

The “Strange Eruption” in *Hamlet*: Shakespeare’s Psychoanalytic Vision

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Abstract

Shakespeare is indeed the poet of nature. He knows the “deep psychology” of humanity. In his vision, as shown in *Hamlet*, men often “war” for women. In the family, the son is a “Ham-let” whose libidinous Id is repressed by both his spiritual father (Super-Ego) and his corporeal father (shadow) and whose Ego is pulled between the two fathers as between his good angel and his bad angel. As the son is not yet weaned from his Oedipus complex, he cannot achieve individuation, thus psychologically still staying in the Imaginary Order though he is already immersed in the Symbolic Order. In the play we see a split Hamlet whose conscious self is in conflict with his unconscious self, while his persona appears sanely above and his true ego hides madly below, attracted by his anima Gertrude, who is occasionally displaced by Ophelia, and repressed by his fathers. Thus, the play is Hamlet’s “strange eruption,” which comes from the attraction and the repression. And thus the play is not a traditional revenge tragedy, but a new revenge tragedy in which the revenge is upon oneself and suicide is a jouissance. This fact, then, can account for the hero’s inactivity or delay in taking vengeance, and can bring forth the playwright’s particular vision regarding the theme of war and woman in its sexual and symbolic aspects.

Keywords: consciousness vs. unconsciousness, the Oedipus complex, Super-Ego/Ego/Id, libido, condensation and displacement, female/yonic vs. male/phallic symbols, the collective unconscious, archetype, persona/anima/shadow, projection and individuation, the Imaginary Order vs. the Symbolic Order, jouissance, Hamlet, psychoanalysis, melancholy, madness, patriarchy, repression, eruption, vision

I. The Poet of Nature

It is well-known that Samuel Johnson praises Shakespeare as “above all writers, at least above all modern writers, the poet of nature, the poet that holds up to his readers a faithful mirror of manners and of life” (Adams 330). In this praise, as we know, Johnson alludes to Hamlet’s statement that the end of playing “was and is to hold as it were the mirror up to nature” (III, ii, 21-22).¹ In Hamlet’s mind, and presumably in Shakespeare’s as well, stage presentation must be true to life: “to show virtue her feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure” (III, ii, 22-24). In other words, faithful imitation of humanity and the world is the basic principle of art for Hamlet, Shakespeare, and Johnson.

But this mimetic theory has one particular problem when applied to the study of Hamlet’s own character. It is obvious that when Hamlet in the play or Johnson in his Preface to *Shakespeare* talks of “nature,” the word refers to human nature rather than to the great external nature so extolled by the Romantics later on. Furthermore, it refers mostly to such observable manners of life as able to embody the nature of one’s virtue, vice, or folly. For Johnson, especially, the observable manners are not “particular manners” which “can be known to few, and therefore few only can judge how nearly they are copied” (Adams 330). Shakespeare’s characters, Johnson asserts,

are not modified by the customs of particular places, unpracticed by the rest of the world; by the peculiarities of studies or professions, which can operate but upon small numbers; or by the accidents of transient fashions or temporary opinions: they are the genuine progeny of common humanity, such as the world will always supply and observation will always find. (Adams 330)

Therefore, Johnson concludes, “in the writings of other poets a character is too often an individual: in those of Shakespeare it is commonly a species” (Adams 330).

Now, is Hamlet an individual or a species? Does Johnson mean to hold that Hamlet is an inactive type of person when he says that “Hamlet is, through the whole play, rather an instrument than an agent” (Hoy 147)? Or does he agree with most critics that Hamlet is an enigma, a puzzling individual whose conduct is largely without “poetical probability” (Hoy 147)?

For me it makes no significant difference to call Hamlet an individual or a species. What counts is whether or not Shakespeare has created a Hamlet whose behavior is explicable according to our knowledge of human nature, and whether or not this Hamlet’s life and character can verify the particular vision that Shakespeare might

have in this drama.

II. The Psychoanalytic Ideas

Hamlet has been an enigma, indeed, to the other characters in the play and to Shakespearean critics. His “antic disposition” (I, v, 180) has been puzzling to people around him. His speech and his behavior often seem inscrutable. Even today, critics are still arguing about his personality. Is he simply a man with “an extreme sensibility of mind” (Mackenzie 149) or “an intellectual given to reason and reflection” (Knights 66) or a man “whose sense of moral excellence is uncommonly exquisite” (Richardson 147) or “a great moralizer ... marked by refinement of thought and sentiment” (Hazlitt 164-5)? Why has he kept delaying his vengeance on Claudius? Why should he seem so cruel to Ophelia? Puzzled by such questions, critics seem to have found no easy way out except probing into Hamlet’s “deep psychology.”

Talking of “deep psychology,” one instantly thinks of today’s psychoanalysis, and Freud’s and Ernest Jones’s connecting Hamlet with the Oedipus complex instantly comes to our mind. But we must admit that Shakespeare was born in an age when Freudian concepts were foreign or non-existing to him. As a Renaissance playwright, Shakespeare was most probably affected by the theory of the four humors. And, as A. C. Bradley has vigorously argued, Hamlet’s case can be taken to be that of melancholy: “It would be absurdly unjust to call *Hamlet* a study of melancholy, but it contains such a study” (103).

Still, to impute Hamlet’s tragedy to his melancholy character is an old-fashioned and not so “scientific” a way of analyzing his personality. Although Shakespeare certainly did not have any scholastic contact with our modern “deep psychology,” we may still assume that his understanding of human nature or human psychology can possibly lead him to write a play with its characterization and action interpretable in terms of today’s psychoanalysis.

Since Jones’s Freudian interpretation, Hamlet seems to have been fixed up as a case of the Oedipus complex and as a personality “unconsciously identified with Claudius” (1983, 37). But is Jones’s interpretation all plausible? Does it truly reflect Shakespeare’s psychoanalytic vision? It is my contention that we now need a new psychoanalytic interpretation of *Hamlet* if we want to do justice to Shakespeare. And this new interpretation will involve, at least, the technical terms mentioned below, in addition to the “Oedipus complex.”

