

# Shakespearean Tragedy: Lectures on Hamlet, Othello, King Lear, Macbeth - The Original Classic Edition

A.C. Bradley



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Bradley offers some of the most eloquent, complete, and balanced criticisms of the tragedies that you will ever read. Unlike so many literary critics of today, Bradley does not disdain to view Shakespeares characters as actual people, which lends his view of the works a sense of import and meaning which so few critics manage to convey. These lectures are necessary reading for anyone at all who wishes to understand Shakespeares tragedies better, actors, directors, and academics alike.

This has for almost a century been, and continues to be today, one of the most important books on Shakespeares best and most popular tragedies. For much of the time since around 1930, it has been severely criticised: on the grounds, chiefly, that the author is too much inclined to respect or have sympathy for the heroes (which he is), and that he treats them too much like real people (which he does, and which they arent).

Yet, for all that, Bradleys approach to the heroes as though they were characters we all know has revealed a great deal about what Shakespeare has made those characters, and those who see the characters as complex and psychologically worth exploring identify a more significant aspect of Shakespeares interest in humans and his art than do many of Bradleys opponents. Moreover, the detail of his examinations of the texts makes it possible to probe much with him, even if one continues to question or quarrel with him on the way (and he is not infrequently demonstrably wrong).

Thus this remains a work of criticism which is inspirational and searching even if at times quite wrongheaded; and every serious reader of Shakespeare (including actors and directors) should read this book and own it.

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