The Tragedy of Indecisiveness and Delay in William Shakespeare's Play "Hamlet"

Dr. Kamal Ismaeel Al- Gorani
Assistant Prof. English Literature, English Department, Faculty of Arts, Ibb University
kamalalgorani71@gmail.com
Mobile No: 00967 770249296

Abstract
The present paper attempted to investigate the tragedy of indecisiveness and delay as a tragic flaw of Hamlet, the main character of Shakespeare's play "Hamlet". It examines the events and experiences that shape Hamlet's character and contribute to his inability to act decisively, ultimately leading to his tragic fate. Employing a descriptive analytic approach, the study analyzes Hamlet's vacillation and the underlying factors behind his hesitation. Key findings suggest that his indecisiveness stems from a complex interplay of fear, moral uncertainty, and conflicting emotions, which paralyze him in the face of action. Hamlet's struggle with these internal conflicts prevents him from avenging his father's murder, resulting in a tragic outcome for himself and those around him.
Key Words: Hamlet, indecisiveness, delay, tragedy, tragic flaw, hesitation, madness, reasons, factors

ملخص البحث
تستكشف هذه الورقة التردد والتأخير كخطأ مأساوي في شخصية هاملت في مسرحية شكسبير. تدرس الأحداث والتجارب التي تشكل شخصية هاملت وتساهم في عدم قدرته على اتخاذ القرار الحاسم، مما يؤدي في النهاية إلى مصيره المأساوي. باستخدام المنهج التحليلي الوصفي، تحلل الدراسة تردد هاملت والعوامل الكامنة وراء تردده. تشير النتائج الرئيسية إلى أن تردده ناتج عن تفاعل معقد من الخوف، وعدم اليقين الأخلاقي، والعواطف المتضاربة، مما يشل حركته في مواجهة الأفعال. يمنع صراع هاملت مع هذه الصراعات الداخلية من الانتقام لمقتل والده، مما يؤدي إلى نتيجة مأساوية له ولمن حوله.
الكلمات المفتاحية :هاملت، التردد، التأخير، المأساة، الخطأ المأساوي، الجنون, اسباب, عوامل

1. Introduction

William Shakespeare represents the pinnacle of the English language, culture, and global literature. He shaped the essence of English itself. Without his influence, English would not exist as we know it today; it would merely be a Western Germanic dialect spoken by the invaders who settled in what would become the greatest empire in history. At that time, England was inhabited by Celtic tribes that were subjects of the Roman Empire.

Throughout the years, Shakespeare's works have been celebrated for their eloquent poetic language, captivating both critics and scholars, as well as for their vividly drawn characters. He is renowned for his imaginative power and deep understanding of human relationships, needs, and desires. His art reflects a profound insight into human nature and psychology, capturing the complexities of character and behavior.

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The main characters in Shakespeare's plays often possess a depth that makes them relatable and profoundly human. One of his most renowned works, *Hamlet*, is considered one of the greatest tragedies in literature. It explores the Danish prince Hamlet's internal struggles, including the death of his father, his mother's marriage to his uncle Claudius during his mourning, and feelings of betrayal. Through Hamlet, Shakespeare masterfully conveys themes of alienation and existential despair. This play artfully combines elements of drama, poetry, and philosophy, solidifying its status as one of the greatest tragedies ever written.

2. The play " Hamlet, the Prince of Denmark" as a typical Shakespearean Tragedy

Shakespeare's *Hamlet* is built upon characters that make themselves appear different from reality. This play pulls the readers and audience into a world of tragedy, of sorrow, and of fallen heroes. Shakespeare uses many conventional plot elements in *Hamlet*. The traditional elements of a tragedy set by Aristotle, for example, are employed with literary articulation in the play. The hero is a noble character. He has a serious flaw in character that would lead to his tragic end. The play introduces Hamlet to the audience as a noble prince whom the people could identify with more than the nobility. Soon after that, the events of the play twist tragically due to the murder of Hamlet's father by his uncle Claudius. That turn of events puts Hamlet's capacity to take action to a severe test. Audience and readers alike could notice the difficult situation Hamlet is put in. From that point of time and all the way through the end of the play, Hamlet's indecisiveness gets more

obvious and more painful for it causes Hamlet to suffer more and prolongs his tragic miseries. His hesitation and the inability to make decisions and act are his weaknesses.

The play delves into the intricacies of human nature, exploring themes of deception, tragedy, and the struggle with indecision. Hamlet's internal conflict and difficulty in making choices are central to the narrative, highlighting the consequences of inaction and the effects of his inner turmoil.

Additionally, Shakespeare incorporates traditional tragic elements, such as the noble hero with a tragic flaw, which adds depth to Hamlet's character. The audience becomes invested in his emotional journey as he confronts his circumstances and personal demons.

Hamlet is trapped in a maze of thoughts that obstruct his quest for revenge against King Claudius. His indecision at two pivotal moments leads to greater turmoil and pain. The first instance arises when he considers suicide, and the second occurs after the ghost's revelation, when he initially resolves to kill Claudius but then falters. As noted by Crag (2010), the play can be interpreted as a narrative of spirits, yet it is widely acknowledged as a tragedy. *Hamlet* is frequently criticized as a representation of a man paralyzed by indecision.

Critics have extensively discussed Hamlet's character and actions, with some perceiving him as a tragic figure overwhelmed by doubt and indecision, while others view him as someone confronting deep philosophical questions about life, death, and morality. Shakespeare's depiction of Hamlet's inner turmoil continues to captivate both audiences and scholars, ensuring that *Hamlet* remains one of his most enduring and thought-provoking works.

According to Dillon (2007), no play better exemplifies Shakespeare's distinctive mixed dramaturgy or his engagement with the popular theater of his predecessors than *Hamlet* This work crafts a hero facing an ethical dilemma, similar to Brutus, while also interacting with the conventions of revenge tragedy.

By intertwining these elements, Shakespeare not only engages with the theatrical norms of his time but also subverts and transcends them, resulting in a piece that is both innovative and timeless. Hamlet's internal conflicts, moral challenges, and quest for justice resonate with audiences throughout the ages, establishing the play as a classic and enduring work of literature.

A survey of the literature on Shakespeare's *Hamlet* alerts us to the great attention paid by critics to what is termed Hamlet's delay. What is being referred to as "delay" are Hamlet's actions from the time Hamlet hears the Ghost's commands for revenge to the play's ending. The questions then are, "Does Hamlet delay?" and, "If he does delay, why does Hamlet delay?" Although the belief that Hamlet delays is not the only assumption that is made to account for the duration of the action. (Cohen 1996)

Here, in this particular argument made by the critic Cohen, the researcher finds himself completely convinced and agrees with this very interesting point. The issue of Hamlet's delay, and whether he actually delays in taking action to avenge his father's murder, is a long-standing and complex debate among Shakespeare scholars.

"According to most critics," John W. Draper (1966) asserts, "the crucial question in the tragedy is the reason for Hamlet's delay in avenging his father's murder" (165). This sentiment is echoed by Norman N. Holland, who summarizes Freud's psychoanalytical perspective on the delay: "The basic issue of the play, Freud and Jones say (and so, they point out, do many literary critics), is: Why does Hamlet delay?" (164). Edmund Wilson notes, "The problem of delay is a commonplace of Hamlet criticism" (201).

Although the play contains what Northrop Frye refers to as many "minor problems" (*On Shakespeare 84*), Wilson tells us that the King at prayers, the slaying of Polonius, Hamlet's treatment of Gertrude, the madness of Ophelia, her funeral and struggle at graveside, among others,

> form for the most part a series of detached episodes; only a few of them contribute to the mechanism of the main plot; and, though they are exciting in themselves, none except the fencing-match and what leads up to it is felt to be central. A great question overshadows them all, until the final scene: When will Hamlet exact just retribution from his uncle? and why does he not do so? (203-04)

Ernest Jones (1954) believes that the "central mystery" of the play, "namely the meaning of Hamlet's hesitancy in seeking to obtain revenge for his father's murder--has well been called the Sphinx of modern Literature" (22). He briefly mentions many of the critical approaches that this mystery has produced. These hypotheses are categorized from a denial of any delay at all to the "box office" view that in order for the play to have a decent length, the murder must be delayed until the end. The three most important approaches explaining the delay, he says, hinge on [1] something in Hamlet's character or constitution "which is not fitted for effective action of any kind," [2] the task itself "which is such as to be almost impossible of performance by any one," and [3] some "special feature" of the task that makes it "peculiarly difficult or repugnant" to Hamlet's sensitivity and temperament (26).

For Jones, the cause for Hamlet's delay is in the third category, "namely in some special feature of the task that renders it repugnant to him" (45). He argues that Hamlet is never unclear about what his duty is, "about what he ought to do; the conflict in his mind ranged about the question why he could not bring himself to do it" (48). It is the unconscious nature of the cause of his repugnance to his task that holds the key to Hamlet's problem of delay. Jones points out Hamlet's own words in his seventh soliloquy to this effect:

I do not know
Why yet I live to say this thing's to do,
Sith I have cause, and will, and strength, and means

To do 't.[1]
(IV.iv.35-38)

[1] Hibbard, G.R. ed. *Oxford Shakespeare: Hamlet By William Shakespeare*. New York: Oxford UP, 1994. (All textual references to Shakespeare's Play Hamlet are taken from this edition)

Thus, Jones' perspective suggests that Hamlet's inaction is a product of complex, unconscious motivations rather than a simple lack of clarity or resolve. This interpretation adds a layer of psychological complexity to Hamlet's character and further complicates the debate surrounding his behavior.