First, Freud’s emphasis upon the *unconscious* aspects in contrast with the *conscious* aspects of the human psyche is still very useful.² Next, his idea of three psychic zones (the *Id*, the *Ego*, and the *Super-Ego*) can still be adapted for our present

interpretation. We may doubt his assertion that all human behavior is motivated ultimately by sexuality. Yet, we may allow the idea that *libido*, or sexual energy, is a prime psychic force. Finally, we must recognize that the unconscious process may take place through *condensation* or *displacement*, and repressed desires are often expressed through the use of female (*yonic*) symbols and male (*phallic*) symbols.³

Besides these Freudian concepts, we also need some Jungian ideas. First, we can believe with him in the existence of the *collective unconscious*, not just that of the *personal conscious* and the *personal unconscious*. Next, we can also agree that the collective unconscious is not directly approachable; it is often found in *archetypes* (e.g., the hero, the scapegoat, the Devil, the Good Mother, the Unfaithful Wife, etc.). Then, we may accept the *shadow*, the *anima/animus*, and the *persona* as the three essential archetypes that compose the self. Finally, we may also use the idea of *projection* and that of *individuation*.⁴

After Freud and Jung, Lacan develops a psychoanalytic system of his own, based on linguistic or structuralist/poststructuralist theories. Available for us here are the three Orders he proposes to describe our tripartite personality: the *Imaginary Order* (the preverbal stage, centered in the mother), the *Symbolic Order* (the stage dominated by linguistic differences and ruled by the “Law of the Father”), and the *Real Order* (a stage beyond language, either preceding it or exceeding it).⁵ Aside from this Lacanian proposal, the idea of *jouissance* which Lacan shares with Roland Barthes, Judith Butler, Richard Middleton, and others is also useful. It is the enjoyment or bliss that “gets you off,” the “orgasmic rapture found in texts, films, works of art or sexual spheres,” and it is “intrinsically self-shattering, disruptive of a ‘coherent self.’”⁶

III. War and Woman

Shakespeare is a Renaissance dramatist. Renaissance is an age of humanist revival. Humanism is based on the understanding that a man is a man. It understands that occupying the middle link of the Great Chain of Being, man is no God and no Devil, though he aspires to be angelic and tends to become bestial at times. In other words, Shakespeare’s Renaissance humanist spirit makes him face the Ego naturally, though his religious nurture teaches him to regard highly the Super-Ego and despise the Id at the same time. When Johnson criticizes that Shakespeare “sacrifices virtue to convenience, and is so much more careful to please than to instruct that he seems to write without any moral purpose” (Adams 333), he is telling us that the playwright is more on the side of the Hellenistic culture of humanism, letting loose our libido, than on the side of the Hebraic culture of asceticism, practicing to repress our desires.

Now, the best-known work of the Hellenistic culture is Homer’s *Iliad*. *Iliad* is

about the Trojan War. The War is for the sake of Helen. This shows that sexuality is indeed presumably the ultimate motivation of human warfare. We know the mythological gods and goddesses are all anthropomorphic. They represent mankind's desires, hopes, aspirations, etc. How many of us would not like to become the omnipotent Zeus? Yet, what does Zeus do? He seems to be philandering all the time: only loving to love and seeking for sex.

In the world of beasts, we see so many males keep "waging war" for females, just as the gods or human heroes do: he-goats fighting for she-goats, bucks battling for does, etc. This tells us that animals are forever struggling for procreation, and a particular female often becomes, for a group of them, the target worth combating for in order to win the right of mating. No matter whether the war is carried on for the immediate pleasure of sex or for the final end of survival through procreation, the female is in effect the anima, the symbolic force that attracts the males to it, just as Helen attracted the warring heroes.

In *Hamlet*, we are told that King Hamlet had a combat with Fortinbras of Norway, and won from him his lands after slaying him. Young Fortinbras then wished to avenge his father and recover the lands. But the King of Norway, uncle to young Fortinbras, curbed his invasion into Denmark. Later, young Fortinbras went on a campaign against the Polack through the dominions of Denmark. The campaign was said to "gain a little patch of ground/That hath in it no profit but the name" (IV, iv, 18-19). But it turned out that when young Fortinbras returned victorious from Poland, the kingdom of Denmark, with the deaths of Claudius, Hamlet, Gertrude and others, was left to return to Fortinbras.

This background story seems to suggest that human beings are warlike and combatant animals, they constantly combat for lands or war for names, they often fight in the name of revenge, but lands or names may be gained without active vengeance. Underneath this suggestion, however, there is this truth: to have lands or names is to have the power to own the necessary resources for survival, including the dear women for men. In actuality, to combat or to war is to exercise our libido, and to revenge is but to fix a target for the exercise. In *Hamlet*, there is a war of revenge between Hamlet and Claudius. They fight for Gertrude. There is another war of revenge between Hamlet and Laertes. They fight for Ophelia. Superficially, on the level of the conscious, Gertrude is Hamlet's mother and Ophelia is Laertes' sister. Deep down there, however, in the realm of the unconscious, Gertrude is no other than Ophelia: either is but a dear woman, an exciting anima to rouse one's libido.

So, I agree with those critics who do not take *Hamlet* for a revenge tragedy in the line of Thomas Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy*, which is just a sensational slaughter in the name of revenge for one's own son or for any one murdered, and just a display of the

revenger's art in carrying out his plan of vengeance. But I do not think that "*Hamlet* towers above other plays of its kind through the heroism and nobility of its hero" (Gardner 224). Instead, I think that it is typical through its involving the "deep psychology" of war and woman. And I believe the central problem of *Hamlet* is sexuality although the play can be "on all kinds of problems: on fathers and children, on sex, on drunkenness, on suicide, on mortality and corruption, on ingratitude and loyalty, on acting, on handwriting even, on fate, on man and the universe" (Harrison 1968, 884).

IV. Appearance vs. Reality

Appearance vs. reality is verifiably a recurrent motif in Shakespeare. In his great tragedies especially, we find the motif becomes a predominant element in characterization and plot. In *King Lear*, for instance, we have the children who appear to be filial (Goneril, Regan, Edmund) vs. those who are truly filial (Cordelia, Edgar), the Fool who appears to be foolish but is wise in reality, and the King, of course, who appears to have power but actually has nothing to keep even his dignity and life, and the tragedy is a history of finding the "real" children and subjects (Lear finding Cordelia, Albany, Kent, the Fool, etc., and Gloucester finding Edgar). In *Othello*, we have the "honest Iago," who is honest only in name, not in truth, and who through the whole play tries to appear friendly, benevolent, loyal and kind to Othello and others while in reality he acts most like a Machiavellian schemer or the Devil's incarnation, and the play is also a history of finding out the truth. In *Macbeth*, we have the Witches who seem to bring good tidings and predict good future, but actually do the opposite; we have the brave Macbeth who seems to be loyal at first but proves to be a traitor at last and who seems to win at first but is only to lose at last; and we have so many words and situations in the play which seem to be clear on the surface but actually ambiguous in depth.

Now, in *Hamlet* we find the appearance vs. reality motif occurs even more frequently. Claudius only appears to be good to Hamlet, Gertrude is a "most seeming-virtuous queen" (I, v, 46), Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are actually spies on Hamlet rather than his friendly schoolmates, and Hamlet is "but mad north-north-west" (II, ii, 375), not truly mad beyond knowing a hawk from a handsaw. Hamlet himself is most aware of the discrepancy between appearance and reality. He reminds Ophelia that "God hath given you one face, and you make yourselves another" (III, i, 144-5). He wants Horatio to join judgments in censure of Claudius's "seeming" (III, ii, 86-7). And he sighs to his schoolmates:

What piece of work is a man, how noble in reason, how infinite

in faculties, in form and moving how express and admirable, in action how like an angel, in apprehension how like a god: the beauty of the world, the paragon of animals—and yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust? (II, ii, 303-8)

Hamlet is indeed most aware of “the evil reality under the good appearance” (Spencer 39).

