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PERFORMANCE AS POPULAR CRITICISM:

THEATRICAL TEXTS OF HAMLET,

1676-1804

by

Regina E. M. Melczer

B.A., Simon Fraser University, 1983

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFULLMENT

OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

in the Department

of

English

Regina E. M. Melczer

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

April 1988

ISBN 0-315-48795-X

APPROVAL

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DEGREE: Master of Arts

TITLE OF THESIS: Performance as Popular Criticism: Theatrical Texts of Hamlet

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PERFORMANCE AS POPULAR CRITICISM:
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ABSTRACT

Theatrical alteration of a long play such as *Hamlet* constitutes a system of interpretation that, because it satisfies public expectation, reflects the popular view: the Hamlet that audiences were familiar with during the late seventeenth and throughout the eighteenth century was far removed from the Hamlet Shakespeare had written.

In the period between 1676 and 1804, the swashbuckling Hamlet of the actors paralleled scholarly views of the play; in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, however, criticism began to take a different turn, analyzing Hamlet's mind. The hypersensitive and procrastinating Hamlet that then began to appear in print did not find an analogue on the stage. From Sir William Davenant's relatively rough Hamlet of the Restoration; through Robert Wilks' gentlemanly prince of the early eighteenth century; through David Garrick's athletic Hamlet of the middle and late eighteenth century; to, finally, John Philip Kemble's slower but no less virile hero at the start of the next century, there is no indication of weakness on the part of Hamlet. Delay, when admitted, is attributed either to Shakespeare's clumsiness in assimilating the various elements of his source or to Hamlet's moral scruples and princely sensitivity--not, as in scholarly criticism from 1774 on, to emotional conflicts within the character himself.

This study examines the relationship between the stage and the page--the one represented by five acting versions of *Hamlet*,

and the other by the literary interpretations of a number of eighteenth-century critics--in particular, Thomas Hanmer and William Richardson. On the basis of changes made to the play, the theatrical perception of Hamlet is seen to be consistently neoclassical in its premises, while scholarly criticism towards the end of the eighteenth century begins to move in a different direction, becoming psychological and, eventually, Romantic. In the theatre, it is the impulsive, active hero who captures the popular imagination and, for a time, forestalls the image of Hamlet the brooding procrastinator.

For Gabriel,
Who never doubted

Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing you make of me! You would play upon me; you would seem to know my stops; you would pluck out the heart of my mystery; you would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass; and there is much music, excellent voice, in this little organ, yet cannot you make it speak.

(Hamlet.III.ii.)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

report me and my cause aright
(Hamlet, V.ii.)

The history of theatrical texts of Shakespeare's plays--that is, of texts associated with performance and often printed to be read by the public--has always been a curiously under-explored area of Shakespeare studies. While a great deal of attention has been paid the scholarly editions, theatrical copies have been traditionally ignored as somehow beneath critical notice. After all (so the argument goes), actor-managers have always been in business primarily to make a profit--and what can a middle-class audience, with its notoriously short attention span, its love of spectacle and violence, know of philosophical soliloquies and poetry? To those who denounced them, the existence of promptbooks and actors' editions, because they pander to public taste, somehow sullied the pure, rarefied atmosphere which usually surrounds the Shakespearean canon. The alterations in acting versions of Shakespeare's plays had undoubtedly, they felt, been motivated by the thinking of such pragmatists as the Machinist and Prompter in Fielding's Tumble-Down Dick (1744), who here argue with Fustian, the actor:

> MACH. . . . But, Mr. Prompter, I must insist that you cut out a great deal of Othello, if my Pantomime is so perform'd with it, or the audience will be pall'd before the entertainment begins.

PROMP. We'll cut out the fifth act, Sir, if you please.

MACH. Sir, that's not enough. I'll have the first cut out too.

FUST. Death and the devil! Can I bear this? Shall Shakespeare be mangled to introduce this trumpery?

PROMP. Sir, this gentleman brings more money to the house, than all the poets put together.

MACH. Pugh, pugh, Shakespeare![1]

With some justification, therefore, an early stage historian such as John Genest refers to printed stage renditions as "that sink of corruption" and imagines Shakespeare's complaint to have been that "St. Lawrence never suffered more on his Gridiron, than I have suffered from the Prompt-Book."[2] A more recent critic, R.W. Babcock, in the introduction to his Genesis of Shakespeare Idolatry, informs the reader that "criticism of actors' versions of the plays" will not appear in that book. It, he proclaims, "has no concern with such mutilated stage versions of Shakespeare."[3]

On the other end of the scale, we might contend that theatrical texts yield valuable information about the public's--not the solitary "closet" critics'--conception of Shakespeare's characters. Precisely because each playscript, according to this view, mirrors the combined aesthetic and popular tastes of its age, whatever appeals to an audience appeals because it has tapped a nerve, because it reflects back to the satisfied spectators a shared system of critical values. Of course, to some

this hypothesis seems self-evident; yet actors' texts go one exciting step beyond that. In their variations over the years--in their choosing, and differing over, what to retain and what to eliminate--these various scripts become barometers that measure the subtler shifts in an audience's critical perceptions. Laurence Olivier's Hamlet, for example, a Hamlet who grapples sensually with his mother on her bed, would cause as much bewilderment in an eighteenth-century spectator as the rather vapid and filially polite Hamlet of Robert Wilks would today. In each case, the actor has become famous in the role because he has found, for his century, the "heart," or centre, of the play--and only theatrical texts can record where that centre lies, and how it has changed.

Because a staged play is by definition a public event and necessarily dependent on pleasing its audience, an actor's interpretation is in effect popular criticism brought to life. The successful actor simultaneously reflects an audience's preconceptions of a particular character and subtly modifies and challenges those existing views. It is therefore interesting, in trying to determine the popular view of Hamlet at any time, to see whether theatrical and scholarly approaches to Shakespeare ever coincided--or whether, instead, they ever separated, and why. In other words, we might ask what sort of relationship exists between an actor's conception of a role and contemporary scholarly commentary on that same character. More specifically, is there a noticeable change in actors' interpretations that parallels the by now well-known shift in Hamlet criticism towards the end of the

eighteenth century? Critics such as Paul S. Conklin have traced and analyzed the historical evolution of this criticism from the Elizabethan period through to the Romantics; the present study, however, attempts to go one step further by analyzing especially the relationship between the theatre and the study, primarily as it is to be found in actors' editions and in other theatrical texts.

Furthermore, within the general category of dramatic criticism, some differentiation is necessary between theatrical criticism on the one hand--which derives, as it implies, from performance--and scholarly criticism on the other--which may or may not be associated with stage interpretations and in fact departed increasingly, in the nineteenth century, from the earlier assumption that plays were written to be performed as well as read. Shakespearean theatrical criticism of the seventeenth century unfortunately consists of little more than a few descriptions or allusions and a number of entries in the diary of the easily-biased Samuel Pepys; that of the eighteenth century, however, poses a far different problem. While eighteenth-century criticism in general lacks a unified philosophy, criticism pertaining to the theatre is sometimes very astute--as evidenced in the Tatler and Prompter; sometimes pedestrian--as witness the comments of Francis Gentleman; and sometimes no more than a tool of the "puff" system by which fans and paid hacks glorified one actor while they automatically vilified his rival. The trick is in recognizing to which category any pertinent eye-witness account belongs. On the other hand, the worst of the scholarly criticism

often goes to the opposite extreme, concentrating primarily on ideas but analyzing the plays in an untheatrical vacuum and with little or no concern for the "actability" of certain critical theories.[4] In the late eighteenth century, William Richardson's Philosophical Analysis exemplifies just such an approach.

There is in addition always the worry in a study such as this that one is reading too much into data that is fragmentary and often skewed. In the case of the theatre texts themselves, the excisions are straightforward but the motivation behind them remains, for the most part, open to debate. (David Garrick's 1772 Hamlet is, as we shall see, the happy exception.) Certainly many cuts were made purely in the interests of shortening the longest play in the Shakespearean canon. In the "Introduction" to his 1774 theatre edition of the play, Francis Gentleman complains that "As originally written, it must take up four hours in action; an intolerable time"; and actors such as John Bannister, Jr., and John Philip Kemble were praised and criticized, respectively, for the length of time an audience was made to sit. (Of the 2,750-line version that took him four hours to complete, Edwin Booth later noted that "People gaped, slept and left before the final act--in squads.")[5] Furthermore, certain cuts quickly became standardized over decades, and it is often difficult, and sometimes impossible, to ascertain when an excision is made simply because it was always made on stage, and when it is made because of a changed attitude on the part of the audience and, in turn, the actor. In this study, cuts in Hamlet that are repeated time and again are considered most significant in the first of the

texts to show such an excision; on the other hand, a new omission--or the restoration of lines traditionally cut on stage--provides further clues as to the subtle alteration that must have occurred in the meantime.

The fact that excisions were often made in response to theatrical exigencies does not entirely invalidate their primary place of importance here. The intentions behind these cuts are not as significant as their effects, for while an excision might have been determined solely on the basis of expediency, even expediency requires choosing what is most expendable--and that, in turn involves value judgements concerning different moments in the play. Consequently, while it helps to know whether an excision is interpretive or simply pragmatic, the knowledge does not alter the fact that the final result is in both cases a new reading, either welcomed by the audience or immediately quashed because it refuses to conform to the acceptable limits of Hamlet interpretation.

Finally, while alteration and adaptation are often used synonymously to describe any revised Shakespearean play, the two terms, as James Lynch has pointed out, indicate subtle differences in authorial attitude.[6] An alteration was generally considered by the reviser to be an "improvement," thereby reflecting his dissatisfaction with the original. Cuts were made not simply to shorten the playing time but rather to consciously modify plot, character, and theme. Garrick's 1772 Hamlet, with its completely novel ending, subverts even the most basic level of meaning in Shakespeare's play and thus constitutes an alteration. (William Hopkins' 1777 promptbook and Tate Wilkinson's version also fall

into this category but are referred to in this paper only secondarily.) Adaptations, on the other hand, are comparatively more respectful of their source. They are, for the most part, plays shortened primarily with an eye to the clock; however, in choosing which lines to cut and which to retain, they also either consciously or inadvertently change certain aspects of the play. The 1676, 1751, 1774, and 1804 theatrical texts of Hamlet may all be considered adaptations, although there is often only a fine line distinguishing them from the more blatant alterations.

The attitude towards such revisions has recently undergone considerable modification. Not long ago, any differentiation between alterations and adaptations would have been regarded as quibbling over terms. Call them what you will, the two were equally, many felt, a mutilation of Shakespeare. Indeed, it sometimes seems that scholars secretly welcomed the opportunities afforded them to vent their spleen--as witness the force of the critical outrage at Davenant's alteration of The Tempest. H.H. Furness sputters that

> no imagination, derived from a mere description, can adequately depict its monstrosity,--to be fully hated it must be fully seen;

and Clifford Odell declares it "the worst perversion of Shakespeare in the two-century history of such atrocities."[7] Hazelton Spencer too castigates the Dryden-Davenant work: "Everything that the authors lay their hands on is defiled," he writes; and he includes, in that category, Davenant's

"vaudevillian" Macbeth and "reprehensible" Hamlet.[8] Similarly, although few had ever seen and none had read Garrick's 1772 alteration of Hamlet, his temerity alone provoked embarrassment among his admirers. James Boaden, Garrick's biographer, thought the revision "mean and trashy," and dismissed it as "an actor's mutilation of all parts but his own." Percy Fitzgerald declared it a "famous and Gothic mutilation," the "one act of folly in his life to which Garrick might look back with compunction."[9]

But such denunciations really get us nowhere, and fortunately, more recent and temperate critics have tried to distinguish between the reviser and his model. Alfred Harbage, for example, finds fault not with Davenant but with his detractors, for confusing and then comparing adaptations and their source:[10]

> For anyone preoccupied with Shakespeare to be offended by the Restoration stage versions is natural, but quite illogical. These versions are not the province of Shakespearean scholarship at all. . . . The Restoration adapter in using the original plays did not annihilate them, and certainly such men as Davenant and Dryden would not have done so had it been possible. So far as these . . . are significant at all, they are significant to the student of the entire sweep of literary history or, among specialists, to him who would take the pulse and temperature of the Restoration itself--not, certainly, to the specialist in Shakespeare. They should be examined with interest, not indignation, as illustrative of the undulations of human progress.[11]

He then concedes that, yes, "these adaptations are bad. They could not be otherwise"; but concludes that that is no "justification for the succession of essays in which critics have

vindicated their good taste by rediscovering and illustrating with elaborate analyses just how bad they are." Christopher Spencer, in his introduction to Five Restoration Adaptations of Shakespeare, agrees, re-stating the case even more succinctly. The revisions, he says, "are now dead as Shakespeare and . . . to be-labour them as bad Shakespeare is like kicking a carcass. . . . It is not worth our while to berate the adapters or their versions of the plays, but it is worth an effort to try to understand them." He concludes with a desire that such works be read as new plays, and then states why:

> First, the best of the adaptations are enjoyable in themselves if they are read for themselves, some of the enjoyment coming originally from Shakespeare and some from the adapter. Second, the adaptations read as new plays will add to our understanding of the age that produced them. And third, we may broaden and deepen our understanding of Shakespeare--not by praising him at the adapters' expense, but by comprehending their vision of the Shakespearean material with which they were working.[12]

This, then, is an effort to comprehend the altered and adapted versions of Hamlet that audiences both expected and welcomed for over a century. Part I briefly outlines the general attitudes towards Shakespeare's plays as seen in the dramatic criticism of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Part II is a detailed textual comparison of five stage versions of Hamlet, with further information on the performances coming from a number of theatrical critics. And Part III compares the adapters' modifications to changing scholarly interpretations of the play, here represented by Thomas Hanmer (1736) and William Richardson

(1774). By simultaneously comparing the different acting versions--and then comparing these to the scholarly criticism--I hope to create a sort of palimpsest through which a century and a half of Hamlet interpretations may be revealed.

PART I

> The hero in tragedy is either a whining, cringing fool, that's always stabbing himself, or a ranting, hectoring bully, that's for killing everybody else.
> (Farquhar, Love and a Bottle [1698])

THE LATE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

In his "Preface to Rapin" (1674), Thomas Rymer informs the reader that, before the restoration of the monarchy, England had been "as free from Criticks as it is from Wolves," and he then defends his new profession, claiming "Poets would grow negligent, if the Criticks had not a strict eye over their miscarriages."[1] These first stirrings of critical sensibility were not to become fully developed until the eighteenth century--the great age of Addison and Johnson and Morgann; however, the seventeenth century did produce Dryden and a considerable number of dramatist-critics eager to enter the fray. As Bonamy Dobree has pointed out, the literary battleground after the Restoration had shifted from the field of poetry to that of plays. As a result, instead of The Arte of Poesie or A Defense of Rime, we get An Essay of Dramatick Poesy and A Short Discourse of the English Stage.[2] English criticism being in general more empirical and pragmatic than that of France (Dryden even admits his debt to Hobbes), the form and the function of the drama were both, for the first time, seriously discussed. Some of these critical attitudes--especially as they reflect motivations behind the adapters' excisions in Hamlet and

provide a background to our later discussion of Thomas Hanmer--are worth briefly summarizing here.

One indication of the new trend towards a more self-conscious, more historically aware, critical attitude is to be found in the growing concern, from the late seventeenth century on, over the merits of the British "Antients," especially Shakespeare, in relation to French standards of perfection.[3] In the seventeenth century, Dryden is almost the sole champion of the English native tradition against the dry formalism of the neoclassical unities,[4] yet even Dryden periodically feels obliged to apologize for Shakespeare's crude genius. First, there is the problem of his ignorance of the dramatic unities of time, place, and action; second, his use of over-elaborate conceits and imagery; and third, his lack of concern for what Thomas Rymer was to call, in 1678, "Poeticall Justice." As a result, while Shakespeare was, in the 1660's, too great a dramatist to ignore, it was obvious to all in those smugly-enlightened times that he needed polishing, that he lacked refinement. For the next one hundred and fifty years, Shakespeare was to be improved upon with a vengeance.

That the act of improvement was considered a respectable undertaking, designed to highlight the greatest talents of both parties involved, is perhaps most evident in the century's liberal views on translation and on what Rymer termed "New-modelling," or adaptation.[5] Dryden's concept of "imitation," Scaliger's of "echoing," and Du Bellay's of "borrowing" all suggest one thing: adaptation in the seventeenth century was a legitimate artistic

endeavour which bestowed a modern honour on the deceased artist and instant fame on the writer who had the skill to resurrect him. Thus Thomas Sprat eulogizes Cowley, in 1668, for his "wonderfully happy . . . way of leaving Verbal Translations, and chiefly regarding the Sense and Genius of the Author [Pindar]"; and the anonymous commentator on Bonduca (1696) states that "the whole Brotherhood of the Quill have for many Years been blamed for letting so Ingenious a Relick of the Last Age . . . lie dormant, when so inconsiderable an Additional Touch of the Pen was wanting, to make it fit for an Honourable Reception . . . ."[6] In his "Preface to Troilus and Cressida, Containing the Grounds of Criticism in Tragedy" (1679), Dryden even offers a classical precedent for the honour of collaborating with Shakespeare:

> The poet Aeschylus was held in the same veneration by the Athenians of after ages as Shakespeare is by us; and Longinus has judged, in favor of him, that he had a noble boldness of expression, and that his imaginations were lofty and heroic; but, on the other side, Quintilian affirms that he was daring to extravagance. 'Tis certain that he affected pompous words, and that his sense too often was obscured by figures. Notwithstanding these imperfections, the value of his writings after his decease was such that his countrymen ordained an equal reward to those poets who could alter his plays to be acted on the theatre, with those whose productions were wholly new, and of their own.[7]

Adaptation was not considered stealing--although, as the "borrowing" became increasingly blatant and commercial, the end of the seventeenth century saw the plagiarists scorned as rather desperate hacks. In Davenant's time, the adapter was still

considered a public benefactor, unearthing for his readers' edification long-lost or hopelessly outmoded literary fossils.

Yet despite this attitude, the reaction to Shakespeare was mixed: there seemed in his case such a lot of work to be done. We find Richard Flecknoe praising and grumbling in one breath ("'twas a fine Garden, but it wanted weeding"), and Cowley, employing the same metaphor, says with shears in hand:

> [P]art of Shakespeare's Poems I should take the boldness to prune and lop away, if the care of replanting them in print did belong to me; neither would I make any scruple to cut off from some the unnecessary yong Suckars, and from others the old withered Branches; for a great Wit is no more tyed to live in a Vast Volume, then in a Gigantic Body; on the contrary, it is commonly more vigorous, the less space it animates.[8]

Cowley's last words, reflecting the "Less is More" school of criticism, lead directly to a related issue for discussion: namely, that of seventeenth-century abridgement. For unlike alteration, which gradually became little more than an outlet for capricious flights of fancy, abridgement was most often the result of necessary conformance to the practical exigencies of the theatre. It has been hypothesized, for example, that the so-called "bad quartos" of Shakespeare's Henry VI, Parts II and III, Romeo and Juliet, Henry V, The Merry Wives of Windsor, and Hamlet are all "Players' Quartos," texts abridged for performance by smaller companies of actors.[9] Alfred Hart, examining sixteen acting versions of Elizabethan plays, concludes that "abridgement of plays was customary, not occasional" at the time, and William

Van Lennep, examining Thomas Killigrew's playscripts, finds the situation still unchanged during the Restoration.[10]

Yet cuts were also made in the interests of what Hobbes called "Perspicuity and the Facility of Construction."[11] Thus in "An Essay Upon Poetry" (1682), John Sheffield, the Earl of Mulgrave, advises playwrights that "Soliloquies had need be few, / Extreamly short, and spoke in passion too," and Flecknoe complains that "The chief faults of our [plays] are our huddling too much matter together and making them too long and intricate."[12] Religious and political censorship resulted in further excisions or, at the very least, modifications within the old plays, and the 1606 "Acte to restraine Abuses of Players" seems to have been diligently applied by the censor, Henry Herbert, Master of the Revels from 1623 to 1673.[13] Similarly, the King's joint grant to Davenant and Killigrew on 21 August 1660 was in part an attempt to control the profanity and obscenity that evidently attended the re-opening of the theatres. The two men were charged "to peruse all playes that have been formerly written, and to expunge all Prophanesse and Scurrility from the same, before they be represented or Acted."[14] By the end of that first year, Davenant, anxious to keep up with Killigrew's more impressive repertoire, proposed "reformeing some of the most ancient Playes that were played at the Blackfriers and of makeing them, fitt, for the Company of Actors appointed under his direction and comand."[15] Of the ten plays by Shakespeare to which Davenant was granted exclusive rights, five were staged in an adapted form; of these,

as we shall see, one was to be published as the 1676 theatre edition of Hamlet.[16]

Popular as Hamlet has always been on the stage, however, it has also always presented critical problems. In the late seventeenth century, being a tragedy, it should have conformed to the neoclassical rules that accompanied the court of Charles II on its return to England from France. The comic Gravediggers, Osric and Polonius, the indecorous behaviour on the part of Hamlet and the King, and the ambiguousness of the play's moral message must have discomfited Rymer, Collier, and Dennis; plays such as Hamlet did not comfortably fit the definition of tragedy as moral illustration. By 1678, Rymer, for example, is grumbling, "What is there of the Heroe, of Man, or of Nature in these Kings of our Poets framing?" and even questions, in his usual dogged way, "whether in Poetry a King can be an accessary to a crime." He concludes his Tragedies of the Last Age with a significant criticism of the hero in Fletcher's The Maid's Tragedy. "This character of Amintor is inconsistent," he says, "and is contradiction all over":

> He is a man of Honour, yet he breaks his Faith with his Mistress, bears the greatest of affronts from his Wife . . . and dissembles it. . . . He is also honest, and of unshaken loyalty, yet sometimes has such devilish throws as would affright any true liege people from sitting at a Coffee-house near him. And all the passions in him work so aukwardly, as if he had suck'd a Sow. . . . did ever man huff with such a parenthesis?[17]

Although Rymer is not here referring to Hamlet, the general tenor of his argument concerning Amintor's inconsistency, his language, and his duplicitous behaviour is, as we shall see, reflected in the Restoration acting version of Shakespeare's play.[18]

Finally, all of the above critical views combine with the century's theories on adaptation in Nahum Tate's epistle, "To my esteemed Friend George Raynsford, Esq.," which is essentially a brief explanation by Tate of his methods and motives in adapting Richard II. The document is fascinating for what it reveals of the Restoration concern with decorum and is especially applicable to Davenant in his attitude towards the alteration of Shakespeare.

Tate begins by saying of the play that he was "charm'd with the many Beauties I discover'd in it, which I knew wou'd become the Stage," but then goes on to question the characters' lack of moral stature: "[Shakespeare] took care to shew 'em no worse Men than They were, but represents them never a jot better."[19] Tate prides himself on what he considers the "palliating" of Richard's "Miscarriages," and indeed, his translation of Richard's speeches results in language scarcely recognizable as Shakespeare's. He re-writes, for example, Richard's

> And thou a Lunatick Lean-witted-fool, &c.
> Now by my Seat's right Royal Majesty,
> Wer't Thou not Brother to great Edward's Son,
> The Tongue that runs thus roundly in thy Head
> Shou'd run thy Head from thy unreverent Shoulders;
> (p. 269)

transforming it into

> Gentle Unkle;
> Excuse the Sally's of my Youthfull Blood.
>
> (p. 269)

Having refined the language, Tate goes on to state, "Nor could it suffice me to make him speak like a King (who, as Mr. Rymer says in his Tragedies of the last Age considered, are always in Poetry presum'd Heroes) but to Act so too, viz. with Resolution and Justice." Thus, Tate deliberately rearranges--"for the honour of my Heroe"--the plot, explaining that

> My design was to engage the pitty of the Audience for him in his Distresses, which I cou'd never have compass'd had I not before shewn him a Wise, Active and Just Prince. Detracting Language (if any where) had been excusable in the Mouths of the Conspirators . . . but I wou'd not allow even Traytors and Conspirators thus to bespatter the Person whom I design'd to place in the Love and Compassion of the Audience. Ev'n this very Scene (as I have manag'd it) though it shew the Confederates to be Villains, yet it flings no Aspersions on my Prince. Take ev'n the Richard of Shakespeare and History, you will find him Dissolute, Careless and Unadvisable: peruse my Picture of him and you will say, As Aeneas did of Hector, . . . Quantum mutatus ab illo!
>
> (p. 270)

As we shall see, the theatrical texts of Hamlet too show evidence of excising anything that threatened to "bespatter the Person whom [they] design'd to place in the Love and Compassion of the Audience."

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

In the seventeenth century, the unique situation following the restoration of Charles II led to the creation of an unusually inbred coterie of playwright-critics who examined their ideas about the drama and then attempted to write accordingly. In the following century, however, the two worlds of critic and dramatist grow apart. Scholarly criticism from 1770 on increasingly ignores the theatrical context in which Shakespeare's plays had been written and becomes noticeably divorced from the theatrical criticism of the magazines, formed from actors' interpretations of their roles. The eighteenth century is an especially rich source, therefore, for analyzing the relationship between scholarly criticism on the one hand, and contemporary stage productions of Hamlet on the other.

