

264. James Otis; quoted in Morison, *American People*, p. 205.

265. Cf. “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother” (Gen 2:24). So sang The Animals in San Francisco’s spectacular Cow Palace in 1966.

Chapter 5

1. “Tragedy,” writes Cavell, “is the result, and the study, of a burden of knowledge, of an attempt to deny the all but undeniable, that a loving daughter loves you, that your imagination has elicited the desire of a beautiful young woman, that however exceptional you may be you are a member of a human society, that your children are yours” (Cavell, “Hamlet’s Burden”).

2. 2.5.2.

3. 1.2.205–6.

4. Francisco Sánchez, a distant cousin of Montaigne, wrote *Quod Nihil Scitur* [Why Nothing Can Be Known], in 1576 and published it in 1581.

5. For Montaigne, the so-called certainty of consanguinity boils down to mere chance masquerading as natural inclination or likeness. In “Of the Affection of Fathers for Their Children,” for example, Montaigne writes about the kinship of fathers, specifically, to their children: “Herodotus relates of a certain district of Libya that intercourse with women is promiscuous, but that the child, when he has the strength to walk, finds to be his father the one toward whom in the crowd natural inclination bears his first step. I believe that this must lead to frequent mistakes [*mescontes*, or false accounts].” The reason we usually give for fathers loving their children—“that we begot them [*pour les avoir engendrez*], wherefore we call them our other selves”—may pass in the case of those “children of the mind [*enfantements de nostre esprit*]” that are essays in fiction or philosophy. But in the case of human children, that reason is insufficient and is based in fictional tales only, or *contes* (Montaigne, *Essais*, in *Oeuvres*, ed. Thibaudet and Rat, bk. 2, chap. 8, pp. 379–80). Montaigne refers here to Herodotus, *Hist.* 4:180: “These people enjoy their women in common. They do not live in couples at all but fuck in the mass, like cattle. When a woman’s child is rather older, in three months’ space the men come together, and whichever of the men the child most resembles, his the child is regarded as being” (Herodotus, *History*, trans. Grene, p. 347). “Like father, like son” is the measure of legitimacy.

6. 1.2.107–8. Unless otherwise indicated, citations in this chapter are from the Jenkins edition. Abbreviations for other editions I will cite are as follows: *Q1*, the first, or “bad,” quarto (1603, printed by Valentine Simmes); *Q2*, the second, or “good” quarto (1604/05), printed by James Roberts; *F*, or first Folio (1623). See J. Dover Wilson, *Manuscript of Shakespeare’s “Hamlet”*; and Werstine, “Textual Mystery of *Hamlet*.”

7. See, for example, D’Anglure, *Esquimaux*, and cf. the various spiritual kinships endorsed by the Catholic church, including monachism (where the status of Brother supersedes that of brother) and the gossiped. On the gossiped as such, see Gratian, *Decretum*, 30; Rolandus, *Summa*, 144–45; Stephan of Tournai, *Summa*, p. 241; Feije, *De impedimentis*, chap. 16; Council of Trullo (A.D. 692), in *Colección de canones*; and C. E. Smith, *Papal Enforcement*, pp. 48–51. For the anthropological view of gossiped, see Pitt-Rivers, “Spiritual Kinship,” p. 55, and “Pseudo-Kinship,” p. 408; Gudeman, “Compadrazago”; Mintz and Wolf, “Ritual Co-Godparentage”; and Anderson, “Comparaggio.”

8. Montaigne, who was himself put out to nurse with a peasant woman and had sponsors from the same class, is skeptical about the preeminent importance and authority of the consanguineous bond between human parent and human child, i.e., of the “literal” bond between a genitor or genetrix and offspring (see his essay “Of the Affection of Fathers for Their Children” [1578–80]). He refers to instances where nurse mothers even develop for

their nonconsanguineous nurslings “a bastard affection [*affection bastarde*] soon engendered by habit [*s’engendrer bien tost par accoustumance*], more vehement than the natural, and a greater solicitation for the preservation of the borrowed child than for their own [*leurs propres*].” He concludes that the “natural affection to which we give so much authority” of a genetrix for her consanguineous child has “very weak roots” (Montaigne, ed. Thibaudet and Rat, bk. 2, chap. 8, pp. 379–80; trans. Frame, pp. 290–91). On the specific taboo against marriage between milk siblings—people who received the “milk of human kindness” from the same nurse-mother—, see Crawley, *Mystic Rose* 2, 230. For a discussion of the privileging of collactaneous over blood kinship in the Middle Ages, see Boswell, *Kindness*, p. 359.

9. 1.2.157, 1.5.42, 1.5.83, 3.3.90, 5.2.330. Jenkins discusses how, when Hamlet reproaches Gertrude with her second husband at 3.4.91–92, “the accusation in Q1—‘To live in the incestuous pleasure of his bed’—makes him now apply to the Queen what he said of the King (in Q1 as in Q2)” (Jenkins, “Introduction,” *Hamlet*, p. 29). Among *Hamlet*’s likely literary sources or analogues are Saxo’s Latin *Historiae Danicae*, which was written at the end of the twelfth century and published in 1514, and Belleforest’s French *Histoires Tragiques*, whose *Cinquieme Tome* (1570, 1572, 1576, 1582, etc.) contains a Hamlet story that was probably the basis for the anonymous English *Hystorie of Hamblet* (1608). Saxo says that Feng = Claudius capped “unnatural murder with incest”; Saxo’s Amleth accuses his mother of having an “incestuous bosom” and refers to the crime of “fratricide with incest” (Saxo Grammaticus, *Historiae Danicae*, in Gollancz, *Sources*, pp. 101, 115, 139).