Hamlet suffers from an Oedipal complex or fixation: the unconscious desire to kill his father and marry his mother. Jones argues, "Hamlet's advocates say he cannot do his duty, his detractors say he will not, whereas the truth is that he cannot will" (53). Hamlet's lack of will pertains only to the killing of his uncle and is "due to an unconscious repulsion against the act that cannot be performed" (53).

Jones suggests that Hamlet harbors an unconscious desire to kill his father (King Hamlet) and marry his mother (Gertrude). This Oedipal complex, rooted in Freudian psychology, creates a deep-seated psychological conflict that prevents Hamlet from taking action against Claudius, who has usurped his father's role and married his mother. Coleridge asks, "What did Shakespeare mean when he drew the character of Hamlet?" (qtd. in Furness 154). He answers by asserting that artists never write without first having a design; and in speaking of Shakespeare's design for *Hamlet* he says:

> My belief is, that he always regarded his story before he began to write much in the same light as a painter regards his canvas before he begins to paint: as a mere vehicle for his thoughts,--as a ground upon which he was to work. (154)

In supporting the researcher's argument about Hamlet's indecisiveness and delay, critic Cohen suggested that, although the different theories of Hamlet's indecisiveness and delay provide invaluable insights into the nature and meaning of Shakespeare's hero, no one explanation can reasonably account for Hamlet's indecisiveness and delay throughout the entire action of the play. The study will try to show that Hamlet is a theatrical composite exhibiting various complex human dimensions, and that he delays the killing of Claudius at different times, for different reasons, in his progress toward self-knowledge.(Cohen 1996)

3. The Critical Problem: A Brief History

It's a strange fact that for the first hundred and thirty-five years after the production of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, there is no mention of Hamlet's indecisiveness and delay in any of the scholarly criticism of the play.

John Jump (1973), in his essay "*Hamlet*," tells us that *Some Remarks on the Tragedy of Hamlet*, published anonymously in 1736 and attributed to Thomas Hanmer, is the first detailed critical study of the play where an analysis of indecisiveness or inaction is present. Interestingly, before the

appearance of this piece, "playgoers and readers seemed not to have suspected Hamlet of procrastinating" (147). Hanmer says pointedly:

> Had Hamlet gone right to work, as we could suppose such a Prince to do in parallel Circumstances, there would have been an End of our Play. The Poet therefore was obliged to delay his Hero's Revenge: but then he should have contrived some good Reason for it. (qtd. in Jump 147-48)

17th century scholarly criticism viewed Hamlet as "a bitterly eloquent and princely revenger" (Jump 147). It was in the middle of the eighteenth century that critics ascribed to him "a great delicacy and a more melancholy temperament," but even they did not consider him to be "lacking in initiative and resolution" (147). Scholars of the late 18th century began to speculate about the "good Reason" Shakespeare may have "contrived" for Hamlet's indecisiveness and delay. Their search resulted in discoveries in a variety of places.

Among the Neo-Classical critics, Samuel Johnson (1986) could serve as an excellent example of his period's approach to *Hamlet*. Johnson is primarily concerned with the actions of the character and the moral implications of those actions. Johnson says of *Hamlet*,

> "If the dramas of Shakespeare were to be characterized, each by the particular excellence which distinguishes it from the rest, we must allow the tragedy of Hamlet the praise of variety. The incidents are so numerous, that the argument of the play would make a long tale" ('Endnote to Hamlet"7).

He points out that Hamlet does little throughout the play to direct his revenge, and sees him as an "instrument," rather than an "agent," of his fate. He goes on to say that even after Hamlet is convinced that the King is guilty of killing his father,

> he makes no attempt to punish him, and his death is at last affected by an incident which Hamlet has no part in producing. (Johnson on Shakespeare1011)

Johnson also comments on the seeming contradiction between Hamlet's noble character and his desire to see Claudius' soul "damn'd and black as hell" in the prayer scene:

> This speech, in which Hamlet, represented as a virtuous character, is not content with taking blood for blood, but contrives damnation for the man that he would punish, is too horrible to be read or to be uttered. (990)

Along with its praise for the emotional diversity and theatricality of Shakespeare's play, this was a period that raised the issue of the playwright's failure to give an explanation for Hamlet's indecisiveness, which would occupy critical thought for the next hundred and fifty years.

Romantic Criticism

The crucial question, then, posed in the 18th century and dominating 19th century criticism of *Hamlet* was, "Why does Hamlet delay killing Claudius?" The answer for critics in this period came from the exploration of the inner world of Hamlet's personality. Goethe (1796) found it in Hamlet's delicate sensibility, presenting what has been subsequently looked

upon as a sentimental image of "[a] beautiful, pure, noble and most moral nature, without the strength of nerve which makes the hero, [that] sinks beneath a burden which it can neither bear nor throw off" (qtd. in Furness 273), subjected to an intolerable fate. His famous description, set down in his autobiographical novel *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship* (1796), follows Hamlet's:

> The time is out of joint; O cursed spite,
> That ever I was born to set it right. (I. v. 188-89)
>
> > In these words, I imagine, will be found the key to Hamlet's procedure. To me it is clear that Shakespeare meant, in the present case, to represent the effects of a great action laid upon a soul unfit for the performance of it. In this view the whole piece seems to me to be composed. There is an oak tree planted in a costly vase, which should have born only the pleasant flowers in its bosom; the roots expand, the jar is shivered. (qtd. in Furness 15)

A.C. Bradley (1985) pointed out the inadequacy of casting Hamlet in the role of such "a costly vase" when he said "you can feel only pity not unmingled with contempt. Whatever else he is, he is no herd' (80). The sentimental view of Hamlet presents a character of a pure and noble nature but without the strength of character to form a hero. Goethe, nevertheless, calls our attention to an aspect of Hamlet's character, sweet and sensitive, that is, if not heroic, certainly admirable.

Schlegel (1808), in *A Course of Lectures on Dramatic Art and Literature*, found the reason for Hamlet's delay in the "hero's labyrinths of thought, in which we neither find end nor beginning" (qtd. in Furness 280). Schlegel, viewing tragedy as the conflict between man and his hostile universe, held Hamlet's highly intellectual character, with excessive reflection, as an exacerbation of this conflict, rendering him disabled for action. The play, in Schlegel's view, "is single in its kind: a tragedy of thought inspired by continual and never-satisfied meditation on human destiny . . . intend[ing} to show that a consideration, which would exhaust all the relations and possible consequences of a deed to the very limits of human foresight, cripples the power of acting" (qtd. in Furness 279).

With due respect to Eliot (1934), it is not difficult to recognize the similarity of temperament and emotionality between the romantic artist and the part of Hamlet's personality that contemplated an ethereal universe. Deb (1989) describes the enormously complex influences exerted on the romantic artist originating in "his awareness of a universe alienated from human glories . . . liv[ing] in an unstable imaginative sphere, a lonely, diminished, fallen angel, evolving an art of struggle and anguish in pursuit of a timeless ideal" (74).

Eliot regards Coleridge as a "real corrupter," a supplier of opinion or fancy rather than facts, and raises the question whether Coleridge's criticism of Hamlet was "an honest inquiry as far as the data permit," or "an attempt to present Coleridge in an attractive costume?" ("Function of Criticism" 21-

22). Whether one can devise a true test to resolve such a rhetorical stance is open to conjecture, what can be emphasized is that Coleridge had made a consistent attempt to analyze Hamlet's internal world. What Coleridge did cloak himself with was Hamlet's self-created, subjective world of intellectual brooding, vivid imaginings, and uncompromising idealism that also characterized the sensibility of the romantic artist

Karl Werder (1875) in *The Heart of Hamlet's Mystery*, saw Hamlet's difficulty in performing his duties at the opposite extreme from character analysis. He viewed him as a man capable of doing his duty, but inhibited by causes external to himself. Hamlet, in Werder's view, does all that can be expected of a revenge-hero to accomplish an impossible task. Speaking of Hamlet's challenge, Werder remarks,

> "Whether or not he was naturally capable of doing it is a question altogether impertinent. For it simply was not possible, and this for reasons entirely objective. The situation of things, the force of circumstances, the nature of his task, directly forbid it . . ." (qtd. in Furness 354).

Werder believes it would be impossible for Hamlet to justify his deed to the court and people on the word of a ghost. Would there not have been an uprising "at once against Hamlet," Werder asks,

> "as the most shameful and impudent of liars and criminals, who, to gratify his own ambition, had wholly without proof, charged another, the King, with the worst of crimes, that he might commit the same crime himself?" (356).

By considering Werder's perspective, we gain a new appreciation for the complexity of Hamlet's dilemma and the limitations he faces within the context of his world. This challenges us to move beyond simplistic interpretations and explore the multifaceted nature of the play.

To account for the delay, Werder sees Hamlet's "real" task as "not to crush the King at once,--he could commit no greater blunder--but to bring him to confession, to unmask and convict him: this is his first, nearest, inevitable duty" (357). He goes on to explain that:

> [w]hat Hamlet has nearest at heart, after the Ghost appeared to him, is not the death, but, on the contrary, the life, of the King, henceforth as dear to him as his own life! These two lives are the only means whereby his task is to be accomplished. Now that he knows the crime, now that he is to punish it, nothing could happen to him worse than that the King should die, unexposed, and so escape justice!. This is the point (357-58).

Hamlet was seen not as the procrastinator of Goethe and Coleridge, but rather a dynamic hero with the impossible task of bringing the murderer to justice. Quinn calls Werder's work "remarkable in its anticipation of a prominent twentieth-century view of the problem of Hamlet's delay" (19).

