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# A comparative study of imagery in quarto one and quarto two of william shakespeare's hamlet

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A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF IMAGERY IN  
QUARTO ONE AND QUARTO TWO OF  
WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S *HAMLET*

by  
Richard Paul Hurff

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## ABSTRACT

Hurff, Richard Paul. A Comparative Study of Imagery in Quarto One and Quarto Two of William Shakespeare's *Hamlet*.

The purpose of this paper is to compare the imagery of the first quarto (Q1) of *Hamlet* with the imagery of the second quarto (Q2) and the first folio (F1). This paper examines verbal and visual (stage) imagery, including a comparison of dramatic images based on physical appearance of characters, settings, stage effects, and time sequence. The lack of imagery in Q1 denies the work its full thematic meaning and reduces the action to the level of brutality, destroying Hamlet as a tragic figure.

The images in Q2 are more numerous, consistent within a passage, and better integrated with dramatic action and theme than the images in Q1. Just as Q2 is a longer play than Q1, it also has more images. In Q2, linguistic details of rhetoric, prose, hyperbole, and other figures of speech are more in harmony with character rôle than in Q1. The speaker may be differentiated in Q2 by his manner, tone, or mode of dialogue. Q2, however, has few major ideas or themes not found in Q1.

The images in Q2 are usually paired as opposites, such as Eden and the unweeded garden or appearance and reality. Character motivation, plot details, and thematic ideas are enhanced because of these contrasts. Q1 fails to provide

many contrasts through imagery; opposite patterns of imagery are generally clumsy and superficial in relation to plot and character. No patterns are original to Q1. The images appear more isolated, merely describing events or objects while Q2 alludes through imagistic patterns and connotation to something beyond simple description.

Although the whole play deals with the problem of decay and corruption in Denmark, the first two acts do not concentrate on specific image groups. The second half of both quartos is predominantly centered on the more specific images of sickness. Many images come from Hamlet himself.

Imagery in Q1, especially after Act I, is sporadic and merely a decorative overlay to infuse frequently bald poetic material with life. This technique is self-defeating because the imagery is not parallel with theme, stage effects, and action. The references to nature (flowers, heavens, life, growth), business and commerce, poison, decay, and disease in Q1 do not distinguish or separate character personality. Occasional forces of lust, reason, honor, or fear in Q1 are linked with images, but the bond is superficial and often the image forms one idea and the plot and dialogue another idea.

Often the more graceful language of Q2 obtains its beauty through the images. While material about disease imagery is the same in both quartos, the image clusters of lesser thematic importance are not in Q1. Q1 is not merely less imagistic but also less graceful, because the lack of images means a loss of expression and less fluidity through

figurative language. Q1 is frequently blunt, unpoetic, and without meaningful images.

The purpose of this paper is to compare the imagery of the first quarto (Q1) of *Hamlet* with the imagery of the second quarto (Q2) and the first folio (F1). Although there have been several critical studies of metaphorical language, imagery, iterative words and word pictures in Q2 and F1, no study has seriously investigated the imagery in Q1. I hope to demonstrate that the lack of imagery in Q1 denies the work its full thematic meaning and reduces the action to the level of brutality, destroying Hamlet as a noble or tragic figure.

Textual problems and historical origins of *Hamlet* are not considered in this paper nor is any attempt made to resolve arguments over the nature of Q1 (consideration of piracy, memorial reconstruction, foul papers). Q2 and F1 are contrasted only where key dissimilarities exist or where lines are unique to one of the texts. The images in Q2 are nearly identical to the images in F1.

#### HISTORY OF *HAMLET*

*Hamlet* was entered in the Stationer's Register in 1602; Q1 was published in 1603 as *The Tragicall Historie of Hamlet Prince of Denmark*. Toward the end of 1604, Q2 appeared with nearly the same title and the sub-title, "Newly imprinted and enlarged to almost as much againe as it was, according to the true and perfect Coppie."<sup>1</sup>

Several copies bear the date 1605, suggesting that Q2 first appeared in the winter of 1604 and continued into 1605. In 1611, John Smethwick printed the Q3, a reprint of Q2. In 1623, the first folio included *The Tragedie of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*. A fourth quarto, without a date, was printed between 1611 and 1637, and a fifth quarto appeared in 1637. Both Q4 and Q5, like Q3, are reprints of the second quarto. There are, then, three distinct texts: Q1, Q2 (the longest version and the authoritative text), and F1.

"Q2 substantially represents the original text of the play . . . ,"<sup>2</sup> probably set from the author's manuscript. Abnormal spellings and printing errors prevalent in the text may be attributed to poor legibility in the original manuscript. Most critics believe that Q2 was not used as prompt copy.<sup>3</sup>

Scholars believe that F1 was printed from a manuscript used as a prompt book, perhaps at the Globe.<sup>4</sup> The manuscript was probably a copy of Shakespeare's autograph, corrected for stage use. F1 has more lines and clearer stage directions than Q2.

In general contrast to Q2 and F1, the first quarto is a different version of the play. Q1 is short, half the length of Q2, and is linguistically inferior to Q2 and F1. Although the plot and characters (except for name changes) are similar, many lines are awkward and the language is dull and uninspired. Paraphrases, omissions of words, shifts in the order of lines within a scene, unmetrical lines and misplaced



passages, anticipated or repeated, mar the text.<sup>5</sup> The soliloquies are parodies of the familiar lines in the authoritative text.

Images, an integral part of writing and thinking, are markedly lacking in Q1. An explanation for this obvious lack of imagery is not basic to the present study. However, as a brief background, four theories exist about the origin of Q1: (1) Q1 is a first draft or collaborative effort with another author. (2) Q1 is a shorthand version recorded during a performance.<sup>6</sup> (3) Q1 was reconstructed from the memory of an actor. Critics George I. Duthrie, Walter Greg, and E. K. Chambers hold this "memorial reconstruction"<sup>7</sup> or "reporting" viewpoint.<sup>8</sup> (4) According to Albert B. Weiner, Q1 was "prepared from a legitimate abridgment of an early version of the play, and that abridgment-adaptation was made on Shakespeare's foul papers."<sup>9</sup>

#### DEFINITION OF IMAGERY

A poetic image evokes a sensory experience, usually visualization. However, auditory and tactile images as well as sensations of odor, pain, and even hunger or thirst are possible. Imagery generally employs figurative language. Similes and metaphors make abstractions more concrete, eliciting a personal response to the more concrete image. Poetic imagery, however, is less complex than the dramatic imagery basic to this study.<sup>10</sup>

Imagery can contribute to theme and character development in drama. Wolfgang Clemen<sup>11</sup> and R. A. Foakes warn that

dramatic imagery is not "conscious artifice"<sup>12</sup> applied as a sort of linguistic overlay, but an integral part of the language, which gives organic unity to the play. Imagery should not be classified, divided, or categorized according to its subject matter. The object matter of the image or its underlying idea, its *raison d'être*, is more significant not only to drama, in general, but also to this study.<sup>13</sup>

Object matter is not mere metaphor, simile, or iterative words. The verbal images in the lines of a living actor form a subject matter which fuses with the object matter. Dramatic images may also be derived from the physical appearance of the characters, the dramatic settings and geographical or historical locations, the stage effects, and the time sequence of the action.<sup>14</sup>

A play is not merely an "expanded metaphor," however.<sup>15</sup> Imagery is not the playwrights' only vehicle for theme and character development. Foakes says that there are those who "want either to find the whole meaning and importance of a play in its poetic imagery or even to see it as an extended metaphor, a kind of poetic allegory with the characters as symbols."<sup>16</sup>

Images in *Hamlet* establish "the events of a personal tragedy or story in events or places in the world outside, thus building up a background; in this, of course, reference and poetic image interact as in all things."<sup>17</sup> This study examines visual and auditory imagery and stage technique,



with an emphasis on object matter rather than subject matter, in a comparison of Q1 and Q2.

#### ORGANIZATION OF Q1 AND Q2

Several organizational differences exist between Q1 and Q2. Q2 is normally divided into acts and scenes while Q1, for the purpose of this study, is divided into scenes only. It should be noted that the arrangement of scenes in Q1 and Q2 is not the same. For example, scene vii of Q1 is a combination of II.ii and parts of III.1 in Q2. Scene xv in Q1 is completely missing in Q2.

In this study, references to scenes in Q1 are numbered i-xviii. References to Q2 and F1 will include acts and scenes. For example, Act II, scene ii is referred to as II.ii. In Q1, this is scene vii.

#### CHARACTERIZATION IN Q1 AND Q2

While the characters in Q1 and Q2 are basically the same, several spelling discrepancies exist. The following parallel chart shows the corresponding characters in each quarto.

Q2 (the authoritative text)	Q1
Claudius	The King of Denmark
Hamlet	Hamlet
Polonius	Corambis
Horatio	Horatio

Laertes	Leartes
Voltimand	Voltemar
Cornelius	Cornelius
Rosencrantz	Rossencraft
Guildestern	Gilderstone
Fortinbras	Fortenbrasse
Osric	A Braggart Gentleman
Gertrude	Gertred
Ophelia	Ofelia

Since Q2 is the authoritative text, the spelling of the characters' names follows the Q2 spelling throughout this paper. Polonius, however, is referred to as Corambis within the context of Q1 because of the complete change of name.

GENERAL SOURCES

Q1 quotations, punctuation, scene divisions, and line numbers are from Albert B. Weiner, ed., *Shakespeare, Hamlet, Q1, 1603*. Q2 quotations are from a photographic reprint of Q2, Huntington Library. The modernized British spelling and punctuation as well as line numbers are from William A. Neilson and Charles J. Hill, "Hamlet," *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare*.

## II

Shakespeare wrote *Hamlet* in order that the opening scene would be visually dramatic, capturing the attention of the audience. On the stage, the audience *sees* fear in the faces of Bernardo and Francisco and *hears* at the very start the pervading theme of sickness:

Tis bitter cold,  
And I am sick at heart.  
Q2:I.i.8-9.<sup>18</sup>

An imaginative man might *feel* the cold foreboding of the time (midnight), in a mysterious foreign country, strange to an Elizabethan audience. The audience learns later--but would be able to see from the start by the costumes--that this is winter, and a biting cold envelops these men as they shiver high on a windy castle turret or platform at Elsinore.<sup>19</sup> Thus, in Q2, Shakespeare shows, in words and visual effects, the great barrenness in Denmark.

Q1, however, has no commentary on the setting or time. Some of the visual effects (costumes, shivering actors) would still be used. Because Q1 does not have the words "bitter cold" and "sick at heart," the audience has little preparation for what follows.

In both quartos, Bernardo describes the ghost to the doubting, sarcastic Horatio. In Q1, the ghost enters but there is no description of a "fair and warlike form" from Horatio:

What art thou that thus usurp'st the state  
 In which the majesty of buried Denmark  
 Did sometimes walk? By heaven I charge  
 thee, speak!

*Q1:i.37-39. 20*

In Q2, Horatio asks who dares disturb the quiet hour of night by dressing like King Hamlet:

What art thou that usurp'st this time of night,  
 Together with that fair and warlike form  
 In which the majesty of buried Denmark  
 Did sometimes march?

*Q2:i.i.46-49.*

The image in Q2 gives the audience somewhat greater physical discomfort with "time of night" and the military "march" related to "warlike." Both quartos continue as the ghost actually appears, is challenged, and vanishes.

Horatio, frightened, is convinced that the ghost is real, for King Hamlet is remembered in military gear, defending Denmark, and it is this same armor that they now see. The belief grows that something is wrong in the body politic: "This bodes some strange eruption to the state." Marcellus reinforces the idea with his explanation that the nation is working ceaselessly to prepare for war. His description (11.70-79) of men arming themselves refers to time and haste several times: "nightly toils," "daily cast," "Does not divide Sunday from the week," "night joint-laborer with the day." The impression we get from these lines is that the state is disrupted by hasty preparation for war. These ideas are the same in both quartos.

Horatio replies in a rather long monologue explaining that the military activity is defense against Prince Fortinbras. Q1 is somewhat shorter at this point (lines 91-95 and 100-104 of Q2 do not appear) but there is no change in imagery. Lines 107-125, missing in both Q1 and Q2, but found in F1, do advance the growing connection between apparitions and developing events. There is the obvious suggestion in Horatio's continuing "harbinger preceding still the fates" that this ghost's revelation will be related to the impending war.

The ghost re-enters before line 126 and the quartos are alike as Horatio again admonishes and challenges its presence. Failing to get the spirit to reveal news about "thy country's fate," Horatio suggests that perhaps it has a knowledge of some lost treasure. The ghost vanishes, wordless, and the men can only question why it left without a sign. Shakespeare draws both quartos to a close with the same lines. The language suggests to the audience an end to cold and darkness and ghosts. There are references to a morning rooster and the singing of birds at Advent, protection from spirits, witches, and fairies. Horatio's famous lines end the scene in both quartos on a note of hope with the rising sun:

But, look, the morn, in russet mantle clad,  
Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastward hill.<sup>21</sup>

As they depart, preparing to tell Hamlet about the ghost, the audience moves from darkness to light and from suspicion and ignorance to at least some certainty of the ghost's

reality. Although Q1 fails to firmly establish the fear, cold, and late hour as does Q2, it does end the same, answering the question of the ghost's appearance in armor of war. We are left with the feeling that Hamlet can satisfy the problem of the uncanny appearance. The imagery in scene 1, especially in Q2, is vague and suggestive. With all of the references to cold weather and darkness before these disheartened men, the ghost alludes to evil forces at work far beyond man's knowledge. The imagery is suggestive or abstract rather than manifest or concrete, creating curiosity in the audience instead of providing distinct impressions, specific knowledge, or exact comparisons.



