

TEXTUAL HISTORY AND ANALYSIS OF THE
SOLILOQUIES IN SHAKESPEARE'S HAMLET

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by
Cathy J. Wilton
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Charles S. Weston

Approved for the Major Department

David E. Duvall

Approved for the Graduate Council

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Preface

I make no apology for wanting to add to the wealth of critical work already existing in connection with Shakespeare and the play Hamlet. The purpose of this thesis is to analyze a fascinating and legitimate theatrical device, the soliloquy, and to offer textual conclusions, drawn from comparing the variant forms of the Hamlet soliloquies, as additional evidence for certain bibliographic theories attempting to reconstruct the manuscript behind each printed version of the play. I believe that this study is justified not only in view of what it can add to Shakespearean scholarship, but also in view of what it can delineate about the origin and method of soliloquy.

I sincerely acknowledge the critical assistance of Dr. Charles E. Walton, Dr. James Hoy, and the members of the faculty in the Department of English at Emporia Kansas State College. I also wish to thank my very patient family and friends, all of whom provided continual encouragement during the completion of this project.

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C. J. W.

Chapter I

History of Soliloquy as a Dramatic Device

Soliloquy as a dramatic device has been in existence in some form, however crude, since the beginning of drama. Only in the last hundred years has its importance in the theatre declined, a victim of the nature of contemporary plays. There is little specific scholarship tracing the soliloquy's development and theatrical function throughout the history of drama; however, its prominence in Shakespeare's Hamlet leads one to believe that the device has a more illustrious past and function than is implied by existing scholarship, especially in connection with the text and the interpretation of Hamlet.

Soliloquies are found in some form in all of Shakespeare's plays. In fact, Shakespeare's Cymbeline contains over 400 lines of soliloquy, approximately 100 more lines than are found in Hamlet.¹ But it is in Hamlet that soliloquy has a curious importance. The action of the play depends upon Hamlet's delay in avenging his father's murder, and it is through soliloquies that the delay is

¹Morris Arnold, The Soliloquies of Shakespeare: A Study in Technic, pp. 24-5.

fully explicated and the movement of the play is carried forward. Soliloquies appear in other Shakespearean plays for innumerable reasons, but the soliloquies of Hamlet may convince one, at first impressionistically, and then critically, that the device is not mere decorum or a clumsy, outmoded convention of Elizabethan drama.

Critics have argued over the reasons for Hamlet's delay in killing Claudius for nearly 300 years. They have also argued over the moral delineation of the character, Hamlet, for nearly 300 years. Furthermore, as an added twist, textual critics and bibliographers have interjected the scholarship with their own peculiar work on the nature of the manuscripts behind the three major printed versions of the play: the First Quarto of 1603, the Second Quarto of 1604, and the First Folio of 1623. As one critic, Henry David Gray, warns, the answers offered to the questions concerning Hamlet's delay can become sophomoric:

As soon as we ignore all that makes Shakespeare's Hamlet interesting and distinctive, we at once revert to type. . . . Why did Hamlet feign madness? To enable him to avoid suspicion. Why did he not kill the king at once? Why, because he couldn't; because "the tyrant is always surrounded by many guards." Why did he have the play? To settle his doubts. It is the answer of a simple mind, when the questions are set before it. But to propose such answers to Shakespeare's Hamlet is to rob Hamlet's soliloquies of all their point.²

²Henry David Gray, "Reconstruction of a Lost Play," Philological Quarterly, VII (1928), 273-4.

Perhaps "sophomoric" is too strong a term to apply to the reasons behind Hamlet's delay as they appear in the major historical sources of the play. But Shakespeare's character, Hamlet, is not entirely the Hamlet of his sources, and I agree with Gray that to deny the importance of the soliloquies is to return the play to an interesting but predictable play of revenge, lust, and greed. Critics must address the soliloquies in Hamlet as major components of the drama.

Therefore, if I may be granted the importance of the soliloquies in Hamlet; that is, they make the play distinctive and present the motivation of the play's main character, I will discuss the second aspect of this thesis. Much scholarship has been contributed on the nature of the manuscript behind the printed versions of Hamlet. In other words, scholars have attempted to determine what copy or manuscript each printer used to produce his particular text of Hamlet. This mystery and sometimes jigsaw puzzle of bibliographic scholarship has been pursued for most Elizabethan plays, and Hamlet is no different in this respect. However, in the excellent analyses of the variant editions of Hamlet, scholars have spent little time in examining specific differences between the soliloquies of each version. If the characteristic nature of Hamlet revolves around the soliloquies, then perhaps significant textual

differences revolve around the soliloquies also.

The question, then, is why are the soliloquies from the major printed versions different, especially in Q1 as compared to Q2 and F? The explanations for the textual variations in general are many and complex and will be presented in detail in Chapter III. Nevertheless, I will attempt to confirm or to discount the major theories based almost entirely on the textual comparison of the soliloquies in all three editions. Furthermore, I will submit that this textual examination necessitates one assumption over others, although not as conclusively as we might like.

There is some danger in constructing an hypothesis for the origin of the entire play based solely on the soliloquies. However, at all times I will keep the entire play in mind and do not mean to assume that the soliloquies are apart from the rest of the text, nor that they are necessarily the only significant textual parts of the play dismissing the other dramatic techniques and scenes as secondary. I only mean to point out that the textual variations in the soliloquies could very well reveal the reasons for discrepancies between the larger, complete printed editions.

This thesis is thereby developed in four sections: a history of soliloquy as a dramatic technique, a brief explication of Hamlet and description of the function of

each soliloquy in it, the history of the printing of Shakespeare's Hamlet and the textual problems posed by the three major printed versions, and the final argument for bibliographic theories supported by noted differences between the soliloquies as they appear in Q1, Q2, and F.

It is beneficial to establish both the definition and the background of soliloquy as a dramatic device before determining its function in Shakespeare's Hamlet, or, for that matter, in any other play. As has been stated earlier, there is little detailed information on soliloquy and how it has been used in the theatre. Fortunately, Morris Arnold, in the course of writing his definitive study on Shakespeare's soliloquies, provides a brief history of the device.³ Arnold's history, supplemented with comments by scholars in Elizabethan theatre, is the foundation for the following background.

Much of the impact of drama comes from revealing information concealed in the unobservable elements of a play. One such unobservable element is unspoken thought. The need to transmit unspoken thought is not original with Shakespeare or any other Elizabethan dramatist. Rather, the problem has confronted dramatists for centuries. In fact, its dramatic solution, a technique whereby unspoken

³Arnold.

thought is transmitted to the audience, has a history reaching back to the beginnings of drama.⁴

Soliloquy is the extended speech of a single character when he is either completely alone on the stage or when he implies that he believes himself to be alone while speaking. Even though other characters may be present when a speech is delivered, that speech is considered to be a soliloquy if it reveals a character's complete isolation or oblivion to his surroundings.⁵ Soliloquy differs from monologue in that monologue, although it is an extended speech by a single character, is not delivered in actual or implied isolation. Furthermore, soliloquies can be classified as either verbal or mental. Verbal soliloquies are those in which a character actually talks to himself, and mental soliloquies are those speeches in which a character implies that he is thinking to himself. Both classifications are forms of direct address, for they both anticipate that the audience will overhear a speech, and they both serve to transmit information that would otherwise go unspoken.⁶

The actual term "soliloquy" was coined by St. Augustine in the fourth century. In Latin the word was

⁴Una Ellis-Fermor, The Jacobean Drama, p. 50.

⁵Arnold, p. 2.

⁶Ibid., p. 17.

soliloquim and was constructed from solus and loqui, meaning to talk to oneself.⁷ It is not clear whether St. Augustine's term was even indirectly connected to the theatre. St. Augustine more than likely used the term in reference to speeches by religious characters. The English later preserved the Latin root, and the word came to mean speaking alone; however, it was still being used in Tudor times to refer to private meditation of a religious character. There is no indication that Shakespeare even knew the word "soliloquy," for its use in connection with the theatre outside of morality plays did not appear until later in the history of English drama.⁸

Regardless of the fact that the convention may be older than the name for the convention, soliloquy, taken in the sense in which it has been defined in the preceding paragraphs, began in early Greek drama. Not surprisingly, soliloquy existed at the beginning of Greek drama in the form of prayer,⁹ for early Greek drama was nothing but prayer or celebration of the gods. Later, as the drama developed, prayers became monologues in which two or more characters delivered lengthy speeches without actually addressing each other. Monologue finally gave way to dialogue in which characters did address each other.

⁷Ibid., p. 2.

⁸Nevill Coghill, Shakespeare's Professional Skills, p. 128.

⁹Arnold, p. 1.

Monologue still remained after the inception of dialogue, and its function also changed somewhat.¹⁰ Monologue was no longer the entire device by which the business of the play was carried out; it was merely one device, and its use became deliberate rather than mandatory. Along with the new value of monologue came a special type in which a character, reverting almost to the original germ of drama, was truly isolated without benefit of chorus or other characters. This special type of monologue was comparable to what is now called soliloquy.

Although soliloquy began with the Greek theatre, soliloquies are scarce in early Greek drama. Arnold supposes that this lack of soliloquies was probably due to the fact that Greek dramatists assigned speeches that could be soliloquies to the chorus.¹¹ A quick inventory of Greek plays will confirm this assumption. The chorus's remarks, delivered as a running commentary on the action of the characters, were not intended to be spoken in isolation, but were a backdrop against which other monologues and, later, dialogues were played.

Despite the lack of soliloquy as it has been defined in Greek drama, the soliloquies that do exist are significant in the history and development of the

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Ibid., p. 5.

convention and illustrate the changes in soliloquy as both speech and drama. Citing these soliloquies also benefits comparisons of early English soliloquies with those of Shakespeare's contemporaries.

The first Greek dramatist, Aeschylus, has three soliloquies in his plays. A soliloquy begins both Agamemnon and The Eumenides, and one accents the plight of Prometheus in Prometheus Bound. Aeschylus is thought to have used both monologue and soliloquy in his tragedies because his plays were based on lyric or direct expression and could best be presented by these two dramatic techniques.¹²

In Agamemnon, the opening soliloquy is spoken by a watchman who states that he has been praying and watching for a sign of the capture of Troy: "And still I await the sign, the beacon pyre/ That bears Troy's capture on a voice of flame."¹³ The watchman also makes allusions to ". . . the tale untold/ Of this house . . ." (19-20). During his speech, he sees first a glimmer of light, then a shining blaze, indicating ". . . Ilion's citadel/ Is fallen, as yon beacons flaming tell." (30-1). He rejoices

¹²Ellis-Fermor, p. 50.

¹³Aeschylus, Agamemnon, in Fifteen Greek Plays, trans. Gilbert Murray, et al. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1943), 8-9. Subsequent references to this edition are given in parenthesis within the text.

that he shall see the master of the house, Agamemnon. At the conclusion of his soliloquy, the watchman again alludes to the legend concerning the house of Agamemnon and states that he will speak to no one about the story unless that person already knows it: ". . . A great ox hath laid his weight/ Across my tongue. . ." (36-7).

The opening soliloquy in The Eumenides is delivered by a prophetess at Delphi. She prays to the gods, giving a history of each as she prays, and prepares to take her throne. She leaves the stage as if to enter the inner shrine of Delphi, and then dashes back to tell of seeing a praying man, "A man abhorred of God, his body hurled/ Earthward in desperate prayer. . . ." ¹⁴ She describes seeing also strange creatures, not born of women, who surround the man. These creatures are, of course, the Eumenides sent to torture Orestes. The prophetess leaves the situation to Apollo, "Being Helper, Prophet, Seer of things unseen" (67) for solution.

It is in a soliloquy in Prometheus Bound that Prometheus offers his defense for the act that led him into eternal captivity. The soliloquy, like those in the other two plays, is almost a prayer, for it is addressed to

¹⁴Aeschylus, The Eumenides, in Fifteen Greek Plays, trans. Gilbert Murray, et al. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1943), 46-7. Subsequent references to this edition are given in parenthesis within the text.

O thou bright sky of heaven, ye swift-winged breezes,
ye river-waters, and multitudinous laughter of the
waves of ocean, O universal mother Earth, and thou,
all-seeing orb of the sun. . . .¹⁵

Prometheus concedes his punishment at the hands of Zeus:

"My allotted doom I needs must bear as lightly as I may,
knowing that the might of Necessity brooketh no
resistance" (227). However, he does not concede the
seriousness of his crime, providing mortals with fire.

The main message of the soliloquy is Prometheus's lament,

For it is because I bestowed good gifts on mortals
that this yoke of constraint hath been bound upon
me to my misery . . . Such is the offence for which
I pay the penalty, riveted in fetters beneath the
open sky (227).

The function of Aeschylus' three soliloquies is clear. The soliloquies in Agamemnon and The Eumenides present history needed to understand or to preface the subsequent action of the play. The soliloquies also provide some transition into the opening scenes of the play. In other words, they forecast the main content of the plays in which they appear, and they serve as prologues. Only the soliloquy of Prometheus Bound appears as a part of the play itself, not as a prologue to the action. But it, too, does not necessitate that the

¹⁵Aeschylus, Prometheus Bound, in Fifteen Greek Plays, trans, Gilbert Murray, et al. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1943), p. 225. Subsequent references to this edition are given in parenthesis within the text.

information be delivered in soliloquy, although Prometheus's impassioned soliloquy begins to touch upon characterization. The soliloquies in all three plays cited are majestic, invoke the favor of the gods, and speak of prophecy and legend. Except for Prometheus's, they do little to develop a character, and none attempts to set a moral tone, although each exhibits passions. In short, these soliloquies are expository.

In a manner similar to that of Aeschylus, Sophocles uses a soliloquy to present the suicide of Ajax in the play of the same name. This soliloquy begins with Ajax burying Hector's sword, blade up, in the ground. He is preparing to kill himself. Ajax prays to Zeus that his body will be discovered first by his companion, Teucer, "Before some enemy catches sight of me/ And throws me to the dogs and birds of prey."¹⁶ Ajax then invokes vengeance on the sons and armies of Atreus, asks Helios to "Tell my old father and my wretched mother/ The tale of my calamities and my death" (809-10), and calls to Death: ". . . Draw thou near to me, come gaze upon me" (816). The scene ends with Ajax throwing himself upon Hector's sword.

¹⁶Sophocles, Ajax, in Four Plays by Sophocles, trans. Theodore H. Banks (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966), 292-3. Subsequent references to this edition are given in parenthesis within the text.

Electra's soliloquy in Sophocles's Electra¹⁷ is also more prayer than speech. In her soliloquy, Electra mourns the death of her father at the hands of her mother and her mother's lover. She prays to the Furies to avenge her father's death and to let her brother return to share her grief. Again, it is a soliloquy of great emotion, although on a universal or archetypal level rather than on an individual level.

Consistent with the previous discussion of the first use of soliloquy in Greek drama, these soliloquies of Sophocles are, for the most part, prayers. They also review and preface items important to the action of the play. However, these examples also establish soliloquy as depictions of passions, a technique to be popularized later by English dramatists.¹⁸

Euripides also has soliloquies distributed among his plays. Euripides uses soliloquy not only as exemplification of prayer and passion, but also as true exposition.¹⁹ In fact, Euripides opens thirteen of his dramas with dramatic monologues, defined here as soliloquies because

¹⁷Sophocles, Electra, in Four Plays by Sophocles, trans. Theodore H. Banks (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966), 87-121.

¹⁸Ellis-Fermor, p. 50.

¹⁹Arnold, p. 6.

they are delivered by single characters alone on the stage, and these monologues are used primarily as exposition of the action to follow.²⁰ Euripides appears to use these opening soliloquies more consistently and predictably than do Aeschylus or Sophocles. Another noteworthy characteristic of Euripides' soliloquies is that often major characters deliver the soliloquies. The soliloquy is beginning to crudely delineate character, although the character of the hero or heroine is fairly straightforward as defined by understood Greek character types.

The soliloquy opening Euripides' Alcestis illustrates the comments made above. Apollo, leaving the palace of Admetus, King of Thessaly, explains his departure in an isolated dramatic speech. The soliloquy is a synopsis of the events that have caused Apollo to state, "But I must leave this Palace's dear roof, for fear pollution soil me in the house."²¹ Another example of the same use of soliloquy is manifest in the nurse's opening soliloquy in Medea. This speech is perhaps more sophisticated than that of Apollo in Alcestis; it is, nevertheless, serving the same purpose--to explain the events prior and behind the action of the upcoming play.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Euripides, Alcestis, in The Complete Greek Drama, I, ed. Whitney J. Oates and Eugene O'Neill, Jr. (New York: Random House, 1938), p. 677.

It is important to be reminded, again, that the monologue, chorus, and confidant used in Greek tragedies explain the small amount of soliloquies in classic drama.²² The chorus in Sophocles' plays guides the audience's interpretation of the thought implicit in a previous speech, and Sophocles seems to have favored this convention. Furthermore, in the drama of Euripides, the chorus reflects and extends the thoughts of the principal character,²³ and he also chooses to employ the chorus, except for the opening speech, to convey the implications and innermost thoughts associated with the tragic hero's plight.

Despite the beginnings of soliloquy evident in these classic plays, it is difficult to trace a direct influence upon English drama and English soliloquy through Greek drama. Even when one considers that soliloquy is also a conspicuous part of early Greek poetry, specifically in that of Homer, there is simply not enough soliloquy in Greek drama to trace or to prove a direct influence on English drama. On the other hand, the indirect influence through Senecan drama is probably considerable.²⁴

Senecan drama, like Greek drama, contained few soliloquies. No matter how long or introspective a speech

²²Arnold, p. 7.

²³Ellis-Fermor, p. 50.

²⁴Arnold, p. 7.

is, it is usually delivered to someone, even if only to a nurse, servant or other confidant.²⁵ One example of soliloquy can be cited, however. The opening speech of Seneca's Hercules Oetaeus is a soliloquy delivered by the title character. This play is anthologized in The Tenne Tragedies, a translation of Senecan drama popularized during the Renaissance.²⁶

Characteristically, Hercules is praying in the soliloquy and asks why heaven is still not granted to him despite his deeds: ". . . in every place thy peace procure I have/ . . . And yet O Father, yet the Heavens are still withhelde mee free."²⁷ Hercules proceeds to list his deeds in a rather lengthy speech which rapidly develops into a short biography of Hercules and a recitation of Herculean deeds. Like the Greek soliloquies, Senecan soliloquy is marked by majesty of speech, length, and stock characterization. It is, however, a remnant of passionate speech, even though the passion may be from a classic hero.

The appearance of soliloquy in English morality plays confirms that Seneca is not the source of the English soliloquy, but because Senecan drama was much more popular

²⁵Ibid., p. 6.

²⁶Ibid., p. 9.

²⁷Seneca, Hercules Oetaeus, in Seneca: His Tenne Tragedies Translated into English, II, ed. Thomas Newton (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1927), 1.3-8.

than classic Greek drama among English readers and playwrights, it is logical to assume that although the convention did not flow to English drama through Senecan tragedy, it was certainly nurtured by Senecan popularity. A few soliloquies stressing meditation were transmitted to Elizabethan dramatists through The Tenne Tragedies, and this quality, emotional introspection, became a dominant element in English soliloquy.²⁸

It is perhaps worth noting that just as soliloquy became a feature of Greek poetry, it was likewise a feature of the first English epic poem, Beowulf.²⁹ Despite this fact, the prominent incorporation of soliloquy is in early English drama rather than in poetry. The soliloquy's first appearance in English drama comes with the first English plays--the morality and mystery plays.³⁰ The soliloquy is not a sophisticated dramatic convention at this point in English theatrical history; soliloquies appear in the mystery plays, but they are brief and follow a rather rigid formula. Characteristic soliloquies of this period are narratives at the opening of the play explaining the situation in which subsequent action will occur. These soliloquies seem to serve as a prologue to the drama of the

²⁸Arnold, pp. 8-9.

²⁹Ibid., p. 5.

³⁰Ibid., p. 7.

individual play and are almost reminiscent of the structurally placed soliloquies in Euripides' plays. Soliloquy serves also as a means of self-identification for characters, both villains and heroes alike.

Like the plays themselves, nearly all the soliloquies in morality plays are little sermons, although there is a slight tendency toward introspection. Nevertheless, one distinct contribution of the morality play to the development of the soliloquy is a moralizing theme and tone.³¹

The technique is alive in English drama at its beginning, and like the situation found in early Greek drama, there are a few distinguished soliloquies in the early English mystery plays. The most notable soliloquies are probably the revelations of the three shepherds in the Towneley cycle's Second Shepherds' Play. The play opens with the first shepherd's soliloquy in which he complains about the cold weather:

Lord, what these weders are cold! and I am
 yll happyd;
 I am nere hande dold so long haue I nappyd;
 My legys thay fold my fyngers ar chappyd,
 It is not as I wold for I am al lappyd
 In sorrow. 32

³¹Ibid., p. 8.

³²Shepherds' Play, II, in The Towneley Plays, ed. George England and Alfred Pollard (New York: Oxford University Press, 1897), 1-5. Subsequent references to this edition are given in parenthesis within the text.

Likewise, the soliloquies of a second and a third shepherd begin with complaints about the state of the world. The first shepherd also lectures on the poor lot of shepherds, a lot instigated by "thyse gentlery men"(18). The second shepherd warns young men against marriage, and the third comments that the storms which usually plague the people have grown worse. In short, the state of the world is not good.