One of the most prominent scholars of Shakespearean criticism in both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries was A.C. Bradley. His comprehensive critical treatment of Hamlet in *Shakespearean Tragedy* (1985) traces the historical stage criticism of the play, analyses the characters of Claudius, Gertrude, and Ophelia as well as Hamlet's character, and presents a theory

for Hamlet's delay grounded in melancholic disgust and apathy rendering him incapable of action.

In his discussion of Shakespeare's tragic period, Bradley relates *Julius Caesar* to *Hamlet* "Both Brutus and Hamlet are highly intellectual by nature and reflective by habit" (63). Calling them "good" men who, when placed in "critical circumstances," exhibit "a sensitive and almost painful anxiety to do right" (63), he says that their failure to deal successfully with their respective situations is rather due to their "intellectual nature and reflective habit than with any yielding to passion" (82). Thus, both plays may be considered "tragedies of thought," whereas Bradley attributes the tragic failures of Lear, Timon, Macbeth, Antony, and Coriolanus to bouts of "passion." Bradley contends that moral evil "is not so intently scrutinized or so fully displayed" in the two earlier works (64). Shakespeare does not occupy himself with the more extreme form of evil, which "assumes shapes which inspire not mere sadness or repulsion but horror and dismay" (83), which he is directed by in *Othello*, *King Lear*, and *Macbeth*. He makes the point that it is Hamlet's character that is the cause of the delay. He says that Laertes and Fortinbras, both in parallel situations of having their fathers slain, and both bent on revenge, show a great contrast in character to Hamlet:

> "For both Fortinbras and Leartes possess in abundance the very quality which the hero seems to lack, so that, as we read, we are tempted to exclaim that either of them would have accomplished Hamlet's task in a day" (71).

In tracing historical stage criticism, Bradley says,

> that most spectators have never questioned Hamlet's character or what caused him to delay. Bradley reiterates that it was not until 1730 that Hanmer remarked that "there appears no reason at all in nature why this young prince did not put the usurper to death as soon as possible" (72).

Bradley counters, "[B]ut it does not even cross [Hanmer's] mind that this apparent 'absurdity' is odd and might possibly be due to some design of the poet" (72). Hanmer explained the "absurdity" by saying that if Hamlet followed his nature, the play would have ended at the beginning. Bradley points out that "Johnson, in like manner, noticed that 'Hamlet is, through the whole piece, rather an instrument than an agent,' but it does not occur to him that this peculiar circumstance can be anything but a defeat in Shakespeare's management of the plot" (72).

For Bradley the central question of indecisiveness can be attributed to Hamlet's character. Bradley espouses the theory that Hamlet, shaken by his mother's indiscretions by so quickly forsaking his father's memory and hastily marrying his uncle, had lapsed into "a boundless weariness and a sick longing for death" (96). He is already stricken with a disabling malady even before he is commanded by the Ghost to kill Claudius. Hamlet is afflicted with a condition of *melancholic apathy*, or what modern psychiatry might label a full blown clinical depression that renders him incapable of taking action.

Hamlet does come to what Nietzsche (1872) termed "understanding," which leads to a recognition of the absurdity of his attempt to set things right. Nietzsche's interesting insight that Dionysiac man resembles Hamlet in principle, as the "dark, mysterious, irrational agent of the will" appears in his essay on the origins and nature of Greek tragedy, *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872). He says,

> both have looked deeply into the nature of things, they have understood and now are loath to act. They realize that no action of theirs can work any change in the eternal condition of things, and they regard the imputation as ludicrous or debasing that they should set right the time which is out of joint. Understanding kills action, for in order to act we require the veil of illusion; such is Hamlet's doctrine, not to be confounded with the cheap wisdom of John-a-Dreams, who through too much reflection, as it were a surplus of possibilities, never arrives at action. What, both in the case of Hamlet and of Dionysiac man, overbalances any motive leading to action, is not reflection but understanding, the apprehension of truth and its terror. (51-52)

It is true that Hamlet's journey toward "understanding" ultimately leads him to a recognition of the absurdity of his situation. This aligns with Nietzsche's concept of Dionysiac man, who embodies a kind of tragic awareness of life's inherent meaninglessness.

Hamlet expresses his attainment of truth by unmasking his "veil of illusion" to Horatio in his "divine grace" speech when he says,

There's a divinity that shapes our ends
Rough-hew them how we will."
(V.i.9-10)

Hamlet comes to understand that no action he can take will change God's eternal plan. In the end, Hamlet chooses to be God's agent, accepting His providence, and waits in readiness for divine guidance to accomplish his revenge.

In contrast to Nietzsche, Joseph Quincy Adams (1929), in his *edition of Hamlet*, characterizes Hamlet as an idealist who does not understand or accept the shortcomings of humankind. Hamlet, in Adam's view, becomes disillusioned with the human condition and, as a result, becomes melancholic and thus unable to act. Adams holds that "Shakespeare lays heavy emphasis on the binding nature of revenge; it is a duty, a sacred obligation" (211). He goes on to define precisely what renders the play's hero helpless in the face of action: "Hamlet is overcome with an utter sickness of soul that makes all effort impossible for him.. . . in other words, he is again sinking into melancholia" (218-19). It is Hamlet's mental disease, with its general condition of depression, that causes him great difficulty making a decision and summoning the energy to act to accomplish

his task. We can see much of Bradley's theory of melancholy as the cause of Hamlet's delay in Adams' work, but Adams expands and refines Bradley's thesis.

Ernest Jones further complicates this discussion by referring to Hamlet's hesitancy as the "Sphinx of modern literature," indicating the deep-seated mysteries that surround his motivations. Jones categorizes critical responses to Hamlet's delay, ranging from outright denial to interpretations that frame the delay as a narrative necessity. This spectrum of analysis underscores the diverse approaches scholars take in attempting to decipher Hamlet's actions.
Detmold contributes to this discourse by defining the tragic hero through three core characteristics: exceptional will-power, intense emotional depth, and high intelligence. He argues that Hamlet's moral integrity and complex introspection inhibit him from committing acts of violence, thus highlighting the uniqueness of his tragic journey compared to more archetypal heroes like Macbeth or Othello, who are driven by ambition and passion. Detmold's perspective invites scholars to consider how Hamlet's internal struggles differentiate him from traditional tragic figures, prompting a reevaluation of what constitutes heroism.

4. Analysis of the Character of Hamlet

Hamlet is an unpredictable character who reveals different facets as the play unfolds. When he is first introduced in Act I, Scene ii, he appears as a sensitive young prince mourning his father's death and his mother's hasty marriage to his uncle. These events leave him in deep anguish. Hamlet's anger and sorrow stem from his mother's union with Claudius, driving him to contemplate suicide, a thought that is tempered by his moral and religious beliefs. His desire to end his life highlights a vulnerability in his character, reflecting a sense of weakness. However, his decision against suicide, influenced by his ethical convictions, suggests that this flaw is balanced by a moral compass. This internal struggle and confusion ultimately contribute to Hamlet's tragic downfall.

In this regard, Detmold (1949) addresses the question of why Hamlet delays taking revenge on Claudius by assessing his status as a tragic hero. According to the critic, a tragic hero has three prominent characteristics: (1) a will-power which surpasses that of average people, (2) an exceptionally intense power of feeling, and (3) an unusually high level of intelligence. From this definition of a tragic hero, Detmold especially focuses on Hamlet's unorthodox demonstration of will-power in the play, arguing that the protagonist's preoccupation with moral integrity is what ultimately delays him from killing Claudius. Further, the critic asserts that *Hamlet* is distinct from other tragedies in that its action commences in the soliloquy of Act I, scene ii where most other tragedies end: "with the discovery by the tragic hero that his supreme good is forever lost to him." Perhaps the most significant reason why Hamlet hesitates, the critic concludes, is that although he is tempted by love, kingship, and even revenge, he is long past

the point where he desires to do anything about them. None of these objectives gives him a new incentive for living. (21)

To understand Hamlet, we must grapple with the persistent question: "Why does he delay?" Despite having sufficient "cause, and will, and strength, and means" (IV.iv.45) to avenge his father's death, he takes nearly three months to act and ultimately succeeds almost by accident. The only plausible explanation for why a strong, intelligent man would refrain from killing when he feels no aversion to the act, when duty compels him, when he is unafraid, and when the target is not invulnerable, is that Hamlet simply lacks a strong desire to do so. His mind is occupied with other matters. Much of the time, he forgets about his mission, akin to neglecting a letter that needs a response—only occasionally does he recall it and reflect on his reluctance to fulfill this seemingly straightforward duty. Rightly or wrongly, his thoughts are elsewhere.

Revenge, particularly when it involves murder, is a profoundly significant matter; how can anyone overlook it? What sort of individual can prioritize anything else? Is Hamlet in any way unique or elevated beyond our understanding of human nature? To truly grasp his character, we must analyze him not just as a man but, more importantly, as a tragic hero.

Within Hamlet's humanity and universality, we can identify three characteristics typically found in a tragic hero. The first is an extraordinary willpower that surpasses that of ordinary individuals; the hero faces no obstacles and accepts no compromises, relentlessly pursuing his desired goal. The second characteristic is an intensity of feeling greater than that of the average person; the hero experiences heights of happiness that are unattainable for most, and correspondingly plunges into deep despair. The third trait is a remarkable intelligence, evident in both his actions and his eloquence. Aristotle encapsulates these qualities with the term *hamartia*: the tragic flaw, reflecting a failure of judgment and an unwillingness to compromise. In his passionate pursuit of what he desires, the hero often becomes incapable of exercising calm and rational judgment.