10. For the term “sometime” as used in *Hamlet* 1.2.8, see also Bale’s reference to “the right virtuous lady Margaret, sister sometime to the French king Francis” (Bale, “Epistle Dedicatory” to Elizabeth Tudor’s *Godly Medytacyon* [1548], Folio 9r; in Shell, *Elizabeth’s Glass*).

11. Helena in *All’s Well That Ends Well* is the daughter by adoption of the Countess. Helena takes great care to determine that she is eligible to marry her legal brother, insisting that she is not the natural daughter of the Countess:

HELENA: Mine honorable mistress.
 COUNTESS: Nay, a mother.
 Why not a mother? When I said “a mother,”
 Methought you saw a serpent. What’s in “mother,”
 That you start at it? I say I am your mother,
 And put you in the catalogue of those
 That were enwombed mine. Tis often seen
 Adoption strives with nature. . . .
 HELENA: Pardon Madam.
 The Count Rossillion cannot be my brother. . . .
 COUNTESS: Nor I your mother?
 HELENA: You are my mother, madam; would you were—
 So that my lord, your son, were not my brother—
 Indeed not mother! Or were you both our mothers
 I care no more for than I do for heaven,
 So I were not his sister. Can’t no other
 But, I your daughter, he must be my brother?
 COUNTESS: Yes, Helen, you might be my daughter-in-law.
 (1.3.141ff.)

The Countess loves Helena as if she were a natural daughter. “If she had partaken of my flesh and cost me the dearest groans of a mother,” says the Countess, “I could not have owed her

a more rooted love" (4.5.10–11). Because of that love, the Countess would transform Helena from a daughter by legal adoption into a daughter by nature. But if Helena is to be united with Bertram in chaste marriage, either she must not be the Countess's daughter or Bertram must not be the Countess's son. Helena insists on the first, that she can be the daughter-in-law, but not the daughter, of the Countess.

12. One can no more know whether "fictional" people like Claudius and Gertrude are "literal" brother and sister than know whether "real" people like you and I are related consanguineously. The relationship is fictional whether the people are or not. Cf. Knights, "How Many Children Had Lady Macbeth?"

13. Jenkins complains that, "criticism has made too little of the bond between the two revengers which Hamlet acknowledges with the word *brother*" (Jenkins, ed., *Hamlet*, p. 567). Yet, as we shall see, the play goes well beyond this brotherhood of revenge.

14. A returning son's wondering who his father is, or that father's wondering about the strange young man before him, may be one source for the name *Laertes*; Laertes' "knees were loosed where he stood, and his heart melted," says Homer in the *Odyssey* (24.345–47), "as he knew the sure tokens which [the disguised] Odysseus told him."

15. On the issue of whether bastards could inherit, see chap. 3, n. 23. In Rome, we shall see, filial adoption was virtually a precondition for succession.

16. Textual variants here may be significant. Claudius says to Laertes in one version, "What would you undertake / To show yourself your father's son in deed" (F4); in another, "What would you undertake / To show yourself your father's son indeed" (F); and finally, in a third version, "What would you undertake / To show yourself indeede your father's son" (Q2). Laertes can show himself to be indeed his father's son only in the deed of killing a father's son.

17. *Hamlet* 1.5.42, cf. 46. The term *adulterate* is used by the ghost to describe Claudius, but as "adulteress" it probably describes Gertrude as well. In Marsden's *Antonio's Revenge* the counterpart to Gertrude is clearly unfaithful to her husband. For the view that Gertrude had a guilty relationship with Claudius before her husband's death, see Bradley, *Shakespearean Tragedy*, p. 166, and J. Dover Wilson, *What Happens in 'Hamlet'*, pp. 292–94. Belleforest, *Cinquiesme Tome* (a source for the old Hamlet tale), has it that Gertrude commits incestuous adultery with Feng (Claudius) before Feng's murder of Horvendile (Old Hamlet).

18. On the meaning of "too much in the sun" (1.2.67) as "ostracized from home, kindred, and social life," see Blackmore, *Riddles of Hamlet*, p. 103.

19. Electra, who plays the role of Hamlet-like gadfly after the murder of her father Agamemnon in Aeschylus' *Oresteia*, is separated from her exiled brother Orestes, whom she loves just as if he were her brother, father, mother, sister, spouse, and child.

To call you father is constraint of fact,
and all the love I could have borne my mother turns
your way, while she is loathed as she deserves; my love
for a pitilessly slaughtered sister turns to you.
And now you were my steadfast brother after all.

—*Libation Bearers*, ll. 239–43

Electra eventually marries a peasant; but she lives out her life like a nun because the peasant fears Orestes' wrath.

20. For the sources: Saxo Grammaticus, *Historiae Danicae*, in Gollancz, *Sources*, pp. 108–9. For collactaneous kinship et al., see pp. 104–5, 109; Hansen, *Saxo*, pp. 130–31, cf. 129; and Jones, *Hamlet*, p. 153. See also Belleforest, *Cinquiesme Tome*, in Gollancz, *Sources*, pp. 202–3. Cf. Belleforest's remark that Ophelia's counterpart was "one that from her infancy loved him" (in Belleforest, *Cinquiesme Tome*, in Gollancz, *Sources*, p. 203).

21. The term *foster* is linked etymologically to a Scandinavian term involving nourish-

ment (as of milk) and recalls such terms as *alumnus*. See Boswell, *Kindness*, pp. 356-60, 388-89.