The virtue of these soliloquies in the Towneley cycle is not only that they set the stage for the miraculous birth of Christ at the play's conclusion, He who will right the suffering and injustice--the true lamb, but they reveal the character of each of the three shepherds who will, when they finally meet at the close of their separate speeches, participate in the action of the drama. The soliloquies display not only the moralizing tone said to be characteristic of the first English soliloquies, but they also exhibit the characterization and explanation of the state of affairs prefaced by early Greek soliloquies. The soliloquies of the Towneley cycle are marked also by simplicity of characterization, differing from the Greek soliloquies in that they offer a glimpse into the nature of the men who deliver them. Moreover, they are timely and show an unsophisticated level of language not allowed in the stiffer, heavier Greek soliloquies.

Mak, a fourth character in The Second Shepherds' Play, displays another use of soliloquy, a use that is to be observed in Hamlet and one that becomes a major function of the device. Mak reveals his villainy in a soliloquy. Although he is a rather likeable villain, he nevertheless plots the theft of a sheep as the shepherds are sleeping:

A fatt shepe I dar say,
A good flese dar I lay,
Eft whyte when I may,
 Bot this will I borow. (292-5)

The use of soliloquy in another series of mystery plays, the York cycle, is similar, but one characteristic does deserve mentioning. Like the Towneley cycle, the York cycle uses the soliloquy to preface the main action of the play, but the York soliloquies form a more consistent pattern in starting each play. As an example, one may consider a soliloquy that exemplifies the previously mentioned technique of exposing a villain's true nature through individual speech and shows how the soliloquy is used to establish the moral conflict of the play at its beginning.

The play in question is The Cowpers Play about Satan's tempting of Eve. In the opening speech, Satan says that he will approach Eve in the likeness of a worm and betray her with a lie:

My trauayle were wele sette
 Myght y hym so betraye,
 His likyng for to lette,
 And sone I schalle assaye.
 In a worme liknes wille y wende,
 And founde to feyne a lowde lesynge.³³

After its instigation in the English morality plays as a truly English dramatic technique, soliloquy, a unique combination of classical and native dramatic traditions, had become a recognized part of the English theatre by the second half of the sixteenth century.³⁴ English farces appearing after 1550, such as Ralph Roister Doister, show the new prominence of comic monologues, some of which fit the definition of soliloquy and are most likely an influence of Roman comedy.³⁵ The comic soliloquies in a play like Ralph Roister Doister do not offer actual characterization; rather, they offer an affirmation of the ridiculous motive of each person involved in the comic plot. Moreover, the soliloquies in Roister Doister are straightforward and do not imply anything other than a casual chance for a character to comment on the humorous activities, namely Roister Doister's wooing. These soliloquies fit smoothly into the play, usually as interludes between acts or scenes, and are

³³The Cowpers Play, in York Mystery Plays, ed. Lucy T. Smith (New York: Russell and Russell, 1885), 19-24.

³⁴Arnold, p. 8.

³⁵Ibid., p. 9.

written in the same rhymed couplets as the entire play. In short, Roister Doister's soliloquies do not call attention to themselves. They are light and for the most part merely delay the action or serve as transitions between highlights in the action.

The following cutting is from the soliloquy of Dobinet Doughty:

Where is the house I go to, before or behind?
I know not where nor when, nor how I shall
it find.

If I had ten men's bodies and legs, and
strength,
This trotting that I have must needs lame
me at length.

And now that my master is new-set on wooing,
I trust there shall none of us find lack
of doing:

* * *

And now am I sent to dame Christian
Custance;

But I fear it will end with a mock for
pastance.

I bring her a ring, with a token in a clout;
And, by all guess, this same is her house
out of doubt.

I know it now perfect, I am in my right way³⁶

The comic monologues of Roister Doister are included in this present history because Shakespeare also used comic soliloquies, and the technique is not unique to the author of Ralph Roister Doister.

The next stage in the development of soliloquy is represented by George Whetstone's play Promos and Cassandra.

³⁶Nicholas Udall, Ralph Roister Doister, in Dramatic Writings, ed. John S. Farmer (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1966), II.i.1-45.

Arnold concludes that Whetstone's play typifies the function of soliloquy in an apprentice stage.³⁷ Importantly, Shakespeare was familiar with Whetstone's play, and it is in Whetstone's Promos and Cassandra that sophisticated use of dramatic soliloquy is first evident. Promos' speech in III.i is actually a debate with himself. He loves Cassandra and laments that love can be cold and hot at the same time: "Euen so in Loue, we freese, through chilling feare,/ When as our hartes, doth frye with hote desire."³⁸ The soliloquy concerns itself with the duplicity of love: fire and cold, reason and desire, pain and pleasure. Promos must decide whether to release Cassandra's brother; this decision is also part of his debate with himself. The soliloquy has the sophistication of Greek tragedy, yet it also has the human elements of the soliloquies in the English morality plays. It is noble, yet emotional. It is serious, but not pompous. Its tone is like that of Hamlet's soliloquies: reason attempting to overcome emotion, hope attempting to overcome despair, and confidence attempting to overcome fear. Whetstone's soliloquy also bares a side of Promos that can only be exposed in private thought or speech. The soliloquy is an integral part of the play, servicing

³⁷Arnold, p. 10.

³⁸George Whetstone, Promos and Cassandra, Tudor Facsimiles edition, III.i.10-11.

neither confidant nor fellow character, but the man around whom the play revolves.

The next group of playwrights to use soliloquy significantly includes Shakespeare's immediate predecessors and contemporaries. Very little is added to the form of the soliloquy after Whetstone, and by 1587, the form of soliloquy is fairly well established in England.³⁹ However, one important element characteristic of the Renaissance is added to the dramatic tradition of soliloquy: a spontaneity and human quality apart from the grandeur and majesty of the classic soliloquies.⁴⁰ The soliloquies of the late 1500's are not as crude and as simple as the soliloquies in the early morality plays; they lie somewhere between the classic soliloquies of the Greeks and those of the miracle plays.⁴¹ By the latter half of the sixteenth century, the soliloquy takes on characteristics that will eventually reflect the stamp of the English drama upon the convention.

It is perhaps important to mention at this point the soliloquies of Shakespeare's contemporary, Thomas Kyd, who will figure prominently in the later discussions of Hamlet in Chapters II, III, and IV, and who is best known

³⁹Arnold, p. 8.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 11.

⁴¹Ibid.

for his play, The Spanish Tragedy. It is in Kyd's plays that the influence of Seneca upon English drama is most readily seen.⁴² His soliloquies, too, bear the mark of Seneca. They are long, pompous, and return almost to the Greek manner of delivery, not at all like the more spontaneous, natural, and logically complex soliloquies of another Shakespearean contemporary, Christopher Marlowe. For example, in the following soliloquy from The Spanish Tragedy, the main character, Hieronimo, discovers his murdered son:

What out-cries pluck me from my naked bed,
 And chill my throbbing hart with trembling
 feare,
 Which neuer danger yet could daunt before?
 Who cals Hieronimo? speak, heere I am.
 I did not slumber; therefore twas no dreame.
 No, no, it was some woman cride for helpe,
 And heere within this garden did she crie,
 And in this garden must I rescue her.
 But stay, what murdrous spectacle is this?
 A man hangd vp and all the murderers gone:
 And in my bower, to lay the guilt on me.
 This place was made for pleasure, not for
 death.

· · ·
 Alas, it is Horatio, my sweet sonne.

· · ·
 O poore Horatio, what hadst thou misdonne,
 To leese thy life ere life was new begun?
 O wicked butcher, what so ere thou wert,
 How could thou strangle vertue and desert?
 Ay me most wretched, that haue lost my joy,
 In leeing my Horatio, my sweet boy.⁴³

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³Thomas Kyd, The Spanish Tragedy, in The Works of Thomas Kyd, ed. Frederick Boas (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1891), II.v.1-33. Subsequent references to this edition are given in parenthesis within the text.

Another soliloquy delivered by Hieronimo exhibits the same degree of exemplary but nearly overladen speech:

Oh eies, no eies, but fountains fraught with
teares;
Oh life, no life, but liuely fourme of death;
Oh world, no world, but masse of publique
wrongs,
Confusde and filde with murder and misdeeds.
O sacred heuens, if this vnhalloved deed,
If this inhumane and barberous attempt,
If this incomparable murder thus
Of mine, but now no more my sonne,
Shall vnreueald and vnreueged passe,
How should we tearme your dealings to be
iust,
If you vniustly deale with those, that in
your iustice trust?
The night, sad secretary to my mones,
With direfull visions wake my vexed soule,
And with the wounds of my distressfull sonne
Solicite me for notice of his death.
The ougly feends do sally forth of hell,
And frame my steps to vnfrequented paths,
And feare my hart with fierce inflamed
thoughts.
The cloudie day my discontents records,
Early begins to register my dreames,
And driue me forthe to seeke the murtherer.
Eies, life, world, heuens, hel, night and
day,
See, search, shew, send some man, some
meane. . . . (III.ii.1-23)

Of all the soliloquies that precede Shakespeare's, Marlowe's are the most noteworthy, not only on their own merit as drama, but also for their probable influence on Shakespeare's soliloquies.⁴⁴ Marlowe's soliloquies contain nothing original in subject matter but are more polished and spirited than those of the morality plays. In many

⁴⁴Arnold, p. 11.

plays from the beginning of the English Renaissance, not only Marlowe's, soliloquies occur in which the innermost thoughts of a character are exposed. This type of soliloquy is characteristic of Hamlet. Furthermore, the main English contribution to the development of the soliloquy is introspection supported by verbal spontaneity characteristic of the Renaissance.⁴⁵ Marlowe's soliloquies are doubly significant, for they quite effectively and simply focus attention on the plight and thoughts of the leading character besides exemplifying Renaissance dramatic values. These points will be even more pertinent when the specific function of the soliloquies in Hamlet is discussed in Chapter II. Like Whetstone's soliloquies, Marlowe's soliloquies contain internal debate and are not simple soliloquies of exposition. Significant parts of the play actually occur in them. In fact, the soliloquy is the natural vehicle for a moral tragedy, having been anointed with moralizing themes from the mystery plays and great dignity from Seneca and the Greek dramatists.

Marlowe uses the techniques discussed in the opening scene of Doctor Faustus. Faustus' first soliloquy sets the turmoil of the play. Faustus is disillusioned by the inadequacy of his various academic and occupational pursuits. He first dispels book learning:

⁴⁵Ibid.

Is to dispute well Logickes chiefest end?
 Affoords this Art no greater miracle?
 Then read no more, thou hast attain'd that
 end.46

His abilities as a physician are of no comfort to him:

"The end of Physicke is our bodies health:/ Why Faustus,
 hast thou not attain'd that end?" (I.i.45-6). Law is also
 inadequate: "This study fits a Mercenarie drudge,/ Who
 aims at nothing but externall trash" (I.i.61-2). Theo-
 logical studies are likewise fruitless:

The reward of sin is death? that's hard:

• • •
 If we say that we haue no sinne
 We deceiue our selues, and there is no truth
 in vs.

Why then belike we must sinne,
 And so consequently die,
 I, we must die, an euerlasting death.
 What doctrine call you this? Che sera,
sera:
 What will be, shall be; Diuinitie adeiw.
 (I.i.67-75)

Faustus settles upon magic as the true liberator of the
 person stretching his intellectual limbs and as a subject
 worthy of study. Magic is also apparently the only way to
 power and omnipotence. As Faustus concludes, "A sound
 Magitian is a Demi-god" (I.i.82).

Like Whetstone's soliloquy, the first soliloquy
 from Marlowe's character Faustus is a revelation of

⁴⁶Christopher Marlowe, The Tragicall Historie of
 Doctor Faustus, in Marlowe's Doctor Faustus, ed. W. W. Greg
 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1950), I.i.37-8. Subsequent
 references to this edition are given in parenthesis within
 the text.

character and explicitly sets up the conflict within the character. Marlowe, as well, is using the soliloquy to convey an emotional and logical state of mind. The soliloquy's structure is that of a character debating with himself. The soliloquy is certainly neither artificial nor extraneous, but is an integral part of the play. It fits the pace of Faustus as completely as the comic interludes fit the pace of Ralph Roister Doister. It is as eloquent as Greek drama, as attuned to the language and state of mind of a character and as concerned with morality as the English mystery plays, and is as dextrous in combining the logical turns necessary for sophisticated internal conflict as Promos and Cassandra. Focusing attention on the main character by means of soliloquy, the dramatic convention now becomes a major vehicle of character delineation. The convention of soliloquy is important and sophisticated enough to convey the nature of the leading character by itself; it is no longer an arbitrary device, but it is a deliberate dramatic technique thoroughly wedded to the intent of the play: the turmoil and folly of a thinking man.

Perhaps the English history of the soliloquy may be condensed in Arnold's quotation:

Through the fervid imagination of the Elizabethan, then aroused by the imposing monologs of the classics, the English soliloquy, which began its career in the miracle play as a little story of the plot or a

prayer or a word to the audience--this linked together the episodes of the pieces and gave psychological meaning to the action. Such is the soliloquy of Marlow, and such, with even a more comprehensive reach is the Shakespearean soliloquy.⁴⁷

The very fact that the soliloquy is a convention that was accepted by Elizabethan audiences illustrates significant differences between the Elizabethan audience and the modern audience which may be used to determine the actual function of the Elizabethan soliloquy. The audiences of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries had a capacity for theatrical make-believe enabling them to accept various stage conventions, such as crude forms of scenery, direct address by an actor, or the design of the stage itself, that might be too "unnatural" for modern audiences.⁴⁸ In Elizabethan drama, the concept of fictive reality is not the same concept as that found in modern drama. Although self-revelation in soliloquy always breaks essential dramatic verisimilitude, the Elizabethan audience did not demand absolute reality; thus self-revelation was a break that they could seemingly tolerate.⁴⁹ Only with the introduction of the proscenium arch, which isolated the players from the audience, and with the use of lighting, which darkened the

⁴⁷Arnold, p. 14.

⁴⁸Allardyce Nicoll, Shakespeare in His Own Age, p. 198.

⁴⁹E. E. Stoll, Shakespeare and Other Masters, p. 27.

house and left the actor in a complete world of his own, did the soliloquy begin to die in English drama.⁵⁰ Furthermore, the drop curtain and arrangement for entrance and exit on three sides of the stage removed the need for graceful entrance and exit speeches, a need which the soliloquies answered.⁵¹ The Elizabethan stage itself provided other reasons for an audience's accepting the soliloquy as a harmonious convention of Elizabethan drama. Although on a modern stage it is assumed that the characters speak to one another and not to the audience, an assumption supported by the separation of stage and audience, there was no such division on the Elizabethan stage; in fact, there were specific places from which actors could speak directly to the audience.⁵²

But perhaps the greatest reason for Elizabethan acceptance of the soliloquy is that the Elizabethans had the habit of making everything explicit and of stating everything in the verse itself rather than leaving the core of the play to the action or to implication.⁵³ Therefore, the soliloquy was accepted as an integral part of the drama

⁵⁰Coghill, p. 129.

⁵¹Arnold, p. 97.

⁵²M. C. Bradbrook, Themes and Conventions of Elizabethan Tragedy, p. 111.

⁵³Ibid., p. 127.

because it explicitly stated characterization and morality.

Yet regardless of its historic place in the dramatic conventions of the Elizabethan stage, the soliloquy is a functioning and necessary part of the Elizabethan play. The essential structure of Elizabethan drama lies not in narrative or in character, but in the word.⁵⁴ The themes of the plays are usually traditional themes, and characters and plots are usually taken from known sources. The originality, the individual greatness of a play such as Hamlet, and the characteristics which distinguish Shakespeare's plays from his sources can be found within the word, within the verse. Lesser writers who could not unify their plays through speech rely on melodrama or spectacle. Shakespeare relies on speech for unification, and a significant part of that speech is the soliloquy.⁵⁵

It is a critically accepted fact that the best examples of Elizabethan uses of soliloquy are found in the plays of Shakespeare. Arnold has divided Shakespeare's soliloquies into six chronological periods, each period associated with the dominant characteristic of its representative soliloquies.⁵⁶ The first period is characterized by soliloquies of narration, the second group by

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 5.

⁵⁵Ibid.

⁵⁶Arnold, pp. 41-3.

soliloquies of passion, the third by comedy, the fourth by morality, the fifth by introspection, and the sixth group is characterized by various ideas and represents the disappearance of the Shakespearean soliloquy.⁵⁷ The groups indicate not only convenient categories of purpose, but a progression and maturity in Shakespeare's handling of soliloquy. Furthermore, Nevill Coghill distinguishes seven major uses of soliloquy in Shakespeare: e.g., comedy, exposition, comment, prediction, meditation, prayer, and personal epiphany.⁵⁸ Arnold consolidates these uses into four general functions: the soliloquy used as exposition, as an accompaniment of the action, as a comic monologue, and as the pure revelation of thought and feeling.⁵⁹

Shakespeare's most intense soliloquies are found in Hamlet. The ideas in the soliloquies of Hamlet cannot, for the most part, be separated from the theme of the play. They cannot be set apart as philosophizing.⁶⁰ They are part of the fabric of the play. In one critic's opinion, Hamlet without soliloquy would be Hamlet left out, for Hamlet's habit of thinking too precisely on the events of

⁵⁷Ibid.

⁵⁸Coghill, p. 137.

⁵⁹Arnold, pp. 41-3.

⁶⁰Ibid., p. 152.

the play comprises the real tragedy.⁶¹ The soliloquy in Hamlet is truly a part indistinguishable from the whole of the play. Hamlet is the drama of moral confusion, of a process of self-awareness, and of a mind striving for cohesion.⁶² Hamlet is, one critic says, "about a mind."⁶³ Therefore, the technique of soliloquy, emotional introspection, is conducive to the entire intent and structure of the play.

Henrik Ibsen is usually given credit for the disappearance of the soliloquy in modern drama.⁶⁴ Exposition and the revelation of suppressed emotion are no longer communicated through direct address. Instead, such knowledge is conveyed through stage direction, comments by other characters, stage techniques, and through the introduction of dialogue serving little purpose other than to communicate further explanation or to illuminate emotion.⁶⁵ Ironically, the very technique of soliloquy considered by modern audiences to be archaic and unoriginal has always been a persistent and successful part of theatre. The

⁶¹Ibid., p. 169.

⁶²Arthur Rossiter, English Drama from Early Times to the Elizabethan, p. 172.

⁶³Ibid.

⁶⁴Arnold, p. 16.

⁶⁵Ellis-Fermor, p. 49.

Elizabethans use it skillfully, and the appreciation of soliloquy depends on an audience's understanding of the structural skill of soliloquy. Shakespeare's soliloquies typify the dramatic necessity, acceptability, and function of this convention in Elizabethan drama.

Chapter II

Function of Soliloquy in Hamlet

Morris Arnold has examined exhaustively the soliloquies in all of Shakespeare's works and has catalogued them according to function. Several other scholars have considered specific soliloquies in Hamlet.⁶⁶ However, it appears that in all of the textual criticism and explication, no scholar has looked at the soliloquies of Hamlet together as a whole and has then compared textual differences between the soliloquies as they appear in Q1, Q2, and F. Granted, Arnold must be consulted for definitions of the kinds and functions of each soliloquy; however, he then must be subordinated in lieu of bibliographers when it comes to textual problems in Hamlet.

The following explication of Hamlet is indebted mainly to Bertram Joseph's interpretation of Hamlet and,

⁶⁶N. B. Allen, "Hamlet's 'To be or not to be' Soliloquy," Shakespeare Association Bulletin, XII (1938), 195-207; J. G. Barry, "Shakespeare's Deceptive Cadence: A Study of the Structure of Hamlet," Shakespeare Quarterly, XXIV (Spring 1973), 117-27; Fredson Bowers, "Hamlet's 'Sullied' or 'Solid' Flesh: A Bibliographical Case History," Shakespeare Survey, IX (1956), 448; A. Newell, "Dramatic Context and Meaning of Hamlet's 'To be or not to be' Soliloquy," PMLA, LXXX (March 1965), 38-50; W. Schrickx, "Background and Context of Hamlet's Second Soliloquy," Modern Language Review, LXVIII (April 1973), 241-55.

as mentioned before, to Arnold's categorization of the soliloquies in general. The present author also submits that one should think of soliloquies as major divisions in the action of the play Hamlet, almost as the divisions in classical tragedy, since the soliloquies mark significant changes in character, plot, and action. Using Joseph's suggestions, coupled with agreeing and opposing views from other critics, and noting my own submission, the soliloquies in Hamlet lead easily to the explication of the play. The soliloquies of Hamlet are interesting because they are not just soliloquies of exposition. The soliloquies are not in the play simply to move the plot forward, but, with one exception, they deal with the character of Hamlet and his inability to avenge his father's murder.

Hamlet's character is assumed to be that of a Renaissance man expressing Renaissance morality.⁶⁷ This view has become especially popular among twentieth-century students of the play. Hamlet may have enough individuality to make him a character, and an interesting character at that, but the foundation for his actions is decidedly in the Renaissance. Moreover, most of the virtues alluded to in the soliloquies were taken for granted by the Elizabethans.⁶⁸ Therefore, it is unfair and anachronistic to

⁶⁷Bertram Joseph, Conscience and the King, p. 37.

⁶⁸Ibid.

submit the play completely to psychological criticism, formalistic criticism, or whatever other twentieth century point of view one may wish to impose upon the play. The great appeal of Hamlet lies in the fact that it lends itself to infinite interpretations and readings, but for the sake of this study, the play should be looked upon as a product of the Elizabethan theatre. Therefore, if the soliloquies are great revelations of character, then one must determine just what type of character is revealed.

