirty years ago and the Aussian winter and the blackishyellow steppe made me feel sick at heart. In my desclution 1 had for companion a volume of chakespeare's plays. I found myself reading and re-reading out of thems "The Tragedy of Handet, Prince of Demmark. Altogether I must have read it over some three dozen times. By personal life had taken a turn towards derkness. Daylight seemed bounded in a narrowing disc which was growing dismer and dismer. I remember at one time the cold was so intense that much my horse stubbled and fell, I was too apathetic to get out of the audile. Fortunately - though I myself might not have thought so - the glant stiff creature, a-Gossack mare we had picked up, jerked herself onto her leas less and I was seved, for has she rolled over 1 should have been crushed. At that period of my existence my soul was numbed and fell under the spell of a recurrent day-dream. I read my "Hundet" and every word, phrase and intomation of its blank verse seemed plain and clear to me.

For many years the memory of these black months haunted me. I could not rid myself of the idea that by some weird enance I had possessed myself of Hamlet's secret. I know shy he did not hill the King. I know shat it was he feared. I know shy he so awiftly was Polonius through the body shen he mistode him for the

REALSE

Ning pretending he was only chacing a rat. I knew what his conflueed words to Ophelia meant. But even while I still fult I knew, I was already fast forgetting. By days were clearing up and, as light broke in, knowledge passed into shadowy recollection, which in its turn faded into a more intellectual understanding. I was now happy and could only faintly remember what had once formed part of my being's Manlet's infamen sufferings. Yet something in me insisted that my theories on Hamlet's indecision and feighed madness were not merely the morbid offspring of my late welledy.

However, I merely propose to recount my reaction to the opinion of that great Angliah critic, andrew Secil Bradley, whose views on Hamlet's character, when I came across them, struck me by their recemblance to my own. But Bradley had stopped short of the solution.

Hamiet's inaction, so bracky thought, was to be explained by the influence of a prefound melanohely. He is snocked by his mother's gross sensuality into after disguet of life. It is in this frame of mind that the revelation of his father's marder and the command of revenge reaches him. Als mind is poisoned and paralysed, hence his endless hesitations. The other companents of his character - intellectual genius, moral considerity, temperanental instability - were either cause or expression of this melanoholy. It alone accounts for the source of the play if taken tegether with the periods of normal behavior during which Hamlet's "healthy impulses", those remnants of a virile personality, break forth.

10 BAD

In this picture I recognized my Hamlet. At the same time, I know that Bradley had not unlocked the double secret of Hamlet, the person and the play. For at the heart of it all, there is inaction which the here cannot justify and for which nothing second to him to account satisfactorily. But there is also the riddle of how a successful play could ever have been staged about inaction. As one would expect, one key served both locks.

24

Hamlet's melanoholy seems at first to offer a full and estisfactory explanation, both of his dilatory behavior and of his own lack of comprehension of himself. The play shows him in a state of deep dejection in which he is average to any kind of action. <u>Hitcheys</u> is the Russian for it. It finds its medium of expression in mechanical answers, a sort of back-chat; sometimes he repeats the words of the speaker without irony or wit, like a man too bemimbed to consider what he is asying. And yot "this allegedly flower like youth", Bradley said, "rages through the major part of the play, mardering and destroying mouse lives, rubbless, floree, a terror to the Court." And as Douden remarked of the extreme impulsiveness of this peculiar dreamer, "he suddenly conceives of the possibility of unmarking the King's guilt on the accidental arrival of the players, and proceeds without delay to put the matter to the test, suddenly overcheles Ophelia with his reproaches of wemanhood, suddenly stabs the cavesdropper behind the arras, suddenly as if under some irresistible inspiration, sends his companions on shipboard to

their deaths, suddenly bourds the pirates, suddenly grapples with Learter in the grave, suddenly does execution on the guilty King, plucks the poison from Horatic's hands and gives his dying voice to a successor to the threne." Not in his <u>lucide intervalle</u> Hamlet is unable to understand the perelycing pressure which his molanchely exerts on him at other times. This accounts for his inability to find a good reason for his insetion.

But why then, we cannot help asking ourselves, do the healthy implies arise so frequently as to make hamlet into a person of almost terrible ruthlessmess and yet prevent him from doing the deed which he has mean the spirit of his father to do? Having conset without remores the deaths of at least four persons in the king's entourage, why does he still seem to have some no mearer to the performance of his supreme supportunity to take his revenge on the King? Is this a more coincidence? The sections spens to think it is not so, etherwise it would lose interest. There must be some hidden reason for Hamlet's hesitation to perform the required act, a reason which hadlet himself cannot fathem and which permaps will be revealed only through his out death.

But there is more to it than this. Hamlet's spurts of action and inaction are no freaks of a temperapent which alternate between feverish explaits and alothful lethargy. He often does one thing instead of another. He not only refrains from alonghtering the

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Aing in the proper scene, but also slays Polonius mistaking him for the King, soldblockedly shouting "a rab". Yet he could not have been too melanoholy to make a tarast at the King and still be sufficiently bealthy to stab relonius. "Healthy impuble" could not have intervened at ense too late to make him act rightly and yet in time to make him act wrengly. Paralysis of will power should not prevent a sem from acting in one way but leave him uninhibited to act sagerly in another. On the other hand, in the last act familet, having made no preparations to destroy the King, kills him on the instant. He takes performs with meet a marber of actions except the one required of him, and then suddenly does the deed without any sign of hesitation. The widdle of the delay in hilling the Eing still stares us in the face.

Bradley missed the answer by a hair's breadth. He addreed instances of Hamlet's proneness to action and added, "he acts in these cases since it is not <u>370</u> one hateful action on which his morbid self-feeling had centered." He meant, of course, the killing of Glandhus. Unfortunately, he did not follow up the clue.

The truth is that Hamist does not kill his uncle, because through the force of circumstances and by reason of his character his averagness to live has become centered on this "one hateful action". While continuing to live he is unable to decide for life. He can live only as long as he is not forced to resolve to do so. Challenged to take a decision, it would be his undeing, since he could not deliberately choose life. This, in terms of drama, is the purport of Hamlet's melanoholy.

en Sene

We should not take Hamlet's professions of wishing to die "A la lattre, they are only the expressions of a mood, he does not want to die, he merely hates to live. A here who stubbornly insisted on dying would be insupportable. There would be no conflict to follow, no play to watch; for who would care to prevent him from having his way? Haulet's elaborations on the these "I wish I were dead" simply mean that he would refuse to acttle down to the job of life, should such a decision have to be taken by him. But most of us never have to make such a decision. Hamlet is, like all of us, prepared to fight for his life, and maybe all the more bravely because he does not set it "at a pin's fee".

Here lie the despent roots of the delay.

Hamlet is out of time with life, but only the appearance of the ghost starts the tragedy. He meridy simped to withdraw from the Court and rative to sittenberg, though at his mother's entreaties (and perhaps for Ophelia's sake) he postponed his departure. Now his father's ghost compands him to kill the King. Note is pushing him towards a decision; His fate is to be taken out of his hands. To obey would involve all that hire involves, he is to become King himself, perhaps with Ophelis for his queen, the princely rater of the Court of Elsinsre, a rediant oun amongst a host of Accentrations and duildensterns. Hamlet knows in his bones that he will not comply. His refusal to "set the world right" springs from his dread of becoming part of a world he now detests more bitterly than ever. The ghost has uttered

...6.

his death sentence. He will perioh before he fulfills that command and he knows it. This, in a sense, is Hamlet's most personal secret.

The Milling of the King, "ch curace spite", now stands for the decision to live. This action, on which his morbid selffeeling centers, he cannot perform not the mechanical act itself that is different - but the act of filled duty enjoince upon him by his father's tearful command, involving him in a fatal sequence of obligations, a dead that would plunge him into the maclatrom of life. Hamlet could kill the King sacily by mistake, off the recerd, under the cover of an alibi, by a discumed gesture, under the pretence of chance, by some emphatically unsymbolic act - or show the and was accured and he himself was already decoved to die, but not as a connectous meaningful act, as long as he is alive.

actually, he attempts both - to do it, pretending it in unintentional and to do it, when this can no more affect his own fate. He stabe Felonius in a trice, when he mistakes him for his better, while instinctively desying any deliberate purpose in the very act. and, even more decisively at the end, when he almost explicitly repeats three tipes his "I an dead", and the sceptical dreamer becomes Voltaire's butcher boy, whose slaughters are no more than mechanical action, signifying nothing, since he, Hamlet, is now sceursly dead.

II.

Humlet's feigned madness was, I suspect, the vortes

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attracting me in my malady. I mean the role of his pretended fancies in the fulfilment of his tragedy. His antics are the instrument of his doom.

Hamlet's excited doings after the encounter with the gheat are a more almost of his melancholy. He is moving away with all his being from the Court, from convention, from all that which "scens", when fate arrests his flight and hurls him back into the center of domintion. He almost loses his senses for sheer horror of the apparition and fears that he will not be able to recover them. As soon as the fit wears off - and he gots over it guickly - a definite concern overmasters him and determines the use he will make of his discovery of his best for antica. This anxiety springs from the fear of being pushed to action against his will. His first reaction is to turn secretive, so as to remain free. This is not an act of political cautions by confiding the secret of his feigned madnese to them, he proves that he trusts his friends implicitly. But should they but learn of what happened between his and the ghost, and the dread decision could no longer be deferred. Only if he alone knows of the seful revelation - later maybe Horatio, his alter eno is he, Hamlet, safe. In delaying the decision, Hamlet is fighting for his life. Jeigned mainess was his most personal response to this situation. The whole rhythm of the tragedy is set by this.