### III

The second scene of both quartos introduces the main characters, establishes the relationship of Hamlet to Claudius and Gertrude, and reveals the causes of Hamlet's melancholy. One of the most dramatic and important parts of the play, it contains Hamlet's first soliloquy, an outline of the difficulties between the Prince and his mother. Both quartos are similar in structure and language and have a number of verbal images. Both also reveal the personality of the main characters by their manner of speaking, the tone of voice, the use of rhetoric: Claudius is rhetorical, serious, commanding; Gertrude attempts to soothe and is less devious or intellectual; Hamlet is sarcastic, biting, and clever. The King appears to the audience as direct and efficient in action and speech, while Hamlet seems almost scheming for his replies are nasty and designed to hurt others--or himself. Shakespeare has devised this scene most carefully so that his audience sees Claudius' outer, public shell, his official kingly façade. Not even Hamlet can reveal his baseness here, for not even Hamlet yet places blame on Claudius.<sup>22</sup> But if Claudius is hidden, much of Hamlet's inner self is revealed. His ability to unmask, to penetrate reality is evident and his emotional and intellectual "personalities" are clear. The characters are shown as unique not so much by their appearances or their actions but by the images in their dialogue.

In both quartos, Claudius speaks first to the whole court. The audience assumes that there is daylight, for this is a counsel of state. The mood is as serious as that of scene one, yet more positive, with the king's command giving forward movement and control to the scene. There is less mystery and uncertainty in the thoughts of the characters. In Q2, Claudius speaks first of the mixed emotions surrounding King Hamlet's death and the marriage of Gertrude and Claudius. The prevalent image until Voltimand and Cornelius enter is that God's sovereign kingdom is disrupted: a king is dead and young Prince Fortinbras is trying to take advantage of the situation:

Holding a weak supposal of our worth,  
Or thinking by our late dear brother's death  
Our state to be disjoint and out of frame.  
Q2:I.ii.18-20.

Q1 has none of these images nor those of a disrupted kingdom which occupy the first twenty-five lines of the Q2 scene. The audience, instead, is pushed into the more immediate problems of sending the ambassadors to Norway. Therefore, in Q1 Claudius is a man who sends off ambassadors or assumes bureaucratic duties with fervor and he seems less majestic.

In Q2, Claudius is warm and open towards Laertes, whose name is repeated four times (LL. 42-50). Hamlet, by contrast, is treated quite curtly later in the scene. There is an anatomical image in Claudius' words to Laertes which reflect the closeness of the king and his counselor and also the



internal unity of Denmark:

The head is not more native to the heart,  
 The hand more instrumental to the mouth.  
 Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father.

*Q2:I.ii.47-49.*

The idea that parts of the body are interdependent parallels the thought that there must be a perfect relationship between Polonius as counselor and Claudius as king.<sup>23</sup> Furthermore, all of this reverts to the belief that there must be unity within a kingdom which is wisely ruled by a monarch under God's divine guidance. The words of Q2 show a continuum of thought in Claudius' mind, reflecting a belief in the ordered Elizabethan world of the Great Chain of Being<sup>24</sup> and a contrast to the state "disjoint and out of frame." If Claudius, as head of Denmark, is externally threatened by war, he at least can claim internal unity among members of his court. Thus, the imagery is of a person physically united (head, heart, hand) against external assault. Without these lines Q1 depicts a different Laertes--one whose rank is of no greater importance than the other ambassadors.

After Laertes leaves, the King, turning finally to Hamlet, asks why the Prince is sad and melancholy. Here the quartos differ. Q1 shows Claudius urging Hamlet to stay in Denmark as "the joy and half heart of your mother." Q1 lacks the imagery of light versus darkness, which symbolizes the untroubled versus the depressed mind in Q2. Furthermore, Gertrude does not soothe her grief-enveloped son in Q1. In fact, she does not even speak at this point. Missing also

in this quick repartee of the second quarto:

*King.* How is it that the clouds still hang  
on you?

*Ham.* Not so, my lord; I am too much i'  
th' sun.

*Queen.* Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour  
off . . .

Do not for ever with thy vailed lids  
Seek for thy noble father in the dust.

*Q2: I. ii. 66-68; 70-71.*

Hamlet's accounting for his appearance is to Claudius in Q1 and to Gertrude in Q2. This first long speech of Hamlet is a mass of bitter introspection, grief, and perhaps self-pity. The Q2 version stresses the difference between appearance, clothing, speech, tears, facial expression of grief, and true inner feeling, which Hamlet bitterly emphasizes as genuine. He says, "I know not seems," and the audience realizes that there is no desire to deceive: appearance and reality are the same.<sup>25</sup> This idea appears in Q1 less forcefully:

Nor all together mix'd with outward semblance,  
Is equal to the sorrow of my heart.  
Him have I lost I must of force forgoe;  
These but the ornaments and suits of woe.

*Q1: ii. 37-40.*

The Q1 Hamlet says directly that his grief is genuine and that what is in his heart outdoes his appearance, while Q2 suggests, more darkly, that something within the Prince runs beyond man's ability to depict or display. The outward appearance is a shallow, superficial indication of an ingrained grief. Q2, like Q1, ends in a couplet:

But I have that within which passeth show,  
These but the trappings and the suits of woe.

*Q2: I. ii. 85-86.*

Claudius interrupts Hamlet and Gertrude in Q2 to deliver a somewhat cold and military explanation of death as a part of Nature's plan. Hamlet is showing "unmanly grief" (Q2) to mourn longer and Claudius urges Hamlet to throw off his mourning stance. Since the Prince is next to the throne, Claudius says that he would like to act as a father and comforter. Yet, the lines resemble a political speech on avoidance of offense to Nature and Claudius hardly reveals sympathy towards Hamlet. While both quartos show Claudius as unsympathetic, his long and coldly analytical lines in Q2 are a contrast to the warmth and sincerity he showed towards Laertes. Q1, on the other hand, does not elaborate on the appearance of death as a part of some plan in Nature; Claudius merely tells Hamlet outright that all men die:

And in reason's common course most certain,  
None lives on earth, but he is born to die.

*Q1:ii.47-48.*

Q1 is devoid of images here and seems hollow when compared to Q2. Claudius' lecture to Hamlet in Q2 reveals the king's essentially serious nature, for we see him as a man in control of his emotions and impatient with what he feels are excessive displays of sentiment in Hamlet. The imagery reveals, furthermore, that Claudius sees life as ordered or regulated while Hamlet's grief "shows a will most incorrect to heaven" and Hamlet's actions therefore are

A fault to nature  
To reason most absurd, whose common theme  
Is death of fathers.

*Q2:I.ii.102-104.*

Without these images of a disturbed world order, Q1 cannot fully present sound motivation for Claudius' irritation at Hamlet's behavior. We also lose sight of an aspect of the King's personality in Q1's failure to show Claudius' compassion towards Leartes or his elaborate display of interest in Hamlet's conformity to the social conventions of mourning that Q2 so carefully details.

Hamlet's first soliloquy in Q1 is about half the length of the Q2 version. In both versions there is the wish for death but Q1 adds that it would be fitting even to see the end of man:

The universal  
Globe of heaven would turn all to a chaos!  
Q1: *ii.57-58.*

Hamlet's words search for a personal death and, in Q1, universal chaos. The bulk of the soliloquy describes the difference between appearance and reality, between Claudius and King Hamlet, between Hamlet's grief and his mother's hasty marriage. The chief source of Hamlet's agony centers on the "sin" of marriage committed by Gertrude: she is the focal point of the soliloquy. Q1 expresses the general idea of bestiality in her lack of social prudence in hasty marriage. There is no sustained pictorial image, only a mention of "a beast devoid of reason" and "increase of appetite" in Q1, and this does not seem to be a very strong example of imagery. This version offers only Hamlet's deep regret in seeing his mother marry his uncle, a man unsuitable for Gertrude and unlike himself and his father.

In contrast to this barren Q1 soliloquy stand the ideas and images of Q2: Denmark is a vile hole, an "unweeded garden," made corrupt by the death of a noble king and his replacement by Claudius, "Hyperion" contrasted to "a satyr." The Shakespearean love of contrast and balance is evident at every point in the speech. King Hamlet becomes god-like and Claudius depraved, a goat-man who encourages Gertrude in the crime of incest. The imagery of corruption, both moral and physical, reinforces Hamlet's revulsion earlier (in Q2) and his genuine grief over the disdain for death in the royal couple's lecture that all men die as a part of Nature's plan. The contrast of King Hamlet as the perfect compassionate monarch and Claudius as an unthinking satyr is balanced by the earlier contrast of the unfeeling court and the grieved Hamlet, the former men who seem distressed and Hamlet who is genuinely moved. Without these images and the metaphors, the first quarto is weak in revealing Hamlet's suicidal impulse, fails to explain his distaste for his mother and, most importantly, does not establish the theme that, by gradual corruption, Denmark is undone.

'Tis an unweeded garden,  
That grows to seed; things rank and gross  
in nature  
Possess it merely. That it should come--  
thus!

Q2:I.ii.135-137.

In fairness to Q1, there is a comparison of King Hamlet to Hercules, of Gertrude to Niobe, and some display of Hamlet's desire to destroy or melt away his own existence. These are



stock references to a classical allusion easily understood by an Elizabethan audience. There is a certain barren dryness in the longer Q1 speeches which seems to be attributed to the lack of imagery. Q1 becomes fragmented, with an unfinished or plodding style quite unlike the subtle or poetic lines of Q2. There are, of course, some images in Q1, but generally they can be found hidden only as small, isolated fragments, such as Horatio's "russet mantle clad." The longer and more dramatic material, such as Hamlet's first soliloquy, however, provides very few images.

The material following the soliloquy is nearly the same in both quartos. Horatio describes accurately his experience of the night before, creating a pictorial image consistent with scene one--darkness, the frightening ghost, and the terrified men. The scene in both quartos closes with a reference to the theme of corruption:

Foul deeds will rise,  
Though all the earth o'erwhelm them, to  
men's eyes.

*Q2:I.ii.256-257.*

Both quarto versions of the second scene present the main characters with similar personalities. The imagery in both plays is consistent; it relates to the characters and is not self-contradictory. Yet only in Q2 do individual images merge into a pattern of ideas which create a thematic object matter from the subject matter itself. Q1, with its shorter speeches and blunted expression, does not achieve nearly the linguistic effect. Gertrude is not really developed for the

audience because she says less, and Claudius lacks the majesty and strength that Q2 grants him. Even Hamlet's personal anguish in the soliloquy lacks conviction; as soon as an idea is developed or a metaphor spoken, there is a shift to another topic. The result for Q1 is disappointing. The second scene arouses the curiosity of the audience but cannot fully satisfy their questioning of Hamlet's motivation. The audience understands his actions to some degree but, without the imagery of Q2, there is an incomplete psychological picture of this main character and a weakened audience grip of theme and motivation.

#### IV

The third scene in both quartos focuses on Polonius and his family. Laertes says farewell to his sister as scene iii opens. Q1 gives us eleven lines in which he warns that Hamlet's words of love are spoken, not felt. This echoes Hamlet's own idea that Claudius and Gertrude represent one thing in reality and another in appearance. Ophelia's reply to Laertes is blunt. She agrees to follow Laertes' admonition "to keep my honor firm" and reminds him to follow the same advice. The second quarto dialogue is much longer and provides us with the reasons why Hamlet's love may be insincere.

Laertes begins scene iii of Q2 warning that Hamlet will treat Ophelia as a trifle if she encourages his affection. The image is of a young rake idly destroying her innocence. Laertes explains that just as objects in nature change by slow growth rather than sudden movement, Hamlet's love also grows gradually. Laertes warns that while Hamlet may now love Ophelia honestly, there is every possibility that because

His greatness weigh'd, his will is not his own;  
F1: [For he himself is subject to his birth;]  
Q2:I.iii.17; F1:I.iii.18.

he may merely "use" Ophelia without the honorable designs of future marriage. Laertes echoes the anatomical analogy in Q2 of I.ii.47-49 when he asserts Hamlet's inherited restrictions: Hamlet "is the head" of the "body" of Denmark and so



"his choice be circumscrib'd"; he cannot marry Ophelia. Laertes summarizes his warning by suggesting that "best safety lies in fear" and reminds her that moderation, prudence, and honesty of appearance are necessary to avoid calumny or censure. Ophelia's reply is polite, yet coy. She will be watchful but does not want advice from a libertine hypocrite whose words do not parallel his actions. Both quartos give Ophelia's lines the same meaning but the Q2 version adds an image of a clergyman preaching hypocritically:

Do not, as some ungracious pastors do,  
 Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven,  
 Whilst, a puff'd and reckless libertine,  
 Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads,  
 And reck's not his own rede.

Q2:I.iii.47-51.

Polonius enters here and offers advice to Laertes as he admonishes him not to miss his boat, soon to sail. Q1 adds nothing to the Q2 version of Polonius' famous speech. There is no consistent imagery in the speech although we could possibly visualize a man allegorically avoiding temptations of faithless friendship, borrowing, lending, wild entertainment, and lavish clothing. Weiner suggests that the lecture is merely the old man's "sublime bourgeois wisdom."<sup>26</sup> Kitteredge and Weiner believe the lines to be an adaptation of Lyly's *Eupues*.<sup>27</sup> Or perhaps Lyly and Shakespeare both drew from common proverbs.