Evidently, the play is full of ideas, images, episodes as well as characters that can suggest the appearance/reality contrast. In his “The World of *Hamlet*,” Maynard Mack has discussed the ideas of seeming, assuming, and putting on; the images of clothing, painting, mirroring; the episode of the dumb show and the play within the play, together with the characters of Polonius, Laertes, Ophelia, Claudius, Gertrude, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, and Hamlet himself. And his conclusion is: “all these at one time or another, and usually more than once, are drawn into the range of implications flung round the play by ‘show’” (52).

The idea of “show” brings us to the Freudian concept of the conscious and unconscious levels of mental activity. In this concept, the human mind is structured like the iceberg: what is shown above or appears to be seen is the level of consciousness, while what lies hidden beneath the surface or what counts as its great real weight is the level of unconsciousness. If we consider the appearance vs. reality motif in the light of the conscious vs. unconscious psyche, we may find that *Hamlet* is indeed a show of the conscious Hamlet in conflict with the unconscious Hamlet.

V. Ham-let and Den-mark

Hamlet is, of course, not a dual personality like that of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hide. But his personality is certainly split into a conscious self and an unconscious self. He tells his mother: “I have that within which passeth show” (I, ii, 85). But does he know what that is?

Freud tells us that the Id is entirely unconscious. That is what often passes show. And what is often shown are parts of the Ego and the Super-Ego. Now, the Id is the reservoir of libido, the primary source of all psychic energy, and it functions to fulfill the pleasure principle whereas the Ego and the Super-Ego serve to check or repress the Id by observing the reality principle and the morality principle.

Now, the Ghost that appears to bid Hamlet avenge him is only apparently a ghost. He is in effect Hamlet’s Super-Ego, the ethical part that makes his conscience, that directs him to act in accordance with the moral principle. In the deep bottom, then, there is Claudius, who is Hamlet’s Id, who acts according to the pleasure principle,

and who must be checked or repressed by Hamlet's Super-Ego and Ego. But the difficulty is: facing two fathers (i.e., sources) of his inner psyche, Hamlet's Ego simply cannot annul either easily. At any critical moment, his reality principle can only tell him to hesitate between the two forces. So, Hamlet's inactivity or delay in taking vengeance is the effect of his being pulled at the same time by his own Super-Ego as a good angel and his own Id as a bad angel, rather than due to the fact that the conscious call of duty to kill his stepfather is in conflict with "the unconscious call of his nature to kill his mother's husband, whether this is the first or the second" (Jones 1976, 90).

Critics have found that Shakespeare is notoriously fond of word play. But as far as I know, no critic has as yet noticed the meaningful reference to hams in Hamlet's reply to Polonius's question about what he is reading:

Slanders, sir. For the satirical rogue says here that old men have gray beards, that their faces are wrinkled, their eyes purging thick amber and plum-tree gum, and that they have a plentiful lack of wit, together with most weak hams—all which, sir, though I most powerfully and potently believe, yet I hold it not honesty to have it thus set down. For yourself, sir, shall grow old as I am—if like a crab you could go backward. (II, ii, 196-204)

Here, the phrase "most weak hams" suggests impotence, of course. An old man like Polonius may already suffer from "most weak hams" and become impotent at times in sexual intercourse. But does a man as young as Hamlet feel that he has "most weak hams," too?

No direct mention of Hamlet's sexual power is made in the play, and we can believe that he is not yet impotent, even with all his ambiguous attitude towards Ophelia. But the name "Hamlet" may suggest not only a "hamlet," a group of houses or a small village in the country; it may also suggest a "ham-let," a little ham which is not yet strong or powerful enough to counteract the strength of the great hams that his two fathers possess.

As we know, the original source of *Hamlet* is F. de Belleforest's story *Le Cinquieme Tome des Histoires Tragiques*. In that French story, the hero's name is Amleth.⁷ We do not know for sure whether or not Shakespeare changed "Amleth" into "Hamlet" with any particular purpose. But the change does make it more liable for Freudian interpretation. As the name may suggest "a little ham," Hamlet can certainly be thought of as a man not yet strong enough to compete for sex, much like a young lion or young hart that is still unable to compete for the target lioness or hind. This Hamlet, in other words, may indeed be still suffering from the Oedipus complex with

Gertrude as the target female, although he is said to be already thirty years of age.⁸ In Hamlet's unconscious mind, Gertrude is still his love, but his ghost father and his stepfather (uncle father) are still keeping the woman, threatening to "castrate" or "kill" him if he dares to challenge the fatherly sovereignty.

Facing this situation, Hamlet's Ego naturally feels that he is torn between his Super-Ego and his Id. That is why he often feels that things are going out of joint. After hearing the Ghost's revelation, as we know, Hamlet concludes the first act of the play by saying: "The time is out of joint. O cursed spite,/That ever I was born to set it right" (I, v, 196-7). This conclusion can easily lead critics to believe that Hamlet has the habit of amplifying his personal dilemma and acting as "bonesetter to the time," only to be sacrificed so as to "allow us the satisfaction and exaltation of tragic catharsis" (Brockbank 103 & 115). Nevertheless, the agony Hamlet feels now, as we must admit, is but a continuation of the former feeling that made him wish that "this too too sullied flesh would melt,/Thaw and resolve itself into a dew" (I, ii, 129-30), a feeling caused by his mother's speedy remarriage.

In his unconscious psyche, we may suggest, Hamlet may be delighted with his father's death (crying out, "Now that he is gone, I am free to possess her"—now that Laius is gone, Oedipus can have Jocasta), although his father's image (sometimes in the form of a ghost) may still come back and haunt him: "My father—methinks I see my father ... In my mind's eye" (I, ii, 183-5). But what a hindrance that has come immediately! Another father has replaced the dead one, and that so speedily! The little Ham's desire, his libido, has to be repressed all the same! What can he do now? Except complaining about the frailty of woman (I, ii, 146) and imagining the world as "an unweeded garden" with only "things rank and gross in nature" (I, ii, 135-6), what can Ham-let do?

He can agree with Marcellus that "Something is rotten in the state of Denmark" (I, iv, 90). Moreover, he can imagine "the time is out of joint": Denmark has become "Den-mark," just as he himself has become "Ham-let" again, owing to his mother's remarriage with Claudius. Indeed, in his imagination, here is a great Den, in which the leading mark is "a beast that wants discourse of reason" (I, ii, 150).