It has been noted that towards the end of the play Hamlet's gloom to lifting and the assumed derangement fades amoy. For some unaccountable reason - one would rather expect the opposite -

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he nov appears more placid and composed. This anticliman is one of the chief becutics of the play. Yet how could it be otherwive? Hamlet who at the beginning of the play imagined that he wished to sie, is now ready to go. He makes no preparations to kill the King and yet seems cartain that the hour of revenge is approaching. Yet again, how could this be othervise? He now welcomes death not any more from a confusion of moods which denies the meaning of life, but from a recognition of its true meaning. He strikes down the king, when he himself is "dead" and death come to him when he is rive for it. The accidents which appear to control the course of the play are a mere semblance; its progress is as plain as Calvary. No wonder that the figure of Hamlet could be interpreted as that of a saint. and yet, no worse misunderstanding is conceivable. It is true tragedy, the story of guilt and explation. and it is his feigned madness, chosen by him as a tool of his just revenge, which involves Haulet deeper and deeper in guilt.

Hamlet staged his ontice with deadly precision and with a grim sense of instant. The "dumb scene" sends Ophelia crying into her father's arms, her father rushes post-kaste to the hing, the hing decides to set a trap with Ophelia herself as bait. Hamlet now excels in frate of rementic irony. He sets them the riddles what is the conse of his own madmass? Hamlet knows his orew and make them gauges true to character. Polonius, that pempone vacuity, displays all the self-assurance of his wordy cynicism, Hamlet thwaries in sectoring Ophelia has gone made. The Queon, somewhat measure the truth, is made to feel the guilt of her overheaty merringe. The Hing along is on a par with

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Hamlet and refuces to be daped by his feiled lover's frensies. He sends for hosenerants and Guildenstern, arranges for the trap, orders Hamlet to be put under guard, dispatches him to England, sets Laertes on his trail and concects the murder plot. But for him, they are all Hamlet's puppets. Hamlet at first enjoys his cruck superiority; the chaotizement of that solemn medicority, Folonius, the self-debacement of these farming gigglers, Hosenerants and Guildenstern, even the anguish of the King caused by Hamlet's eminous conversational flashes. Eventually, Hamlet, playing the madman, stages a play in the play, the effects of which on the Hing send him into transports of joy. and yet, all the time his belpless self is more and more emmeshed in guilt. In spite of his glamorous antice he knows, in his most senditive heart, that he has lost his way.

Hamlet's tragedy is emseahed in his love for Ophelia, whom he has satificed. "I loved Ophelia", he ories at her grave when all is over. It is the turning point of Hamlet's drama. Up to this time external events failed to penetrate the shroud of his melancholy. His inner isolation was complete. Suddenly in a flach of pain, it happens. Listen to his ranting and to his awakening when he knows himself:

Hamlets ".. What is he, whose grief

Bears such an emphasis? These phrase of sorrow Conjures the wondering stars, and makes them stand Like wonder-wounded hearcro? - <u>This is 1</u> Hamlet the Dene!"

(He leaps into the grave.)

His love for Sphelia was pure and ardent. Haulet is driven

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to the paint of platonic frenzy by his mother's seemal debasement, which has tarred Ophelia with the case break. But not even his mother is beyond redemption, terribly though she has einned, how much less the innocent Cyhelis who he must feel is morely a vietim of his imaginations? His love for her lies like a chasm between him and the others. He knows the patrid atmosphere of the Court. He knows his Lagrees, the youthful lecher who is depraving his own elster's mind. He knows his courty Felonius, who instills vile suspicions into her confiding souls He knows his hesenerants and dulldenstern whose horizon is bounded by lasolviousness. He knows his fing and quarm who set busiv hopes on ophelia's physical charms which shall tough him to become untrus to his mission. He hates then for their calumny of all that is most truly noble. Not one but debased ophylin's love for him and his for her into a political counter, speculating an what there was of weakness in either.

He haves and despises them, yet of all men he, hashet, has the least right to do so. For two also but he kinedif had conceived of the idea of using Ophelia's feelings for political endsy who fooled her in the gars of the distracted lover, so groasly conventional in his disordered attire, that the more recounting of the scene called forth from the Frike Himister the backneyed diagmosis "Had for thy love"? and the fed Felonius' suspicions, harping on his daughter at every turn of their ambiguous dialogue? and who confirmed those suspiciens in the mannery scene by his insults to Ophelia? Who but he, Haulet the Dane?

1. J. J. 40

At every turn of the screw Hashet's sufferings feed on the effect of his own actions. Was he not slandering Ophelia to her father? Twinting himself with the virus he leathed, dragging her through the mire of court ingrigue, prompting the hims to maker her a decoy in the envestropping scene, in which he takes unjust revenge on her for playing the very role he devised for her? Not it is in this scene that Ophelia is most true to him. She is wronged by him, as Cordelia, when she resembles, is wronged by her complacently over-generous father. Masket arraigns her for prostibuting herefif, a worthy slip of his debauched mether, while all the time he knows only too well that he alone is to blame. What scenes to bear out his accusations is in truth of his own doing, and no better than a crime against this pure and beloved shild.

Ophelia has been promised that she shall marry Hamlet if she restored him to his normal self. Adduty and henor, love and marriage, are for once in concord. She loves Hamlet and known not of the danger that threatens him. He never confided his burden to her. Her task is to charm him back to lite and happiness, to exercise the demons that are darkening his spirit. What role could be more appropriate to her selfless devotion?

In the presence of her own father and of the Hing himself the oneen had said to Ophelia:

Queen: "And for your part, Sphelia, I do wish That your good beauties be the happy cause Of Hamlet's wildness; so shall I hope your wirtues Will bring him to his wonted way again, To both your honors!

12

Ophelia: Madame 1 sich it mays"

And later at Ophelia's grave she says, ignorant of Hamle's presence:

Queen: "I hoped than shouldst have been my Hamlet's wife; I thought thy bride-bed to have deck'd; sweet maid; and not have strew'd that grave."

In the numery scene Chelis, who knows nothing, is but by Hamlet, who knows sverything. He sinces at the thought that Ophelia has been "let loose" upon him to seduce him from the sulesiance to his dead father and turn him sway from the path of homor and homosty. His words are as much to the point as they are unfair to Ophelia:

Hermil 6 6 4	"Hay he are you honese?
Opholia.	My lord?
24	Are you fair?
0	west means your lordship?
H	That if you be honest and fair, your honesty
	should educt no discourse to your beauty.
0	Could beauty, my lard, have better conserve
	than with honesty?
H	Ay, truly, for the power of beauty will sconer
-	transform honesty from which it is to a bund
	than the force of honesty can translate beauty
	into his likeness; this was sometime a paradex,
	but now the time sives 14 proof."

Mambet knows that for him to turn back for Opbelia's sake from the course of duty scale disbonor them both. True, recentful at the role cast for Ophelia, and desirous of revenge for relonics" and Leertes' low appersions, he gives a twist to his words. But on the satter itself, he is clear and concise. If Ophelia (she is offering to return his takens) were to try and make him marry her, she would be merely depraving him; if, on the contrary, she sere to attempt to follow him in the path of hence, she would have to sucrifice their love. She should go to a mannery - also disks for brothel - for that is where she belongs. Has she not given proof of it by offering hercelf in the secret presence of an adulterous merderer and a perental band?

Yet all this is Hunlet's een work. Fredently he will insult her in the presence of the Court and use her as a sucke-screen in his hunt for the margerer. Eventually, he will kill her father, whom she adored. By the time Ophelia drowns hereelf, Haalet has deserved more than one death. Invarily, he must have all a hundred.

But shy did the more delaying of revenge involve Hamlet in such monotrous guilt? His feighed madness is the anover, form of hatred of life and a sigh to delay the doing of his duty, it breeds guilt. It must tempt him into using not only his engaines but also his friends as tools; it traps him into covardly evasions and makes insincerity appear as an obligation. It confuses him and makes him a riddle unto himself.

But after that public confession of his love for ophelia, he plays the fool no more. He is preparing for the end. There is but a short "interim" before the news from England must come of the death of the King's agents. Homlet's composure in the last part of the play is of sugreme beauty. Accountled to death he need no longer mesitate to kill the King. He now utters no wish to die which shows the difference between the Hamlet of the first and of the last act. Then he only inspined that he longed for doubt and spoke of it often; now he wants to die and keeps silent in quist readiness. It is the King whose heurs are numbered. So much for the contents of this play which has no less a subject than refusal to live. But that precisely is why its theatrical success is a puzzle. Longing for death is the only passion that is undramatic. and yet "Hanlet" if anything, is a good play. Be manager, no actor is able to spell it. Share to seek for a colution of this riddle?

Everybody knows the history of the purloined letter which was left in full view on the table where no one would think of looking for it. May I quote a passage which, one would assume, is too well known to hide a secret. (I still remember the day, more than thirty years ago, when it first struck me.)

"To be, or not to be: that is the question. Whether "tic mobler in the mind to suffer The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, Or to take arms against a see of troubles, and by opposing the them? To die, * to sleephe more

Each has been written about this monologue. Some of it is chasing. "In this soliloguy", breakey suid, "Memiet is not thinking of the duty laid upon him at all. He is debuting the question of suicide." Haslot, he thought had by this time forgotton his secred premise. "Shot can be more significant than the fact that he is such in these reflections (on suicide) on the very day which is to determine for him the truthfulness of the dhost?" and so bradley, like some others before him, came to the conclusion that the great soliloguy was of no drematic importance.