Laertes departs reminding Ophelia of his warning; she replies that it is "lock'd" in her memory (Q2) or heart (Q1). This image of locked security is tied in with Ophelia later

as we see her watched and guarded from within (temptation, sin) and without (Hamlet's advances). Like the buds of springtime, her fresh innocence is vulnerable. Her obedient assent to this parting comment and to her father's demands suggest not servility, as we might think, but rather the obedience of a young girl living in the late medieval period or even the Renaissance. She is controlled first by her father, then later by her husband. As with Hamlet, her will is not her own. She seems almost too quick to agree; Ophelia appears willing to accept separation from one she apparently loves and it is almost that she "enjoys" or encourages her prison rôle in life.

Polonius pries from Ophelia the information that Hamlet has "made many tenders" of love and affection to her. The image of her experience as "green," similar to Cleopatra's "salad days," appears only in Q2, which also plays hard on the word "tenders" ("offers" of love from Hamlet). Q1 ignores any possibility of quibble or word play on "tenders." In Q1, Polonius warns her to ignore his vows; she agrees, and he concludes the scene with a brief admonition that she should ignore Hamlet's letters and remember that such men seek to ensnare her. Again there is an underlying implication that behind the pretense of love is really a deep-rooted lust.

The conclusion of the second quarto is somewhat different. After comparing Hamlet's "tenders" with false valued offers, Polonius quips:

Tender ["hold"] yourself more dearly  
 Or--not to crack the wind of the poor phrase,  
 Wrong [Fl: "Roaming"] it thus--you'll tender  
 me a fool.

*Q2:I.iii.107-109.*

This play on words reveals the nature of Polonius. He can jest and tease even when serious. Ophelia innocently believes Hamlet's love "in honorable fashion" and says that he vowed his love to heaven. Polonius ignores her and in a long reply, stresses that hot young love blinds girls to the falseness of youthful promises. The imagery is centered on burning lust:

When the blood burns, how prodigal the soul  
 Lends the tongue vows. These blazes, daughter,  
 Giving more light than heat, extinct in both  
 Even in their promise, as it is a-making,  
 You must not take for fire.

*Q1:I.iii.116-120.*

His vows are false, more showy splendor than substance, and they cannot be accepted as enduring or long-burning. Appearance is attractive in such love but it lacks endurance. Again, in Q2, there is the idea of a difference between what *is* and what we *see*. Hamlet, continues Polonius, is less restricted than Ophelia, for he is a prince and man while she is a virtuous girl:

And with a larger tether may he walk  
 Than may be given you.

*Q2:I.iii.125-126.*

The image is of a dog, or even a wild beast, at the end of a leash, wandering at will, barely restricted within the circle of his movement. Ophelia quietly agrees to reject Hamlet as she ends the scene resigned to follow another's desires: "I shall obey my lord."

In Q2, the imagery of scene iii is continued from and consistent with that of scenes i and ii. Although there is very little expansion of the decay or disease images, there are many references to the dangers of being unable to distinguish between surface appearance and reality. This is in keeping with the subject of scene iii, which deals with the protection of honor within the House of Polonius. There must always be an outward show of moral and social well-being from Laertes and Ophelia to guarantee this public face.

The whole scene is a contrast to the ghost's appearance, the court formalities, and Hamlet's earlier bitterness. It is almost as though this scene was meant to provide relief to the heaviness of the images of death and decay in the first act. The sweetness of Ophelia and the labored weight of Polonius' advice balance the gravity of the ghost's message in the remainder of this act. While Ophelia and Laertes speak of love, springtime, and youth, the more serious Polonius stresses the danger of over-indulgence in pleasure. The paternal commentary is self-centered, designed to safeguard the name of the House of Polonius; however, it does advise enjoying life in moderation. In short, scene iii offers a more positive and, at times, humorous approach to the problems of the individuals concerned.

Both quartos present the same theme, but Q1 grapples with Laertes' behavior more than the reasons behind Hamlet's lustful interest in Ophelia. In both versions we are told of a designing Prince without evidence to indicate that the

opinions of Laertes and Polonius are accurate. Certainly Ophelia does not agree with their judgments. Both quartos utilize a sort of appetite imagery to describe Hamlet, but Q2 develops these images more fully. Q1 supplies an occasional convenient metaphor and does not achieve the consistency of the second quarto. Thus we attain the same impression of Hamlet in both quartos but more bluntly or directly in Q1.

Scene iv of both quartos is very nearly the same except that Q1 lacks LL.17-38 of Q2, a few words are changed, and in the dialogue between Hamlet and Horatio the order of speech is reversed, with no real change in meaning.

Hamlet, Horatio, and Marcellus (who says almost nothing) wait on "the platform" at midnight for the ghost. As the men shiver, the visual stage imagery is of penetrating cold and of darkness:

*Ham.* The air bites shrewdly; it is very cold.

*Hor.* It is a nipping and an eager air.

*Q2:I.iv.1-2.*

Having left the comfort and security of the setting in scenes ii and iii, we return to darkness, mystery, and images of decay. Trumpets sound and there is noise below. Both quartos reveal that Denmark's monarch loves his Rhenish wine and public toasting. There is an image of drunkenness:

The king doth wake to-night and takes his rouse,  
Keeps wassails, and the swagg'ring up-spring reels;

*Q2:I.iv.8-9.*

Q2 continues the image of intoxication when Hamlet adds that other nations think of Danish men as drunkards from so many



toasts. The general malaise is thus applied to each particular individual. This, he warns, is as illogical as the belief that men are evil because of one fault, that some defect overpowers all their innate goodness in the eyes of others. The conclusion is that great men are judged by their imperfections:

--be they as pure as grace,  
As infinite as man may undergo--  
Shall in the general censure take corruption  
From that particular fault.

*Q2:I.iv.33-36.*

This passage is significant for it explains the dangers that arise when great men, such as Claudius or King Hamlet, have a noticeable flaw which can ruin, through association, the reputation of a whole nation. The images of drunkenness form two ideas: (1) that appearance can be one thing (greatly flawed) and the reality another (a single weakness), and (2) Claudius is a beast, a drunkard, not worthy of kingship. In the second idea lies the significant belief that the weak or evil monarch threatens everyone, spreading his sin throughout the nation, making Denmark, in the words of scene i, an "unweeded garden." Alcoholism continues the earlier image of corruption and moral decay.

In Q1 these lines (17-38, Q2) are reduced to the statement that Claudius drinks often, a custom "More honor'd in the breach than in the observance." The first quarto tells the audience of his drinking but does not give any conclusion, explanation, or justification for observing this fact. The additional commentary of Q2 concludes that his action and

the resultant public opinion could be the cause of evil in Denmark and possibly the reason for the ghost's appearance.

As Hamlet finishes speaking, the ghost emerges. Hamlet formally addresses it in a speech identical in both quartos. His words are highly metaphorical and create, through images, an atmosphere of horror that surrounds the apparition. The ghost would seem released from the mouth of hell to walk on earth terrifying men. The audience can easily visualize an open tomb, with "marble jaws," as the passage from hell spewing evil. The lines have a rhetorical balance, contrasting the calm, quiet funeral with this present horror of the moving ghost:

Let me not burst in ignorance, but tell  
 Why thy canoniz'd bones, hearsed in death,  
 Have burst their cements; why the sepulchre,  
 Wherein we saw thee quietly interr'd.  
 Hath op'd his ponderous and marble jaws  
 To cast thee up again.

*Q2: I. iv. 46-51.*

Except for lines 17-38, there is little difference in the two versions of scene iv. The dialogue about the grave, the corpses, the cold hour on the platform, and the ghost create a subject matter series of images that point to the underlying object of a perturbed spirit. Verbal description and images would be reinforced as the actors shiver from the cold, as they look about cautiously and in fear, and as the ghost appears and a near hysterical Hamlet is restrained from following it off stage. The imagery and metaphors of corruption and decay continue unabated; the audience is actually reminded of them as Marcellus ends the scene. Hamlet again

notices the differences between appearance and reality with Claudius' personality (but only in Q2). However, there is no focus of the imagery on something definite. The audience must wait until scene v for the ideas to merge in the ghost's revelations. The imagery is not fragmented or inconsistent; yet, the audience has no way of knowing the reasoning behind the author's use of these specific images.

Many of the important images, those which reflect the themes of the whole play, are suggested in scene iv: man's delicate, easily ruined, balance of body and soul; the problems of men with a small defect which ruins a noble reputation and a whole nation, almost the definition of a tragic flaw. Scene iv is linguistically powerful in its use of balanced rhetoric, extensive use of metaphor and imagery. It serves well as an introduction to the ghost and for Hamlet's later reflections on a revenge plan. Perhaps, more importantly, the scene prepares the audience philosophically. Since the ghost in *Hamlet* does not itself commit revenge, but asks a mortal to act as an agent or an arm from the grave, the audience must realize its importance, fear its power and potential for evil, and sense the extreme urgency of the whole situation. In conveying these ideas, the scene is quite successful, helped, to a large degree, by the imagery.



The final scene of Act I in Q2 (Q1: scene v) couples the ghost's story of murder, incest, and adultery with Hamlet's regicidal vow and assumption of his antic disposition. Verbal images are profuse in both plays as King Hamlet's ghost recounts the cause and nature of his appearance. Visual images and stage effects are used to advantage. There is little difference in the two quartos in this scene.

Act II.i. of Q2 (Q1: scene vi) opens as Polonius lectures Reynaldo, who will soon be in Paris spying on Laertes. There are few individual images in the whole conversation. Reynaldo exits in both quartos and Ophelia enters, describing an encounter with Hamlet. Q1 has her explain Hamlet's actions in terms of images of flowers and jewels. The imagery, however, is really a commonplace Elizabethan metaphor of youth compared to flowers and precious stones. Neither quarto provides any important or new use of imagery in Act II.i. Q1 is brief compared to Q2, coming directly to the point without extensive use of figurative language.

Act II, scene ii in Q2 is quite different from scene vii of Q1, though both open as Claudius explains his problems to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. Q1 is shorter but similar in idea. When the ambassadors from Norway enter, the plays are almost identical. The division begins as Polonius theorizes about Hamlet's madness; Q1 is considerably briefer and the old counselor demonstrates none of the famous fustian love found in Q2. As he finishes, the royal couple (and, in Q1, Corambis also) conceal themselves as Hamlet enters. The structure of the rest of scene ii can best be understood with the following comparative chart:

Q1 <i>Scene vii</i>	Q2 <i>Act II, scene ii</i>
1. Hamlet speaks his "To be or not to be" soliloquy. Ophelia enters.	1. Hamlet ridicules Polonius.
2. Ophelia is rejected and exits after Hamlet leaves.	2. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern enter and are questioned. Polonius has exited.
3. Hamlet re-enters as do Corambis and Claudius. Claudius leaves.	3. Polonius enters and Hamlet again acts mad.
4. Hamlet ridicules Corambis with his mad act.	4. The actors enter and Hamlet discusses with them the play of <i>Gonzago</i> .
5. Guildenstern and Rosencrantz enter and speak to Hamlet. Corambis enters.	5. Hamlet closes the scene with his "guilty creatures" soliloquy.
6. The actors enter and Hamlet speaks about <i>Gonzago</i> .	
7. Hamlet closes with the "guilty creatures" soliloquy.	

It is worth noting that even though Q2 does not include the "To be or not to be" soliloquy or Ophelia's dialogue with Hamlet, it is about two hundred lines longer than scene vii of Q1.

There is almost no imagery in the dialogue of Claudius and Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, or Corambis in Q1. Q2 also lacks imagery but is more graceful in its use of language as Claudius outlines Hamlet's madness.

Corambis enters (Q1) to explain that he has "found /The very depth of Hamlet's lunacy." No one makes a serious reply, and the ambassadors enter. Q2, more logically, has Claudius demand quick explanation. Polonius asks for the ambassadors, suggesting that their news from Norway will be a feast topped by the dessert of his own explanation:

Give first admittance to the ambassadors  
My news shall be the fruit of that great feast.  
Q2: I. ii. 53-54.

Claudius suggests that he will "sift" Polonius for the truth, forming an image of sifting particles of flour as sifting truth from smatterings of misinformation. This image is important, for the audience now realizes that Claudius is concerned about Hamlet's behavior and is suspicious of Hamlet's motivation. Q1 lacks this material. Polonius exits in Q2 (he remains in Q1) and the ambassadors enter. Voltimand speaks identical lines in both plays and there is the same series of ideas about old Norway's physical infirmity. When they leave, Polonius enters majestically (Q2) with Ophelia.

Corambis explains the cause of Hamlet's madness without much use of imagery in Q1. His lines are considerably fewer than in Q2, and, while he tends to be bombastic in manner, Corambis does seem to take Gertrude's advice to "be brief." Corambis' usual play on words is truncated:

Touching the young Prince Hamlet, certain it is  
That he is mad; mad let us grant him then.  
Now, to know the cause of this effect,  
Or else to say, the cause of this defect,  
For this effect defective comes by cause--  
Q1:vii.59-63.

The Q2 version of Polonius' speech acts almost as comic relief to the sobriety of so much of Acts I and II. Polonius' verbose style of oratory is a model of deception and verbal intrigue. Imagery does not seem to be highly important in his lines and it appears, only occasionally, sometimes as humor:

Therefore, brevity is the soul of wit;  
And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes,  
I will be brief.

Q2:II.ii.90-92.

The only consistent idea is that Hamlet's madness is caused by Ophelia's rejected love and that love could remove the barriers Polonius erects before Hamlet. We see Ophelia's life through an image of locked security:

then I prescripts gave her,  
That she should lock herself from his resort.

Q2:II.ii.142-143.

Polonius refers again to his warning as "fruits of my advice," reverting to his idea that the speech is a "dessert" to the news from Norway.