Again, this discussion turns to Joseph's work on Hamlet because it is probably the lengthiest attempt to explicate and examine Hamlet in terms of the Elizabethan audience's understanding of the play. Joseph argues that the only legitimate way in which to examine the play is by dropping twentieth-century interpretations and considering the words of the play as they may have affected an Elizabethan audience.⁶⁹ Joseph's views are shared by other critics.⁷⁰

A surface explanation of Hamlet reveals that it concerns the hesitant plan of a man seeking revenge for the murder of his father. This analysis is accepted without argument. The point of contention among critics is why Hamlet requires five acts in which to carry out his revenge.

⁶⁹Ibid., p. 24.

⁷⁰Ibid., p. 35.

He clearly has an opportunity to dispose of Claudius well before the final scene, and even his final act of revenge is almost an accident. In a duel with Laertes, Hamlet manages to survive long enough to kill Claudius. The general debated reasons for his delay are that Hamlet's melancholy prevents him from acting, that mere reluctance to kill after he has resolved to avenge his father's death causes the delay, and that the simple mechanics involved, such as easing his doubts and catching Claudius alone where the deed can be done conveniently, stymie Hamlet's revenge.

Joseph points out that nowhere in Hamlet does Shakespeare say specifically that Hamlet's delay in getting rid of Claudius is the result of melancholy. Elizabethans would not have assumed that Hamlet's delay or downfall was caused by melancholy.⁷¹ For them, there were several other reasons for not killing Claudius upon first hearing of his transgression. The reasons were ones for which the consequences, if Hamlet had ignored them, would have been serious. The ghost might be false. If the ghost were a devil, an evil thing, deliberately tempting and misleading Hamlet, then to follow its direction would be a mortal sin. Joseph reiterates that there is no doubt that Shakespeare's contemporaries would have accepted this reason as the cause

⁷¹Ibid., p. 40.

of Hamlet's delay.⁷²

Regardless of this implied reluctance to follow the directions of a spirit, revenge was very much a part of the Renaissance tradition and failure to avenge the death of a father was as unnatural as blasphemy.⁷³ Actually, the ethical teachings of Elizabethan England did not advocate revenge. This attitude was based on biblical references to reveng:

Recompense to no man evil for evil. . . . Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath; for it is written, Vengeance is mine. I will repay, saith the Lord. ⁷⁴

However, Shakespeare, like his contemporaries, uses the theme of revenge. In fact, his play varies little from the pattern established by the stock of Elizabethan revenge plays.⁷⁵ The three elements characteristic of revenge plays are evident in Hamlet: revelation of a crime that demands "blood-vengeance," identification of the guilty party, and, once the guilty party is revealed, designation of the avenger. Theatrically, the policy of all revenge

⁷²Ibid.

⁷³Ibid., p. 40.

⁷⁴Lily Campbell, "Theories of Revenge in Renaissance England," Modern Philology, XXVIII (1930-1), 281.

⁷⁵A. H. Thorndike, "The Relationship of Hamlet to Contemporary Revenge Plays," PMLA, XVII (1902), 176. For an extensive study of Elizabethan revenge plays see Fredson Bower's Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy.

plays is that the avenger is not allowed immediately to reach his goal.⁷⁶ Barry points out one more significant fact; the revenge pattern is not a tragic pattern. The tragedy occurs when the avenger assumes his role in violation of biblical teachings. Vengeance belongs to God, and the man who does not rely on God to serve justice destroys himself.⁷⁷ Such is the tragic pattern of Hamlet.

In light of Joseph's interpretation, Hamlet is a Renaissance man holding onto honor, dignity, and noble behavior. He wants to behave as honor demands, and, consequently, despises himself for the inability to risk his own damnation.⁷⁸ However, why he delays is not the point to emphasize. The fact that he does delay, regardless of reasons, is the most emphatic aspect of the play. Hamlet himself does not know precisely what holds him back (a conclusion substantiated by close analysis of the soliloquies). In fact, each soliloquy is almost a new excuse for putting off the deed he is destined to perform. The mere fact that he is involved in delaying the precept of revenge makes him so uniquely Shakespeare's Hamlet that the soliloquies are necessary to carry him out of the constraints

⁷⁶Schrickx, p. 243.

⁷⁷Barry, p. 119; Bowers, Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy, p. 94.

⁷⁸Joseph, p. 37.

imposed by the historical sources for the play. The course of action is straightforward for the tragic hero of the revenge story serving as the source for Hamlet, and only the mechanics of executing Claudius stand in his way. Therefore, no soliloquies, no mental debates or travesties, are found in the source.

Another important part of Hamlet is the implication of Gertrude's marriage. Marrying her husband's brother was an act of adultery in the eyes of the Elizabethans. In fact, they were probably very much aware of the subject since Elizabeth herself gained the throne through her father's insistence on the sinful nature of his union with his brother's widow, Catherine of Aragon.⁷⁹ Hamlet arrives in Denmark to find that incest is being celebrated as holy matrimony. Therefore, he is grieved not only by the untimely death of his father, but also by his mother's transgressions. The world has turned completely upside down for him.

Granted, when one reads Hamlet, he must keep in mind three Renaissance traditions to understand clearly the actions of the play: the tradition of honor and revenge, the belief that spirits exist as manifestations of both good and evil making it difficult to tell whether they represent heaven or hell, and the belief that marrying the

⁷⁹Ibid., p. 46.

brother of one's spouse was incest. But one must also grant to Hamlet a complexity above and beyond rote tradition. Hamlet is still the story of a multifaceted man. His complication is that he is both the epitome of Renaissance tradition and his own man with his own peculiar reluctance to act.

In all of the more mature plays of Shakespeare, soliloquies are placed only at points of structural necessity and seem to be carefully planned.⁸⁰ The fact that Shakespeare places soliloquy at points of structural necessity is readily illustrated by Hamlet. Not only does Hamlet exemplify the five part structure of Elizabethan tragedy, but it also weds that structure with soliloquy.⁸¹ One may conclude, therefore, that the soliloquies of Hamlet are markers for the major concentration of each of the five parts. They are not geometrically or linearly placed, but are dramatically the center of each part. The parts do not necessarily represent scenes, but they are almost exclusively defined by the five acts of Hamlet and help to link psychological movement, action, and character change. Using Arnold's four categories of soliloquy, one may explain the major soliloquies of Hamlet according to structural

⁸⁰Coghill, p. 142.

⁸¹For a detailed explanation of Shakespeare's five-part structure see Thomas Baldwin's Shakespeare's Five-Act Structure.

placement and function.

The five dramatic parts of Elizabethan tragedy are the act of exposition or statement of the problem, the act of rising action or development of the problem, the act of climax, the act of falling action, and the act of catastrophe and resolution. Briefly, the soliloquies in Hamlet occur as follows: in I.ii Hamlet's soliloquy lamenting the marriage of his mother and his uncle appears after Claudius's address to the kingdom.⁸² In I.v, Hamlet comments on the ghost's information about his father's death and resolves to investigate the matter. Hamlet's resolution to use the traveling players to catch the conscience of the king is stated in II.ii. In III.i, appears Hamlet's "To be or not to be" soliloquy, the essence of which is that conscience makes cowards of men. Although the sequence of this soliloquy in relation to the other soliloquies is the same in both Q2 and F, it appears in a different scene in Q1, thus confusing scenes in which Polonius (Corambis in Q1) and Claudius plan a test of Hamlet's madness and a scene in which Hamlet has an interview with Ophelia. Before going to speak to his mother, Hamlet delivers another short soliloquy in III.ii. There are two soliloquies in III.iii; one is the confession of Claudius, and the other

⁸²Act and scene designations apply to Q2. The order of the soliloquies is the same for Q2 and F; however, Q1 does vary in this respect.

is Hamlet's reason for not killing Claudius while the King is praying. Finally, the eighth soliloquy, presented in IV.iv, is concerned with Hamlet's resolution to act and finally to avenge the murder of his father.

The first seven soliloquies are found in the F and in the Q1 and Q2 editions of Hamlet, although in varying forms. The eighth soliloquy appears only in Q2. The surface meaning of the soliloquies is the same in each version, and it is that general meaning that is discussed in this chapter. Discussion of the differences between the soliloquies as they appear in the Q1, Q2, and F is reserved for Chapter IV.

The first soliloquy, I.ii, is delivered by Hamlet himself. The soliloquy serves as, consistent with Elizabethan dramatic structure, one statement of Hamlet's problem in the play, for the soliloquy contains not only a practical evaluation of present events in the Danish kingdom, but it also contains Hamlet's feelings about these events. Claudius has married his brother's queen within two months of the senior Hamlet's death. According to Renaissance standards, this course of action is incest, and it was considered as such by Elizabethan audiences.⁸³ Claudius numbs the members of his kingdom; they are either blinded to Claudius's sin or afraid to transgress his

⁸³Joseph, p. 103.

. . . remember thee,
 Yea, from the table of my memory
 Ile wipe away all triuiall fond records,
 All sawes of bookes, all formes, all pressures past
 That youth and obseruation coppied there,
 And thy commandement all alone shall liue,
 Within the booke and volume of my braine (I.v.92-113)

The soliloquy is not only, using Arnold's terms, a pure revelation of thought and feeling, but also a means of extending the problem or complication of the play. Hamlet swears to remember the words of the ghost, and he is obviously affected by these words; yet he initially does not know if the ghost is a "spirit of health or goblin damn'd" bringing "ayres from heauen or blasts from hell" (I.iv.40-1). Arnold asserts that Hamlet does not know the nature of the ghost, for in his soliloquy Hamlet swears by both heaven and hell: "O all you host of heaven, o earth, what els,/ And shall I coupple hell" (I.v.92-3). Therefore, the remaining action of the play will be, first, the job of determining whether the apparition can be trusted and, secondly, Hamlet's actual retribution for his father's murder. However, another critic suggests that Hamlet has already affirmed the need for revenge and that his reference to hell is simply an attempt to swear by any and every possible entity.⁸⁵ The play then proceeds to document Hamlet's putting off of the task through too much introspective thinking on the matter. There are other theories

⁸⁵Schrickx, p. 16.

on the interpretation of this soliloquy, and these theories certainly extend the philosophical implications of the play, but the reader is urged to be more pragmatic in explaining what the soliloquy does for the audience and for the playwright--it moves the action forward and reveals character. Hamlet has resolved to avenge his father's murder. Readings other than those in accordance with the two functions forces the reading of Hamlet and are of little practical theatrical use.

Another soliloquy spoken by Hamlet is contained in II. It is obviously consistent with both Elizabethan dramatic structure and Arnold's categories of soliloquy function. In it Hamlet curses himself for not having the emotional reaction to his father's murder comparable to the contrived reaction of one of the traveling players to the death of Hecuba, a character in a tragedy. Hamlet suggests again, ". . . The spirit that I have seene/ May be a deale . . ." (II.ii.27-8) and resolves to use a play to determine the king's guilt or innocence. Serving as development of the problem first stated in I, the soliloquy accompanies the action of II, exposes Hamlet's thoughts and feelings, explains how he will use the traveling players to confirm his suspicions about Claudius, and reveals Hamlet's character as being that of a rather youthful and passionate man. If one follows Arnold's interpretation, the soliloquy

also sets up a test of the ghost; his story must be confirmed before Hamlet can act upon it. If one follows Newell's interpretation, the soliloquy emphasizes Hamlet's inability to take immediate action (he is, after all, a thinking man not prone to quick and illogical actions) and gives Hamlet his first opportunity to stall for time.⁸⁶ In either case, this soliloquy fits both Arnold's classifications and, according to the second part of the five act dramatic structure, contributes to the rising action of the play.

The third part of this five act dramatic structure is that of climax in which the action culminates and turns toward its eventual outcome. As if to forecast III's function in the whole scheme of the play, the act contains four soliloquies. Hamlet again implicitly chastises himself for not acting promptly on the revenge of his father's murder, but is shackled by thoughts of the consequences of all acts in general. Of course, the particular act and consequence of which he is speaking is the act of killing Claudius on the word of a ghost who may be a figure sent from hell. Again, according to Joseph's interpretation, the obvious reason for Hamlet's not killing Claudius outright is that the ghost might be false. Therefore, killing

⁸⁶Newell, p. 38.

Claudius would ensure Hamlet's own damnation.⁸⁷ Hamlet laments that men are often so conscious of the consequences of their acts:

Thus conscience dooes make cowards,
And thus the natiue hiew of resolution
Is sickled ore with the pale cast of thought,
And enterprises of great pitch and moment,
With this regard theyr currents turne awry,
And loose the name of action. . . . (III.i.83-8)

The soliloquy also appears to support Newell's view that Hamlet is concerned with his tendency to think beyond the surface implications of a topic.⁸⁸ His discourse on death is an example of this tendency and serves to illustrate what is occurring in reference to Hamlet's revenge.

The next soliloquy in III is spoken after the play within the play has exposed Claudius's guilt. Now Hamlet is ready for action because the play has accomplished what he had hoped: he has more proof of the king's guilt and is convinced that the ghost was speaking the truth. He is resolved to conduct ". . . such busines as the bitter day/
Would quake to looke on . . ." (III.ii.409-10). This soliloquy, as well as the three soliloquies preceding it, serves to trace changes in Hamlet's psychology, emotions, and strategy.

⁸⁷Joseph, p. 32.

⁸⁸Newell, pp. 45-6.

At this point, one may notice that the main reason for Elizabethan inclusion of soliloquy, to accompany and explain character and action, is also the justification for soliloquy in Hamlet. The soliloquies are truly the centers of their respective acts and scenes because, while focusing on Hamlet, they also relate the main action of the play, a mental working out of barriers prohibiting physical action.

Appearing after this brief soliloquy, in which Hamlet also prepares for an audience with his mother, the next soliloquy in III is perhaps the most traditional of all in Hamlet because it encompasses the old technique of letting a villain expose himself as an evil figure through speech. In iii, Claudius admits in the soliloquy that he has murdered his brother. From one point of view, the progress of the play is a revelation of the quality of Claudius's villainy, and the King's soliloquy, which follows the Elizabethan convention of soliloquy as a villain's direct self-explanation to an audience, provides quick and effective exposition.

Finally, the last soliloquy in III is Hamlet's approach to the praying king and his reason for not killing Claudius at this point. Again, the soliloquy is a means of explaining to an audience why Hamlet, after resolving to avenge his father's murder in a previous speech, hesitates here. Shakespeare carefully traces the thoughts of his

character so that the implications of action will be accurately received; interpretation is not left up to the audience. Hamlet does not want to kill Claudius if there is a chance that Claudius will die having confessed his sins. Hamlet's father was not afforded the same opportunity, Hamlet reasons; therefore, killing Claudius at this point would not be revenge, but would be a benefit. However, again, the scene may be interpreted as another excuse for Hamlet to delay what he must do: e.g., kill Claudius. It is ironic that Hamlet's fears are unjustified in this scene just as his fears about the ghost's story are unjustified. Hamlet is the one who establishes the conflict and irony of the play.

The eighth soliloquy, which does not appear in Q1 or F, is, more or less, another stepping stone or accompaniment to the action. Hamlet again reiterates that he must stop thinking and start acting:

. . . now whether it be
 Bestiall obliuion, or some crauen scruple
 Of thinking too precisely on th'euent,
 A thought which quarterd hath but one part wisdom,
 And euer three parts coward, I doe not know
 Why yet I liue to say this thing's to doe,
 Sith I haue cause, and will, and strength, and meanes
 To doo't; . . . (IV.iv.39-46)

The moment is merely a pause, a direction, not a hesitation. His example for action is not a group of players in this scene; it is Fortinbras' army, men fighting for a less personal cause than Hamlet's. The play is moving

toward its ultimate conclusion after the climax of III, and Hamlet's last soliloquy in IV reaffirms his previous resolution to avenge his father's murder and predicts the action of V: "O from this time forth,/ My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth!" (IV.iv.66).

There are no soliloquies in V, and this absence in itself indicates the function of soliloquy in Hamlet. The play is, first, a revelation of the guilt of Claudius and the final achievement of revenge. Throughout the acts stating and climaxing these two factors, dramatic activity is conducted in Hamlet's mind; all dramatic activity is either emotion or thought. But after Hamlet's final soliloquy at the end of IV, the play turns to physical action whose implications are explicit and basic to revenge tragedy; Hamlet kills the King and is, in turn, killed by Laertes. The Elizabethan audience needs no aid in interpreting the communication of Shakespeare's last act.

Thus, the soliloquies in Hamlet, can be shown to be structurally and thematically justified. Soliloquy is a convention of Elizabethan drama, but one that has a unique function in a dramatic work. It is difficult to envision how the same effects of Hamlet could be similarly portrayed on a modern stage with modern conventions. Some type of narration or explanation would be necessary because the play is essentially moving in the character of Hamlet, and

the character of Hamlet is essentially moving in the soliloquies. Hamlet is a psychological play in that it concerns a mind, but the psychology of Hamlet is not revealed through action, symbolism, scenic design, or by analysis made for the audience by another character. The audience must see Hamlet's mind at work, and to do so must be presented with soliloquy.

Regardless of lengthy and careful textual study, which proves the necessity of soliloquy in Hamlet, soliloquies need not be explained only in practical terms of category and structural placement; they may also be explained in theoretical terms of philosophy and idea. For example, T. S. Eliot argues that Shakespeare was influenced by the stoicism of Seneca and that at the height of dramatic intensity, Shakespearean heroes assume an attitude of self-dramatization. Thus, the soliloquy may be explained as a stoic pose, the individual man cheering himself up in the midst of an indifferent world.⁸⁹ Maurice Charney argues that, within the context of Shakespeare's Coriolanus, the soliloquy is a literal stage image of isolation.⁹⁰ Therefore, since Hamlet is essentially the drama

⁸⁹T. S. Eliot, Shakespeare and the Stoicism of Seneca, p. 17.

⁹⁰Maurice Charney, "Dramatic Use of Imagery in Shakespeare's Coriolanus," Journal of English Literary History, XXIII, no. 2 (September 1956), 189.

of a mind attempting to organize itself into action, the soliloquies may be stage images of a mind in isolated torment and of a man who must act alone against the forces of evil.

Soliloquy may be used also for dramatic and artistic control, especially of material adopted from sources that jump from strong-point to strong-point. Shakespeare consolidates narrative by relating action in the play to strategically placed soliloquies and by suggesting what is to come with soliloquy.

Soliloquy is, therefore, a means for linking scene to scene.⁹¹ Granville-Barker observes that soliloquies are important in Hamlet, Macbeth, and Othello, but contends that in King Lear, Antony and Cleopatra, and Coriolanus, where the heroes are men of action, the soliloquy is unimportant.⁹² Furthermore, could the appearance of soliloquy in a particular play be related to the varying qualities of each play's source? Can soliloquies be found in the original source, or are they added because of structural difficulty in a source or because of difficulty in transmitting that source to the stage? These questions are impossible to answer for all of Shakespeare's plays without an entire

⁹¹Coghill, p. 133.

⁹²Harley Granville-Barker, A Companion to Shakespeare Studies, p. 45.

study devoted solely to the problems; however, they can be briefly answered for Hamlet.

One difference between the sources of Hamlet and the actual Shakespearean version of the story is that the sources, whether from Danish folklore or from the translation of the stories, are in prose. Thus, the implications of the story, if any, can be explained by the narrator, who subsequently controls the reader's interpretation of the prose. This same control over the reader, or audience, is the intent of the Elizabethan dramatist. But obviously, the particular medium will change dramatic technique. Drama has no natural overall omnipotent narrator, but it can have an artificial commentator such as an informed character, a chorus, monologue, or soliloquy. Through these devices, the dramatist inserts an organizational explanation and direction for the action of the play. As one may recall, such was the function of the Greek soliloquies.

Furthermore, the sources for Hamlet are folktales from Danish history. Thus, they have little detailed action or character delineation, but are instead lengthy discourses by a story-teller narrator. Pure physical action can be reproduced on a stage, but mental introspection normally provided by a narrator cannot be reproduced. Therefore, the soliloquies could be structural

devices necessitated by these problems in transferring a source to the stage, and may help to explain why Antony and Cleopatra, Coriolanus, and King Lear do not include soliloquies, for they are generally plays of action that can be reproduced successfully from a source. Moreover, the continuity of the sources is brought about by a plot line. To sustain dramatically for five acts the surface plot of Hamlet, one must fill in the spaces between isolated events, a matter that could be executed by connecting soliloquies placed between main sections of action. Of course, this function still does not preclude the soliloquy's main purpose in Hamlet: the conveyance of Hamlet's self-debate and motivation for avenging his father's murder.

Another function of soliloquy related to dramatic and artistic control of drama is that of dramatic balance. By exposing itself as an artificial means of speech, the soliloquy can become a means for a built-in balance designed to keep the audience from completely identifying with the actor's role.⁹³ The soliloquy is a device that insists the audience recognize actors, but also encourages a psychological identification with the character the actor is portraying. In other words, it is an actor's pose.

⁹³Maynard Mack, "Engagement and Detachment in Shakespeare's Plays," in Essays on Shakespeare and Elizabethan Drama in Honor of Hardin Craig, ed. Richard Hasley, p. 277.