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III.

Eillions of people have listened to it and did not feel so. Her did the hosts of actors who spoke it. They were all convinced that in some unaccountable fashion the very heart of the play was throbbing there.

They were right, of course, since "To be or not to be" is about suicide, the problem of the play. But the mystery of the successful play only despens, for suicide is as imponsible as the subject of a drama as inaction is unsuitable for a plot.

Yet those five lines give anay the secret of the stage success. "To be or not to be, that is the question." A clear out alternative stated by the here at a moment of high dramatic tension. The here must be suighing the alternative on which the play hinges: killing the king or not? Yet Hamlet refers to the first as <u>passivity</u>, to the second as <u>simed action</u> and <u>infolds of following up the implications of the second paradox: Hamlet has turned amay from life, of which he can think only in terms of passivity, even if this happens to invalve a mumber of se-called actions such as killing the King, marrying Ophelia, ruling the country and as on. For the one and only true action following the heading of "Hot to be". One can perform it with a bare bookin, when it hat</u>

> ".... Conscience does make cowards of us all. And thus the native hus of resolution is eloblicd ofer with the pale cast of thought, and enterprises of great pith and moment with this regard their currents turn arry and lose the name of action."

with the thought of action the solidayuy opens and ends. Yet it deals solely with suicide. In this syparent confusion you

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have the dramatic trath of the play. The alternative is killing the king or killing himself. Inward and outward are bridged by Hamlet's visionary gifts. He sees his father's figure "in his mind's eye" even before he is told of the appearance of the ghost; he doubts "some foul play" before the ghost reveals it to him. His prophetic soul gaussed his usole's guilt. He foresees Ophelia's report to her father; he is conscious of the savesdroppers in the mannery scene; he is on the track of the apying constiers, he guesses their mission, he justly appreises the purpose of the fearing match, he correctly instructs the players, and with the one exception of releafue behind the arras, when he mistakes for the King, he is an aperate undowed with double dight.

Until the very end his presentions are translated into reality:

- Howlets "I shall win at the odds. But then wouldst not thisk how ill all's here about my heart; but it is no matter.
- Horatios hay, my good lord a . .
- Hamlet: It is but icolery; but it is such gaingiving as sould perhaps trouble a woman.
- Horatic: If your mind dislike anything, over it; I will forestall their repair mither, and say you are not fit.
- Hanlet: Not a whit; we dely augury; there's a special providence in the Tall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tic not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come; the readiness in all; since no one knows of aught he leaves, what is't to leave betimes?"

From the tragic point of view, Hamlet parts willingly from life; he commits suicide. Dramatically he does not. He is murdered and the certainty of his own death releases him to do his duty.

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as in hear, Othello or MacDeth, with the first act the tragedy is set. Lear in his vanity and folly has threen himself on the generosity of his heartheas daughters - in the rest of the play he fulfills his fate. The Moor's conquest of Desdemone was a triumph of spirit over disparity of age and race which can never stand the test of brute passion, Othello goes to his doom. In MacDeth the weird sisters draw the circle of tragedy around the hero and his notorious ambition, the end follows as ay geometrical necessity. Similarly, as I see it, in "Homiet". The opening act contains the tragedy in mage. When his father's command reaches him, Hamlet's fate is cealed. Instead of "Now to my revenge", his words are: "The time is out of joint, on cursed opite that ever I was born to put it right!" herore the curtain rises on the mercand act, it has been decreed that Hamlet will lose his life while delaying action by feigning to be mage.

We need not go far to understand shy Hamlet is a good play. Hamlet's whole inner conflict, his hovering on the confines of life and death, is translated here into external events, into sharply accentuated dramatic action. This play is about suicide in terms of killing on energy it is about endless delay in terms of incressant action.

The plot is extremely clever. Same Grammaticus' "which pretended madness in order to prepare for his revenge on the King, Shakespeare's Hamlet, on the contrary, seeks instruments of delay. This is the true function of his madness in the plot. But for his feigned madness, Hamlet could not have put off his decision without a clach with his friends and supporters. This would have dragged

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his own inner conflict to light and been artistically fatal. For a hamlet who refused to obey the behast of the ghost or deliberately hesitated to not when presed by his friends, would lose the sympathy of the audience, just as he would lose their admiration if he were defeated in his quest for revenge by hing and Court. As matters are, Hamlet himself is the only obstacle both to the decision to take revenge on the King and is the carrying out of that decision. This raises the play to the highest level of universality is terms of inner life, while spelling it out through shakespeare's art into blood, fire and brimstone. Small wonder that it makes a good play!

"Hashet" is about the human condition. So all live and refuse to die, but we are not decided to live and be happy in all the essential respects in which life invites us. To some extent we are delaying happiness and putting off life, because we fear to commit ourselves to live. This makes the hero's delay so symbolic. Life is man's missed opportunity. Yet Hamlet's life fulfills itself, for readiness to die is readiness to live.

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from afur there to the sould an and the sub-

was serving as an officer in the Anstro-Hungarian Amy years we have been winter and the blackishyellow stapps made no feel tick at heart. In my develotion 1 had for esty which a volume of shakespeare's plays. I found myself rouding and re-rousing one of theme "the tragedy of Hemici, Frince of Dommarks altogether I must have read it over some three dogen times, ay personal lits had taken a turn towards derinees. Daylight second bounded in a narrowing disc which was growing disser and disser. I remember at one time the cold was so intense that when my horse stabuled and fall, I was too apathetic to get out of the stables sortunately - though I are cell might not have thought our the affect stiff creature, a huge cooses marghe had picked up, jerked hersels onto her long lego as the welt toor got , and i was saved, for has she ralles over, i Would have been Crushed by at that period of my existence my coul was numbed and fell under the woll of a recurrent day-dream. I read my "Humber" and every word, phrase and intenation of its blank verse seeme plain and clear to me.

FOR many years the memory of these black months mainted me. I could not rid agrealf of the idea that by open woird shaped I had possessed myself of humbet's search. I have say in die not kill the Hing. I have shat it was he feared. I have shy as to wistly year solutions through the body mean at mistode him for the Ling pretending he was only chosing a rat, 1 knew what his confaced words to Ophelia meant. And even while 1 still felt I knew, I was already fast forgetting. By days were clearing up and, as light broke in, knowledge passed into shadowy recollection. Mis marks in its turn faded into a more intellectual understanding. I was now happy and could only faintly recember shet had once formed part of my beings Hamlet's inhuman sufferings. Tet something in me insisted that my theories on Hamlet's indecision and feigned madness were not merely the mirble sifepring of my latemalady.

However, I norely propose to recount (or reaction to the opinion diffic great <u>extended in a</u> and reacted brackey, whose views on Hamiet's character, when I came across them, about as the colution. But bracked extended just who was a he with back

Humist's inaction, so **Draftey** thought, suc to be explained by the influence of a profound melancholy. He is shocked by his mother's group menanality into utter disgust of life. It is in this frame of mind that the revelation of his father's surder and the command of revenge reaches him. His mind is pricented and paralyzed, names his sudless insitutions. Not other compenents of his character - intellected genius, morel constility, temperamental instability - pere either cause of expression of this melancholy. It alone accounts for the source of the play if taken together with the periods of normal behavior during which Hamist's "healthy impulses", those remaants of a virile personality, break forth.

na Jas

In this picture 1 recognized my Hamlot. and this same I knew that Bradley had not WA the double sea that of "Hamleb" her plays and the heart of attain, 1200200 1.0 inaction which the here counci justify and for which nothing Secure to him to account entiriactors also the riddle of how a successful play could ever h stonet In the stadle put this The Key soned way. both work the sty fish TAK Hables's melencholy seems adminust to offer MAMAA/MM der MAMMay explanationy both of his dilatory behavior and of his own lack of comprehension of himself. The play shows him in a state of deep dejection in which he is averag to any kind He mailes in of action. <u>Altehery</u> is the Bussien for it. hivel et agreeton is mechanical answers, a sort of back-abat; reser times he repeats the content the speakers without irony or wit, like a man too bemeabod to consider what he is anying. And yet This allowed the set of the set o the major part of the play, mardering and destroying human lives, ruthless, fleres, a terror to the court." tias Devilen remark CINER CONTRACTOR SECONDER STATISTICS suddenly conceives of the possibility of unmashing the King's guilt on the accidental arrival of the players, and proceeds without delay to put the matter to the test, ouddenly overwhelms Ophelia with his repressions of semanhood, suddenly stabs the eavesdropper bahind the arras, suddenly as if under some irresistible inspiration, sende his companions on shipboard to

500 g Donden's beculies decance get in accorded att their deaths, suddenly bourde the pirates, suddenly grapples with Lectes in the grave, suddenly does execution on the guilty King, plucks the polson from Hornito's hands and gives his dying volce to a successor to the thread, " That I his lucide intervalle Restet is unable to understand the paralysing pressure which his molon- > Delle aboly exerts on him at other times. This accounts for his inability to find a good reason for his inaction.