Since the different order of the action has no effect on imagery, I will follow the order of Q2; this means that consideration of Q1:vii.113-200 will be deferred until the Q2 parallel in III.1.

In the scene with Polonius, just as Polonius toyed with words before Claudius, Hamlet plays with logic and phrases to deride Polonius himself. The contamination of the court seems to be reaching Hamlet as he grows moody, deceptive, sardonic, or mad. Polonius, of course, believes that Hamlet's madness is the result of rejected love, however. The audience senses that Hamlet's game is to avoid Polonius' probing questions. Hamlet's image of a fishmonger is appropriate: the image of a fishmonger is associated with a flesh peddler or a pimp, a man who would sell anything for personal gain.

The shorter Q1 does not contain the material in Q2 about decaying flesh. The imagery of Polonius as an impotent fool runs parallel in both plays. Q2 adds the reference to Ophelia's inability to conceive (understand), possibly leading to her illegitimate conception (pregnancy). Mention of "the sun breeding maggots in a dead dog" and "good kissing carrion" imply decay and contamination touching Ophelia, the one whom Hamlet loved.

Hamlet is asked in both quartos, "Will you walk out of the air?" and his reply is "Into my grave?" The implication is that death relieves this tedious argument and with it all the problems of old age in men such as Polonius. Polonius

leaves in ignorance and confusion but the audience is aware of the gravity of Hamlet's condition by this first of a series of images of death and the grave.

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern enter as Polonius departs. They greet Hamlet as old friends, and he immediately drops his antic disposition to welcome them warmly. Q2 shows them as light-hearted young men engaged in sophisticated and risqué dialogue with Hamlet: like mindless fleas they crawl all about Fortune's body. Hamlet bitterly warns that Fortune is deceptive--not what she appears to be: "Oh, most true; she is a strumpet." The imagery (which is not found in Q1) sets the mood for the rest of the dialogue.

Hamlet begins his diatribe against what could be called the general corruption of all society with the remark that in a world of prisons "Denmark's a prison" and "one o' th' worst." In one of the most magnificently lucid speeches of the whole play, he says that neither God's majestic universe nor man himself delights or fascinates him.

He suggests that the cause of the melancholia is a universe grown too small for his thoughts. To Hamlet, the world seems a "sterile promontory" under "a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours." Hamlet's imagery in this scene does not say that the world is a prison but that to Hamlet, personally, the universe seems Corrupt:

I have of late--but wherefore I know not--  
lost all my mirth, foregone all custom of  
exercises, and indeed it goes so heavily with my



disposition that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory, this most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire, why, it appeareth nothing to me but a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours. What a piece of work is a man! How noble in reason! How infinite in faculties, in form and moving! How express and admirable in action, How like an angel in apprehension! How like a god! The beauty of the world! The paragon of animals! And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust? Man delights not me.

*Q2:II.ii.305-321.*

Hamlet, a man able to distinguish the difference between appearance and reality, sees corruption in the court at Denmark. Perhaps Hamlet is suggesting that he now is touched by the evil of Claudius' action and is growing corrupt himself. He is no longer a part of Eden, but is an arm that carries out Fortune's wishes, able to distinguish men as either angelic or satanic. This new rôle makes the whole universe seem evil and yet Hamlet is still able to realize that the corruption is not universal.

Unlike Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, Hamlet has located the core of evil, and yet seems hesitant to accept the knowledge. The universe is a prison not because Claudius keeps Hamlet in Denmark, but because Hamlet is chained to his father's request from beyond the grave, a request that, coming from both father and supernatural spirit, obligates Hamlet and, in a sense, even makes him part of the supernatural. Hamlet has relinquished his association with mankind and finds the experience formidable. Perhaps the imagery of madness

itself, of the antic disposition, is a symbol that he has broken his physical link with man.

Rosencrantz changes the subject subtly as he informs Hamlet that the players have arrived. The discussion among the three men is centered, in both quartos, on the problems of companies of child actors. In Q2, most of the lines are devoid of imagery except at the beginning of the passage, Hamlet's reference to rôles for actors, and at the end, his mention of his father and uncle.

In Q2, as the players enter, Hamlet reiterates the theme of appearance and reality. A man's welcome to guests, he says, "is fashion and ceremony." Hamlet says that the welcome is sincere but that his madness is a deception, merely one element of his personality: "my uncle-father and aunt-mother are deceiv'd." Hamlet uses the image of direction and the compass, (as did Polonius earlier with his reference to "indirections") to remind the audience that his madness is only one of many points in the circle of activity in which move both man and compass. None of these images are in Q1.

As Polonius enters, Hamlet resumes his antic disposition. Hamlet taunts the old counselor who tries repeatedly to be serious, demonstrating his knowledge of stagecraft. Hamlet refers to Jephtha and, of course, Polonius believes that it reflects the cause of his madness in lost love for Ophelia. The image is an insult, for it slights Polonius as rash and foolish; Jephtha caused the death of his own daughter by a

rash vow, an event not unprophetic in this play.<sup>28</sup> Q1 and Q2 are nearly identical.

Hamlet speaks to the players at great length in both quartos. The ideas in Q1 and Q2 are the same but Q1 is briefer and more awkward. The players purposely deceive audiences with boys disguised as girls. Both the actors and the audience are aware that the woman in the play is impersonated by a boy. This is deception, like the accepted and innocuous ceremony of welcoming the players.

Hamlet asks the players to recite a speech from "Aeneas' tale to Dido." The Pyrrhus speech, the same in both quartos for the first nine lines, contains little imagery. Pyrrhus is described as black and blood covered (Q1 and Q2)--an object of horror, similar to the ghost of King Hamlet and certainly as awesome. But the image dies in Q1 with Corambis' interruption of "well spoke and with good accent" and we hear no more about Pyrrhus. This play moves to the "mobled queen" segment of the lines with an image of Hecuba watching the ghastly sight of Pyrrhus

with malicious strokes  
Mincing her husband's limbs,  
'Twould have made milch the burning eyes of heaven,  
And passion in the gods.

*Q1: vii. 357-360.*

Q2, however, gives a more detailed examination of Pyrrhus' hesitation and the renewed attack of Priam.

Act II closes with Hamlet's self-accusatory soliloquy which begins with a review of the passion of the first

player's speech about Pyrrhus and Hecuba and ends as Hamlet examines his own inaction, deciding to test Claudius with Gonzago. Although Q1 is shorter, the meaning is as clear as in Q2. Q1 is very blunt:

Why, these players here draw water from eyes  
For Hecuba.

Q1: *vii.386-387.*

Q2 explains the significance of the tears: the words are so dramatic and forceful that they touch his soul:

Is it not monstrous that this player here  
But in a fiction, in a dream of passion  
Could force his soul so to his own conceit  
That from her working all the visage wann'd  
Tears in his eyes, distraction in his aspect,  
A broken voice, and his whole function suiting  
With forms to his conceit? And all for nothing!  
For Hecuba!

Q2: *II.ii.577-584.*

Hamlet wonders what audience reaction could be invoked had this player the motivation that the ghost created in the young prince. Q1 gives a visual image of tears becoming blood:

He would turn all his tears to drops of blood,  
Amaze the standers-by with his laments,  
Strike more than wonder in the judicial ears,  
Confound the ignorant, and make mute the wise;

Q1: *vii.392-395.*

Q2 is less gruesome but just as visual; the touch of rhetoric and balance are evident:

He would drown the stage with tears  
And cleave the general ear with horrid speech,  
Make mad the guilty and appall the free,  
Confound the ignorant and amaze indeed  
The very faculties of eyes and ears.

Q2: *II.ii.588-592.*

Hamlet asks who challenges his valor and in both quartos there is an identical reference to plucking his beard--the

insulting action a man performed against another. Hamlet's language describing Claudius is more abusive and profane in Q2. There is also more detail in Q2 as Hamlet explains that he answers his father's call for revenge not with action but by cursing like a mere whore would reck vengeance. Both quartos tell the audience that Claudius may reveal his guilt by seeing a dramatic reconstruction of his sin, but in Q2 there is an image describing his actions speaking more than his lips:

murder, though it have no tongue, will speak  
With most miraculous organ.

*Q2:II.ii.622-623.*

Q1 suggests only that "guilty creatures" will sometimes confess "a murder committed long before." The next line in Q1 is confused and awkward, especially when compared to Q2:

This spirit which I have seen may be the devil,  
And out of my weakness and my melancholy  
(As he is very potent with such men),  
Doth seek to damn me.

*Q1:vii.412-415.*

Q2 explains more fully why he hesitates to act directly. The lines *must* be clear to the audience, for they explain the major reason for Hamlet's caution in seeking revenge for his father's death:

The spirit which I have seen  
May be a devil, and the devil hath power  
T' assume a pleasing shape; yea, and perhaps  
Out of my weakness and my melancholy,  
As he is very potent with such spirits,  
Abuses me to damn me.

*Q2:II.ii.627-632.*

As the scene closes, it refers to the evil of destruction-- the theme of appearance and reality. If the ghost is actually



the devil, then, of course, Hamlet's revenge becomes ruthless murder of an innocent uncle and the prince faces eternal damnation.

Act II does not really introduce any new image patterns in either quarto and, except for Hamlet's extensive discussion about "what a piece of work is man," there is only limited utilization of the images which dwell on contamination and those which describe the difference between appearance and reality. Q1 is shorter than Q2 in almost every passage of Act II. The difference is often in Q1's failure to elaborate on an idea, to fully explain a point, or to give the reasons for the motivation of a character. While Q1 can be understood without difficulty, an audience would not develop an appreciation of Hamlet's actions or an emotional response to his problems. In Q1, without the passage on "What a piece of work is man," Hamlet is developed less sensitively and motivated less sublimely. The Q1 Hamlet lacks the more profoundly philosophical foundation that the Q2 Hamlet possesses. The melancholia in Q1 is less developed and his antic disposition is not so clear. Q1 fails to create the impression that Hamlet's problem is an intellectual trial as well as a physical danger. The images of man's power and scope--his godlike apprehension and potential--are not in Q1, and therefore Hamlet seems motivated more by cowardice, compulsion, and an undisciplined antic disposition than in Q2. Finally, the language of Q1 is inferior in diction and syntax and the images frequently lack force and direction.



## VII

Act II of Q2 and scene viii of Q1 open with Claudius' questioning of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern about the cause of Hamlet's madness. There is little verbal imagery, but the idea of spying is continued. In both plays Act III contain motifs of spying to gain otherwise unattainable knowledge. Q2 has an additional brief set of lines, an aside spoken by Claudius after all but Polonius leave. The lines clearly uncover the court's treachery. The King responds to Polonius' remarks that men often hide "the devil himself" behind their pleasant appearances. Claudius' words are rich in images of deception. The interpretation of a false façade is quite easily understood by the audience:

The harlot's cheek, beautied with plast'ring art,  
Is not more ugly to the thing that helps it  
Than is my deed to my most painted word.  
O heavy burden!

Q2:III.i.51-54.

This image, about deception and spying, reveals some of Claudius' personal guilt to the audience in Q2 while it also reveals that the King is conscience-stricken by his sin.

Hamlet enters and the audience assumes that Claudius and Polonius are behind the arras, waiting for Ophelia's entrance. The "To be or not to be" soliloquy that he speaks has always been the center of attention in any study of Q1. Unlike the rest of *Hamlet*, the Q1 text is neither shortened greatly, nor altered, when compared to Q2. The soliloquy is garbled in Q1; however, if there were no knowledge of Q2 for direct comparison, the passage would not be indecipherable.

Hamlet's soliloquy in both quartos stresses the misery and discomfort in so much of man's existence and combines his own personal dilemma with an examination of the problems of all men. The imagery consists of phrases that describe a "weary life" and all that may make a man wish for death. In both soliloquies, there is the common poetical analogy of sleep to death, of dreams to immortality. Both speeches also seem to indicate that Hamlet is considering and weighing alternatives, turning one way and then another, especially at the start of the soliloquy:

To be, or not to be--ay, there's the point:  
 To die, to sleep--is that all? ay, all. No;  
 To sleep, to dream--ay, marry, there it goes;  
*Q1:vi.115-117.*

Q2 contains other, additional images. Hamlet laments that he suffers as a result of fickle chance, the "slings and arrows of outrageous fortune," and then questions the possibility of fighting back and removing the cause of one's trouble, "to take arms" and "by opposing end them." Neither idea is in Q1.

Hamlet muses about the sort of existence his soul endures after death. In Q2 it is

The undiscovered country, from whose bourn  
 No traveler returns, puzzles the will  
 And makes us rather bear those ills we have  
 Than fly to others that we know not of?  
*Q2:III.i.79-82.*

The image of an "undiscovered country" implies such risky adventure that few mortals dare seek suicide as relief from mortal problems. Q1 reverses the lines:

For in that dream of death, when we awake,  
 And borne before an everlasting judge,  
 From whence no passenger ever return'd,  
 The undiscovered country, at whose sight  
 The happy smile, and the accursed damn'd.

*Q1: vii. 118-122.*

Hamlet describes death as a dream in which men awake to eternal judgment in an undiscovered country of no return. The place brings joy to those already happy and pain to those already damned. Because of this, he asks, why bear life's pains when they can be eased through suicide? Hamlet ends suddenly by deciding that man endures for fear of greater horror, after death which "puzzles the brain and doth confound the sense." Cowards, he concludes, are made from fear of death or, more specifically, from fear of what follows death. The speech makes sense and, in its own right, is not much worse than the bulk of Q1. Compared to Q2, however, this soliloquy lacks subtlety, grace, and poetic language.