22. For adoption as an impediment to marriage, and the relevant struggle between secular and religious Rome, see Justinian, *Digest* 1.23, tit. 2, lex 17; Gratian, *Decretum*, caus. 30, q. 3, C. 6; and Ivo Carnotensis, *Decretum, Patrologiae* (Latina) 161, 657. See also G. Oesterlé, "Inceste," in Naz, ed., *Dictionnaire* 5, 1297-314. C. E. Smith, *Papal Enforcement*, p. 6, shows that "adoption has the same effect in precluding marriage as does kinship by blood." Fowler, *Incest Regulations*, p. 40, suggests, however, that this view of adoption has been contested frequently since the fall of Rome. On adoption as an impediment to marriage in Shakespeare, see Bertram's reluctance to marry Helena in *All's Well That Ends Well*.

23. Hansen, *Saxo*, p. 130. The king here is Tamerlaus of England.

24. For these Brothers and Sisters, see the section on "Social Anthropology of Universalist Orders" in chapter 4.

25. Cf. "The Garden of Love," in *Songs of Experience, in Poetry and Prose of William Blake*.

26. Perhaps Shakespeare submerged the collactaneously incestuous aspects of the Hamlet-Ophelia story because he believed that consciously desired incest—of the sort we might feel uneasy about in the Claudius-Gertrude story—would not have made for a good tragedy. T. S. Eliot, in his consideration of Elizabethan drama, and Thomas Rymer, in his consideration of the sibling love in *Canace* by Speroni [1546] and in *A King and No King* by Beaumont and Fletcher, would seem to endorse just this belief. They argue on quasi-Aristotelian grounds that a knowingly incestuous hero would be so unlike most people as not to elicit from their audiences the appropriate combination of pity or fear. (Aristotle, *Rhetoric* 1386-87, *Ethics* 1155; Rymer, *Critical Works*, pp. 48, 49; Eliot, *Essays in Elizabethan Drama*, pp. 129, 139; cf. Roper, introduction to Ford, *'Tis Pity*, p. 33, Sherman, introduction to *'Tis Pity*, pp. 45-53, and R. J. Kaufmann, "Ford's Tragic Perspective.") For speculation on whether Ophelia may have consummated a sexual affair with Hamlet (or even Claudius), see West, *Court*, p. 15.

27. Shakespeare, *Pericles* 5.1.197. The basically Protestant view that Hamlet's "nunnery" here means "brothel" has dominated most criticism since Wilson, *What Happens in Hamlet?*, esp. pp. 128-34; for one critique of this interpretation, see Jenkins, ed., *Hamlet*, p. 496, and *Hamlet and Ophelia*. Theobald, in his edition, cleverly reads the twice-repeated term "beautified" (2.2.109-11) as "beatified."

The Sister that Hamlet here wants his quasi-sister Ophelia to become recalls the quasinun Olivia in *Twelfth Night* as well as the novice Isabella in *Measure for Measure*. Stephen Greenblatt remarks insightfully of the role of celibacy in *Twelfth Night* that Olivia's vow to become "like a cloistress" in order "to season / A brother's dead love" (*Twelfth Night* 1.1.25-30) "picks up for Shakespeare's Protestant audience associations with life-denying claims of the flesh by entering into holy matrimony" (Greenblatt, *Shakespearean Negotiations*, pp. 69-70, 176). However, few Protestants outside such incest-practicing sects as the Family of Love—and no Catholic—would argue that "life-denying" through celibacy is wrong in those cases where "life-affirming" entails sexual intercourse with one's brother—as is the case for Ophelia's relation to her quasi-collactaneous sibling Hamlet and for the quasi-Sister Isabella's relation to her consanguineous brother Claudio in *Measure for Measure* (see my *End of Kinship*, chap. 4). Where all people are potentially or essentially siblings—as when people either do not know who their kin are or take literally Jesus' catholic words that "All ye are brethren"—the tension between the requirements to reproduce and not to commit incest expresses itself as the conflict between life and death. On the overall question of whether the Shakespearean plays take the Catholic or Protestant side in the great Reformation debates, see Honigmann, *Shakespeare*; Mutschmann and Wentersdorf, *Shakespeare*; and my *End of Kinship*, esp. pp. 49-50, 217.

28. *Pericles*, act 1, chorus, 27–28. For the clever pun on “none”/“nun,” see esp. 5.1.128–32. *Much Ado*’s Beatrice touches on the distinctive source of Hamlet’s universalist attitude to marriage (“To a nunnery, go”) when she says, “I’ll none. Adam’s sons are my brethren, and truly I hold it a sin to match in my kindred” (*Much Ado*, 2.1.63–64; cf. 4.1.239–42).

29. Despite differences between the nunnery scenes in Q2 and F, this line appears in both. See Werstine, “Text Mystery of *Hamlet*,” p. 24.

30. “Thou dost handle my soul (if so durst I say) as a mother, daughter, sister, and wife, alas, yea, for Thou hast broken the kindred of mine old father, calling me daughter of adoption” (Elizabeth, “Glass of the Sinful Soul,” Folio 13r).