Bravly publics

But why them, we cannot help acking surselves, do the healthy inpulses arise as frequently as to make Hamlet into a person of almost terrible ruthlessness and yet prevent him from doing the deed which he has sworn the spirit of his father to do? Having caused without remorse the deaths of at least four persons in the King's entourage, why does he still seen to have come no nearer to the performance of his amprene futy? Say does the "vell of melancholy" never lift when he has an opportunity to take his revenge on the ging? Is this a more coincidence? The audience not feel th t is not so, otherwise it would lose interest. There must be some hidden remann for Hamlet's hemitation to perform the required act, a reason which Hamlet himself cannot fathom and which perhaps will be revealed only through his sum apartas and to trus keys he an coner there is more to it than (three) haules's spurts of action and inaction are no frenks of a temperament which alternate between feverish anglaits and slothful letharmy. By often does one thing includ of enclose. He not only refrains from cloughtering the

ning in the proper seens, but also alays Folonium mistaking him for the King, coldbloadedly shouting "a mat". Yet he could not have been too melanoholy to make a thrust at the King and still be sufficiently healthy to stab relomium. "Healthy impuble" could not have intervened at ence too late to make him set rightly and yet in time to make him set wrongly. Faralysis of will power should not prevent a man from acting in one way but leave him uninhibited to act engerly in another. On the other hand, in the last act Kamlet, having made no preparations to destroy the King, hills him on the instant. He theus performs with mest a mumber of actions except the one required of him, and then enderstly does the deed without any sign of hesitation. The rights of the delay in hilling the King still starse us in the face.

bredley minned the answer by a hair's breadth. He adduced instances of Hemlet's proneness to action and added, "he acto in these cases since it is not <u>JM</u> one hateful action on which his morbid self-feeling had centered," He meant, of course, the killing of Clauding, Unfortunately, he did not follow up the alus.

The truth is that Hamiet does not kill his uncle, because is truth is that Hamiet does not kill his uncle, because is averaged to force of circumstances and by remach of his absructor his averaged to live has become centered on this "one hateful action". While continuing to live he is unable to decide for thre. He can live only as long as he is not forced to recolve to do co. Challenged to take a decision, it would be his undeing, since he would not deliberately choose life. This, in terms of drama, is the purport of Hamiet's melancholy.

we shall not take Hamlet's professions of wishing to die "I is intime: they are only the expressions of a mood. He does not want to die, he merely hates to live, <u>here would be no con-</u> flict to follow, no play to watch, <u>share would be no con-</u> flict to follow, no play to watch; <u>share would be no con-</u> flict to follow, no play to watch; <u>share would core of project</u> if from naving his way. Hasist's elaborations on the theme "I wish I ware dead" <u>mere</u> mean that he would refuse to be taken by him. But most of as never have to make such a decision. Hamlet is, like all of he, prepared to fight for his life, and maybe all the more bravely because he does not set it "at a pin's for".

Here lie the determin roots of the delay.

forthere

Hamlet is out of the with life, but only the appearance of the gnest starts the tragedy. He merely winded to withdraw from the Court and retire to dittemberg, though at his mether's entreaties (and perhaps for Ophelia's sake) as pertyoned his departure. Now his father's ghost commands him to kill the hing. Pute is pushing him towards a deviaidm. His fate is to be taken out of his hands. To shey would involve all that and involves. He is to become hing himself, perhaps with Ophelis for his queen, the princely ruler of the court of alsindre, a radiant sum exongst a host of hosemerantees and duildensterms. Haulet knows in his bones that he will not comply. His refused to 'soft the world right' springs from his dread of becoming part of a world he now detects more bitterly than over. The ghost has uttered

-6-

his death : Asuce. He will period before be fulfills that connend and he knows it. This, in a sense, is Hamlet's most Compulsion personal secret.

The killing of the King, "oh cursed spite", now stands for } tin intrinci to live. This soties, on which his morbid colfas su feeling centers, he cannot performs not the mechanical act act that is different - but the act of filial daty enjoined upon him 2.5 by his father's tourful command, involving him is a fatel sequence of obligations, good that would plunge him into the mediatrom easily the sing as if were of life. Haulet coul by mistake, off the record, under the cover of an alibi, by a disconed gesture, under the pretence of thance, by some emphatically unsymbolic act - or then the out the accured and he himself the already doesed to die, but not as a conscious meaningful act, as long as he is alive.

while, Actually, he attempts both - to do it. / aing it tames unintentional and to do it and this can no more affect his own fate. He ataba Polonius in a trice, when he mistakes him for his botter, while providently denying any deliberate purpose in the very act. and, even more declaively at the end, when he should emiltantly repeate three times his "I am dead", and the sceptical dreamer because Voltaire's butcher bay, whose alsoghters are no more than mechanical actions signifying nothing, since he, Haslet, is her with dead.

I suspect that in my malady any monouries she were that

ettracting me an approximity I mean the role of his pretended fencies in the fulfilment of his tragedy. The antice and the avere morth Alinetranents of his deces. m the first Ar Were no more first of his melancholy. He is moving anay with all his being from the Court, from convention, from all that which "seems", when fate arrests his flight and imple him back into the center of domition, Se almost loss his senses haver of The apparition or inchate the will not revever then, as soon as the fit wears off - and he gets over her work it quickly - a definite concern overmasters him and determines unexpeded the use he will make of his discovery of his bent for antics. new This municity oprings from the fear of being pushed to action He against his will. Minister reaction 15 to turnSecretive, so as it wight cantions ht as to remain free. This is not an act of peli there is no week iding the secret of his reigned madness to tiends he proves that he trusts there include implicitly. But should they we learn of what happened between him and the gliest, and the dread decision could no longer be deferred. Only if he alone knows and of the acful revelation - Vister maybe Horatic, his alter sas is he, Haulet, safe. In deleying the decision, Healet is fighting for his life. Feigned madness was his nost personal response to this situation. The mole phythm of the tragedy is act by this fail

It has been noted that towards the end of the play Hamlet's Stown of lifting and the assumed derangement fodes away. For some unaccountable reason - one would rather expect the opposite -

he now appears more placed and composed. This antichings is one of the chief besuties of the play. Yet how could it be otherwise? Hamlet who at the beginning of the play imagined that he wished to die, is not ready to go. He makes no prepersions to kill the King and yet ocens certain that the hours of revenue is approaching. Yet again, how could this be otherwise? He now welcomes death not any more from a conflicton of moods which denies the meaning of life, but from a recognition of its true meaning. He strikes down the King, men he himself is "dead" and death come to him when he is rive for it. The accidents which appear to control the course of the play are a more comblance; its pregress is as plain as Culvary. No wonder that the figure of Hamlet could be interpreted as that of a bainte and yet, no wares misunderstanding is conceivable. It is true tracedy. the story of guilt and explation. And it is his feigned madness, chosen by him us a tool of his just revenge, which involves Manlet deeper and deeper in guilty

Maniet staged his antice with deadly precision and with a grim sense of humany. The "dumb sound" sends Ophelia orying into her father's appear, her father rushes post-basts to the hing, the sing decides to set a trap with Ophelia herself as balt. Hamist may excels in feats of remarkie fromy. He sets them the righter what is the cause of his own medness? Healet knows his orew and make them guess true to character. Felenius, that pompous vacuity, displays all the self-assurance of his sordy syniciam; Hamist theories in sectoring Ophelia has gone mod. The queen, computer mearer the truthy is made to feel the guilt of her overhasty surriege. The Hing alone is on a par with

we go as

Mambet and refuses to be doped by his foiled lover's frenzies. He sends for Recemerants and Guildenstern, arranges for the trap, orders Hamlet to be put under guard, dispatches him to hughend, sets harries on his trail and concosts the marder plot. But for him, they are all Hamlet's puppets. Hamlet at first anjoys his eruci superiority; the chastizement of that solemn medicerity, Felenius, the self-deposement of these farming gigglers, Recentrants and Guildenstern, even the anguish of the King counsed by Hamlet's eminous conversational flaches. Eventually, Hamlet, playing the madman, stages a play in the play, the effects of which on the King send him into transparts of joy. and yst, all the time his helpless self is more and more emmeshed in guilt. In spite of his glamorous antice he knows, in his most sensitive heart, that he has lost his way.

Hanict's tragedy is encouled in his love for Ophelia, when he has sacrificed. "I loved ophelia", he ories at her grave when all is over. It is the turning point of Hamiet's drame. Up to this time external events failed to penetrate the abroud of his melanoholy. His inner isolation was complete. Suddenly in a flach of pain, it heppens. Listen to his rating and to his awakening when he knows himself:

Handols "... That is he, where grief

Beers such an explasio? Those phrase of sorrow Conjurgs the wandering stars, and makes them stand Like worder-wounded hourers? - This is I Namist the Danc!"

(He leaps into the graves) His love for Ophelia was pure and ardent. Hamlet is driven

million .

to the paint of platenic fremay by his mother's second debesement, which has tarred Opholia with the same brunk. But not even his mother is beyond redemption, terribly though she has sinued, how much less the inscent Ophelia who he must feel is merely a vietim of his imaginational His love for her lies like a chasm between him and the others. He knows the putrid atmosphere of the Court. He knows his Lawries, the youthful leaker who is depraving his own elster's mind. He knows his ematty polonius, who instills vile suspicions into bur conficing scal. Me knows his hesenerasis and Guildenstern where herizon is bounded by lastiviousness. He knows his Hing and queen who set their happe on Ophelia's physical charms which shall tempt him to become untrue to his mission. He hates then for their columny of all that is must truly nobles not one but debased opholia a love for him and his for her into a political counter, appendating on what there use of weakness in cither.

He haves and despises them, yet of all new he, humlet, has the least right to do so. For who sloe but he himself had conceived of the idea of uning ophelia's feelings for political ender who fooled her in the garb of the distructed lover, so grownly conventional in his disordered attire, that his more recounting of the scene called forth from the Prime Minister the hackneyed diagnosis "had for the love"? and who fed Falosias' suspicions, harping on his daughter at every turn of their ambiguous dialogue? and who confirmed these suspicions in the mannery scene by his insults to Ophelia? The but he, Haulet the hane?