Although the primary use of soliloquy is as a structural piece designed to hold together the narrative and the scenes in most plays, a subordinate use of soliloquy also is evident in Elizabethan plays. As in the early morality plays, the soliloquy is often used to state the moral of the play.⁹⁴ Accompanying this particular function is the revelation of hero and villain through soliloquy, as exemplified by Claudius's soliloquy in III.iii of Hamlet. M. C. Bradbrook argues that soliloquy may have been written in part for the moral persuasion of the play and in part for the censors of the play. Self-characterization, whereby a villain or a hero reveals his true self, clarifies doubtful speech. In the case of clowns, it is traditional that they enter into direct conversation with the audience. But the villain must also reveal his whole scheme and his real nature; therefore, it is a good means of determining on whose side the audience should be.⁹⁵ This interpretation of the function of soliloquy parallels Joseph's interpretation of Hamlet; the audience must know that Claudius is a villain so that Hamlet's act of revenge is not a response to a devil's tempting story.

Many critics marvel at the psychological depth of the soliloquies in Hamlet, but no scholarship supports the

⁹⁴Ibid., p. 285.

⁹⁵Bradbrook, p. 128.

notion that the Elizabethan dramatists consciously used soliloquy to expose the innermost psychological make-up of characters. Instead, the Elizabethan dramatist uses soliloquy as a dramatic convention designed to add expository remarks, to delineate characters, and to benefit the structure and the moral message of the play. These purposes are not unlike a culmination of all the purposes of soliloquies described in Chapter I at every stage in the soliloquy's development. The confession of the villain, which subsequently exposes the true character of a villain, is perhaps the intended psychological limit of Elizabethan soliloquy. Charney makes this comment on soliloquy:

Rather than expressing "thought" in one modern sense of discursive reasoning, the soliloquy in Hamlet is used primarily to give free vent to emotions that might otherwise be suppressed. It is this passionate, emotional quality that makes soliloquy so different in kind from other speeches.⁹⁶

Thus, the soliloquies of Hamlet must be examined as being dramatically conceived devices intended by Shakespeare to perform specific structural functions within the play.

In conclusion, the soliloquies of Hamlet have two main functions: the exposition of action in the play and the revelation of emotion. Hamlet is an introspective man thrust into an environment where the accepted moral order has been disturbed. His mother marries his uncle, which

⁹⁶Maurice Charney, Style in Hamlet, p. 296.

for Hamlet and the Elizabethan audience is an incestuous act, yet no one appears to be concerned. Later in the play, Hamlet finds that he must assume the responsibility of avenging his father's murder. But because of his own peculiar distaste for the act he must perform, he is unable to become a man of action. Consequently, he must mentally play out his approach to this problem. The soliloquy is, therefore, the natural technique for communicating all of Hamlet's problems and all of his solutions. The audience must know that Hamlet is shocked by his mother's actions, a task completed by the expository elements of the first soliloquy in Hamlet. Also, Hamlet must resolve to act on his problems, and because the soliloquy is an emotional speech, it is consequently beneficial for motivating the reasoning process. According to Renaissance psychology, the passions, even though they are the baser human faculty, are necessary to reason, which gives the motivation for human actions.⁹⁷ The soliloquy also parallels Hamlet's introspective nature. Soliloquy fuses emotion, provides transitions between ideas, and can follow the musings of a sensitive mind better than dialogue. Therefore, soliloquy is appropriate to the dramatic situation of the play; its place in the play's structure is probably Shakespeare's first consideration in designing the soliloquies of Hamlet.

⁹⁷Granville-Barker, Companion, p. 69.

Again, one is urged to consider the pragmatic, theatrical reasons for soliloquy in lieu of more exotic historical and psychological theories.

Furthermore, regardless of the various speculative interpretations of the function of soliloquy in Shakespeare's plays, particularly Hamlet, two facts remain: the soliloquy is part of a dramatic convention originating with classical dramatists, and soliloquy is a convention accepted by Elizabethan audiences. Also, the soliloquy is not a superfluous decoration of Elizabethan plays, but is a functioning, necessary, and carefully planned structural part. Shakespeare appears to accept the convention as readily as he accepts other dramatic conventions.⁹⁸ The greater writers among Elizabethan dramatists developed many ways of using soliloquy as exposition and as the revelation of suppressed emotion.⁹⁹ Shakespeare achieves no less than this in his soliloquies.

⁹⁸Coghill, p. 130.

⁹⁹Arnold, p. 16.

Chapter III

History and Textual Problems of Hamlet

It is generally accepted that there was a play dealing with the theme of Hamlet's revenge long before Shakespeare turned it into a successful Globe production. It is not as comfortably assumed, however, that the identity of the author of this early Hamlet is known. The original play is called Ur-Hamlet and its author probably used an English translation of Francois de Belleforest's The Histoires Tragiques, The Hystorie of Hamblet, as his source. Belleforest's collection, published in the late 1500's, had been freely translated from Historiae Danicae written by a Danish monk, Saxo Grammaticus, between 1180 and 1208 for the Danish archbishop, Absalon.¹⁰⁰

The Histoires Tragiques is the story of the marriage of Horvvendille and Geruthe, daughter of the King of Denmark, and their son, Amleth. Horvvendille is murdered by his brother Fengon, and Fengon marries Geruthe, whom he has previously seduced. Amleth pretends madness to avenge his father's murder, which incidentally was

¹⁰⁰Horace Furness, ed., A New Variorum Edition of William Shakespeare: Hamlet, II, p. 87.

committed in full view of the court. The Hystorie of Hamblet is an almost literal translation of Belleforest's work and was probably written around 1570 and published soon after that.¹⁰¹

It is generally assumed that Thomas Kyd was the author of the Ur-Hamlet, although this theory cannot be proved unequivocally. Scholars have argued this point just as they have argued every other point concerning the background of Shakespeare's Hamlet.¹⁰² But critics agree that, if it were not Kyd who wrote the actual Ur-Hamlet, it was very likely an imitator of Kyd who probably took what he could from Belleforest's tale and fitted it into a Senecan tragedy.¹⁰³ Kyd was also a Senecan tragedian, a fact that seems to help confirm his authorship.

Unfortunately, this early play on which Shakespeare based his Hamlet is lost, although some critics believe that Kyd's The Spanish Tragedy may help in a reconstruction of the Ur-Hamlet.¹⁰⁴ In fact, The Spanish Tragedy may be Kyd's attempt to incorporate some of the features he found to be successful in Ur-Hamlet--the theme of revenge, the

¹⁰¹Ibid.

¹⁰²See Variorum, ed. Horace Furness, for synopsis of the major arguments.

¹⁰³Furness, p. 87.

¹⁰⁴Frederick Boas, ed., The Works of Thomas Kyd, pp. xlv-liv; Gray, "Reconstruction."

play within the play, feigned madness of the hero--if indeed Kyd were the author of the Ur-Hamlet and assuming also that the play was produced before The Spanish Tragedy.¹⁰⁵ Henry David Gray has attempted to reconstruct the early Hamlet.¹⁰⁶

The entire controversy over Kyd's authorship of the Ur-Hamlet is sparked by a reference by Thomas Nashe in his preface to Greene's Menaphon, 1589. Nashe attacks a dramatist who "'will affoord you whole Hamlets, I should say handfulls of tragical speeches.'"¹⁰⁷ Critics who establish Kyd as the author of the Ur-Hamlet argue that Nashe is referring to Kyd. However, G. I. Duthie does not accept this view. He hypothesizes that Nashe is attacking a group of writers, not Kyd individually, and, therefore, the passage does not conclusively imply that Kyd is the author of the play in question.¹⁰⁸

Thomas Boas sees Kyd as the author of Ur-Hamlet and offers that Kyd wrote it in the latter part of 1587. Boas

¹⁰⁵Thomas Parrott and Hardin Craig, The Tragedy of Hamlet: A Critical Edition of the Second Quarto, p. 10.

¹⁰⁶Gray, "Reconstruction."

¹⁰⁷Thomas Nashe, preface to Menaphon by Robert Greene, in Menaphon and A Margarite of America, ed. G. B. Harrison (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1927), p. 9.

¹⁰⁸G. I. Duthie, The "Bad" Quarto of Hamlet, p. 76.

offers both external and internal evidence to support his theory that Kyd is the author of the early Hamlet. The play, Boas concludes, resembles The Spanish Tragedy in style and technique; however, it did not become as popular as The Spanish Tragedy, and there is no record of its having been printed.¹⁰⁹

Regardless of whether its author will ever be determined, it is likely that in the late 1500's Shakespeare found a play in the coffers of the Lord Chamberlain's Company combining Senecan and native English elements, opening with the appearance of a ghost calling upon Hamlet for revenge, and ending in a bloody quarrel.¹¹⁰ Henslowe records in his diary that a play Hamlet was being performed in 1594 by two companies acting together.¹¹¹ One of these companies was the Lord Chamberlain's men; therefore, it is likely that Shakespeare revised and revitalized the company's play.¹¹² The company evidently needed a more successful version of Hamlet, because references to the early forms of the play show the receipts to be very

¹⁰⁹Boas, p. liii.

¹¹⁰Parrott and Craig, pp. 14-15.

¹¹¹Philip Henslowe, Henslowe's Diary, ed. R. A. Foakes and R. T. Richert (Cambridge: University Press, 1961), p. 21.

¹¹²Gray, "Reconstruction," p. 255.

small.¹¹³

The exact date of Shakespeare's Hamlet is also under fire. Duthie argues that there are few passages in the play that could not refer to anything before the latter half of 1601.¹¹⁴ Therefore, Shakespeare's Hamlet was either not in existence or did not exist in its final form before 1601. Bullough does not enter into the controversy. He notes simply that the play was written sometime between 1598 and 1601 and that alterations were made in 1601 or 1602.¹¹⁵

By 1602, the Lord Chamberlain's Company, perhaps fearing piracy, entered Hamlet into the Stationer's Register to printer James Roberts. Dated January 18, 1602, this printer's entry represented exclusive rights to publish the play if and when the printer and the company agreed to its printing.¹¹⁶ The players probably arranged with Roberts to enter the play in the Stationer's Register to prevent it from being pirated like Henry V and Merry Wives of Windsor had been.¹¹⁷ Roberts was evidently on friendly terms with the company because he had exclusive rights to print bills which advertised the play. There is no

¹¹³Parrott and Craig, pp. 6-7.

¹¹⁴Duthie, pp. 83-4.

¹¹⁵Bullough, p. 5.

¹¹⁶Parrott and Craig, p. 20.

¹¹⁷Ibid.

apparent reason for his publishing without the company's consent. His 1602 order was, more than likely, a blocking order to claim exclusive rights to publication if and when the company wanted to publish.¹¹⁸ Apparently, before Roberts could capitalize on his entry, a pirated version, Q1, appeared in 1603.

For the most part, books were printed in an orderly fashion in the Elizabethan period. Copyright was understood to be the right of a printer to print copy duly registered by the Stationer, granted by obtaining a license, a warrant, and a formal entry in the Stationer's hall book.¹¹⁹ However, printers sometimes used unscrupulous means to acquire texts for which they had not paid.¹²⁰ For example, an actor could be bribed to deliver his part to the printer; a reporter stationed in the audience could record the play and later sell his transcript to a printer; or a printer could obtain unauthorized copies of the play. Whatever the means used, Q1 of Hamlet appears to have been the victim of a surreptitious printing.

Shakespeare and his company took steps to have what the new heading called "the true and perfect Coppie"

¹¹⁸Ibid.

¹¹⁹W. W. Greg, The Shakespeare First Folio, pp. 28-9.

¹²⁰Sir E. K. Chambers, The Elizabethan Stage, III, p. 185.

printed, and in 1604, Roberts printed Q2. After Q2, three more quarto editions of Hamlet were published, each appearing to have been printed from the preceding edition. Q3 appeared in 1605, Q4 in 1611, and Q5 was published undated. Finally, Hamlet was included in F in 1623. Hamlet appears in three other folio editions: F2 of 1632, F3 of 1664, and F4 of 1665.¹²¹ The four folio editions are for all practical purposes the same text.¹²² Quartos appearing after Shakespeare's death are called Players Quartos.¹²³

The First Quarto is a bad or surreptitious text--that is, it was not printed from any authorized text--and is a rough and brief version of the subsequent Q2 and F. The more popular theory of its printing seems to be that it is a reported version of Q2, and that it was transmitted by either a stenographer or a reporter appearing in one of the minor roles. Stenographic piracy was a known practice in the first part of the seventeenth century,¹²⁴ and actors would often recite their parts, and, to the best of their memories, the parts of other actors so that a printer would have a complete, although reconstructed, text.¹²⁵ Bullough

¹²¹Furness, p. 394.

¹²²Ibid., p. 36.

¹²³Ibid., p. 35.

¹²⁴Duthie, p. 12.

¹²⁵Chambers, Elizabethan Stage, pp. 190-1.

and Gray hypothesize that the Hamlet pirate was an actor playing the roles of Marcellus.¹²⁶ Chambers and Craig say that the actor may have been Voltimand.¹²⁷ Differences between Q1 and Q2 are then attributed to the inaccuracy of the reporter.

Duthie divides the hypotheses about the manuscript behind the printing of Q1 into two main groups: The first states that a manuscript separate from that of Q2 lies behind Q1. The second states that Q1 is based solely on the Q2 version. The first hypothesis is then broken into two subgroups. If Q1 is an independent version of Hamlet, either (as the title page implies) Q1 is Shakespeare's original draft and he altered it for subsequent versions, or Q1 is a transition play lying between Ur-Hamlet and Q2 with Q2 being a revision of this play as Shakespeare's final version. The second hypothesis is likewise broken into two subgroups: Q1 is an imperfect reporting of Q2, or it is a deliberate abridgement of Q2.¹²⁸

¹²⁶Bullough, p. 3; Henry David Gray, "The First Quarto of Hamlet," Modern Language Review, X (April 1928), 171-80.

¹²⁷Sir E. K. Chambers, William Shakespeare, I, p. 95; Parrott and Craig, pp. 35-6.

¹²⁸Duthie, pp. 84-7.

Parrott and Craig cite two main schools of thought on the reporting of Q1, if indeed Q1 is a reported text. One opinion is that Q1 is a badly reported version of Shakespeare's first draft of Hamlet; the other opinion is that Q1 is a badly reported version of the true and final work.¹²⁹ Rhodes cancels the idea that the text may have been supplied by a stenographer with the observation that a stenographer would have emphasized major parts rather than the minor roles. Rhodes' observation leads to one argument for a reported text of a play being acted on the London stage or even on a provincial stage; the minor parts seem to be preserved consistently and the scenes which do include one of the characters who may have been the reporter are reproduced more faithfully than those that do not.¹³⁰ Duthie also argues against the stenographer in lieu of the reporter because he cannot find traces of corrupted spelling and other textual problems expected from a transcription of the particular shorthand systems used by the Elizabethans.¹³¹

There are many differences between Q1 and the later versions of Hamlet. Besides an aesthetic difference, Q1 does not bear the style and poetics of its successors, Q1 changes the order of the nunnery scene, Gertrude's

¹²⁹Parrott and Craig, p. 26.

¹³⁰R. Crompton Rhodes, Shakespeare's First Folio, pp. 81-2.

¹³¹Duthie, p. 87.

character is not quite that of later texts, Polonius is called Corambis, Hamlet's escape from England is handled differently, and the soliloquies are rather sparse and bungled when compared to the fuller, more logical soliloquies of Q2 and F1.

Of course, no matter what theory as to the origin of the text behind Q1 critics might agree to, the differences between the two Quarto versions are explained in similarly diverse ways. If Q1 is a reported version of Q2, then the differences may be attributed to either the reporter filling in gaps in his memory with works of inferior writers, or to the reporter filling in gaps with his own verse. It is also possible that the reporter may have acted in an abridged provincial tour and reported faithfully that abridged version.¹³²

The theory that supposes Q1 postdates Q2 implies that there was deliberate revision, abridgement, or adaptation of the larger Q2 text. These changes may have been made for the original Globe production or for a provincial tour. In either case, the company's complete version of Hamlet would have necessitated some accommodations for stage production. If, on the other hand, one assumes that Q1 predates Q2, then Q1 is either Shakespeare's first draft of Hamlet or a doctored manuscript containing parts of

¹³²Ibid., p. 273.

Ur-Hamlet, Kyd's contributions, Shakespeare's verse, and parts from the play as it was currently being acted.

Two scholars, J. D. Wilson and G. I. Duthie, have made detailed analyses of Q1, and their theories deserve consideration, here, if only because their textural scrutiny surpasses that of most of the historical critics who may be making general assumptions about the Quartos' backgrounds without carefully examining the text. Wilson maintains that Q1 is a reconstruction, or reporting, of a current performance of Shakespeare's Hamlet. This performance was probably that of the Globe, although it could have been provincial. The text for the acting version could have been amended for acting as it was put into prompt copy, and the reporter, therefore, would be reporting revisions that are not Shakespeare's.¹³³

Duthie concludes basically the same fate for Q1. It is a reported text of a touring acting company and postdates Q2. The First Quarto is derived, therefore, from the full text lying behind Q2.¹³⁴

The history of Q2 is not as notorious, and its theories are not as diverse as those of the history of Q1. It is generally thought to be closer to Shakespeare's

¹³³J. D. Wilson, The Manuscript of Shakespeare's Hamlet and the Problems of Its Transmission, I, p. 20.

¹³⁴Duthie, p. 273.

original signed manuscript than Q1 or even F. Parrott and Craig assert that Q2 is Shakespeare's manuscript, not a prompt copy or scribal copy, and was originally submitted to the acting company. It is unlikely that the version was ever acted in full, but underwent revision before stage production.¹³⁵ Nevertheless, it is Hamlet as Shakespeare wrote it.

Q2 is nearly two times the length of Q1, and would have demanded a playing time of approximately 3½ hours.¹³⁶ Q2 contains some differences in character motivation when compared to Q1. Gertrude does not repent and support Hamlet's revenge as she does in Q1. The Second Quarto also retains a soliloquy that is not found in either Q1 or F.

Chambers and Wilson both agree with Craig's assessment of the origin of Q2; however, Wilson offers a modification. It is likely that a scribe made an immediate copy of Shakespeare's original manuscript for prompt copy. The manuscript then remained unused in the possession of the company until James Roberts somehow ended up with it so that he could print the manuscript as an answer to Q1.¹³⁷ Chambers argues Q2 may have allowed Shakespeare to

¹³⁵Parrott and Craig, p. 41.

¹³⁶Ibid., p. 49.

¹³⁷Wilson, pp. 170-1.

restore passages omitted for stage production.¹³⁸

Bowers and Bullough work on a slightly different theory. Bowers speculates that Q2 postdates Q1 and, therefore, Q1 corrupts Q2. Two composers put Q2 together for printing. One worked with a bad version, maybe Q1, and the other worked with a better version.¹³⁹ Bullough also argues that the text of Q2 was set by two composers, one consulting an inferior text and thereby corrupting Q2.¹⁴⁰

The third printed edition of Hamlet, F, is shorter than Q2, omitting over 200 lines but adding about 85. Like Q2, F appears to be too long for stage production. It would have taken three hours and 5 minutes to complete the play on stage.¹⁴¹ In brief, there are over 1,300 differences between Q2 and F, not counting differences in punctuation, stage directions, and spelling.¹⁴²

Parrott and Craig dismiss the idea that F was printed from a playhouse copy or from reference to a prompt

¹³⁸Chambers, Elizabethan Stage, p. 193.

¹³⁹Fredson Bowers, On Editing Shakespeare and the Elizabethan Dramatists, p. 43.

¹⁴⁰Bullough, pp. 3-4.

¹⁴¹H. Childs, "On the Elizabethan Staging of Hamlet," Shakespeare Quarterly, XIII (Autumn 1962), 467.

¹⁴²Wilson, p. 7.

copy. There are so few bibliographical similarities that it is unlikely that F was printed from Q2. Furthermore, they suggest that there is none of the characteristic marks of a book printed from a prompt copy. For example, F contains few stage directions and defines very few properties. There is some attempt to divide F into acts and scenes, but someone, perhaps the printer, discontinues the technique.¹⁴³ Also, F retains three long passages (II.ii.244-76, II.ii.352-79, V.ii.68-80) that do not appear in Q2.¹⁴⁴ This fact alone supports the argument that F was printed from a manuscript independent of Q2.

Likewise, Wilson says that F is a corrupt text. He further suggests that the changes were not made by a printer or compositor, but that they were corrections in the original text. These alterations were evidently made for clarification, modernization, and reproduction of individual actor's delivery. For the most part, the omissions from Q2 to F were made for theatrical purposes.¹⁴⁵ As has been stated before, F retains three long passages; however, it omits several long and difficult passages. Interestingly, F omits the eighth soliloquy which appears after Fortinbras' march. The march remains in F, but the soliloquy does not.

¹⁴³Parrott and Craig, p. 25.

¹⁴⁴Ibid.

¹⁴⁵Wilson, p. 77.

There also seems to be some attempt to cut down on the number of actors. Although all the secondary roles are preserved in F, the number of extras is reduced. Finally, F shows the effects of an act passed in 1606 that prohibited words considered profane from plays produced in the English theatre.¹⁴⁶

In short, Q2 appears to have been printed from a manuscript close to the original holograph copy, but F was printed from an inferior text. Parrott and Craig suspect that F was printed from the transcript of the manuscript for the acting version at the Globe.¹⁴⁷ The text was not the prompt book, but the manuscript used for the final prompt book. They offer further evidence to show that the text behind F may be the first revision of Shakespeare's manuscript for an acting version. Briefly, their analysis of F's history is that when Shakespeare handed over his foul papers to the company, a transcript was made in preparation for a prompt book. The transcript abbreviated Shakespeare's manuscript and also modernized the spelling and added some definite stage directions, but before the transcript was sent to the licenser, it was cut and altered. It was still possible to use the transcript for a prompt book, but a clean copy was made for the licenser

¹⁴⁶Parrott and Craig, p. 54.