VI. Mad with Method

In Act I, Scene 2, when Claudius addresses the Prince of Denmark (or, rather, Den-mark) as "my cousin Hamlet, and my son," (I, ii, 64), Hamlet (or Ham-let) says (as an aside): "A little more than kin, and less than kind" (I, ii, 65).⁹ This rejoinder has caused a number of discussions about the differences in sense between "kin" and "kind" (see the long note in Jenkins 434-5). In my psychoanalytic view, this imme-

diate reply (a purposeful “slip”) from the little Ham’s inner soul has accurately described the mutual relationship between Claudius and Hamlet. Hamlet is indeed a little more than kin to Claudius: he is not just his cousin and his son as stated here, nor just his “chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son” (I, ii, 117) proclaimed elsewhere to be “the most immediate to our throne” (I, ii, 109). He is, in addition, his rival in love, his competitor for Gertrude, and his father’s or his own Super-Ego’s avenger for the target woman. On the other hand, Hamlet is certainly a little less than kind to Claudius, not because he is unkind to him but because he feels that although they are of the same kind (a man with beastly desire to possess the woman), yet he is just a Ham-let, a little Ham with but “most weak hams,” an impotent in the face of the potentate father, who is the Phallus, the powerful kind in terms of sex.

Thus, the little Ham is plunged into melancholy. Hamlet himself and Claudius, as well as Shakespearean critics (e.g., A. C. Braley), have diagnosed Hamlet’s case as that of melancholy (see II, ii, 597 & III, i, 167). In his *Anatomy of Melancholy* Robert Burton (Shakespeare’s contemporary) has dealt with various morbid mental states, and for him melancholy “embraced everything from raving lunacy to philosophical and occasional pessimism.”¹⁰ When we read through the play, we may surely find Hamlet lost, at times, in “raving lunacy” and “philosophical and occasional pessimism.” And we may agree with Bradley that Hamlet’s excess of reflection “is to be considered rather a symptom of his [melancholy] state than a cause of it” (93).

What, then, is the cause? The superficial (conscious) cause is, of course, “His father’s death and our over-hasty marriage” (II, ii, 57), as Gertrude tells Claudius. But the deep (unconscious) cause should be the little Ham’s libido, which shapes itself into an “ambition” to kill the father and own the mother, or a “bad dream” in which his first spiritual father wants him to slay his second corporeal father. This “ambition” or “bad dream,” as defined in Hamlet’s exchange of words with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, is “but a shadow” or “a shadow’s shadow” (II, ii, 260 & 262). And in Jung’s terminology, “shadow” represents “the dark, unattractive aspects of the self” which the individual’s impulse rejects and projects on someone or something else (Dobie 68). In *Hamlet*, the “shadow” is seen in the abundant “images of sickness, disease or blemish of the body” and “the idea of an ulcer or tumor, as descriptive of the unwholesome condition of Denmark morally” (Spurgeon 316). And it is seen in Claudius, of course, as “a villain” (III, iii, 76 & 77). It is this shadow that makes “the goodly frame the earth” seem to Hamlet to be “a sterile promontory” (II, ii, 298-99). And it is this shadow, too, that drives him at last to kill Claudius as the “incestuous, murderous, damned Dane” (V, ii, 330). So, Claudius is ambivalently both Hamlet’s Id and his shadow.

Thus, Hamlet is truly mad in his own way. And madness is truly “poor Ham-

let's enemy" (V, ii, 235). His madness, as is his melancholy, is expressed in "raving lunacy" and "philosophical and occasional pessimism." But this madness is expressed not only as Hamlet's conscious self (Super-Ego and Ego) striving against his "shadow," but also as his unconscious self (libidinous Id) striving for his "anima," the life force that stops him from committing suicide. Hamlet's "anima" is, of course, his mother Gertrude. Yet, by "displacement" Ophelia often becomes Gertrude's substitute. So, in his madness Hamlet will treat Ophelia as if she were Gertrude.

Polonius, as we know, says that "there is method" in Hamlet's madness (II, ii, 205). And Hamlet tells his mother that "I essentially am not in madness, / But mad in craft" (III, iv, 189-90). In fact, Hamlet's madness is more "like mad" when he is abandoned to his unconscious self. And that is when he is at the sight or at the thought of his anima, i.e., Gertrude or Ophelia. On the other hand, he may seem "not so mad" or "mad with method" or "mad in craft" when he is controlled by his conscious self. And that is when he is confronted with his Super-Ego (his father), his shadow (his uncle father), or other male figures.

Hamlet certainly shows no sign of madness when he hears Horatio, Marcellus and Bernardo's story about the ghost, and subsequently when he goes to hear the ghost's revelation. In fact, he is prudent enough to refuse to tell his friends what passed between him the ghost, and discreet enough to force them to swear that they will reveal nothing of what they have seen.

In the face of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, Hamlet is all circumspect. He immediately suspects that they are Claudius's spies. He taunts them with worldly wisdom, and finally contrives to save himself and send them to death, just as a wary and scheming man will do to his enemies.

Hamlet has the wits to arrange a performance of *The Murder of Gonzago* with some lines of his own inserted, to instruct the players in acting techniques, to privately set Horatio to watch the King's reaction to the play, and to succeed in testing the King's conscience.

It stands to reason that Hamlet rejects the idea of killing Claudius while he is praying with remorse. The excuse that he would then send him to heaven at such a moment of repentance is certainly from a sound practical mind. When finally he runs him through with a rapier and forces him to drink the poisoned liquor, he may be said to be "mad" with anger. But he is then in a situation demanding that righteous act of vengeance. Thus, no one will consider him a lunatic just for the final scene.

In other scenes when Hamlet meets other male figures, including Polonius, Laertes, Osric, the grave-diggers, etc., Hamlet is likewise sane enough to either make witty remarks or act sensibly, although he may occasionally and purposely display certain "madness with method." And it is sanity, too, that enables him to ponder

over the question of “to be or not to be” or reflect upon his own inactivity when he is alone.

VII. Daggers and Death

When Hamlet faces Gertrude, the scene is quite otherwise. In the chamber scene, the Queen directly says, “Alas, he’s mad” (III, iv, 106). She says so because Hamlet has been speaking “words like daggers” (III, iv, 94) to her and because he speaks to the reappearing ghost invisible to her, which seems to her to be “holding discourse with the incorporal air” (III, if, 118).

In this scene Hamlet is mad, in actuality, like a male animal (say, a ram) mad in due time to mate with a female (ewe) and yet somehow made to repress his desire, only to stand by watching a stronger one tup her. Under such circumstances, since his horns are too weak to vie with the stronger one’s (his stepfather’s) and he cannot for the time being ram away the strong opponent, Hamlet naturally can only rave at the tuppied one, using “words like daggers” to attack her, besides reviling the stronger one and imagining that morality (personified by the ghost father) is on his side.