#1.1.*

At every harm of the serve Haulet's sufferings feed on the effect of his sum actions. Was he not plandering Sphelis to her father? Tuinting hisself with the virus he loathed, dragging her through the mise of court ingrigue, prompting the king to maker her a decay in the envestropping scene, in which he takes unjust revenge on her for playing the very role he devised for her? Not it to in this scene that Sphelim is most true to him. she is wronged by him, as Caravila, whom she recembles, is wronged by her complacently ever-generous father. Hankst her for prostituting herself, a workhy ally of his debauched mether, while all the time in knows only too well that he alone is to blaze, what seems to beer out his accussions is in truth of his sam soing, and no better that a crime against this pare and beloved child.

opinite has been promised that she chall marry Hamlet if the restores him to his normal self. Secury and homor, love and marriage, are for once in concord. She loves Namlet and knows not of the danger that threatens him. He never confided his burden to her. Her task is to share him back to life and happiness, to express the denses that are darkeding his spirit. What role could be more appropriate to her selfless devotion?

In the presence of her one father and of the himself the cucon had said to ophalics

Queen: "And for your part, Sphelia, I do wish That your good besutles be the happy cause Of Hamlet's wildness; so shall I hope your virtues Will bring him to his winted way again, To both your homors!

million

ophelia: Madamy I wish it mays"

and later at Opholia's grave one says, ignorant of Hamle's presence:

queen: "I hoped thou shouldst have been my Hamlet's wife; I thought thy brids-bed to have deck'd; sweet maid; and not have strew's they grave."

In the numbery scene cyhelis, who knows nothing, is met by Hamlet, who knows everything. He winces at the thought that Ophelia has been "let loose" upon him to seduce him from the allegiance to his dead father and turn him away from the path of honor and honcesty. His words are as much to the point as they are unfair to Ophelia:

HUMLEDE	"Hey he are you housen's
Ophalias	my lord?
11	are you fair?
0	What means your lordship?
E	That if you be honest and fair, your heavaty
	cheuld soult no discourse to your beauty.
0	Could beauty, my lord, have better connerce
	tion sith hencety?
H	ay, truly, for the power of beauty will sooner
	transford homesty from what it is to a band
	than the force of hongety can translate beauty
	into his likeness; this and sometime a paredox,
	has now the time gives it preaf."

Mambet knows that for him to turn back for Ophelia's sube from the course of duty sould disheast them both. True, recentrul at the role sait for Sphelia, and desiress of revenge for relamine" and Lagress' low aspersions, he gives a twist to his words, but on the matter itself, he is clear and concise. If Ophelia (who is offering to return his takens) were to try and make his marry her, she would be merely depraving him; if, on the contrary, she were to attempt to follow him in the path of homer, she would have to sacrifice their love. She should go to a numbery - also slang for brothel - for that is where she belongs. Has she not given proof of it by effering herself in the secret presence of an adulterous merderor and a parental band?

Yet all this is Audist's can work. Freently he will insuit her in the presence of the Court and use her as a anoke-screen in his hant for the marderer. Eventually, he will kill her father, whom she adores. By the time Sphelis Grouns hereelf, Haslet has deserved more than one death. Invarily, he must have died a hundred.

but shy did the more delaying of revenge involve Baslet in such monstrous goilt? His feigned medness is the ensure. Som of hatred of life and a wish to delay the doing of his auty, it breeds guilt. It must tempt him into using not only his countes but also his friends as tools; it trops him into coverdly evasions and makes insincerity appear as an oblightion. It confuses him and makes him a riddle unto himself.

but after that public conferences of his love for ophelia, be plays the fool no more. He is preparing for the end. There is but a short "interim" before the news from England must come of the death of the King's agents. Healet's composure in the last part of the play is of supreme beauty. Excending to death he med no longer hesitate to kill the Hing. He now uttors no wish to die which shows the difference between the Healet of the first and of the last act. Then he only imagined that he longed for death and spoke of it often, now he ments to die and keeps cilent in quiet readiness. It is the Hing whose hours are ambered.

-12 Sec.

III. Thus far the contents of the play which has no less a subject than refusal to live. But that precisely is may its theatrical excess is a puzzle. Longing for death is the only passion that is undramatic. And yet "Hamlet" if anything, is a good play. So menagery no wotor to able to spail 14. we were for a subscription of white a function Everybody knows the history of the surleined letter which was left in full view (on the table) where would think of 100 in 102 it. The words and the scon Bould assume. Francisculy concert to hold a secret. (1 still reacher the day, almost a lifetimie ALC: NO sety years ago, when it first struck may) "To be, or not to be: that is the question. whether the nobler in the mind to suffer The alings and arress of outrageous fortune, or to take arms against a sea of troubles, And by opposing and them? To die, - to sleep-NO MOTO assess much has been written about the manologue, done of it is amazing. "In this collowry", Bradley said, "Hamlet is not

amazing. "In this collingay", Bradley cald, "Homist is not thinking of the duty icld upon him at all. He is debuting the question of suicide." Manlet, he thought had by this time forcotton his secred promise. "What can be more significant than the fact that he is such in these reflections (on suicide) on the very day which is to determine for him the truthfalness of the dhost?" and so Bradley, like some others before him, came to the conclusion that the great collicant was of no dramatic importance.

in Line

Millions of people have listened to it and did not feel so.

about suicide, the problem of the play. And the mystery of the shout suicide, the problem of the play. And the mystery of the successful play only deepens, for suicide is as impossible as the subject of a drama as inaction is unsuitable for a plot.

Yet those five lines give any the secret of the stander's success. "To be or not to be, that is the question." A clear out alternative stated by the here at a moment of high dramatic The here must be witching the alternative on which tenaidh. sheeper to un the play bingess (killing the King or not? 努福金 to for suffering and , "not toke" for sta violen 44.6216 pasition / This counds abourd and Mast critics La La tat tollowing by the implications of the objection bolted instand as day. paradoxy danlet has turned away from life, of which he can think only in terms of passivity, even if this happens to involve a number of scephlod actions such as killing the Eing, marrying Orbelia, ruling the country and so on. For the one and only true action falls under the heading of "Not to be". One one perform it with a bare bookin. were it not that

> "..... conscionce does make covards of us all; and thus the mative has af resolution is sighted ofer with the pale cast of thought, and enterprises of great pith and moment with this regard their currents turn arry and lose the name of action."

nother in The minid, "to be" and tuffer, or "i	nos tobe
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have the dramatic truth of the play. The diterative is killing "A different the fear the new the order scenes, the king or killing misself, "second and sides" a figure "is his mind's eye" even before he is told of the appearance of the ghost, he doubts "some foul play" before the ghost reveals it to him. his prophetic coul guessed his uncle's guilt. He foreness Ophelia's report to her father, he is conscious of the savesdroppers in the numery scene, he is on the track of the spying courtiers, he guesses their mission, he justly approase the pubpose of the fencing match, he correctly instructs the players, and with the one exception of following behind the arres, whom he mistanes for the fine, he is an approal endowed with double sight.

Until the very and his premonitions are translated into reality:

- Healet: "I shall win at the onds. But then wouldst not think how ill all's here about my heart, but it is no metter.
- Horabio: Key, my good lord a + +
- Haulet: It is but fealery; but it is such gaingiving as would perhaps trouble a second
- Heratio: If your mind dislike anything, obey it; I will forestall their repair hither, and say you are not fit.
- Hemist: Not a whit, we defy angury, there's a special providence in the Sail of a spurrow, if it be now, 'the not to come, if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come, the read.ness is all, since no one knows of anght he leaves, what is't to leave betimen?"

From the tragic point of view, Samlet parts willingly from life, he commits suicide. Joranatically, he does not. as to Hawled is mardered and the certainty of his own douth releases him to do

stage 120 any The incas Stage and the ontward right mikkor and other to the end. L. tav that in despair, but in pulptin trueni HERE Case readines to accept life. travinen to die is reasons

as in Lear, Othello or Macheth, with the first act the tragedy is set. Lear in his vanity and folly has thrown bisself on the generosity of his heartless daughters - in the rest of the play he fulfills his fate. The Scor's conquest of Descenting was a triumph of spirit over disparity of age and race which can never stand the test of brute passion; Othello goes to his coom. In Macbeth the weird distors draw the circle of tragedy around the hero and his notorious subition; the end follows as by geemetrical necessity. Similarly, as I see it, in "Mamlet". The opening act contains the tragedy in muse. When his father's command reaches him, Mamlet's fate is scaled. Instead of "Now to my revenge", his words are: "The time is out of joint, sh sursed spite that ever I was bern to put it right!" helore the curtain rices on the second act, it has been decreed that Mamlet will love his life while delaying action by feigning to be made.

We need not go far to understand sky Hamlet is a good play. Hamlet's whole inner conflict, his hovering on the confines of life and death, is translated here into external events, into enarphy accentuated dramatic action. This play is about suicide in terms of killing an energy it is about endless delay in terms of incessant action.

The plot is extremely clever. Same Granmaticus' amblet pretended madness in order to prepare for his revenge on the King. Shakespeare's Hamlet, on the contrary, seeks instruments of delay. This is the true function of his madness in the plot. But for his feigned madness, Hamlet could not have put off his decision without a slash with his friends and supporters. This would have dragged

malle

his own inner conflict to light and been atticully fatel. For a hamlet who reduced to obey the behast of the ghost or deliberately hemitated to not when pressed by his friends, would lose the aympathy of the andience, just as he would lose their admiration if he were defeated in his quest for revenge by hing and Court, as matters are, Hamlet himself is the only obstacle acth to the decision to take revenge on the king and to the carrying out of that decision. The same his glap to The highest level of is her reached universality in terms of inner life, sails spelling and uncert universality in terms of inner life, sails spelling is out wonder that is makes a good that then.