The Ghost's revelation that murder has paved the way for his mother’s new husband deeply shocks Hamlet, but it does not provide him with a renewed incentive to live; instead, it exacerbates his misfortune and solidifies his despair. The additional knowledge of his mother’s adultery delivers a final blow, further entrenching him in his disillusionment. The Ghost's call for revenge is ultimately an appeal to his better nature: if he cannot restore the moral beauty of the world, he can at least punish those who have desecrated it. Yet, this appeal feels distant. The harm done is irreparable. After fervently pledging to "remember" his father, Hamlet later finds himself regretting those promises.

The time is out of joint; O cursed spite,
That ever I was born to set it right.
(I.v.188-89)

Moreover, Hamlet's delay not as a character flaw but as a logical consequence of his profound despair. Hamlet is not a hero seeking to achieve some greater good, but a man grappling with the shattering of his world. He is trapped in a state of disillusionment where action seems pointless. His famous line, "The time is out of joint," perfectly encapsulates this sense of shattered order and the futility of trying to set it right.

Within ten minutes after his first meeting with the Ghost he has succumbed again to his anguish, which is now so intense after the discovery of his mother's adultery and the murder of his father that his mind threatens to crack under the strain. His conversation with his friends is so strange that Horatio comments upon it:

These are but wild and whirling words, my lord. (I.v.133)

A few moments later, Hamlet declares his intention to feign madness, adopting an "antic disposition." This choice seems aimed at relieving his overwhelming emotions and possibly preventing himself from descending into true madness, rather than as a strategy to deceive Claudius in order to achieve his revenge. At this point, there is little reason to deceive Claudius, who is unaware of any witnesses to the murder and is more vulnerable to attack now than he will be later in the play.

Two months later, this antic disposition has only succeeded in raising the King's suspicions. Hamlet has not taken any steps toward revenge, nor is there any indication that he has even considered it. All we know is that he is deeply troubled, as Ophelia reports to her father:

> My lord, as I was sewing in my closet, Lord Hamlet, with his doublet all unbrac'd, No hat upon his head, his stockings foul'd, Ungartered and down-gyved to his ancle, Pale as his shirt, his knees knocking each other, And with a look so piteous in purport As if he had been loosed out of hell To speak of horrors, he comes before me, (II. i. 74-81)

5. Madness in Hamlet

Hamlet's madness is central to his character and plays a pivotal role in his indecisiveness and delay. It operates on multiple levels—strategic, psychological, and existential—and directly influences his ability to act.

1. Antic Disposition as a Strategic Mask: Hamlet's decision to feign madness serves as a tactical maneuver to investigate Claudius while avoiding suspicion. This "antic disposition" allows him to navigate the treacherous political landscape of the Danish court with relative safety.

I essentially am not in madness, but mad in craft. (III.iv.143)

This quote reveals Hamlet's awareness of his act. He consciously distinguishes between genuine madness and the façade he presents to others, highlighting the strategic nature of his behavior. However, this act of feigned insanity complicates his emotional state, leading to genuine feelings of confusion and despair.

2. Psychological Conflict and Existential Dread: Hamlet's internal struggle is deeply rooted in his moral qualms about avenging his father's

murder. His reflections on mortality and the implications of his actions contribute to a sense of paralysis.

To be or not to be: that is the question. (III.i.1)

In this famous soliloquy, Hamlet contemplates existence and the nature of life and death. His indecisiveness stems from profound existential questions, creating a conflict that prevents him from taking action. The contemplation of suicide reflects his despair and highlights the weight of his moral considerations, leading to further delay.

3. Isolation and Alienation: Hamlet's madness results in emotional isolation, exacerbating his inability to act. His erratic behavior alienates him from those who might offer support, intensifying his internal conflict and sense of loneliness.

I loved you once. (III.i.119)

This line, spoken to Ophelia, showcases Hamlet's emotional turmoil. He pushes her away, complicating their relationship and deepening his sense of isolation. His inability to engage meaningfully with Ophelia or others contributes to his disconnection from reality and complicates his motivations.

4. The Nature of Truth and Deception: Madness also reflects the uncertainty of truth within the play. Hamlet's erratic behavior underscores his struggle to discern reality from illusion, complicating his quest for vengeance.

There is no good or bad, but thinking makes it so.
(II.ii.523)

This quote underscores Hamlet's philosophical stance on perception and reality. His madness leads him to question the very nature of truth, which delays his decisive action against Claudius. As he grapples with the ambiguity of the ghost's message and the moral implications of revenge, his uncertainty manifests as hesitation.

5. Catalyst for Action and Subsequent Regret: Ironically, Hamlet's madness can spur moments of clarity that prompt action. The play-within-a-play serves as a turning point, revealing his deep-seated emotions and driving him closer to confronting Claudius.

The play's the thing wherein I'll catch the conscience of the King.
(II.ii.553)

Through this plan, Hamlet seeks to confirm Claudius's guilt. However, even after this moment of insight, Hamlet's subsequent actions are clouded by doubt and guilt, particularly after he accidentally kills Polonius.

I must be cruel only to be kind.
(III.iv.177)

Here, Hamlet justifies his harsh treatment of Gertrude as a means to an end. This reflects his internal conflict; while he recognizes the necessity of action, his madness complicates his understanding of morality and kindness, leading to further delay.

6. Madness as a Reflection of Tragic Flaw: Ultimately, Hamlet's madness embodies his tragic flaw—his inability to act decisively. While other tragic heroes exhibit a more straightforward path to their downfalls, Hamlet's journey is marked by introspection and hesitation, deeply intertwined with his mental state.

How all occasions do inform against me, and spur my dull revenge.
(IV.iv.32-3)

In this soliloquy, Hamlet reflects on his inaction in contrast to Fortinbras's decisiveness. His self-reproach highlights the tragic irony of his situation—he is aware of his delay but feels powerless to overcome it.

This analysis offers a fascinating perspective on Hamlet's "antic disposition" and its role in the play. It suggests that Hamlet's feigning madness is not a calculated strategy for revenge, but rather a desperate attempt to cope with his overwhelming grief and the shattering of his world. Here's a breakdown of the key arguments:

- **Hamlet's Immediate Despair**: The passage emphasizes that Hamlet's despair is immediate and intense after his first encounter with the Ghost. He is already on the verge of mental collapse, driven to a state of near-madness by his mother's infidelity and his father's murder.
- **"Antic Disposition" as a Defense Mechanism**: Hamlet's decision to feign madness is not a cunning plan for revenge, but a desperate attempt to relieve the overwhelming pressure of his grief and potentially avert true madness. The "antic disposition" is his way of coping with the unbearable pain of his situation.
- **Lack of Focus on Revenge**: The passage highlights that Hamlet's initial focus is not on revenge but on his own mental and emotional turmoil. He is consumed by his anguish and the shattering of his world, leaving no room for strategizing or plotting against Claudius.
- **The Ineffectiveness of the "Antic Disposition"**: Two months later, Hamlet's "antic disposition" has not brought him any closer to revenge. Instead, it has only aroused the King's suspicions. This suggests that the "antic disposition" is not a calculated strategy but a symptom of Hamlet's inner turmoil.
- **Hamlet's Breakdown**: Ophelia's description of Hamlet's appearance reveals a man deeply disturbed and shattered. His physical and mental state indicates that his "antic disposition" is not a playful act but a reflection of his profound anguish.

It is unlikely that Hamlet intends to deceive the court into believing he is mad due to unrequited love—only the foolish Polonius falls for that notion. More probably, he approaches Ophelia out of genuine affection, akin to his feelings for his mother, yet he fears discovering the same corruption in her

that has tainted his view of Gertrude. He suspects that Ophelia's love for him may be insincere, a belief that is later confirmed when he catches her acting as a pawn for Claudius and Polonius. The crucial point is that his thoughts remain fixed on his previous sorrow rather than his father's plight.
Moreover, he does not wait for the trap to be laid; during the performance of "The Mousetrap," he openly accuses Claudius, clearly convinced of his guilt. However, when he is alone again before "The Murder of Gonzago" is enacted, what occupies his thoughts? His uncle? His father? Revenge? Not at all. Instead, he reflects, "To be, or not to be, that is the question" (III.i.55). He finds himself back where he began, grappling with the same existential quandaries that have haunted him throughout.

The heart-ache, and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to.
(III.i.61-2)

"The Mousetrap" undeniably convicts Claudius; he flees the room, unable to withstand the reminder of his crime—the poisoning of a sleeping king. However, just fifteen minutes later, Hamlet has a clear opportunity to kill his uncle but fails to do so, for reasons that seem unclear even to him. He expresses a desire not only to kill Claudius but to condemn his soul as well, deciding to wait until he can strike when Claudius is unconfessed. At this point, the Ghost appears to lose patience, returning to Hamlet in the next scene to urge him onward:

Do not forget: this visitation is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose.
(III.iv.110-11)

The Ghost's exhortation is in vain. That very night, Hamlet permits Claudius to send him to England. He may feel he has no choice but to obey; he likely understands the danger awaiting him and perhaps even welcomes a legitimate form of death. Certainly, in England, he cannot plan to kill his uncle. The following day, as he travels toward exile and potential death, he encounters the army of Fortinbras. Their courage and determination prompt Hamlet to reflect on his own actions and inactions:

How all occasions do inform against me, And spur my dull revenge!
(IV.iv.32-3)

He considers how low he has sunk in his despair:

What is a man, If his chief good and market of his time
Be but to sleep and feed? A beast, no more.
(IV.iv.33-4)

Lamenting nothing in men so much as their beastliness, he has become little better than a beast himself. Why has he not performed the simple act of vengeance required by his dead father? He does not know:

Now, whether it be Bestial oblivion, or some craven scruple
Of thinking too precisely on the event,—
A thought which, quartered, hath but one part wisdom
And ever three parts coward,—I do not know
Why yet I live to say 'This thing's to do,'

Sith I have cause, and will, and strength, and means To do 't.
(IV.iv.39-46)

He is ashamed to have forgotten his duty:

How stand I then,
That have a father kill'd, a mother stain'd,
Excitements of my reason and my blood,
And let all sleep . . . ?
(IV.iv.56-9)

And with the resolve:

O, from this time forth,
My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth!
He is off for England, where even the bloodiest thoughts
will be utterly of no avail.
(IV. iv. 65-6)

When Hamlet returns, he remains unchanged, still consumed by thoughts of death. He wanders the graveyard with Horatio, contemplating the equalizing influence of corruption. Disturbed by the insincerity he witnesses at Ophelia's funeral, he becomes overwhelmed with disgust, leading to a confrontation with Laertes. He informs Horatio of Claudius's crimes and resolves to take revenge, yet he ultimately accepts the invitation to the fencing match, fully aware that it may be a trap but resigned to whatever fate awaits him.