There are many references of the dagger in Shakespeare.¹¹ The dagger can be a weapon used to kill a man (e.g., Duncan in *Macbeth* or Caesar in *Julius Caesar*). It can also be a weapon used to kill a woman (e.g., Juliet in *Romeo and Juliet* or Emilia in *Othello*). When a female is stabbed by a dagger, the “killing” may have a sexual implication. For, the dagger with its sharp-pointed length is admittedly a male or phallic symbol in linguistic usage as well as in Freudian psychology (see de Vries 126). In *Romeo and Juliet*, for instance, when Juliet finds that Romeo has poisoned himself, she stabs herself with Romeo’s dagger, saying, “O happy dagger,/This is thy sheath. There rust, and let me die” (V, iii, 168-9). This utterance, for all its pathetic tone, does inadvertently carry with it the pleasure associated with sexual intercourse.

So, with the dagger as a phallic symbol, when Hamlet “speaks daggers” to his mother, he is symbolically tuppied her, thrusting her with his verbal penis, and fulfilling his dream of possessing her as his libido will unconsciously have him do or his madness will fanatically lead him to do, since he is not yet weaned from his Oedipus complex.

In Act III, Scene iii, after Polonius comes to inform Hamlet that the Queen will speak with him presently, Hamlet tells himself:

O heart, lose not thy nature. Let not ever
The soul of Nero enter this firm bosom;
Let me be cruel, not unnatural.

I will speak daggers to her, but use none.
My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites:
How in my words somever she be shent,
To give them seals never my soul consent. (384-90)

Here the allusion to Nero is significant. For Nero put his mother Agrippina to death because she poisoned her husband, the emperor Claudius. Here Hamlet says that he will act differently from Nero. He will not use real daggers to kill his own mother. He will just “speak daggers” to let her “be shent.” And he thinks that the act may “be cruel” but “not unnatural.” It is only that his tongue and soul will then “be hypocrites,” since they never really want to kill her.

But this soliloquy reveals more than this superficial interpretation. In terms of sexual psychology, what Hamlet reveals here is not just his conscious determination to “lose not thy nature” or to avoid being “unnatural,” that is, to keep his instinctive affection (or filial love) for his mother. It is also an unconscious determination to bring forth his “natural” instinct of sex, to let go his libido, that is, to thrust the woman with his verbal dagger, if not with his real dagger or male organ for copulation. In other words, to be “natural” here can mean both to consciously observe the moral principle (to look up to one’s Super-Ego) and to unconsciously observe the pleasure principle (to give in to one’s Id).

The famous “chamber scene” is preceded by the equally famous “nunnery scene,” where Ophelia takes Gertrude’s place to receive the thrusts and stabs of the little Ham’s verbal dagger. There, similarly, Hamlet is considered mad: “O, what a noble mind is here overthrown ... that noble and most sovereign reason/Like sweet bells jangled out of tune and harsh,/That unmatched form and feature of blown youth/Blasted with ecstasy” (III, I, 152-62). And Hamlet himself says, “Go to, I’ll no more on’t, it hath made me mad” (III, i, 148)..

John Dover Wilson is right in saying that “in the tirades of the nunnery scene he [Hamlet] is thinking almost as much of his mother as of Ophelia” (193). Wilson may also be right in asserting that “Hamlet must have overheard what Polonius said to the king” (196), and “Hamlet’s accidental discovery of the intention to spy upon him has a bearing wider than his attitude towards Ophelia ... It renders the nunnery scene playable and intelligible” (197). Yet, no matter whether Hamlet has discovered the King and Polonius’s intention or not, the scene is still “playable and intelligible” in terms of “deep psychology.” For, as we must know, there Hamlet is displaying not only his “savage side” in treating Ophelia “like a prostitute” (Wilson 194). He is also unconsciously experiencing the jouissance that goes with the verbal thrusts.

Much depends on the word “nunnery.” It refers, literally, to a place where a

maid like Ophelia “will preserve her chastity and be safe from love, marriage, and breeding of sinners,” and yet, sarcastically at the same time, it also refers to “a house of *unchaste* women” (Jenkins 282: note 121). It is certainly perverse to insist on the sarcastic meaning at the expense of the literal meaning, as does Wilson in his *What Happens in “Hamlet.”* Nevertheless, we must understand that unconsciously, on the level of Id, the little Ham would be all the happier to meet his target woman (be she Gertrude or Ophelia) at a brothel, where no Super-Ego will come to check his libido. Thus, Hamlet’s unconscious mind is pleading earnestly when he says, “Get thee to a nunnery” (III, i, 121), although his conscious mind may deny it as a joke and Ophelia, as well as all others, may take it as merely a frenzied utterance.

If to speak daggers to a woman has a symbolic, libidinous pleasure of sexual intercourse, to wish to die for a woman is to pursue the *jouissance* of orgasm. I have pointed out, in another essay, that death is often equal to orgasm in *Romeo and Juliet* (see Tung 212 ff.). In fact, this bawdy connection is seen repeatedly elsewhere in Shakespeare. In *Much Ado about Nothing*, for instance, we have Benedict saying to Beatrice: “I will live in thy heart, die in thy lap ...” (V, ii, 102). And in *King Lear* we have the mad Lear saying, “I will die bravely,/Like a smug bridegroom” (IV, vi, 195-6).

In *Hamlet*, there is no line that can directly associate death with orgasm except, perhaps, these: “O, I die, Horatio. The potent poison quite overcrows my spirit” (V, ii, 357-8). These are words said when Hamlet is about to die after he is wounded by the poisoned rapier and has snatched the poisoned cup from Horatio. The word “overcrows” suggests the crowing of a victorious cock, and a cock suggests the genital organ of a man while the potent poison suggests the female’s fluid shed in coition. Here Hamlet seems to suggest that he is overjoyed (has reached orgasm) through the coition fluid that comes with the thrusts, but the poison (fluid) has triumphed over his “cock” as he is soon to die.

In sexual intercourse, to die is actually to “sleep in quiet” after orgasm, just as suggested by Juliet when she assures her mother: “Indeed I never shall be satisfied/With Romeo, till I behold him—dead ... Madam, if you could find out but a man/To bear a poison, I would temper it--/That Romeo should upon receipt thereof/Soon sleep in quiet” (*Romeo and Juliet*, III, v, 93-99). Now, in *Hamlet* we have these lines:

... To die—to sleep,
No more; and by a sleep to say we end
The heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to: ’tis a consummation

Devoutly to be wished. (III, i, 60-64)

As the word “consummation” can refer specifically to the completion of marital union by the first act of sexual intercourse after marriage, to die or to sleep can, naturally in this context, refer to the quiet state after orgasm. And consequently a sexual implication can also be found in the ensuing lines, particularly these: “For who would bear the whips and scorns of time ... When he himself might his quietus make/With a bare bodkin?” Here, a “bare bodkin” is again a phallic symbol like the dagger, and to “make one’s quietus with a bare bodkin” is to “sleep in quiet” after orgasm. Thus, this most famous soliloquy of Hamlet’s (and Shakespeare’s) is unconsciously in effect a soliloquy carried on by a Ham-let that dare not let go his libido to achieve his sexual consummation, rather than merely a conscious reflection upon the ethical question of “to be or not to be” in the rational Hamlet’s mind. This interpretation, to be sure, is further supported by the fact that as soon as Hamlet concludes this soliloquy, he sees Ophelia coming, and as soon as he sees her, he says: “Soft you now,/The fair Ophelia! Nymph, in thy orisons/Be all my sins remembered” (III, i, 88-90). If the fair nymph remembered all his sins in her prayers, wouldn’t it be easier for him to sink in “the undiscovered country [pleasure] from whose bourn/No traveler returns” (III, i, 79-80)?