"Hanlot" is about the human condition. we all live and reiuse to die, but we are not accided to live and be happy in all the coordial respects in which life invites us. To some extent we are delaying happiness and putting off life, because we fear to constit ourselves to live. This makes the hero's aclay so symbolic. Life is man's missed opportunity. Yet which there

VICTURE LANCE, RETERIEVED SAME OF ATERS 10-2140. outhers has not master it quite. The automace is not and more but feels and happies the plan. The culture leaves time, but also recordial.

THE CURTAIN LEAVES THE NOT ONLY WISCH, BUB ALSO RECONCILED.

ma I gan

Hamlet

Han hould more to The English reader to perhaps for that a man must that come from afar to have that most outworn of all subjects, Hamlet, That reader's Surmise will be correct.

I was serving as an officer in the The surmise is correct. in I the Austro-Hungarian Army, & little chort of thirty years ago .- The Russian winter and the blackish-yellow steppe made me feel sick at heart. In my desolation I had for companion a volume of Shakespeare's plays. I found myself reading and re-reading one of them: The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark. Altogether I must have read it over some three bleen. My personal life had taken a turn towards darkness. Daylight seemed bounded in a narrowing disc which was growing dimmer and dimmer. I remember at one time the cold was so intense that when my horse stumbled and fell, I was too apathetic to get out of the saddle. Fortunately - though I myself might not have thought so - the gaunt stiff creature, a Cossack . mare we had picked up, jerked herself onto her long legs and I was saved, for had she rolled over 1 should have been crushed. At that period of my existence my soul was numbed and fell under the spell of a recurrent day-dream. I read my "Hamlet" and every word, of 153 blank verac phrase and intonation seemed plate and clear to me. and Boundhers the For many years the memory of these bleak months haunted me. I could not rid myself of the idea that by some weird chance I had possessed myself of Hamlet's secret. I knew why he did not kill the King. I knew what it was he feared. I knew why he so swiftly ran Polonius through the body when he mistock him for the King and why r pretended he was only chasing a rat. I knew what his confused words to Ophelia meant. But even while I still felt I knew, I was already fast forgetting. My days were clearning up and, as light

broke in, knowledge passed into shadowy recollection, which in its turn faded into a mere intellectual understanding. I was now happy and could only faintly remember what had once formed part of my being: Hamlet's inhuman sufferings. Yet something in me insisted that my theories on Hamlet's indecision and feigned madness - for that was all my former cortainties now amounted teawere not merely the morbid offspring of my late malady. However, tel me find. I hope I shall be pardoned for this lengthy introduction, for

I merchy propose to recount my reaction to the opinion of that great English critic, Andrew Cecil Bradley, when died almost twenty years ago. His views on Hamlet's character, when I came across them, struck me by their resemblance to my own. But he Bra Doy hat stopped short of the solution.

Hamlet's inaction, so Bradley thought, is to be explained by the influence of a profound melancholy. He is shocked by his mother's gross sensuality into utter disgust of life. It is in this frame of mind that the revelation of his father's feed murder and the ghostly command of revenge reaches him. His mind is poisened and paralysed, hence his endless hesitations. All the other components of his character - his intellectual gonius, moral sensibility of temperamental instability - were either cause or expression of this melancholy. It alone accounts for the course of the play, if taken together with the periods of normal behavior during which Hamlet's "healthy impulses", those remnants of a virile personality, break forth.

In this picture I recongnized my Hamlet. At the same time, dowloor is the same time, I knew that Bradley had not unlocked the secret of Hamlet, if the

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person and the play.) For at

the heart of it all, there is **builder** inaction which the here cannot justify and for which nothing seems to him to account satisfactorily.

But there is also the <u>mesthetic Eystery</u> of how a successful play could ever have been staged about inaction.

As one would expect, one key Antoening served both locks. I will first deal with Hamlet, the person.

Hamlet's melancholy seems at first to offer a full and satisfactory explanation, both of his dilatory behavior and of hisbwn lack of comprehension of himself. The play shows him in a state of deep dejection in which he is averse to any kind of action. Nitchevo is the Russian for it. It findsits medium of expression in mechanical answers, a sort of back-chat; sometimes he repeats the words of the speaker without irony or wit, like a man too benumbed to consider what he is saying. And yet "this allegedly flower like youth", Bradley said, "rages through the major part of the play, murdering and destroying human lives, ruthless, fierce, a terror to the Court." And, as Dowden remarkedy of the extreme impulsiveness of this peculiar dreamer, "he suddenly conceives of the possibility of unmasking the King's guilt on the accidental arrival of the players, and proceedss without delay to put the matter to the test, suddenly overwhelms Ophelia with his reproaches of womanhood, suddenly stabs the eavesdropper behind the arras, suddenly as if under some irresistible inspiration, sends his companions on shipboard to their deaths, suddenly boards the pirates, suddenly grapples with Laertes in the grave, suddenly

does execution on the guilty King, plucks the poison from Horatio's hands and gives his dying voice to a successor to the throne." Yet in his <u>lucida intervalla</u> Hamlet is unable to understand the paralysing pressure which his melancholy exerts at other times. This seems to accounts for his inability to find a good reason for his inaction.

But why then, we cannot help asking ourselves, do the healthy impulses arise so frequently as to make Hamlet into a person of almost terrible ruthlessness and yet prevent him from doing the deed which he has sworn the spirit of his father to do? Having caused without remorse the deaths of at least four persons in the King's entourage, why does he still seem to have come no nearer to the performance of his supreme duty? Why does the "veil of melancholy" never lift when he has an opportunity to take his Comer dence? revenge on the King? Is this a mere accident? The audience seems thrule 16 15 at this is not so, otherwise it would lose interest. There must be some hidden reason for Hamlet's hesitation to do keform the required act, a reason which Hamlet himself cannot fathom and which perhaps will be revealed only through his own death.

But there is more to it than this. Hamlet's spurts of action and inaction are not used freaks of temperament, which alternates between feverish exploits and slothful lethargy. He often does one thing <u>instead</u> of another. He not only refrains from slaughtering the King in the prayer scene, but <u>solution</u>y slays Polonius, mistaking him for the King, coldbloodedly shouting "a rat". Yet he could not have been too melancholy to make a thrust at the King and still be sufficiently healthy to stab Polonius. "Healthy impulse" could

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not have intervened at once too late to make him act rightly and yet in time to make him act wrongly. Paralysis of will power should not prevent a man from acting in one way and at the same time but leave him uninhibited to act eagerly in another. On the other hand, in the last act Hamlet, having made no preparations whatseever to destroy the King, kills him on the instant. He thus performs with zest a number of actions except the one required of him and then and the and the delay in killing the King still stares us in the face.

Bradley missed the right answer by a hair's breadth. He adduced instances of Hamlet's proneness to action and added, "he acts in these cases since it is not <u>THE</u> one hateful action on which his morbid self-feeling had centered." Bradley meant, france, here the killing of Claudius. Unfortunately, he did not follow up the clue.

The truth is that Hamlet does not kill his uncle, because through the force of circumstances and by reason of his character his averseness to live has become centered on this "one hateful action".

This defines the predict meaning of his secondled melancholy: While continuing to live he is <u>unable to decide for life</u>. He can live only as long as he is not forced to resolve to do so. Should he by any mischance be challenged to take a decision, it would be his undoing, since he could not deliberately choose the suddent life. This, in terms of drama, is the purport of Hamlet's melancholy. Accordingly the should not take his professions of wishing to die <u>à la lettre</u>; they are merely expressions of a mood. He Hamlet does not actually want to die, he merely hates to live. A dramatic hero who stubbornly wished to die would be insupportable. There would be no conflict to follow, ne play to watch; anyhow for who would care to prevent him from having his way? Hamlet's elaborations on the theme "I wish I were dead" should not, therefore, mislead anybody. What they hean is that he would refuse to settle down to the job of life, if such a decision had to be taken. But most of us never have to make such a decision. Hamlet is premarket pared to fight for his life, and persity all the more bravely because he does not set it at a pin's fee."

Haulets

Here lie the deepest population roots of the delay. Hamlet has turned away from life, but the appearance of the ghost which starts the tragedy. Rest fate is now pushing him towards a decision. He merely wished to withdraw from the Court and retire to Wittenburg, though at his mother's entreaties (and perhaps for Ophelia's sake) he postponed his departure, Now his father's ghest commands him to kill the King. To obey towards a dersion. would involve all that life involves. His fate is to be taken out of his hands.) He is to become King himself, perhaps with Ophelia as his Queen, the princely ruler of the Court of Elsinore. a radiant sun amongst a host of Rosencrantzes and Guildefinsterns. Hamlet knows in his bones that he will not comply. His refusal to set the world right springs from his fear of becoming part of a world he now detests more bitterly than ever. His fatheris The ghost has uttered his death sentence. He will perish before he

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fulfills that command and he knows it. This, in a sense, is Hamlet's most personal secret.