The Q2 soliloquy progresses gradually from one idea to another, avoiding pitfalls of logic caused by lack of example or explanation, fully revealing the thoughts and mood of Hamlet. From his opening line, which expresses the theme of the whole soliloquy, to the repeated "to die, to sleep" and into the "But that the dread of something after death," the audience should fully realize that this is much more than rhetoric or stage artifice; Hamlet is actually thinking, examining alternatives and, finally, making a decision. Unlike so much of the play, this section shows Hamlet resolving the tension of a conflict. He is never seriously tempted

again by thoughts of suicide. Hamlet now believes that death, unlike sleep, will not necessarily be comforting. The rub is, of course, that death's world may well be a greater calamity than the present state. The words echo the ghost's imagery of a "prison house" with secrets which can mortify human flesh. The catalogue of mortal anguish in Q2 seems to apply to all men whereas, in Q1, the references are simply vague and apply neither to Hamlet nor to the bulk of humanity. Few of the audience, for instance, may identify with the Q1 reference to a widow or an orphan, but nearly everyone can identify with the Q2 mention of

The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,  
The pangs of dispriz'd love, the law's delay,  
The insolence of office,

*Q2:III.i.71-73.*

Suddenly, Hamlet realizes the danger of exchanging the present evils for "something after death." The image of a man as a traveler in some dread country is a more realistic one to Shakespeare's audience in the age of discovery that existed in the early seventeenth century. This is not a man's soul, a religious symbol, or some vague spirit Hamlet describes. It is a man wandering after death in a region fraught with dangers. The image is concrete and, therefore, more forceful for the audience. Hamlet draws the conclusion that deliberation and thought make cowards, that fear of a final resolve or consequence urges man to stave off death, and, because of this, men about to undertake a great adventure hesitate for fear of personal death forever losing their momentum. Hamlet

ignores the return of the ghost from purgatory in Act I and in this soliloquy never mentions his specific personal problems. The soliloquy examines the plight of all men as did the lines earlier with Rosencrantz and Gildenstern ("what a piece of work is man"). Hamlet exhibits a capability for an impersonal examination of man which he uses to resolve his own deeply personal problems.

In Q2, Ophelia interrupts Hamlet, and the audience assumes that Polonius and Claudius are listening to the conversation. Hamlet, perhaps suspicious, returns to his antic disposition. There is a distinct change of mood on his part as the anguish and questioning of the soliloquy becomes cynicism, disgust, and a heightened sense of rejection of Ophelia, a distinct part of the spying and deceit. His words warn her that all men are deceptive and that she would be wise to avoid being deceived, even by Hamlet. Ophelia does not escape personal abuse as Hamlet ridicules her use of cosmetics, which is a part of the theme of false appearance, and the artifice in behavior so common in Denmark.

Q1 is very similar to Q2 in the dialogue between Hamlet and Ophelia. The image that material objects lose value when their owners are cruel or deceitful, however, is not found until later in this scene. Q2 has Ophelia remind Hamlet that his gifts of love were accompanied with

words of so sweet breath compos'd  
As made these things more rich. Their perfume lost,  
Take these again; for to the noble mind  
Rich gifts wax poor when givers prove unkind.

Q2:III.i.98-101.



Ophelia's words are sweet and gentle and the image, likewise, implies the innocence of a young girl. The Q1 version is less poetic:

And with them such earnest vows of love  
 As would have mov'd the stoniest breast alive;  
 But now too true I find, rich gifts wax poor  
 When givers grow unkind.

*Q1:vii.154-157.*

The conversation in Q2 is much longer than in Q1, and it examines images of virtue and corruption with reference to Ophelia's chastity. He warns her that men are base, proud, and ambitious in both quartos and provides an image of men as crawling serpents in Q2. The references to Ophelia's dowry as a plague and the attendant images of sickness are similar in both quartos. Q1 is short and cannot express either the ideas or the images conveyed in Q2.

Q1 has in this scene, as elsewhere, fewer images and shorter passages when compared to Q2. The predominant theme is that of spying, continued from the first two acts, and it is expanded to include Claudius, Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, Polonius, and Ophelia. The spying imagery exists in Q1, but with the exception of the passage in which Ophelia returns the love letters, is weak or inconclusive. Ophelia is unable to give herself fully to the spying project, although she knows that her father and the king are listening. The scene suggests that her rôle is one of perverted innocence.

Although this scene does not advance the theme of appearance and reality with opposing images of clarity and



deception, it does present images of human misery and a suggestion that suicide could lead Hamlet into total damnation, a condition worse than the present state of Denmark.

## VIII

The second scene of Act III, containing the play within the play, is long and without much imagery, for its purpose is to advance the plot rather than to elaborate on the characters. Most of the speeches in Q2 are made up of brief segments of dialogue, with few long or reflective monologues and only one soliloquy at the end of the scene. The use of stage effects, to dramatize the *Gonzago* action, can be visually dramatic and, in a sense, may even augment or replace the scarce verbal or visual imagery. Perhaps the outstanding image is to be found in the dialogue about a recorder between Hamlet and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. Both quartos are similar but Q2 evokes more tightly-knit series of images. The final soliloquy, beginning with "'Tis now the very witching time of night," is not in Q1. Without this passage, Hamlet's new-found conviction and deep sense of assurance is lost to the audience.

## IX

Scene iii of Act III is in three segments in Q2: (1) Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, and Claudius arrange for Hamlet to go to England, and Polonius tells the king that he will listen to the impending conversation between Hamlet and Gertrude; (2) Claudius prays aloud, revealing to the audience his anguished guilt but unrepentant soul; and (3) Hamlet stumbles unnoticed on Claudius and decides to kill him later, when involved in some sinful deed so that the revenge brings eternal damnation rather than salvation in life after death. The scene is brief and the three segments are about equal in length.

Q1, on the other hand, shows only the prayer segment and Hamlet's pronouncement that he will kill Claudius later. This version is considerably shorter and Claudius' lines are awkward, disconnected, and lacking in imagery. Hamlet's speech is shortened but not so poor as Claudius' lines. In this scene, we see how Q1, with its missing images, metaphors, and descriptions, is a less effective work compared to Q2. It is as though the figurative language were dropped in Q1 and the plot line simplified and shortened.

Scene iii of Q2 uses two images at the start which are connected with accretion or growth. Claudius wants to send Hamlet to England because he represents a danger to the whole country of Denmark. The threat increases or spreads like a weed that chokes the nation. The danger does "hourly grow /

Out of his lunacies."<sup>29</sup> Guildenstern responds with another image of life by replying that the nation must "live and feed upon your majesty." All of Denmark depends on Claudius; like the sun, he radiates warmth and life-giving energy through effective leadership. Rosencrantz reminds the audience that the king affects the nation by his actions while an ordinary person affects only himself; any danger to Claudius is a threat to them all and so Hamlet must leave Denmark.

As Rosencrantz and Guildenstern leave, Polonius enters and announces that he will spy as Hamlet and Gertrude talk in her chamber. Claudius is now alone and kneels in prayer (Q1 stage direction; not in Q2).

In Q2, Claudius seems to be a worthy man, praying in anguish for a forgiveness he can never attain. He realizes that, as long as he retains the things he took by his crimes of murder, incest, and adultery, he cannot earn salvation; therefore, because he cannot "be pardoned and retain the offense," his soul must remain "as black as death." Q1 begins the whole scene with this prayer and is much shorter than Q2. The meaning is the same but there are few images and almost no use of figurative language. Here, for instance, is the beginning of the prayer-soliloquy:

O, that his wet that falls upon my face  
 Would wash the crime clear from my conscience!  
 When I look up to heaven, I see my trespass;  
 The earth doth still cry out upon my act,  
 "Pay me the murder of a brother and a king";  
 And the adulterous fault I have committed.

Q1:x.1-6.

Q2 begins this passage by returning to the theme of decay and corruption, associating Claudius with Cain. Claudius compares himself to a man who neglects one important responsibility for another and yet is derelict in both duties by his untimely hesitation. His guilty conscience, the blackened soul, corrupts his innate goodness, his desirable qualities of strength, intelligence, and leadership and so he neglects himself and the state. Claudius asks, using a particularly gruesome image, if there could be enough rain above to wash the brother's blood from his hand to make it white (pure) again. The hand becomes thin and small because of the thickness of the blood on it.

Claudius knows that as long as he keeps the earthly gratifications that tempted him to murder his brother, there can be no forgiveness. While men on earth may hide their sins and deceive legal or moral justice, God cannot be deceived; Claudius speaks in images of covered, deceptively attractive, gilded sin and of manipulating justice by force:

In the corrupted currents of this world  
 Offense's gilded hand may shove by justice,  
 And oft 'tis seen the wicked prize itself  
 Buys out the law.

*Q2:III.iii.57-60.*

This imagery of movement may be interpreted as a crowd of unruly men who "may shove by justice" on earth, but in heaven "there is no shuffling." Masses of impetuous, sinful, and depraved men, caught in the "corrupted currents" of earthly existence come to mind. But despite the realization that he has sinned and that he cannot deceive God, Claudius cannot

repent his sins in prayer. To the audience in Elizabethan England, therefore, Claudius is truly damned and would stand as a totally depraved villain:

Try what repentance can. What can it not?  
 Yet what can it when one cannot repent?  
 O wretched state! O bosom black as death!  
 O limed soul, that, struggling to be free  
 Art more engag'd!

*Q2:III.iii.65-69.*

The closing image shows Claudius in a state of struggle, working against his resistive self to ask forgiveness. The conflict is in his conscience, one side repenting, the other, fueled by ambition and greed, refusing to yield what was gained by evil.

Hamlet enters, but he hesitates to kill the king for fear of giving Claudius a blessing of eternal salvation rather than eternal damnation. Both quartos are similar. Q1 finds Hamlet's thoughts centered on Claudius' prayer for forgiveness. Q2 uses an image of "hire and salary" with immediate revenge--Hamlet would be working for someone as an employee doing a great deed, helping Claudius, in bringing about his death. Hamlet reminisces that his father was killed without benefit of Extreme Unction and so was spiritually unprepared for life after death. The images imply a legal settlement with heaven. Hamlet's father died without fasting and repentance (i.e., "full of bread") and, therefore, would be asked to account for it:

A took my father grossly, full of bread,  
 With all his crimes broad blown as flush as May;  
 And how his audit stands who knows save heaven?

*Q2:III.iii.80-83.*



The final image of Claudius in various acts of sin is the same in both quartos. Hamlet decides to slay Claudius later while he is performing a deed so evil that there could be no chance of salvation. Finally, Claudius closes the scene with a summary of his own problem: his thoughts remain sinful, earthbound, and greedy while hollow words form a prayer. The scenes, in both Q1 and Q2, end in a couplet; there is a slight but noticeable difference in the wording:

Q1:           My words rise up, my sins remain below.  
              No king on earth is safe if God's his foe.

Q2:           My words fly up, my thoughts remain below.  
              Words without thoughts never to heaven go.

In this scene, the imagery reverses the ethical role of Claudius and Hamlet. The king grovels in prayer and guilty anguish while Hamlet attempts revenge-murder and hesitates, in the hope that Claudius' greater damnation can be achieved later. Hamlet errs in his belief that Claudius will not suffer permanent damnation if murdered while praying. Such an act of regicide, however, would damn Hamlet's own soul. Hamlet's desire to seize something more than murder and earthly judgment is revealed by imagery that depicts in the young prince a deep and bitter hatred of Claudius. This horrendous loathing for Claudius is a malignant product of Claudius' own actions at the start of the play.

Scene iv of Act III contains a large number of emotional speeches between Hamlet and Gertrude. The scene has many images of corruption, decay, sickness, and infection which come out of Hamlet's attempts to explain to Gertrude why she should avoid Claudius and how she was involved in his earlier crimes. The ghost appears in this scene, adding a visual or verbal image (depending on how the play is performed). Hamlet murders Polonius without the slightest feeling of guilt or remorse, providing more than a small amount of violent action. Hamlet's utter callousness heightens the tension of the scene. In many ways, scene iv is a climax to the play's action, for now Hamlet will find murder--and revenge--much easier, having once killed a man.<sup>30</sup>

As the scene opens, Polonius enters and hides behind the arras to listen to the conversation between Gertrude and Hamlet. Both quartos are nearly alike as Hamlet and Gertrude argue, Polonius reveals himself and is killed, and Hamlet accuses Gertrude of complicity in the murder of King Hamlet.

Gertrude asks Hamlet why he is so rude, arrogant, and upset. His reply, found only in Q2, is that she has committed some act which offends virtue, nature, and her own soul. Hamlet uses several images in a group of metaphorical phrases to depict the intensity of her evil:

Such an act  
That blurs the grace and blush of modesty,  
Calls virtue hypocrite takes off the rose  
From the fair forehead of an innocent love

And sets a blister there, makes marriage vows  
 As false as dicers' oaths; O, such a deed  
 As from the body of contraction plucks  
 The very soul, and sweet religion makes  
 A rhapsody of words.

*Q2: III.iv.40-48.*

This<sup>is</sup> partly an image of sickness: the rose, symbol of youthful innocence and pure love, is replaced by a blister, symbolizing infection or corruption. Gertrude repeats her question, asking again what specific act "roars so loud and thunders" to show her guilt.

Q1 and Q2 are similar as Hamlet explains that her marrying Claudius is a deed which Hamlet finds repugnant and vile. Hamlet holds two pictures before his mother's face and, in Q2, uses the most flattering of images in comparing his father to mythological figures of beauty, wisdom, and power. Hamlet reminds her that the dead king seemed to be a product of the gods who wanted to give humanity a near perfect man and king. Q1 is similar but refers only to Mars and then recalls the dead king's fearsome eye, a face of virtue, a heart and hand working in unison with perfect obedience to the vows of marriage.

In Q2, Hamlet contrasts his dead father with Claudius. The image shifts from god-like revery to creature-like disease and waste. The description of Claudius makes him seem sterile, hollow, and empty. Q1 says that Claudius looks like Vulcan and would frighten children. There is no real image other than that of a fearsome appearance:

Look you now: here is your husband;  
 With a face like Vulcan;  
 A look fit for a murder and a rape,  
 A dull, dead hanging look, and a hell-bred eye,  
 To affright children and amaze the world.

*Q1:xi.36-40.*

In Q1, Hamlet's speech ends when he asks Gertrude how she dare look on a murderer with love or how she can live in "incestuous pleasure" with such a creature.

In Q2, Hamlet continues to denounce her marriage to Claudius, suggesting that it was a voluntary selection of something foul, not a choice made in a fit of madness or in ignorance. In both quartos, Gertrude cries out to Hamlet to stop, but in Q2 she adds an image that reveals her remorse and personal guilt, all of it as a stain or deeply penetrating and festering sore:

Thou turn'st my very eyes into my soul,  
 And there I see such black and grained spots  
 As will leave there their tinct.

*Q2:III.iv.89-91.*

Hamlet ignores her, and in Q2, continues his accusations with a particularly vicious set of lines, implying that she rolls like a hog in the greasy sty of corruption created by Claudius:

to live  
 In the rank sweat of an enseamed bed,  
 Stewed in corruption, honeying, and making love  
 Over the nasty sty.

*Q2:III.iv.91-94.*

Hamlet's use of images to describe the unwholesome marriage creates a highly repulsive association of "rank," "sweat," "enseamed" (greasy), "stewed," "corruption," "nasty," and

especially the final term "sty" with Gertrude. Q1 does not have any similar lines.

Q2 shows Hamlet highly excited and angry so that he is screaming at Gertrude, heightening the whole scene with the loudness of his voice and the violence of his accusations. The final lines Hamlet hurls at Gertrude give us an image of debasement that appears to be a nadir of corruption in Hamlet's mind: he calls Claudius a cutpurse, a lowly thief who managed to seize the throne, the power of state, and the life of King Hamlet:

A murderer and a villain!  
A slave that is not twentieth part the tithe  
Of your precedent lord! A vice of kings!  
A cutpurse of the empire and the rule,  
That from a shelf a precious diadem stole,  
And put it in his pocket!

*Q2: III. iv. 96-101.*

Q1 does not have these lines. Q1 also does not attempt to build either Hamlet's accusations of Gertrude into a rhetorical speech or his mood into growing, seething anger.

The ghost enters, interrupting Hamlet's accusations.

When presented as a real creature on the stage, the ghost provides a strong visual image that adds horrific intensity to Hamlet's verbal image, simply through its demonic presence. Its exit, however, leaves a more rational and lucid Prince who urges his mother to ask divine forgiveness for her former association with Claudius. Hamlet's image is like I.v.62-73.

(Q2) where the ghost describes the death of Hamlet's father. He uses images of disease to warn Gertrude of her contact with corruption:



It will but skin and film the vicerous place,  
 Whilst rank corruption, mining all within,  
 Infects unseen. Confess yourself to heaven;  
 Repent what's past, avoid what is to come,  
 And do not spread the compost on the weeds  
 To make them ranker.

Q2:III.iv.147-152.

Hamlet continues by describing Claudius and Gertrude in bed and the aggressive Claudius advancing on Gertrude.

Hamlet's descriptive language includes a number of repulsive ideas, created through images of the filth associated with Claudius:

Let the bloat king tempt you again to bed,  
 Pinch wanton on your cheek, call you his mouse,  
 And let him, for a pair of reechy kisses,  
 Or paddling in your neck with his damn'd fingers.

Q2:III.iv.182-185.

Hamlet warns that *if* Gertrude were to do this, her life would be endangered because invariably she would reveal to Claudius what Hamlet has told her. Gertrude assures Hamlet that she will say nothing. Hamlet leaves, dragging the body of Polonius and explaining that he must leave for England with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, whom he trusts as much as "adders fang'd."

Scene iv of Q2 contains examples of nearly every image pattern in this play. There is abundant use of imagery which depicts moral and physical corruption, the difference between appearance and reality and the slow spread of poison in the court caused by Claudius' initial crime. Q2 builds in pace and vociferance with all of Hamlet's lines in order to heighten audience effect. Hamlet's anger is more than stage rhetoric for effect; it compliments the seriousness of his



purpose and the anguish he feels. Q1, on the other hand, has far fewer images; it rearranges a number of lines, often at the expense of clarity but it fails to make reference to mythological figures in Hamlet's descriptions of his father and does not clearly show the height of Hamlet's anger.

Gertrude is characterized poorly in Q1, which presents only her several requests to Hamlet to stop accusing her of complicity in Claudius' evil. Only at the very end of this scene, when Gertrude says

But as I have a soul I swear by heaven  
I never knew of this most horrid murder,  
Q1:xi.91-92.

does she reveal that she can speak more than "Sweet Hamlet, cease." Although Hamlet provides most of the images in Q2 and all of the imagery in Q1, there are still some significant lines in Q2 which come from Gertrude. The Gertrude of Q1 is a shallow, stock character whose responses merely move the action of the play forward or interrupt Hamlet's basic monologue. In Q2, Gertrude reveals anguish and guilt as well as an understanding of her rôle in Hamlet's torment.

## XI

In Q2, Act IV is divided into seven brief scenes, none of which has any extensive use of imagery. Although there are references to death, bestiality, decay, insanity, disease, and poison, there are no new image patterns and little character development through images. The fourth act advances the plot swiftly as Rosencrantz and Guildenstern leave with Hamlet for England. Hamlet reviews Fortinbras' troops, Ophelia becomes insane and dies, and Claudius persuades Laertes to duel with Hamlet. The longest scene of Act IV is scene vii, where Claudius waxes treacherous and clever, bringing Laertes into his scheme to kill Hamlet. He uses a great deal of figurative language, the essence of imagery. This seventh scene contains more imagery than the rest of Act IV.

Q1 has even fewer images in Act IV and, as stated earlier, imagery tends to diminish with each successive scene. There is, however, an interesting but brief scene in Q1 (xv) that is not in Q2. Unfortunately, there is no imagery in this scene to expand understanding of the play.

In Q2, scenes i and ii are brief, and without imagery. Scene iii leans heavily on Hamlet's antic disposition in order to move deeply into an image of physical decay. Hamlet describes the fate of mortal flesh as food for worms, a common Elizabethan metaphor, and then elaborates on the life cycle by which a king is consumed by worms just as other creatures are fattened for man's diet. There is a pun on diet

and worms, for the Diet of Worms in 1521 questioned Martin Luther:

A certain convocation of politic worms are e'en at him. Your worm is your only emperor for diet. We fat all creatures else to fat us, and we fat ourselves for maggots. Your fat king and your lean beggar is but variable service, two dishes, but to one table. Q2:IV.iii.21-26.

This image, a gruesome jest, can be used to demonstrate how insensitive and callous Hamlet has become since murdering Polonius, the subject of this conversation. Hamlet's earlier imagery, in Acts I and II, was generally more ideal but has now become base, corporeal and, like the court itself, contaminated. This is even more evident in Act V when Hamlet describes to what "base uses" we all return, himself included.

Hamlet's final speech in this scene is that Polonius is under the stairwell where "you shall nose him." In this scene, the images of corruption are grim jibes as Hamlet continues his antic disposition. Q1 is the same, almost word for word, in the speech about the king and the beggar, but the final speech, in which Claudius says, in a very brief soliloquy, that Hamlet's death in England will relieve his conscience, is shorter and less imaginative in Q1.

Scene iv depicts Hamlet watching Fortinbras' troops march through Denmark enroute to Poland. Hamlet is impressed, as the men pass, that they would fight for a worthless, uncultivated piece of land. Hamlet speaks a long soliloquy about the purpose of man's existence, the foolishness of his own slow progress toward revenge and ends, exhorting himself to

slay Claudius. Q1 has a five line scene iv with no use of imagery.

Hamlet's first image in the soliloquy is that man is a valueless beast if he does nothing more with life than "sleep and feed." Hamlet is unsure of his reasoning for not acting against Claudius; he says that his delay could be "bestial oblivion" (forgetfulness, as in a dull animal) or "craven scruple" (cowardly hesitation or inaction). The images form a contrast between man's potential, his "god-like reason," and the dull torpidity of a beast which feeds on nature but is cowardly when challenged or disturbed. All the world, says Hamlet, exhorts him to act. "Delicate and tender" Fortinbras, for instance, appears before Hamlet with courage from a "spirit with ambition puff'd," laughing at danger or death. Fortinbras would fight for nothing, a trifle, an "eggshell." Hamlet then dramatically turns his criticism inward. He speaks of his own idleness and wishes he could be like the men who go to their "graves like bed."

The imagery of the soliloquy avoids the heavy and pessimistic mood found with disease imagery, but it does imply that, like the beasts, man often exists for no purpose at all. Hamlet points out in this soliloquy that it is man's spirit, his "large discourse," "god-like reason," his honor, that enables him to attain greatness and rise above the lesser forms of life. Despite the few images of death, there is no mention of disease and the noble element of man's existence

is emphasized more than man's predilection for evil. Hamlet's final lines, "My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth!" must not obscure the meaning of the rest of the soliloquy: men who struggle against adversity often achieve personal satisfaction or greatness, for without the conscious act of struggle, man is a beast who only sleeps and feeds on nature. In Hamlet's soliloquy is the belief that out of death, murder, or revenge comes goodness, the catharsis of Aristotelian tragedy. Hamlet reveals his guilt over his inaction and his realization that the corruption of the court, while touching even himself, can be overcome by man's exertion of a positive goodness over the evil.

Scene v presents Ophelia's madness in detail in both plays and is considerably longer than the earlier scenes in Act IV. Much of the imagery in this scene stems from either Ophelia's madness or from the lines of Claudius and Laertes, who discuss the problems of her illness and of Polonius' death. Q1 and Q2 are more alike in scene v than in scenes i-iv. Ophelia's lines are almost identical. Claudius' longer speeches, especially the one (Iv.v.75-96) before Laertes enters, are shorter in Q1 and there are fewer images in Q1.

In both quartos, Ophelia distributes flowers to members of the court in this scene, speaking briefly to each person about the individual flower. This action forms visual stage imagery in both quartos but the purpose is more symbolic than imagistic. The beauty of rue or a daisy, for instance, is not



so important as the idea of sorrow or faithlessness in love<sup>31</sup> that the blossom represents.

Scene vi of Q2 contains a letter for Horatio from Hamlet, describing his escape from the pirates. It contains no imagery. In Q1, there is no corresponding letter, but there is a thirty-five line scene placed, between the equivalent of scenes v and vii of Q2, totally unlike anything in Q2. Horatio describes to Gertrude how Hamlet escaped the pirates and explains that he will soon return. There is no imagery and no notable use of figurative language.

Scene vii is almost entirely composed of a conversation between Claudius and Laertes. At the end of the scene, Gertrude enters to announce that Ophelia has drowned. This scene marks a return to the imagery of disease and poison as Laertes announces that, with a poison sword, he will kill Hamlet, revenging his own father's death. The imagery of disease appears in the words of both Claudius and Laertes, the latter having been pulled into the corruption of the court. In fact, there is a contrast between this scene and scene v in that here, Laertes is much more Claudius' scheming partner. In scene v, Laertes seemed to be an external force which threatened to excise the disease, Laertes symbolizing innocent justice, and Claudius symbolizing the corruption.

In the conversation between Laertes and Claudius a number of visual images relate to a poisoned sword or cup; there are references to venom, contagion, the gathering of poison



under a full moon to increase its potency and mention of ulcer, "cataplasm" (poultice), and a sigh. (Elizabethans believed that sighs drew blood from the heart.) The imagery in scene vii to the end of Claudius' reference to a poisoned chalice is but a continuation of the poison images earlier in the play. The imagery in this scene suggests sin, evil, and death. Because Laertes has been corrupted by Claudius, they become indistinguishable in their guilt.

The imagery in this scene changes when Gertrude enters to describe Ophelia's death by drowning. The queen's lines form "elegiac harmony of assonance and rhyme"<sup>32</sup> with such words as *willow*, *grows*, *shows*, *melodius*, *crow*, *clothes*, etc. There is a great deal of *ow*, *od*, and *on* assonance.

There is a willow grows aslant the brook,  
 That shows his hoary leaves in the glassy stream.  
 There with fantastic garlands did she make  
 Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies and long purples  
 That liberal shepherds give a grosser name,  
 But our cull-cold maids do dead  
     men's fingers call them;  
 There, on the pendent boughs her coronet weeds  
 Clamb'ring to hang, an envious sliver broke,  
 When down the weedy trophies and herself  
 Fell in the weeping brook.

Q2: IV. vii. 166-176.

The images from this passage combine images of serene beauty and sublime delicacy, such as "hoary leaves in glassy stream" and "her clothes spread wide, /And mermaid-like, while they bore her up," with other images that suggest a dark undercurrent of madness and death: "weeping brook," "poor wretch," "muddy death." A shift of emphasis in imagery is due to the subject change from a revenge-murder plot to the death of an

innocent but mad young girl. Certainly, in this scene, Laertes and Claudius are at their very worst and the queen's entrance is almost a relief to the treachery of their plotting.

Q1 uses no imagery at all in the conversation between Laertes and Claudius. There is, instead, straightforward description of what Claudius plans for Hamlet. In Q1, the queen's narrative about Ophelia's death, however, contains alliterative use of an *s* or an *s/sh* sound, either at the beginning or the end of a word. Perhaps this could suggest the quiet, babbling sound of the brook where Ophelia drowns:

O, my lord, the young Ofelia,  
 Having made a garland of sundry sorts of flowers,  
 Sitting upon a willow by a brook,  
 The envious sprig broke, into the brook she fell.  
 And for a while her clothes, spread wide abroad,  
 Bore the young lady up; and there she sat,  
 Smiling, even mermaid like, twixt heaven and earth,  
 Chanting old, sundry tunes, uncapable, as it were,  
 Of her distress.

Q1:xvi.40-48.

Act IV of Q2, like Act II, does not create fresh, new images and does not imaginatively elaborate on previously presented images or image patterns. Act IV contains fewer images than the other acts and the last scene, scene vii, which was discussed above, is flawed in plot.<sup>33</sup> The images of death and poison in scene vii are ineffectual when compared to similar earlier images, especially in Acts I and III. The only new imagistic development of the act is that, in Q2, Laertes becomes debased and his verbal imagery reveals this corruption.

## XII

The imagery of Act V, scene i in Q2, is powerful, with many allusions to the garden of Eden, madness, suicide, decay, and death. The scene emphasizes how quickly physical decomposition of flesh starts after man's spirit vanishes with death. There is no consideration of the soul and no reference to the corruption of man's spirituality. The scene opens as the grave-diggers discuss the mortal sin of suicide and its effect on church burials. The First Clown employs a pathetic fallacy but no images as he states that, if water comes to a man and drowns him viciously, then his death is natural.<sup>34</sup> There is a pun as the First Clown says Adam was the first to "bear arms" (i.e., the shield of a coat of arms). More important is the image of Eden. For Hamlet, the whole world now seems to be a corrupt graveyard, filled with serpents like Laertes, Gertrude, Polonius, and Claudius. Physical death and mortal decay would seem life's only certainty. This scene is perhaps the most horrific (in terms of images) in the whole play, despite the humor of the clowns. The imagery of the earth as a paradise and man, especially King Hamlet, as god-like gives way to a corrupted garden image during Act I and now Eden becomes a graveyard. When the First Clown asks who builds to last for eternity, the Second Clown humorously replies, "A gallows-maker." But when the Second Clown warns him that the church outlasts the gallows, the audience realizes that under the jests is a serious purpose. While, as he

says in the next lines, a grave-maker's work outlasts that of a gallows-maker, the church stretches beyond both to eternity. If man must die and if indeed the garden is choked with weeds, if flesh rots and man's power falls to dust, one certainty still does not perish or deserve scorn, one thing rises above the evil: man is dependent on divine will and must follow it to whatever is requested of him, even unto death.

The Second Clown exits as Hamlet and Horatio enter.

They are shocked at the grave-digger's vulgar familiarity with his trade, for he sings as he digs. The grave-digger throws up a skull, and surely Shakespeare presents the best possible visual image of death to coincide with Hamlet's mocking tone and the imagery of wasteful human pretense, materialism, and physical show. Picking up the skull, Hamlet thinks aloud about Cain. The audience associates his thoughts with Claudius by his reference to a corrupt politician. Even though not mentioned by name, Claudius fits the image, for he disrupts the whole kingdom to have his own way. Furthermore, Hamlet's reference to "circumvent God" applies to Claudius' alteration of the law of the council breaking God's and man's laws with his various crimes.

Q1 is similar to Q2 except that it ignores reference to the church outlasting the grave, an important image noted above. In scene i, Q1 seems to be more centered on providing humor for the groundlings than on imagery. The reference to Cains's jawbone is not in Q1 and the dialogue is slightly

shorter for each set of lines. There are no images in Q1 that are not in Q2 and no fresh or notable lines in Q1.

Hamlet picks up another skull, evidently tossing aside the first in disgust or contempt. Then, in Q2, Hamlet questions the grave-digger, "Whose grave's this, sirrah?" and for his trouble learns "Mine, sir." The two men jest and quibble, punning on "quick" and "liest." There is a return to imagery with Hamlet's morbid question, "How long will a man lie i' th' earth ere he rot?" The reply that he may survive about eight years *if* not rotten before interment is humorous to the audience and poignant in a study of imagery, for it implies the moral decay of the court. The images of mouldering flesh are gruesome and the grave-digger expands on the resistance of a tanner's body to decay. All of this conversation refers to the stock-in-trade of the First Clown: a body, to him, is not part of life, something robbed of life nor an object that once held value, especially spiritual value. Like the tanner, he works his trade oblivious of the symbolic interpretation of death's victims.

Q1 is similar to Q2, but shortened and awkward, poetically. For instance, water is a "sore decayer" of dead flesh in Q2 but a "great soaker" of dead flesh in Q1.

The grave-digger hands Hamlet Yorick's skull. Hamlet takes the skull in his hand and eloquently ruminates on the man that it once was. Death comes closer to Hamlet as we see the image of the prince holding the skull of a man, a court jester, he knew as a boy. Hamlet moves in this scene from



abstract considerations of death--Cain's jawbone, an unnamed politician, a courtier, a lawyer, or landowner--to something much more personal. Later, in this scene, at Ophelia's funeral, Hamlet sees death in a still more personal form.

In Q2, Hamlet's description of Yorick contains the image of a dwarf court jester carrying the young Hamlet on his back. Now, showing the audience the skull, Hamlet grows nauseous, for the skull is empty of flesh, life, and the spirit that made Yorick alive. Hamlet's thoughts on the mortality of great men is interrupted. Claudius, the court, including Laertes, a priest, and Ophelia's body, enter following Hamlet's references to ancient monarchs.

The stage presentation of Ophelia's burial presents a visual image that, like Yorick's skull, greatly coincides with the verbal imagery spoken by the characters. The priest uses religious images of final judgment and a biblical stoning to describe how Ophelia should be buried, better, he says, than the present

virgin crants, [Fl: "rites,"]  
Her maiden strewments, and the bringing home  
of bell and burial. Q2:V.i.255-257.

Laertes, incensed at the brevity of the church's rites, returns the priest's imagery with another religious image of a different nature:

I tell thee, churlish priest,  
A minist'ring angel shall my sister be,  
When thou liest howling. Q2:V.i.263-265.

Laertes contrasts his sister's angelic innocence with the



priest as a shrieking demon in hell: the former as symbolic of purity, the latter as symbolic of a stringency that ignores human frailty. Most of the imagery in the funeral passage of this scene is different from the rest of the play: first, because it uses exaggeration and hyperbole, and second, because it is self-defensive and guilt-ridden. It is, however, the same in both quartos.

Both quartos are very similar in V.i., just as in Act I. Q1, like Q2, studies physical death without consideration of man's soul or spirit as the grave-diggers discuss the fate of a man's body. This vision of life is pitiless and dreary, the opposite of Hamlet's views of death. Hamlet agrees that man returns to base uses but he denies that such is the totality of man's fate. In both quartos, the imagery in Hamlet's utterances offers the hope that ultimately man escapes to something greater than worms, bones, dead flesh, moral corruption, or revenge.

XIII

In the final scene of *Hamlet* in Q2, the underlying, thematic or symbolic strain of ideas is more prevalent in the word and thought of the characters, as though Shakespeare abandoned simple verbal imagery for more direct and pointed language in the final scene. Therefore, a discussion of imagery in this scene must include consideration of theme and symbolism more than elsewhere in an examination of the play.

In Q2, Hamlet opens the scene by describing his escape from the pirates to Horatio. Hamlet tells him that Providence shapes the course of man's actions. The individual is wiser to follow divine guidance than attempt to shape his own fate according to personal wishes.

Rashly,  
And prais'd be rashness for it; let us know  
Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well  
When our dear plots do pall; and that should  
learn [F1: "teach"] us  
There's a divinity that shapes our ends,  
Rough-hew them how we will.

Q2:V.ii.6-11.

Horatio later comments, almost as a question, "So Guildenstern and Rosencrantz go to't." In F1, Hamlet uses an image to describe their ambition in carrying out the young Prince's death warrant, stressing their love for Claudius' favors over the friendship and trust they once showed toward

Hamlet:

[Why, man, they did make love to this  
employment;]

They are not near my conscience.

Q2:V.ii.57-58.

F1 has line 57; it is omitted in Q2.

Hamlet returns to his use of images centered on corruption and disease when he next describes Claudius' vileness. Explaining that he killed King Hamlet, "whor'd my mother / Popp'd in between th' election and my hopes," and tried to catch Hamlet (there is a fishing image in this line) to kill him, Hamlet wonders if the murder of Claudius would not be justified. Disease imagery ends in F1, but it is omitted in Q2:

And is't not to be damn'd,  
To let this canker of our nature come  
In further evil? *F1:V.ii.68-70.*

Osric enters, informing Hamlet and Horatio of the ensuing duel. There are no images in Q1 other than a few repeated comments about his fish-like smell, a joke on Osric's foppish actions and dialogue.

In Q2, Hamlet warns Horatio that it is "a vice" to know someone like Osric, for his artificiality makes him a fool and in a nation of fools, he would be beside ("feed" near) the king:

He hath much land, and fertile; let a  
beast be lord of beasts, and his crib shall  
stand at the King's mess. *Q2:V.ii.86-89.*

There is some visual stage imagery as Osric tries to doff his cap in false, exaggerated humility while Hamlet urges him to don it once again. The exchange of nonsense between Hamlet and Osric is amusing to the audience and provides a sort of comic relief before the final conclusion. Osric's euphemism can be deciphered, but the many references he and

Hamlet make to arithmetic, a mirror, "quick sail," and "card and calendar" are not images. Hamlet asks Horatio why they speak to Osric "in our more rawer breath?" and Horatio suggests, "Is't not possible to understand in another tongue?" and later, "All's golden words are spent." The only image, but one most fitting, is that Osric is hot air, all appearance and no reality in flattery. Osric explains the bet between Laertes and Claudius, the weapons they will use, and leaves. Q1 follows this pattern, much simpler in dialogue, however, and Hamlet is urged by Horatio to "forbear the challenge." Hamlet's reply in Q1 is simply that Providence guides man, determining our ultimate fate:

if danger be now, why, then  
it is not to come. There's a predestinate  
providence in the fall of a sparrow.

Q1: *xviii*, 39-41.

Hamlet later warns that premonitions and omens ("augury") are meaningless; death is in divine hands, not something that occurs by chance:

Not a whit; we defy augury. There is special  
providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it  
be, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come,  
it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will  
come; the readiness is all. Since no man has  
aught [F1: "of what"] he leaves, knows what  
is't to leave betimes? Let be.

Q2: *V.ii*. 230-235.

The view of life Hamlet describes here is quite unlike that discussed in the earlier speeches and soliloquies. Hamlet has traded a desire for self-destruction or suicide and for revenge for his father's death for a willingness to patiently await divine guidance in his riddance of Denmark's

evil. Death no longer holds any interest for Hamlet personally, perhaps because he has seen every possible manifestation of human dissolution through the course of events in the whole play. Hamlet now realizes that he has become as corrupt as Claudius or Laertes in seeking pure revenge. Claudius' death must come about for the purpose of removing a corrupted monarch, not for a personal desire for vengeance. For Hamlet, the value of existence is not measured in *quantity* so much as by what man *achieves* in a quantity of time; a brief but noble life is better than great age or Polonius', Gertrude's, and Claudius' sort of achievement. The "readiness" is not readiness for death but readiness to act according to a divine plan for a noble purpose.

In Q2, after the duel, Hamlet bids "adieu" ("Go to God") to Gertrude, whom he addresses as "wretched Queen." Hamlet's use of "wretched" suggests "unfortunate" rather than the more modern "worthless," or "miserable." Turning to the court's followers, Hamlet uses an image of Death as Time's lackey sergeant that captures him, asking Horatio to explain why he murdered Claudius and to detail the action of the play:

You that look pale and tremble at this chance,  
That are but mutes or audience to this act,  
Had I but time--as this fell sergeant, Death,  
Is strict in his arrest--O, I could tell you,  
But let it be.

Q2:V.ii.345-349.

After the deaths of the King, the Queen, Laertes, and Hamlet, Fortinbras and the ambassadors enter. Fortinbras asks why Death has "feasted," animal-like, in gluttony, on the Danish court. Horatio asks that the bodies be removed



and prominently displayed for public viewing, a contrast to the images of secrecy, night, spying, and brief haste with which the members of the court often met at death earlier in the play. Horatio then outlines King Hamlet's murder and Gertrude and Claudius' adultery and incest; the accidental deaths of Polonius and Ophelia; the deaths of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern; and the unsuccessful plot of Laertes and Claudius to kill Hamlet. Q1 does not have Horatio's final capsule summary of all that has transpired in the play.

There are fewer images in the final scene of Q2 for several reasons. There is no further character development among the court members and Hamlet has dropped his antic disposition, the mood which provided opportunities for imagistic language. Puns are missing in the court scenes and only the word-play with Osric makes the scene slightly less tense. Hamlet's desire seems to be that his words be understood quickly and clearly, without innuendo and imagery, free of ambiguity or abstraction and cutting into a situation without embellishment. Because, in Q2, the final scene is one of action, there is a certain harmony that exists between Hamlet's activity and the clarity of the language about him. As he sends Laertes and Claudius to death, Hamlet speaks briefly to each about the justification of individual death. Hamlet himself dies swiftly, wishing only that the world know the nature of his actions. Q1 ends without imagery and in abbreviated form, a condensation of Q2.