¹⁴⁷Ibid., p. 57.

and, subsequently, the printer. AS was to be expected, changes and errors found their way into the new text. The Folio preserves, therefore, a fuller version of the play than a prompt book would have preserved, but, nevertheless, it has been altered somewhat for stage production.¹⁴⁸

Wilson also concludes that F is a second copy of the original signed manuscript. When Shakespeare handed over his foul papers to the company, a copy was made immediately for prompt. At this point, Wilson asserts, the fate of the prompt book can no longer be traced. However, he is sure that it was emended slightly for the stage and then recopied for publication in F. Therefore, as Parrott and Craig also suggest, the text for F is at least twice removed from Shakespeare's first manuscript.¹⁴⁹

Greg adds that F is a corrected version of the original manuscript. The Folio is most likely a transcript of the play made by someone who also knew the stage version and often let his memory of that version interfere with his reading of the true text.¹⁵⁰

Wilson makes one other interesting observation. Whereas most critics advocate Q2 over F, usually because Q2

¹⁴⁸Ibid.

¹⁴⁹Wilson, pp. 170-1.

¹⁵⁰W. W. Greg, The Editorial Problem in Shakespeare, p. 165.

is thought to be closer to Shakespeare's manuscript than F, Wilson advocates F over Q2. The First Folio soon emerged as the true copy of Hamlet because the Globe editors used it to print F2 which follows the stage directions, speech arrangement, punctuation, and wording of F1. Wilson concludes that, when there are differences between Q2 and F, F should be read as the correct version.¹⁵¹

As an epilogue to the history of Hamlet, a German play, Der Bestrafte Brudermord (Fratricide Punished), was published in 1781.¹⁵² It was carried to Germany by traveling English players sometime between 1600 and 1603.¹⁵³ Different from Shakespeare's Hamlet except in theme and general story line, the German play may be a reconstructed version of the Ur-Hamlet; therefore, it is often used as an archetype for the play which Shakespeare may have revised as his own Hamlet.

¹⁵¹Wilson, p. 8.

¹⁵²Parrott and Craig, p. 10.

¹⁵³Greg, First Folio, p. 308.

Chapter IV
Comparison of the Variant Forms
of the Hamlet Soliloquies

Chapters I, II, and III establish the foundation needed to examine the text and the soliloquies of Q1, Q2, and F. Again, the reasons for differences between the soliloquies in each printed version of Hamlet may lead to discovering the reasons for differences between the entire texts. Unfortunately, very few Elizabethan plays are found in manuscript. Even what may be called a manuscript is often only a scribal transcript. Therefore, when a scholar deals with an Elizabethan text, he deals with scribes, compositors, actors, and printers, each potentially able to alter the text, either deliberately or inadvertently, from its true version. Furthermore, the fact that the plays are printed in many editions coupled with the emendations possible through the many people associated with the transmission of an Elizabethan play from manuscript to printed copy yield variant texts.

Fredson Bowers establishes the ground rules for effectively approaching the problem of selecting, editing, and compiling texts of Elizabethan plays. He acknowledges

three questions the editor or critic must ask as he prepares to examine a play: What was the nature of the lost manuscript that served as the printed copy? What was the nature of the printing process and how did it affect transmission of the text from manuscript to printed copy? What was the relationship of all copies of the text in manuscript or printed edition and what are the degrees of authority of each copy?¹⁵⁴ Approaching the play's copy armed with these questions comprises what Bowers calls the biblio-textual method of analyzing Elizabethan drama, a method that is a combination of bibliography and textual criticism. An editor's particular application of the method depends on what kind of an edition of a play he hopes to create--facsimile, diplomatic, or critical.¹⁵⁵

The facsimile edition is an exact duplication of both the typesetting and the text of the play. A facsimile is usually produced by photographing the original document. An editor merely selects the pages to be photographed and perhaps catalogues the variant readings when words or phrases are obscure.¹⁵⁶ A diplomatic edition also duplicates the text of the original play, but there is no attempt to reproduce the typesetting of the document. The editor

¹⁵⁴Bowers, p. 8.

¹⁵⁵Ibid., p. 67.

¹⁵⁶Ibid.

must choose how to set up the printing of the text without changing the text itself.¹⁵⁷ A critical text is really a synthetic text. The editor must consider all variant readings of a play and attempt to create a text that he thinks is as close as possible to the text as the author wanted it. Therefore, the editor attempts to reproduce the play as it existed before it was filtered through printers, compositors, and scribes.¹⁵⁸

As stated before, the opportunity for corruption in the printed versions of Elizabethan dramas was great. Scholars rarely deal directly with the author's original manuscript; rather, they deal with a copy possibly doctored by and passing through scribes, compositors, actors, self-appointed editors, and printers. Bowers lists a minimum of thirteen possible copies that could have been submitted to a printer for publication, reproduced here merely to suggest some idea of the magnitude of critical consideration in attempting to discover the text behind the printed edition of a play and to give some idea of the reasons for difficult, obscure, deleted, or otherwise variant words and phrases in the often numerous versions of any one play.

¹⁵⁷Ibid., p. 68.

¹⁵⁸Ibid., p. 69.

The copy given to the printer could have been any of the following:

1. Author's foul papers (his last draft manuscript before he submitted it to be copied in its final form)
2. Author's or scribe's fair copy not intended for direct theatrical use (the neat copy of an author's foul papers)
3. Foul papers or fair copy marked by a prompter for a prompt book
4. Transcripts copied for private individuals
5. The prompt book from the theatrical company
6. Copy of a prompt book
7. Unrevised edition of an earlier printed edition
8. Unauthorized revised copy of an earlier printed edition with the revisions originating with publisher
9. Copy of an earlier edition revised by the author
10. Copy of an earlier printed edition annotated by comparing it to another manuscript
11. Earlier printed edition used as a prompt book
12. Scribal transcript of prompt book or transcript made by an individual actor

13. Memorial transcript of text without any direct contribution by author or a manuscript¹⁵⁹

Generally speaking, the soliloquies in Q2 and F are fairly similar.¹⁶⁰ Soliloquies in each edition contain the same number of lines except for two cases (fourth and seventh soliloquies) and are almost word for word duplicates of one another. The Folio does use a different system of punctuation and spelling, but these differences may comply with the policies of individual printing houses or may reflect a scribal copy somewhere between the two editions that attempts to modernize spelling and punctuation.¹⁶¹ In fact, on this basis alone, one may assume that F and Q2 were not printed from the same manuscripts. This present study will not attempt a detailed comparison of the punctuation changes or spelling changes that occur between the two texts; only pertinent general observations will be made. There are changes in words and phrases as they are printed in Q2 and F that cannot be explained through printer's errors, and there is some evidence that censorship was applied to F.¹⁶² But for the most part, the

¹⁵⁹Ibid., pp. 11-12.

¹⁶⁰See Appendix for a reproduction of the soliloquies as they appear in the three editions discussed. Appendix also includes a line-by-line analysis of variant readings between the three texts.

¹⁶¹Parrott and Craig, p. 54.

¹⁶²Ibid.

soliloquies carry no appreciable textual differences from Q2 to F.

However, there are definitely appreciable differences between the soliloquies as they appear in Q1 and as they appear in the two later editions, Q2 and F. In fact, at times the soliloquies of Q1 bear little resemblance to their counterparts. The essence of meaning is the same, but the words, lines, substance, similes, and method by which the meaning is presented in Q1 are not the same.

The soliloquies offer a chance to reenter the textual controversy surrounding the three editions. The soliloquies are the touchstones of the play, the style markers by which the reader or audience passes through the production. Soliloquy has been shown to be a conscious and important part of theatre. The solution to the mystery of the variant soliloquies lies within the solution to the mystery of the variant editions of the play, and vice versa.

The first soliloquy in all three editions, "O that this too too sullied flesh," is the one in which Hamlet grieves over his mother's hasty marriage to his uncle. It is the soliloquy that sets the first moral norm in the play; Gertrude and Claudius have entered into an incestuous union, and Gertrude has betrayed all past display of affection for her dead husband.

The soliloquy is thirty-one lines long in both Q2 and F. There are few differences between the two presentations, which follow the rule of thumb described earlier, but a scribe, compositor, or printer has changed the punctuation and spelling for F. All lines are essentially the same. The very first line contains one disputed word: "sullied flesh" in Q2 versus "solid flesh" in F. Wilson states that the F version, "solid," is obviously an error because the image of solid flesh melting into a dew would be so humorous as to violate the mood of the soliloquy and the play.¹⁶³ Line 7 of F reads "oh fie, fie" rather than "ah fie," and F adds "even she" at the end of line 21, seemingly as an emphasis to the impossibility of Hamlet's mother's marrying so soon after the death of her husband.¹⁶⁴ This addition of emphatic words and phrases seems to be characteristic of F, and there are more differences between F and Q2 stemming from this characteristic. Other minor differences are catalogued in the annotated comparison in the Appendix; however, one notable difference is that line 22 of the Folio displays what is likely the censorship of 1606. "O God" in Q2 is changed to "O Heuen" in F.

The differences between Q1 and the two later editions are not so routine. Three lines (2-3) in Q1

¹⁶³Wilson, p. 310.

¹⁶⁴Line enumeration is taken from the lines as they appear in Appendix.

substitute for lines 2-4 in Q2 and F without keeping with the thought of the latter. The rest of the soliloquy is essentially preserved. However, Q1 does exclude ten lines, leaving a total line count of twenty-one, which consist of comparing the world to an unweeded garden and involve the description of Hamlet's father's evidence of love for Gertrude. Q1 does not preserve any full lines from Q2 or F; it does, however, preserve some phrases. Generally, Q1 does retain the sense and some images of all lines, except for the ten that are definitely missing and approximately two others for which there are no parallel lines in Q1, but for which there are substitute lines.

Briefly, the first soliloquy is complete in Q1. It preserves all the major points of the same soliloquy in Q2 and F, although surely not as eloquently. While there are few differences between Q2 and F, the soliloquy in Q1 differs greatly, yet retains the intent and substance of the soliloquy as it appears in Q2 and F. If one were to examine graphically the pattern of comparison, he would find something like the following:

Lines from Q1	Corresponding Lines from Q2
1	1
2	-
3	-
4	-
5	16-17
6	24
7	25

Lines from Q1 (continued)	Corresponding Lines from Q2 (continued)
8	25-26
9	26-27
10	22,27
11	24-25
12	24,18
13	15-16
14	16-17
15	28
16	29
17	19
18	20
19	21,30
20	30
21	31

It appears that a section of the soliloquy, lines 2-14, in Q2, was simply excluded, and the rest of the soliloquy was spliced from or patterned after lines 16-31 in Q2.

An obvious difference between the second soliloquy, "O all you host of heauen," in Q2 and F is the characteristic spelling and punctuation change. There is also one line change; lines 20-1 in Q2 are combined into one line, 20, in F. Also, Q2 shows an extra "hold" in line 2 and prints "swiftly" instead of F's "stiffely" in line 4. There is also an extra "my table" in F, which corresponds to the conclusion about emphatic words and phrases reached in the discussion of the first soliloquy. All are minor differences that do not threaten the theatrics of the soliloquy.

But, again, there are noticeable differences between Q1 and Q2 and F. The soliloquy as it appears in Q1 is six

lines shorter and suffers several word changes. Lines 2-6 that deal with Hamlet's pleading for his body to support him while he absorbs the shock of what has been revealed to him are not present in Q1. "Conceites" substitutes for "records," line 5, and "remembrance" for "Commandment," line 7. These are obviously not misreadings or printer's errors, since they are distinct changes. Q1 drops lines 12-13 found in Q2 and F, and the last line is also slightly different.

Again, the soliloquy is the same in substance as that in Q2 and F. However, like the first soliloquy, only sense and phrases are preserved rather than individual, complete lines. Q1 is a rearrangement, alteration, or cutting of the lines found in later editions and relies heavily for meaning upon whatever manuscript was behind F and Q2. A graphic analysis reveals the same pattern as that found in the first soliloquy; after a section of the soliloquy missing in Q1, the remaining lines follow the argument and sense of Q2:

Lines from Q1	Corresponding Lines from Q2
1	1
2	-
3	7
4	8-9
5	4, 8-9
6	10
7	11
8	14
9	15

Lines from Q1 (continued)	Corresponding Lines from Q2 (continued)
10	16
11	17
12	18
13	19
14	19-20
15	21

Not to break with the textual pattern, the differences between Q2 and F are negligible for soliloquy three, "O what a rogue and peasant slave am I." There are five instances of words changed in F. The most noteworthy change occurs in lines 34-39. The Folio prints "Oh Vengeance" as a separate line and transposes part of the following line thereby changing lines 34-39. All lines are preserved, but the sequence of phrases included in each line is disturbed somewhat from that found in Q2 because of the extra line and the transposition of another.

Again, the soliloquy of Q1 is appreciably different from that found in Q2 and F. The very first line, "Why what a dunghill idiotic slave am I?" sets the tone of the soliloquy in Q1. The declaration of Q2 and F is "O what a rogue and peasant slave am I." The First Quarto retains the idea of Q2 and F, but expresses that idea in rougher, down to earth language. The whole soliloquy is an unintellectual and unpoetic version of the same soliloquy in the later editions.

Twenty-four lines are dropped in Q1, the largest cut in any of the eight soliloquies, and of the thirty-four remaining lines, approximately six have no companion lines in Q2 or F. Plotting the pattern of lines in Q1 shows major gaps in lines 12-23 (Q2) and 43-47 (Q2). The greatest retention of sense and exact preservation of lines begins with line 24 and continues to line 55, excluding, of course, the gap of lines 43-7 already mentioned:

Lines from Q1	Corresponding Lines from Q2
1	1
2	6
3	9-10
4	11-12
5	-
6	-
7	13-16
8	-
9	16
10	-
11	19
12	-
13	27-28
14	24-25
15	25-26
16	27-28
17	30
18	31
19	32
20	33-34
21	37
22	36, 38
23	39-40
24	42
25	-
26	28-49
27	51
28	52
29	53
30	54
31	55

In the fourth soliloquy, "To be or not to be," the differences between Q2 and F are very few. In F "Cowards of vs all" appears as opposed to only "cowards" in Q2. "Pith" replaces the word "pitch" in Q2. Of course, the differences between the two texts include the usual punctuation and spelling changes. However, this soliloquy shows the closest resemblance between Q2 and F than any other soliloquy.

Unlike the first and second soliloquies, the fourth soliloquy as it occurs in Q1 is not the same soliloquy of Q2 or F. It cannot be argued that the substance of the soliloquy is kept while incurring a few changes. As printed in Q1, the fourth soliloquy is extremely different when compared to Q2 or F. In fact, it is almost nonsensical. The argument presented in Q2 or F is presented in Q1, but it is carried, and ever obscurely at that, by one line of the soliloquy: "conscience makes cowardes of vs all." The soliloquy is twelve lines shorter than in Q2, but of the twenty-three lines, only fourteen preserve either the sense or the exact wording of Q2. The remaining lines have no companions in Q2 and F. If one examines a graphic pattern of this soliloquy, he finds that Q1 follows the argument most closely for lines 20-8 of Q2, although the line sequence is not held. These lines are spliced and out of order. The soliloquy both preserves entire lines from the

later editions and, paradoxically, adds lines not even hinted at in Q2.

Lines from Q1	Corresponding Lines from Q2
1	-
2	-
3	10
4	11
5	-
6	24-25
7	24
8	-
9	-
10	15
11	-
12	-
13	-
14	-
15	22
16	20
17	21
18	23
19	-
20	26
21	27
22	28
23	34-35

In Q1 there are no qualifying lines 2-9 as in Q2 for the opening remark, "To be or not to be." The Q1 soliloquy seems to be concerned with death and death alone; death is not simply a mental exercise designed to get Hamlet to the conclusion that conscience makes cowards of us all. The Q1 soliloquy jumps immediately into "To Die, to sleepe, is that all?" The preoccupation is prophesied by the last half of the first line in Q1, "I there's the point," compared to "that is the question," Q2. Also, Hamlet speaks of "dreame of death" in Q1 instead of "sleepe of death" as

in Q2. The speaker in Q1 has switched positions; it is not sleep, but dream that is now the main metaphor for death.

Lines 15-23 of Q1 roughly parallel lines 20-28 in Q2. However, Q1 refers to the "hope of something after death" instead of the "dread of something after death" in the same soliloquy in Q2. These are certainly not the same ideas at all. In fact, Hamlet presents an argument opposite that of Q2. In Q1, the trials of living are borne because of this "hope of something after death." In Q2, trials are borne because of the dread of something after death. What may be the first reason for Hamlet's delay, that thought can stymie enterprises of pitch and moment, which is a part of the meaning of the fourth soliloquy in both Q2 and F, is excluded from Q1.

In short, there are ten lines that are very different in Q1, and twelve lines that are missing. Furthermore, the soliloquy as printed in Q1 does not maintain a cue for Ophelia's entrance in this scene. The First Quarto contains an abrupt reference to Ophelia as the last line without the introductory next to the last line found in Q2. In fact, it is unlikely that a reader or audience would know to what line 23 refers unless Ophelia were standing beside Hamlet as he uttered this last line. Regardless, it is not dramatic craftsmanship at its best by any means.

A graphic comparison of the soliloquy as it is found in Q1 and in Q2 reveals the slim reliance of Q1 on Q2.

Lines from Q1	Corresponding Lines from Q2
1	-
2	-
3	10
4	11
5	-
6	24-25
7	24
8	-
9	-
10	15
11	-
12	-
13	-
14	-
15	22
16	20
17	21
18	23
19	-
20	26
21	27
22	28
23	34-35

The fifth soliloquy is a prologue to Hamlet's interview with Gertrude. The Folio and Q2 differ in two places; line 2 shows a word change, "breaths" versus "breakes," and line 4 shows a switching of the noun modified by "bitter." Again, the soliloquy as it appears in Q1 is not the soliloquy of Q2. The First Quarto does retain the heart of Q2's address, but drops half of the lines in Q2. Line one is not the opening line of Q2. The line is almost too blunt: "My mother she hath sent to

speak with me." Furthermore, Q1 retains the sense of lines 6-12 in Q2, preserving only line 8: "Let me be cruell, not vnnaturall." Hamlet is concerned only with going to talk to his mother; whereas in Q2 and F he is bracing himself for action: "Now could I drinke hote blood."

There are no differences between the Q2 version and the F version of the sixth soliloquy, "O my offence is ranck, it smels to heauen," other than the usual spelling and punctuation differences. But again, the soliloquy in Q1 is not the same soliloquy as in Q2 and F. The only comparative element is an allusion to washing sins as white as snow, but other than this area of comparison, the soliloquy of Q1 is simply not the soliloquy of Q2 and F. Only one line, 39, is even remotely preserved. Q1 preserves line 39 except it prints "sinnes" for "thoughts" found in Q2.

Likewise, the seventh soliloquy exists with the same constraints. The First Quarto does not display the same soliloquy as Q2 and F. Approximately two lines are preserved. Other than these two lines, the order and lines of the Q1 version of this soliloquy are only loosely related to that of Q2 and F. The most faithful retention of sense occurs in the second half of Q1:

Lines from Q1	Corresponding Lines from Q2
1	-
2	2-3
3	8
4	10
5	10
6	3
7	13
8	5-6
9	16
10	17
11	18
12	19-20
13	20-21
14	20-21
15	23
16	24

Interestingly, the Folio does exhibit major differences between it and Q2. Folio prints "this is hyre and sallery" instead of "base and silly" found in Q2. The phrase is very different from its counterpart in Q2, and its inclusion seems to be deliberate, for "hyre and sallery" also works within the context of the line and is not a spelling or copying error. However, the two phrases have very different meanings. The Folio also drops seven lines which explain or forecast more opportune moments to kill Claudius.

The eighth soliloquy, "How all occasions doe inform against me," appears only in Q2; therefore, no comparison between Q2 and Q1 and F can be made on the basis of this speech. However, its very absence is important in determining the textual history of the play.

With the major differences between the soliloquies of Hamlet as they appear in the three printed editions reviewed, it may now be helpful to reconsider the major theories concerning the manuscript or copy that lies behind the printed text of each edition:

I. Q1

- A. Q1 is derived from Q2 and postdates it
 - 1. Q1 is a reported version of Q2 text
 - 2. Q1 is a deliberate abridgement or revision of Q2 text
- B. Q1 is a text independent of Q2 and predates it
 - 1. Q1 is Shakespeare's first draft of the complete play
 - 2. Q1 is a transition play between Ur-Hamlet and Shakespeare's final version

II. Q2

- A. Q2 is printed from a transcript of Shakespeare's signed manuscript
- B. Q2 is printed from Shakespeare's signed manuscript
- C. Q2 is a revision of Q1

III. F

- A. F was printed from the transcript of a prompt book
- B. F was printed from the Globe prompt book

The tendency is to support theory A for the two quartos and F, on the basis of the status of the comparison

of the major soliloquies for the following reasons: based on the soliloquies, Q1 is not an abridgement of Q2 because the soliloquies do not show signs of a practical, level-headed editorializing or cutting of the Q2 soliloquies without assuming anything about the aesthetic quality of the Q1 soliloquies, which are simply not the same as those of Q2. There is no evident reason for changing the internal composition of the lines instead of simply dropping or shortening the lines or even of clarifying allusions by rearranging the lines. Similarly, Q1 is not likely a draft of Q2. Even a draft copy for Q2 would attempt to make sense, and some parts of the Q1 soliloquies are nonsensical. Furthermore, the parallels between Q1 and Q2 do not seem to support that Q2 is a revision of Q1. Again, the soliloquies are neither close enough to be draft or final copies of each other, nor different enough to be completely independent of each other.