The killing of the King # "oh cursed spite" A, has become to make new Hands for duision for Hamlet / the symbol of deciding to live. This action, on which his morbid self-feeling centers, he cannot therefore perform, not Not the mechanical act itself - that is indifferent - but the act of filial duty enjoined upon him by his father's tearful command, involving him in a fatal sequence of obligations, a that would plunge deed plunging him into the muelstrom of life. Hamlet could kill the King easily by mistake, off the record, under the cover of an alibi, by a disowned gesture, under the pretence of chance. by some emphatically unsymbolic act - or when the end was assured and he himself was already doomed to die. In delaying the killing of the King at his father's behest, Hamlet is fighting for his life. But not as a conscious meaningful act, as long as Actually, he attempts both - to do it, pretending it is unintentional and to do it, when this can no more affect his own fate. He stahs Polonius in a trice, when he mistakes him for his better, while denying any deliberate purpose in the very act. And, even more decisively at the end, when he almost exultantly three Times repeats to Horatio his "I am dead", The sceptical dreamer is becomes transformed into Voltaire's butcher boy, whose slaughters are no more than mechanical action, signifying nothing, since he, Hamlet, is now securely dead.

II.

all this, I felt, threw much light on the role Hamlet's feigned madness played in sight tragedy. This, I confess, had

This antics are the -8his doon ristonment was, I suspect, the been the vortex attracting me in my malady. I do not mean the tote part of his pretended fancies in the plat of the play (which is obvious), but in the fulfil ment of His tracery. His excited A Hamlef's excited and are a mere shunt of his melancholy. He was inco moving away with all his being from the scenes of social obligation, frem the Court, from convention, from all that which seems, which fate arrests his flight from Sarle ghost seens Life and hurls him back into the center of damnation. The almost lear loses his senses for sheer horror of the apparition and is afraid he will of not be able to recover. then. As soon as the fit wears a definite off - and he gets over it uickly - up entirely different concern he will make of his and determines the use he is going to make of his opportune discovery of his bent for antics. This new anxiety springs immediately from the fear of being pushed to action His first reaction the Handed is to against his will. The turn's secretive, but he cause to de (I his is not an act of political cantion to Ry confidence to the secret of his feigned madness, he shows t tree. that to them But should they been of but he proves the confider in his friends But should they leave know of what happened between him and the chost, and the dread decision could me learn no longer be deferred. Only to Iong the alone knows of the fatel shoft's revelation - later, maybe, Horatio, them he learnes to trust as his alter ego - is he, Hamlet, safe. In delay the decrion, In delay a the. Hamlet's gloom is lifting and his assumed derangement becomes fades away Less obvious. For some unaccountable reason - one would rather expect the opposite - he now appears more placid and composed. This anticlimax constitutes one of the chief beauties of the play. Yet how could it be otherwise? Hamlet who at the beginning of The whole thythin of the tragedy is set by this)

the play imagined that he wished to die , is now ready to go. Seems He makes no preparations to kill the King and yet appears more and more certain that the hour of revenge is approaching. Yet, again, how could this be otherwise? He now welcomes death not any more from a confusion of moods which denies the meaning of life, but from a recongnition of its true meaning. He strikes down the King, when he himself is already "dead" and death comes to him when he is ripe for it. The accidents which seem to control segulate the course of the play are no more them semblance; its progress is as plann as Calvary. No wonder that the figure of Hamlet could be interpreted as that of a saint. And yet, no worse misunderstanding worse play is conceivable. It is time bragedy, the story of guilt and expiation. feigned Hamlet madness chim involves, bin deeper and deeper in guilt. staged his antics) with a grim sense of humour, with deadly precision, The"dumb scene" sends Ophelia crying into her father's arms, her father rushes post-haste to the King, the King instantly decides to set a trap with Ophelia herself and bait. Hamlet excels in feats of romantic irony. He himself sets the riddle: what is the cause of his own madness? He knows his crew and makes them guess true to character. Polonius, that pompous vacuity, displays all the self-assurance of his wordy twarled in cynicism: Hamlet bent on seducing Ophelia and having (somewhat wears the hat) thwarted has gone mad . The Queen is made to feel the guilt of her werhasty marriage (which is nearer the truth) The King alone is on a par with Hamlet and refuses to be duped by

Lehosen by him as a tool of his fast revenue,

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rensies his foiled lover's franzy. He sends for Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, arranges for the trap, orders Hamlet to be put under guard, dispatches him to England, sets Laertes on hts But trail and concocts the murder plot, Except for him, they are mas Hamlet enjoys his cruel superiority, 2 all Hamlet's puppets. the chastizement of that solemn mediocrity, Polonius, the selfdebasement of those fawning gigglers, Rosenorantz and Guildenstern, the anguish of the King caused by Hamlet's ominous con-Eventually, The climax is reached when Hamlet, playing versational flashed. the madman, stages a play in the play, the effects of which on the King send him into transports of joy. And yet, all the time his helpless self is more and more enmeshed in guilt. In spite of his glamorous antics he knows, in his mosgt sensitive heart, that he has lost his way. trage "

Hamlet's guilt is enmeshed in his love for Ophelia, whom at W grave, he has sacrificed. "I loved Ophelia", he cries/when all is over. Hamlet's drama. Up to this time ed It is the turning point of the the External events fail to penetrate the shroud of the time melanchely. His inner isolation in a tak of pan, it was complete. Interior enderly happens. Listen to his ranting and then to his the awakening when in a flash of print Hamlet he knows himself:

Hamlet: "..What is he, whose grief Bears such an emphasis? Whose phrase of sorrow Conjures the wandering stars, and makes them stand Like wonder-wounded hearers? - <u>This is I</u> Hamlet the Dane!"

(He leaps into the grave.)

His love for Ophelia was pure and ardent. Hamlet is driven to the point of platonic frenzy by his mother's sexual debasement, which has Ophelia tarred with the same brush. But not even his mother is beyond redemption, terribly though she has sinned, for much less the innocent Ophelia who's merely a victim of his imaginations. His love for her lies like a chasm between him and the others. He knows the putrid atmosphere of the Court. He knowshis putting Laertes, the youthful lecher, who was depraving his own sister's mind. He knowshis smitty Polonius, who instilled? vile suspicions into her confiding soul. He knows his Hosencrantz and Guildernstern whose horizon was bounded by lasciviousness. He knows his king and queen who set their hopes on Ophelia's physical charms attractions, which which tempt him to become untrue to his mission. He hates them for their calumny of all that is most truly noble. Not one but debased Ophelia's love for him and his for her into a political counter, what there was of meanness in either. He hates them, yet of all men(mas least right to do so. For

He hates them, yet of all men ness least right to do so. For the had conceived of the idea of using Ophelia's feelings for political ends? Who fooled her in the garb of the despised distants lever, so grossly conventional in his disordered attire, that the mere recounting of the scene called forth from the Prime Minister the hackneyed diagnosis "Mad for thy lovege? And who fed Polonius' suspicions, harping on his daughter at every turn of their ambiguous dialogue? And who but the himself confirmed those suspicions in the numbery scene by his insults to Ophelia?

> At every turn of the screw Hamlet's sufferings feed, on the effect of his own action. Was he not slandering Ophelia to her father? Tainting himself with the virus he loathed, dragging her through the mire of court intrigue, prompting the King to make her

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a decoy in the eavesdropping scene, in which he take unjust revenge ther for playing the very role he devised for her? Yet it is in this scene that Ophelia is most true to him. She is wronged by him, as Cordelia, whom she resembles, is wronged by her complacently over-generous father. Hamlet arraigns her for prostituting herself, a worthy ally of his debauched mother, while all the time he knows only too well that her her alone, is to blame. What seems to bear out his accusations is in truth of his own doing, and no better than a crime against thispure and beloved child.

Ophelia has been promised that she shall marry Hamlet, if she ear restore; him to his normal self. Beauty and honor, love and marriage, are for once in concord. She loves Hamlet and knows not of the danger that threatens him. He never confided his burden to her. Her task is to charm him back to life and happiness, to exorcise the demons that are darkening his spirit. What role could be more appropriate to her selfless devotion?

In the presence of her own father and of the King himself the hat Queen said to Ophelia:

Queen: "And for your part, Ophelia, 1 do wish That your good beauties by the happy cause Of Hamlet's wildness; so shall I hope your virtues Will bring him to his wonted way again, To both your honors!

Ophelia: Madam, I wish it may" *late* And at Ophelia's grave she says, ignorant of Hamlet's presence: *L* Queen: "I hoped thou shouldst have been my Hamlet's wife:

I thought thy bride-bed to have deck'd, sweet maid, And not have strew'd thy grave." In the nunnery scene Ophelia who knows nothing, is met by Hamlet, who knows everything. He winces at the thought that Ophelia has been let loose upon him to seduce him from the allegiance to his dead father and turn him away from the path of honor and honesty.

His behavior is as much to the point as it is unfair to they are Ophelia:

Hamlet:	"Ha, ha are you honest?
0	My lord?
H	Are you fair?
0	What means your lorship?
0 H	That if you be honest and fair, your honesty should admit no discourse to your beauty.
0	Could beauty, my lord, have better commerce than with honesty?
H	Ay, truly, for the power of beauty will sooner transform honesty from what it is to a bawd than the force of honesty can translate beauty into
	his likeness; this was sometime a paradox, but now the time gives it proof."

Hamlet knows that to turn back for Ophelia's sake from the course of duty would dishonor them both. True, deeply resentful at the rôle cast for Ophelia, and desirous of revenge for Polonius' and Laertes' low aspersions, he does giver a twist to his words. But on the matter insert he is clear and concise. If Ophelia (who is offering to return his tokens) were to epreal to him and try to make him marry her, she would be merely m_{i} to take m_{i} of the in the path of honor, she would have to sacrifice their love. She should go to a nunnery - also slang for brothel - for that is where she belongs. Had she not given proof of it by offering herself in the secret presence of an adulterous murderer and a parental bawd? Yet all this is Hamlet's own work. Presently he will insult her in the presence of the Court and serven worke, use her as a smoke-screen in his hunt for the murderer. Eventually, he will kill her father, whom she adores. By the time Ophelia drowns herself, Hamlet has deserved more than one death. And Anwardly, he must have died a hundred.