31. Belleforest, *Cinquesme Tome*, in Gollancz, *Sources*, pp. 210–11.

32. Both the profane conflation of kinship positions in the Danish court (where Gertrude and Claudius are sibling-spouses and where Hamlet and Ophelia are sibling-lovers) and their sacred conflation in a Catholic nunnery (where Ophelia would be the Sister and Spouse of Christ) recall the Elizabethan Court of Wards (where the members called one another “cousin” or “brother” and intermarriage was not uncommon). Denmark is, to Hamlet, a “ward” (2.2.246). Edward de Vere (Earl of Oxford), sometimes credited with being the author of the plays we call “Shakespearean,” was raised as a ward of the court after the death of his father (and apparent abandonment by his mother). “Ward-son” there to the fatherly William Cecil (Master of the Wards), he called himself Cecil’s “most assured and loving brother,” formed an alliance with Cecil’s consanguineous son Robert, and eventually married Cecil’s consanguineous daughter Anne. (The marriage was not of the “hot” type: their first child was probably not Oxford’s and there was a five-year period of estrangement. Cf. Bertram reluctantly coming to marry his adoptive sister Helena in *All’s Well That Ends Well*.) There is a long critical tradition claiming that Cecil is the historical model for the “steward” Polonius in *Hamlet* (4.5.171). For the argument that Edward de Vere, muzzled by his guardian (Lord Treasurer Burghleigh), wrote under the pseudonym “Shakespeare,” see esp. Ogburn, *Mysterious William Shakespeare*.

33. In Belleforest’s version, Hamlet regards himself as heir: “I am lawful successor in the kingdom” (Belleforest, *Cinquesme Tome*, in Gollancz, *Sources*, p. 281).

34. See Hansen, *Saxo*, p. 122. According to historical hypothesis, in the pre-Abramic Hurrian fratriarchy “authority is exercised by the eldest brother and is handed on from brother to brother as something inherited, the inheritance passing to the oldest son of the first brother on the death of the last brother” (de Vaux, *Israel*, p. 197; see also Koschaker, “Fratriarchät,” and Gordan, “Fratriarchy”). At the same time, the fratriarch officially adopted spouses into the family as “sisters,” either at the time of marriage or earlier. (The former is Speiser’s view [“Wife-Sister Motif,” pp. 15–18], the latter Seters’ [*Abraham*, pp. 72–75].)

35. See Stabler, “Elective Monarchy.”

36. Thomson, influenced by Bachofen’s views of *Mutterrecht*, comments on similar situations in the *Oresteia*, to the effect that it is as though kinship itself were thought of as having been originally uterine (Thomson, ed., *Aeschylus Oresteia*, p. 385; cf. Engels, *Origin of the Family*, p. 103).

37. Belleforest, *Cinquesme Tome*, in Gollancz, *Sources*, pp. 182–85. Grebanier, *Heart*, p. 192, says that in Belleforest, “Hamlet’s father is rewarded for his services to the crown by being married to the King’s daughter.”

38. Coke, *Commentary upon Littleton*, L.1, c.5, 36b; see also Clarkson and Warren, *Law of Property*, p. 81. Kittredge, ed., *Hamlet*, p. 139, claims that a “jointress” is “a widow who has jointure, an estate which falls to her on the death of her husband.” Clarkson, pp. 83–84, doubts that “jointress” in the play should be taken in this sense. Werder, *Vorlesungen*,

p. 355, discusses Gertrude as an *Erbin* (heiress)—a standard German translation for “jointress” in *Hamlet*. Contrast the legal definition of jointress as “she who had an estate settled on her by the husband, to hold during her life if she survived” (cited in C. K. Davis, *Law in Shakespeare*, p. 255).

39. Brady, *Hamlet's Wounded Name*, p. 15, writes of Claudius and Gertrude that “probably he married her for political advantage as well as love.” Jenkins assumes that “what is clear is that Claudius became king before taking her [Gertrude] ‘to wife’ but consolidated his position by a prudent marriage” (*Hamlet*, p. 434).

40. Saxo Grammaticus, *Historiae Danicae*, in Gollancz, *Sources*, pp. 152–53.

41. Saxo Grammaticus, *Historiae Danicae*, in Gollancz, *Sources*, pp. 152–53.

42. Ency. Brit. (11th ed.) 17:822a.

43. Cf. 4.4.52. On father and mother as one flesh in the sense suggested by Christian doctrine, see Bracton, lib. 5, Tract. 5, cap. 25: “Vir et uxor sunt quasi unica persona, quia caro una, et sanguis unus” (quoted in Rushton, *Legal Maxims*, pp. 21–22).

44. Thomson, ed., Aeschylus, *Oresteia* (*Eumenides*), 1. 741, note.

45. See his paper, “Hamlet’s Burden.”

46. Strachey comments that “the Queen’s want of any clear and distinct views and opinions is in keeping with her whole character” (Strachey, *Shakespeare’s ‘Hamlet’*, p. 173).

47. *Commere*, which means something like “godmother,” is Theobald’s and Warburton’s emendation of *comma*. (*Comma*, which is what modern editors prefer, also makes good sense: it indicates the agency that both separates and links words.) The French term *commerage*, according to Cotgrave’s dictionary (1611), refers to “gossiping, the acquaintance or league that grows between women by christening a child together, or one for another.” In any case, the spectator can understand the kinship in *Hamlet* in grammatical as well as kinship terms; from one viewpoint, incest is a grammatical violation in which only nomenclature is confused (see Barthes, *Sade, Fourier, Loyola*, pp. 137–38).

48. Gregory I, for example, describes a monastery in which the monks had visits from females which they wished to make seem innocent by having the women appear to be their *commatres* (Letter from Gregory I to Valentinus, A.D. 584, cited in Fowler, *Incest Regulations*, p. 164).