In the climactic moment, upon discovering Claudius's final treachery, Hamlet stabs him with the poisoned foil and forces the contaminated wine down his throat. However, even in this moment of action, there is no reflection on his father or the fulfillment of his earlier purpose. Instead, he is primarily driven by anger over his mother's death:

Here, thou incestuous, murderous, damned Dane,
Drink off this potion: is thy union here? Follow my mother.
(V.ii.325-27)

The above lines paint a powerful picture of Hamlet's final act, emphasizing the complexities of his motivations and how his grief and anger drive him to a violent end.

The murder of Claudius is simply accomplished. We see how easily it could have been managed at any time in the past by a man like Hamlet, with whatever tools might have come to his hand. Even though the King is fully awake to his peril he is powerless to avert it. The only thing necessary is that Hamlet should at some time choose to kill him.

The critic Detmold, then, concludes:

> that Hamlet finally does so choose is the result of accident and afterthought. The envenomed foil, the poisoned wine, Laertes and Gertrude and himself betrayed to their deaths—these things finally arouse him and he strikes out at the King. But he has no sense of achievement at the end, no final triumph over unimaginable obstacles. His uncle, alive or dead, is a side-issue. His dying thoughts are of the blessedness of death and of the

> sanctity of his reputation—he would clear it of any suggestion of moral evil but realizes that he has no time left to do so himself. Accordingly he charges Horatio to stay alive a little while longer.(36)

Absent thee from felicity a while,
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain, To tell my story.
(V.ii.347-49)

Ernest Jones (1954) applies Sigmund Freud's techniques of psychoanalysis to Hamlet's character, asserting that the prince is afflicted with an Oedipus Complex. This psychological disorder involves the unconscious desire of a son to kill his father and take his place as the object of the mother's love. According to the critic, Hamlet delays taking revenge on Claudius because he identifies with his uncle and shares his guilt. Thus Hamlet's inaction stems from a "tortured conscience," and his affliction is caused by "repressed" feelings. Furthermore, this theory accounts for Hamlet's speaking to Gertrude like a jealous lover, dwelling on his mother's sexual relations with Claudius, and treating his uncle like a rival. Significantly, the critic also claims that while his father's murder evokes "indignation" in Hamlet, Gertrude's perceived "incest" awakes his "intensest horror." In addition, Jones maintains that the prince suffers from "psychoneurosis," or "a state of mind where the person is unduly, often painfully, driven or thwarted by the 'unconscious' part of his mind." This internal mental conflict reflects Hamlet's condition throughout much of the play.

The extensive experience of the psycho-analytic researches carried out by Freud and his school during the past half-century has amply demonstrated that certain kinds of mental process show a greater tendency to be inaccessible to consciousness (put technically, to be "repressed") than others. In other words, it is harder for a person to realize the existence in his mind of some mental trends than it is of others. In order therefore to gain a proper perspective it is necessary briefly to inquire into the relative frequency with which various sets of mental processes are "repressed." Experience shows that this can be correlated with the degree of compatibility of these various sets with the ideals and standards accepted by the conscious ego; the less compatible they are with these the more likely are they to be "repressed."(Jones 51)

Hamlet's inaction is not simply a result of indecision, but a manifestation of a profound internal conflict rooted in the unconscious mind. It's a compelling and controversial argument that has sparked debate about the role of psychoanalysis in interpreting literary works.

According to A. C. Bradley (1985), in his *Shakespearean Tragedy*, Hamlet's melancholic disgust at life was the cause of his aversion from "any kind of decided action." His explanation of the whole problem of Hamlet is "the moral shock of the sudden ghastly disclosure of his mother's true nature," and he regards the effect of this shock, as depicted in the play, as fully comprehensible. He says:

> Is it possible to conceive an experience more desolating to a man such as we have seen Hamlet to be; and is its result anything but perfectly natural? It brings bewildered horror, then loathing, then despair of human nature. His whole mind is poisoned. . . . A nature morally blunter would have felt even so dreadful a revelation less keenly. A slower and more limited and positive mind might not have extended so widely through the world the disgust and disbelief that have entered it.(78)

Bradley attributes Hamlet's aversion to action to the "moral shock" of discovering his mother's true nature, which leads to a disillusionment with humanity and a weariness of life. He further asserts:

> But we can rest satisfied with this seemingly adequate explanation of Hamlet's weariness of life only if we accept unquestioningly the conventional standards of the causes of deep emotion. Many years ago John Connolly (1863), a well-known psychiatrist, pointed out in his A Study of Hamlet the disproportion here existing between cause and effect, and gave as his opinion that Hamlet's reaction to his mother's marriage indicated in itself a mental instability, "a predisposition to actual unsoundness"; he writes: The circumstances are not such as would at once turn a healthy mind to the contemplation of suicide, the last resource of those whose reason has been overwhelmed by calamity and despair." (79)

In reality, quick second marriages happen frequently without resulting in the extreme reactions depicted in Hamlet's case. When such outcomes do occur, a closer analysis often reveals that the event has triggered repressed mental processes that had previously been suppressed. Hamlet’s mind has likely been prepared for this catastrophe by earlier thoughts and feelings that now resurface in association with recent events.

We come at this point to the vexed question of Hamlet's sanity, about which so many controversies have raged. Dover Wilson (1970) authoritatively writes in his *What Happens in Hamlet*:

> I agree with Loening, Bradley and others that Shakespeare meant us to imagine Hamlet as suffering from some kind of mental disorder throughout the play.(28)

The question is what kind of mental disorder and what is its significance dramatically and psychologically. The matter is complicated by Hamlet's frequently displaying simulation (the Antic Disposition), and it has been asked whether this is to conceal his real mental disturbance or cunningly to conceal his purposes in coping with the practical problems of this task? (Jones 70-3)

What we are fundamentally concerned with is the psychological understanding of the dramatic effect created by Hamlet's personality and behavior. This effect would be vastly different if the central character merely represented a "case of insanity." In such instances, as seen with Ophelia, the character becomes distant and less relatable, transcending our understanding of humanity. In contrast, Hamlet maintains our interest and sympathy throughout the play.

Shakespeare certainly did not intend for us to view Hamlet as insane; thus, the phrase "mind o'erthrown" must carry a meaning beyond its literal interpretation. Robert Bridges captures this nuance with exquisite delicacy in his work *The Testament of Beauty*, where he reflects on the complexities of Hamlet's mental state and the profound emotional depth it conveys.

> Hamlet himself would never have been taught to us, or we To Hamlet, we're not for the artful balance whereby Shakespeare so gingerly put his sanity in doubt Without the while confounding his Reason.

Extensive studies over the past half-century, inspired by Freud, have taught us that psychoneurosis represents a state of mind in which an individual is excessively and often painfully influenced by the "unconscious" part of their psyche. This buried aspect, rooted in infancy, coexists with the adult mentality that has developed over time. It signifies a profound internal mental conflict.

This understanding highlights why it is impossible to intelligently discuss the state of mind of anyone suffering from a psychoneurosis—whether the subject is a real person or a fictional character—without considering how their current manifestations are linked to experiences from their infancy that continue to shape their behavior and thoughts. Such an analysis reveals the complexity of human psychology and the enduring impact of early life experiences.

For some deep-seated reason that is unacceptable to him, Hamlet experiences profound anguish at the thought of his father being replaced in his mother's affections. His devotion to Gertrude may have made him so protective of her love that he found it challenging to share it even with his father, let alone with another man. However, this suggestion raises three objections.

First, if this were a complete explanation, Hamlet would be consciously aware of his jealousy, whereas we have established that this mental process remains hidden from him. Second, there is no evidence that this thought arouses any old, forgotten memories. Third, Hamlet is not deprived of a greater share of the Queen's affection by Claudius than he was by his own father; both men claim the love of a beloved husband.

The last objection, however, leads us to the crux of the matter. What if, in his childhood, Hamlet resented having to share his mother's affection even with his father, viewing him as a rival? If he secretly wished his father out of the way to enjoy her undivided love, such thoughts would likely have been repressed and obliterated by filial piety and social conditioning. The actual realization of this childhood wish—his father's death at the hands of a jealous rival—could then stimulate these repressed memories, manifesting as depression and other forms of suffering. This mechanism aligns with the psychological findings on real individuals who exhibit similar traits to Hamlet.

In "The Dilemma of Hamlet (William Shakespeare: 'Hamlet')," Edgar Johnson (1954) examines the various interpretations of Hamlet's character

that have developed over the past two centuries, culminating in Ernest Jones's Freudian analysis. Johnson critiques Jones's viewpoint, arguing that if such a perspective were accurate, it would negate the moral dilemma inherent in the tragedy.