But why did the mere delaying of revenge involve Hamlet in such monstrous guilt? This feigned madness is the answer. Born of **the cinful** hatred of life and a wish to delay the doing of his duty, it breeds guilt. It tempts him into using not only his enemies but also his friends as tools; it traps him into cowardly evasions by and making insincerity appear as an obligation. It confuses him to the and point of making him a riddle unto himself.

But after that public confession of his love for Ophelia, he plays the fool no more. He is preparing for the end. There is to be but a short "interim" before the news from England must come of the death of the King's agents. Hamlet's composure in the last part of the play is of supreme beauty. Reconciled to death he need no longer hesitate to kill the King. That he now utters no wish to die "proves how greaters the difference between the Hamlet of the first and of the last act: Then he only imagined that he longed for death and spoke of it often; but now he wants to die and keeps silent in quiet readiness. It is the King whose hours are numbered.

III. This

So much for the contents of the play which has no less a subject than **set** refusal to live. But that precisely is why its theatrical success is a puzzle. Othello is about jealousy, Romeo and Juliet is

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about love, not out of a wish for suicids. Hamlet is in the last act as near to committing suicide as any play allows which is about suicide. This is no paradox. Fire donging for death is the only passion that is undramatic. And yet "Hamlet" if anything, is a good play. No manager, no actor is able to spoil it. Where to seek for a solution of an answer to this paradox? hille?

Everybody knows the history of the purloined letter left in full view in the middle of the table where no one would think of looking for it.

(May I quote **Few lines from** a passage which, one would assume, is too well known to hide a secret. (I still remember the day, more than thirty years ago, when it first struck me.)

"To be, or not to be: that is the question. Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, Or to take arms against a sea of troubles, And by opposing end them? To die, - to sleep-No more"

Much has been written about this monologue. Some of it is amazing. "In this soliloquy", Bradlye said, "Hamlet is not thinking of the duty laid upon him at all. He is debating the question of suicide." Hamlet, he thought, had by this time forgotten his sacred promise. "What can be more significant than the fact that he is sunk in these reflections (on suicide) on the very day which is to determine for him the truthfulness of the Ghost?" And to like some oflast before him. Bradley, came to the conclusion that the great soliloquy was of no dramatic importance.

Millions of people have listened to it and did not feel so, Hor did the hosts of actors who spoke it. On the contrary, They , were convinced that in some unaccountable fashion the very heart of the play was throbbing there. Since)

They were, <u>enchetically</u> right, "To be or not to be" is about suicide, the problem of the play. But the mystery of the successful play obviounly deepens, for suicide the impossible as a subject for drama as inaction is unsuitable for a plot.

the stage Yet those five lines give away the secret of anothetic success. "To be or not to be, that is the question." A clear cut alternative stated by the hero at a moment of high dramatic tension. The hero must be weighing the alternative on which the play hinges: killing the King or not? #Yet Hamlet refers to the first as passivity, to the second as armed action and forcible opposition! This sounds abound inclead of following almost unbelievebler most critics bolted and did hot follow up Lications of the seeming paradox? You the position is the im as clear indisimple as can be, Hamlet has turned away from life. of which he can think only in terms of pessivity and suffering, even if this happens to involve a number of so-called actions such as killing the King, marrying Ophelia, ruling the country and so on. For the one and only true action falls under the heading of "Not to be". One can perform it with a bare bodkin, were it not that

".....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."

With the thought of action the soliloquy opens and ends. Yet it deals solely of suicide. One can call those lines confused, but In that this recenting confusion you have the dramatic truth of the play. The alternative is killing the King or killing himself. Thus Hemletts

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whole inner conflict, his hovering on the confines of life and ad death, is translated into external events, into sharply accentuated 18m and dramatic action Fins transport tion for inward to the outward to proff (are pridge helped by Hamlet's visionary gifts. He sees his father's figure "in his mind's eye" even before he is told of the appearance of the ghost; he doubts "some foul play" before the ghost reveals it to him. His prophetic soul guessed his uncle's guilt. He foresees Ophelia's report to her father; he is conscious of the eaves-droppers in the nunnery scene; he is on the track of the spying courtiers, he guesses their mission, he justly appraises the purpose of the fencing match, he correctly instructs the players, and with the one exception of Polonius behind the arras, whom he mistakes for the King, he is as a person endowed with double sight.

Over and over again his premonitions are translated into reality; . This is so until the very end:

- Hamlet: "I shall win at the odds. But thou wouldst not think how ill all's here about my heart; but it is no matter.
- Horatio: Nay my good lord ...
- Hamlet: It is but foolery; but it is such gaingiving as would perhaps trouble a woman.
- Horatio: If your mind dislike anything, obey it; I will forestall their repair hither, and say you are not fit.
- Hamlet: Not a whit; we defy augury; there's a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come; the readiness is all; since no one knows of aught he leaves, what is't to leave betimes?"

From the tragic point of view, Hamlet parts willingly from life; he commits suicide. Dramatically he does not. He is murdered and the certainty of his own death releases him to do his duty.

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As in Lear, Othello or Macbeth, with the first act the tragedy is set. Lear in his vanity and folly has thrown himself on the generosity of his heartless daughters - the rest of the play fulfills his fate. The Moor's conquest of Desdemona was a triumph of . the spirit over disparity of age and race which can never stand the test of brute passion; Othello goes to his doom. In Macbeth the weird sisters draw the circle of tragedy around the hero and as I see his ambition; the end follows as by geometrical necessity. Similarly in Hamlet. The opening act of the play contains the tragedy in nuce. When his father's command reaches him his fate is sealed. Instead of "Now to my revenge", Hamlet's words are: "The times is out of joint, oh cursed spite that ever I was born to put it right!" Before the nols on second act begins, it has been decreed that Hamlet will lose his life while delaying his duty by feigning to be mad.

We need not go far to understand why Hamlet is a good play. It douls of a matter of life of the most universal interest in a manner that is most universally understandable. It deals with suicide in terms of killing an enemy. It is about curlens delay in terms of incessant action. The plot is extremely clever.

Saxo Grammaticus's Amblet pretended madness in order to prepare for his revenge on the King. Shakespeare's Hamlet, on the contrary, seeks instruments of delay. This is the true function of his madness in the plot. But for his feigned madness, Hamlet could not have put off his decision without a conflict with his friends and supporters. Such a conflict would have dragged his own inner conflict to light and been artistically fatal. A Hamlet who refused

whole Hamlets inner conflict, his havering aits, into sharply accentuated dramatic acc

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to obey the behest of the ghost or deliberately hesitated to act when pressed by his friends, would lose the sympathy of the audience and its admiration, if he were defeated in his quest for revenge from outside by the King and the Court. Admiller, Hamlet himself is the only obstacle both to the decision to take revenge on the King and to the carrying out of that decision. This raises the play to the highest level of universality in terms of inner life, and the play to the massively external play is transposed by Shakespeare's art into blood, fire, and brimstone. Small wonder that it makes a good play!

"Hamlet" is about the human condition. We all live and refuse to die, but we are not all the time decided to live and be happy, errtainly not in fill the essential respects in which life invites us. To some extent we are fill the time delaying happiness and putting off life, because we fear to commit ourselves to live. Our self-feeling (we chould not call it morbid) may then the set center on an action which to our dismay we find ourselves not doing. This makes the here's Hamlettid delay so symbolic. Life is man's missed opportunity. Yet is readiness to live.

I realize that I have not given you what I promised: some of my inner assurance that I ever understood the Prince in that easy conversational manner in which one imagines one understands oneself. I now find that it may have all been no more than a dream of bad days. One imagines one has learned in one's sleep the secret of life, yet on awakening finds that it has all evaporated.

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HAMLET

by Karl Polanyi

A brief reminiscence at the outset will serve a twofold purpose. It should reduce to the vanishing point the literary claims of this piece of amateur writing, while adding a note of authenticity to the author's reasons for putting off publication for almost a lifetime.

Nearly forty years ago I was serving as an officer in the old Austro-Hungarian Army. The Russian winter and the blackish steppe made me feel sick at heart. It happened that at the time my personal life had taken a turn towards darkness; daylight seemed bounded in a narrowing disk that grew dimmer and dimmer. At one time, I remember, the cold was so intense that when my horse stumbled and fell I was too apathetic to get out of the saddle. Fortunately -- though I may not have thought so then -- the gaunt stiff ceature, a yellow Cossack marethat we had picked up, jerked herself onto her long legs and I was saved, for had she rolled over I might have been crushed to death. For companionship I had nothing but a volume of Shakespeare's plays; in my desolation I found myself reading and re-reading one: "The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark." Altogether I must have read it through well over a score of times. My soul was numbed and fell under the spell of a recurrent daydream. I read my "Hamlet" and every word, phrase, and intonation of the hero's revings came through to me, simple and clear.

For many years the memory of those bleak months haunted me. I could not rid myself of the idea that by some weird chance I had possessed myself of Hamlet's secret. I knew why he did not kill the King. I knew what it was he feared. I knew why he so swiftly ran Polonius through the body when he mistook him for the King, pretending he was only after amath a rat. I knew