The first stirrings of an extensive scholarly interest in Shakespeare do not appear until the early 1700's. "The hoof of the critical elephant"--to quote Oxberry in his 1818 edition of Kean's Hamlet--was then only beginning to be felt; indeed, the scarcity of critical commentary before Steele and the Tatler (1709), and statements such as that of Francis Atterbury, Bishop of Rocheater, indicate that the plays cried out to be interpreted for a curious but puzzled eighteenth-century public. Writing to Pope in 1721, Atterbury protests that "in a hundred places I cannot construe him: I do not understand him":

> The hardest part of Chaucer is more intelligible to me than some of those scenes, not merely through the

> faults of the edition, but the obscurity of the writer, for obscure he is, and a little (not a little) inclined now and then to bombast, whatever apology you may have contrived on that head for him. There are allusions in him to an hundred things, of which I know nothing and can guess nothing. . . . I protest Aeschylus does not want a comment to me more than he does.[20]

In response to such bewilderment, playing at being a critic rapidly became a popular pastime. In a column entitled "Critics and Coffee-house Papers," for example, Applebee's Original Weekly Journal of September 1718 recommends Charles Gildon's Compleat Art of Poetry for the simple reason that "To be wholly ignorant of criticism is to be unfit for polite conversation, and a beau that can't talk of pamphlets is like a lady that can't use her fan." By 1765, the situation had become such that a correspondent to the Gentleman's Magazine asks for permission to throw one more critical "mite into the treasury"--for, as he says, "almost every body is making emendations, annotations, or illustrations, of some part or other of Shakespeare." And in the theatres, the rage for commentary showed itself in spectators who overnight became self-appointed connoisseurs:

> Dick is always the first night at a new play in the pit; and though he never read Aristotle, or understands a syllable of Horace, he is one of the greatest critics of the age. He has learnt a few set-phrases at the Bedford: these he utters promiscuously upon all such occasions, and he blends them in so curious a manner that they will do for any performance of every degree of merit. He, nevertheless, has frequently a crowd about him at the coffee-house; and his decisions, indecisive as they be, are considered as the opinion of the town.[21]

Such critical self-assurance could only have come about as a result of the public's obsessive interest in what daily occurred on stage, and some of the credit for the new awareness of Shakespeare's characters must therefore go to the actors, whose more naturalistic acting styles and subtly changing interpretations forced audiences to re-evaluate their own conceptions of the characters.[22]

For, in keeping with Sir Richard Baker's belief in the previous century that a play read "hath not half the pleasure of a play acted,"[23] the average early eighteenth-century "fan" of Shakespeare looked to the stage as often as to that growing number of published but contradictory annotations for interpretive clues. For example, a letter to David Garrick in 1744, only two years after his debut as Hamlet at Goodman's Fields, pointedly requests his advice as an actor:

> Sir, As you seem to me to be a very good judge of Shakespeare, and have often given us his true sense and meaning where his learned editors could give us neither, I shall submit to your judgment a line in Hamlet, which, in my opinion, is wrong placed in all the editions that I have seen . . . .[24]

Repeatedly, Garrick is singled out and commended for his having "done our poet more justice by his manner of playing his principal characters, than any editor has yet done by a publication."[25] Even an anonymous bit of doggerel in the Scots Magazine of 1759 notes the tension between the separate proponents of the stage and the page:

> To relish Shakespeare read him o'er and o'er,
> See Garrick play him, and he'll charm you more.[26]

This conflict between Shakespeare studied in the scholarly editions and Shakespeare presented in the theatre becomes increasingly obvious in the eighteenth century as cheaper, smaller editions of the plays created a larger and more educated reading public. In his "Preface to The Conscious Lovers" (1722), Sir Richard Steele feels compelled to make a distinction between the closet and the stage, and comes down firmly in favour of attending the theatre:

> it must be remember'd, a Play is to be seen, and is made to be Represented with the Advantage of Action, nor can appear but with half the Spirit, without it; for the greatest Effect of a Play in reading is to excite the Reader to go see it; and when he does so, it is then a Play has the Effect of Example and Precept.[27]

Similarly, while Theobald writes that "there is scarce a poet . . . who is more the subject of the Ladies' reading," John Hill reminds those same readers that

> we must hear, not read the passages . . . and the great, the excellent performer gives them that eminence upon the stage, which we should never have found in them in the closet.[28]

The popular theatrical conception of Hamlet will become evident in the different stage versions of the play; however, the climate of scholarly opinion at the time of the various

productions also deserves mention. In the view of the seventeenth century, and measured against the standards of the "Beauties-Faults" school, Shakespeare had inevitably failed; consequently, the eighteenth century felt that a different perspective on his genius was needed. While Rymer's generation had "chiefly consider'd the Fable or Plot, . . . to be the Soul of a Tragedy," later critics admitted Shakespeare's structure was faulty and quickly looked elsewhere for something to praise.[29] Gradually, adherence to the "Rules" was judged to be secondary in importance, and a new, patriotically defensive tone begins noticeably to appear in scholarly writing from Lewis Theobald onward. Thomas Whately, in his Remarks on some of the Characters of Shakespeare, summarizes this radical shift in critical thinking most clearly. "The writers upon dramatic composition," he says,

> have, for the most part, confined their observations to the fable; and the maxims received amongst them, for the conduct of it, are therefore emphatically called, The Rules of the Drama. It has been found easy to give and to apply them; they are obvious, they are certain, they are general: and poets without genius have, by observing them, pretended to fame; while critics without discernment have assumed importance from knowing them. But the regularity thereby established, though highly proper, is by no means the first requisite in a dramatic composition. Even waiving all consideration of those finer feelings which a poet's imagination or sensibility imparts, there is, within the colder provinces of judgment and of knowledge, a subject for criticism more worthy of attention than the common topics of discussion: I mean the distinction and preservation of character . . . .[30]

As a result, Shakespeare came to be seen as less the wayward genius and more, as Johnson put it, the conscious "poet of nature;

the poet that holds up to his readers a faithful mirrour of manners and of life."[31]

This interest in Shakespeare's characters as exemplifying truth to "Nature" so pervades eighteenth-century criticism that the two terms, character and nature, become cliched and virtually meaningless. However, the universalizing of Shakespeare's characters that we find in Johnson and many minor critics is far removed from the later character sketches of William Richardson, Maurice Morgann, and others of the pre-Romantic school.[32] In keeping with Johnson's belief that "In the writings of other poets a character is too often an individual; in those of Shakespeare it is commonly a species," Hamlet before 1770 had been regarded as a Shakespearean "Everyman." Indeed, William Guthrie's statement in 1747 that "In this character there is nothing but what is common with the rest of mankind" seems in its basic assumptions light years behind Thomas Robertson's praise, almost half a century later, of Hamlet for being quite the opposite--that is, "singularly and marvellously made up."[33]

There is also no doubt that the eighteenth century's critical shift of focus to Shakespeare's characters as opposed to his plots led, ultimately, to the increasingly philosophical criticism that tended to use the plays as material for the study of human nature. In other words, the new empirical interest in a character's motivation, rather than merely his behaviour, prompted men such as Morgann and Richardson to "cut the character out of the canvas" (to use Dover Wilson's phrase) even when it meant subverting the

literal meaning of his words. By 1795, the Monthly Review clearly shows the influence of such an approach when it says that

> there is a passion of the mind,--the strength of which is usually commensurable with the progress of our knowledge of human nature,--which delights to observe the manners; to investigate the symptoms of character; to infer, from the occasional actions of an individual, the predisposing bent or state of his mind, or from a preconceived idea of his turn and disposition to infer his probable conduct in given circumstances, and to compare with these inferences the actual result;--a philosophic passion, which might be named the ethic curiosity.[34]

Without the earlier analyses of Richardson, Morgann, and Whately behind him, the anonymous writer might never have thought to "observe," "investigate," and, most importantly, "infer" a fictional character's inner life so thoroughly.[35]

In short, the attitude to Shakespeare underwent a radical transformation in the eighteenth century. That is, the judicial approach inherited from men like Thomas Rymer in the previous century--a mathematical subtraction of "blemishes" from "virtues," to determine the total value of a work--was strongly challenged by the treatment of imaginary characters as though they were real. As we shall see, Hamlet too undergoes changes in interpretation; and as he represents "the most important general character study of the period," we might want to look for those changes in the Hamlets of the theatre.[36] Certainly, we can say that Hamlet--in the study--grows in complexity from being the "Prince of great Accomplishments" of Hanmer to being virtually the symbol of a complex, enigmatic, and paradoxical mind in conflict with

itself.[37] Ultimately, whether or not the theatrical Hamlet changes in the same way can only be determined by a close examination of the adapted texts.

PART II

look where my abridgement comes . . . .

(Hamlet.II.ii.)

A. DESCRIPTION OF TEXTS

DAVENANT 1676

The 1676 theatre edition of Hamlet is a re-working by Sir William Davenant of a 1637 quarto, and it lists Thomas Betterton (who played the part until 1709, when he was more than seventy years old) as the prince. Although not published until 1676, it is this version of the play that was first presented at Lisle's Tennis Court on 24 August 1661. As a result, while it will be referred to hereafter as Davenant 1676, the interpretation it presents was actually introduced and applauded fifteen years earlier.[1]

With Betterton in the lead, this version of the play was extremely popular in the seventeenth century, being reprinted in 1683, 1695, and 1703. It also seems to have been the model for the Smock Alley promptbook composed sometime between 1676 and 1679, and it (and its 1683 reprint) was most certainly used by John Ward as the basis for his touring production throughout the provinces, circa 1745.[2] From the start, therefore, there is evidence that Davenant's adaptation met with great success. John Downes records that "No succeeding Tragedy for several Years got

more Reputation, or Money to the Company than this," and adds that it brought Betterton, "by his exact Performance of it, . . . Esteem and Reputation, Superlative to all other Plays." Pepys attended the premiere in 1661 and duly noted that it was "done with scenes very well" (he was always "mightily pleased with it"); and only John Evelyn--who might have been reacting to a different production, done not with the new moving "scenes" but on the old platform-style stage--gave a dissenting opinion later in the same year. On "November 26," Evelyn writes, "I saw Hamlet Pr: of Denmark played: but now the old playe began to disgust this refined age; since his Majestie being so long abroad."[3]

Davenant anticipates this desire of the Restoration to begin anew, as, from the start, his Hamlet pays tribute to, yet remains distinct from, the original "old playe." Like the 1751 theatre edition of Hamlet to come, Davenant 1676 opens with a note "To the Reader" that

> This Play being too long to be conveniently Acted, such places as might be least pre-judicial to the Plot or Sense, are left out upon the Stage: but that we may no way wrong the incomparable Author, are here inserted according to the Original Copy with this Mark " [4]

Somewhat surprisingly, the critics have in general agreed with Davenant that his excisions were not "prejudicial to the Plot or Sense." Hazelton Spencer, for example, says that Davenant's version "was not structurally altered, except for being ruthlessly cut" (he does not explain how he distinguishes between the two); and, after enumerating the many deletions, Spencer still concludes

that "These are far from fatal changes." Gunnar Sorelius too dismisses Davenant 1676 as "a cut and polished version, . . . with no structural changes"; and C.D. Odell even approves of the excisions, saying that "Altogether, this version is not a bad acting edition . . . the story is compressed to good effect."[5] Yet, as Mongi Raddadi has established, Davenant cuts approximately 850 of Shakespeare's 3,730 lines--almost one quarter of the original text.[6] This is a substantial reduction and must be seen as influencing our interpretation of the play.

Furthermore, Davenant 1676 is not a mere theatrical abridgement. As the first in a long line of actor-managers concerned with both official and audience approval, Davenant cuts in a very conscious and thematically selective way, thereby hinting at a radically different conception (when compared to Shakespeare's) of Hamlet as a play for public performance. Specifically, he omits all sexual innuendo and dutifully obeys the 1606 statute forbidding profanation on stage (e.g., "God" is always "Heaven" or "Nature"). More importantly, however, Davenant flattens the language until it is dishearteningly modern and unpoetic. Thus "Adieu, adieu, adieu" is translated into a terse "Farewell"; "I do not set my life at a pin's fee" becomes, lamely, "I value not my life"; and Hamlet tells Laertes that his skill at fencing shall merely "Appear"--rather than, as in Shakespeare, "Stick fiery off indeed."[7] Of course, these are minor quibbles when compared to the larger question of how Davenant alters our perception of the characters themselves.

WILKS 1751

The 1751 theatre edition of Hamlet has been described by Charles H. Shattuck as being the "acting version . . . standard for the eighteenth century."[8] It is listed by Henry N. Paul as one of the nineteen reprints of the 1718 Hughs-Wilks duodecimo--so called because John Hughs, comparing Davenant 1676 to Rowe's collected edition of 1709, reinstated a significant amount of the First Folio while Robert Wilks, the Hamlet of the 1718 version, dictated theatrical cuts.[9] Together, Hughs and Wilks departed from Davenant's version of the play by cutting the Dumb Show and all mention of Fortinbras but also restored two passages that were to become initiatory tests for any new actor in the eighteenth century: Hamlet's words upon first meeting the Ghost ("Angels and ministers of grace defend us!") and his advice to the Players, the latter of which received written acclaim in the year of its restoration:

> What excellent Instructions has Shakespear given us (in his Hamlet) to make a Player, which has for this many years been omitted in the Performance, 'till very lately; I need not tell you how agreeably I was surpriz'd, when I last saw that admirable Play, to hear Mr. Wilks (who's the fittest Person in the World to give those Instructions) speak those Lines, that ought never to have been omitted.[10]

Even John Ward's two promptbooks of the 1740's show evidence of this pervasive Hughs-Wilks influence, as, following their suggested cuts, Ward modernizes Davenant 1676, making it more compatible with the eighteenth century.

No doubt copying Davenant's text, Wilks 1751 also marks its excisions for performance with inverted commas throughout; however, unlike the former, the compositor of the 1751 version is not so meticulous, either forgetting to indicate the end of a cut or suggesting a cut where it contextually makes no sense.[11] Despite the confusion engendered by such errors, however, Wilks 1751 should not be underestimated. Its importance lies in the fact that it reflects the acting version standard for the first half of the eighteenth century; it thus affords a valuable glimpse of what the average actor prior to Garrick had to work with. Popular as it was for a time, only Garrick's innovations finally made it seem out of style.

Garrick 1763

The 1774 Bell's Theatre Edition of Hamlet is a reprint of the text that George Colman of Drury Lane allowed to be printed in 1763 while a disillusioned and momentarily unpopular David Garrick was living in France,[12] It was this version that Garrick acted from his debut on 12 August 1742 until his more radical alteration of the play in 1772. It lists the casts of performances at Drury Lane, with Garrick as Hamlet (18, 21, and 23 December 1772) and at Covent Garden, with William Smith in the lead (4 January and 19 May 1773).[13] The lines that were cut in performance are not printed (and therefore not marked for omission), thus making for a very short text. The edition does boast, however, "An Introduction, and Notes Critical and Illustrative" by the author

of The Dramatic Censor, Francis Gentleman. Since Garrick's version was reprinted six times between 1763 and 1770, Francis Gentleman and John Bell would have been very much aware of it even before deciding to include it in their 1774 anthology of stage productions.

Critical reaction has not been kind to this edition; the adjective repeatedly used by those who attempt to describe it is "mutilated." In 1774, for example, William Kenrick declares the need for a public lecture on the "poetical or moral beauties of Shakespeare" now that a "mutilated play-house copy [of Hamlet] has appeared"; and more recently, R.W. Babcock has stated that his Genesis of Shakespeare Idolatry "has no concern with . . . mutilated stage versions" such as this. Only John Genest, writing in the nineteenth century, seems to have viewed the text with some ambivalence. "[Garrick 1763] has been censured," he says,

> as the worst edition of Shakespeare ever published, which strictly speaking is true, as it presents the plays in a mutilated state--but in another point of view, this edition is very useful as it is copied from the prompter's book.[14]

Genest is correct; Garrick 1763 is indeed useful. In addition to being the only text with extensive and revealing critical footnotes, as the most admired and discussed version of Hamlet in the eighteenth century it provides a marked contrast to Garrick's subsequent changes to the play.

GARRICK 1772

David Garrick's 1772 acting version of Hamlet is the final product of his vow to "rescue that noble play from all the rubbish of the Fifth Act" by remodelling it to suit especially Voltaire's neoclassical standards,[15] Available until recently only as a rough, unpublished script, the changes Garrick makes throughout this version of Hamlet are significant enough to warrant comparison with the three editions already discussed.

Garrick used as his base a 1747 duodecimo reprint of the Hughs-Wilks text, an almost exact duplicate of the Hughs-Wilks edition published again four years later and described above as Wilks 1751.[16] Not only do we have, therefore, the evidence of Garrick's radical departure from the mainstream of Hamlet performances, we also have examples of that mainstream itself--namely, the particular acting versions that Garrick consciously opposed. We have a reprint (Wilks 1751) of the Hughs-Wilks Hamlet that Garrick was familiar with but chose not to follow. We have another reprint (Garrick 1763) depicting his usual production of the play, which was quite different from that staged by Wilks. And finally, we have the startling alteration (Garrick 1772) that departed from both the Hughs-Wilks Hamlet (its base) and from Garrick 1763, the text Garrick had himself adapted and used for thirty years. In all three cases, David Garrick is the common denominator.

The version Garrick presented to the public on 18 December 1772 was radically different from the numerous productions of

Hamlet--including his own--that audiences had grown accustomed to. Writing to Madame Necker the day before she was to see his performance, Garrick warned her that "the copy you have got from the bookseller will mislead you without some direction from me." The "direction" he gave her went as follows:

> the first act which is very long in the original is by me divided into two acts--the third act, as I act it, is the second in the original--the third in the original is the fourth in mine, and ends with the famous scene between Hamlet and his mother--and the fifth act in my alteration consists of the fourth and fifth of the original with some small alterations, and the omission of some scenes, particularly the Gravediggers.[17]

Reaction to this altered conclusion was swift and at first highly commendatory. In his notes for 18 December 1772, William Hopkins, Garrick's prompter, records that "The Tragedy of Hamlet having been greatly Alter'd by D.G. was performed for the 1st time Mr Garrick playd divinely & merited the great Applause he receivd. It is alterd much for the better in regard to the part of Hamlet & I think the alterations very fine and proper."[18] That this new Hamlet was on the whole extremely popular is attested to by theatre records and by glowing reviews in the press. The London Chronicle is pleased to report, the day after the play's inception, that Mr. Garrick "played . . . with uncommon spirit" to a "crouded house," and that "the play makes a very respectable figure in its present state, and . . . seem[s] to have been produced by the hand of a master." A similar response is that

found in the Westminster Magazine for January 1773, which feels that, as altered,

> The tedious interruptions of this beautiful tale no longer disgrace it; its absurd digressions are no longer disgusting. These . . . inaccuracies are obviated by the simple effects of transposing, expunging, and the addition of a few lines.--Necessary innovations! when introduced by the acquisition of such splendid Advantages. We have now to boast, that this brilliant Creation of the Poet's Fancy is purged from the Vapours and Clouds which obscured it; and like his own Firmament, it appears to be finely fretted with Golden Stars.[19]

Only gradually did a few grumbles come to be heard above the gushing notes of praise--dissenting voices that especially cried out for the reinstatement of the gravediggers. That they were missed is inadvertently revealed in the somewhat defensive comments of George Steevens (Garrick's advisor concerning the alteration), who sarcastically expressed amazement at the fact that, "notwithstanding the universal applause which distinguished the alteration of Hamlet in three several representations, . . . a number of judicious critics are determined on the next exhibition to testify their discontent, and in particular to call for the Grave-diggers' scene, about which so much has been said in the news-papers."[20] Georg Lichtenberg, who had previously been such an admirer of Garrick, was one of those who now felt he had gone too far. In the actor's omission of the gravediggers, Lichtenberg wrote, "Voltaire has . . . gained one victory at Drury Lane," and noting that the "Clowns" were still to be seen at Covent Garden, he concluded, "Garrick should not have done this."[21] Finally, in

his parody of Hamlet's first meeting with the Ghost in Act I, Arthur Murphy also took exception to the removal of the gravediggers, his Ghost of Shakespeare agreeing with Lichtenberg that "so the ear of Europe / Is by the forged process of a Frenchman / Rankly abus'd":

> . . . on my scenes, by ages sanctified,
> In evil hour thy restless spirit stole,
> With juice of cursed nonsense in an inkhorn,
> And o'er my fair applauded page did pour
> A Manager's distilment . . . .
> . . . . . .
> Thus was I, ev'n by thy unhallow'd hand,
> Of both my grave-diggers at once dispatch'd,
> Cut off in the luxuriance of my wit,
> Unstudied, undigested, and bemawl'd:
> No critic ask'd,--but brought upon the stage
> With all your imperfections on my head!
>
> Garrick. O, horrible! O, horrible, most horrible![22]

In fact, Garrick himself worried that the changes might not succeed ("It was the most imprudent thing I ever did in my life") and later seemed genuinely surprised at the acclaim: "The alteration was received with general approbation, beyond my most warm expectations."[23] Although never produced at Covent Garden, the 1772 Hamlet held the stage at Drury Lane until John Bannister, Jr. returned to Garrick's first version on 21 April 1780. In the period between 1772 and 1780, the alteration was performed thirty-seven times, eleven more than was Garrick's usual Hamlet in the preceding eight years.[24]

KEMBLE 1804

The last acting text here studied is a personally marked script of Hamlet that John Philip Kemble used for rehearsal. Based on his own 1804 edition of the play (one of the seven different texts he sold at the theatres between 1796 and 1814), Kemble's notations leave the text almost unchanged.[25]

Burdened with chronic asthma, which he described as "drawing on [one's] own chest and finding the cheque dishonoured," Kemble took longer in Hamlet than any other actor before or since (Richard Sheridan once suggested they play music between his pauses). This affliction and its accompanying lack of energy for the role might explain his greater cutting at the end, for it almost seems as if Kemble hurries towards a conclusion. The most detailed in terms of listing costumes, properties, lighting cues, and act-timings (a total of three hours and eighteen minutes), the 1804 text reveals that Kemble was also the first to conscientiously restore much of Shakespeare's language. When his friend John Taylor suggested further changes be made for a new production of Hamlet, Kemble is said to have told him, "Now, Taylor, I have copied the part of Hamlet forty times, and you have obliged me to consider and copy it once more." As his biographer, James Boaden, put it: "To be critically exact was the great ambition of his life."[26] Thus Hamlet in 1804 again wears an "inky cloak" rather than the "mourning suit" suggested in Davenant 1676; his first words after meeting the Ghost are "whirling" and no longer just "windy"; and "flights" of angels--not "choirs"--sing

him to his rest. Such restorations, however, were often the subject of great debate among a public that had helped preserve the Hamlet tradition in stone. The Public Advertiser (7 October 1783) complained that Kemble's restoration of "dearest" for "direst foe"--though "justified by the best copies"--was done "on principles too remote for a public audience"; and an anonymous author in 1789 wrote that Kemble's focus on Horatio in the pointed "Did you not speak to it?" "hath occasioned as great dispute in the dramatic, as Mr. Fox's India Bill . . . hath in the political world."[27]

Despite the controversial "new readings," Kemble's version of Hamlet gradually became the model for all others until the time of Irving, as Edmund Kean, William Macready, and Charles Kean followed him almost word for word. A bridge between the two centuries represented by David Garrick on the one hand and Edmund Kean on the other, Kemble nevertheless resembled neither, preferring to ignore their volatile, athletic interpretations in favour of a restrained and classical sort of Hamlet.

B. COLLATION OF TEXTS

ACT ONE

Our first sight of Hamlet is significant, for, in marked contrast to the stubbornly inconsolable prince of the original play, Hamlet on stage in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is not introduced as being grief-stricken. On the subject of his mourning, all of the texts prior to Kemble's omit Hamlet's four lines on "customary suits . . . . / . . . . haviour of the visage" (I.ii. 78-81),[28] and not even Kemble 1804, which restores but strangely reverses the order of two of those lines (to read "Nor the dejected haviour of the visage, / No, nor the fruitful river in the eye") restores them all. In his long reiteration of Hamlet's "dejected haviour," Shakespeare had subtly stressed Hamlet's outward despair even as Hamlet himself urged a deeper understanding. The many stage versions simplify this by denying Hamlet the outward appearance of grief--partly, perhaps, because such "windy suspiration" would have been considered "unmanly," as Claudius says (I.ii.94), and partly because this Hamlet must in no way seem paralyzed by a sense of loss. Later, but in conjunction with this view of a Hamlet who must not appear depressed, Davenant 1676 and Wilks 1751 contain a single revealing cut: namely, Hamlet's admission to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern that he suffers from a "heav[y] disposition" (II.ii.305b-306a); and still later, Smock Alley, Wilks 1751, and Garrick 1763 cut Claudius' conjecture

that "There's something in his soul / O'er which his melancholy sits on brood" (III.i.167b-168).

Also noteworthy in this scene is the fact that all of the texts cut I.ii.96-106a, in which Claudius harshly berates Hamlet for refusing to accept the natural inevitability of a father's death. Perhaps a society that admired Hamlet precisely for this devotion beyond the grave did not feel he deserved condemnation from a character such as Claudius. The adapters then further strip Claudius of seven lines towards the end of this speech, thereby eliminating his profession of love for Hamlet and his request that the latter not go to Wittenberg (I.ii.110-116). In every version, only the Queen asks Hamlet to remain at court.

Hamlet's first soliloquy is identical in all of the theatrical versions in one respect at least: they agree on the necessity for cutting Hamlet's criticism of Gertrude ("a beast that wants discourse of reason / Would have mourned longer") and for cutting his four lines on the unseemly speed with which his mother had slipped between "incestuous sheets" (I.ii.153b-157). On the other hand, they differ from one another in their variations on Shakespeare's language, with many taking their cue from Davenant, whose penchant was always for a simpler and more modern word order. Indeed, this passage allows one to see evidence of Kemble's reputation for restoring the readings of especially the First Folio. The reference to "self-murder," for example, found in Wilks 1751 and Garrick 1763, is dropped in exchange for the original "self-slaughter"; Davenant's "he permitted not the winds of heaven"--which was spoken on stage for over a hundred years--is

restored to "he might not beteem"; and the oaths "O God! God!" and the more innocuous "Heaven and earth, / Must I remember?" bravely reappear in Kemble's production.[29]

We next see Hamlet in Act I, scene iv, the beginning of which has always been fraught with tension as audiences in effect wait with Hamlet for the Ghost to reappear. According to Lichtenberg, eighteenth-century spectators were no exception. Here he describes the charged atmosphere that prevailed as Garrick opened the scene in 1775:

> Hamlet has folded his arms under his cloak and pulled his hat down over his eyes; it is a cold night and just twelve o'clock; the theatre is darkened, and the whole audience of some thousands are as quiet, and their faces as motionless, as though they were painted on the walls of the theatre; . . . one could hear a pin drop.