Johnson presents his interpretation of Hamlet as a hero facing a complex dilemma: he must navigate the temptation to seek justice driven by passion and personal motives, ultimately striving to act solely for the sake of justice and the welfare of the State. His goal is to "weed the unweeded garden of Denmark" and restore order to a world that is "out of joint."

Additionally, Johnson delves into the theme of appearance versus reality, applying this concept to the characters of Hamlet, Claudius, Polonius, and Laertes. This exploration reveals how these characters grapple with their public personas while confronting their private truths, thereby enriching the moral complexity of the play.

This description seems to imply that Shakespeare's hero was a fusion of Goethe's own Werther and Wilhelm Meister [in *The Sorrows of Young Werther* and Wilhelm Meister's *Travels*]; Coleridge paid Hamlet the compliment of assuming that Shakespeare had been painting a sixteenth century version of the nineteenth century Coleridge. "He intended," wrote Coleridge,

> to portray a person in whose view the external world and all its incidents and objects, were comparatively dim and of no interest in themselves, and which began to interest only when they were reflected in the mirror of his mind. . . . [Hamlet indulges in] endless reasoning and hesitating—constant urgency and solicitation of the mind to act, and as constant an escape from action; ceaseless reproaches of himself for sloth and negligence, while the whole energy of his resolution evaporates in these reproaches. (85)

Such a view of Hamlet is on the whole accepted by A. C. Bradley and E. K. Chambers, and is essentially that of Laurence Olivier's film version of the play, where, in the beginning, while ghostly mists swirl around the battlements and cold vaulted interiors of Elsinore, a disembodied voice intones, "This is the tragedy of a man who could not make up his mind."

Opposed to this judgment is the approach of those like George Lyman Kittredge(1972), who see Hamlet as a man of action moving to avenge his father's death with no essential hesitation and all practicable dispatch, his self-reproaches caused only by chafing at the slowness imposed upon him by circumstances. J. Dover Wilson (1973), in turn, takes issue with a part of this argument by insisting that Hamlet never wanted to prove to the world that Claudius was his father's murderer.

W. W. Greg (1976) has devised a still more radical overturn of previous themes. For him, the reason Claudius fails to be alarmed by the dumb show of the murder, but breaks up the performance of the play, is that he is in fact innocent. He has not recognized the dumb show as directed against himself, but does, with the court, take the subsequent action of the play as prefiguring an attempt on his own life. The ghost's accusations, heard by no

one but Hamlet, are simply a hallucinating projection of his own deluded suspicions and have no basis in fact. Hamlet is in truth even madder than he has been pretending to be.

T. S. Eliot (1934) concludes that none of these explanations will really do. More, Hamlet's self-disgust and his revulsion at his mother's adultery and what Hamlet calls her incest, the nauseated loathing with which his imagination dwells in revolted detail upon "The bloat King" "honeying and making love" to his mother "in the rank sweat of an enseamed bed" "over the nasty stye" (III.iv.182,92-4), seem to Eliot emotions so excessive for the facts that he regards them as insufficiently motivated in the drama, and drawn from some hidden source in Shakespeare himself. "Hamlet," he says, ". . . is full of some stuff that the writer could not drag to light, contemplate, or manipulate into art." Consequently, "So far from being Shakespeare's masterpiece, the play is certainly a failure."

However, there remains one more perspective to consider before concluding this survey of critical interpretations: the psychoanalytic theory originally proposed by Freud and further developed by Ernest Jones. This approach offers a unique lens through which to examine Hamlet's character and motivations, delving into the complexities of the human psyche and the underlying emotional conflicts that drive the narrative.

According to this psychoanalytic interpretation, Hamlet is grappling with an Oedipal desire that he cannot consciously recognize: the wish to kill his father and supplant him in his mother's affections. Ernest Jones argues that this hidden desire explains Hamlet's behavior towards Gertrude, as he speaks to her like a jealous lover, tormented by grotesque images of her intimacy with Claudius. His intense hatred for the King reflects the hysterical loathing of a rival.

Because Claudius has acted upon what Hamlet subconsciously wished to do—killing his father and marrying his mother—Hamlet partially identifies with his uncle and shares in his guilt. This internal conflict leads him to oscillate between his conscious loyalty to his father and his repressed infantile feelings of hatred and aggression. As a result, he becomes paralyzed, unable to act on either of his conflicting impulses. The play's tragic conclusion is thus brought about by chance rather than Hamlet's decisive action, resulting in a catastrophic ending that is equally fatal for himself and for Claudius.

The assertion that Hamlet delays unreasonably and fatally in seeking justice against Claudius can be challenged on several grounds. One might ask why Claudius himself does not act more decisively to eliminate Hamlet, despite recognizing the threat he poses. If we were to apply the same Freudian lens, we could question Claudius's own delays, which ultimately lead to his downfall.

In truth, both characters exhibit understandable reasons for their actions. An Elizabethan audience would have recognized that a ghost could potentially be a deceptive spirit, and any prince striving for justice must first validate

the ghost's claims, no matter how compelling the urge to believe them might be.

The events of Acts II and III, along with the first half of Act IV, unfold over a single day and night. This is shortly after Polonius has instructed Ophelia to avoid Hamlet, and it is during this time that Hamlet becomes aware of her deliberate avoidance. The very next day, the players arrive in Elsinore, prompting Hamlet to devise his plan and execute it. Following his missed opportunity to kill Claudius while he is at prayer, Hamlet is sent to England under guard.

Dover Wilson's observation that Claudius is engaged in conversation with Polonius during the dumb show—discussing Hamlet's recent display of love-madness—partly counters Greg's argument, as it suggests that Claudius may not have fully observed the pantomime. However, Greg's theory is ultimately refuted by Claudius's own soliloquy in the prayer scene, where he explicitly acknowledges "the primal curse" of "a brother's murder" (III.iii.37-38). This admission is definitive, and it effectively dismantles any claims regarding Claudius's innocence. Thus, we need say no more on the matter. (Greg 55)

There remains only to outline the aspects of my own position that have not been addressed in the earlier discussion. As I have stated, the central theme of *Hamlet* is the relationship between appearance and reality, particularly the gradual classification of moral identities that are deliberately portrayed with ambiguity at the outset. Marcellus observes, "Something is rotten in the State of Denmark" (I.iv.90), while Hamlet laments that it is "an unweeded garden" (I.ii.135) and cries out, "The time is out of joint: Oh cursed sprite, that ever I was born to set it right" (I.v.188-89).

At this early stage, we are left uncertain about whether Hamlet himself might be the source of the rot—proud, revengeful, and consumed by frustrated ambition to claim the throne for himself, while rationalizing his fury at being overlooked. This ambiguity is further complicated by the parallel with Fortinbras, who has also failed to secure his father's throne, which is now held by an uncle. Unlike Hamlet, however, Fortinbras does not seem to harbor feelings of injustice; rather, he is focused on reclaiming the territory of Norway that his father lost to the elder Hamlet. This contrast adds depth to the exploration of ambition, rightful power, and moral integrity within the play.

Hamlet, as the hero, is not entirely heroic; he gradually becomes so throughout the play. His wit is sharply critical of stupidity and sycophancy, exemplified by his mockery of the affected Osric. He is openly rude to Claudius, even before he learns of the ghost's accusations, and he shows a lack of courtesy towards Polonius, despite having feelings for his daughter. His treatment of Gertrude is brutally harsh, reflecting his turmoil and anger.

Most troubling is that for more than half the play, Hamlet's desire for revenge is driven by a fierce, hysterical, and vindictive hatred that he struggles to contain. This thirst for vengeance lacks any deeper concern for

justice, revealing a darker side to his character. This complexity underscores the play's exploration of human emotion, morality, and the burdens of action, presenting Hamlet as a flawed hero grappling with profound inner conflict.

This is the dilemma of Hamlet, both as Prince and as a man: to disentangle himself from the temptation to seek justice for the wrong reasons and in a state of evil passion. He must ultimately act for the pure sake of justice, aiming for the welfare of the State, to tend to Denmark's "unweeded garden" and correct the "time that is out of joint."

From this conflict between misguided emotions and rightful actions, Hamlet eventually emerges, achieving a more appropriate state of mind. At the conclusion of the play scene, he does indeed refuse to kill Claudius while he is at prayer, justifying this decision to himself by arguing that he wishes to send his uncle's soul deeper into hell, choosing a moment devoid of grace or salvation.

Slowly, in the course of the last two acts, Hamlet subdues his violent emotions. By the end of his confrontation with his mother, he expresses sorrow for his impulsive murder of Polonius, stating, "For this same Lord, I do repent" (III.iv.173). He gently bids his mother good night, saying, "When you are desirous to be blest, I'll blessing beg of you" (III.iv.171-72). Hamlet also seeks Laertes's forgiveness for the wrongs he has committed against him, moderating even the wild, passionate words he previously directed at Claudius. Instead of succumbing to rage, he calmly asks, "Is't not perfect conscience to quit him with this arm?" and expresses a desire to prevent "this canker of our nature" from spreading "further evil" (V.ii.67-70). In this moment, he resolves the moral dilemma of vengeance versus justice.

In this transformation, Hamlet purges himself of his fierce passions, emerging as the great and heroic figure that had been struggling to be born within him. As peace descends over troubled Denmark, we can echo Horatio's sentiments, recognizing the profound journey Hamlet has undertaken from chaos to clarity, from vengeance to justice:

> Good night, sweet prince, And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!
> (V. ii. 359-60) (Johnson 99-111)

In his article "Hesitancy as an Inherent Flaw in Hamlet's Character: A Psychoanalytic Perspective," Ibrahim (2020) emphasizes Hamlet's internal struggle as he grapples with the idea of deposing Claudius and claiming the throne of Denmark. This desire for vengeance is fueled by his mother's scandalous relationship with Claudius, which dishonors his family. The conflict intensifies in Act I, Scene v, when the ghost of Hamlet's father reveals that Claudius murdered him, depriving him of life, the crown, and the Queen.