49. One source of the notion that M. Brutus was the illegitimate son of Caesar is Plutarch’s report that Caesar’s last words were, *Et tu, mi fili* [And you, my son]—which Shakespeare changes to “*Et tu, Brutè*” [And you, Brutus] (*Julius Caesar* 3.1.77); cf. Jones, *Hamlet*, p. 124. For the ancients’ belief that Brutus’ mother, Servilia, was Caesar’s mistress, see *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, p. 980. Shakespeare’s Polonius, who played the part of Julius Caesar when he was an actor (3.2.102), is killed by the new Danish “Brutus.” For Lucius Brutus, see also Belleforest, *Cinquiesme Tome*, in Gollancz, *Sources*, pp. 193ff.

50. Seneca, *Octavia*, in *Four Tragedies*, p. 258.

51. Claudius was the Roman emperor who undertook the conquest of Britain in A.D. 43, a few years after the philo-Roman British prince Cunobelin (= Shakespeare’s Cymbeline) was succeeded by his two sons. In Krantz’s *Chronica* (1545), p. 619, Ambletus = Hamlet and the Emperor Claudius are referred to on the same page (*Hamlet*, ed. Jenkins, p. 432). Claudius is cited as the type of bad ruler by Erasmus, *Institutio* (*Hamlet*, ed. Jenkins, p. 163). Skeat, *Shakespeare’s Plutarch*, p. xviii, says that the name “Claudius” in *Hamlet* may come from “Clodius” in North’s translation of Plutarch’s “Antony and Cleopatra,” but Montgomerie, “English Seneca,” says that the Senecan play *Octavia* was one source for the name “Claudius” (cf. Montgomerie, “More an Antique Roman than a Dane”).

Constantine the Great, born in A.D. 288, was the illegitimate son of Constantius I and Flavia Helena, whom Saint Ambrose describes as an innkeeper. “Since Constantine’s legal right to the Empire of the West rested on his recognition of Maximus, he now had to seek

for a new ground of legitimacy, and found it in the assertion of his descent from Claudius Gothicus, who was represented as the father of Constantius Chlorus. . . . Such is the primary version of the story, implied in the Seventh Panegyric of Eumenius, delivered at Trier in A.D. 310. It would seem that when Christian sentiment was offended by the illegitimate origin ascribed to Constantius, the story was modified and Claudius became his uncle" (*Ency. Brit.* [11th ed.] 6:988).

52. Fowler, "Incest Regulations," esp. pp. 70–80.

53. Tacitus, *Annals* 12.42.

54. Racine, *Britannicus*, 1.2.

55. "Agrippina through a burning desire of continuing her authority and greatness grew to that shamelessness that in the midst of the day, when Nero was well tippled and full of good cheer, she offered herself to him drunk as he was, trimly decked and ready to commit incest: and the standers by noted her lascivious kisses and other allurements, messengers of her unchast meaning" (Tacitus, *Annals*, trans. Greenewey, 14.2). The *Annals* were translated by R. Greenewey in 1598 (Bullough, ed., *Narrative and Dramatic Sources* 5, 12). For the publication history of Tacitus' work, see Mendell, *Tacitus*, esp. pp. 363–65. Berry ("Hamlet") juxtaposes Suetonius' Claudius with Shakespeare's Hamlet: both are kept from power by murderous uncles, both are "wild and whirling" in speech, and both are apparently inactive before their uncles.

56. In Shakespeare's *King John*, the rebels are called "you degenerate, you ingrate revolts / You bloody Neros ripping up the womb / Of your dear mother England" (5.2.152). *King John* tells the story of John, who occupied the throne in defiance of the right of his nephew Arthur, who was the son of John's elder brother Geoffrey. Of Nero, Lydgate says in his *Falls of Princes* (1494) that "He mysusid his moodir Agripyne," and Marsden, in his *Scourge of Villanie* (1599), describes how "Nero keeps his mother Agrippine" (Lydgate, *Falls*, Bk. 8.1.728; Marsden, *Scourge*, quoted by Montgomerie, "More an Antique Roman," p. 76). Dowden, in his note to the Nero passage in *Hamlet* 3.2, writes that Nero "was the murderer of his mother Agrippina. . . . Perhaps the coincidences are accidental, that Agrippina was the wife of Claudius, was accused of poisoning a husband [Passienus Crispus, her second husband]; and of living in incest with a brother [the Emperor Caligula]."

57. Sophocles' Oedipus says: "Give me a sword, / to find this wife no wife, this mother's womb, / this field of double sowing whence I sprang / and where I sowed my children" (*Oedipus the King*, trans. Grene, 11.1255–58). It is unclear whether Oedipus somehow intends to kill Jocasta. A similar matricidal impulse plays a crucial role in the *Oresteia*.

58. Tacitus, *Annals*, 14.9.

59. Neoptolemus is called Pyrrhus in Cooper's *Achilleus* (1565); cf. Marlowe and Nashe's *Tragedy of Dido* (1594), probably one source of the "Aeneas speech" in *Hamlet* (see Hillebrand's note to his edition of Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*, pp. 451–52).

60. Dusinger writes that, for Hamlet "to cast out a belief in the indivisibility of man and wife is to justify Gertrude's faithlessness. Hamlet can obey the ghost when Gertrude's death leaves Claudius unprotected, and gives Hamlet a motive for revenge which seems to reunite his parents against the intruder on their marriage" (*Shakespeare and the Nature of Women*, pp. 99–100).

61. Dido does not quite keep her word. She is seduced by Aeneas with such speeches as the one that the Player recites in *Hamlet*; Virgil's *Aeneid* is ambiguous both as to whether Dido and Aeneas are properly married and as to whether Aeneas has a sexual liaison with Dido's sister Anna. (On the love affair between Anna and Aeneas, see Servius' commentary on Varro's remarks about Virgil, *Aeneid* 5.4.)