How different this tensely quiet, pent up prince is from that of Kemble, who, following the stage direction in his text, nervously "paces backwards & forwards" (Kemble 1804, p. 16)! The novelty of Garrick's covering his face and remaining perfectly still goes almost unnoticed until one discovers that most actors played the scene as Kemble does. Frederick Pilon, in his Essay on Hamlet as Performed by Mr. Henderson (1777), describes the nervous pacing of that actor, and the Monthly Mirror in 1795 chides Cooper, the new Hamlet at Covent Garden, for "peep[ing] about, as if appalled at his own shadow." The writer in the Mirror goes on to say that "It has been usual with performers in this scene to walk to and fro"

because "everybody knows, that the strongest symptom of a man's being agitated, is LOCOMOTION."[30]

Yet the tension felt by Hamlet and the audience is short-lived. Hamlet's lengthy speech on drunkenness and "the stamp of one defect" (I.iv.17-38), which had neatly served in the original to prolong the expectation of the audience, is cut in all of the texts, thus bringing the Ghost on prematurely. Perhaps in imitation of F_1 (where Harold Jenkins says it was "cut as being 'undramatic'"), the passage consistently lost twenty-two of its twenty-six lines when staged according to the dictates of the actor-managers.[31]

Most interesting of all, however, is the cut in Davenant 1676 of I.iv.40-51a ("Angels and ministers of grace defend us!"), in which Hamlet first greets the Ghost. While probably motivated by worry that a dutiful son such as Hamlet could even consider his father's representative a "goblin damned," bringing with him "blasts from hell," Davenant's excision also resulted in the loss of what was to become a key-note for future Hamlets: that is, the degree of awe, fear, and filial respect with which the line "I'll call thee Hamlet, / King, father, royal Dane" was uttered. Strangely enough, this is one time (the omission of the Dumb Show is another) when Smock Alley declares its independence of Davenant 1676, despite the proximity of their production dates. It retains the entire address to the Ghost, thus anticipating the Hughs-Wilks text (which is today still commonly considered the first to restore those lines) by almost half a decade.

And the remaining theatre texts unanimously keep the passage because it provided their Hamlets an opportunity for showing off. Of Betterton, for example, we know that he

> open'd with a Pause of mute Amazement! then rising slowly, to a solemn, trembling Voice, he made the Ghost equally terrible to the Spectator, as to himself! . . . the boldness of his Expostulation was still govern'd by Decency, manly, but not braving; his voice never rising into the seeming Outrage, or wild Defiance of what he naturally rever'd.

Wilks, on the other hand, is criticized by the same writer, Colley Cibber, for reacting "with a straining Vociferation requisite to express Rage and Fury"; and still later, Kemble, true to form, struck an "elegant attitude" that allowed him to reserve his breath for the long speeches ahead.[32] However, Garrick's delivery of these lines was probably most remembered and discussed. According to Lichtenberg, he would first "stagger back two or three paces with his knees giving way under him"; his hat would then conveniently fall to the ground, disordering his hair so that it seemed to stand on end; and finally--"at the end of a breath, with a trembling voice"--he would begin. While most spectators agreed with Lichtenberg that it was "one of the greatest and most terrible [scenes] . . . ever played on any stage," a few, along with Dr. Johnson, were not impressed. The Theatrical Examiner (1757) felt that "The start at the ghost . . . may be picturesque, but it is grossly absurd to see a man fling himself into so exact an attitude, which is impossible for him to remain steady in, without two supporters"; and in 1772, George Steevens' complaint

was still: "why will not the Actor speak Angels and Ministers! &c. upon the immediate Entrance of the Ghost?"[33]

Garrick 1763 is the only text to omit the first mention of revenge in Hamlet--specifically, at the start of Act I, scene iv, when the Ghost and Hamlet are finally alone. Perhaps because it might have reminded an audience of Hamlet's slowness in later fulfilling the Ghost's command, the following has been prudently altered:

> GHOST. Pity me not, but lend thy serious hearing
> To what I shall unfold.
>
> HAMLET. Speak. I am bound to hear.
>
> GHOST. So art thou to revenge, when thou shalt hear.
>
> HAMLET. What?
>
> (I.v.5-8)

In Garrick 1763, the exchange is curiously flat in comparison:

> GHOST. Pity me not, but lend thy serious hearing
> To what I shall unfold.
>
> HAM. What?
>
> (Garrick 1763, p. 20)

Similarly, all of the promptbooks and theatre editions except Garrick 1772 cut the Ghost's damning statement to Hamlet that

> duller shouldst thou be than the fat weed
> That roots itself in ease on Lethe wharf,

Wouldst thou not stir in this.

(I.v.32-34a)

As a result, Hamlet's suitability for the deed is stressed, not questioned. The texts unanimously choose to omit the incriminating three lines and are left with only:

HAMLET. Haste me to know't, that I, with wings as swift
As meditation or the thoughts of love,
May sweep to my revenge.

GHOST. I find thee apt,
Now, Hamlet, hear.

(I.v.31b-34)

From Davenant in 1676 until Charles Kean in 1859, the Ghost simply finds Hamlet "apt." Only Garrick 1772, which had taken great pains to show that Hamlet would "stir in this," departs from what had become the tradition. The reference to "dullness"--which hardly describes Garrick's fierce avenger--is considered no risk in 1772, and is retained.

Garrick 1772 is again unique in allowing in its entirety I.v.42-91, the Ghost's fifty-line description to Hamlet of how he was murdered. Perhaps because what remained was always "spoken without action, very low and solemn,"[34] and thus threatened to bore an audience, the other texts routinely cut the lines on Claudius' "wicked wit and gifts," the five lines on virtue, lust, and garbage (I.v.53-57), and, to varying degrees, the lines describing the senior Hamlet's reaction to the poison (I.v.69-73). In addition, all productions before Garrick's in 1763 (v. Garrick

1763) cut the Ghost's line beginning, "O horrible!" From Garrick 1763 on, it is not only retained but given to Hamlet--a combined result, no doubt, of Garrick's influence on stage tradition, and Johnson's on subsequent critics. The latter had agreed that "this line seems to belong to Hamlet, in whose mouth it is a proper and natural exclamation; and who, according to the practice of the stage, may be supposed to interrupt so long a speech."[35]

Following the Ghost's exit, all of the theatre texts move quickly towards the conclusion of Act I. They unanimously cut Hamlet's sudden and seemingly disrespectful doubt: "O all you host of heaven! O earth! What else? / And shall I couple hell? O fie!" Similarly, there is Lichtenberg's complaint that Garrick, in his 1772 production, read "one may smile, and smile, and be a villain" as if he were that villain--that is, "with an expression and tone of petty mockery." The German traveller was "gratified and charmed," however, to find that Garrick at a later date revised this, "declaim[ing] the same words in a manner entirely in accord with my own sentiments, namely, in the purposeful tone of one bent on immediate action."[36] Finally, the eight lines (I.v.105-112) in which Hamlet becomes almost too carried away with his new-found resolve are cut from Kemble 1804 on. Well into the nineteenth century, Hamlet does not scribble or curse or in other ways lose control.

Of Hamlet's request that the men swear upon his sword, and of the audible proof of the Ghost's ability to "work i' th' earth so fast," the two earliest texts, Davenant 1676 and Wilks 1751, retain the most. All of the others, including Garrick 1772 (which

here departs from its 1747 base-text), reduce the Ghost's three commands that Horatio and Marcellus swear to only one, and also cut the fourteen lines in which Hamlet irreverently refers to the Ghost as "old truepenny," "this fellow in the cellarage," an "old mole," and "A worthy pioner" (I.v.150-163). For almost half a century, the scene is consistently stripped, on stage, of those elements that made it seem most disturbing--namely, the threefold repetition of the oath, the subterranean swearing, and the conjurational quality of the Latin "Hic et Ubique." As a result, Horatio's exclamation that "this is wondrous strange" strikes one as almost an over-reaction in these abbreviated versions. So far at least, the Ghost has hardly seemed diabolical, and Hamlet comes across as a man more impatient than semi-hysterical.

ACT TWO

Although it is designated the beginning of Act III in his alteration (his Act II had begun at I.iii.), Garrick 1772 is the only one to retain, without a single cut, all of Act II, scene i. All of the other stage productions from 1676 to 1804 cut the Polonius-Reynaldo exchange in its entirety, with Smock Alley and Ward A and B most explicit in their marginal reminders, at II.i.74, that "Act 2d. Begins / Here" (Smock Alley, p. 737). These same texts then shorten and rewrite the end of the scene, wherein Ophelia recounts to her father the state in which Hamlet came to see her. In Davenant 1676, Wilks 1751, and Garrick 1763 and 1772, Ophelia describes herself as having been reading--not

sewing--in her closet when Hamlet arrived (the Smock Alley Ophelia merely "sit[s]");[37] and, according to her, Hamlet's stockings had not been "fouled" but were only "loose." Her description of Hamlet's appearance may be seen in the frontispiece to Rowe's 1709 edition, which shows Betterton with his right stocking fallen to his calf; however, this symbolic slovenliness quickly became cliched, as evidenced in the complaint in 1754 that the actors were "afraid we should lose sight of Hamlet's pretended madness, if the black stocking, discovering the white one underneath, was not rolled half-way down the leg."[38] By 1804, Kemble was above using such tricks but did allow his powdered hair to "flow dishevelled in front and over the shoulders in these scenes of feigned distraction."[39] He also again permitted Ophelia her sewing and Hamlet his befouled stockings--the latter of which Edmund Kean quickly omitted a short time later. Garrick 1763 and Kemble 1804 then cut the description of Hamlet's "look so piteous in purport, / As if he had been loosed out of hell / To speak of horrors" (II.i.82-84a)--a cut entirely in keeping with the excision in the same texts of those lines associating the Ghost with the devil in I.v. Having eliminated the vulgar and the filially disrespectful elements of the scene, the theatre editions leave Ophelia with only an "exceeding pretty" description of Hamlet's behaviour (Garrick 1763, p. 26).

Act II, scene ii opens with the King's request that Rosencrantz and Guildenstern discover the cause of Hamlet's "transformation," and it is perhaps significant that virtually all of the texts cut the definition of what Claudius meant by that

term: "Sith nor th' exterior nor the inward man / Resembles that it was" (II.ii.6-7a). Indeed, two of these same stage versions--Wilks 1751 and Garrick 1763--go so far as to eliminate the King's suggestion that Hamlet is removed "So much from th' understanding of himself"--a cut that ties in with the adapters' view that Hamlet's madness is merely assumed (II.ii.9).

In addition, all of the theatre texts except that of Garrick 1772 consciously widen the moral gap that Shakespeare draws, in this opening speech, between such men as the two sycophants and Hamlet. As a result, perhaps partly as a means of dissociating Hamlet from their unscrupulous behaviour, and partly as a means by which their death at the end of the play will not reflect badly on him (he therefore does not conspire to kill lifelong friends), the lines that describe Rosencrantz and Guildenstern as "being of so young days brought up with him, / And sith so neighboured to his youth and haviour" (II.ii.11-12) are omitted. (Davenant 1676 retains the first line, marking the second). Later, it will become evident that Garrick 1772 did not need to worry about these lines: Rosencrantz and Guildenstern do not suffer the same fate in that text as they do in Shakespeare's.

All of the stage versions of Hamlet omit precisely the same lines from the middle of Act II, scene ii: namely, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern's contention that they are "Fortune's privates" (ll. 230-239a); Hamlet's belief that "Denmark's a prison," and that therefore he has "bad dreams" and is "dreadfully attended" (ll.243-276); and the passage concerning the boy actors (ll. 345-370). In addition, as mentioned briefly in the description of

Act I above, Davenant 1676 and Wilks 1751 mark for omission Hamlet's statement that "it goes . . . heavily with my disposition" (II.ii.305-306). This, however, is restored in all subsequent versions, with an eighteenth-century hand in Smock Alley even correcting the Third Folio's incongruous "heavenly," reproduced in its text (Smock Alley, p. 740). Apparently Kemble so worried audiences with his calm demeanour in this first meeting with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern that, as one observer wrote, one "could not help feeling some degree of fear lest those gentlemen should discover the madness of their young Prince to be merely assumed."[40]

Shortly after Polonius' second entrance, Hamlet is greeted by the newly-arrived actors. Not surprisingly, the most sanguinary lines (ll.465-474) in Hamlet's cue to the Player are unanimously cut in the theatre texts, and the Player's recitation of lines 486-492 (on Pyrrhus' temporary pause before killing Priam), lines 504b-508 (the apostrophe to "All you gods"), and lines 523-529 (on Hecuba's "clamor") are missing as well. The adapters seem to have agreed with Dryden that the language of the five-line passage beginning "Out, out, thou strumpet Fortune" "smell[ed] a little too strongly of the buskin."[41] Yet Gentleman's comment in Garrick 1763 hints that the many critics who condemned the language as bombastic might have been reacting to the way in which the retained passages on Pyrrhus were delivered on stage. Gentleman first praises the "great force in this description" and then goes on to say that "though the play exhibited by these itinerants, is certainly a mock tragedy, we cannot think the above speech any way

burlesque, though bad speakers often make it such, by vile utterance" (Garrick 1763, p. 35).

One of the most startling changes to Shakespeare's choice of words occurs in the first line of Hamlet's second soliloquy (II.ii.560). Instead of "O what a rogue and peasant slave am I!" all of the eighteenth-century editions significantly read "wretch" for "rogue," and Wilks 1751 in addition substitutes "pleasant" for "peasant." The final result in the latter is the very different "O what a wretch and pleasant slave am I." A motive for the first substitution may perhaps be hinted at in Johnson's definition of the word in his notes to Othello. Commenting on the line, "Excellent wretch! Perdition catch thy soul / But I do love thee," he writes: "The meaning of the word wretch is not generally understood. It is now, in some parts of England, a term of the softest and fondest tenderness. It expresses the utmost degree of amiableness, joined with an idea which perhaps all tenderness includes, of feebleness, softness, and want of protection. . . . It may be expressed, Dear, harmless, helpless Excellence."[42] Earlier, the Queen had announced Hamlet's entrance by saying, "But look where sadly the poor wretch comes reading" (II.ii.168); and towards the end of the play, the drowned Ophelia is described as a "poor wretch [Pulled] . . . / To muddy death" (IV.vii.182). In these instances, and in the revised soliloquy, the choice of the word "wretch" invites us to feel sympathy, not reprehension (as with "rogue"), for the characters. In addition, "pleasant" in Wilks 1751 might possibly have been interpreted as a misprint were it not for the fact that Garrick 1772, usually quite scrupulous

about restoring Shakespeare's words at the beginning of the play, also allows it and the word "wretch" to remain uncorrected, as though agreeing with the more favourable connotation of the line as rewritten.

It is worth noting that Kemble 1804 avoids the issue completely. Seemingly determined not to let Hamlet's self-condemnation poison an audience's conception of him, Kemble chooses to cut forty lines rather than, as is his usual custom, restore Shakespeare's words and risk making Hamlet appear a knave. His edition omits the first two-thirds of the soliloquy, beginning it very late, at II.ii.601 ("I have heard that guilty creatures"), which Hamlet now says immediately after the First Player's exit. In Kemble's conception of the character, there is no room for Hamlet's "cleav[ing] the general ear with horrid speech," for admissions of cowardice, or comparisons of himself to a whore. Kemble's is a short soliloquy, only the lines at the end having been approved en masse.

On the other hand, there are the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century texts, which are more revealing for carefully seeming to consider and select each line of the soliloquy on its own merits, retaining one, then discarding the next, and so on. For example, only in the two earliest stage versions--Davenant 1676 and Smock Alley--is Hamlet's reference to "drown[ing] the stage with tears" marked for omission; yet all four texts--Davenant 1676, Wilks 1751, and Garrick 1763 and 1772--agree that Hamlet's vehement statements about "Mak[ing] mad the guilty" and "fat[ting] all the region kites / With this slave's offal" are

worth keeping. Indeed, the only deletions in this passage that are common to all of the editions, including Kemble's, concern Hamlet's self-recriminations. It is not difficult to imagine what the adapters must have thought of them. While the different versions retain the lines in which Hamlet plots strategy and actively vows revenge, sections II.ii.577-587 ("Yet I, / . . . . I should take it") and II.ii.591b-600 ("Bloody, bawdy villain! / . . . . Hum--") are apparently cut in the same texts as being too self-critical. The lines significantly omitted refer to Hamlet's dullness, his cowardice, and his inaction. Not surprisingly, the editions also excise Hamlet's swearing and his references to himself as an ass, a whore, a "drab," and a "stallion." In all of the promptbooks, and in Davenant 1676, Wilks 1751, and Garrick 1772, no mention is made of Hamlet's "weakness" and "melancholy," nor is it suggested that he might be damned.

As a result of these changes, audiences in the latter half of the seventeenth century, and all of the eighteenth, would have heard a Hamlet very different from the original. Significantly, not until Charles Kean's acting text of 1859 was the soliloquy presented uncut--and by that time, the scholarly perception of Hamlet as weak, procrastinatory, and overly sensitive had become the norm. In contrast, Betterton recited an angry soliloquy that remained popular for almost one and a half centuries, and that was repeated essentially unchanged by Wilks, Garrick, and (partly) Kemble:

what wouldhe [sic] do
Had he the motive, and that for passion

That I have? he would
Make mad the guilty and appeal [sic] the free;
But I am pigeon liver'd, and lack gall
To make oppression bitter, or e're this
I should have fatted all the region Kites
With this slaves offal:
hum, I have heard
That guilty creatures sitting at a Play
Have by the very cunning of the Scene
Been strook so to the soul, that presently
They have proclaim'd their malefactions:
For murther though it have no tongue will speak
I'll have these Players
Play something like the murther of my father
Before mine Uncle: I'll observe his looks,
The spirit that I have seen
May be a Devil, and the Devil hath power
T assume a pleasing shape,
I'll have grounds
More relative than this, the Play's the thing
Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the King.
(Davenant 1676, pp. 35-6; II.ii.570b-617)

It is interesting to note not only the lack of verbal self-abuse but the speed with which this Hamlet now arrives at his plan of action. The rapid reiteration of first-person verbs--"I should have fatted," "I have heard," "I'll have these Players play," "I'll observe his looks," "I'll have grounds," "I'll catch"--all suggest a confident, vitally active and quick-thinking hero rather than Shakespeare's "John-a-dreams," cursing and crying plaintively, "am I a coward?"

That the soliloquy was always, on stage at least, seen as an opportunity for Hamlet to finally vent his anger and not just his self-disgust can be seen in the theatrical (as opposed to the scholarly) critics' praise of those actors who were most vehement in the role. Kemble, we learn, was partial to "ranting and stamping the foot" on the line, "I'll have grounds / More relative than this" (II.ii.615b-616a); and Frederick Pilon extolls Garrick

for "the great exertion of [his] voice" and his "impassioned" reading of the speech. This "Rant" was again admired in the later Dramatic Miscellanies of Thomas Davies, who approved of the "passionate ebullition" with which Garrick had played the scene. Davies remembered that the retained lines had been "strongly pointed, and blended with marks of contemptuous indignation."[43] While aware of his failings, this Hamlet had not been overwhelmed by them.

Even more interesting, however, is Davies' revelation that Garrick did sometimes keep II.ii.592-600 ("Remorseless . . . . / . . . . Hum!"), for he says that not until Garrick "closed his strong paintings with the epithet, kindless villain!" did "a tear of anguish [give] a most pathetic softness" to the entire scene.[44] The lines are blocked off for cutting in Garrick 1772 and are retained in only one text--surprisingly, the related Hopkins 1777; Francis Gentleman, however, refuses to budge in his disapproval of them. He unwillingly prints the passage (further proof that Garrick at least sometimes spoke it) but marks it for omission with inverted commas--a rare occurrence by that time. At the bottom of the page, Gentleman will only remark, darkly, that the speech "is full long enough without them" (Garrick 1763, p. 37).

ACT THREE

Act III, scene i, which is the start of Act IV in Garrick 1772, begins with an excision common to all of the remaining texts: that is, Claudius' description to Rosencrantz and

Guildenstern of a Hamlet who, by this time, appears to be "Grating so harshly all his days of quiet / With turbulent and dangerous lunacy" (III.i.3-4). Such an omission may indicate a tendency, especially prevalent in productions of the play prior to the nineteenth century, to see Hamlet as essentially sane; for, as previously mentioned at the start of our discussion of Act II, scene ii above, many of these same texts endeavour to erase the image of Hamlet as one who has been put "So much from th' understanding of himself" (II.ii.9) that he appears deranged. Ward A and B, Wilks 1751, and Garrick 1763 go even further, not only cutting the reference to "dangerous lunacy" mentioned above, but also cutting Guildenstern's four-line report to Claudius on the "crafty madness" that has made Hamlet so secretive to his friend (III.i.7-10).

Following the exit of the two spies, Polonius and the King prepare to hide as Ophelia, who does not "Read on [any] book" in Davenant 1676, Wilks 1751, and Garrick 1763, is set loose to entrap Hamlet. Hamlet then enters with "To be or not to be," which predictably (Lichtenberg relates that audiences were as familiar with it as with the Lord's Prayer) remains almost unchanged in all of the texts.[45] Only Kemble 1804 shows evidence of what may have been a later decision to cut, for beside lines 71-72 ("Th' oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely, / The pangs of despis'd love, the law's delay") is the curious notation, in a penciled hand, 24 X X | . Perhaps Kemble agreed with Dr. Johnson that Hamlet has here "for[gotten] . . . that he is a

prince, and mentions many evils to which inferior stations only are exposed."[46]

What appears to be a belated excision is even more interesting for being repeated in the so-called Nunnery Scene immediately after. For while the other texts make almost no changes to the dialogue between Hamlet and Ophelia, the following lines are blocked off in Kemble 1804 and have, even more faintly, the same inscription as is found at III.i.71-72:

> I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious; with more offences at my beck, than I have thoughts to put them in, imagination to give them shape, or time to act them in:
>
> (Kemble 1804, p. 39; III.i.124-128)

Although as a result of the actors' deletions the theatrical Hamlet would always be more resolute than the Hamlet of the study, these markings suggest that in later years--sometime after the eighteenth century--a modification of the usual perception of Hamlet in the theatre was taking place. If they indeed indicate an excision, the markings are significant in their being the only instance in our texts of an actor altering the language in order that Hamlet not appear either proud, revengeful, or ambitious.

Furthermore, the Nunnery Scene became fertile ground upon which the actors could test the validity of their views concerning Hamlet's madness or sanity, his true feelings for Ophelia, and his sensitivity or the lack of it. On the eighteenth-century stage, for example, Hamlet seems always to have been depicted as sane, and his apparent cruelty towards Ophelia was attributed to the

necessity of his maintaining a facade. Were he to have revealed himself to Ophelia (so the argument went), Polonius and Claudius would have become aware of his plan and he would have lost the advantage of surprise. Francis Gentleman typifies this approach when he states that "The conversation between Hamlet and Ophelia is finely imagined to puzzle the spies who watch his words and actions; and though it exhibits madness, yet as Polonius remarks of a former scene--there is method in it."[47] Describing Garrick and Henderson in the role, Frederick Pilon explains away the brutality when, in 1777, he records that Hamlet at first speaks to Ophelia with "gentleness and delicacy," but, suddenly having remembered his adopted role, "starts wildly from the point, and under shelter of frenzy, vents the keenest satyr against the sex in general." Samuel Johnson also represents the standard eighteenth-century point of view when he says that "Hamlet, at the sight of Ophelia, does not immediately recollect that he is to personate madness, but makes her an address grave and solemn, such as the foregoing meditation ["To be or not to be"] excited in his thoughts."[48]

Given this opportunity for showing Hamlet's madness to be merely assumed, however, the actors in their zeal often overdid it. That Garrick was probably single-handedly responsible for stressing Hamlet's cruelty is evident in Thomas Holcroft's complaint in 1805 that, even in the case of the considerably more staid Kemble,

> The feelings of Hamlet are generally outraged by the actor: he appears to persecute, nay to bully

> Ophelia. . . . I cannot conceive how this mistake, which now seems as if it were traditional, could get possession of the stage: perhaps it originated in the strong feelings which Mr. Garrick threw into the scene.[49]

Garrick was criticized for his boisterousness by Thomas Davies, who compared him unfavourably to Spranger Barry (Barry was "not so violent") and to Robert Wilks, who "retained enough of disguised madness; but, at the same time, preserved the feelings of a lover and the delicacy of a gentleman."[50] George Steevens, writing as "Hic et Ubique" in the St. James's Chronicle of 1772 (and before Garrick's revised Hamlet appeared later that year), also advised the actor not to be "too rough with her--She has done nothing to deserve it, and it is the best Distinction of feigned from true Madness that [Hamlet] would choose from his Feelings to support it with as little Outrage as possible. . . ."[51]

Of course, further into the nineteenth century, and with the rise of a more subjective criticism, such onstage "bullying" came to be considered less a symptom of Hamlet's assumed madness and more either a reflection of real insanity (as Charles Kemble played the scene), or a self-protective screen hiding Hamlet's genuine love and pity for Ophelia. In a gesture that epitomizes the great difference between the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Hamlets of the theatre, Edmund Kean was shortly after to electrify audiences with his farewell kiss of Ophelia's hand--a gesture Hazlitt considered "the finest commentary ever made on Shakespeare."[52]

Following as it does Hamlet's exit, Ophelia's soliloquy beginning "O what a noble mind is here o'erthrown" is left almost unchanged in the theatre editions, although, interestingly, her description of "That unmatched form and feature of blown youth / Blasted with ecstasy" (III.i.162-163a) is cut in all but Davenant 1676 and Garrick 1772. This ties in with the general tendency of Wilks 1751, Garrick 1763, and Kemble 1804 to avoid any suggestion of real madness in Hamlet--indeed, Ward A and Garrick 1763 go further and additionally omit the subsequent references to "melancholy" (III.i.167b-172a) and to "This something-settled matter in his heart, / Whereon his brains still beating puts him thus / From fashion of himself" (III.i.176-178a).

Following this, none of the stage versions indicates a scene division at Act III, scene ii--in fact, Act III in the original is one very long Act IV in Garrick 1772, with no demarcation into separate scenes. Only Davenant 1676 marks for omission all of Hamlet's speech to the Players (reduced to a si gle "First Actor" in Kemble 1804), and again it is interesting that Smock Alley, while contemporaneous with Davenant 1676, chooses independently to retain the passage unaltered. Later, of course, the advice to the Players was, along with the earlier address to the Ghost ("Angels and ministers of grace defend us"), restored in all texts subsequent to the Hughs-Wilks Hamlet of 1718.

In addition to the rather unexpected nonconformity of its allowing the advice to the Players, Smock Alley again departs from Davenant 1676 in permitting all of Hamlet's tribute to Horatio, which is otherwise surprisingly shortened in every edition except

Kemble 1804. The three lines on the "candied tongue lick[ing] absurd pomp" (III.ii.62-64), and, more importantly (since they provide a perhaps too-flattering portrait of a foil to Hamlet), the five lines describing Horatio as "A man that Fortune's buffets and rewards / Hast ta'en with equal thanks" (III.ii.69-73a) are cut in Davenant 1676, Wilks 1751, and Garrick 1772 and 1763--although as Francis Gentleman admits, "It is cruel to leave out" the former (Garrick 1763, p. 44).[53] These same texts then excise Hamlet's admission to Horatio that his "imaginations are as foul / As Vulcan's stithy" (III.ii.85-86a), and Garrick 1772 goes still further by cutting the suggestion that "If [Claudius'] occulted guilt / Do not itself unkennel in one speech, / It is a damned ghost that we have seen" (III.ii.82b-84).

