Hamlet Takehome Question

Your answer to this question will constitute one-third of the Final Examination. I understand that some of you were concerned that I was asking for ten pages, but what I meant was that you should write as complete an answer as you can, but if you found yourself writing the first ten pages of a JP, to desist. I should think that something more than three pages is the minimum requirement. You may use your text to make your points, but do not type out quotations; just give act, scene, and lines. I do not want you to use secondary materials that you already know is part of your argument, feel free to cite it. The purpose of this question is to make you think about the problem and to give you more time than the three-hour examination period would allow.

On 14 January at 7:30pm in 28 McCosh (our room) you will hand in your answer and proceed to answer the other two questions You may take as much of the three hour exam time as you need to complete the exam. OK?

QUESTION:
The lecturer has presented a very biased critical opinion about the nature of Hamlet as a character. He sees Hamlet not as a tragic hero but as a devil-ridden avenger who destroys his family, himself and his kingdom. Roche's Hamlet is not the gentle melancholy prince who is beset by circumstances outside his control:

The time is out of joint. O cursed spite
That ever I was born to set it right.

How accurate do you think Hamlet is in assessing his situation in this way? Where do you stand? You need not agree with Roche's interpretation. How does Hamlet play out his assessment of his situation in his relations with two or three of the following:

- Gertrude
- Ophelia
- Rosencrantz and Gildenstern
- the Ghost

Good Luck!