The theme of death, carried along the sexual path, will ultimately come to the grave. It takes Andrew Marvell to write, “The grave’s a fine and private place,/But none, I think, do there embrace” (“To His Coy Mistress,” 31-32). But the grave-diggers in *Hamlet* know more than this. As they joke at their work, they know the grave “lasts till doomsday” (V, i, 59). What they do not know is: the grave can be a female or yonic symbol, and two men will soon come there to embrace. As we are told, when Ophelia is being buried, Laertes suddenly leaps into the grave, saying, “Hold off the earth awhile,/Till I have caught her once more in mine arms” (V, i, 242-3). Upon seeing this, Hamlet also leaps into the grave, wishing to be “buried quick with her” as well. In consequence, the two men grapple with each other in the grave, with Hamlet proclaiming that “Forty thousand brothers/Could not with all their quantity of love/Make up my sum” (V, i, 264-66).

This is indeed a moving scene. But it not only shows a brother’s deep love and a lover’s deep affection. It also symbolizes the great attraction that a target female can have for her enamored male. As we know, the grave, with its concave shape before earth is put to it, is obviously a female (yonic) symbol. To leap into it so as to die there is a “consummation” any unconscious Id may wish for. That is why earlier in Act II, Scene ii, when Polonius asks, “Will you walk out of the air, my lord?” Hamlet answers, “Into my grave?” (206-7). Unconsciously for Hamlet, the grave is

Gertrude or Ophelia, for whom he would willingly “die.”

Besides the grave, the cup is another female (yonic) symbol in the play. The poisoned cup is the emblem of the Fatal Woman or the Unfaithful Wife. At the end of the play, Gertrude drinks it unwittingly, Claudius is forced to drink it, and Hamlet drinks willingly the “liquor left” (V, ii, 347). All the three die from it. This means: woman certainly can be a ruinous “cup” for all.

VIII. Patriarchy and Prison

Though a woman can be like a poisoned cup, a man’s libido still seldom hesitates to approach and drink it. In the case of Hamlet, for instance, even though he complains of a woman’s “frailty,” he is still subject to her beauty or charm. Thus, as Ophelia describes to her father, there was a time when Hamlet looked as if “he had been loosed out of hell/To speak of horrors” while perusing her face (II, i, 83-4). And, as we know, there are times in the plays when Hamlet seems to have loosed his libido to speak words with bawdy implications: e.g., “Let her not walk in the sun. Conception is a blessing, but as your daughter may conceive—friend, look to it” (II, ii, 184-5); “In the secret parts of Fortune? O most true, she is a strumpet” (II, ii, 235); “Lady, shall I lie in your lap? ... Do you think I meant country matters” (III, ii, 110 & 115).

But a man’s sexual desire is too often repressed. In Shakespeare’s age, it is said, “the father was the head of the family and its ruler” (Harrison 1966, 95). In the world of Hamlet, as in most parts of the ancient world, in fact, patriarchy is a system that constricts not only a child’s freedom in marriage (as Capulet does Juliet’s or Egeus does Hermia’s), but also a child’s “fancy” or natural desire for a sexual partner. In Act I, Scene iii, therefore, we have Laertes warning Ophelia, thus:

Fear it, Ophelia, fear it, my dear sister,
And keep you in the rear of your affection
Out of the shot and danger of desire.
The chariest maid is prodigal enough
If she unmask her beauty to the moon.
Virtue itself scapes not calumnious strikes. (33-38)

Then we have Polonius admonishing her, thus:

Affection? Pooh, you speak like a green girl,
Unsifted in such perilous circumstance.

... Tender yourself more dearly
Or ... you'll tender me a fool. (101-109)

And then, as we know, Laertes is himself asked to bear in mind all his father's moral "precepts" (I, iii, 58ff.) and behave well. Polonius even sends Reynaldo to detect by wiles his son's conduct in Paris, to see if Laertes is addicted to gaming, drinking, fencing, swearing, quarreling, drabbing (whoring), etc. (II, i, 26-26).

In truth, we also see young Fortinbras controlled by his uncle, King of Norway. And Hamlet, obviously, is controlled by his spiritual (ghost) father and his corporeal (step or uncle) father. His ghost father wants him to act as an avenger, a champion of virtue against incest or lechery, but the ghost says: "Taint not thy mind nor let thy soul contrive/Against thy mother aught. Leave her to heaven,/And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge/To prick and sting her" (I, v, 85-88). Superficially, this is a father's warning against a son's matricide. But in deep psychology this is the Super-Ego's prohibition against the Id's incestuous instinct that goes with the Oedipus complex.

As to Claudius, the corporeal father or uncle, he simply represents, as we have said, both Hamlet's Id and his shadow. As his Id, he is attracted to the same anima, Gertrude. As his shadow, he must struggle against the prince's persona. He knows the Queen's attachment to her son, feels the son's jealous hatred against her speedy remarriage with him, and is therefore constantly on the alert for any surprise attack from the mad one on either himself or the Queen. As the powerful king and the hostile uncle/father, he represses Hamlet's desire most conspicuously indeed. He even summons Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to observe Hamlet and seeks to have the prince's life done away with.

In Act II, Scene ii, Hamlet tells the two old "friends" that "Denmark's a prison" (243), and that the world is "a goodly one, in which there are many confines, wards, and dungeons, Denmark being one of the worst" (245-6). When they say they do not think so, Hamlet then replies: "Why, then it's none to you; for there is nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so. To me it is a prison" (249-50). From this dialogue we can clearly see that Hamlet does feel strongly that he is himself imprisoned tightly in Denmark.

What, then, is the cause of this feeling? Is it ambition, as his friends suggest? Hamlet himself says: "O God, I could be bounded in a nutshell and count myself a king of infinite space—were it not that I have bad dreams" (II, iii, 254-6). What, then, are the bad dreams? Hamlet does not make it clear, though he mentions that "A dream itself is but a shadow" (II, ii, 260). Now, judging from this conversation along with the situation he is in, we may infer that Hamlet may have such bad dreams

as: first, a latent ghost is constantly appearing to direct his behavior, to restrict his will, and to control his desire within the ethical confines; second, a potent shadow is forever there watching over him, guarding against his “mad” conduct, and threatening to strangle his freedom along with his life. And this latent ghost plus this potent shadow are no other than the little Ham’s two fathers, who in a process of condensation together with all other fathers of all other families form the father image and become the governing authorities that make up the patriarchal system to repress the children’s desires, especially the desire prone to incest (the Oedipus complex) or to lust.