The Danish court next enters in anticipation of the play, and Hamlet's double entendres to Ophelia before The Mousetrap begins (III.ii.116-127, 138-40) are unanimously omitted in the theatre texts--although, within that passage, Davenant 1676, Wilks 1751, and Garrick 1772 permit the more oblique reference to "country matters" (line 119), and all of the versions retain Ophelia's innocuous "You are merry, my lord" (line 125). At his debut in 1783, Kemble scandalized audiences by reciting the more objectionable lines while "lolling on Ophelia's lap," and a writer in the London Chronicle expressed his relief when the actor wisely modified his performance the following night: "Oh, how glad I am to see that they have now left out that shocking indecency, when Hamlet talks to Ophelia about country matters!"[54]

The Dumb Show in Hamlet was then, as now, almost always cut in production--first, because it no doubt seemed a time-consuming reiteration of what was immediately and more explicitly to follow; and second, because, as John Dover Wilson has pointed out, there is the problem of why the King does not react.[55] Thus in all of the promptbooks and almost all of the editions, there is no Dumb Show--only Davenant 1676 allows it to remain.[56] For this reason, Ophelia's specific allusion to it ("What means this, my lord?") is replaced, in all of those texts, with the more general "What means the play?" and her original reference to "this show" (III.ii.145) is similarly replaced by a newly-written line, "But what's the Argument?"

Concerning The Mousetrap itself, most of the texts seem to have agreed with Thomas Hanmer that it is written in "wretched verse."[57] Garrick 1772 is unique in retaining all of the lines originally marked for omission in his 1747 base-text, and the remaining editions cut III.ii.161-163 (on "thirty dozen moons," etc.), III.ii.173-174 ("And women's fear and love hold quantity, / In neither aught, or in extremity"), and III.ii.188-191--although Davenant 1676 cuts only the last two lines: "A second time I kill my husband dead / When second husband kisses me in bed." In addition, most of the Player King's speech beginning "Purpose is but the slave to memory" (III.ii.194-219) is "properly much shortened" (Garrick 1763, p. 47) by all but Garrick 1772, which retains it in its entirety, and by Davenant 1676, which cuts only III.ii.202-205, 210-219, or fourteen of the thirty lines. Thus Wilks 1751 reduces the Player-King's speech to its first and last

two lines and cuts twenty-six lines, retaining only III.ii.192-193, 220-221; and Garrick 1763 and Kemble 1804 cut the same, restoring only a single couplet, "What to ourselves in passion we propose, / The passion ending, doth the purpose lose" (III.ii.221-222). Somewhat inexplicably, the different stage versions then unanimously excise Hamlet's "What, frighted with false fire?" after he sees the effect the play has had on Claudius; and, more significantly, the five editions omit Hamlet's manic reaction after all but Horatio have left (III.ii.281-291, 299-301)--perhaps agreeing with the latter that Hamlet "might have rhymed." In the 1774 reprint of Garrick's early version, Francis Gentleman seems once again to speak for the rest. He says of the four-line verse he does allow to remain ("Why, let the strucken deer go weep," etc.): "We think Hamlet's expression, upon the full conviction of his uncle, much too light and inadequate" (Garrick 1763, p. 49).

Finally, all of the stage versions agree that the last three lines in the scene (III.ii.405-407) should be omitted--although, significantly, all retain Hamlet's final violent resolution to "drink hot blood." They then end with Hamlet's vow to "speak daggers to [Gertrude], but use none."

Act III, scene iii is left virtually untouched in Garrick 1772; at the other extreme, there is Kemble 1804, in which it almost entirely disappears. Seeming to use the Hughs-Wilks reprints as models, Garrick 1763 and Kemble 1804 begin by omitting Claudius' worry that "The Terms of our Estate may not endure / Hazards so near us, as do hourly grow / Out of [Hamlet's] Lunacies

[sic]" (Wilks 1751, p. 55). The result is that we lose another of the many suggestions put forward by other characters that Hamlet might really be mad.

More importantly, Claudius' attempt at prayer and Hamlet's subsequent opportunity for finally carrying out the Ghost's command are both completely eliminated by 1804 and remained so until the time of Irving. The King, in Kemble 1804, exits along with Polonius, and the play jumps directly to the scene in the Queen's closet.[58] Kemble thus nicely disposes of one of the many opportunities for revenge that Hamlet in the original does not act upon. The result is that Hamlet in 1804 travels a straighter course towards his goal.

Garrick 1763 joins with Kemble 1804 in omitting Hamlet's speech upon finding the King at prayer; however, it and the remaining texts all differ from Kemble in retaining as they do the King's confession, probably agreeing with Francis Gentleman that it is "feelingly pictured" and "exhibits, in a fine flow of poetical expression and just reasoning, the agitation of a guilty soul" (Garrick 1763, p. 52).[59] What is extraordinary about this scene in 1763 is that Garrick allows the King his repentance but then cuts his final couplet:

> My words fly up, my thoughts remain below.
> Words without thoughts never to heaven go.
> (III.iii.97-98)

Such an excision effectively strips the scene of the irony that no audience, watching it in its entirety, could have been unaware of.

As a result, Garrick 1763 gives us a Claudius alone and repentent, with even a suggestion of hope for his moral future (he ends: "All may be well"), while Hamlet, as in Kemble 1804, is entirely absent and does not "delay" because he is given no ideal opportunity (such as this was) to kill the King.

Five texts approach the scene from another angle. While they do retain both Claudius' and Hamlet's speeches, Davenant 1676, Wilks 1751, Ward A and B, and Garrick 1772 embellish the more controversial one ("Now might I do it pat") through the addition of a startling new line. In what seems to be Davenant's only direct interpolation into the 1676 text (he does sometimes substitute and, as we have seen, cuts heavily, but otherwise there are no additions), Claudius has just concluded his attempt to confess his crime to heaven when Hamlet enters. Hamlet's first words upon seeing him, in Ward's, Davenant's, Wilks', and Garrick's (1772) versions, are

> Where is this murderer, he kneels; and prays,
> And now I'll do't, and so he goes to heaven,
> And so am I reveng'd?
> (Davenant 1676, p. 51; III.iii.73-75a;
> emphasis added)

While in the original play Hamlet had quite inadvertently stumbled across the King at prayer, and had then begun to ruminate on the pros and cons of avenging his father's death at that moment, this Hamlet enters searching for Claudius, intent from the start on killing him. Indeed, the interpolation gives to Hamlet's subsequent lines a sense of urgency barely restrained. His cry,

"Where is this murderer," has a forceful, retributive ring to it quite foreign to the later scholarly critics' image of him as an irresolute and delicate prince--one might say, more Kydian than Shakespearean. The fact that "Where is this murderer" remained uncorrected on the stage for three quarters of a century indicates a considerable degree of approval of such a change.[60]

In addition, these same texts, with the exception of Garrick 1772, agree to excise Hamlet's vow to "trip him, that his heels may kick at heaven, / And that his soul may be as damned and black / As hell, whereto it goes"--although Wilks retains the first line (III.iii.93-95a).[61] Francis Gentleman in 1770 had considered Hamlet's reasons for postponing retribution "more suitable to an assassin of the basest kind than a virtuous prince and a feeling man";[62] and in the 1774 theatre edition, all of Hamlet's speech is, according to him, "commendably thrown aside, first, as being unnecessary, and next, as tending to vitiate and degrade his character, much" (Garrick 1763, p. 53). According to Thomas Davies, Garrick himself usually considered the lines "horrid" and "not only shocking but highly improbable." It is therefore especially significant that, in keeping with George Steevens' desire that Hamlet not be shown as timid and ineffectual, Garrick's 1772 text is the only one to restore all of Hamlet's lines upon finding the King at prayer.[63]

Regarding Polonius' slaying, few changes are to be found in any of the texts, although Kemble 1804 alters his cry, "O, I am slain!" to the more realistic "O, O, O!"--perhaps to avoid the laughter that might have arisen when the garrulous old man used

his last breath to state the obvious. (Kemble does the same in Act V, excising Hamlet's "I am dead, Horatio" [V.ii.334].) Reviewing Kemble's debut performance in 1783, an anonymous critic in the St. James's Chronicle noted that "Where Polonius is killed behind the Arras, and Hamlet says, 'Is it the King?' the universal Plaudits of the Audience were not to be resisted." What had apparently set the spectators off was the somewhat vicious "smile of exultation" with which Kemble's Hamlet always said that particular line, a smile that Johnson reportedly "sanctioned by his approbation."[64]

Yet there is also evidence that both theatregoers and scholarly critics were becoming more uncomfortable with this emphasis on Hamlet's cruelty. Another reviewer felt that Kemble's particular smile was more suitable to "the soul of Nero than to the pigeon-liver'd frame" of Hamlet (London Public Advertiser, 7 October 1783); and more than a decade earlier, Francis Gentleman had expressed his dismay at Hamlet's general conduct following Polonius' death. Describing it as "another shade upon our hero's character," Gentleman had said that "when the mistake [of assuming Polonius was the King] is discovered, [Hamlet] has not common humanity enough to regret taking the life of an innocent inoffensive old man, nay the Father of a Lady too for whom he professes a regard; but . . . seems to hold the matter light . . . ."[65] This is similar in tone to James Harris' disapproval in 1781 of Hamlet's callousness and lack of remorse having once committed the accidental crime:

> But should the same Hamlet by chance kill an innocent old man, an old man from whom he had never received offence, and with whose daughter he was actually in love;--what should we expect then? . . . Should we not be shocked . . . were he to be brutally jocose? Here the MANNERS are blamable, because they are inconsistent; we should never conjecture from Hamlet anything so unfeelingly cruel.[66]

These complaints by Gentleman, Harris, and the Public Advertiser, when viewed in conjunction with Steevens' attack in 1771, signal a growing awareness in the eighteenth century of the more savage side of Hamlet's personality. The sense of disillusionment that developed out of this recognition led, inevitably, to the elaborately argued rationalizations of critics such as William Richardson.

The remaining moments in this scene were regarded as an opportunity for Hamlet to exemplify "Filial Piety" towards both his mother and the image of his dead father; consequently, actors were measured by the degree to which they conformed to each generation's definition of that term. Garrick was criticized as being too rough with Gertrude (Wilks and Barry had, in comparison, retained "the delicacy of address to a lady"), and Kemble as being too tame ("In this scene it was doubted whether, in 'speaking daggers' to the Queen, they were drawn and sharp enough"). The censure of Kemble is surprising, for in his later years--and perhaps in reaction to the criticism--it was reported that he regularly "[shook] his mother out of her chair." Much later, Charles Kean voiced what other actors had no doubt felt before: "Is it not enough to make a rational being mad . . . ? The Thing

[i.e., his critic] supposes that because I am not in a devil of a passion . . . I cannot make . . . [my mother] feel."[67]

It is significant that Garrick 1772 retains the greatest number of lines by which Hamlet criticizes Gertrude; even that text, however, agrees with the promptbooks and editions in making certain cuts standard in the scene. Thus all the stage versions omit III.iv.152-156 (Hamlet's five-line plea that Gertrude not "spread the compost on the weeds / To make them ranker"); III.iv.162-173a (on "That monster custom . . . ."); III.iv.184-186 (on "reechy kisses," etc.); and III.iv.189b-197 (on the consequences of his mother's revealing his secret and, "like the famous ape, / . . . break[ing] [her] own neck down"). In addition, all except Smock Alley and Garrick 1772 cut Hamlet's description of his mother "cozened . . . at hoodman-blind" by the devil (III.iv.77b-82), and cut also his masochistic fascination with the image of Gertrude "Stewed in corruption, honeying and making love / Over the nasty sty" (III.iv.94-95a). Only Kemble 1804 permits the Queen's admission that in her soul she sees "such black and grained spots / As will not leave their tinct" (III.iv.91-92); the other texts, perhaps unwilling to believe her guilty, omit it. Because Hamlet had promised not to use daggers, all but Davenant 1676 and Wilks 1751 omit the Queen's statement that "These words like daggers enter in my ears" (III.iv.95-96). Most of the texts therefore leave her with only the plea that Hamlet "speak / No more."

While the few words between Hamlet and the Ghost are left untouched in all of the versions, the adapters agree completely on

the need for cutting the nine lines (III.iv.203-211) in which Hamlet vows to "blow [Rosencrantz and Guildenstern] to the moon"--perhaps because this time the reference to Hamlet's "knavery" is made explicit (line 206).[68] In addition, Garrick 1763 and Kemble 1804 are the only ones to cut Hamlet's statement that he "must to England." In the former, Francis Gentleman somewhat proudly admits that "about thirty lines [are] lopped off the end, very justifiably" (Garrick 1763, p. 57); in fact, however, that Hamlet ends thirty-eight lines early, immediately after "Thus bad begins, and worse remains behind." Only Garrick 1763 and Wilks 1751 then conclude Act III with Hamlet "dragging out" (the latter reads "in") Polonius.

The most damning opinion concerning the close of Act III comes from George Steevens, who so influenced Garrick in his 1772 alteration of the text. Shakespeare in the original version, Steevens says,

> has been unfortunate in his management of the story of this play, the most striking circumstances of which arise so early in its formation as not to leave him room for a conclusion suitable to the magnificence of its beginning. After this last interview with the Ghost the character of Hamlet has lost all its consequence.[69]

With an encouraging eye to Garrick, he elsewhere concludes: "If I had my Will, I would quit the Theatre at the End of the 3d Act."[70]

ACT FOUR

While Act IV, scene i is actually the start of Act V in Garrick 1772, it starts off innocently enough in that text, with Garrick even restoring much of Shakespeare's language.[71] The remaining theatre editions and promptbooks, however, begin the scene by cutting two references to Hamlet's madness: Claudius' speech on "This mad young man" being "full of threats to all" (IV.i.14-23a), and the Queen's statement that "his very madness . . . / Shows itself pure" (IV.i.25-27). With the exception of Garrick 1772, all of the texts also cut Claudius' "O come away! / My soul is full of discord and dismay" (IV.i.44-45), perhaps because it threatened to present the King in too sympathetic a light.

The next two scenes in Act IV involve Hamlet's deliberate obfuscation concerning the whereabouts of Polonius. Predictably, his political insinuations that "the King is not with the body" and "may go a progress through the guts of a beggar" (IV.ii.27-30a; IV.iii.26-31)) are cut in all but Garrick 1772; more surprising, however, is the complete omission in Davenant 1676 and Wilks 1751 of Claudius' wish that England undertake "The present death of Hamlet" (IV.iii.59-68). The remaining texts--Garrick 1763 and 1772, and Kemble 1804--while not deleting the King's speech completely, retain only its most salient point: ". . . England, if my love thou hold'st at aught, / Let it be testified in Hamlet's death."[72]

Both before and for many years after Garrick's 1772 alteration, Act IV, scene iv was, as far as I have been able to determine, not performed on any English stage. There seem to be no eyewitness accounts in either the seventeenth or the eighteenth century of another actor's delivery of "How all occasions do inform against me," and while Smock Alley, based on F3, at least prints (but as quickly marks for omission) the exchange between Fortinbras and the Captain, all of the remaining texts with the exception of Garrick 1772 eliminate the entire scene. It is therefore most significant that Garrick restored this scene in 1772 although he had previously omitted it, following stage tradition, in 1763. Indeed, because it signals the beginning of Garrick's radical interpolations into a text which until now had differed from the other versions only in its number of restorations, his treatment of Act IV, scene iv warrants brief examination.

Garrick 1772 begins IV.iv. with a stage direction: "Scene a Wood. / Trumpets and Drums at a Distance / Enter Hamlet and Rosencrans meeting Guildenstern" (Garrick 1772, p. 66).[73] Lines 1 through 8 have been cut, and Guildenstern (in Hopkins 1777, Rosencrantz) replaces the Captain, who, along with Fortinbras and the soldiers, has been eliminated. As a result, Garrick begins with a newly-written line that allows him to retain Guildenstern's explanation for the military preparations; Hamlet's first words are: "Well the news! Have you learnt whence are those powers?" Later, when Rosencrantz and Guildenstern have left, Hamlet remains to recite, for the first time on stage, all of the fourth

soliloquy, in which Garrick makes no excisions but supplies a significantly altered conclusion. What should end

> O, from this time forth
> My thoughts be bloody or be nothing worth
> (IV.iv.65-66)

ends instead with something in the manner of Davenant's "Where is this murderer":

> O from this Time forth,
> My thoughts be bloody all! the hour is come--
> I'll fly my Keepers--sweep to my revenge.
> (Garrick 1772, p. 68)

If, as G. Blakemore Evans conjectures, Garrick 1772 was superseded by the version evident in Hopkins 1777, Garrick's intentions also become that much clearer when we see the revised conclusion in the latter text:

> [How stand I then,
> That have a father killed, a mother stained,
> Excitements of my reason and my blood,]
> And let all sleep, Awake my Soul awake!
> Wake Nature, Manhood Vengeance wake [deleted]
> rouse at once
> My Father's Spirit calls! the hour is come!
> From this time forth--My thoughts be bloody all
> I'll fly my Keepers--Sweep to my Revenge.[74]

That this new ending redeemed the soliloquy in the eyes of many can be seen in Francis Gentleman's comment in 1774. Gentleman seems to be directly in sympathy with such a change, for he writes, of the original Act IV, scene iv,

> The author has here introduced a very unessential scene, unworthy the closet and the stage, therefore properly consigned to oblivion; though Hamlet's soliloquy, in Mr. Garrick's alteration, is preserved [in performance] not censurably--in the original state of the play, the whole is quite superfluous: besides, the Prince seems to take a violent resolution; yet is no more heard of, till we find he has been shipwrecked.
>
> (Garrick 1763, p. 61)

It seems to have been just such a fear that Hamlet's departure might be considered weak and cowardly that made Garrick alter the conclusion to this crucial soliloquy on procrastination. Earlier, on the page immediately preceding this one, Gentleman in his comment on Hamlet's acquiescent "Come, for England" (IV.iii.53) had voiced the opinion that "consenting so tamely to depart for England, seems to show him pusillanimous and impolitic" (Garrick 1763, p. 60); and George Steevens too wondered at Hamlet's ready cooperation, finding that in the original version he "suffer[s] himself to be tamely and unnaturally sent out of the Kingdom, to which he returns as unaccountably and as ineffectually as he left it."[75] In contrast, by shortly after ending the play with Hamlet impetuously "sweep[ing] to [his] revenge," Garrick allows nothing to disturb Hamlet's new-found resolution.

It is also interesting to see what the four editions, Garrick 1772 excepted for the moment, do with the final scenes in the play. Act IV, scene vi, for example, is in general left unchanged by Davenant 1676, Wilks 1751, and Garrick 1763 but is lengthened by about fifteen lines in Kemble 1804, which combines in the interests of economy the beginning of V.ii.--in which Hamlet in

person tells Horatio how he altered the commission ordering his death--with the letter in IV.vi., in which Hamlet promises to meet and inform him. In other words, Kemble reads Hamlet's line, "Of [Rosencrantz and Guildenstern] I have much to tell thee," literally, placing it near the beginning (after line 15), not at the end, of the letter and regarding it as an opportunity for actually telling what is disclosed in the later scene. However, although Kemble's Act V, scene ii afterwards begins at line 75, with Hamlet saying, "But I am very sorry, good Horatio, / That to Laertes I forgot myself," Kemble does not transpose the previous seventy-four lines into the letter in Act IV verbatim. He eliminates from his edition the idea that Hamlet might have felt defeated ("Methought I lay worse than the mutines in the bilboes") and afraid ("My fears forgetting manners"); the suggestion of Hamlet's uncontrolled "rashness" and "indiscretion"; his fatalistic notion that "There's a divinity that shapes our ends"; his seemingly callous admission that Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are "not near my conscience" and were killed "Not shriving time allowed"; and his belief that not to kill Claudius is to be "damned" (V.ii.1-3, 5b-11, 19-22, 25-31a, 32b-43, 45-46a, 47-48, 53b-74). The other texts delete most of the same passages.

All of the editions then conclude Act IV with no further major changes. (They do excise, however, the King's belief that Hamlet's envy of Laertes reflects negatively on him [IV.vii.75-76]). Francis Gentleman closes by saying that Act IV is "much more languid, than any other in the piece," and he gives as his reason the fact that Hamlet has "too little, the King and

Laertes too much, to say" (Garrick 1763, p. 70). A similar complaint is to be found in George Steevens' column in the St. James's Chronicle two years earlier. According to Steevens, it is "some Comfort to us little Beings that the most sublime Genius can sink from Heaven below the Earth, that our greatest Philosopher, Bacon, and our greatest General, Marlborough, could descend to the Weaknesses of the lowest Minds; and that our greatest Poet, Shakespeare, could produce the two last Acts of Hamlet."[76] It was opinions such as these that led Garrick to come out with his second and more radical conclusion to the play.

Following the alteration of Hamlet's soliloquy in IV.iv., no significant changes are made in Garrick 1772 until just before Ophelia is about to enter for the second time.[77] At that point, Garrick transposes IV.v.201b-216 to the lines immediately following IV.v.152. In other words, after the passage in which the King protests to Laertes that his innocence "shall as level to your Judgment pierce [sic], / As Day does to your Eye," Garrick has pasted in the King's later but still pertinent speech to Laertes beginning "Go but a-part"--a not unhappy move, since their conversation in Shakespeare's play is only momentarily discontinued as Ophelia enters to walk between them onstage (Garrick 1772, p. 72). Thus Laertes in 1772 uninterruptedly concludes his talk with Claudius about avenging his father's death, is then made a witness to his sister's madness (after IV.v.216, Garrick inserts a stage direction: "[As they are going they see Ophelia]"), and immediately after her mad songs and exit, when he is most overwrought and impelled to action at the sight of

her, suddenly comes across Hamlet. Whatever one might think of Garrick's temerity in altering either Laertes' motivation or Ophelia's fate, one cannot deny there is a neat symmetry to his plan.

As a result, Ophelia's exit at IV.v.198 is directly followed by V.i.248:

> Laer. O treble Woe
> Fall ten Times double on that cursed Head,
> Whose wicked Deed depriv'd thee of
> Thy most ingenious Sense!--let me but see him
> Heav'n!
> 'Twould warm the very Sickness of my heart,
> That I should live and tell him to his teeth,
> Thus didst Thou!
>
> Ham. What is he, whose Griefs
> Bear such an Emphasis? Whose Phrase of Sorrow
> Conjures the wand'ring Stars, and makes them stand
> Like wonder-wounded Hearers? This is I,
> Hamlet the Dane!
>
> Laer. Then my Revenge is come. (*draws his sword*)
>
> (*Garrick 1772*, p. 74)

Garrick 1772 gives no indication of when Hamlet might have entered and whether he would therefore have known about Ophelia's madness, although one may conjecture that his entrance followed Laertes' "Let me but see him." In any case, Ophelia's fate is left unclear. There is no description of her drowning, and we learn nothing more about her.

Garrick 1772 then moves quickly towards its conclusion. Ophelia's death having been cut, there are of course no gravediggers; nor is there any vulgar grappling by Laertes and Hamlet over her grave. The hero no longer shamefully retreats to

England, and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are not put to death at Hamlet's command "Not shriving time allowed." Instead, as Laertes and Hamlet rant at one another at the sight of Ophelia's madness, the King, angry at Hamlet's disobedience in not going to England as instructed, calls on his guards to arrest Hamlet, to which Hamlet decisively cries, "First feel [my Wrath]"--and then--"[Stabs him]." His last words to Claudius are:

> Here thou Incestuous, Murd'rous, damned Dane
> There's for thy treachery, Lust and Usurpation!
> (Garrick 1772, n. pag.)

In other words, Dr. Johnson's worry that Hamlet seemed "rather an instrument than an agent" has been attended to and dispelled.[78] Garrick's Hamlet does not ignominiously wait to be goaded--wounded--into action; he wreaks his revenge swiftly and deliberately, as he had assured us he would in the altered soliloquy of IV.iv. As the King lies dying, Hamlet purposely "runs upon Laertes' sword," and a Messenger, in true Sophoclean style, enters with the news that the Queen, like Jocasta,

> Struck with the Horror of the Scene, . . . fled--
> But 'ere she reached her Chamber door, she fell
> Intranc'd and Motionless--unable to sustain the Load
> Of Agony and Sorrow--
>
> Hamlet
>
> O my Horatio--watch the wretched Queen,
> When from this Trance she wakes--O may she breathe
> An hour of Penitence, 'ere Madness ends her. . . .
> (Garrick 1772, n. pag.)

With the King and Queen gone, the play ends as Hamlet, just before he dies, "[joins Horatio's hand to Laertes']," requesting that the two "unite [their] Virtues-- / To calm this troubled Land." Horatio utters the standard (for the century) closing lines:

> Now cracks a Noble heart--Good night, sweet Prince,
> And Flights of Angels sing thee to thy rest:
> Take up the Body such a Sight as this
> Becomes the Field, but here shews much Amiss.
> (Garrick 1772, n. pag.)