As a tragic hero, Hamlet embodies high moral standards, which starkly contrasts with the actions of other characters in the play. At this juncture, he becomes increasingly aware of the treachery surrounding him, particularly when he realizes that Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are spying on him for

Claudius. This awareness deepens his sense of isolation and betrayal, further complicating his already tumultuous journey.

Mr. Ibrahim (2020) further pointed out:

> This information permits him to control the circumstance and give Claudius bogus data. He is additionally suspicious that Ophelia's enthusiasm for him is not certifiable. With respect to his mom, Hamlet is careful, yet he recollects his guarantee to the Ghost. As Act III Progresses, one sees Claudius' plot against Hamlet proceeds while Hamlet appears to delay looking for his retribution. (25)

This reality is best outlined in Act III, Scene iii when Hamlet sees Claudius praying, he says:-

Now might I do it pat. Now he is a-praying.
And now I'll do 't. And so he goes to heaven.
And so am I revenged.—That would be scanned.
A villain kills my father, and, for that,
I, his sole son, do this same villain send
To heaven.
Why, this is hire and salary, not revenge.
He took my father grossly, full of bread,
With all his crimes broad blown, as flush as May.
(III.iii.73-81)

The researcher posits that Hamlet's awareness of the spying by Rosencrantz and Guildenstern enables him to manipulate the situation, ultimately feeding Claudius false information. This newfound insight also leads him to suspect that Ophelia's affection for him may be insincere. While he remains cautious regarding his mother, he is continually reminded of his promise to the Ghost.

6. Hamlet's Tragic Flaw

Hamlet's tragic flaw of indecisiveness and delay is indeed a central theme in the play. This inner conflict between action and contemplation drives him to overanalyze situations, leading him to consider multiple perspectives and moral implications. As a result, he often delays taking decisive action, which contributes to the unfolding tragedy. Throughout the play, Hamlet's hesitation is palpable as he grapples with his conscience and the weight of his internal struggles. His philosophical reflections on life, death, and vengeance complicate his ability to act, creating a profound tension between his desires and his moral sensibilities. This indecision not only hinders his quest for revenge but also exacerbates the tragic circumstances surrounding him, ultimately highlighting the complexities of human emotion and the consequences of inaction.

Hamlet frequently rationalizes his inaction with various justifications, which serve to mask the deeper hesitancy rooted in his complex psychological issues and character flaws. This internal struggle reveals the depth of his suffering and the significant impact of his inner turmoil on his ability to act decisively.

His justifications often revolve around moral and ethical considerations, such as the need for certainty before taking vengeance or the fear of condemning Claudius's soul. However, these rationalizations ultimately highlight his profound conflict between desire and duty. This hesitancy not only paralyzes him but also amplifies his anguish, as he becomes increasingly aware of the consequences of his delay.

Hamlet's internal battles exemplify the broader themes of existentialism and the human condition, illustrating how psychological complexity can hinder action and lead to tragic outcomes. His struggles resonate with audiences, showcasing the universal challenge of reconciling thought and action in the face of moral dilemmas.

One significant example of Hamlet's indecisiveness is his missed opportunity to avenge his father's murder by killing Claudius while he is praying. Hamlet's belief that this act would send Claudius to heaven, thereby denying him the vengeance he seeks, illustrates how his overthinking and moral quandaries lead to missed opportunities and tragic consequences.

Hamlet deliberately delays taking action, refraining from killing Claudius because he believes that Claudius must be punished in a state of sin—similar to the circumstances of his father's murder. This internal struggle reflects Hamlet's deep moral considerations and his desire for a revenge that aligns with his ethical beliefs. In his quest for the right moment, he feigns madness, attempting to navigate the treacherous political landscape created by Claudius's manipulations.

The interplay between Hamlet's hesitation and Claudius's desire to eliminate him creates a palpable tension that propels the play toward its tragic conclusion. Hamlet's deliberation coupled with Claudius's quest for power and control adds layers of complexity to the unfolding events, ultimately leading to the inevitable and fateful climax.

Hamlet acknowledges Claudius's guilt when he observes the King's strong reaction to the play that mirrors the murder scene. Despite this revelation, Hamlet remains indecisive about taking action. He contemplates killing his mother, believing she has betrayed her marriage vows to his father, yet he refrains from following through on this plan.

This inaction is largely fueled by Hamlet's profound grief over his father's death, which paralyzes him and clouds his judgment. His emotional turmoil complicates his ability to act decisively, as he grapples with feelings of betrayal, anger, and sorrow. This paralysis not only highlights Hamlet's tragic flaw but also underscores the broader themes of revenge, morality, and the consequences of inaction, culminating in the play's tragic fate.

Hamlet's tragic flaw is indeed his inability to act decisively. Throughout the play, he spends much of his time mourning and deliberating rather than taking concrete steps toward avenging his father's murder. This paralysis is rooted in his complex emotional state, characterized by grief, anger, and moral uncertainty.

Instead of swiftly seeking revenge, Hamlet becomes consumed by introspection, weighing the implications of his actions and grappling with questions of morality and justice. This constant deliberation not only hinders his ability to move forward but also allows the situation around him to deteriorate further, ultimately contributing to the tragic outcomes for himself and those he cares about. His struggle between thought and action serves as a poignant exploration of the human condition, illustrating how inaction can lead to devastating consequences.

Indeed, Hamlet's tragic flaw of indecisiveness and hesitation significantly impedes his ability to take decisive action and fulfill his goal of avenging his father's murder. His inner turmoil, marked by conflicting emotions and constant contemplation, creates a paralysis that results in missed opportunities and ultimately tragic consequences throughout the play.

This ongoing struggle with his feelings of grief, betrayal, and moral uncertainty contributes to his inaction. As he grapples with the weight of his responsibilities and the implications of revenge, he becomes increasingly trapped in his own mind. This inability to act decisively serves as a central theme that drives the tragic events of the story and highlights the complexity of his character.

Hamlet's inability to take action in crucial moments, such as not going through with suicide, killing his mother, or seizing the opportunity to kill Claudius while he is praying, highlights his deep-seated fear and hesitancy. This fear paralyzes him and prevents him from making a clear decision, as he struggles to determine the best course of action.

Therefore, it seems that his indecisiveness and hesitation stem from a combination of fear, moral uncertainty, and conflicting emotions. His internal struggles prevent him from taking action, as he grapples with the weight of the decisions before him. The fear of making the wrong choice and the moral ambiguity of the situations he faces contribute to his paralysis and inaction. Ultimately, Hamlet's inability to decide on a course of action leads him to refrain from taking any action at all, resulting in a tragic outcome for himself and those around him.

Hamlet states that ―Haste me to know't, that I, with wings as swift as meditation or the thoughts of love, may sweep to my revenge‖ (I.v.29-31)

Hamlet says, "Or that the Everlasting had not fixed his canon' gainst self-slaughter. O God, God! How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable seems to me all the uses of the world" (I.ii.131-4). This quote is saying that Hamlet's life has lost all meaning, yet he cannot commit suicide because it is forbidden.

Hamlet's indecision, rooted in moral uncertainty and psychological despair, creates a dynamic tension with the ambitious and calculating Claudius. This interplay fuels the play's tragic arc, as Hamlet grapples with the complexities of revenge, the fragility of morality, and the dire consequences of his inaction. Through these themes, *Hamlet* serves as a timeless

commentary on the human condition, exploring how internal conflicts can shape our actions and define our destinies.

Act III, Scene iv serves as a crucial turning point, setting the stage for the dramatic events that follow. As Hamlet confronts his mother and unintentionally kills Polonius, the emotional and psychological tension escalates. Each character grapples with their motivations and the consequences of their actions, leading to a spiral of tragedy. Ophelia's breakdown and eventual death symbolize the collateral damage of the characters' conflicts, emphasizing the themes of madness, betrayal, and the fragility of human relationships. This cumulative sense of tragedy deepens the play's exploration of the human condition, illustrating how individual grief and turmoil can resonate throughout a community, ultimately propelling the narrative toward its inevitable, heartbreaking conclusion.

In the final act of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, the tragic events reach their climax. Claudius, aware that Hamlet is returning to Denmark, concocts a sinister plan to have Hamlet killed during a fencing match with Laertes. This scheme involves both a poisoned sword and a poisoned cup of wine, ensuring multiple contingencies for Hamlet's demise.

During the match, the tension escalates as both Hamlet and Laertes are wounded by the poisoned sword. In a heartbreaking twist, Gertrude unwittingly drinks from the poisoned cup, sealing her fate. This series of events not only results in the deaths of key characters but also highlights the themes of betrayal and the consequences of ambition.

As the chaos unfolds in the final act, Gertrude reveals that she has been poisoned, adding to the tragic atmosphere. In his dying moments, Laertes exposes Claudius as the mastermind behind the plot, confirming Hamlet's suspicions. This revelation ignites Hamlet's rage and determination for vengeance.

In a powerful moment of realization, Hamlet confronts Claudius and fatally wounds him, thereby avenging his father's murder. This act, however, comes at a devastating cost. The tragic climax culminates with the deaths of Hamlet, Laertes, Gertrude, and Claudius, sealing the fates of the central characters.

This tragic resolution underscores the themes of revenge, betrayal, and the inevitability of death, leaving the audience to reflect on the profound consequences of ambition and the destructive cycle of violence. The play concludes with a sense of loss and the recognition of the fragility of human life, marking *Hamlet* as a timeless exploration of the darker aspects of the human condition.