62. Cf. Tertullian's *Ad uxorem*, in which he advises his own wife to remain unmarried after his death (*Ency. Cath.*, s.v. "Tertullian," 13:1021).

63. For the sources, see Belleforest, *Cinquiesme Tome*, in Gollancz, *Sources*, pp. 186–89. The comparisons between Hamlet and James and between Gertrude and Mary are worth pursuing. King James VI's mother was Mary, initially the hope of the English recusant Catholics, as Carl Schmitt stresses in his book on *Hamlet*. Widow Mary married her cousin Henry Darnley (1565). She probably then conspired with her lover James Bothwell in killing Darnley (1567). She finally married Bothwell in Gertrude-like haste, within three months, thus becoming, like Gertrude, the wife of her husband's murderer and the conferrer on her husband of the title of king.

Her story raises questions about the legitimacy of James VI that match in certain respects those about the legitimacy of Queen Elizabeth. First, although papal dispensation was needed for the cousins Mary and Henry Darnley to marry, the dispensation was never granted. Second, Bothwell may well have been not only James' stepfather but also his adulterous genitor: Bothwell was known as an adventurous libertine and at James' baptism, which Darnley refused to attend, Bothwell stood in for the father. (Incidentally, Bothwell had divorced a previous wife on the dubious grounds of kinship by carnal contagion.) Third, Mary eventually consented to divorce Bothwell only on condition that the divorce not impeach her son James' legitimacy.

64. Cf. Cavell in "Hamlet's Burden": "I do not have to turn aside, as Jenkins, among other critics, is moved to do, the literal possibility that Gertrude is, or that Hamlet thinks that she is, the murderer, or accomplice, in the literal murder, of Hamlet's father." For the arguments on both sides, however, see the anonymously published *Hamlet. An Attempt*. . .

65. When a *Volk* (*gens*, or kin) is conflated with a species (*genus*, or kind) we have the strange and murderous Neronian consequences which Hamlet seeks to avoid through his doctrine of kind cruelty.

66. The anonymously published *Warning* "recounts how at Lynn in Norfolk a woman was so moved by watching a guilty wife in a tragedy that she confessed to having murdered her late husband" (Jenkins, ed., *Hamlet*, p. 482; citing *Warning*, sig. H2, in Bullough, *Sources*, p. 18). Cf. Heywood's *Apology for Actors* (Gv–G2v).

67. Gifford, in his sixteenth-century treatise, remarks that certain ghosts, "instruments of God's vengeance," "kindle and stir up in [certain reprobate human beings] . . . filthy lusts, and carry them headlong into foul and abominable sins" (Gifford, *Discourse of the Subtle Practices*, quoted in Hoy's edition of *Hamlet*, p. 116). It is in this context, perhaps, that we might ask what were the "foul crimes" of Old Hamlet that they cry out to be purged (1.5.12, cf. 3.3.80–81).

68. The parallel between Claudius and Hamlet as murderous and as both actually or potentially incestuous is patent. In the play-within-the-play, the Player King stands for both Old Hamlet, whom Claudius (his brother) murdered, and Claudius, whom Hamlet (his nephew) threatens to murder; the murder of the Player King by his nephew Lucianus thus not only represents the murder of Old Hamlet by his brother Claudius and the murder of Claudius by his nephew Hamlet, but also conflates the polar opposite topoi of a son who kills his father and a father who kills his son. Shakespeare had depicted such filiacidal and patricidal commonplaces separately in the third part of *Henry VI*: According to the usual stage directions, there enters at one door a "son that hath kill'd his father" (without having known the man to be his father) and then, at another door, "a father that hath kill'd his son" (without having known the man to be his son) (2.5.54–122, cf. Forsythe, "Tacitus"). In *Hamlet*, on the other hand, Shakespeare depicts the father-killing son and the son-killing father in a single "tableau."

69. Belleforest, *Cinquiesme Tome*, in Gollancz, *Sources*, p. 303; cf. p. 301.

70. See the line drawing in Robert, *Oidipus* 1, 55; Gould's note to 1. 36 of his edition of

Sophocles' *Oedipus the King*; and Pindar's reference to the "enigma from the savage jaws of the virgin" (Fr. 177.4). For a relevant psychoanalytic discussion, see Gessain, "Vagina Dentata."

71. Belleforest, *Cinquesme Tome*, in Gollancz, *Sources*, pp. 287–89. Defeating the Amazon was the greatest of Theseus' Herculean and Stoic tasks. "And when it became known in Greece that [the Greeks] would have peace with the Amazons, never had there been a greater joy, for there was nothing [the Athenians] feared as much as the Amazons" writes Christine de Pisan in *City of Ladies* (p. 47). But what Theseus can do in the comedic Athens of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Hamlet cannot accomplish in tragic Denmark. Hamlet is no Hercules. Hamlet is like Hippolytus, the antisexual son of Theseus and the Amazon Queen Hippolyta: As in the Roman Seneca's and the French Racine's plays on the subject, he is also called upon during his father's adventures in the realm of death to reject the incestuous advances of a mother (for Hippolytus, his stepmother Phaedra, for Hamlet his aunt-mother Gertrude). Queen Elizabeth herself, according to much literature of the period, was the Amazon queen incarnate. Cf. Schleiner, "Divina virago: Queen Elizabeth as an Amazon."

72. "Unlike in the *Oedipus* [of Sophocles], where [that fantasy] is brought into the open and realized as it would be in a dream" (Freud, *Interpretation of Dreams*, pp. 264–65). Freud seems to mean that Hamlet both fantasizes wishfully and also represses his fantasies.

73. Suetonius, *Nero*, 52 and 38. Nero claimed that, should he ever be deposed, he would become a great actor in Alexandria. Cf. Hamlet's jest about getting "a fellowship in a cry of players" (3.2.271–72). On Hamlet's singing and dancing like Nero, see Montgomerie, "Folkplay" and Charlesworth, "Nero."

74. See, for example, Gilbert Murray, "Hamlet and Orestes," and Kott, "Hamlet and Orestes." Scholars have noted similarities between the theme of *Hamlet* and both the Orestes theme—as it appears in such works as Aeschylus' *Oresteia* [which Shakespeare probably did not know] and Heywood's *Iron Age* and Seneca's *Agamemnon* [which he probably did]—and the Oedipus theme—as it appears in such works as Sophocles' *Oedipus the King* and Seneca's *Oedipus*. Another Orestes play sometimes considered in this light is Pikerung's *Horestes* (see Prosser, *Revenge*, pp. 41–42). In Seneca's *Agamemnon*, as in *Hamlet*, the ghost of Agamemnon urges his kin to avenge his having been murdered by his brother Atreus.

75. The story of the sibling love between Macareus and Canace was well known from its Roman source in Ovid. On the Canace story in the English tradition, which takes Ovid's *Heroides* as its *locus classicus*, see Gower, *Confessio Amantis*, 3. 142; Chaucer, *Squire's Tale*, 667–69; and Spenser, *Faerie Queen*, 4.3. Cf. Nohrnberg, *Analogy of the Faerie Queene*, pp. 662–63; and Goldberg, *Endlesse Worke*, pp. 114–16.

76. On Pyrrhus' and Hamlet's state of neutrality, see also Levin, "Player's Speech," in *Hamlet*, ed. Hoy, esp. p. 230.

77. As hypocrisy can transform vice to virtue, so it can virtue into vice. Habit is all: "That monster custom . . . is angel yet in this" (3.4.163–64); "For use almost can change the stamp of nature" (3.4.170). In *Pericles, Prince of Tyre* it is said of the incest between Antiochus and his daughter that "custom what they did begin / Was with long use account'd no sin" (Act 1, Chorus, 11. 29–30).

78. *Twelfth Night* 5.5.355. "L'habit ne fait le moyne," is how Rabelais puts the proverb (cited in Kennard, *Friar in Fiction*, p. 45). Cf. Lucio's removal of the Duke's cowl in *Measure for Measure*.

79. Gertrude later says to Hamlet that "these words like daggers enter in my ears" (3.4.95). These are ears like those of Old Hamlet (through which the ghost says that Old Hamlet was killed) and Young Hamlet (through which the ghost speaks words to Hamlet himself). Cf. "The whole ear of Denmark" (1.5.36).

80. Compare Clytemnestra's words, "Bring me quick, somebody, an ax to kill a man" (Aeschylus, *Libation Bearers*, trans. Lattimore, l. 889), which suggest that she plans to kill her son Orestes.

81. Belleforest, *Cinquierme Tome*, in Gollancz, *Sources*, p. 221.

82. Tacitus, *Annals*, trans. Grenewey, 14.2; emphasis mine.

83. Hamlet may go so far as to compare Polonius, a daughter-sacrificing Jephthah (Judg. 11), with the incestuous Lot (Gen. 19): "As by lot God wot, / And then, you know, / It came to pass, as most like it was" (2.2.411–13).

84. "You Neroes . . ." is from *King John*, 5.2.152. The church is the seat of those guilt feelings that might ordinarily inhibit pursuits of revenge. However, Claudius responds that "revenge should have no bounds"—which implies that an avenger has the right to pursue his victim anywhere at all or nowhere at all.

85. Consider here the fourfold divorce of kinspersons that informs *Coriolanus*. Coriolanus casts off his "father" Menenius Agrippa and claims that he no longer knows "wife, mother, child" (*Cor.* 5.2.71, 83; cf. 5.3.102). Compare Volumnia's remark that Coriolanus is no longer akin to his Roman mother, wife, and child, and other repetitions of the same motif (*Cor.* 5.3.178–80). Coriolanus claims that he has no family at all and allies his rejection of ordinary kinship with the atheist or isotheist hypothesis that "a man [is] author of himself / And [knows] no other kin" (*Cor.* 5.3.36–37).

86. Compare the views of Diogenes of Sinope: "Asked where he came from, [Diogenes of Sinope] said, 'I am a citizen of the world (*kosmopolites*)'" (Diogenes Laertius, *Lives*, VII, 63). Diogenes "preferred liberty to everything else" (Diogenes Laertius, *Lives*, VII, 71). For him this liberty meant overcoming parentarchy through a rejection of particularized consanguinity. ("The only true commonwealth was, [Diogenes of Sinope] said, that which is as wide as the universe. He advocated community of wives, recognizing no other marriage than a union of the man who persuades with the woman who consents. And for this reason he thought sons too should be held in common"; Diogenes Laertius, *Lives*, VI, 72.) Diogenes of Sinope also "assert[ed] that the manner of life he lived was the same as that of Hercules" (Diogenes Laertius, *Lives*, VII, 71; cf. VI, 50), the Stoics' favorite hero and apparently Hamlet's.