It is worth remembering that it was Garrick's omission of those two "favourites of the people" (as he scornfully described them)--and not Hamlet's more vengeful speech or actions at the conclusion of the play--that occasioned the only disapproving comments regarding this alteration.[79] In fact, that Hamlet's fierceness was generally agreed to be an improvement over the lackadaisical manner in which, in Shakespeare's original, he effected his revenge, is especially evident in an odd little work written and performed by Tate Wilkinson, manager of a provincial acting company, in imitation of Garrick's new production of Hamlet. Encouraged by the success of the 1772 alteration, and unable to procure a copy of it for his Shakespeare tour of the provinces, Wilkinson proceeded to write his own version of the play. "This was acted at all my Theatres," he says, "and well received, whether with any degree of desert, I will not presume to say."[80] Closely following the plot of Garrick 1772, it goes even further in agreeing with Steevens' disapproving perception of an

irresolute Hamlet, and also makes more obvious the theme of revenge. Laertes, for example, upon seeing his mad sister, cries,

> Too much of water hast thou, poor Ophelia,
> And therefore I forbid my tears.
>
> Tears! Wherefore tears? They rather should convert
> To sparks of fire.--Let me but meet him, Heav'n.
> Enter QUEEN.
> Till that hour comes, time moves on drooping wings.
> Revenge, revenge!
>
> (p. 167)

In Wilkinson, as in Garrick 1772, Hamlet and Laertes fight and the King is incensed that Hamlet has disobeyed his order to leave for England. "Traitor!" he cries,

> [H]ow cams't thou hither against our will?
> Against our sovereign express command?
> (Now soft-ey'd pity hence, and keen remorse) [Aside.
> Thou must rely on other shores for safety:
> The cries of blood, blood all innocent,
> Here loudly claim thee as a victim due.
> I will not screen a murd'rer. Call officers. [To Laertes.
> Thy father's death shall instant be revenged.
>
> (p. 168)

Most importantly, Hamlet's final response to the King's anger perfectly epitomizes, albeit in a crude way, the conception of Hamlet that had captured audiences from the time of Betterton until Garrick's retirement. Given the opportunity for vengeance that this Hamlet had always welcomed, he now rises to the occasion:

> I have not time to wage a war of words,
> I must appear a blaze of vengeful terror.
> By me my father speaks; by me he warns thee:
> In me behold his dread, assur'd avenger.
> The sword of Heaven is drawn--prepare--prepare--
> The hour it [sic] come that sinks thee to perdition.
> (p. 169)

This turgid, almost comic exaggeration of Garrick's original intent is an indication of just how far actors and audiences were willing to go--at least temporarily--in maintaining the perception of a virile and resolute Hamlet. Yet as we shall see in Part III, Wilkinson and especially Garrick were fighting a losing battle. By the end of the century, this "blaze of vengeful terror" will have been damped by the psychological and Romantic criticism that was beginning to appear, and Garrick's "energetic, impulsive, interesting Prince" will have been superseded by what the scholarly critics by then preferred: Hamlet as the "image of a distracted intellect and a broken heart."[81]

ACT FIVE

Perhaps no other scene in Hamlet better exemplifies the ever-widening split, from the end of the seventeenth to the beginning of the nineteenth century, between popular audience reaction and a scholarly critical sensibility than does the opening of Act V, better known as the Graveyard scene. While neoclassical critics bemoaned the fact that its farcical elements destroyed the solemnity of the play's theme, audiences from the start had no such reservations. As early as the 1640's, Abraham

Wright states that although in his opinion Hamlet is "But an indifferent play, the lines but mean," he must admit that "the beginning of the 5th Act between Hamlet and the grave-digger make[s] a good scene."[82] Similarly, during the Interregnum, audiences defied the Puritan ban against attending plays and flocked to see the "incomparable Robert Cox," whose troupe, "under pretence of rope-dancing, or the like," enacted scenes such as "The Gravemakers"--in actuality, the beginning of Act V in Hamlet. According to Francis Kirkman, despite the risks, "great was the confluence of the auditors." In the eighteenth century, Lichtenberg admired the scene's "rude vigour," and even Francis Gentleman, usually so constrained by his awareness of the dramatic "rules," admitted that while "These gentry, and their quibbling humour, certainly trespass upon decorum," yet "the moral reflections occasioned by the grave, &c. make ample amends; and though their dialogue is often stigmatized as mere gallery stuff, . . . we think that sensible boxes may be pleased and instructed by it" (Garrick 1763, p. 71).[83]

On the other hand, a 1736 newspaper review of Thomas Hanmer's Remarks listed, among those elements it considered improper for tragedy, the gravediggers and the foppishness of Osric; and a few years later, the author of Miscellaneous Observations on Hamlet (1752) was so incensed at the presence of the gravediggers in his favourite play that he wrote, "This incoherent absurdity will forever remain an indelible blot in the character of our poet; and warn us no more to expect perfection in the work of a mortal, than sincerity in the breast of a female."[84] By 1771, George Steevens

had proposed a solution uttered only half in jest. In a letter to Garrick concerning the changes he should make in his upcoming 1772 alteration, Steevens advises him to "throw what remains of the piece into a farce, to appear immediately afterwards. . . . You may entitle it, The Grave-Diggers; with the pleasant Humours of Osrick, the Danish Macaroni."[85] In short, the critics--no doubt made more aware of the problem by the unabashed clowning of the actors[86]--continued to be disturbed by the opening of Act V in Hamlet; and, as we have seen, Garrick 1772 attempted to address their concerns by ruthlessly "destroy[ing] . . . those favourites of the people."

Having said that, and keeping in mind that Garrick 1772 will no longer be cited (for its conclusion, see pp. 76-79 above), we might want to see what the remaining texts do with the contentious scene in question. In Kemble 1804, for example, Act V begins with the grisly reminder that "the two Sculls and the Bones [be] ready in the Grave" (Kemble 1804, p. 69), and Ward A contains a similar notation: "Long Trap open, Earth, Sculls and Bones in it." While Kemble 1804 also divides Act V into three scenes, the last beginning immediately after Hamlet's "Let be" (V.ii.225), the cuts in scene one that are consistent in all four editions seem to have been made simply to speed up the action and to avoid some of Hamlet's quibbles with the gravedigger. Like Q_2, all omit the description of how "Adam digged" (V.i.35-38), and in addition they leave out most of Hamlet's cynicism concerning "Lord Such-a-One" and "Lady Worm" (V.i.83-91; Davenant 1676 cuts only lines 89-91). In keeping with the tendency of the earlier texts

not to be shocked at lines that offended later more delicate sensibilities, only Smock Alley and Davenant 1676 retain Hamlet's "My gorge rises at it," said in reference to Yorick's skull (V.i.189). In fact, both of the early texts do precisely the opposite of what Garrick 1772 had done--that is, they cut the greatest number of lines before Act V, and retain the last act almost entirely.

For the entrance of the funeral party, Davenant 1676 supplies a meager stage direction ("[Enter King, / [Queen, La- / [ertes, and / the coarse") quite different from that of Kemble 1804, which brings on a veritable crowd: "Enter Friar, King, Queen, LAERTRS [sic], MARCELLUS, BERNARDO, FRANCISCO, 8 Gentlemen, 8 Ladies, &c. attending the corpse of OPHELIA."[87] Although Davenant 1676 is typically silent on the matter, Wilks 1751 and Garrick 1763 then suggest that Hamlet "[Leap . . . into the Grave]" after Laertes, while Kemble 1804 specifically excludes him from doing so. (In 1804, only Laertes jumps in, and then out, to "seiz[e] Hamlet"; perhaps for this reason also, Kemble cuts Hamlet's later statement to Horatio that "the bravery of his grief did put me / Into a tow'ring passion" [V.ii.79-80].) The First Quarto, of course, had indicated that they should both jump into Ophelia's grave, and the 1619 "Funerall Ellegye" commemorating Shakespeare's first Hamlet, Richard Burbage, praised him for the manner in which he had done so.[88]

No major changes are made from this point on until the end of the scene, but it is worth noting that Kemble 1804 gives the King's line, "O he is mad, Laertes" (V.i.274) to the Queen,

probably because it is she who is so audibly upset (the King is almost silent). The effect, however, is to make one wonder whether Gertrude has not, in Kemble 1804, either forgotten or indeed never believed Hamlet's private revelation to her that he is only "mad in craft" (III.iv.189).

As already mentioned in the discussion of Act IV (pp. 74-75), Kemble 1804 also excises the first seventy-four lines in Act V, scene ii, in which Hamlet tells Horatio about having switched the order for his death. In Kemble, such an excision is not as crucial as it might seem, since some of Hamlet's lines are incorporated into the letter to Horatio in IV.vi.; the situation is more serious, however, in a text such as that of Garrick 1763, in which the almost complete omission of Hamlet's eighty-line conversation with Horatio radically alters the remaining mood of the play. What is left of their dialogue at the start of V.ii. is bewildering:

> Enter HAMLET and HORATIO.
>
> HAM. So much for this.
> Do you remember all the circumstance?
>
> HOR. Remember it, my Lord?
>
> Enter OSRICK.
>
> OSR. Your Lordship is right welcome back to Denmark.
>
> (Garrick 1763, p. 78)

In addition, such an excision eliminates all evidence of a now changed, more resigned Hamlet who yet is capable of action. In excising Hamlet's plot against Rosencrantz and Guildenstern,

Garrick 1763 does eliminate what previous texts had recognized was a problem--the seemingly vicious sentiment that the two be killed "Not shriving time allowed"; however, remembering that this same text also omits Hamlet's earlier vow to "blow them to the moon," one now finds their fate is left completely unexplained. Even Francis Gentleman recognizes that something is wrong, for he writes, "There are eighty odd lines of the original, left out here: we think retaining a dozen or fifteen of them, would make the plot more clear." On the other hand, Gentleman just as quickly adds that retaining all of the lines "would be dreadfully tedious, and most unnecessarily circumstantial"--not to say detrimental to his conception of the hero (Garrick 1763, p. 78).

In general, therefore, all four editions cut Hamlet's admission that he felt defeat and a sense of rashness as he headed for England (V.ii.5b-7); and while Davenant 1676 and Wilks 1751 do allow Hamlet's successful plot against Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, in Garrick 1763 and Kemble 1804, no mention of them is permitted and their fate remains unknown. Only Kemble 1804 retains most of Hamlet's regret concerning Laertes (it simply cuts V.ii.78b-80a, while the others eliminate all of V.ii.75-80), and Wilks 1751 too is unique in retaining in its entirety Hamlet's argument that it is "perfect conscience" / To quit [such a king] with this arm" (V.ii.63-70; Davenant 1676 partially retains it, beginning the excision after line 67). Hamlet's poking fun at Osric is considerably shortened in these texts, with Garrick 1763 and Kemble 1804 deleting the most (V.ii.114-127; 131-136; 184-196).

More significantly, the implications of Hamlet's realizing, in the previous scene, that "There's a divinity that shapes our ends" (a line eliminated in Garrick 1763 and Kemble 1804) are absent here also, as evidenced in the omission in all the texts of those lines in which Hamlet finally realizes that it is better to "Let be" (V.ii.220b-225). A key issue for twentieth-century criticism--Does Hamlet return a changed man?--is in these theatre versions not even an issue. In all of the texts, Hamlet's last words to Horatio before the duel begins stress defiance ("we defy augury") and not a new-found resignation to a higher philosophical order.

The fencing scene in the latter half of Act V, scene ii begins with the King's request that Laertes and Hamlet join hands. Only Davenant 1676 and Smock Alley then retain all of Hamlet's direct apology to Laertes. While Wilks 1751 and Garrick 1763 cut those eight lines in which Hamlet blames his past behaviour on his madness (V.ii.234-241), they still retain a trace of that defense by permitting his reference to a "sore distraction" (V.ii.229-233). Kemble 1804, on the other hand, eliminates even that small admission of insanity, as Hamlet merely says, "I have done you wrong: / But, pardon it, as you are a gentleman" (Kemble 1804, p. 80). Perhaps the theatre texts from the middle of the eighteenth century on had been influenced by Johnson's dismay at what he considered Hamlet's "falsehood"; if so, the excision underscores the fact that, by agreeing with Johnson, the adapters did not consider Hamlet's madness anything but an act.[89] All of the editions and promptbooks also unanimously cut Laertes' at

least honest confession that, where it concerns his honour, he must for a time "stand aloof" (V.ii.247b-251). The result is that Laertes appears blatantly hypocritical, saying he is "satisfied in nature, / . . . . / And will not wrong" Hamlet's love when the audience knows he carries an envenomed sword. Curiously enough, this elimination of Laertes' point of honour is paralleled, in all of the editions except Kemble 1804, with Davenant's odd substitution, for Hamlet, of "No, on my honour" for "No, by this hand," which was Hamlet's original response to Laertes' complaint that he is being mocked (V.ii.58-59). Coming so soon after Laertes has been made to appear dishonourable, this seemingly slight alteration stressing Hamlet's sense of honour becomes significant.

All of the theatre editions except Davenant 1676 cut or mark for omission the unattractive image of a Hamlet "fat, and scant of breath" (V.ii.288), and they also excise V.ii.289 and line 295, on Hamlet's needing a handkerchief.[90] Just as he had earlier rewritten Polonius' last words before dying, Kemble provides the Queen with a more obviously emphatic expiration--"O, O, O"--than the one she had been given in the original version, wherein she silently falls (Kemble 1804, p. 82). On the other hand, the King's pathetic last line ("O, yet defend me, friends. I am but hurt") is excised in both Kemble 1804 and Garrick 1763, and he dies without a sound.

Following this, Garrick 1763 and Kemble 1804 strike out the cry, uttered by those on stage, that Hamlet's killing of the King is treasonous (V.ii.324), and in none of the acting texts--which

cut V.ii.327-329--does Hamlet also force the King to drink poison. (Kemble 1804 makes this even more explicit in its added stage direction on page 82: "[Stabs the King, who dies.]") The absence in the theatrical criticism of any mention of the King's dying of the effects of poison further substantiates this. In his Dramatic Miscellanies, Thomas Davies reports that the King used to be regularly "stuck like a pig on the stage"; and earlier, George Steevens had cautioned Garrick that "As you intend to stab the usurper I beg, for your own sake, you will take care that this circumstance is not on his part awkwardly represented. . . . A stab given to an unarmed or a defenceless man has seldom a very happy effect."[91]

Of Osric's news and the subsequent entrance of Fortinbras, each succeeding text seems to have cut a bit more. Thus Davenant 1676 and Smock Alley retain virtually all of the original ending; Ward A and B and Wilks 1751 cut from just after Horatio's "Good night, sweet Prince" to just before the last eight lines of the play, which Horatio also recites (V.ii.362-396); and Garrick 1763 and Kemble 1804 begin their excisions at V.ii.350-353a, Osric's report regarding the "warlike noise." As a result, only the seventeenth-century texts allow Fortinbras and the ambassadors all of their lines, for while Wilks 1751 and Garrick 1763 retain the five lines in which Hamlet gives his blessing to Fortinbras, the play ends in both of the latter texts without Fortinbras actually present on stage. No doubt agreeing with Francis Gentleman on the "unintelligibility" of retaining the lines on Fortinbras' election in a stage representation which had earlier cut all mention of

him, Kemble 1804 goes the furthest and does not allow a single reference to Fortinbras or the ambassadors to remain.[92]

Finally, while Gentleman himself had always found "the winding up [of Hamlet] exceeding lame," yet, he had to admit, "it engages attention in public, by having a good deal of bustle, and, what English audiences love, many deaths" (Garrick 1763, pp. 3, 84). George Steevens put it even more succinctly: "An Englishman loves a spirited, but abhors a phlegmatic exit."[93]

PART III

> Theory . . . is not . . . imposed intellectually from without; it is as natural a product of the desires of the time as the works of art themselves. That an attitude does not appear in criticism, but only in practice, is no proof that it is dead.
>
> (Bonamy Dobree)

A. HAMLET IN THE THEATRE: A SUMMARY

As the character with the greatest number of lines in the play, and therefore subject to the most deletions, Hamlet is also the most altered. Because of the drastic cutting of his part alone, the action of the play has been speeded up: Hamlet attains his goal much faster and, as the alterations in his soliloquies especially show, deliberates much less. He actually appears to get the job done more quickly. That Hamlet who seemed at times "all talk and no action," who almost embodied Olivier's simplistic conception of him as "a man who could not make up his mind," is repeatedly replaced, on stage, by a man with a mission, with a sense of purpose. In general, the theatrical Hamlet from Restoration to Romantic times is a dutiful son who, significantly, barely questions the Ghost's veracity and instead sets out immediately to learn how to vindicate his father's murder.

The first thing one notices is that, in all of the texts except, on occasion, Garrick 1772 (which will be discussed separately), passages that "tend . . . to vitiate and degrade his character . . . [are] commendably thrown aside" (Garrick 1763, p. 53). In the popular conception of the play, there is no room for

a hero who makes lewd suggestions to his sweetheart, who vows to postpone his vengeance until such time as Claudius may go straight to hell, and who plots to "blow [Rosencrantz and Guildenstern] at the moon" and then does so "Not shriving time allowed." Instead, the Hamlet of the late seventeenth and most of the eighteenth century is, as Gentleman says, "a virtuous prince and a feeling man."[1] He has, not surprisingly, great respect for both of his parents, as witness the careful omission in all four texts of Hamlet's doubt concerning the Ghost and their significant retention of Hamlet's belief that "It is . . . honest." Similarly, his shock at his mother's hasty marriage is muted, since those passages that stress his revulsion at physicality and his obsession ("Heaven and earth, / Must I remember?") with Gertrude's sexuality are also unanimously cut. The adapters' very calculated cuts absolve both Hamlet of the charge of filial disrespect and Gertrude of the suggestion that she is excessively libidinous. As the omissions make clear, a properly respectful son does not have "imaginations . . . as foul / As Vulcan's stithy" (although Kemble does restore this) and certainly does not envision his mother "honeying and making love / Over the nasty sty." He does not quietly threaten that Gertrude will "break [her] . . . neck" should she disclose his secret; neither does he, in his speeches, link her metaphorically with the beasts or physically with a satyr.

The later Hamlets also seem on the whole more mentally stable than does the Elizabethan Hamlet. In the theatrical texts, the hints at Hamlet's melancholy, his real or feigned insanity, and

his bitter pessimism have all been wholly or partially cut. Because the acting versions often excised Hamlet's more manic moments, the result is a less fitful and erratic avenger. In none of the editions, for example, does this Hamlet exhibit any of the jubilation, the near-hysteria, that the original does after the success of The Mousetrap. References to his "rashness" are likewise deleted, as are his irreverence and swift scorn in general. He is more controlled, more predictable, more logical.

Most importantly, there is the question of what the texts did with that part of Hamlet's character that is the crux of so many twentieth-century discussions of the play. In other words, does the theatrical Hamlet of the late seventeenth and the eighteenth century delay? On this point, Davenant, Wilks, Kemble, and especially Garrick are all agreed: the answer is, No. This is evident in the changes they make to the two soliloquies in which Hamlet most clearly admits his procrastination: "O what a rogue and peasant slave am I" (II.ii.560-617), and "How all occasions do inform against me" (IV.iv.32-66). In marked contrast to the scholarly perception of Hamlet which began to appear in the late eighteenth century, the deletions in these soliloquies reveal a conscious attempt to de-emphasize the issue of Hamlet's delay. As the evidence in the texts clearly indicates, both soliloquies were too dangerous to be fully retained, revealing as they do Hamlet's sharpest and most painful self-criticism. Consequently, audiences witnessing these productions were spared Hamlet's tears, his reference to a "dull revenge," his bestial sloth, his over-deliberation, and, especially, his cowardice. Even his

envious wonder at Fortinbras's spirit of enterprise (like his over-praise of Horatio) is excised, perhaps as reflecting badly on the supposed hero of the play.

In addition to these quite radical alterations within the soliloquies, additional passages that suggest or parallel Hamlet's failure to act are cut in all of the theatre texts (still excepting, for the moment, Garrick 1772). As a result, that part of the Player's speech in II.ii. which could possibly reflect on either the virtuousness of Hamlet's revenge or on his later refusal to kill Claudius ("Up, sword, and know thou a more horrid hent") is consistently deleted:

> For lo, his sword,
> Which was declining on the milky head
> Of reverend Priam, seemed i' th' air to stick.
> So as a painted tyrant Pyrrhus stood,
> And like a neutral to his will and matter
> Did nothing.
>
> (II.ii.488b-493)

In all four of these texts, the Player ignores the above "pause" and only describes Pyrrhus' "roused vengeance" that "sets his new awork." The paralysis is excised--but the rage, the lack of remorse, and the vengeance all remain.

Similarly, the suggestion by the Player King in The Mousetrap that

> Our wills and fates do so contrary run
> That our devices still are overthrown;
> Our thoughts are ours, their ends none of our own
>
> (III.ii.217-219)

is omitted in the four texts because it contradicts the popular perception of Hamlet's quite purposeful and studied pursuit of revenge. For this Hamlet, wills and fates do not "contrary run." (It is noteworthy that all of the texts eliminate this passage but retain Hamlet's Herculean "My fate cries out / And makes each petty artere in this body / As hardy as the Nemean lion's nerve.") In addition, there is the unanimous excision of Claudius' long speech in Act IV concerning time and its debilitating influence on intentions:

> That we would do
> We should do when we would, for this "would" changes,
> And hath abatements and delays as many
> As there are tongues, are hands, are accidents,
> And then this "should" is like a spendthrift sigh,
> That hurts by easing.
>
> (IV.vii.118b-123a)

Since the subject of Claudius and Laertes' discussion echoes Hamlet's own situation (a son's revenge of his beloved father's murder), the speech, in stressing immediate action, cannot help but emphasize Hamlet's hesitation and tardiness. All four theatre editions prudently delete it.

But perhaps the most interesting, because so surprising, alteration in favour of a more resourceful and active young prince is the interpolation that first appears in Davenant's version: Hamlet's "Where is this murderer," uttered as he sees Claudius in III.iii. As we shall see, the scholarly criticism objected strongly to Hamlet's entire speech. Allowing virtually all of his

words here, therefore, speaks volumes about the adapters' quite different perception of his character, and the appearance and subsequent retention of Davenant's line in all of the texts that permit Hamlet's presence in the scene (i.e., Ward A and B, Wilks 1751, and Garrick 1772) only underscores this more.

In general, therefore, and because each of the four standard acting texts of Hamlet primarily deletes rather than adds, it is easier to say what the theatrical Hamlet is not, than to say what he in fact is. Hamlet during the Restoration and for most of the eighteenth century is not as cruel, as flighty, as obscene, as was the Elizabethan Hamlet. He does not "Taint [his] mind" in berating his mother (he is more saddened than horrified) and he generally reveres the Ghost as the spirit of his adored father. He is less eloquent, less philosophical--generally less cynical. The contest is not primarily one of a prince at odds with a "weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable" world; it is Hamlet pitted solely against Claudius: the metaphysical focus is gone. Hamlet is in all respects a gentleman--courteous, magnanimous, and, especially, conscious of his honour. His actions are no longer measured against the exploits of foils who threaten to outshine him. He is, Francis Gentleman tells us, a "flexible, spirited" young prince who, at times of crisis, displays "a just manly confidence"--for surely "no revenge can be just, that is not open and manlike" (Garrick 1763, pp. 9, 19, 69). There is never a doubt as to his "assumed" and "feigned" madness; indeed, says Gentleman, it requires a theatrical "frenzied ease of deportment and looks, to support it" (Garrick 1763, pp. 30, 60, 31). In

other words, the Hamlet on stage during the late seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries does not mimic the increasingly sensitive, hesitating philosopher that one sees in criticism from Richardson on. All suggestions of an abnormal procrastination have been cut. At the play's conclusion, not one of the theatre editions or promptbooks allows Hamlet to submit passively to the dictates of Providence--in fact, quite the opposite, since all of them retain only his statement of defiance ("we defy augury"). Thus, right to the end, Hamlet's boldness and sense of personal responsibility are stressed.

This indirectly brings us finally to Garrick's 1772 alteration, which seems to have ignored the scholarly criticism that was just beginning to see Hamlet as weak, unbalanced, and dilatory. Of all the texts, Garrick 1772 demonstrates most clearly that the stage Hamlet was still at that time divorced from the Hamlet the scholarly critics were starting to analyze. Garrick's unsubtle emphasis on Hamlet as exemplifying virile action rather than paralyzing scrupulosity runs counter to what much of their commentary was suggesting at the time.

While Garrick 1772 occasionally seems to depart from the other texts, these departures generally involve restorations of early passages in the play (e.g., all of II.i.); they do not combine to form a portrait of Hamlet that differs markedly from that we have seen elsewhere. Indeed, Hamlet in 1772 is very often reminiscent of the seventeenth-century hero of Davenant's version--a character Hazelton Spencer summed up as "the beau ideal of active young-manhood, rather than a dream-sick weakling pining

for the ministrations of Dr. Freud." Like Betterton's "young man of great expectation, vivacity, and enterprise," Hamlet in 1772 employs "the purposeful tone of one bent on immediate action."[2] Garrick 1772, for example, is the only text to follow Davenant and Hughs-Wilks in cutting Hamlet's reference to his "weakness and . . . melancholy" (II.ii.613); similarly, for the Prayer Scene, Garrick ignores his usual acting version and reverts instead to the tradition established in the Restoration.

Although Garrick is the first to restore the very revealing soliloquy in IV.iv. ("How all occasions do inform against me"), his revised ending completely alters its original effect. In 1772, Hamlet's self-castigation at the sight of Fortinbras, the man of action, suddenly leads him not to England and away from Claudius but to a new sense of resolution. With "bloody [thoughts]" to spur him on, this Hamlet does indeed "fly [his] Keepers" and immediately "sweep to his revenge." All suggestions of lassitude and morbidity are carefully excised throughout; and the result is a Hamlet who, while not quite as bloodthirsty as Tate Wilkinson had imagined him to be, is nonetheless--even more so than in Davenant 1676--a true avenger, a figure far removed from the "sensible, lonely Hamlet" that was to dominate in the nineteenth century.[3]

In general, the adapters have altered the hero in conformance to the demand for moral tragedy and a virtuous hero; however, in merely cutting, they can only go so far. Hamlet from 1676 to 1804 therefore escapes precise categorization, being rather an amalgam of the revisers' many different attempts to meet public

expectation. On the whole, the Restoration and eighteenth-century Hamlet is flatter and less psychologically interesting than is the Hamlet of the original play, the adaptations stressing as they do his surface qualities of chivalry, manliness, and virtue; yet such a conception poses far fewer problems. Most importantly, the theatre texts dispense entirely with those aspects of Hamlet's character that have motivated virtually all twentieth-century discussions of the play. The stage Hamlet during this period suffers no "tragic flaw," is not "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought," and exhibits no traces of an Oedipal or unnatural relationship with his mother. In keeping with popular stage tradition, he is not motivated by urges that seem to us fascinatingly mysterious. He acts solely as a result of external compulsion ("Revenge [my] foul and most unnatural murder"] and, sacrificing his life in the process, accomplishes what he was morally obligated to do.

B. HAMLET: THE SCHOLARLY VIEW

The Hamlet that audiences were familiar with during the late seventeenth and throughout the eighteenth century was far removed from the Hamlet Shakespeare had written. That fact is obvious in light of the deletions in the different theatrical texts. Another aspect of this issue, however, has yet to be addressed. Put simply, what is the scholarly, as opposed to the histrionic, view of Hamlet during these years, and is there any agreement between the two worlds of the stage and the page? If, as Samuel Johnson

said, "The stage but echoes back the publick voice,"[4] what is the relation of Hamlet in the theatre to the Hamlet of the first essayists on the play? Is there a link between the increasingly psychological "closet" critics of the later eighteenth century and, say, Garrick's or Kemble's interpretations of the character on stage? While it is impossible ever to know which came first, the theory or the practice, it is possible to follow the development of the critical conception of Hamlet in order to see whether, indeed, there is any correlation between the theatrical and scholarly points of view.