The soliloquies do support the theory that Q1 is a reported version of Q2. Many critics express this opinion, but Duthie begins what is a major approach to the problem by looking at phrases and lines preserved in Q1 from either a soliloquy or the rest of the text of Q2. Duthie concludes that in Q1, a reporter makes a noble effort to reproduce Hamlet as he knew it, but that often he fills memorial gaps from his own creativity or from his

remembrance of other parts of the play.¹⁶⁵

The theory that Q2 is a revision of Q1 is not supported by the soliloquies because they do not necessarily show signs of revisions; rather, they show signs of untangling and completing lines that are half good and half bad.

On the basis of the soliloquies alone, both theories A and B may be supported for Q2. For example, it can be determined that Q2 was printed from a text very close to the original manuscript since the soliloquies give the impression of being complete, since they make sense, and the eighth soliloquy appears in Q2. The eighth soliloquy is important to the play as literature, although, as most likely was the opinion of the people in charge of the play's production, it is not necessarily important as theatre. However, the entire play must be examined fully to determine if there is a scribal or prompter's hand evident in the text, which would make the text for Q2 a transcript of the manuscript rather than Shakespeare's holograph copy.

Finally, the soliloquies support the theory that F was printed from the transcript of a prompt book. First of all, the exclusion of the eighth soliloquy indicates some degree of theatrical editing. Secondly, the close copy of the soliloquies and the consistent spelling and punctuation

¹⁶⁵Duthie, p. 186.

changes indicate a scribe or compositor at work on producing a deliberate and clean transcription.

Elaborate argument of the preceding points, however, starts almost in the middle of the controversy--with Q2. As critics have argued, it appears to be closer to the original manuscript than Q1 or F. Therefore, it is the accepted standard by which changes in the texts of Q1 and F have been measured. The annotated analyses of the soliloquies in each edition, collected in the Appendix, make use of Q2 as such a norm and, moreover, list all lines wherein Q1 and F do not agree. In most instances, Q2 and F agree against Q1. In fact, in only one instance in the soliloquies do F and Q1 agree against Q2 (line 28 in the fourth soliloquy), although there are twelve such agreements in the overall play.¹⁶⁶ Wilson has suggested that each version, Q1 and Q2, must be read by consulting one another, and argues that holes in one text can only be filled by reading the other text.¹⁶⁷ However, the soliloquies do not illustrate this point, for as far as they are concerned, Q2 is the most complete text and the one against which the soliloquies in the other two versions may be compared.

Again, the soliloquies support the textual theory that Q2 is, or lies very close to, Shakespeare's original

¹⁶⁶W. W. Greg, The Shakespeare First Folio, p. 315.

¹⁶⁷Wilson, p. 92.

manuscript. One cannot make a distinction between the actual manuscript and a transcript of the manuscript on the basis of the soliloquies alone without a lengthier discourse on evidence pertaining to Shakespeare's hand or the work of a pre-theatrical editor in Q2. However, the text still allows the conclusion that Q2 is very close to Shakespeare's original manuscript because of two main observations: the soliloquies do not substantiate the major opposing theory that Q2 is a revision of Q1, thereby making Q1 closer than Q2 to the original manuscript; and Q2 preserves the eighth soliloquy and bears other signs of completion in terms of soliloquy that are not evident in either Q1 or F.

Nowhere in the soliloquies of Q2 are there signs of the soliloquies having been revised from Q1. The soliloquies do not present the case of an inferior work of art having been brought up to a superior level. There are signs of questionable logical progression in the speeches of Q1, nonsensical lines or allusions, and arguments altogether different from those of Q2. There are no signs of editorialized, reworked, or revised copy. For example, phrases like "Why what a dunghill idiote slaue am I" versus "O what a rogue and pesant slaue am I" or "Whol'd bear the scornes and flattery of the world" versus "For who would beare the whips and scournes of time" or "he

tooke my father sleeping, his sins brim full" versus "A tooke my father grosly full of bread" do not suggest revision. Rather, they suggest two different poets. Likewise, the argument of the fourth soliloquy is not the same in Q1 as in Q2 and F. Hamlet speaks of the "hope of something after death" in Q1, while in Q2 he speaks of "the dread of something after death." Both phrases serve to justify man's tolerating the many troubles of life. The former argument is Christian; the latter is almost existential. In other words, they do not represent a revised argument, but show a complete turnabout in philosophy.

Since the initial theory does not explain the differences between Q2 and Q1, one may assume that the remaining theory is proved indirectly; however, a textual analysis offers an even more substantial argument for the second theory than simply the process of elimination. Granted, there are differences between the soliloquies of Q2 and the other two texts, Q1 and F, although there are fewer differences between Q2 and F than between Q2 and Q1. These assertions are supported by the line by line analysis in the Appendix. There is, however, one major difference--neither Q1 nor F contains the eighth soliloquy. The eighth soliloquy is in accordance with the play as it is written in Q2, and with the style of the soliloquies as they occur in Q2. It is a full, stylistically complete, theatrically

justified part of the play. Only a revision that changed the scene in which it appears could have eliminated the soliloquy. It works structurally within the context of Q2.

One should also note that, as opposed to being theatrically important, the soliloquy is appraised in this argument as being theatrically justified. The soliloquy's function almost duplicates that of the third soliloquy, "O what a rogue and peasant slave" and the fifth, "Tis now the very witching time of night," for it expresses Hamlet's disappointment in not having acted when prompted by present conditions to kill his uncle, and it also rallies him again to action much like the fifth soliloquy, appearing after the mousetrap, in which Hamlet says, "now could I drinke hote blood"(3). Furthermore, the scene in which it appears, Fortinbras' army marches into battle, could be relayed by second-hand accounts, as it is in Q1 and F, and this was probably the reason it was dropped in Q1 and F. Therefore, the soliloquy serves no individual, unique, or important function. It is a theatrical touch at best, but it is not as vital to the play as are the other soliloquies. In fact, Granville-Barker argues that the entire last third of the Q1 is reduced and shows signs that a practical man of the theatre took a close look at it and, finding it slow and unexciting, cut some of its passages. This theatrical editor may also have found the last portions

of the play idle conversation.¹⁶⁸ Thus, if the eighth soliloquy is only a theatrical touch, perhaps the author's indulgence in his craft, and can be effectively dropped from the play, the soliloquy was not likely to have been added, but more likely was already in the manuscript.

The eighth soliloquy is not superfluous in Q2; moreover, it appears to bear the style and artistry of the other seven. It supports the theory that Q2 is the text of the original manuscript, or is at least close to the manuscript, for Hamlet.

To determine the text behind the printed F, one must consider that the differences between the soliloquies of Q2 and F are of two kinds. The first concerns word variants, including spellings, misreadings, obvious but unexplained word changes, censorings, and stylistic markings such as punctuation and line organization. The second difference relates to lines that appear in Q2 but not in F, such as the seven lines missing in the seventh soliloquy in F and the lack of the eighth soliloquy. The missing lines themselves show a text removed from the Hamlet manuscript, and the other variances show a deliberate, consistent, clear, and faithful copy of an abridged or an otherwise editorialized or altered text. Beyond these two conclusions, one cannot confirm or deny theories as to the

¹⁶⁸Harley Granville-Barker, Preface to Shakespeare, p. 194.

origin of F based solely on the evidence in the soliloquies.

Wilson states that the bulk of the F omissions are scribal errors, not cuts made out of theatrical necessity.¹⁶⁹ Nevertheless, he does concede that the lengthier passages in Q2 which have not survived in F were cut by someone in charge of making the prompt book.¹⁷⁰ The former explanation for omissions, e.g., scribal error, may apply to the lines missing from the seventh soliloquy (16-23), for the rest of the soliloquy is intact. The latter explanation, e.g., facilitating the prompt book, accounts for the omission of the eighth soliloquy. In short, the F is probably the most difficult text for which to draw conclusions based on a comparative study of the soliloquies.

However, major and substantial textual conclusions concerning the manuscript behind Q1 can be made with reference to the soliloquies, which show the influence of the Q2 text without being either abridged versions of the soliloquies in Q2 or the first drafts of the soliloquies in Q2. The first theory assumes that Q1 is a text independent of Q2 and predates Q2. The arguments for this theory conclude that Q1 is either Shakespeare's first draft or a transition play lying between Ur-Hamlet and Shakespeare's final version.

¹⁶⁹Wilson, p. 22.

¹⁷⁰Ibid., pp. 23-4.

The argument given previously that Q2 is not a revision of Q1 can be inverted so that it is also apparent that Q1 is not the first draft of Q2. In other words, the text of the soliloquies of Q1 does not leave the impression of its having been rewritten to accommodate Q2. The Q1 soliloquies are neither crude nor sophisticated attempts at the soliloquies in later editions. For the most part, these soliloquies are sketchy and confused renditions of the Q2 soliloquies containing completely different concepts and independent speeches that include only phrases, words, and lines from their counterparts in Q2. Again, the soliloquies do not bear the signs of revision, at least certainly not by Shakespeare, and probably not by any other hand.

The other theory related to Q1 as an independent text is that Q1 is a transition play between Ur-Hamlet and Shakespeare's final version. That is to say Q1 is again essentially a rough draft of Q2, but was intended as an independent, complete version of Hamlet without anticipation of a second or revised version. The two main arguments against these explanations for Q1 can also be supported by analysis of the soliloquies.

The soliloquies of Q1 are both good and bad. In other words, their verse style is not consistent. They will often retain one good line from Q2 or F, such as

"this conscience makes cowardes of vs all" from soliloquy four or "Let me be cruell, not vnnatural" from five, in the middle of a soliloquy that has little similarity to its counterpart in Q2 or F. Moreover, the soliloquies do not give the impression of unity. Neither do they give the impression of coherence. Again, some lines are nonsensical or hard to follow. Even an inferior play has some evidence of deliberate literary and theatrical rigor, especially if the play is attributed to Shakespeare. However, at least in the soliloquies, stringent cohesion is missing. In short, they do not comprise an independent text of any quality.

For example, in the third soliloquy, Q1, Hamlet suggests that often a guilty person will confess a crime while sitting at a play with a similar plot. He, then, mentions that the ghost he has seen might be a devil, and he ends the soliloquy with "The play's the thing/ Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the King." However, Hamlet offers no explanation to indicate that he will present a "play something like the murther of my father," an explanation that appears in Q2 and F. Likewise, as has been mentioned previously, he leaves out the cue needed for Ophelia's entrance at the end of the fourth soliloquy. These are not elements that would be added in revision. Instead, they would appear in the original text, especially if it

were meant to be a complete text.

Furthermore, at most points in the soliloquies of Q1 there is a sense of expediency. The lines missing from Q2 or F in these soliloquies are expository and expand the discussion or development of a particular stage of the action. For example, the ten lines not accounted for in the first soliloquy of Q1 compare the world to an unweeded garden:

How wary, stale, flat, and vnprofitable
Seeme to me all the vses of this world?
Fie on't? ah fie, tis an unweeded garden
That growes to seede, things rancke and grose in
nature
Possesse it meerey that it should come thus. (5-9)

and describe Hamlet's father:

So excellent a King, that was to this
Hiperion to a satire, so louing to my mother,
That he might not beteeme the winds of heauen
Visite her face too roughly . . . (11-14)

Likewise, the lines missing from the second soliloquy in Q1 show Hamlet restraining his reaction to the ghost's words:

. . . o fie, hold, hold my hart,
And you my sinnowes, growe not instant old,
But beare me swiftly vp . . . (2-4)

Expediency in the soliloquies of Q1 is gained often at the cost of clarity or artistic unity. In the third soliloquy, the beginning argument, as it is stated in Q1, is not as developed as that in Q2 or F:

Why what a dunghill idiote slaue am I?
Why these Players here draw water from eyes:
For Hecuba, why what is Hecuba to him, or he to
Hecuba? (1-3)

Q2 prints a fuller version of this introduction:

O what a rogue and pesant slaue am I.
 Is it not monstrous that this player heere
 But in a fixion, in a dreame of passion
 Could force his soule so to his owne conceit
 That from her working all the visage wand,
 Teares in his eyes, distraction in his aspect,
 A broken voyce, an his whole function suting
 With formes to his conceit; and all for nothing,
 For Hecuba.
 What's Hecuba to him, or he to her. (1-10)

Granted, Q1 shows signs of a pre-Shakespearean play and retains proximity to the sources and to the German play, Fratricide Punished, but again Q1 is not unified enough to be classified as a revision of the sources forecasting the ultimate version of the play. Furthermore, if Fratricide Punished exemplifies the English Ur-Hamlet, the soliloquies then exemplify that Q1 is substantially different from its predecessor in the English theatre and show that it is more kin to Q2 than to any lost play.

There are approximately four soliloquies in Fratricide Punished. Claudius's confession and Hamlet's companion soliloquy are found in the German play.¹⁷¹ The Queen also recites a soliloquy in which she laments her sins and blames herself for causing Hamlet's madness because she robbed him of the crown of Denmark (III.vi). One final soliloquy has Hamlet explaining his delay in avenging the

¹⁷¹Fratricide Punished, in Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare, VII, ed. Geoffrey Bullough, III.i and III.ii. Subsequent references to this edition are given in parenthesis within the text.

fratricide--the King is surrounded by too many people (V.i). None of these, except for the King's confession, parallels soliloquies of Q1. Furthermore, there are no soliloquies in the prose source, Hystorie Hamblet. Shakespeare appears to have relied little on the sources for his soliloquies. Rather, the soliloquies of Q1 favor those of Q2.

One should next consider theories closer to the one defended in this study: e.g., Q1 is derived from Q2 and postdates it. First, Q1 could be a deliberate abridgement or a revision of the Q2 text. Again, a theory of revision between the three texts is hard to defend, especially between Q1 and Q2. One wonders why a text would be revised into an inferior version. And Q1 is an inferior version. Furthermore, Duthie finds no evidence to show that the play was abridged from Q2, for any performance, London or provincial.¹⁷² Finally, the soliloquies in Q1 are not equal to and certainly not superior to those in Q2.

Despite Duthie's endorsement of the opposing position, the idea that Q1 may be an abridgement of Q2 is difficult to dismiss, although it may be dismissed, nevertheless. One argument for Q1 as an abridgement is that the soliloquies are shorter and often avoid blocks of imagery in the Q2 soliloquies; and that Q1 lacks the eighth soliloquy could be a legitimate theatrical omission. However, as

¹⁷²Duthie, p. 53.

Q1 fails to retain blocks of lines, it fails to retain elements that are important to the idea of the soliloquy and to the business of the play.

In addition to the examples offered to support the theory that Q2 is not a revision of Q1, the fifth soliloquy readily illustrates this point. In Q1, the fifth soliloquy excludes all reference to Hamlet's determination to pursue the ghost's commandments. In other words, in Q2 he is ready to "drinke hote blood" as soon as he quickly takes care of the confrontation with his mother, but Q1 refers only to the impending interview with Gertrude. Likewise, the sixth soliloquy, the King's prayer, is not an abridgement of the same soliloquy in Q2; rather, it is a different soliloquy and retains only one line from the soliloquy in Q2. In fact, all of the soliloquies after one and two are essentially different soliloquies and are not abridgements of their counterparts in Q2 and F. The Q1 soliloquies are not shortened versions of those in the other two editions and do not show lines cut merely to facilitate stage production. In short, it would hardly be advantageous to abridge a play beyond good sense and good theatre.

Finally, one must consider the theory supported by a textual comparison of the soliloquies. Q1 is a reported text of Q2. For some, this conclusion may be elementary or may be an accepted conclusion that has then been dismissed

without considering hard textual evidence. However, the evidence exists both in elements omitted from and in elements added to the Q1 soliloquies. As has been stated before, the piracy of plays is well documented and almost commonplace in Elizabethan theatre. The history of Hamlet specifically provides a context in which the theory of a reported text is nurtured. However, the conclusion is more concretely supported by the text of the play itself, and a textual analysis supports what one may have accepted historically and illuminates to what degree the text was reported.

Again, this study is indebted to an approach instigated by Duthie, who has rigorously addressed the problem of a reported text in terms of textual change. Duthie, convinced that Q1 is a reported version of Q2 revised in places because the reporter's memory failed and he attempted to replace the lost lines with his own poetry, substantiates his own theory by looking at the threads of meaning, imagery, and word usage tied together at various points in the play. He uses this type of analysis on several parts of Hamlet but applies it also to one soliloquy--the King's prayer in III.iii. Here, he hypothesizes that the reporter has strung together words and phrases from other parts of Hamlet, in addition to having inserted his own blank verse

into those areas he could not remember accurately.¹⁷³

For example, in the King's soliloquy, the King reproaches himself for both the murder of his brother and his own act of adultery. In Q2 and F, Claudius confesses only to the murder. Duthie thinks that the reporter picked up the idea of adultery from the scene in which Hamlet accuses his mother of both adultery and incest.¹⁷⁴ Another verbal link is that Claudius confesses his "trespasses" as opposed to his "sinnes" in Q2 and F. "Trespasses" appears in the closet scene in all versions. In other words, the reporter picked up what turns out to be variant readings from other parts of the accurate text.¹⁷⁵

In addition to these examples, the reporter makes a distinction between heaven and the power emitted from heaven. He calls this power the "vniuersall power." Q2 makes this same distinction except, as in the first soliloquy, it is referred to as "the euerlasting." In the first soliloquy of Q1 the reporter again uses "vniuersall." The reporter may have been making a substitution in both soliloquies one and six for a distinction he remembered from Q2.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷³Duthie, p. 53.

¹⁷⁴Ibid., p. 273.

¹⁷⁵Ibid., p. 107.

¹⁷⁶Ibid.

There are many instances of parallel, yet inverted, metaphors between the soliloquies of Q1 and Q2. For example, Duthie points out that in the "genuine" soliloquies, the King describes his sins as "bosome blacke as death" and wishes that they could be washed "white as snowe." This image is one of the few, if not the only, terms carried over to Q1 from the Q2 and F sixth soliloquy. In Q1 the expressions are "blacker than is ieat" and "white as snowe," but they do, nevertheless, retain the same image and sense of Q2 and F.¹⁷⁷

In conclusion, Duthie says that the entire soliloquy is non-Shakespearean and was concocted after Q2 was in existence.¹⁷⁸ One can presume that Duthie means that the entire soliloquy has been manufactured from non-Shakespearean verse, although the germ and need for the soliloquy lies in Q2.

If one applies Duthie's method to the eight soliloquies, he discovers interesting comparisons between Q1 and the two later editions. As summarily stated in the analyses at the beginning of this chapter, every soliloquy preserves to varying degrees either lines or sense of its counterpart in Q2 and F. The most questionable soliloquies are those of the King at prayer and of Hamlet as he

¹⁷⁷Ibid., pp. 109-10.

¹⁷⁸Ibid., p. 111.

deliberates killing Claudius. Duthie has explained these discrepancies as being the pirate's additions perhaps when he could not remember the soliloquies from a genuine acting version of the play.

In short, Q1 depends on the Q2 version or on a stage version of the Q2 copy. In fact, Q1 most likely depends on a stage version, because it omits several scenes including the eighth soliloquy. Q1 is most likely a memorial reconstruction made for provincial performance by the character, Marcellus, who inserted his own blank verse when his memory failed. While he bases his text almost entirely on Q2, the reporter adds both material taken from the old Hamlet and a bastardization of the final Shakespearean version.¹⁷⁹

The reporter has strung together words and phrases in memory from various places in the full text.¹⁸⁰ While the pirate-reporter attempted to reproduce the soliloquies as they existed in an acting version of Q2, he only succeeded in retaining the most striking phrases that are subsequently scattered among his own verse in the Q1 soliloquies.¹⁸¹ Granted, Parrott and Craig argue that these differences are so great that they can not be attributed to

¹⁷⁹Ibid., p. 113.

¹⁸⁰Ibid., p. 143.

¹⁸¹Ibid., p. 164.

bad reporting,¹⁸² but the soliloquies do give one ample reason to believe Duthie's appraisal.

The Appendix contains all examples of lines wherein sense has been retained or wherein entire lines have been preserved from Q2 to Q1. However, a few individual phrases and words can be offered as evidence. For example, although the first soliloquy in Q1 does not retain the exact argument of that soliloquy in Q2, it retains important images. The reporter has tried to reproduce the logic of Hamlet's soliloquy. He retains sleep, death, and dream, although he cannot combine these terms in quite the same manner as in the genuine soliloquies. However, the reporter is conscious of the fact that these terms are important components of the entire soliloquy, and, of course, he manages to retain the primary lines "this conscience make cowardes of vs all," and "To be or not to be."

In the fifth soliloquy the reporter retains Hamlet's attitude toward his mother and reproduces the line, "Let me be cruell, not vnnatural." He is also aware that there is an allusion to Nero in the full version of the soliloquy, although he states, "let ne're the heart of Nero enter this soft bosome" instead of the allusion as it is printed in Q2: "let not euer/ The soule of Nero enter the firme bosome."