IX. The Strange Eruption

But will a son obey his father unquestioningly and docilely all the time? The answer is emphatically in the negative. In the case of Hamlet, we see him “doubt some foul play” (I, iii, 256) from the beginning, when he is told about his father’s apparition. After he himself talks with the ghost and is convinced that “It is an honest ghost” (I, v, 144), he still dare not carry out the vengeance immediately. That is why he has to feign madness and use a pantomime together with the players’ perturbing dialogue as “The Mousetrap” (III, ii, 232) to “catch the conscience of the King” (II, ii, 601). And even after he makes sure of the fact, he still hesitates to kill Claudius while he is praying, and thus he has to reproach himself again and again for being as irresolute or inactive as a coward (see the soliloquy in IV, iv, 32-66).

On the other hand, we see Hamlet has been hostile towards Claudius, his stepfather or uncle father. He regards him as a villain and also suspects him of “foul play,” though unable to avoid falling into his final scheme. In fact, it is against this corporeal father that the entire revenge tragedy is directed on the conscious level, though unconsciously the pressure for revenge comes as much from the good angel (the spiritual father) as from the bad angel (the corporeal father) since both seek to repress the prince’s desires.

Anyway, as a son under the pressure of two fathers, Hamlet is indeed but a little Ham with his libido doubly repressed. Under such circumstances, his psychic state is not just like an iceberg with his conscious persona appearing on the surface to struggle with his Super-Ego against his shadow, while his unconscious Id is kept hidden beneath the surface to stir his soul occasionally in meeting with his anima. In effect, it is even more like a volcano with its visible top (his conscious self or persona) appearing on the surface and its unseen lava (his libidinous Id or true ego) hidden beneath the surface, only to erupt with pressure from his Super-Ego and his shadow.

In the beginning of the play when the ghost becomes a topic, Horatio, compelled

by his “own eyes” (I, i, 61) to abandon the theory of “fantasy” (I, i, 26), says that the ghost’s appearance “bodes some strange eruption to our state” (I, i, 72). By that statement Horatio means, of course, that the apparition is a sign of some strange, violent outbreak that is to come to the state of Denmark. However, “our state” need not refer only to the state of Denmark. It can also refer to “our mental state.” In that sense, “some strange eruption to our state” will then refer to some strange, violent outbreak as seen of Hamlet’s emotion that is to come with the ghost’s appearance to the mental state of all Danes. In other words, Horatio seems to have announced unawares in his ambiguous manner that the play is to be “some strange eruption” from Hamlet’s psychic volcano. And Hamlet’s strange eruption obviously consists of his “raving lunacy” and “philosophical and occasional pessimism,” which are the symptoms connected to what the Renaissance people called “melancholy” or to any neurotic case that can be interpreted in terms of modern psychoanalysis.

X. The Psychoanalytic Vision

As Hamlet’s psychic volcano erupts unconsciously now and then, what sort of person does he seem to be? Among other things, we have seen a Hamlet seemingly as mad as Orlando and as revengeful as Hieronimo. Yet, Shakespeare has not made the play into a love story like Ariosto’s, nor a revenge tragedy like Thomas Kyd’s. Instead, he has written a play the concern of which is primarily not with the sensational effect of mad love or mad revenge, but with the original cause of madness for love and for revenge. And, thus, the play has presented before us a vision that shows Shakespeare’s deep understanding of our basic human nature.

We have argued that “Hamlet” can be “Ham-let” in Shakespeare’s mind. In fact, Shakespeare is always very careful and artful in giving his characters’ names. In *Hamlet*, his namesmanship is shown not only in changing “Amleth” to “Hamlet.” In the original source of the play, as we know, Hamlet’s father is called Horvendile, his mother Geruth, and his uncle Fengon. By replacing “Horvendile” with the “Old Hamlet” or “King Hamlet,” that is, by using the same name “Hamlet” for both father and son, Shakespeare naturally suggests closer ties between the father and the son, thus helping us to claim that the ghost Hamlet is in reality the identical soul of the prince.

On the other hand, in changing “Fengon” into “Claudius,” Shakespeare obviously alludes to the Roman emperor Claudius. The Claudius in *Hamlet*, however, is very different from the Roman emperor. He is the poisoner, not the poisoned; hence, he is revenged upon, rather than avenged. Furthermore, he is revenged upon by Hamlet, his nephew or stepson, unlike the Roman emperor, who was murdered by

Agrippina, his wife. By this allusion, therefore, Shakespeare seems to suggest that people with the same name may also be very different in character and in fate, although they may similarly be involved in power struggle and in love affairs.

But Shakespeare's most significant suggestion lies in the Queen's name "Gertrude." Scholars have noticed that the Gertrude in the Folio edition of the play is different from the First Quarto's Gertred and the Second Quarto's Gertrard; she may still be a lusty widow, but now "her speeches and actions are characterized almost exclusively by meekness and silence" (Kehler 404), and there is no evidence now that Gertrude is an accomplice in murdering King Hamlet.¹² But scholars have not yet pointed out that the name "Gertrude" is significant because in etymology it is from Old High German *ger* (spear) + *trut* (dear, beloved).¹³ When Shakespeare finally adopted the name "Gertrude" instead of "Geruth," what was in his mind?

It is impractical, of course, for us to conjecture now what might be in his mind. But the fact that "Gertrude" stands for "a dear, beloved spear" certainly can assist us in giving the play a psychoanalytic interpretation. In Section III of this paper, we have suggested that men always war for women, and Gertrude is the woman that causes a war of revenge between Hamlet and Claudius. As a dear spear, Gertrude undoubtedly has the inkling of war. But as an anima she causes not only the superficial war between Hamlet and Claudius. As discussed in Sections IV, V, and VI above, Gertrude also causes a deep war between the conscious Hamlet, i.e., the persona representing Hamlet's rational Ego and moral Super-Ego (the sane, normal Hamlet with "a noble mind" as described by Ophelia in III, i, 152-6) and the unconscious Hamlet, i.e., the "mad" Hamlet representing his bestial Id with his libido emerging to the surface or erupted out from beneath. Meanwhile, we also suggest that King Hamlet (the ghost, spiritual, ideal father) is the embodiment of the prince's Super-Ego whereas King Claudius (the corporeal, villainous father) is the incarnation of the prince's libidinous Id and his shadow.