The shift from an objective and neoclassical approach to Hamlet to a subjective and increasingly Romantic one is obvious in two quite different literary discussions of the play. The first is Thomas Hanmer's 1736 Remarks on the Tragedy of Hamlet; the second is the 1774 edition of William Richardson's Philosophical Analysis and Illustration of Some of Shakespeare's Remarkable Characters. While it is always foolhardy to attempt to extrapolate an entire critical movement from a single work, it is nevertheless quite possible to show that each essay, taken individually, illustrates a particular historical position in the gradually changing interpretations of the play.

Apart from Dryden's single complaint about the play's language ("Out, out, thou strumpet Fortune!"), and Drake's turn-of-the-century praise for its exemplification of poetic justice, the seventeenth century contains virtually nothing in the way of commentary on Hamlet. In fact, no full discussion of the characters is to be found before the 1736 Remarks on the Tragedy

of Hamlet, now believed to have been written by Sir Thomas Hanmer. This very significant work, the first "act-by-act, scene-by-scene analysis of a play in English," according to C.D. Thorpe, sits chronologically and philosophically almost midway between the neoclassical and pre-Romantic schools of thought.[5]

The first thing one notices in the Remarks is the author's sensitivity and his concern for critical fairness. As Hanmer states in his preface, he does not easily conform to the contemporary definition of a critic, for the public, he says, "generally understand by Criticism, finding fault with a Work; and from thence, when we call a Man a Critick, we usually mean, one disposed to blame and seldom to commend." With Addison before him as a "true Model for all Criticks to follow," Hanmer proposes instead to "set in the best Light all Beauties, and to touch upon Defects no more than is necessary." He is also concerned, however, that readers not consider him merely an idolater, one unduly "bigotted to an Author." His aim in the Remarks, he says, is quite simply to "shew every one the Reason why they are pleas'd," and he does this by closely examining both beauties and faults as they appear in each act of Hamlet (pp. iii-v, 3).

Hanmer's essay reflects the old "beauties-blemishes" school of criticism at the same time that it recognizes a need for something more. His neoclassical approach is evident, on the one hand, in his praise of the "truly Poeticall Justice" of Laertes' and, especially, the Queen's deaths, and on the other, in the usual complaints about Shakespeare's anachronisms, the presence of comic characters in tragedy, and the "wretched Verse" and "dismal

Bombast" of The Mousetrap and the speech on Pyrrhus. His comments are at one moment derivative ("Shakespeare's Dramatick Works are in general very much mix'd; his Gold is strangely mingled with Dross" [p. 50]) and in the next far in advance of the usual finger-wagging the plays in general still had to endure:

> the Critick's Rules, . . . if they prove any Thing, prove too much; . . . . No Rules are of any Service in Poetry, of any kind, unless they add Beauties, which consist (in Tragedy) in an exact Conformity to Nature in the Conduct of the Characters, and in a sublimity of Sentiments and nobleness of Diction. If these two Things be well observed, tho' often at the Expence of Unity of Time and Place, such Pieces will always please, and never suffer us to find out the little Defects in the Plot . . . .
>
> (pp. 52-53)

Minimizing the importance of the dramatic atrictures concerning time and place, Hanmer concentrates instead on what he considers a unity of "main Design." In Hamlet, Hanmer says in the Remarks, there is not one scene that does not in "some way or other conduce . . . towards the Denouement of the Whole," and he concludes that "it all hangs by Consequence so close together, that no Scene can be omitted, without Prejudice" to that design. He cites "Laertes going to France, and Ophelia's Madness"--"however trivial they may seem"--as "Incidents absolutely necessary towards the concluding of all," and says that "Concerning the Design of [I.iii], we shall find it . . . necessary towards the whole Plot of the Play, and . . . by no Means an Episode" (pp. 59, 26).

Hanmer's essay also provides evidence of a tendency, still prevalent at that time, to see the stage as the proper platform

for Shakespearean drama. In what proves to be an early discussion of the problem of theatrical illusion as opposed to an insistence on realism, Hanmer stresses the role the "Delusion of our Imagination" plays in making improbabilities disappear. He notes as an example the curious fact that "all Nations, on our Stage, speak English; an Absurdity one would think that should immediately revolt us." Yet, he says, because of the willing "Impositions on our Reason," such a thing "never shocks, . . . nor do we find any Difficulty in believing the Stage to be Rome, (or Denmark, for instance, as in this Play;) or Wilks to be Hamlet, or Booth to be a Ghost." Without this implicit faith in the ability of the stage to make us believe, he says, "farewel all Dramatick Performances" (p. 53).

As a result, Hanmer never considers scenes in Hamlet solely from a reader's perspective but rather evaluates them also in light of their theatrical context. Hamlet's words and actions are measured by how they sound and appear to an audience in the theatre, and Hanmer is always sensitive to the effect this interplay between "Actor," "Spectators," and "Representation of the piece" will have on our further appreciation of Hamlet in the study. For example, as a scholarly critic Hanmer does not find the "stamp of one defect" speech worth retaining ("it is but of very obscure Diction, and is much too long; for a very short Moral is to be drawn from it"), but as a man of the theatre he must admit that--on stage--the passage is necessary because "Some Time [is] requisite to prepare the Minds of the Spectators, that they might collect all their Faculties to behold this important Scene

[Hamlet's first meeting with the Ghost], on which turns the whole Play, with due Attention and Seriousness" (pp. 26-27). Such an acknowledgement of the added dimension an awareness of theatrical exigencies can bring to critical analysis becomes increasingly hard to find in the Hamlet criticism of the last quarter of the century.

Some Remarks on the Tragedy of Hamlet therefore throws a great deal of light on the alterations to be found in the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century theatrical texts of the play. Hanmer repeatedly confirms in theory what the stage adapters, through their deletions, had decided was right in practice. By this, I do not mean to imply that either the scholarly criticism or the productions necessarily influenced one another (attempting to demonstrate this would involve factors difficult to measure, and presuppose the existence of equations and evolutionary patterns almost impossible to prove), but rather that both reflected attitudes and assumptions that were commonly "in the air" at the time. The Remarks is worth examining because it further corroborates attitudes already implicit in theatrical revisions of the play.

We have already seen (p. 103) that Hanmer specifically equates Hamlet with Wilks, and the Ghost with Booth--actors represented in this study by Wilks 1751. Consequently, it comes as no surprise to find that much of Hanmer's criticism is levelled at passages that were universally cut on the stage. For instance, he remarks that the long digression on the child-actors in Act ii, scene ii (omitted in Wilks' text and in all of the others) suffers

from being too specific; for "The Poet's stepping out of his Subject," he says, "is not allowable in Tragedy, which is never to be a Satire upon any modern particular Foible or Vice that prevails, but is to be severe upon Crimes and Immoralities of all Ages, and of all Countries" (p. 36). Similarly, Hamlet's immodest suggestions to Ophelia before the court play begins display a "want of Decency" on the part of the hero, and his exultation at confirming the King's guilt (III.ii.281-291, 299-301) is felt by Hanmer to be "not a-propos," for it reveals "a Vein of Humour in the Prince's Character" and thus incongruously, in a tragedy, "rais[es] a Laugh" (p. 40).

However, there are also times when Hanmer departs from the theatrical perspective and discusses scenes that were never retained in the theatre. For example, he praises Polonius' "discourse to Reynoldo" because it is "of a good moral Tenour"; he says that although "introducing an Army on the Stage" in Act iv, scene iv is "quite unnatural and absurd," it provides an occasion for Hamlet's "noble Reflections" upon seeing Fortinbras' men; and he considers "the grave and excellent Instructions . . . from Polonius to Laertes" to be "good Sense expressed in the true Beauties of Poetry" (pp. 32, 44, 14, 26). He also often condemns passages that were sometimes retained--most notably, Hamlet's speech upon finding the King at prayer ("so very Bloody . . . so inhuman, so unworthy of a Hero"), and the graveyard scene, which he admits "is very much applauded," but which, in his "humble Opinion, is very unbecoming such a Piece as this" (pp. 41, 46). As a result, we should not be too hasty in viewing the critic as

wholly caught up in a theatrical approach to the play. What makes the Remarks stand out is that Hanmer, to his credit, refuses to be stamped as solely a theatrical or a scholarly critic, trusting instead to his uniquely personal, sometimes moralistic, and always commonsensical view.

Finally, of course, there is the question of whether or not Hanmer's view of Hamlet reflects that already seen in the acting texts themselves. From the start, the essay seems to confirm the theatrical conception of him as an "Heroical Youth"--virtuous, noble, and resolute. Hanmer says that "The Prince's Resolution to speak to the Phantom, is entirely suitable to his Heroical Disposition" (p. 22), and he later again asserts that the "Prince's Resolution [to do "bitter business"] is suitable to his Character" (p. 40). He dismisses the problem of Hamlet's responsibility for Polonius' death by remarking not only that Polonius is "far from a good Character," but also that "our Hero had not put him to Death, had not he thought it to have been the Usurper hid behind the Arras; so that upon the Whole, this is no Blemish to his Character" (p. 44). He repeatedly stresses "giv[ing] the Audience a true Idea of the Filial Piety of the young Prince, and of his virtuous Character" (p. 16), and the only really negative note is in the "great Offense" he feels at Hamlet's soliloquy in the prayer scene. As already mentioned, Hanmer finds the sentiments in that passage "unworthy of a Hero," but he significantly blames Shakespeare, not Hamlet, for the lapse: "I wish our Poet had omitted it" (p. 41).

The Remarks also criticizes the artist and not his creation (by the end of the century, the two were to have become inextricably confused) over the issue of Hamlet's delay. Indeed, in even thinking to comment on Hamlet's procrastination, the essay rightly deserves tribute as "the earliest adumbration of the 'Hamlet problem.'"[6] In a fine example of the simple logic by which he analyzes what until then had never been questioned, Hanmer raises the problem and then attempts to address it:

> Now I am come to mention Hamlet's Madness, I must speak my Opinion of our Poet's Conduct in this Particular. To conform to the Ground-Work of his Plot, Shakespeare makes the young Prince feign himself mad. I cannot but think this to be injudicious; for so far from Securing himself from any Violence which he fear'd from the Usurper, which was his Design in so doing, it seems to have been the most likely Way of getting himself confin'd, and consequently, debarr'd from an Opportunity of Revenging his Father's Death, which now seem'd to be his only Aim; and accordingly it was the Occasion of his being sent away to England. Which Design, had it taken effect upon his Life, he never could have revenged his Father's Murder. To speak Truth, our Poet, by keeping too close to the Ground-work of his Plot, has fallen into an Absurdity; for there appears no Reason at all in Nature, why the young Prince did not put the Usurper to Death as soon as possible, especially as Hamlet is represented as a Youth so brave, and so careless of his own Life.
>
> The Case indeed is this: Had Hamlet gone naturally 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.
>
> (pp. 33-34)

A number of things are worth noticing here. First, as suggested above, the delay is not attributed to a weakness on the part of the character but is, rather, externalized. According to

Hanmer the fault lies not within Hamlet's psychological make-up but within Shakespeare for so slavishly "keeping too close to the Ground-work [i.e., original source] of his Plot." This very pragmatic view of the problem is seen again in Hanmer's comment on the soliloquy in II.ii ("O what a rogue and peasant slave am I"). "Hamlet's Speech . . . is good," he says; "and by it we see that the Poet himself seems sensible of the Fault in his Plot. But that avails not, unless he had found Means to help it, which certainly might have been" (p. 36; italics mine). He continues to chide Shakespeare for not having caught the discrepancy: "The Prince's Design of confirming by the Play, the Truth of what the Ghost told him, is certainly well imagin'd; but as the coming of these Players is supposed to be accidental, it could not be a Reason for his Delay" (p. 36). Unlike the critics who would appear at the end of the century, Hanmer never assumes that Hamlet himself is at fault.

Secondly, one notices that Hanmer combines the issue of delay with that of Hamlet's sanity. As the theatre editions have shown, Hamlet on stage not only did not delay; he was also consistently stripped of his wilder, more manic episodes. References to his seeming madness by characters who could not know that it was only feigned (e.g., Claudius and Ophelia) were, we have seen, often deleted by the adapters, yet those passages in which Hamlet explicitly declares the antic disposition to be merely put on were always retained. In the Remarks on the Tragedy of Hamlet, Hanmer too never considers Hamlet's behaviour anything other than a

charade. "The whole Conduct of Hamlet's Madness" is, according to Hanmer,

> too ludicrous for his Character, and for the situation his Mind was then really in. I must confess, nothing is more difficult to draw than a real Madness well, much more a feign'd one; for here the Poet in Hamlet's Case, was to paint such a Species of Madness as should not give cause of Suspicion of the real Grief which had taken Possession of the Prince's Mind.
>
> (p. 35; italics mine)

This "Species of Madness" was therefore considered a shield--and according to Hanmer, not a very well-constructed one, at that--for the vulnerable, grieving prince. Even in his dialogue with Ophelia, Hanmer notes that Hamlet dare not let down his guard: "Hamlet's Conversation with Ophelia, we may observe, is in the Stile of Madness; and it was proper that the Prince should conceal his Design from every one, which had he conversed with his Mistress in his natural Stile could not have been" (p. 37). In the case of both this Hamlet and the Hamlet of the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century stage, what appears to be madness is only a calculated "Stile," and neither Hamlet allows his grief to immobilize him.

On the whole, Hanmer's Remarks on the Tragedy of Hamlet greatly illuminates some of the more puzzling changes made to the text of Hamlet by the actor-managers. In its emphasis on Hamlet's "Filial Piety," his "Moral Sentences," and "virtuous Temper," it seems to be describing the rather flat and colourless perfect gentleman of Robert Wilks. There is no suggestion of a crippling

procrastination, and no question but that Hamlet is always completely sane.

A markedly different world is presented to us, therefore, when we turn to William Richardson and his Philosophical Analysis and Illustration of Some of Shakespeare's Remarkable Characters, published in 1774. Coming as it does after Thomas Whately's comparison of Richard III and Macbeth in 1770 (which, however, had not yet been published), and before Maurice Morgann's ingenious defense of Falstaff in 1777, the title of Richardson's book alone indicates the direction that criticism would take after the publication of Hanmer's modest Remarks.

Unlike Hanmer's conscientious awareness of the need to test dramatic theories in a real or imagined theatre, Richardson so removes Hamlet from his natural place on stage that, to quote Morgann's assessment of Shakespeare's characters in general, Hamlet appears "rather as [a] Historic than Dramatic being . . . ."[7] In treating a character as if he were a clinical case-study, Richardson extrapolates an inner life and motives that go far beyond the limits of the text; consequently, he leads the way to the full-blown Romanticism of critics such as Goethe and Coleridge. As the "foremost psychological critic of Shakespeare in the late eighteenth century," he provides an interesting contrast to Hanmer and to theatrical perceptions of Hamlet popular at the time.[8]

The first word in Richardson's Philosophical Analysis is "Moralists"--a revealing introduction to what follows, since, as Richardson was later to say, only "the moralist becomes a critic:

and the two sciences of ethics and criticism appear to be intimately and very naturally connected."[9] In his "love of virtue, and . . . hatred of vice," he reflects the prevalent seventeenth- and eighteenth-century view of what tragedy should properly instil in the heart of every man, and his chief purpose for urging the reader to "Know thyself" is not that the latter might then be wiser and more content, but rather that he might more easily recognize and thwart the "inroads of vice" that threaten from all sides:

> We must therefore be attentive to the state and constitution of our own minds; we must discover to what habits we are most addicted, and of what propensities we ought chiefly to beware: . . . . Now, the study of human nature, accustoming us to turn our attention inwards, and reflect on the various propensities and inclinations of the heart, facilitates self-examination, and renders it habitual.[10]

Repeatedly, Richardson uses the language and methodology of the scientist to force a system onto what is obviously new and unknown. "Difficulty in making just experiments is the principal reason why the knowledge of human nature has been retarded," he says. "The materials of this study are commonly gathered from reflections on our own feelings, or from observations on the conduct of others. Each of these methods is exposed to difficulty, and consequently to error" (p. 18). Because writers naturally present us with characters that, being fictional, stand still long enough to be examined, Richardson finally concludes that the study of human nature might best be served by a study of

the poets: "that class of poetical writers that excel by imitating the passions, might contribute in this respect to rectify and enlarge the sentiments of the philosopher: And, if so, they would have the additional merit of conducting us to the temple of truth" (pp. 28-29).

This, then, is the somewhat disheartening method by which Richardson at long last comes to an awareness of the suitability of studying Shakespeare's plays. Unlike Hanmer, who had evinced a genuine fascination for the characters that preceded his occasional moralizing on their behaviour, Richardson begins with the sole purpose of inculcating into his readers a sense of virtue, and only incidentally finds himself examining the characters as if they had inner lives of their own.

With all of Richardson's emphasis on morality, one may assume that he disagreed with George Steevens' opinions, published in the previous year, concerning "the immoral tendency of [Hamlet's] character."[11] In fact, Richardson's whole approach to Hamlet differs from anything that had been done before. Steevens and most of the earlier critics had examined Hamlet's actions (in Steevens' case, his deplorable lack of action), but Richardson proposes right from the start to "analyz[e] the <u>mind</u> of Hamlet, ... [and] the various <u>principles of action</u> that govern him." Suddenly, we find a new interest in the "examin[ation of] . . . <u>motives</u>, and the temper or <u>state of mind</u> that produces them"--surely as fitting a definition of psychological criticism as one may ever hope to get (pp. 86-87; italics mine).

Richardson begins by first establishing Hamlet's "ruling passion." In his study of Jaques in As You Like It, Richardson defines this as one passion that "either by original and superior vigour, or by reiterated indulgence, gains an ascendant in the soul, and subdues every opposing principle" (p. 166). Analyzing Hamlet, he concludes that "a sense of virtue . . . seems to be the ruling principle"--even to the extent of making Hamlet appear a martyr and a saint:

> In other men, it may appear with the ensigns of high authority: in Hamlet it possesses absolute power. United with amiable affections, with every graceful accomplishment, and every agreeable quality, it embellishes and exalts them. . . . Yet, with all this purity of moral sentiment, with eminent abilities, exceedingly cultivated and improved, with manners the most elegant and becoming, with the utmost rectitude of intention, and the most active zeal in the exercise of every duty, he is hated, persecuted, and destroyed.
>
> (pp. 140-41, 142-43)

The text of course contradicts this. After all, Hamlet's words taken literally do not show him to be quite so amiable in the prayer scene, or when he is alone with Ophelia. Richardson therefore performs his most astonishing feats as a moralist and critic when he examines such passages and still manages to find in Hamlet an "exquisite sense of virtue" (p. 94). He does this chiefly by denying the surface meaning of Hamlet's words. According to Richardson's analysis of his language, Hamlet is never explicit and his words are never to be taken at face value. The Hamlet we find described in the Philosophical Analysis "delivers himself ambiguously"; "disguises [the] external

symptoms" of "the real state of his mind"; and is consistently "oblique" and "indirect" (pp. 88, 90; italics mine). Even his behaviour is seen to be duplicitous: "he would seem frivolous when the occasion required him to be sedate: and, celebrated for the wisdom and propriety of his conduct, he would assume appearances of impropriety: full of honour and affection, he would seem inconsistent: of elegant and agreeable manners, and possessing a complacent temper, he would put on the semblance of rudeness" (p. 122). While Hamlet in the original play does admittedly do all of this when he feels he is being watched, Richardson takes the notion of Hamlet's counterfeit madness to an extreme, seeming to see all of Hamlet's speeches--even those in which he is alone--as revealing an opposite trait or emotion within.

This subversion of the play's literal meaning is perhaps best illustrated in Richardson's comments on Hamlet's soliloquy beginning, "Now might I do it pat" (III.iii.73-96). Although lengthy, the passage in the Philosophical Analysis is invaluable for displaying Richardson's habitual tendency to turn Hamlet's words and their meaning upside-down.

> The sentiments that Hamlet expresses when he finds Claudius at prayer are not, I will venture to affirm, his real ones. There is nothing in his whole character that justifies such savage enormity. We are therefore bound in justice and candor to look for some hypothesis that shall reconcile what he now delivers with his usual maxims and general deportment. I would ask, then, whether on many occasions we do not allege as the motives of our conduct those considerations which are not really our motives? Nay, is not this sometimes done almost without our knowledge? . . . Apply this . . . to the case of Hamlet; [a] sense of supposed duty and a regard to character prompt him to slay his uncle;

> and he is withheld at that instant by the ascendant of a gentle disposition; by the scruples, and perhaps weakness, of extreme sensibility. But how can he answer to the world and to his sense of duty for missing this opportunity? The real motive cannot be urged. Instead of excusing, it would expose him, he thinks, to censure; perhaps to contempt. He looks about for a motive; and one . . . is immediately suggested. He alleges, as direct causes of his delay, motives that could never influence his conduct; and thus exhibits a most exquisite picture of amiable self-deceit.[12]

Here, Richardson opposes true motives to alleged ones, and "venture[s] to affirm" that, despite a lack of textual evidence, he can tell the difference between the two. His entire method consists of explaining away that which does not suit his preconceived notion of Hamlet's character. Needless to say, that way madness--that is, critical anarchy--lies.

Given these various levels of meaning, however, the Hamlet of the Philosophical Analysis is admittedly more "round" than is the character described in Hanmer's Remarks, and evidence of this new complexity may be found in the changed attitude towards the issue of Hamlet's sanity. Hanmer, for example, had assumed Hamlet's madness to be only feigned and had even gone so far as to criticize Shakespeare for the untidy craftsmanship that left the seams of his assimilation exposed to view. In Hanmer's opinion, the obvious answer to the problem of Hamlet's state of mind is to be found in his confession to his mother that he "essentially [is] not in madness, / But mad in craft," and he is supported in this by the opinions of other earlier critics. Mrs. Charlotte Lennox, for one, agrees in 1753 that Hamlet's is only an assumed madness, and "less essential to the Play than [to] the History [i.e., Saxo

Grammaticus']"; and Johnson later notes that while the "pretended" and "feigned" madness "causes much mirth," yet (again blaming Shakespeare) "there appears no adequate cause" for it, for Hamlet "does nothing which he might not have done with the reputation of sanity."[13]

Richardson, on the other hand, just as firmly believes Hamlet is mentally unstable--although not so much so that it would take away from his conscious virtues. The Philosophical Analysis of 1774 is still relatively restrained in its opinion:

> Conceiving designs of punishment, conscious of very violent perturbation, perceiving himself already suspected by the King, afraid lest his aspect, gesture, or demeanour should betray him, and knowing that his projects must be conducted with secrecy, he resolves to conceal himself under the disguise of madness.
>
> (p. 119)

However, the Essays on Some of Shakespeare's Dramatic Characters, written ten years later, implicitly reveals the popular acceptance of such a view, as Richardson confidently goes even further:

> Surely such disorder of mind, in characters like that of Hamlet, though not amounting to actual madness, yet exhibiting reason in extreme perplexity, and even trembling on the brink of madness, is not unusual. Meantime, Hamlet was fully sensible how strange those involuntary improprieties must appear to others: he was conscious he could not suppress them; he knew he was surrounded with spies; and was justly apprehensive, lest his suspicion or purposes should be discovered. But how are these consequences to be prevented? By counterfeiting an insanity which in part exists.[14]

Already, for Richardson and other dramatic critics, Hamlet verges on being what he pretends to have become. Thus Steevens, agreeing with Dr. Akenside, feels that "the conduct of Hamlet [is] every way unnatural and indefensible, unless he were to be regarded as a young man whose intellects were in some degree impaired"; and James Beattie, in a letter to Mrs. Montagu, remarks that while "the peculiarity of his circumstances often obliges him to counterfeit madness, . . . the storm of passions within him often drives him to the verge of real madness."[15] What was in 1736 regarded as an objective reason for Hamlet's feigning madness--that is, Shakespeare's necessary reliance on the plot provided him by his source--is by the last quarter of the century seen as a part of Hamlet's psychological nature.

Interestingly, as we have already seen in Hanmer's Remarks, this issue of Hamlet's real or pretended madness again appears to be directly related to the issue of whether or not Hamlet is active or irresolute. In other words, it almost seems as if the saner the prince, the more likely he is to be energetic and vengeful; and conversely, the more impaired his intellects, to use Steevens' phrase, the more apathetic he becomes.

Richardson's ingenious (and through the similar views of Goethe and Coleridge, still quite influential) theorizing concerning the cause of Hamlet's delay begins simply enough: Hamlet at the start of the play, he says, grieves for the loss of his father. However, since all "Grief is passive," it "rouses no active principle" but instead already "disposes [him] to silence, solitude, and inaction" (p. 87). No longer willing to blame

Shakespeare, Richardson also does not blame Hamlet. In fact, he praises the notion of delay, seeing it as proof that Hamlet's moral nature was unequal to the completion of such an immoral task. "The tendency of indignation," he says,

> and of serious and inflamed resentment, is to inflict punishment on the offender. But, if resentment is ingrafted on the moral faculty, and grows from it, its tenor and conduct will be different: in its first emotion it may breathe excessive and immediate vengeance; but sentiments of justice and propriety interposing, will arrest and suspend its violence. An ingenuous mind, thus agitated by powerful and contending principles, exceedingly tortured and perplexed, will appear hesitating and undetermined. Thus the vehemence of the vindictive passion will by delay suffer abatement; by its own ardour it will be exhausted . . . .
>
> (p. 123; italics mine)

This is interesting, and the still current popularity of such a view indicates that, in the study, it is capable (correct or not) of being consistently applied throughout the play. However, the more pertinent question here is: Will it work on the stage? In one of the most valid criticisms of Richardson's analytical method, E.L. McAdam, Jr., answers, No:

> Richardson's whole account of Hamlet's character is that of a man with a thesis to prove. He picks out isolated speeches and strings them together; he neglects the obvious intent of the text . . . ; he seeks out an interpretation which is so subtle as to be unobserved and unsuspected by any audience, forgetting that subtlety is not, can not be, a part of popular drama; moreover, he says that he simply does not believe the text when it contradicts his views.[16]

In an issue of the Monthly Review published in 1789, there is a caution that "analyzing of dramatic characters might easily be carried to an extreme";[17] and we only have to turn to Richardson's elaborate reconstruction of Hamlet's thoughts in the prayer scene to wonder whether any actor could ever have brought that overly subtle interpretation to life on stage. Not one of the theatre texts depicts the virtuous but vacillating and half-mad Hamlet of the Philosophical Analysis. As we have seen, Hanmer's emphasis on the character's filial piety, his heroism, and his resolution more closely approximates the Hamlet of the theatrical texts than Richardson's paralyzed Hamlet ever could.