¹⁸²Parrott and Craig, p. 20.

As discussed earlier, the reporter retains the images in the sixth soliloquy that compare sin to blackness and penance to whiteness. Furthermore, he remembers that the last lines comprise a rhymed couplet, yet his substitution is not the couplet from Q2.

In the seventh soliloquy, the reporter remembers an allusion to the state of Hamlet's father's soul at the time of the murder; however, the phrase he includes, "sins brim full," is not quite that of Q2, "grosly full of bread." The sense is retained, but the exact wording of the genuine soliloquy is not. In the same soliloquy, the reporter catalogues the more opportune moments to kill Claudius, but faithfully preserves only one line from Q2's soliloquy: "incestuous pleasure of his bed."

In short, the similarities between the soliloquies as they appear in Q1 and as they appear in Q2 are too numerous to catalogue in the format of prose discussion. The analyses contain the detailed evidence for the assertion that the Q1 text is a reported version of the Q2 version of Hamlet. Striking phrases, metaphors, lines, and images, are captured by the reporter with varying degrees of success. Furthermore, the Q1 text supports Duthie's corollary that the reporter adds lines or fills in gaps with his own poetry. The couplet at the end of the sixth soliloquy is one of the best examples; however, the graphic

patterns of corresponding lines given earlier in this chapter also illustrate the reporter's dexterity in adding inferior lines for which there are no companion lines in Q2 or F.

In conclusion, the rationale behind this study has been that soliloquy is an important dramatic convention, both in Elizabethan drama and in the history of the theatre. If one wishes to examine the textual explanations for variant texts, it is valid to examine techniques of parts significant to the theme and form of the complete text. Of course, ideally one would like to examine the entire text. However, a rigorous and sufficient analysis may be made on significant parts.

Furthermore, soliloquy is also an important, if not the most important device in terms of structure and meaning in Hamlet. The soliloquies comprise the sections of the play by which character and even action are carried out. Hamlet without the soliloquies would not be a coherent play, nor would it present the same character explicit in them.

The differences between soliloquies in Q1, Q2, and F versions of Hamlet appear to have nothing to do with revision. The soliloquies are actually fairly set in form and do not appear to change from that primary form as it is found in Q2. A review of the play's textual history as it has been pieced together by scholars and an analysis of

the differences between the soliloquies in the three earliest editions of Hamlet yield the following conclusions:

1. Q2 lies close to Shakespeare's manuscript of Hamlet.
2. F is most likely an edition edited somewhat for production in the theatre and printed from a version of a prompt book.
3. Q1 is a reported version of a fairly complete text, relies heavily on the text of Q2, and has been pieced together from striking phrases and remnants of lines and images from the genuine soliloquies in Q2.

As a closing remark, I would like to add that comparative study of the soliloquies is not by any means exhausted. There are still facets in the soliloquies that can be drawn upon for textual study and more rigorous analyses of the soliloquies can be made. In conclusion, the soliloquies offer an exacting and interesting key to the origin of the manuscripts behind the printed editions of the play, and they offer also the impetus for a study of this dramatic convention as it has developed from early Greek drama to the English theatre. Most importantly, what this study contributes to Hamlet scholarship are the analyses collected in the Appendix with evidence that some theories surrounding the origin of Hamlet can be

abandoned in lieu of others if variant forms of the soliloquies are compared.

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APPENDIX

First Soliloquy

Q1:

Ham. O that this too much grieu'd and sallied flesh
Would melt to nothing, or that the vniuersall
Globe of heauen would turne all to a Chaos!
O God within two moneths; no not two: married,
Mine vncke: O let me not thinke of it, 5
My fathers brother: but no more like
My father, then I to Hercules.
Within two months, ere yet the salt of most
Vnrightheous teares had left their flushing
In her galled eyes: she married, O God, a beast 10
Deuoyd of reason would not haue made
Such speede: Frailtie, thy name is Woman,
Why she would hang on him, as if increase
Of appetite had growne by what it looked on.
O wicked wicked speede, to make such 15
Dexteritie to incestuous sheetes,
Ere yet the shooes were olde,
The which she followed my dead fathers corse
Like Nyobe, all teares: married, well it is not,
Nor it cannot come to good: 20
But breake my heart, for I must holde my tongue.

Q2:

Ham. O that this too too sallied flesh would melt,
Thaw and resoluē it selfe into a dewe,
Or that the euerlasting had not fixt
His cannon gainst seale slaughter, o God, God,
How wary, stale, flat, and vnprofitable 5
Seeme to me all the vses of this world?
Fie on't, ah fie, tis an vnweeded garden
That growes to seede, things rancke and grose in nature,
Possesse it meerey that it should come thus
But two months dead, nay not so much, not two 10
So excellent a King, that was to this
Hiperion to a satire, so louing to my mother,
That he might not beteeme the winds of heauen
Visite her face too roughly, heauen and earth
Must I remember, why she should hang on him 15

As if increase of appetite had growne
 By what it fed on, and yet within a month,
 Let me not think in't; frailty thy name is woman
 A little month or ere those shooes were old
 With which she followed my poore fathers bodie 20
 Like Niobe all tears, why she
 O God, a beast that wants discourse of reason
 Would haue mourn'd longer, married with my Vncle,
 My fathers brother, but no more like my father
 Then I to Hercules, within a month, 25
 Ere yet the salt of most vnrighteous teares,
 Had left the flushing in her gauled eyes
 She married, o most wicked speede; to post
 With such dexteritie to incestuous sheets,
 It is not, nor it cannot come to good, 30
 But breake my hart, for I must hold my tongue.

F:

Ham. O that this too too solid Flesh, would melt,
 Thaw, and resolute it selfe into a Dew:
 Or that the Euerlasting had not fixt
 His Cannon 'gainst Selfe-slaughter. O God, O God!
 How weary, stale, flat, and vnprofitable 5
 Seemes to me all the vses of this world?
 Fie on't? Oh fie, fie, 'tis an vnweeded Garden
 That growes to Seed: Things rank, and grosse in Nature
 Possesse it meere. That it should come to this:
 But two months dead: Nay, not so much; not two, 10
 So excellent a King, that was to this
Hiperion to a Satyre: so louing to my Mother,
 That he might not beteene the windes of heauen
 Visit her face too roughly. Heauen and Earth
 Must I remember: why she would hang on him, 15
 As if encrease of Appetite had growne
 By what it fed on; and yet within a month?
 Let me not thinke on't: Frailty, thy name is woman.
 A little Month, or ere those shooes were old,
 With which she followed my poore Fathers body 20
 Like Niobe, all tears. Why she, euen she.
 (O Heauen! A beast that wants discourse of Reason
 Would haue mourn'd longer) married with mine Vnkle,
 My Fathers Brother: but no more like my Father,
 Then I to Hercules. Within a Moneth? 25
 Ere yet the salt of most vnrighteous Teares
 Had left the flushing of her gauled eyes,
 She married. O most wicked speed, to post
 With such dexterity to Incestuous sheets:
 It is not, nor it cannot come to good. 30
 But breake my heart, for I must hold my tongue.

<u>Line</u>	<u>Variant Reading</u>
1	Q1. too much grieu'd and sallied flesh. F. solid
2	Q1. Would melt to nothing, or that the vniuersall
3	Q1. Globe of heauen would turne al to a Chaos!
4	Q1. O God within two moneths; no not two: married,
5	Q1. Mine vncke: O let me not thinke of it, Parallels 16-17.
6	Q1. My fathers brother: but no more like. Compara- ble to 24.
7	Q1. My father, then I to <u>Hercules</u> . Comparable to 25. F. Oh fie, fie
8	Q1. Within two months, ere yet the salt of most. Comparable to 25-6, although Q1 states two months and Q2 and F states a month
9	Q1. Vnrigheteous teares had left their flushing. Comparable to 26-7, although their for the. F. come to this.
10	Q1. In her galled eyes: she married, O God, a beast. Splices 22 and 27.
11	Q1. Deuoyd of reason would not haue made. The sense is that of 24-5.
12	Q1. Such speede: Frailtie, thy name is Woman. The sense is that of 24 and the comment on woman is from 18.
13	Q1. Why she would hang on him, as if increase Splices 15-16.
14	Q1. Of appetite had growne by what it looked on. Splices 16-17 except looked for fed.
15	Q1. O wicked wicked speede, to make such. Remnant of 28.
16	Q1. Dexteritie to incestuous sheetes. Retains 29 except with such.

- 17 Q1. Ere yet the shooes were olde. Last half of 19
except adds yet the.
- 18 Q1. The which she followed my dead fathers corse.
Retains 20 except the for with and dead fathers
corse for poore fathers bodie.
- 19 Q1. Like Nyobe, all teares: married, well it is not.
Retains half of 21 and substitutes well it is not for
It is not 30.
- 20 Q1. Nor it cannot come to good. Retains last half
of 30.
- 21 Q1. But breake my heart, for I must holde my tongue.
Ends soliloquy with 31. F. even she.
- 22 F. O Heauen.
- 27 F. of her.

Second Soliloquy

Q1:

Ham. O all you hoste of heauen! O earth, what else?
 And shall I couple hell; remember thee?
 Yes thou poore Ghost; from the tables
 Of my memorie, ile wipe away all sawes of Bookes,
 All triuiall fond conceites 5
 The euer youth, or else obseruance noted,
 And thy remembrance, all alone shall sit.
 Yes, yes, by heauen, a damnd pernitiuous villaine,
 Murderons, bawdy, smiling damned villaine,
 (My tables) meet it is I set it downe, 10
 That one may smile, and smile, and be a villayne;
 At least I am sure, it may be so in Denmarke.
 So vncke, there you are, there you are:
 Now to the words; it is adue adue: remember me,
 Soe t'is enough I haue sworne. 15

Q2:

Ham. O all you host of heauen, o earth, what els,
 And shall I coupplle hell, o fie, hold, hold my hart,
 And you my sinnowes, growe not instant old,
 But beare me swiftly vp; remember thee,
 I thou poore Ghost while memory holds a seate 5
 In this distracted globe, remember thee,
 Yea, from the table of my memory
 Ile wipe away all triuiall fond records,
 All sawes of bookes, all formes, all pressures past
 That youth and obseruation coppied there, 10
 And thy commandement all alone shall liue,
 Within the booke and volume of my braine
 Vnmixt with baser matter, yes by heauen,
 O most pernicious woman.
 O villaine, villaine, smiling damned villaine, 15
 My tables, meet it is I set it downe
 That one may smile, and smile, and be a villaine,
 At least I am sure it may be so in Denmarke.
 So Vncke, there you are, now to my word,
 It is adew, adew, remember me 20
 I haue sworn't.

F:

Ham. Oh all you host of Heauen! Oh Earth; what els?
 And shall I couple Hell? Oh fie: hold my heart;
 And you my sinnewes, grow not instant Old;
 But beare me stiffely vp: Remember thee?
 I, thou poore Ghost, while memory holds a seate 5
 In this distracted Globe: Remember thee?
 Yea, from the Table of my Memory,
 Ile wipe away all triuiall fond Records,
 All sawes of Bookes, all formes, all presures past,
 That youth and obseruation coppied there; 10
 And thy Commandment all alone shall liue
 Within the Booke and Volume of my Braine,
 Vnmixt with baser matter; yes, yes, by Heauen:
 Oh most pernicious woman!
 Oh Villaine, Villaine, smiling damned Villaine! 15
 My Tables, my Tables; meet it is I set it downe,
 That one may smile, and smile and be a Villaine;
 At least I'm sure it may be so in Denmarke;
 So Vnckle there you are: now to my word;
 It is; Adue, Adue, Remember me: I haue sworn't. 20

<u>Line</u>	<u>Variant Reading</u>
2	Q1. remember thee? Drops o fie, hold, hold my heart. F. Oh fie: hold my heart.
3	Q1. Yes thou poore Ghost; from the tables. Preserves thought of 7.
4	Q1. Of my memorie, ile wipe away all sawes of Bookes. Splices 8-9. F. stiffely.
5	Q1. All triuiall fond conceites. Along with preserves sense of 8-9, although conceites for records.
6	Q1. The euer youth, or else obseruance noted. Preserves sense of 10.
7	Q1. And thy remembrance, all alone shall sit. Preserves sense of 11 except remembrance for commandement and sit for liue.
8	Q1. Yes, yes, by heauen, a damnd pernicious villaine. Pernicious refers to villaine instead of to woman 14.
9	Q1. Murderons, bawdy, smiling damned villaine. Retains smiling damned villaine 15.
10	Q1. (My tables) meet it is I set it downe. Retains 16.
11	Q1. That one may smile, and smile, and be a villayne. Retains 17.
12	Q1. At least I am sure, it may be so in Denmarke. Retains 18.
13	Q1. So vncke, there you are, there you are. Retains 19 except repeats there you are for now to my word. F. yes, yes.
14	Q1. Now to the words; it is adue adue: remember me. Splices 19-20 except now to the words for now to my word.
15	Q1. Soe t'is enough I haue sworne. Retains sense of 21. Ends soliloquy.
16	F. my tables, my tables.
20	F. combines 20-1. F. ends soliloquy.

Third Soliloquy

Q1:

Ham. Why what a dunghill idiote slaue am I?
 Why these Players here draw water from eyes:
 For Hecuba, why what is Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba?
 What would he do and if he had my losse?
 His father murdred, and a Crowne bereft him, 5
 He would turne all his teares to droppes of blood,
 Amaze the standers by with his laments,
 Strike more then wonder in the iudiciall eares,
 Confound the ignorant, and make mute the wise,
 Indeede his passion would be generall. 10
 Yet I like to an asse and Iohn a Dreames,
 Hauling my father murdred by a villaine,
 Stand still, and let it passe, why sure I am a coward:
 Who pluckes me by the beard, or twites my nose,
 Giue's me the lie i'th throate downe to the lungs, 15
 Sure I should take it, or else I haue no gall,
 Or by this I should a fatted all the region kites
 With this slaues offell, this damned villaine,
 Treacherous, bawdy, murderous villaine:
 Why this is braue, that I the sonne of my deare father, 20
 Should like a sealion, like a very drabbe
 Thus raile in wordes. About my braine,
 I haue heard that guilty creatures sitting at a play,
 Hath, by the very cunning of the scene, confest a murder
 Committed long before. 25
 This spirit that I haue seene may be the Diuell.
 And out of my weakenesse and my melancholy,
 As he is very potent with such men,
 Doth seeke to damne me, I will sounder proofes,
 The play's the thing, 30
 Wherein I'le catch the conscience of the King.

Q2:

Ham. I so God buy to you, now I am alone,
 O what a rogue and pesant slaue am I.
 Is it not monstrous that this player heere
 But in a fixion, in a dreame of passion
 Could force his soule so to his owne conceit 5
 That from her working all the visage wand,
 Teares in his eyes, distraction in his aspect,
 A broken voyce, an his whole function suting
 With formes to his conceit; and all for nothing,
 For Hecuba.
 What's Hecuba to him, or he to her, 10

That he should weepe for her? what would he doe
 Had he the motiue, and that for passion
 That I haue? he would drowne the stage with teares,
 And cleaue the generall eare with horrid speech,
 Make mad the guilty, and appale the free, 15
 Confound the ignorant, and amaze indeede
 The very faculties of eyes and eares; yet I,
 A dull and muddy metteld raskall peake,
 Like Iohn a dreames, vnpregnant of my cause,
 And can say nothing; no not for a King, 20
 Vpon whose property and most deare life,
 A damn'd defeate was made: am I a coward,
 Who cals me villaine, breakes my pate a crosse,
 Pluckes off my beard, and blowes it in my face,
 Twekes me by the nose, giues me the lie l'th thraote 25
 As deepe as to the lunges, who does me this,
 Hah, s'wounds I should take it; for it cannot be
 But I am pidgion liuerd, and lack gal!
 To make oppression bitter, or ere this
 I should a fatted all the region kytes 30
 With this slaues offall, bloody, baudy villaine,
 Remorslesse, trecherous, lecherous, kindlesse villaine.
 Why what an Asse am I, this most braue,
 That I the sonne of a deere murdered,
 Prompted to my reuenge by heauen and hell, 35
 Must like a whore vnpacke my hart with words,
 And fall a cursing like a very drabbe; a stallyon, fie
 vppont, foh.
 About my braines; hum, I haue heard,
 That guilty creatures sitting at a play,
 Haue by the very cunning of the scene, 40
 Been strooke so to the soule, that presently
 They haue proclaim'd their malefactions:
 Fur murther, though it haue no tongue will speake
 With most miraculous organ: Ile haue these Players
 Play something like the murther of my father 45
 Before mine Vncle, Ile obserue his lookes,
 Ile tent him to the quicke, if a doe blench
 I know my course. The spirit that I haue seene
 May be a deale, and the deale hath power
 T'assume a pleasing shape, yea, and perhaps, 50
 Out of my weakenes, and my melancholy,
 As he is very potent with such spirits,
 Abuses me to damne me; Ile haue grounds
 More relatiue then this, the play's the thing
 Wherein Ile catch the conscience of the King. 55

F:

Ham. I so, God buy ye: Now I am alone.
 Oh what a Rogue and Pesant slaue am I?
 Is it not monstrous that this Player heere,
 But in a Fixion, in a dreame of Passion,
 Could force his soule so to his whole conceit,
 That from her working, all his visage warm'd; 5
 Teares in his eyes, distraction in's Aspect,
 A broken voyce, and his whole Function suiting
 With Formes, to his Conceit? And all for nothing?
 For Hecuba?
 What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba, 10
 That he should weepe for her? What would he doe,
 Had he the Motiue and the Cue for passion
 That I haue? He would drowne the Stage with teares,
 And cleane the generall eare with horrid speech:
 Make mad the guilty, and apale the free, 15
 Confound the ignorant, and amaze indeed,
 The very faculty of Eyes and Eares. Yet I,
 A dull and muddy-metled Rascall, peake
 Like Iohn a-dreames, vnpregnant of my cause,
 And can say nothing: No, not for a King, 20
 Vpon whose property, and most deere life,
 A damn'd defeate was made. Am I a Coward?
 Who calles me Villaine? breakes my pate a-crosse?
 Pluckes off my Beard, and blowes it in my face?
 Tweakes me by'th'Nose? giues me the Lye i'th'Throate, 25
 As deepe as to the Lungs? Who does me this?
 Ha? Why I should take it: for it cannot be,
 But I am Pigeon-Liuer'd, and lacke Gall
 To make Oppression bitter, or ere this,
 I should haue fatted all the Region Kites 30
 With this Slaues Offall, bloody: a Bawdy villaine,
 Remorselesse, Treacherous, Letcherous, kindles villaine!
 Oh Vengeance!
 Who? What an Asse am I? I sure this is most braue,
 That I, the Sonne of the Deere murdered, 35
 Prompted to my Reuenge by Heauen, and Hell,
 Must (like a Whore) vnpacke my heart with words,
 And fall a Cursing, like a very Drab,
 A Scullion? Fye vpon't: Foh. About my Braine.
 I haue heard, that guilty Creatures sitting at a Play, 40
 Haue by the very cunning of the Scene,
 Bene strooke so to the soule, that presently
 They haue proclaim'd their Malefactions.
 For Murther, though it haue no tongue, will speake
 With most myraculous Organ. Ile haue these Players, 45
 Play something like the murder of my Father,
 Before mine Vnkle. Ile obserue his lookes,

Ile rent him to the quicke: If he but blench
I know my course. The Spirit that I haue seene
May be the Diuell, and the Diuel hath power
T'assume a pleasing shape, yea and perhaps
Out of my Weaknesse, and my Melancholly,
As he is very potent with such Spirits,
Abuses me to damne me. Ile haue grounds
More Relatiue then this: The Play's the thing,
Wherein Ile catch the Conscience of the King.

50

55

<u>Line</u>	<u>Variant Reading</u>
1	Q1. Why what a dunghill idiote slaue am I? Loosely retains sense 1.
2	Q1. Why these Players here draw water from eyes. Retains sense of crying 6.
3	Q1. For Hecuba, why what is Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba? Combines 9-10 except Hecuba for her.
4	Q1. What would he do and if he had my losse? Loosely retains sense 11-12. F. whole.
5	Q1. His father murdred, and a Crowne bereft him. F. his.
6	Q1. He would turne all his teares to droppes of blood.
7	Q1. Amaze the standers by with his laments. Description of actions 6-9 parallel to but not the same as 13-16.
8	Q1. Strike more then wonder in the iudiciall eares.
9	Q1. Confound the ignorant, and make mute the wise. Preserves first half of 16.
10	Q1. Indeede his passion would be generall. F. Hecuba for her.
11	Q1. Yet I like to an asse and Iohn a Dreames. Preserves Iohn a dreames 19.
12	Q1. Hauing my father murdred by a villaine. F. cue for that.
13	Q1. Stand still, and let it passe, why sure I am a coward. Loosely retains sense 27-8.
14	Q1. Who pluckes me by the beard, or twites my nose. Retains sense of parts of 24-5.
15	Q1. Giu's me the lie i'th throate downe to the lungs. Preserves second half 25 and first half 26 except downe to the lungs for as deepe as to the lunges.