Since the war is in its actual depth a conflict between the conscious Hamlet (outer ego) and the unconscious Hamlet (inner ego), the result is naturally a tragedy, a kind of suicide, a death that passes the question of "to be or not to be," or an end that the split personality can only wait for with the attitude of "The readiness is all" (V, ii, 218). So, in a sense, we see that Gertrude as a dear spear has caused not only a deep war but also a great woe: she represents not only the archetype of the Unfaithful Wife but also that of the Fatal Woman in our collective unconscious. This fatal woman brings a number of deaths in the play. But the death of Hamlet with his two fathers is the death of a trinity, of three Hams (a weak one plus two powerful ones), and it is the aftermath of having his Ego torn fatally, under the influence of his anima, between his Super-Ego (his soul, his spiritual father) and his Id or shadow (his body, his cor-

poreal father). And thus one can aver with Barbara Everett: “Hamlet didn’t delay in revenging his father, because he didn’t revenge his father. In the end he revenged only himself” (118).

Ironically, then, a woman as mild and meek as Gertrude can become a lethal weapon, a beloved spear to cost so many dear lives, just as Helen does in *Iliad*. But how about Ophelia? Isn’t she as mild and meek? Yes, she is even more so, and she is chaste and harmless. She is not the type of the Unfaithful Wife nor that of the Fatal Woman. In truth, her name means “a help or succor” in its Greek origin.¹⁴ Her role in the play is not just to contrast her youth, chastity, innocence, etc., with Gertrude’s age, lust, crime, etc. Nor is it just to increase the tragic sense by adding her own death to the tragedy or to “represent a quality in Hamlet’s mind ... that point of love in Hamlet which is the center of his true nobility” (Vyvyan 41). Besides providing occasions for Hamlet’s or Shakespeare’s or the Shakespearean scholars’ philosophizing about beauty, virtue, death, fatalism, etc., Ophelia is actually to help demonstrate the psychological truth that in one’s fancy displacement often occurs: a target woman (e.g., Gertrude) may easily be displaced by another (Ophelia). Thus, as discussed in Section VII above, she also receives verbal daggers from the mad Hamlet as does Gertrude. And her grave, as a female (yonic) symbol, is the place where Hamlet, no less than Laertes, wishes to “die” in, just as the poisoned cup, another female (yonic) symbol, is no other than Gertrude, the dear spear that kills Hamlet as well as his two fathers.

In Shakespeare’s vision, then, men do often war for women. But only the strongest man can possess the target woman, in the big world or in a small village (a hamlet). In a family, the powerful one is always the father. The son is but a Ham-let, who is forever influenced and controlled by the strong Hams, his spiritual father and corporeal father. So, if the son is not weaned from his Oedipus complex, he cannot achieve individuation. He may stay somewhat in the Imaginary Order, although placed in the Symbolic Order and aspiring for the Real Order. In that case, as in the case of Hamlet, there is no “due balance between the real and the imaginary world” (Coleridge 163), and madness or melancholy will surely ensue. And more often than not the Ham-let will suffer from a conflict between his conscious self and unconscious self, involving his rational Ego, moral Super-Ego, bestial Id, and villainous shadow fighting altogether vainly for his anima, the figure ambiguously to be his spear and his cup, his poison and his love, his grave and his life all at once. Consequently, death becomes a jouissance, a symbolic orgasm experienced at last by the erotic male with his strange eruption in the face of his anima. Is this then a revenge tragedy? Yes, but not a traditional kind. It is a Shakespearean kind: a kind, to crack a joke by the way, that stems from the little Ham that dares to come and try to

shake the dear spear cherished by the patriarch, the powerful father, the strong Ham, the Gigantic Phallus. As a playwright of such a kind of revenge tragedy, isn't this Shake-spear the "poet of nature," who sees clearly as a psychoanalyst the depths of human nature in relation to the theme of war and woman, in its sexual and symbolic aspects?

Notes

1. Hereinafter the parenthesized numbers of the act, the scene, and the line(s) refer to The Arden Edition of Shakespeare. *Hamlet* is edited by Harold Jenkins.
2. For his discrimination between the levels of conscious and unconscious mental activity, see his "The Anatomy of the Mental Personality, Lecture XXI," in *New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis* (Norton, 1964).
3. A simplified explanation of these Freudian concepts can be found in Guerin's *A Handbook of Critical Approaches to Literature*, 87-94, and in Dobie's *Theory into Practice: An Introduction to Literary Criticism*, 49-55.
4. For a simplified explanation of these Jungian ideas, see Guerin, 134-39, or Dobie, 56-60. Jung's works include *Psyche and Symbol*, *Psychological Reflections*, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*, and *Two Essays on Analytical Psychology*.
5. For a simplified explanation of these Lacanian concepts, see Dobie, 61-64. Lacan has touched on the father-and-son relationship in *Hamlet* in his *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*.
6. Quoted from the entry "Jouissance" in *Wikipedia*, the free encyclopedia on line.
7. G. B. Harrison says that "Hamlet appears first as Amlethus in the *Historia Danica* written by Saxo Grammaticus in the twelfth century." See his *Shakespeare: The Complete Works* (1968), 880.
8. Hamlet's age is inferred from the Grave-digger's account of the combat between Old Hamlet and Old Fortinbras in act V, Scene 1, ll. 139-57. But this inference is problematic. See the longer note in Jenkins's *Hamlet*, 551-4.
9. This aside is a chance remark and as such it can be a verbal slip, which according to William Beatty Warner is a form of the unconscious, along with dreams, symptoms, personal rituals, defense mechanisms, and jokes.
10. See the entry of "Anatomy of Melancholy" in Benèt's *The Reader's Encyclopedia*, 33.
11. In Ad de Vries's *A Dictionary of Symbols and Imagery*, under the entry of "dagger," the references are said to appear in *Twelfth Night* (IV, ii), *1 Henry IV* (II, iv), *Henry V* (IV, iv), etc. In fact, the references to "poniards" such as in *Much Ado about Nothing* (II, i), and in *3 Henry VI* (II, i), have the same semantic force.
12. For detail about the murder of Old Hamlet, see the Ghost's explication in Act I, Scene v, 42ff. That Gertrude is innocent of the murder is also evidenced in her calm reaction to the players' panto-

mime and dialogues in Act III, Scene ii.

13. See the entry "Gertrude" in *Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language* (1967).

14. See the entry "Ophelia" in *Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language* (1967).

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**《哈姆雷特》中的「怪異爆發」：
莎士比亞的精神分析靈象**

莎翁深知人性，在《哈姆雷特》中，對「男恆爭女」的性靈，所體現之特殊見地，似乎與現代精神分析學說不謀而合：男孩在家中受父權壓制，戀母情節未了而心

理未真正成熟時，容易憂鬱而產生人格分裂。本篇論文以佛洛伊德、容格、拉岡等人的心理分析術語和觀念，重新詮釋莎翁在《哈姆雷特》中描繪何種「怪異爆發」，同時對劇中一些傳統問題提出看法。

關鍵詞：1.有意識、無意識 2.戀母情節 3.超我、自我、遺德 4.裡蔽躲 5.集体無意識 6.基型 7.表我、動魅、潛影 8.意象界、象徵界 9.茹爽 10.父權体制

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