The entrance of Fortinbras at the end of *Hamlet* signifies the resolution and restoration of order after the chaotic events that have unfolded. Upon learning of the tragic occurrences, Fortinbras ensures that Hamlet receives a proper and honorable funeral, acknowledging the prince's noble lineage and the gravity of his struggles.

This final scene in Act V, Scene ii, solidifies Hamlet as a tragic hero—a character whose flaws and circumstances lead to his downfall, yet evoke both sympathy and admiration from the audience. His journey through indecision, moral conflict, and ultimately vengeance highlights the complexities of his character.

Shakespeare's portrayal of Hamlet adds depth and richness to the play's exploration of themes such as revenge, madness, and mortality. Hamlet's internal battles resonate with audiences, prompting reflection on the human condition and the consequences of our choices. Fortinbras's arrival not only signals a new beginning for Denmark but also serves as a poignant reminder of the cost of ambition and the fragility of life, encapsulating the enduring impact of the play.

Hamlet's contemplation of suicide is a significant aspect of this soliloquy, as he acknowledges the temptation to end his own life to escape the suffering he experiences. However, his fear of divine punishment, as expressed through the notion of God's "canon against self-slaughter," prevents him from taking this drastic step.

O God: A beast, that wants discourse of reason,
Would have mourned longer – married with my uncle,
My father's brother, but no more like my father
Than I to Hercules. Within a month,
Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous rears
Had left the flushing in her galled eyes,
She married.
(I.ii.150-156)

Hamlet's famous "To be or not to be" soliloquy, delivered in Act III, Scene i, marks a turning point in the play. Following the unsettling performance of the play-within-the-play, Hamlet's contemplation of suicide reveals the depth of his despair and the weight of his existential crisis. He yearns for his "too solid flesh" to "resolve itself into a dew," (III.i.56-57) reflecting his desire for an escape from the burdens of existence. This longing is fueled by his grief over his father's death, his disgust at his mother's hasty marriage to Claudius, and his growing perception of the court's pervasive moral corruption. The "unweeded garden" (I.ii.135) metaphor becomes a powerful symbol of this corruption, suggesting a world overrun with "rank and gross" (I.ii.136) behaviors. Hamlet's fear of divine punishment for suicide, however, inhibits him from taking action. The "canon 'against self-slaughter'" (I.ii.132) represents a moral barrier, further emphasizing the complex interplay between his desire for release and his belief in a higher power. This soliloquy serves as a powerful expression of Hamlet's internal conflict and foreshadows the tragic events that will unfold in the play.

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; and by a sleep to say we end.
(III.i.56-61)

By exploring the themes of mortality, uncertainty, and the human experience, this soliloquy highlights Hamlet's internal struggle and his profound contemplation of the consequences of his actions. It showcases his inner turmoil and the weighty decisions he must make as he navigates the challenges and dilemmas presented to him in the play.

7. Reasons for Hamlet's indecisiveness and delay

Hamlet's indecisiveness and delay in the play can be attributed to several reasons as follows:

1- **Moral and ethical considerations**: Hamlet is a deeply moral character who is torn between his sense of duty to avenge his father's murder and his moral qualms about committing a violent act. He grapples with the ethical implications of taking another person's life, even if that person is his father's murderer.

2- **Uncertainty and doubt**: Throughout the play, Hamlet is plagued by uncertainty and doubt. He questions the reliability of the ghost's message, the motives of those around him, and even his own thoughts and actions. This uncertainty paralyzes him and makes it difficult for him to take decisive action.

3- **Fear of consequences**: Hamlet is acutely aware of the potential consequences of his actions. He fears the repercussions of killing Claudius, both in terms of his own safety and the political fallout that might occur. This fear of the unknown future contributes to his indecisiveness.

4- **Complexity of the situation**: The situation in which Hamlet finds himself is incredibly complex. He is dealing with issues of family loyalty, political intrigue, betrayal, and personal grief. The complexity of these factors overwhelms him and makes it difficult for him to see a clear path forward.

5- **Psychological turmoil**: Hamlet's indecisiveness is also rooted in his psychological state. He is grieving the loss of his father, struggling with feelings of isolation and alienation, and grappling with existential questions about the nature of life and death. These psychological factors contribute to his indecisiveness and inability to take action.

6- **Existential Angst and the Search for Meaning**: Hamlet's indecisiveness stems from his profound existential questioning. He grapples with the meaning of life and death, leading him to paralysis

in the face of action. The play-within-the-play intensifies these anxieties, further contributing to his inaction.

7- **Moral Ambiguity and the Fear of Consequence**: Hamlet is plagued by the fear of divine judgment for taking action, symbolized by the "canon 'against self-slaughter'". He is torn between the desire for justice and his moral compass, which complicates his quest for revenge and fuels his hesitations.

8- **Grief and the Burden of the Past**: His overwhelming grief over his father's death and his disgust at his mother's hasty remarriage contribute to his melancholic state. The "unweeded garden" metaphor reflects his internal turmoil and his inability to confront the reality of his grief.

9- **The Complexities of Revenge**: Hamlet's desire for revenge against Claudius is intertwined with his deep moral struggle. He wrestles with the weight of his actions, the potential consequences, and the implications for his own soul. This internal conflict delays his revenge, leading to a spiral of further tragedy.

10- **The Paradox of Action and Inaction**: While Hamlet is often criticized for his inaction, his indecision is not simply a lack of will. His profound contemplation of action and consequence, driven by his complex motivations, paradoxically make him both brilliant and tragic.

11- **Indecisiveness not as a character flaw**: but as a logical consequence of his profound despair. Hamlet is not a hero seeking to achieve some greater good, but a man grappling with the shattering of his world. He is trapped in a state of disillusionment where action seems pointless. His famous line, "The time is out of joint," perfectly encapsulates this sense of shattered order and the futility of trying to set it right.

12- **Feign madness**: Hamlet's decision to feign madness is not a cunning plan for revenge, but a desperate attempt to relieve the overwhelming pressure of his grief and potentially avert true madness. The "antic disposition" is his way of coping with the unbearable pain of his situation.

Conclusion, Findings & Recommendations

Here is a conclusion and findings about Hamlet's indecisiveness as a tragic flaw, drawing from the previous analysis:

Conclusion

Hamlet's indecisiveness is not merely a flaw but a multifaceted symptom of his profound inner conflict. It is this internal struggle, fueled by existential anxieties, moral dilemmas, and the burden of his grief, that ultimately leads to his tragic downfall. He is a complex character, caught between action and inaction, his brilliant intellect and noble intentions consumed by the very anxieties that he seeks to resolve.

Findings

After the detail discussion and analysis of the tragedy of indecisiveness and delay in *Hamlet*, the paper came up with the following findings:

1. Human beings are characterized by a scope of all inclusive mental attributes. These incorporate dread, satisfaction, aspiration, voracity, love, disdain, envy, and so forth. One might say that hesitancy, as a prevailing subject of *Hamlet*, mirrors the human mind. All things considered, there are numerous circumstances in life when individuals are in an issue, persevering through the anguish of picking the correct choice. Subsequently, the confounding of what moves oneself to make can demolish one's estimation of life, prompts shortcoming and unavoidably be the starting point of the saint's grievous fall.
2. These facts are existentially reflected in an awareness of the absurdity and meaninglessness so strongly reflected in Hamlet's preoccupation with notions of dreary life and death-wish. Thus, puzzling over what course of action to take can destroy one's quality of life, leading to paralysis and can, ultimately, be the origin of the hero's tragic fall. Again, if anxiety (for students and people, in general, can be either "positive" or "debilitating", so can a sense of doubt. On one hand, doubt and anxiety must accompany any serious attempt to resolve one's inner dilemmas, coming to terms with life's many inexplicable events and the endeavor for success.
3. Hamlet's indecision, rooted in both moral uncertainty and psychological despair, creates a dynamic tension with the ambitious and calculating Claudius, fueling the play's tragic arc.
4. Hamlet explores the complexities of revenge, the fragility of morality, and the consequences of inaction, making it a timeless commentary on the human condition.
5. *Hamlet* was probably the best tragedy at any point composed. It is reasonably viewed as the zenith of Shakespeare's grievous vision and it gives an encapsulation of flawlessness to the origination of western tragedy figured by Aristotle. While Aristotle took as his model Oedipus Rex by Sophocles, Shakespeare's work is significantly more advanced and offers the soul of Renaissance

independence. However, the two works are comparative in the work of a lamentable legend experiencing a lethal hamartia and brought about the torment of both saints.

Recommendations

On the basis of the research findings, the research came up with the following recommendations:

1. It is highly recommended that *Hamlet* be included in any course on Shakespearean drama due to its versatility and ambiguity, facts that explain the popularity of the play as testified by the choice of Hamlet as a world-tour play to commemorate Shakespeare's 400th death.
2. Teachers are urged to go beyond theme-based superficial interpretations of *Hamlet* in the light of outmoded new criticism to stress the authorial.
3. *Hamlet* can be held up as a model in interdisciplinary examinations and, accordingly, joint tasks between Departments of English and Human Research can be organized to overcome any issues among writing and different teaches, for example, history, human sciences, and governmental issues.
4. Utilizing psychoanalysis as a reason for additional comprehension of Hamlet's predicaments, Lacan (1982) endeavor's to join psychoanalysis and Marxism and Kristeva's (1986) adjustment of psychoanalysis to her women's activist way of thinking. Subsequently, an all-inclusive psycho-political or gendered valuation for Hamlet can be picked up. Psychoanalysis is a settled and fruitful ground for contemplating the riddles of Hamlet. However, there are similarly encouraging territories for exploring that future analysts can take part in.

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