- 16 Q1. Sure I should take it, or else I haue no gall.
Loosely retains 27-8.
- 17 Q1. Or by this I should a fatted all the region
kites. Preserves 30 except adds or by this.
- 18 Q1. With this slaues offell, this damned villaine.
Preserves first half 31 and sense of second half.
- 19 Q1. Treacherous, bawdy, murderous villaine. Retains
sense 32.
- 20 Q1. Why this is braue, that I the sonne of my deare
father. Retains sense of 33-4.
- 21 Q1. Should like a sealion, like a very drabbe.
Preserves like a very drabbe 37.
- 22 Q1. Thus raile in wordes. About my braine. Retains
sense of 36 and preserves about my braines 38.
- 23 Q1. I haue heard that guilty creatures sitting at a
play. Preserves second half 39 and 40.
- 24 Q1. Hath, by the very cunning of the scene, confest
a murder. Preserves 40 and retains sense 42.
- 25 Q1. Committed long before.
- 26 Q1. This spirit that I haue seene may be the Diuell.
Preserves second half 48 and first half 49.
- 27 Q1. And out of my weakenesse and my melancholy.
Preserves 51 except adds and. F. why.
- 28 Q1. As he is very potent with such men. Preserves
52 except men for spirits.
- 29 Q1. Doth seeke to damne me, I will sounder proofes.
Retains sense 53.
- 30 Q1. The play's the thing. Retains second half 54.
- 31 Q1. Wherein I'le catch the conscience of the King.
Preserves 55. Ends soliloquy.
- 33 F. prints Oh Vengeance! as separate line. Who for
why (34 because of extra line). Adds I sure this is.
- 34 F. the for a (35 because of extra line).

- 37 F. transposes a scullion? Fye vpon't: Foh. to next line. (38 because of extra line).
- 38 F. transposes I haue heard to next line. (39 because of extra line).
- 39 F. adds I haue heard transposed from previous line (40 because of extra line).
- 47 F. but (48 because of extra line).

Fourth Soliloquy

Q1:

Ham. To be, or not to be, I there's the point,
 To Die, to sleepe, is that all? I all:
 No, to sleepe, to dreame, I mary there it goes,
 For in that dreame of death, when wee awake,
 And borne before an euerlasting Iudge, 5
 From whence no passenger euer retur'nd,
 The vndiscovered country, at whose sight
 The happy smile, and the accurled damn'd.
 But for this, the ioyfull hope of this,
 Whol'd beare the scornes and flattery of the world, 10
 Scorned by the right rich, the rich curssed of the poore?
 The widow being oppressed, the orphan wrong'd,
 The taste of hunger, or a tirants raigne,
 And thousand more calamities besides,
 To grunt and sweate vnder this weary life, 15
 When that he may his full Quietus make,
 With a bare bodkin, who would this indure,
 But for a hope of something after death?
 Which pusles the braine, and doth confound the sence,
 Which makes vs rather beare those euilles we haue, 20
 Than flie to others that we know not of.
 I that, O this conscience makes cowardes of vs all,
 Lady in thy orizons, be all my sinnes remembred.

Q2:

Ham. To be, or not to be, that is the question,
 Whether tis nobler in the minde to suffer
 The slings and arrowes of outragious fortune,
 Or to take Armes against a sea of troubles,
 And by opposing end them, to die to sleepe 5
 No more, and by a sleepe, to say we end
 The hart-ake, and the thousand naturall shocks
 That flesh is heire to; tis a consumation
 Deuoutly to be wisht to die to sleepe,
 To sleepe, perchance to dreame, I there's the rub, 10
 For in that sleepe of death what dreames may come
 When we haue shuffled off this mortall coyle
 Must giue vs pause, there's the respect
 That makes calamitie of so long life:
 For who would beare the whips and scornes of time, 15
 Th'oppressors wrong, the proude mans contumely,
 The pangs of despiz'd loue, the lawes delay,
 The insolence of office, and the spurnes
 That patient merrit of th'vnworthy takes,

When he himselfe might his quietas make 20
 With a bare bodkin; who would fardels beare,
 To grunt and sweat vnder a wearie life,
 But that the dread of something after death,
 The vndiscouer'd country, from whose borne
 No traailer returnes, puzzles the will, 25
 And makes vs rather beare those illls we haue,
 Than flie to others that we know not of,
 Thus conscience dooes make cowards,
 And thus the natiu hiew of resolution
 is sickled ore with the pale cast of thought, 30
 And enterprises of great pitch and moment,
 With this regard theyr currentts turne awry,
 And loose the name of action. Soft you now,
 The faire Ophelia, Nimph in thy orizons
 Be all my sinnes remembred. 35

F:

Ham. To be, or not to be, that is the Question:
 Whether 'tis Nobler in the minde to suffer
 The slings and Arrowes of outragious Fortune;
 Or to take Armes against a Sea of troubles,
 And by opposing end them: to dye, to sleepe 5
 No more; and by a sleepe, to say we end
 The Heart-ake, and the thousand Naturall shockes
 That Flesh is heyre to? 'Tis a consummation
 Deuoutly to be wish'd. To dye to sleepe,
 To sleepe, perchance to Dreame; I, there's the rub, 10
 For in that sleepe of death, what dreames may come,
 When we haue shuffle'd off this mortall coile,
 Must giue vs pawse. There's the respect
 That makes Calamity of so long life:
 For who would beate the Whips and Scornes of time, 15
 The Oppressors wrong, the poore mans Contumely,
 The pangs of dispriz'd Loue, the Lawes delay,
 The insolence of Office, and the Spurnes
 That patient merit of the vnworthy takes,
 When himselfe might his Quietus make 20
 With a bare Bodkin? Who would these Fardles beare
 To grunt and sweat vnder a weary life,
 But that the dread of something after death,
 The vndiscouered Countrey, from whose Borne
 No Traueller returnes, Puzels the will, 25
 And makes vs rather beare those illes we haue,
 Then flye to others that we know not of.
 Thus Conscience does make Cowards of vs all,
 And thus the Natiue hew of Resolution
 Is sicklied o're; with the pale cast of Thought 30

And enterprizes of great pitch and moment,
With this regard their Currants turne away,
And loose the name of Action. Soft you now,
The faire Ophelia? Nimph, in thy Orizons
Be all my sinnes remembred.

<u>Line</u>	<u>Variant Reading</u>
1	Q1. I there's the point.
2	Q1. To Die, to sleepe, is that all? I all.
3	Q1. No, to sleepe, to dreame, I mary there it goes. Loosely retains sense of 10.
4	Q1. For in that dreame of death when wee awake, Appears to attempt to retain 11, but dreame of death for sleepe of death and when wee awake for what dreames may come.
5	Q1. And borne before an euerlasting Iudge. Not the same argument. Q2 and F. do not mention euerlasting Iudge.
6	Q1. From whence no passenger euer return'nd. Loosely retains sense of 24-5, although passenger for traveler.
7	Q1. The vndiscoverd country, at whose sight. Retains vndiscoverd country although at whose sight for from whose borne 24.
8	Q1. The happy smile, and the accurled damn'd.
9	Q1. But for this, the ioyfull hope of this.
10	Q1. Whol'd beare the scornes and flattery of the world. Appears to attempt to retain sense of 15.
11	Q1. Scorned by the right rich, the rich curssed of the poore?
12	Q1. The widow being oppressed, the orphan wrong'd.
13	Q1. The taste of hunger, or a tirants raigne.
14	Q1. And thousand more calamities besides.
15	Q1. To grunt and sweate vnder this weary life. Retains 22, although this for a.
16.	Q1. When that he may his full <u>Quietus</u> make. Retains sense of 20.
17	Q1. With a bare bodkin, who would this indure. Retains first half of 21.

- 18 Q1. But for a hope of something after death?
Parallels 23, but opposite meaning.
- 19 Q1. Which pusles the braine, and doth confound the
sence.
- 20 Q1. Which makes vs rather beare those euilles we
haue. Preserves 26 except which for And.
- 21 Q1. Than flie to others that we know not of.
Preserves 27.
- 22 Q1. I that, O this conscience makes cowardes of vs
all. Retains sense of 28 with some word changes.
Agrees with F. of vs all.
- 23 Q1. Lady in thy orizons, be all my sinnes remembred.
Retains sense of 34-5, although lady for Nimph. Ends
soliloquy.
- 28 F. cowardes of us all.
- 31 F. pith.

Fifth Soliloquy

Q1:

Ham. My mother she hath sent to speake with me:
 O God, let ne're the heart of Nero enter
 This soft bosome.
 Let me be cruell, not vnnaturall.
 I will speake daggers, those sharpe wordes being spent, 5
 To doe her wrong my soule shall ne're consent.

Q2:

Ham. Tis now the very witching time of night,
 When Churchyards yawne, and hell it selfe breakes out
 Contagion to this world: now could I drinke hote blood,
 And doe such busines as the bitter day
 Would quake to looke on: soft, now to my mother, 5
 O hart loose not thy nature, let not euer
 The soule of Nero enter this firme bosome,
 Let me be cruell, not vnnaturall,
 I will speake dagger to her, but vse none,
 My tongue and soule in this be hypocrites, 10
 How in my words someuer she be shent,
 To giue them seales neuer my soule consent.

F:

Ham. "Tis now the verie witching time of night,
 When Churchyards yawne, and Hell it selfe breaths out
 Contagion to this world. Now could I drink hot blood,
 And do such bitter businesse as the day
 Would quake to looke on. Soft now, to my Mother: 5
 Oh Heart, loose not thy Nature; let not euer
 The Soule of Nero, enter this firme bosome:
 Let me be cruell, not vnnaturall,
 I will speake Daggers to her, but vse none:
 My Tongue and Soule in this be Hypocrites. 10
 How in my words someuer she be shent,
 To giue them Seales, neuer my Soule consent.

<u>Line</u>	<u>Variant Reading</u>
1	Q1. My mother she hath sent to speake with me.
2	Q1. O God, let ne're the heart of <u>Nero</u> enter. Retains sense of 6-7 except heart for soule. F. breaths.
3	Q1. This soft bosome. Continues to retain sense of 6-7 except soft for firme.
4	Q1. Let me be cruell, not vnnaturall. Preserves 8. F. bitter businesse as the day. Switches noun modified by bitter.
5	Q1. I will speake daggers, those sharpe wordes being spent. Retains sense of 9-11.
6	Q1. To doe her wrong my soule shall ne're consent. Loose interpretation of 12. Ends soliloquy.

Sixth Soliloquy

Q1:

King. O that this wet that falles vpon my face
 Would wash the crime cleere from my conscience!
 When I looke vp to heauen, I see my trespasse,
 The earth doth still crie out vpon my fact, 5
 Pay me the murder of a brother and a king,
 And the adulterous fault I haue committed:
 O these are sinnes that are vnpardonable:
 Why say thy sinnes were blacker then is ieat,
 Yet may contrition make them as white as snowe:
 I but still to perseuer in a sinne, 10
 It is an act against the vniuersall power,
 Most wretched man, stoope, bend thee to thy prayer,
 Aske grace of heauen to keepe thee from despaire.
 My wordes fly vp, my sinnes remaine below.
 No King on earth is safe, if Gods his foe 15

Q2:

King. Thankes deere my Lord.
 O my offence is ranck, it smels to heauen,
 It hath the primall eldest curse vppont,
 A brothers murther, pray can I not, 5
 Though inclination be as sharp as will,
 My stronger guilt defeats my strong entent,
 And like a man to double bussines bound,
 I stand in pause where I shall first beginne,
 And both neglect, what if this cursed hand 10
 Were thicker then it selfe with brothers blood,
 Is there not raine enough in the sweete Heauens
 To wash it white as snowe, whereto serues mercy
 But to confront the visage of offence?
 And what's in prayer but this two fold force,
 To be forestalled ere we come to fall, 15
 Or pardon being downe, then I'le looke vp.
 My fault is past, but oh what forme of prayer
 Can serue my turne, forgiue me my foule murther,
 That cannot be since I am still possesst
 Of those effects for which I did the murther; 20
 My Crowne, mine owne ambition, and my Queene;
 May one be pardond and retaine th'offence?
 In the corrupted currentes of this world,
 Offences wuilded hand may showe by iustice,
 And oft tis seene the wicked prize it selfe 25
 Buyes out the lawe, but tis not so aboue,

There is no shuffling, there the action lies
 In his true nature, and we our selues compeld
 Euen to the teeth and forehead of our faults
 To giue in euidence, what then, what rests, 30
 Try what repentance can, what can it not,
 Yet what can it, when one cannot repent?
 O wretched state, o bosome blacke as death,
 O limed soule, that struggling to be free,
 Art more ingaged; helpe Angels make assay, 35
 Bowe stubborne knees, and hart with strings of steale,
 Be soft as sinnewes of the new borne babe,
 All may be well.
 My words fly vp, my thoughts remaine belowe
 Words without thoughts neuer to heauen goe. 40

F:

King. Thankes deere my Lord.
 Oh my offence is ranke, it smels to heauen,
 It hath the primall eldest curse vpon't,
 A Brothers murther. Pray can I not.
 Though inclination be as sharpe as will: 5
 My stronger guilt, defeats my strong intent,
 And like a man to double businesse bound,
 I stand in pause where I shall first begin,
 And both neglect; what if this cursed hand
 Were thicker than it selfe with Brothers blood, 10
 Is there not Raine enough in the sweet Heauens
 To wash it white as Snow? Whereto serues mercy,
 But to confront the visage of Offence?
 And what's in Prayer, but this two-fold force,
 To be fore-stalled ere we come to fall, 15
 Or pardon'd being downe? Then Ile looke vp,
 My fault is past. But oh, what forme of Prayer
 Can serue my turne? Forgiue me my foule Murther:
 That cannot be, since I am still possesst
 Of those effects for which I did the Murther. 20
 My Crowne, mine owne Ambition and my Queene:
 May one be pardon'd, and retaine th'offence?
 In the corrupted currants of this world,
 Offences gilded hand may shoue by Iustice,
 And oft 'tis seene, the wicked prize it selfe 25
 Buyes out the Law; but tis not so aboue,
 There is no shuffling, there the Action lyes
 In his true Nature, and we our selues compell'd
 Euen to the teeth and forehead of our faults,
 To giue in euidence. What then? What rests? 30
 Try what Repentance can. What can it not?

Yet what can it, when one cannot repent?
Oh wretched state! Oh bosome, blacke as death!
Oh limed soule, that struggling to be free,
Art more ingag'd: Helpe Angels, make assay: 35
Bow stubborne knees, and heart with strings of Steele,
Be soft as sinewes of the new-borne Babe,
All may be well.
My words flye vp, my thoughts remain below
Words without thoughts, neuer to Heauen go. 40

<u>Line</u>	<u>Variant Reading</u>
1	Q1. O that this wet that falles vpon my face.
2	Q1. Would wash the crime cleere from my conscience!
3	Q1. When I looke vp to heauen, I see my trespasse.
4	Q1. The earth doth still crie out vpon my fact.
5	Q1. Pay me the murder of a brother and a king.
6	Q1. And the adulterous fault I haue committed.
7	Q1. O these are sinnes that are vnardonable.
8	Q1. Why say thy sinnes were blacker then is ieat.
9	Q1. Yet may contrition make them as white as snowe.
10	Q1. I but still to perseuer in a sinne.
11	Q1. It is an act gainst the vniuersall power.
12	Q1. Most wretched man, stoope, bend thee to thy pray- er.
13	Q1. Aske grace of heauen to keepe thee from despaire.
14	Q1. My wordes fly vp, my sinnes remaine below. Preserues except sinnes for thoughts.
15	Q1. No King on earth is safe, if Gods his foe. Ends soliloquy.

Seventh Soliloquy

Q1:

Ham. I so, come forth and worke thy last,
 And thus hee dies: and so am I reuenged:
 No, not so: he tooke my father sleeping, his sins brim full,
 And how his soule stode to the state of heauen
 Who knowes, saue the immortall powres, 5
 And shall I kill him now,
 When he is purging of his soule?
 Making his way for heauen, this is a benefit,
 And not reuenge: no, get thee vp agen, (drunke,
 When hee's at gameswaring, taking his carowse, drinking 10
 Or in the incestuous pleasure of his bed,
 Or at some act that hath no relish
 Of saluation in't, then trip him
 That his heeles may kicke at heauen,
 And fall as lowe as hel: my mother staves, 15
 This phisicke but prolongs thy weary dayes.

Q2:

Ham. Now might I doe it, but now a is a praying,
 And now Ile doo't and so a goes to heauen,
 And so am I reuendge, that would be scand
 A villaine kills my father, and for that,
 I his sole sonne, doe this same villaine send 5
 To heauen.
 Why, this is base and silly, not reuendge,
 A tooke my father grosly full of bread,
 Withall his crimes braod blowne, as flush as May,
 And how his audit stands who knowes saue heauen, 10
 But in our circumstance and course of thought,
 Tis heauy with him: and am I then reuendged
 To take him in the purging of his soule,
 When he is fit and seasond for his passage?
 No. 15
 Vp sword, and knowe thou a more horrid ent,
 When he is drunke, a sleepe, or in his rage,
 Or in th'incestious pleasure of his bed,
 At game a swearing, or about some act
 That has relish of saluation in't. 20
 Then trip him that his heels may kick at heauen,
 And that his soule may be as damnd and black
 As hell whereto it goes; my mother staves,
 This phisick but prolongs thy sickly daies.

F:

Ham. Now might I do it pat, now he is praying,
 And now Ile doo't, and so he goes to Heauen,
 And so am I reueng'd: that would be seann'd,
 A Villaine killes my Father, and for that
 I his soule Sonne, do this same Villaine send 5
 To heauen. Oh this is hyre and Sallery, not Reuenge.
 He tooke my Father grossely, full of bread,
 With all his Crimes broad blowne, as fresh as May,
 And how his Audit stands, who knowes, saue Heauen:
 But in our circumstance and course of thought 10
 'Tis heaueie with him: and am I then reueng'd,
 To take him in the purging of his Soule,
 When he is fit and season'd for his passage?
 Vp Sword, and know thou a more horrid bent
 This Physicke but prolongs thy sickly dayes. 15

<u>Line</u>	<u>Variant Reading</u>
1	Q1. I so, come forth and worke thy last.
2	Q1. And thus hee dies: and so am I reuenged. Comparable to sense of 2-3.
3	Q1. No, not so: he tooke my father sleeping, his sins brim full. Parallel to 3, although not the same line.
4	Q1. And how his soule stode to the state of heauen. Parallel to 10, although not the same line. Retains sense of this line.
5	Q1. Who knowes, saue the immortall powres. Com- parable to second half of 10 except the immortall powres for heauen.
6	Q1. And shall I kill him now. Parallel to 13 al- though not the same line. Retains sense of this line. F. adds 7.
7	Q1. When he is purging of his soule? Retains sense of 13. F. appears as second half of 6. Hyre and Sallery for base and silly.
8	Q1. Making his way for heauen, this is a benefit. Loosely retains sense of 5-6. F. 7 because of transposed line.
9	Q1. And not reuenge: no, get thee vp agen. Compar- able to vp sword 16. F. 8 because of transposed line.
10	Q1. When hee's at gameswaring, taking his carowse, drinking. Retains sense of 17. F. 9 because of transposed line.
11	Q1. Or in the incestuous pleasure of his bed. Preserves 13. F. 10 because of transposed line.
12.	Q1. Or at some act that hath no relish. Splices 19-20. F. 11 because of transposed line.
13	Q1. Of saluation in't, then trip him, Splices 20-1. F. 12 because of transposed line.
14	Q1. That his heeles may kicke at heauen. Preserves 20-1. F. 13 because of transposed line.

- 15 Q1. And fall as lowe as hel: my mother stayes.
Preserves second half of 23. F. line not in F.
- 16 Q1. This phisicke but prolongs thy weary dayes.
Preserves 24 except weary for sickly. F. 14 because
of transposed line and deleted line.
- 17 Q1. Soliloquy ends 16. Deleted.
- 18 F. Deleted.
- 19 F. Deleted.
- 20 F. Deleted.
- 21 F. Deleted.
- 22 F. Deleted.
- 23 F. Deleted.
- 24 F. 15.

Eighth Soliloquy

Q2:

How all occasions doe informe against me,
 And spur my dull reuenge. What is a man
 If his chiefe good and market of his time
 Be but to sleepe and feede, a beast, no more:
 Sure he that made vs with such large discourse
 Looking before and after, gaue vs not
 That capabilitie and god-like reason
 To sust in vs vnvsd, now whether it be
 Bestiall obliuion, or some crauen scruple
 Of thinking too precisely on th'euent,
 A thought which quarterd hath but one part wisdom,
 And euer three parts coward, I doe not know
 Why yet I liue to say this thing's to doe,
 Sith I haue cause, and will, and strength, and meanes
 To doo't; examples grosse as earth exhort me,
 Witnes this Army of such masse and charge,
 Led by a delicate and tender Prince,
 Whose spirit with diuine ambition pust,
 Makes mouthes at the invisible euent,
 Exposing what is mortall, and vnsure,
 To all that fortune, death, and danger dare,
 Euen for an Egge-shell. Rightly to be great,
 Is not to stirre without great argument,
 But greatly to find quarrell in a straw
 When honour's at the stake, how stand I then
 That haue a father kild, a mother staind,
 Excytements of my reason, and my blood,
 And let all sleepe, while to my shame I see
 The imminent death of twenty thousand men,
 That for a fantasie and tricke of fame
 Goe to their graues like beds, fight for a plot
 Whereon the numbers cannot try the cause,
 Which is not tombe enough and continent
 To hide the staine, o from this time forth,
 My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth.