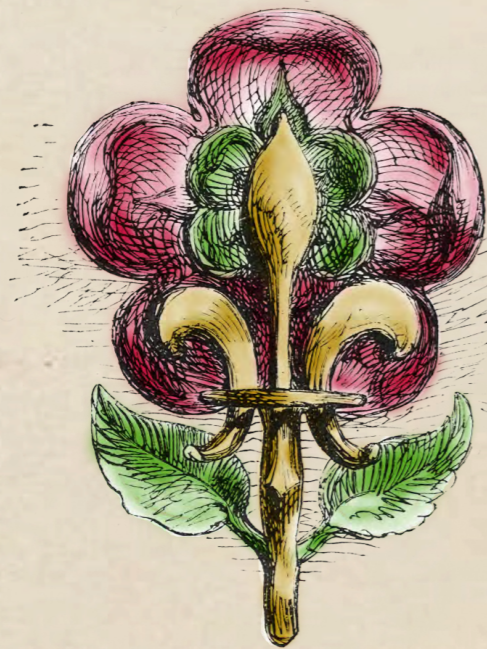


LEAD-INS TO LITERATURE

Hamlet

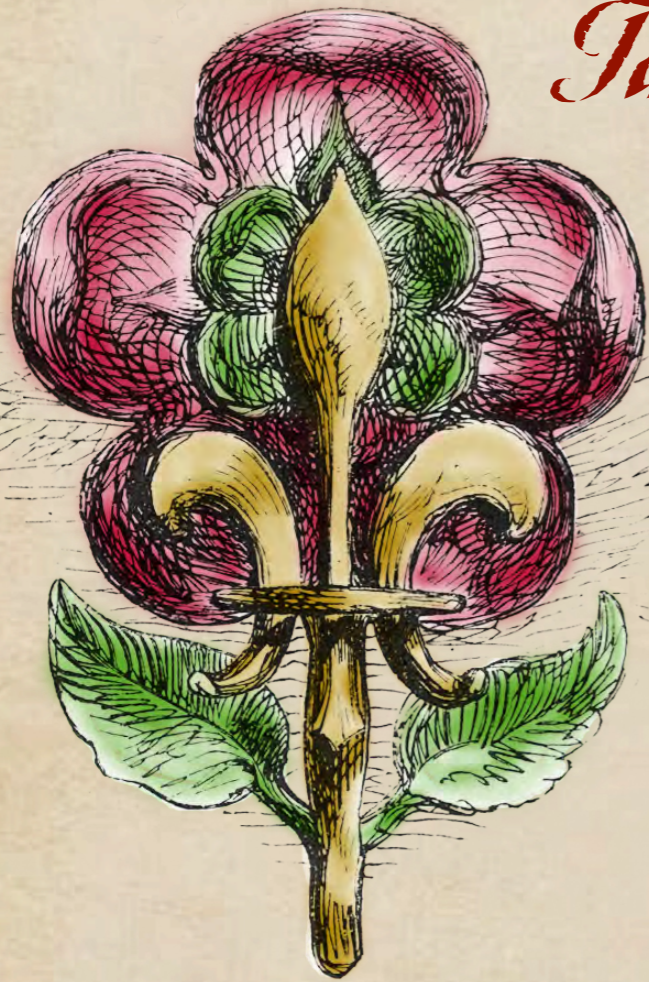
by William Shakespeare



PRESTWICK HOUSE, INC.



Table of Contents



LEAD-INS TO LITERATURE

Hamlet

by William Shakespeare

■ Introduction 5

Background
Shakespeare's Sources
Elizabethan/Jacobean Period

■ Theater & Audience 22

Shakespeare's Theaters
The Groundlings

■ Dramatic Conventions in Hamlet 34

Asides
Soliloquies
Play Within a Play

■ Narrative Conventions 46

The Ghost
Confidants
Spies

■ Shakespeare's Language 62

Punctuation
Inverted and Elliptical Sentences
Poetry
Prose

■ Literary Techniques 81

Metaphor & Simile
Allusion
Pun
Aphorism
Hendiadys

■ Themes 99

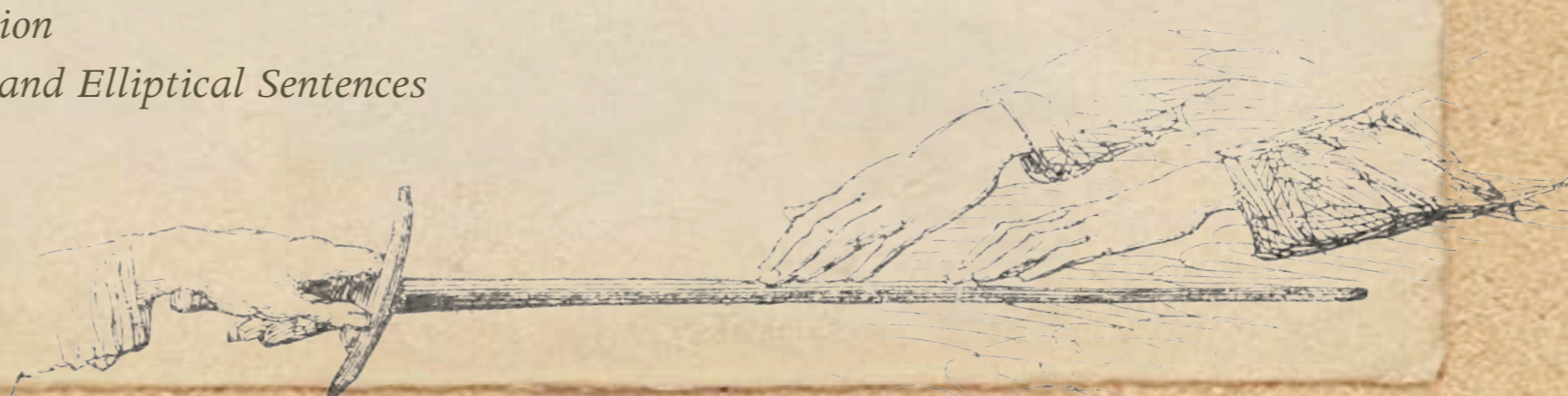
The Deceptive Nature of Appearances:
Sanity or Madness
The Complexity of Choice
The Unknowable Nature of Death

■ Characters 106

Hamlet
Claudius
Polonius
Horatio
Rozencrantz & Guildenstern

■ Productions 131

■ Biography 136





To be, or not to be, that is the question:
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them. To die, to sleep—
No more—and by a sleep to say we end
The heartache, and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to. 'Tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd. To die, to sleep—
To sleep—perchance to dream.

(III, i, 63-72)

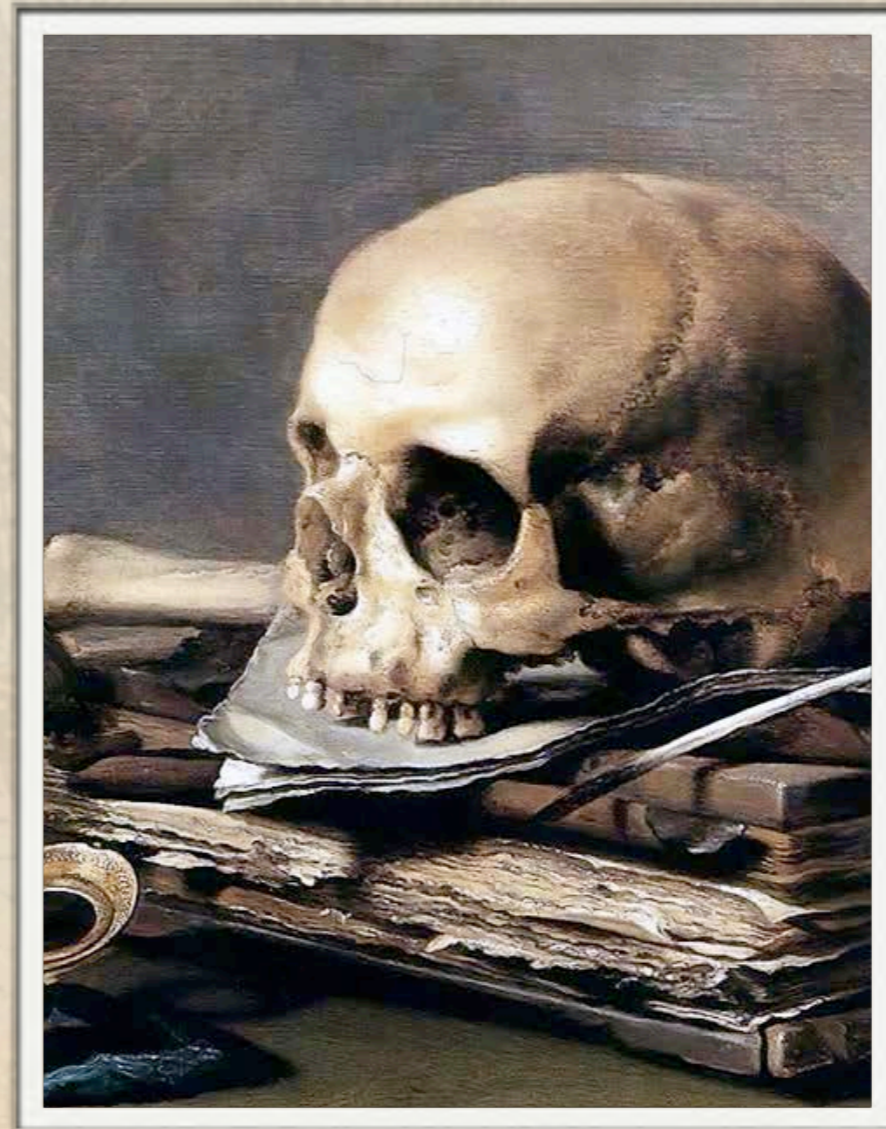


INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

SOURCE OF *HAMLET*

ELIZABETHAN/
JACOBEAN PERIOD



Hamlet

by William Shakespeare

The centuries-old conflict between Norway and Denmark, in which *Hamlet* is set, mirrors England's political turmoil toward the end of Queen Elizabeth's reign.



Hamlet

by William Shakespeare



Shakespeare, working during Britain's Renaissance, created the emotionally complex and human characters in *Hamlet*.



- the deceptive nature of appearances

Hamlet
by William Shakespeare



- the consequences of seeking vengeance.