87. "Thus the king was drawn one way by his love for his daughter [whom Amleth had married] and his affection for his son-in-law, another way by his regard for his friend, and moreover by his strict oath and sanctity of their mutual declarations, which it was impious to violate. At last he slighted the ties of kinship and sworn faith prevailed." (Saxo Grammaticus, *Historiae Danicae*, in Gollancz, *Sources*, pp. 145–47.)

88. Belleforest, *Cinquierme Tome*, in Gollancz, *Sources*, pp. 212–13.

89. On the device of the bedtrick in Renaissance and Jacobean drama, see my *End of Kinship*, pp. 145–48.

90. For the general pun on "cozen" and "cousin," see Abraham, "Cosyn and Cosynage."

91. Some time after Ophelia is told by Hamlet "To a nunnery, go," she says to Claudius "God dild you" (4.5.42); Jenkins has "good dild you," a corruption, he says, of "God yield (i.e., requite) you." There are several such allusions in *Hamlet* to artificial members or castration. Thus Hamlet wishes for the melting or resolving of his "too too sullied flesh" (1.2.129), desiring that deliquescence which Paul calls "checking the indulgence of the flesh" (Phil. 1:23–24; cf. Jenkins, note to 1.2.129–30). Compare Rom. 2:29: "Circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit"; and Matt. 19:12.

92. Polonius would have Reynaldo lay "slight sullies" (2.1.40) on Laertes: "But breathe his faults so quaintly/That they may seem the taints of liberty . . ." (2.1.31–32); "such wanton, wild, and usual slips / As are companions noted and most known / To youth and liberty" (2.1.22–24).

93. The church is the place (topos) where such ordinary offenses as murder and incest, which otherwise seem to cry out for mere retaliation, can be transformed into—even sanctified as—extraordinary wonders such as resurrection and spiritual incest. Claudius' comment that "no place indeed should murder sanctuarize" suggests that no place—not even the church—can sanctuarize, or sanctify, murder.

94. Eisenstadt, "Ritualized Personal Relations."

95. Sollors, *Beyond Ethnicity*, p. 78.

96. Saxo Grammaticus, *Historiae Danicae*, in Gollancz, *Sources*, p. 105. Garber, *Dream*, p. 100, argues that Hamlet, unlike Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, is not one of the "indifferent children of the earth" in that he rejects their "self-interest, policy, and cold-blooded reasoning."

97. Brain, *Friends and Lovers*, p. 30, points out that in the feudal period one sent a boy "to be fostered in the household of one's overlord, where he learned manners and was trained in arms, horsemanship and sports. Two young men thus growing up side by side . . . and competing together in games would become special friends . . . and this intimacy and rivalry continue throughout their lives as warriors."

98. In Saxo Grammaticus' version of the Hamlet story, the counterparts to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, after their executions in England, are "transformed" into sticks of gold—to Feng = Claudius they will be *wergeld*. Amleth = Hamlet, whom the Danes believe to be dead, takes the sticks with him from England when, exactly a year from his supposed death, he returns to Denmark and presides ghost-like over his own supposed "obsequies." In Denmark, Hamlet presents the sticks: "When the Danes ask Amleth about his missing escorts, he holds forth his two gold-filled sticks and says, 'Here they are, both of them.' The grim jest is familiar from the sagas, in which the aggrieved party sometimes identifies blood money with the dead man" (Saxo Grammaticus, *Historiae Danicae*, in Gollancz, *Sources*, pp. 125–29). Gollancz, *Sources*, pp. 27–31, points out the similarity with the role of *wergeld* in the Brutus tale (cf. Hansen, *Saxo*, pp. 33, 139, on Valerius Maximus, *Memorable Sayings and Deeds*, 7.2).

The presentation of the gold sticks, and the speech accompanying it in which Hamlet points "at the weregild of the slain as though it were themselves," is significantly absent from Shakespeare's revenge-centered play (Saxo in Gollancz, *Sources*, p. 127). Yet here Hamlet manages to wreak vengeance on his incestuous uncle-father only after the latter commands his follower to "set it down" that Hamlet should demand, on behalf of King Claudius, the "neglected tribute" or *Danegeld* [cf. 3.1.171–72] that, in Shakespeare's sources, Hamlet brings back from England in the form of *wergeld*.

99. For the term *adiaphora* [indifference], see Diogenes Laertius, *Lives*, VII.104.

100. On the Blackfriars, see Hillebrand, *Child Actors*, esp. pp. 151–57; Irwin Smith, *Shakespeare's Blackfriars Playhouse*, pp. 177–78; and Furness' note in his edition of *Hamlet*, vol. 1, p. 261. Cf. Melville's discussion of the Blackfriars in his quasi-Elizabethan novel *Pierre* (ed. Murray, forew. Thompson, p. 304).

101. *Hamlet*, 2.2.335–58 is absent from Q. The lines are used by Jenkins as from F.

102. As *You Like It* 2.1.1; see Montrose, "'Place of a Brother.'"

103. The child actors of Shakespeare's day represented on stage the sinful libertine incest to which the Edenic condition of universal fellowship tends in the fallen world. Their production of "Family of Love," for example, contained a trial scene in which the sexual libertinism of the antinomian sect called "Family of Love" was institutionalized in law. This comic play, performed by the "Children of the Revels," was probably written by Thomas Middleton. See Shepherd's introduction to his edition of *Family of Love*, p. iii, and Cherry, *Most Unvaluedst Purchase*. On the sect of the Family of Love generally, see Halley, "Heresy." In *Hamlet* "libertine" is the word with which Ophelia taunts her Paris-loving brother Laertes (1.3.49). Shakespeare may also have known the works of such English Libertines as John