CONCLUSION

> [O]ne seems to understand Hamlet better after a little study than after a great deal.
>
> (H. N. Hudson)

In the sixty-year period between 1876 and 1935, as A. A. Raven has said, "there has been published on the average of every twelve days . . . something concerned solely with Hamlet."[1] Within the more than three centuries that have elapsed since Shakespeare first introduced him to the stage, there have been, in addition to the young male prince, female Hamlets, seventy-year-old Hamlets, child Hamlets--even canine Hamlets.[2] More than any other character written for the stage, Hamlet has tugged at the public's imagination at the same time that he has stubbornly refused to reveal himself.

The rage to "interpret" Hamlet, to, as he himself charges, "pluck out the heart of [his] mystery," is a relatively recent phenomenon. Before the beginning of the eighteenth century, there is only an appreciative silence--appreciative, we know, as Hamlet was the most attended play at the theatres. Only gradually do we hear about Hamlet the character--first, in reference to the action of the play, and later, with regard to his own enigmatic nature. From Shakespeare's day until almost the last quarter of the eighteenth century, procrastination, for example, was so little considered a part of Hamlet's personality that it was never mentioned; since then, Hamlet has become, even to those who have never read or seen the play, emblematic of delay.

Despite the fact that a playscript is more than just a literary text, criticism of Hamlet has been predominantly (then and now) of the "armchair" or "closet" type. To a certain extent, this is understandable; the very nature of the play as read is ambiguity, and as such, critics often apply a strictly literary approach to its problems. The temptation to answer definitively the riddle of the sphinx, to sum up neatly Hamlet's character as inherently "virtuous" or "weak" (or, later, Oedipal and neurotic) has sometimes led to tortuous explanations that contradict the words written on the page. Thus Thomas Hanmer is unable to fit Hamlet's speech upon finding Claudius at prayer into his conception of the character; William Richardson's theorizing requires him to ignore those moments when Hamlet is most active; and Ernest Jones, in more recent years, must remain uncharacteristically silent on the subject of Hamlet's constant reiteration of love for his father.[3] In each case, the critic has looked to find his own assumptions validated within the text, his interpretation divorced from an awareness of performance implications.

In the previous sections of this paper, I have outlined both the scholarly and, through the actors' texts, the theatrical perceptions of Hamlet prevalent during the late seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries. For most of this period, there was virtually no difference between these interpretations; they paralleled one another and both maintained neoclassical premises. The Hamlet viewed on stage and discussed in print was never considered weak, procrastinatory, or in any way insane.

By 1774, however, scholarly criticism was beginning to see Hamlet as such. Unlike his neoclassical predecessors, William Richardson accepted these qualities, but only as more obvious manifestations of the character's profound psychological nature. He presented to his readers a Hamlet with an inner life which was accessible through the printed page but could not be accomodated by the practical theatre. As a result, the two worlds of the stage and the page, of actor and scholar, begin to separate, pointing in the direction of criticism to come. For the next one hundred years, Hamlet as a dramatic character--Hamlet as a play for the theatre--will virtually disappear.

Notes to Introduction

[1] Quoted in Gino J. Matteo, Shakespeare's Othello: The Study and the Stage, 1604-1904, Salzburg Studies in English Literature, No. 11 (Salzburg: Institut Fuer Englische Sprache Und Literatur, 1974), p. 145.

[2] John Genest, Some Account of the English Stage from . . . 1660-1830, 10 vols. (Bath, 1832; rpt. New York: Burt Franklin, 1965), 5:107-08; 8:133-34.

[3] R.W. Babcock, The Genesis of Shakespeare Idolatry (1931; rpt. New York: Russell & Russell, 1964), p. xxvii.

[4] In the twentieth century, John Gielgud, for one, was made painfully aware of this misplaced studiousness when, having followed Harley Granville-Barker in assiduously making Hamlet's procrastinatory cycles a part of his staged interpretation, audiences still did not recognize the "problem" of Hamlet's delay. Gielgud's experiment is evidence that intention and effect do not always coincide. See Carol J. Carlisle, Shakespeare from the Greenroom (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1969), p. 49. A.J.A. Waldock, in his Hamlet: A Study in Critical Method (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1931), also says that "most people who see the drama performed do not bother themselves greatly about this delay, and do not question themselves seriously as to its cause" (p. 30; italics mine).

[5] Letter to William Winter, 4 June 1878; quoted in Charles H. Shattuck, The Hamlet of Edwin Booth (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1969), p. xvii.

[6] James J. Lynch, Box, Pit, and Gallery (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1953), p. 59.

[7] Horace Howard Furness, ed., The Tempest, New Variorum Edition (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1892), p. viii; George C.D. Odell, Shakespeare From Betterton to Irving, 2 vols. (1920; rpt. New York: Dover Publications, 1966), 1:31.

[8] Hazelton Spencer, Shakespeare Improved: The Restoration Versions in Quarto and on the Stage (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1927), pp. 203, 172, 173. Sounding equally indignant is H. N. Hudson's by now famous response to Tate's adaptation of King Lear. Hudson hyperbolically refers to it as "this shameless, this execrable piece of dementation. Tate improve Lear? Set a tailor at work, rather, to improve Niagara! Withered be the hand, palzied be the arm, that ever dares to touch one of Shakespeare's plays." Quoted in Christopher Spencer, ed., Five Restoration Adaptations of Shakespeare (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1965), p. 8.

[9] Boaden and Fitzgerald are both quoted in George Winchester Stone, Jr., "Garrick's Long Lost Alteration of Hamlet," Publications of the Modern Language Association, 49 (1934):890, 892.

[10] Note, for instance, Odell, who sniffs, of Davenant's The Law Against Lovers: "If one could forget Shakespeare, one might like the play" (Betterton to Irving, 1:27).

[11] Alfred Harbage, Sir William Davenant: Poet-Venturer, 1606-1668 (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1935), pp. 251-52.

[12] Christopher Spencer, pp. 8, 32.

Notes to Part I

[1] In J.E. Spingarn, ed., Critical Essays of the Seventeenth Century, 3 vols. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1957), 2:163.

[2] Bonamy Dobree, Restoration Tragedy: 1660-1720 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1929), p. 25.

[3] See, for instance, this from Francis Kirkman in 1652: "I beleeve the French for amorous language, admirable invention, high atchievements, honorable Loves inimitable constancy, are not to be equalled: and that no Nation yields better Arguments for Romance Playes (the only Playes now desired) then the French." Orrery, in 1661, states that "his majty Relish'd rather, the French Fassion of Playes, then the English"; and Sir Robert Howard, in his 1665 "Preface to Four New Plays," complains about how the fashion "has very much affected some of our Nation." (In John Munro, ed., The Shakspere Allusion-Book, 2 vols. [New York: Duffield & Company, 1909], 2:24; Gunnar Sorelius, "The Giant Race Before the Flood" [Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1966], p. 114; and Spingarn, 2:99.)

[4] But see also Sir Robert Howard's complaints concerning "Mathematical . . . Rules," in his "Preface to The Great Favourite" (1668), in Spingarn, 2:105-111.

[5] The most well-known of the many seventeenth-century essays in support of free rather than literal translation is Dryden's preface to his Translation of Ovid's Epistles (1680). See also Spingarn, 2:xlviii-lviii, for a discussion of British and Continenral theories on translation.

[6] In Spingarn, 2:132; and Sorelius, p. 148.

[7] In Arthur C. Kirsch, ed., Literary Criticism of John Dryden (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1966), pp. 124-25.

[8] In Munro, 2:85, 56.

[9] Mongi Raddadi, Davenant's Adaptations of Shakespeare (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1979), p. 64. See also G.I. Duthie, The "Bad" Quarto of Hamlet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1941), in which he proposes that Q_1 is a memorial reconstruction by the actor who played Marcellus.

[10] See Raddadi, pp. 64-65.

[11] In Spingarn, 2:69.

[12] In Spingarn, 2:291, 93.

[13] According to this "Acte," a fine of ten pounds would be levied against "any p[er]son or p[er]sons [who] doe or shall in any Stage play interlude shewe Maygame or Pageant jestingly or p[ro]phanely speake or use the holy Name of God or of Christ Jesus, or the Holy Ghost or of the Trinitie." Quoted in Raddadi, p. 67.

[14] Quoted in Raddadi, p. 67.

[15] Quoted in Raddadi, p. 10.

[16] The ten plays by Shakespeare were The Tempest, Measure for Measure, Much Ado About Nothing, Romeo and Juliet, Twelfth Night, Henry the Eighth, King Lear, Macbeth, Hamlet, and Pericles. Davenant's adaptations consisted of Hamlet, Macbeth, The Tempest, or the Enchanted Island, and The Law Against Lovers (a combination of Measure for Measure and Much Ado About Nothing).

[17] In Spingarn, 2:192, 195, 200-01.

[18] Interestingly, Rymer also concluded that many of Shakespeare's characters are dramatic failures because they are all talk and little action: "Many, peradventure, of the Tragical Scenes in Shakespeare, cry'd up for the Action, might do yet better without words. Words are a sort of baggage that were better out of the way at the push of Action, especially in his bombast Circumstance, where the Words and Action are seldom akin, generally are inconsistent, at cross-purposes, embarrass or destroy each other. . . In a Play one should speak like a man of business." Quoted in Spingarn, 2:211.

[19] Tate's "Epistle Dedicatory" is in Munro, 2:268-70. All further references to this work will appear in the text.

[20] Oxberry's phrase is in Hamlet, ... As It Is Performed At The Theatres Royal, in William Oxberry, The New English Drama, 21 vols. (London: W. Simpkin and R. Marshall, 1818), 1:xviii. Atterbury's letter to Alexander Pope (2 August 1721) is quoted in Ronald B. McKerrow, "The Treatment of Shakespeare's Text by his

Earlier Editors, 1709-1768," in Studies in Shakespeare: British Academy Lectures, ed. Peter Alexander (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 116.

[21] Quoted in George Winchester Stone, Jr., "Shakespeare in the Periodicals: Part I," Shakespeare Quarterly, 2 (July 1951):230; Brian Vickers, ed., Shakespeare: The Critical Heritage, 5 vols. (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979), 5:21; and Lynch, p. 291. Earlier, the Universal Spectator (5 April 1735) had printed this facetious recipe for the making of a critic: "A Good Quantity of Stage Terms, such as you may gather in the Pit any first Night of a new Play; a Grain and a half of Judgment, little or no Reading, and a Prejudice and Ill-Nature Quantum Sufficit. Probatum est." Quoted in Charles Harold Gray, Theatrical Criticism in London to 1795 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1931), p. 74. See also Sterne's Tristram Shandy (vol.3: chapt. 12) for a delightful parody of one of these "Excellent observer[s]" evaluating Garrick's soliloquy of the night before.

[22] Many studies have been published on the link between eighteenth-century acting styles and the new emphasis on character criticism. The best of these are probably George Winchester Stone, Jr., "David Garrick's Significance in the History of Shakespearean Criticism: A Study of the Impact of the Actor upon the Change of Critical Focus during the Eighteenth Century," Publications of the Modern Language Association, 65 (1950):183-197; and Joseph W. Donohue, Jr., Dramatic Character in the English Romantic Age (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970).

[23] Quoted in Bertram Joseph, The Tragic Actor (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1959), p. 23.

[24] Letter from Peter Whalley, 20 February 1744. Quoted in Stone, "David Garrick's Significance," p. 184.

[25] Quoted in Stone, "David Garrick's Significance," p. 184, n.4.

[26] Quoted in Stone, "David Garrick's Significance," p. 183; italics mine.

[27] Quoted in Gray, p. 42.

[28] Theobald is quoted in David Nichol Smith, ed., Eighteenth-Century Essays on Shakespeare (1903; rpt. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), p. xiii; and John Hill is quoted in Joseph, p. 78.

[29] Tragedies of the Last Age (1678); in Spingarn, 2:183. For an interesting discussion of the shift from "fabulist" (i.e., plot-or "fable"-oriented drama) to "affective" drama, see Eric Rothstein, Restoration Tragedy (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1967).

[30] Thomas Whately, Remarks on Some of the Characters of Shakespeare, 3rd ed. (1785; rpt. London: John W. Parker, 1839), pp. 17-18. Whately's essay, a comparison of Richard III and Macbeth, was composed sometime before 1770 but first published posthumously in 1785. Interestingly, John Philip Kemble felt compelled to respond to its suggestion that Macbeth lacked intrepidity and in 1786 published his own pamphlet on Macbeth--a clear instance of an actor defending his interpretation against the new school of psychological criticism.

[31] Preface to Shakespeare's Plays (1765), in Walter Raleigh, Johnson on Shakespeare (1908; rpt. London: Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 11.

[32] Hazlitt in the next century was probably the first to pinpoint the important difference between the two types of character criticism. He faults Johnson for having found only "the general species or didactic form in Shakespeare's characters, which was all he sought or cared for; he did not find the individual traits, or the dramatic distinctions which Shakespeare has engrafted on this general nature, because he felt no interest in them." Preface to Characters of Shakespeare's Plays (1818); quoted in Herbert Spencer Robinson, English Shakesperian Criticism in the Eighteenth Century (1932; rpt. New York: Gordian Press, 1968), p. 127.

[33] Preface to Shakespeare, in Raleigh, p. 12; William Guthrie, Essay upon English Tragedy (1747), reprinted in Arthur Freeman, ed., Eighteenth Century Shakespeare, No. 6 (New York: Augustus M. Kelley, 1971), p. 21; Thomas Robertson, Essay on the Character of Hamlet, in Shakespeare's Tragedy of Hamlet (1790), as quoted in Paul S. Conklin, A History of Hamlet Criticism, 1601-1821 (New York: King's Crown Press, 1947), p. 75, italics mine.

[34] Quoted in Babcock, pp. 165-66.

[35] For further general discussion of the eighteenth-century shift from neoclassical criticism to a more interpretive and psychological style of criticism, see Babcock, Genesis of Shakespeare Idolatry, and Nichol Smith, Eighteenth-Century Essays. Also see David Nichol Smith, Shakespeare in the Eighteenth Century (1928; rpt. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967).

[36] Babcock, p. 154.

[37] [Thomas Hanmer], Some Remarks on the Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, Written by Mr. William Shakespeare, Augustan Reprint Society, No. 9 (1947; rpt. New York: Kraus Reprint, 1967), p. 17. While the author of the Remarks preferred to be known only as "Anonymous," I have followed the current tide of critical opinion in attributing it to Sir Thomas Hanmer. C.D. Thorpe's reasons for concluding that Hanmer could not have written it (see "Thomas Hanmer and the Anonymous Essay on Hamlet," Modern Language

Notes, 61 [1934]: 493-98) now seem to have been discredited.

Notes to Part II

[1] Hazelton Spencer makes his case for Davenant as the probable author of the 1676 Hamlet in "Hamlet under the Restoration," PMLA, xxxviii (December 1923):770-77, and expands on that theory in his book, Shakespeare Improved (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1927). On p. 184 of the latter, he also offers a plausible explanation for the delay between performance (1661) and publication (1676).

[2] Some mention of four promptbooks will occasionally be made in order to judge the universality of the revisions in the primary theatre texts under study. These promptbooks will be referred to as Smock Alley, Ward A, Ward B, and Hopkins 1777. According to G. Blakemore Evans, "Some connection [of Smock Alley] with the text of Hamlet as it is found in Qq. 6-7 [i.e., Davenant 1676] is certain . . . . [The evidence] suggests considerable but not very systematic use of Qq. 6-7, eked out . . . with what the reviser (or revisers) remembered from London performances" (Shakespearean Prompt-Books of the Seventeenth Century [Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1966], vol. 4, part i:5-6). Smock Alley was later further revised by eight separate seventeenth- and eighteenth-century hands. Evans also collates this promptbook with Hopkins 1777 (prepared by Garrick's prompter, William Hopkins, in conjunction with Garrick 1772) and with Ward A and B. For a discussion of the Ward promptbooks, see James G. McManaway, "The Two Earliest Prompt Books of Hamlet," in Studies in Shakespeare, Bibliography, and Theatre, eds. Richard Hosley, et al. (1949; rpt. New York: Shakespeare Association of America, 1969), pp. 93-120.

[3] Munro, 2:436, 89, 95; and William Van Lennep, Emmett L. Avery, et. al., The London Stage, 1660-1800, 5 vols. (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1965), 1:43. On page 14 of his Hamlet On Stage: The Great Tradition (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1985), John Mills postulates that Evelyn is referring to the last Hamlet production allowed at Gibbon's Tennis Court and acted by the King's Men. Soon after, the play was given only to Davenant's company, which employed the continental innovation of movable scenery.

[4] The Tragedy of Hamlet Prince of Denmark. As it is now Acted at his Highness the Duke of York's Theatre (1676; rpt. London: Cornmarket Press, 1969), n. pag. All further references are to this edition and will appear as Davenant 1676.

Also, contrary to what their identical notes "To the Reader" imply, Davenant 1676 and Wilks 1751 do not print all of Shakespeare's text. In some cases, this is obviously because Davenant and Wilks closely followed the cuts in their sources;

just as often, however, one feels that censorship and the editors' prudery determined even what one should read. A case in point is the absence--not just the marking for omission--of all religious oaths, and the refusing to print such objectionable lines as Hamlet's double entendres to Ophelia.

[5] Hazelton Spencer, Shakespeare Improved, p. 176; Sorelius, p. 42; Odell, 1:23-24.

[6] Raddadi, p. 66.

[7] Davenant's revision of the language in Hamlet reveals an attitude of superiority towards the Elizabethans that was to become even more marked in the eighteenth century. "Perpend," "coted," and "riband," for example, are considered archaic by 1676, and are given the modern equivalents, "Consider," "met," and "feather." Davenant tidies up Shakespeare's occasionally rough metre, as when he rewrites "This nothing's more than matter" so as to read "This nothing is much more than matter." Most importantly, his alterations consistently display what Honnighausen (in Raddadi, p. 51) has called Entpoetisierung, or a de-poetization of Shakespeare's words. Thus the "native hue of resolution" becomes merely a "healthful face of resolution," and "I'll silence me even here" becomes "I'll here conceal myself."

[8] Charles H. Shattuck, ed., Introduction to Hamlet, in John Philip Kemble Promptbooks, 11 vols. (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1974), 2:ii. The theatre edition is Hamlet, Prince of Denmark: A Tragedy. As it is now Acted by His Majesty's Servants (1751; rpt. London: Cornmarket Press, 1969.) All further references are to this edition and will appear as Wilks 1751.

[9] Henry N. Paul, "Mr. Hughs' Edition of Hamlet," Modern Language Notes, 49 (1934):442.

[10] Some Cursory Remarks on the Play Call'd the Non-Juror (1718). Quoted in Odell, 1:225.

[11] As just one example of inattentive editing, Wilks 1751 begins I.ii. by retaining only thirteen lines of the King's speech (ending, "With this Affair along") and immediately follows this with Laertes' "My dear Lord, / Your Leave and Favour to return to France" (Wilks 1751, pp. 8-9). By not leaving the King a single question to Laertes--something the latter might respond to--the scene as it stands is meaningless.

[12] See Stone, Jr., "Garrick's Alteration," p. 896, for a discussion of Colman's granting permission to have Garrick's usual version printed. Regarding the similarity between the 1763 version and that found in Bell's Theatre Edition, Kalman A. Burnim, in his David Garrick, Director (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1961), states unequivocally that the 1763 edition "is the same text published by Bell in 1774," and

elsewhere, that "the Bell edition [is] the version Garrick acted most of his career" (pp. 153, 158). I have myself examined Stone's chart of the number of lines cut in various eighteenth-century theatre texts of Hamlet (in his "Garrick's Alteration," pp. 902-03), and find that both the number and kind of cuts listed for 1763 agree exactly with the version printed in 1774. Because the chronology is somewhat confusing (i.e., the text examined here was printed in 1774 but actually antedates the more radical version presented in 1772), I have chosen to call this Garrick 1763.

[13] Hamlet, Prince of Denmark. A Tragedy, by Shakespeare. As Performed at the Theatre-Royal, Covent Garden. Regulated From the Prompt-Book, With Permission of the Managers, By Mr. Younger, Prompter. In Bell's Edition of Shakespeare's Plays, . . . 8 vols. (1774; rpt. London: Cornmarket Press, 1969), 3:1-84. All further references are to this edition and will appear as Garrick 1763.

Charles Beecher Hogan also clears up some confusion over the dating of these performances. "In 1773," he says, "Bell printed the play as it was ordinarily acted [i.e., in 1763], but included the cast of Garrick's alteration [i.e., in 1772]" (Shakespeare in the Theatre, 2 vols. [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957], 2:189).

[14] Quoted in Nichol Smith, Shakespeare in the Eighteenth Century, pp. 90-91; Babcock, The Genesis of Shakespeare Idolatry, p. xxvii; Genest, Some Account of the English Stage, 5:439. Kenrick perhaps took his cue from Gentleman himself, who only four years earlier had stated that "theatrical paring . . . makes prompters books such miserable, mutilated objects, as they are in many places; and at the same time wrongs both the author and public taste . . . " (The Dramatic Censor; or, Critical Companion, 2 vols. [1770; rpt. Westmead, England: Gregg International, 1969], 1:136).

I also wonder how seriously we may take the claim, on the title-page of Garrick 1763, that it is "Regulated from the Prompt-Book." Such announcements were often inserted merely to give legitimacy to the work, in the hope that doing so would increase sales. That the Hamlet printed in Bell's Theatre Edition is a reasonably accurate copy of what Garrick did on stage, however, may be assumed. Garrick was certainly aware of its existence, and Gentleman, in his "Advertisement" to the subscribers, reports that he "first solicited [Garrick's] sanction and assistance" (Bell's Edition of Shakespeare's Plays, I:8).

[15] Letter to Sir William Young, 10 January 1773. In David M. Little and George M. Kahrl, eds., The Letters of David Garrick, 3 vols. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1963), 2:845-46. After almost two hundred years of being reviled but never seen, Garrick 1772 is now available in print. See Harry William Pedicord and Frederick Louis Bergmann, eds., The Plays of David Garrick, Vol. 4: Garrick's Adaptations of Shakespeare (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1981):241-323. For the purposes of this study, I have relied on

the latter and on the Folger copy itself (Prompt Hamlet 16). All further references to this text will appear as Garrick 1772.

16 Although the 1747 text and Wilks 1751 indicate some minor differences among words (e.g., "horrible" and "horrid"; "Actions" and "Accent"; "low" and "long"; "love" and "dove," etc.), they are, for our purposes, identical. They both, for example, follow precisely the same pagination.

17 Letter to Madame Necker, 26 April 1776. In Little and Kahrl, 3:1095.

18 Quoted in Burnim, David Garrick, p. 155.

19 London Chronicle, 17-19 December 1772, and Westminster Magazine (January 1773); both quoted in Odell, 1:385-86.

20 In Vickers, 5:481.

21 In Vickers, 5:48, n. 36. Even Francis Gentleman, that conservative apologist for Garrick, agreed that in omitting the gravediggers, "Mr. Garrick has too politely frenchified his alteration, by endeavouring to annihilate what, though Mr. Voltaire could not like it, has indubitable merit" (Garrick 1763, p. 71). There is also some evidence that Garrick attained the neoclassical approval he had been seeking. George W. Stone, Jr. quotes from a letter to Garrick written by Mrs. J. Henrietta Pye on 21 November 1774: "I imagine Mr. Pye told you I had been to pay a visit to Voltaire, where I met with a most gracious reception. We talked of your alteration of Hamlet, which he very greatly approves, and expresst himself very highly in your praise" ("Garrick's Alteration," p. 901; italics mine).

22 In Vickers, 5:467, 468.

23 Letter to Sir William Young, 10 January 1773; in Little and Kahrl, 2:845-46.

24 Stone, "Garrick's Alteration," pp. 893-94. However, audience support for the alteration dwindled rapidly following Garrick's retirement in 1776. On 5 May 1777, it took in only fifty-nine pounds, and on 20 September 1779, the Morning Chronicle complained that "The managers, to our astonishment, continue to play with Garrick's alterations. [The original play] is materially injured by those which Garrick adopted in compliance to the French criticks." The London Stage, 5:79, 284.

25 Shakspeare's Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, A Tragedy, Revised by J.P. Kemble; And Now First Published As It Is Acted At The Theatre Royal in Covent Garden (1804; rpt. Charles H. Shattuck, ed., John Philip Kemble Promptbooks, 11 vols. [Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1974]), 2:1-83. All further references are to this edition and will appear as Kemble 1804.

[26] Quoted in Robert Speaight, Shakespeare on the Stage (Boston: Little, Brown, 1973), p. 40; in Shattuck, Kemble Promptbooks, 2:ii; and in Donohue, Jr., p. 247.

[27] Quoted in Mills, pp. 58, 57.

[28] The act, scene, and line numbering follows that of the Signet edition of Hamlet (Edward Hubler, ed. [New York: New American Library], 1963); where more than one text is cited, I have used the Signet to indicate generality. In those instances where I refer to a specific theatre text, I have noted it parenthetically, giving the page number and date of publication, not first performance.

[29] William P. Halstead is therefore off by about seventy years when he says, "I first became aware of the reappearance of 'God' in the acting editions of Henry Irving" (Shakespeare As Spoken, 2 vols. [Ann Arbor: University Microfilms International, 1977], 1:xxvi). Perhaps Halstead was referring to the general retention of the word in an entire text.

[30] Lichtenberg is quoted in Mills, p. 35; and the Monthly Mirror (1795) is quoted in Arthur Colby Sprague, Shakespeare and the Actors (New York: Russell & Russell, 1963), p. 137.

[31] Harold Jenkins, ed., Hamlet, Arden Edition (London and New York: Methuen, 1982), p. 209. This might also be an opportune moment in which to clear up any confusion concerning truncated sources and their relation to the cuts in these stage versions. For instance, because both F_1 and Q_1 omit I.iv.17-38a ("This heavy-headed revel . . . . own scandal"), it becomes important to check especially the early theatre texts to see whether or not their base-text contained that passage. In other words, if, as in the case of Smock Alley, I.iv.17-38a is not even printed, then we cannot really say that the lines have been consciously "cut"--and we dare not make any sort of conjecture about what the compositor thought of them. On the other hand, if, as in the case of Davenant 1676 and Wilks 1751, the passage was printed from its source and systematically marked for omission with inverted commas, then we can indeed suppose a certain bias on the part of the actors. Later, with Garrick 1763 and Kemble 1804, our suppositions become a bit more conjectural still, if only because their pages are "clean"--i.e., they print only what was performed, not indicating whether the omissions derive from their source or from their own moral and aesthetic disapproval. These eighteenth- and nineteenth-century adapters did, however, have greater access to scholarly editions, which meant that they were more aware of Shakespeare's full text (Q_2 and F_1, before 1821) and thus more free to re-insert lines excised in their source (v. the Hughs-Wilks restorations based on Rowe's edition of 1709).

[32] Quoted in Mills, pp. 22, 58.

[33] Quoted in Mills, p. 35; in Burnim, David Garrick, p. 160; and in Vickers, 5:450.

[34] The Theatrical Speaker (1807); quoted in Sprague, p. 142.

[35] Quoted in Horace Howard Furness, ed., Hamlet, New Variorum Edition, 2 vols. (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1877), 1:104. That the Ghost's speech seems to have been considered interminable is evident as far back as Q_1, which provided relief for both audience and actor through an interruption of another sort. The Ghost cries, "O horrible, most horrible!" and Hamlet interjects with "O God!"

[36] Quoted in Mills, pp. 38-39.

[37] A seemingly unrelated comment by Richard D. Altick, in The English Common Reader (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), may explain why the adapters felt Ophelia should have been reading rather than sewing when Hamlet visited her. Describing upper- and middle-class women of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Altick says that they turned to books because needlework was "no longer regarded as quite genteel" (p. 45).

[38] The Connoisseur, No. 34 (19 September 1754), p. 203; quoted in J. Yoklavich, "Hamlet in Shammy Shoes," Shakespeare Quarterly, 3 (October 1952):217.

[39] James Boaden, Life of J.P. Kemble (1825), 1:104; quoted in Furness, Hamlet, 2:261.

[40] A Short Criticism of the Performance of Hamlet by John Philip Kemble (1789); quoted in Mills, p. 60.

[41] John Dryden, The Grounds of Criticism in Tragedy (1679); in Kirsch, p. 142. Indeed, Dryden was so disturbed by the difference between the language in these recited speeches and that found regularly in Hamlet that he believed The Mousetrap was "written by some other poet." He later admitted his error.

[42] In Vickers, 5:162.

[43] Quoted in Mills, pp. 61, 39-40; and Harold Child, "The Stage-History of Hamlet," in Hamlet, ed. John Dover Wilson, 2nd ed. (1936; rpt. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964), p. lxxxi.

[44] Quoted in Child, p. lxxxi.

[45] See Mills, p. 40. As further evidence of its popularity, there is Pepys' charming description of how, on 13 November 1664, he "spent all the afternoon with my wife within doors, and getting a speech out of Hamlett, 'To bee or not to bee' without book" (quoted in Child, p. lxxii).

[46] In Vickers, 5:158.

[47] Dramatic Censor, 1:23. Gentleman's statement is interesting, for it almost seems to suggest that Hamlet is aware of the two spies behind the arras. As Arthur Colby Sprague points out, however, Hamlet's actual sight of them was not generally shown onstage until probably the 1820's, when actors went to great lengths to attempt to explain Hamlet's otherwise puzzling attitude towards Ophelia. See Sprague, pp. 152-54.

[48] Quoted in Mills, p. 40; in Carol J. Carlisle, "Hamlet's 'Cruelty' in the Nunnery Scene: The Actors' Views," Shakespeare Quarterly, 18 (Spring, 1967):130; and in Vickers, 5:158. Italics mine.

[49] The Theatrical Recorder (1805-06); quoted in Carlisle, "Nunnery Scene," p. 130. A writer in the London Examiner also questioned whether such force on the part of Kemble was necessary, saying, "in what manner did he treat the gentle Ophelia? What threatening of fists, what ferocity of voice, what stamping of feet, what clattering of doors?" Quoted in Mills, p. 62.

[50] Quoted in Carlisle, "Nunnery Scene," p. 130.

[51] St. James's Chronicle, No. 1717 (20-21 February 1772); in Vickers, 5:451.

[52] Morning Chronicle, 14 March 1814; quoted in Carlisle, "Nunnery Scene," p. 132.

[53] In a similar vein, Gentleman criticizes the standard stage practice of eliminating II.i.5-17 in Othello: "Had the preceding passages belonged to capital characters, they would have been carefully retained; but in theatrical paring it seems a rule, to render the smaller parts as inconsiderable as possible, from a paltry, selfish notion that thereby they become a better foil to the principal ones . . ." (Dramatic Censor, 1:136). Cf. also Charlotte Lennox's belief, in 1753, that Laertes "diminishes the hero, and also divides our concern," with the result that there are "two heroes" in the play. (Paraphrased in Augustus Ralli, A History of Shakespearian Criticism, 2 vols. [New York: Humanities Press, 1959], 1:29).

[54] Quoted in Mills, p. 64. In addition, George Steevens, writing in the General Evening Post (19-22 December 1772), commends Garrick's newly revised Hamlet for its substitution of "foolish" for "country matters"--although Garrick 1772 shows no such alteration. In Vickers, 5:474.

[55] For his solution to the problem of Claudius' belated reaction to the Dumb Show, see John Dover Wilson, ed., Hamlet, 2nd ed. (1936; rpt. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964), p. 70. As early as 1807, a puzzled Henry Pye had already noted that "there is no apparent reason why the Usurper should not be as much

affected by this mute representation of his crimes as he is afterwards when the same action is accompanied by words"; and in the nineteenth century, Halliwell-Phillipps exactly anticipated Dover Wilson by asking whether it were not "allowable to direct that the King and Queen should be whispering confidentially to each other during the dumb-show, and so escape a sight of it?" Quoted in Furness, Hamlet, 1:241, 242-43.

56 The excision of the Dumb Show in Smock Alley is interesting for perhaps shedding further light on stage versions of Hamlet in the seventeenth century. G. Blakemore Evans argues that, in allowing the Dumb Show to remain, "Q6 [i.e., Davenant 1676] most probably fails to record contemporary London stage usage, while the Smock Alley PB preserves it, since it is most unlikely that the direction of influence would have been from Dublin to the later English stage" (p. 6).

However, Evans does not entirely convince me that the wholesale circling of the lines describing the Dumb Show could not have been made by a later compositor. Of the nine distinct hands that he identifies as having made notations, cuts, prompt cues, etc. in Smock Alley, Evans considers one (Hand IV) most definitely "a mid-eighteenth-century hand which seems to make its corrections from eighteenth-century edited texts" (p. 2). Is it not conceivable, therefore, that this hand, or indeed another of the eight later ones, could have subsequently blocked out the passage for excision, recalling as it did that the pantomime was by then usually cut?

57 [Thomas Hanmer], Some Remarks on the Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, Written by Mr. William Shakespeare, Augustan Reprint Society, No. 9 ([1736] 1947; rpt. New York: Kraus Reprint, 1967), p. 39. All further references to this work will appear in the text.

58 Thus Thomas Holcroft, after describing Hamlet in the play scene, states that he next reappears in his mother's chamber (The Theatrical Recorder [1805]). See Carol J. Carlisle, Shakespeare from the Greenroom, p. 73, n. 109.

59 The King's confession seems to have been generally regarded as less a confirmation of his villainy and more as "one of the most pathetic and highly finished repentant Struggles . . . which ever fell from the Pen of Genius!" ([George Steevens], St. James's Chronicle, 3-5 March, 1772). Steevens even singled out Thomas Jefferson, Garrick's Claudius at Drury Lane, for his admirable recital of what he considered a "Soliloquy of Repentance." In Vickers, 5:454; and quoted in Burnim, David Garrick, pp. 166-67.

60 See especially the facsimile page reproduced by McManaway in "The Two Earliest Prompt Books of Hamlet," p. 117. Considering the great number of restorations in Ward A and B, it is significant that Davenant's interpolation is retained. Indeed, the facsimile shows that not only did John Ward still unquestioningly accept "Where is this murderer" in the 1740's (and

we see it retained again in Garrick 1772), but he also conscientiously corrected the punctuation by supplying an autograph question mark at its end.

61 Aside from Garrick 1772, Smock Alley is the only other text that seems to allow all of Hamlet's lines in this scene to remain, although even this is open to question as a large corner of one page is missing, and with it III.iii.65-88, and III.iv.41-46. Also contrary to expectation is the cutting in Smock Alley of at least thirteen and a half lines of Claudius' confession (III.iii.40-43a; 46b-55)--more than any other theatre edition or promptbook here studied.

62 Dramatic Censor, p. 24.

63 Davies is quoted in Burnim, David Garrick, p. 166. There is evidence, however, that Garrick had earlier retained the soliloquy, for after his debut performance on 12 August 1742, he was chastised for including it by a correspondent who described it as "abominable . . . a terrible blot and stain to [Hamlet's] character." Quoted in Mills, p. 41.

64 St. James's Chronicle, 2 October 1783 and Morning Chronicle, 19 November 1785. Quoted in Mills, p. 65. In addition, James G. McManaway points out (pp. 111, 119) the problems caused by a misplaced stage direction in Ward A. "Enter Polonius" was inserted immediately before that character is killed by Hamlet, thus making redundant Hamlet's question, "Is it the King?"

65 Quoted in Mills, p. 65; and Dramatic Censor, 1:24-25.

66 London Magazine (1781). Quoted in Babcock, p. 151.

67 Quoted in Mills, p. 41; Furness, Hamlet, 2:250; and Carlisle, Shakespeare from the Greenroom, p. 78. In addition, the following advertisement illustrates the fact that, despite Hamlet's criticism of Gertrude (and perhaps because of his reaction to the Ghost), this scene was often considered a model of proper filial devotion. The theatrical anthology billed for 7 August 1781 at the Haymarket was: "THE SCHOOL OF SHAKESPEARE; or, Humours and Passions. Given in a regular Representation of several of his most favourite and capital Scenes. . . . The inimitable Scenes of the Poet . . . will exemplify . . . . FILIAL PIETY, in the Closet Scene in HAMLET." The London Stage, 5:444.

68 Lines 203-211 are not printed in Smock Alley; therefore, one cannot really say they are "cut." In addition, the omission or retention of certain lines within III.iv.203-209 in Garrick 1772 is open to question. Pedicord and Bergmann, in The Plays of David Garrick, feel that Hamlet in 1772 says, "[M]y two schoolfellows, / . . . . Delve one yard below their mines / And blow them at the moon." However, looking at the Folger copy of the autographed 1772 text, Garrick's vague pencillings could just

as well have applied to the whole block of lines 203 to 209, but since that would have left no grammatical subject for line 210a, which is clearly unmarked for omission and reads "And blow them at the moon," Pedicord and Bergmann might be correct, if "them" is meant to refer to "their mines." The meaning, however, is then also obscured: My two schoolfellows delve one yard below their mines, and blow their own mines at the moon?

69 In Vickers, 5:539-40.

70 St. James's Chronicle, No. 1717 (20-21 February 1772); in Vickers, 5:452.

71 For example, Garrick 1772 begins by restoring Claudius' "There's matter in these sighs. These profound heaves / You must translate; 'tis fit we understand them"--which in Wilks 1751 and Garrick 1763 had simply read "There's matter in these sighs. / You must expound them." Garrick makes a large number of similar restorations throughout the first three scenes in Act IV.

72 This last line is an interpolation into the text. It seems to be first evident in Smock Alley, although it is difficult to know whether the addition was made by a seventeenth- or eighteenth-century hand. Thus the eight lines in IV.iii.59-68 (to line 65b, which reads "Do it, England") are translated into the more pointed "Let it be testified in Hamlet's death." This is also found in Ward A and B, in Garrick 1772 and 1763, and in Kemble 1804.

73 Garrick has pasted his new lines over page 66 of the 1772 text and has then numbered it page 67. Where the confusion over such newly inserted pages becomes too great, I will simply write "n. pag." Garrick's heading, "Scene a Wood," also provides the answer to something that had puzzled George C.D. Odell in his Shakespeare from Betterton to Irving. Describing stock sets and scenery at the theatres during the age of Garrick, Odell had written, "The Barry schedule of 1776 . . . . includes . . . a cut wood (for which scene, I wonder?) for Hamlet" (Odell, 1:417).

74 Evans, p. 9, n. 22. Comparing Hopkins 1777, the younger Boswell's edition of Malone's Shakespeare (1821), and a second copy of the 1777 promptbook prepared by William Hopkins, Evans writes, "[P]erhaps . . . this version, rather than that quoted directly from Garrick's autograph copy [i.e., Garrick 1772] was the final stage form . . . and represent[s] Garrick's final version" (p. 9, n. 22). George W. Stone, Jr., on the other hand, suggests that Hopkins 1777 was based on Garrick 1772 as altered by John Henderson, who succeeded Garrick after his retirement in 1776 ("Garrick's Alteration," pp. 901-02). Interestingly, George Steevens' first review of the alteration in the General Evening Post (17-19 December 1772) also mentions Hamlet "calling upon vengeance, nature and manhood to wake" at the end of IV.iv. (Vickers, 5:473). Therefore, although not in Garrick 1772, the

lines as printed in Hopkins 1777 seem to have been recited onstage from the start.

75 In Vickers, 5:448.

76 In Vickers, 5:452.

77 Act IV, scene v immediately following begins somewhat differently in Hopkins 1777 from the more conventional way in which it begins in Garrick 1772. In the promptbook (quoted in Evans, p. 9, n. 22), the King and Queen are alone, without Horatio or a Gentleman onstage, and are depicted in a surprisingly sympathetic light:

Scene
Enter King and Queen PS.

King: See where She comes--it is a piteous
Sight.

Queen: O She Cleaves my heart--her distemperd
mind
Communicates Infection to my own.

Enter Ophelia distracted.

Where is the Beauteous &c

78 "Hamlet is, through the whole play, rather an instrument than an agent. After he has, by the stratagem of the play, convicted the King he makes no attempt to punish him, and his death is at last effected by an incident which Hamlet has no part in producing." In Vickers, 5:161.

79 Letter from Garrick to M. de Laplace, 3 January 1773: "I have destroyed y^{e} Grave diggers, (those favourites of the people) and almost all of y^{e} 5th Act . . . ." Note too that Garrick's language here reveals a malicious pleasure in altering the play; cf. "I have thrown away the gravediggers" (4 January 1773) and his reference to "the rubbish of the 5th Act" (10 January 1773). In Little and Kahrl, 2:840, 841, 846.

80 Tate Wilkinson, The Wandering Patentee; Or, A History Of The Yorkshire Theatres, From 1770 To The Present Time . . . . In Four Volumes (1795; rpt. London: Scolar Press, 1973), 1:173. All further references are to this edition and will appear in the text.

81 J.C. Young, A Memoir of C.M. Young, quoted in Joseph, p. 38; Fanny Kemble, quoted in Child, p. lxxxvii.

[82] Quoted in Gamini Salgado, Eyewitnesses of Shakespeare (London: Chatto & Windus, 1975), p. 47. If Wright's relatively high opinion of the Grave-digger scene is typical, this might explain why Davenant 1676 later retains it. See also Paul S. Conklin's discussion of the scene in light of the seventeenth century's macabre fascination with the tradition of memento mori (pp. 14-16).

[83] Francis Kirkman's "Preface to The Wits, or Sport upon Sport" (1672-73) is quoted in Mills, p. 13; Lichtenberg is quoted in Vickers, 5:48, n. 36.

[84] A brief summary of the 1736 review of Hanmer's Remarks may be found in George Winchester Stone, Jr., "Shakespeare in the Periodicals: Part II," Shakespeare Quarterly, 3 (October 1952):324. The quotation from Miscellaneous Observations on Hamlet, &c. (1752) is in The London Stage, 4:287.

[85] In Vickers, 5:457. Of the eighteenth-century critics, only Samuel Johnson, Horace Walpole, and a few others defend Shakespeare's fondness for the "mingled drama"; in fact, Johnson specifically excuses its presence in Hamlet, saying that "When Shakespeare's plan is understood, most of the criticisms of Rhymer [sic] and Voltaire vanish away. . . . and the Grave-diggers themselves may be heard with applause." In Vickers, 5:63.

[86] In an unpublished note on Garrick's 1772 alteration, Horace Walpole wrote that "If Garrick had really been an intelligent manager, he would have corrected the vicious buffoonery which lay in his actors, not in the play." That the actors contributed not a little to the critics' condemnation of the scene can be seen in accounts of their milking the humour for all it was worth. The most common trick was to divest oneself of a multitude of waistcoats in preparation for digging. Boaden reports in 1780 that "The joy of the galleries to see [Suett] in Goodman Delver's dozen waistcoats . . . may be readily conceived"; and Michael Kelly praises Kemble for his "saving grace of humour . . . , for even after his just annoyance with the fooleries of the quaint actor, Jew Davis, who was playing the First Grave-digger to his Hamlet . . . , and turned the scene into an uproarious farce, [Kemble] received the culprit with civility and a forgiving sense of his former ill-timed jest." In Vickers, 5:484; and quoted in Sprague, p. 176; and in Claude C.H. Williamson, Readings on the Character of Hamlet (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1950), p. 30. It is interesting that as early as 1708, the date of Q_4 of Webster's The Duchess of Malfi, the Doctor is given an extra stage direction following the Cardinal's command that he take off his gown (V.ii.70): "[puts off his four Cloaks one after another]."

[87] It is worth noting that with every text the stage directions become more numerous and explicit. Davenant 1676, for example, prints virtually no stage directions, aside from recording characters' entrances and exits; Wilks 1751 and Garrick 1763 make the action in certain scenes clearer (e.g., Polonius'

voice comes from "[Behind the arras"); and the diagrams of stage blocking in Kemble 1804 show that actor's view to be increasingly pictorial. By the time of Charles Kean's 1859 Hamlet, stage directions had become so detailed as to indicate action not determined by dialogue (e.g., after III.ii.353, the text reads "[Exeunt HORATIO and Musicians, R.H. GUILDENSTERN, / after speaking privately to ROSENCRANTZ, crosses / behind HAMLET to R.H.]").

88 See Munro, 1:272. Also, while Hamlet in Garrick 1763 leapt into the grave, Gentleman disapproved of both his language and his actions: "This violent frantic climax of passion, is very indecent, at such a time and place, therefore highly disgraceful to Hamlet" (Garrick 1763, p. 77). George Steevens, as "Hic et Ubique," agrees, feeling that Hamlet's rant contradicts the discretionary advice he had earlier (III.ii.) given the Players. See Vickers, 5:451.

89 "I wish Hamlet had made some other defence; it is unsuitable to the character of a good or a brave man to shelter himself in falsehood" (in Vickers, 5:161). In 1783, Joseph Ritson attempted to defend Hamlet against Johnson's charge. "Hamlet's conversation with Laertes immediately before the fencing scene," Ritson says, "was at the Queen's earnest entreaty; and though Dr. Johnson be pleased to give it the harsh name of 'a dishonest fallacy,' there are better, because more natural, judges who consider it as a most gentle and pathetic address . . . ." (quoted in Furness, Hamlet, 2:148-49). Note, however, that unlike the closet critics, Ritson is not suggesting that Hamlet is telling the truth because he really is mad.

90 Goethe saw these lines as further proof of Hamlet's procrastinatory nature. In his long discussion of the play in Wilhelm Meister (1795), he says, "Can you conceive him to be otherwise than plump and fair-haired? . . . does not his wavering melancholy, his soft lamenting, his irresolute activity, accord with such a figure?" Quoted in Furness, Hamlet, 2:275.

91 Quoted in Lynch, p. 67; and in Vickers, 5:457. Davies made the comment while praising the fact that in Garrick 1772 the King defended himself "manfully" against Hamlet's assault and thus died in a more dignified manner. There is, however, no evidence in Garrick 1772 to support this. See also Carlisle, Shakespeare in the Greenroom, p. 42.

92 "As the play is cut, these five lines [V.ii.355-359a] should, we think be omitted; for they are unintelligible to all those who remember the original play, and are quite unnecessary here, and foreign to the representation, as it now stands" (Garrick 1763, p. 84). Sprague says that Fortinbras was not again seen onstage until Forbes-Robertson's Hamlet of 1897--and that the typical spectator at that time felt Fortinbras' entrance was anti-climactic (p. 184).

[93] In Vickers, 5:457.

Notes to Part III

[1] Gentleman, Dramatic Censor, 1:24.

[2] Hazelton Spencer, Shakespeare Improved, p. 9. The description of Betterton by Steele is quoted in William Ackerman Buell, The Hamlets of the Theatre (New York: Astor-Honor, 1968), p. 13; and that of Garrick by Lichtenberg is quoted in Burnim, David Garrick, p. 162.

[3] William Hazlitt is quoted in Child, p. lxxxv.

[4] Samuel Johnson, "Prologue Spoken by Mr. Garrick at the Opening of the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, 1747."

[5] Clarence D. Thorpe, "Introduction," Some Remarks on the Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, Written by Mr. William Shakespeare, Augustan Reprint Society, No. 9 (1947; rpt. New York: Kraus Reprint, 1967), p. 4.

[6] Thorpe, "Introduction" to Remarks, p. 7.

[7] "If the characters of Shakespeare are thus whole, and as it were original, while those of almost all other writers are mere imitation, it may be fit to consider them rather as Historic than Dramatic beings; and, when occasion requires, to account for their conduct from the whole of character, from general principles, from latent motives, and from policies not avowed." Maurice Morgann, An Essay on the Dramatic Character of Sir John Falstaff, in Maurice Morgann: Shakespearian Criticism, ed. Daniel A. Fineman (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), p. 169, T61n. The notion that one could infer a character's latent motives and unavowed policies is central to Richardson's psychological interpretation of Hamlet.

[8] Babcock, p. 159.

[9] Richardson then took this even further, saying that "In truth no one who . . . entertains improper notions of human conduct, can discern excellence in the higher species of poetical composition." (Essays on Shakespeare's Dramatic Character of Sir John Falstaff and on his Imitation of Female Characters [1789]; quoted in Babcock, pp. 132-33.)

[10] William Richardson, A Philosophical Analysis and Illustration of Some of Shakespeare's Remarkable Characters (rev. ed. 1780; rpt. New York: AMS Press, 1966), p. 9. All further references to this work will appear in the text.

[11] In the 1773 edition of The Plays of William Shakespeare, which he co-edited with Johnson, Steevens remarks that "Hamlet seems to have been hitherto regarded as a hero not undeserving the pity of the audience, and . . . no writer on Shakespeare has [yet] taken the pains to point out the immoral tendency of his character" (X, 343-44). Quoted in Vickers, 5:541. Steevens in effect sees these defects as Shakespeare's creative errors, and not (as Richardson and subsequent critics did) as faults within Hamlet himself. Many of Steevens' objections to the plot of Hamlet may be seen in Part II of this paper.

[12] Essays on Shakespeare's Dramatic Characters of Richard III, King Lear, and Timon of Athens, to which are added, An Essay on the Faults of Shakespeare; and Additional Observations on the Character of Hamlet (1784); the 1797 reprint is quoted in Furness, Hamlet, 2:151. Having published the Philosophical Analysis in 1774, Richardson further augmented it through the addition of this essay and that on Falstaff written in 1789 (see n. 9, above). Much that was in the first work is simply revised and expanded on in the subsequent ones. All three were published in 1812 as the sixth edition of the Philosophical Analysis.

[13] Mrs. Charlotte Lennox, Shakespear Illustrated (1753); quoted in Conklin, p. 59, n. 52. Samuel Johnson, The Plays of William Shakespeare (1765), 8:311; in Vickers, 5:161. It is also worth noting that the theatrical, as opposed to literary, critics never wavered in their belief that Hamlet's madness was only assumed. Thomas Davies, for example, in 1783 praised Wilks' ability to enact a "disguised madness"; and Frederick Pilon noted in 1777 that, in addition to hiding his true feelings "under shelter of frenzy" in the nunnery scene, Hamlet "assumes the mask of insanity, to conceal his intentions, and lull the suspicions of the King." Quoted in Carlisle, "Nunnery Scene," p. 130; and in Mills, p. 39; italics mine.

[14] Essays on Shakespeare's Dramatic Characters (1784); quoted in Conklin, p. 73.

[15] Quoted in Furness, Hamlet, 2:147; Conklin, p. 65. In his letter, Beattie also carefully distinguishes the Hamlet he describes from that character "performed by the underlings of the theatre, . . . none of [whom] seemed to understand what they were about." He is disappointed precisely because the actors are unable to portray the "Sorrow, indignation, revenge, and consciousness of his own irresolution, [that] tear [Hamlet's] heart."

[16] Quoted in Conklin, p. 73, n. 30.

[17] Monthly Review (1789); quoted in Babcock, p. 164. A similar concern had earlier arisen over Morgann's defense of Falstaff in 1777; and the Monthly Review had already then taken exception to the new critical method: "[Morgann's] ingenuity betrays him into false refinements. The plainest propositions may

be controverted by subtle disputants. . . . In dramatic writings, especially, the obvious meaning is most probably the true one; and it is surely no great compliment to Shakespeare's admirable delineation of the character of Falstaff, to suppose, that it has hitherto been generally misunderstood." Quoted in Babcock, p. 172.

Notes to Conclusion

[1] Anton Adolph Raven, A Hamlet Bibliography and Reference Guide: 1877-1935 (1936; rpt. New York: Russell & Russell, 1966), p. iii.

[2] On page 13 of his Eyewitnesses of Shakespeare, Gamini Salgado states that in 1809, at the Royal Circus, a performance of Hamlet "was given by a troupe of dogs." Incredibly, Bernard Grebanier describes a different "Dog Hamlet," this one a "condensed canine version" put on by W.W. Lacy and Tom Matthews. It at least included humans in the cast, for according to Grebanier, "The dog followed Hamlet around throughout the course of the play, and in the last scene would be let loose on guilty Claudius, pinning him to the floor of the stage while Hamlet killed his father's murderer" (Then Came Each Actor [New York: David McKay, 1975], p. 263).

[3] Morris Weitz, in an illuminating examination of the methods and fallacies of modern criticism of Hamlet, finds it "amazing" that "no critic of Jones . . . comments on [Jones's absolute silence about one datum of the play, namely, Hamlet's relation to his father]." See Hamlet and the Philosophy of Literary Criticism (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1964), p. 23.

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