#### XIV

*Hamlet* is a play rich in imagery. Most of the images do not concentrate on celestial events, the cosmos, governmental grandeur nor allegorical figures, and very few are for colorful decoration or effect. In this study of the imagery in both Q1 and Q2 versions of *Hamlet*, the examples of imagery are drawn from daily life, nature, trade, and commerce, all of which make up concrete situations. Since evil is part of all human experience, the images of corruption and decay, for instance, refer to mortal sickness, garbage, blisters, immortality, and universal death.

Wolfgang Clemen points out that Hamlet's antic disposition enables him to speak without a great regard for the consequences of fear of reprisal and with images of complexity and subtlety so that only the audience realizes the full power of Hamlet's lines.<sup>35</sup> Shakespeare used an antic disposition to enable Hamlet to explain with sublime word-play the theme of corruption and disease in relation to the actions of the main characters.

Three of *Hamlet*'s characters epitomize the types of falseness prevalent in the play. Lucianus, Claudius, and Hamlet himself are equally false but for different reasons. The first man is a player whose "falseness" is innocent of motive. The second man is human greed, a base root of evil in man. The third man, Hamlet, deceives to find an elusive truth which will correct the greed by means of motivational

innocence. The motif of spying and the various rôles of falseness can be linked with imagery of corruption and decay. They are so inseparable that one supports the other like a meshwork of ideas or a pattern of words.

Although all of *Hamlet* deals with the general problem of decay and corruption in Denmark, the first two acts do not concentrate on specific image groups. The second half of the play is predominantly centered on the more specific images of sickness. In the first act, the soldiers mumble about the time of night, Hamlet speaks of an unweeded garden, and the prince learns of the poisoning of his father. In III.iv. Hamlet uses a number of specific sickness images to describe his mother and to reveal her crimes. The word "sickness" appears frequently in IV and gives exact thematic implication whereas imagery in I and II describes only general decay, failing in its description of the corruption as moral or physical. Clemen lists a number of these general decay images in I and II and concludes that "seen individually, such images do not seem to be very important. But in their totality they contribute considerably to the tone of the play."<sup>36</sup>

Many images in *Hamlet* come from the young prince himself when he desires to express a thought sublime in content and complex in meaning, especially when its understanding by the court would be dangerous. The images reveal these thoughts in the antic disposition speeches. Hamlet's quips, puns, double talk, his use of general figurative language, and

especially complex metaphor, provide a play on words that is more than antic disposition for the sake of the court or decoration for the sake of rhetorical effect. These verbal images in context with physical or visual imagery, stage effects, and dramatic action reveal the depth of Hamlet's complex personality. Hamlet is more sophisticated than the others, more fully developed as a person, and much of him is seen by the audience through his use of images. His thoughts race ahead of his words and beyond the comprehension of other characters. The audience, however, grasps what the characters, especially Polonius, Ophelia, and Gertrude, do not.

The images in Q2 are usually paired as opposites, such as Eden and an unweeded garden, appearance and reality, virtue and wickedness. Character motivation, plot details, and thematic ideas are enhanced, made more vivid and subtle because of these contrasts. Within the complex mind of a character, such as Claudius for example, there are both good and evil traits. His complexity and depth arise from the contrasting elements in his character often presented in the form of imagery.

Q1 usually fails to provide any contrast through imagery; opposite patterns of imagery are generally clumsy and superficial in relation to plot and character. No patterns are original to Q1. The images appear more isolated, lending no impact to the words or thoughts of the characters. Although the ubiquitous disease imagery is somewhat related, it is

readily evident that, in Q1, there are great weaknesses in the images of physical death surrounding Ophelia's funeral, especially in V.i. The description is pictorial, not imagistic. There is no real underlying idea or object matter that relates to a man's soul, no contrast with Hamlet's moral or spiritual beliefs. The differences between the quartos are often not large or self-evident. Q1, under examination, merely describes an event or object while Q2 alludes through imagistic connotation to something beyond mere simple description. Thus, Q1 leaves the audience with an unanswered "why?", whereas Q2 provides fuller explanation beyond surface action or motivation. Q2 fulfills the promise of tragedy as an art form, examining life and interpreting human behavior. Q1 merely describes, occasionally using images to pictorially aid the verbiage.

One important theme not in Q1 is that of an ordered kingdom disrupted by Claudius' murder of King Hamlet. Its absence in Q1 is a direct result of missing imagery in I.ii and I.iii. It has been stated earlier in this study that Q1 simplifies the ideas of Q2. In Q1, King Hamlet's death is not a political or historical tragedy in Denmark. Rather, his demise is important to Hamlet personally and to the royal family. No images convey a theme of a universe disrupted from its neat mechanical order by a king's death. The images of Q1 fail to note that this loss is for the state church and God. Q1's thematic construction is actually a result of a missing series of images that are contained in Q2.

Verbal imagery has been compared in considerable detail in this study. However, little difference in visual or dramatic imagery exists between the two versions. The facial expressions demonstrative of Ophelia's madness or of Claudius' prayerful anguish, where they can be interpreted as visual images, are similar in both plays. Only in Q2, V.ii., when Claudius speaks of the drums calling to trumpets and to heaven or when Horatio orders the bodies be placed above the general populace do we find visual images absent in Q1.

In most instances, Q1's phrasing lacks beauty, originality, or graceful stylistic phrasing. Hamlet's lines (Q2: III.iii) about the recorder and his closing soliloquy on the "witching time of night" are not in Q1. Often the graceful language of Q2 obtains its beauty through the images. While material about disease imagery is the same in both quartos, the image clusters less important to the main theme of the play are not in Q1. In some instances, the lines are altogether absent (as in Q2:III.ii. above). In other cases, the lines in Q1 are shorter but the images similar, as, in the graveyard scene (V.i.). Generally, however, the lines of Q1 are not merely less imagistic but also less graceful, often because the lack of images means a loss of expression and less fluidity through figurative language. Q1 is frequently blunt, unpoetic, and without imagery.

When Q1 and Q2 are compared as whole plays, there is less visual and verbal imagery in Q1. The imagery that does appear in Q1 is in the form of single description, isolated metaphor,



or relatively stock Elizabethan analogy. The Q1 imagery is not always integrated with character development and theme. Nor is the imagery in Q1 consistent; random images appear which are unrelated or even in contrast with other images. The images are not always consistent with character and often it is impossible to distinguish the images of Hamlet's utterance from those of Claudius' or Ophelia's speech. Imagery in Q1, especially after the first act, is sporadic and merely a decorative overlay to infuse frequently bald poetic material with life. This technique is self-defeating because the imagery is not parallel with theme, stage effects, and action. The references to nature (flowers, heavens, life, growth), business and commerce, poison, decay, and disease in Q1 do not distinguish or separate character personality. Occasional forces of lust, reason, honor, fear in Q1 are linked with images, but the bond is superficial and often the image forms one idea and the plot and dialogue another idea. Therefore, imagery in Q1 does not unify the material but, because of its general shallow façade effect, confuses or diverts the audience. The use of imagery without regard to its unity with theme, plot, characterization, and stage effects destroys rather than adds to the overall effectiveness of the play.

The images in Q2 are more numerous, consistent within a passage, and better integrated with dramatic action and theme than in Q1. Just as Q2 is a longer play than Q1, it also has more images. In Q2, linguistic details of rhetoric, prose, hyperbole, and other figures of speech are more in harmony



with character rôle than in Q1. It is not difficult to differentiate the speaker in Q2 by his manner or tone or mode of dialogue. Hamlet's soliloquies and even his dialogue are superior in Q2; the difference is in imagery as well as in complexity, in length, and in expression. It should be remembered, however, that Q2 has few major ideas or themes not found in Q1. Comparing the two plays is like a comparison of boy and man: both personality and body are there in the boy, but physical growth and the experiences of life over a period of time bring the development of a man. The evil of Elsinore is in Q1, but it is the imagery and the greater general use of figurative language in Q2 that makes the evil ineradicable. In Q2, Hamlet rises as a tragic figure rather than a puppet in a hack Elizabethan revenge play, and the whole dramatic gestalt is sublime, not brutal, because of imagery.

## FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>E. K. Chambers, *William Shakespeare, A Study of Facts and Problems*, I (Oxford, 1930), p. 408; *Hamlet The First Quarto 1603*, ed. Albert B. Weiner (New York, 1962), pp. 1-2.

<sup>2</sup>Chambers, p. 412.

<sup>3</sup>Weiner, p. 3; Chambers, p. 413; Hardin Craig, *A New Look at Shakespeare's Quartos* (Stanford, Calif., 1961), pp. 75-104. See also John Dover Wilson, *The Manuscript of Shakespeare's Hamlet*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1934).

<sup>4</sup>Weiner, p. 3.

<sup>5</sup>Weiner, p. 7; Chambers, pp. 415-416.

<sup>6</sup>Weiner, pp. 20-23; Chambers, pp. 415-420.

<sup>7</sup>Weiner, pp. 24-44; Sir Walter Greg defines the term in his *Two Elizabethan Stage Abridgments: The Battle of Alcazar and Orlando Furioso* (London, 1922), p. 256; Chambers, p. 415ff.

<sup>8</sup>George I. Duthrie, *The Bad Quarto of Hamlet* (Cambridge, 1941), *passim*; Greg, *The Editorial Problem in Shakespeare* (Oxford, 1942), *passim*.

<sup>9</sup>Weiner, p. 57.

<sup>10</sup>R. A. Foakes, "Suggestions for a New Approach to Shakespeare's Imagery," *Shakespeare Survey*, 5, (1952), 85.

<sup>11</sup>See Wolfgang Clemen, *The Development of Shakespeare's Imagery* (New York, 1962), Chapter One.

<sup>12</sup>Foakes, p. 90.

<sup>13</sup>Foakes, pp. 82-86. "Subject matter" is the physical object or person or the lines of the play or that which we see on the stage. It is real or literal. "Object matter" is the implication, inference, or thematic idea or symbol with which the subject matter is associated. The object matter is often (but not always) abstract.

<sup>14</sup>Foakes, pp. 89, 90.

<sup>15</sup>See G. Wilson Knight, *The Wheel of Fire* (London, 1930), "Introduction," especially p. 15.

<sup>16</sup>Foakes, p. 86.

<sup>17</sup>Foakes, p. 89.

<sup>18</sup>Q2 lines are from *The Complete Poems and Plays of William Shakespeare*, ed. William Allan Neilson and Charles Jarvis Hill (Cambridge, 1942)--hereafter cited as *Works*.

<sup>19</sup>There is a discussion of the season in *Hamlet, A New Variorum Edition of Hamlet*, I, ed. Horace Howard Furness (New York, 1877; 1963), p. 24. The season may be early winter, perhaps just before Advent, as mentioned in Q2: I.i.158-162.

<sup>20</sup>Q1 is divided into eighteen scenes. To prevent confusion, the author refers to these scenes and to the normal acts, scenes, and lines of Q2.

<sup>21</sup>Q1:I.i.126-117 and Q2:I.i.166-167. This is mentioned by Caroline Spurgeon as an example of a beautiful personification (p. 319) and by F. E. Halliday, *The Poetry of Shakespeare's Plays* (London, 1964), pp. 134-135. Halliday speaks of it as lyric, deliberate, and light.

<sup>22</sup>The author obviously disagrees with G. Wilson Knight's interpretation of Claudius as basically a "typical kindly uncle, besides being a good king," p. 34. See his interpretation of *Hamlet* in Chapter II, *The Wheel of Fire*, pp. 17-46.

<sup>23</sup>Polonius is called "Corambis" in Q1.

<sup>24</sup>An interesting examination of this is in E. M. W. Tillyard, *Elizabethan World Picture*.

<sup>25</sup>Clemen discusses this ability to see reality more closely. See pp. 106-112.

<sup>26</sup>Weiner, p. 171.

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup>See *Judges*, 11. There was also a popular ballad of the period on the same subject.

<sup>29</sup>All of the quarto versions, Q2-Q5, read "browes" and most editors suggest "lunacies." See *Variorum*, I, 275, footnote 7.

<sup>30</sup>The best developed argument, suggesting that this is the climax of the play, is that in J. Dover Wilson, *What Happens in Hamlet* (New York, 1935), Chapter VI.

<sup>31</sup>A thorough examination of the flower symbolism is in *Variorum*, I, 346-349.

<sup>32</sup>Halliday, p. 135.

<sup>33</sup>Most critics think that Laertes' belief that no one will notice Hamlet's death from a poison sword or Gertrude's ability to describe Ophelia's death without being able to save her are flaws.

<sup>34</sup>The quarto and folio copies do not distinguish between clowns as "First Clown" and "Second Clown." "Other" is Second Clown in Q1, Q2, and F1. The author uses First and Second Clown in this study.

<sup>35</sup>Clemen, p. 110.

<sup>36</sup>Clemen, pp. 117-118.

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## A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY

Richard P. Hurff was born on March 31, 1942 to Eleanor C. Berry and Melvin A. Hurff in Camden, New Jersey. He was educated in the public elementary schools in suburban Haddon Heights, New Jersey. In 1960, he graduated from Haddon Heights High School. Mr. Hurff attended Ursinus College, and in 1964 earned the Bachelor of Arts degree in history. He graduated with honors in English, having written a paper entitled, "Shakespeare's Concept of Ageing." He attended Lehigh University for one full year of graduate work as an English major, the winter of 1964-1965.

Mr. Hurff returned to New Jersey and taught American History in Bellmawr at Triton Regional High School for two years. He moved to Haddonfield and then returned to Haddon Heights, where he now resides. He accepted a position with the English Department at Audubon High School in 1967. Mr. Hurff presently teaches twelfth grade English, Honors English, and Advanced Composition at Audubon, and is an instructor in the Division of Continuing Education (evening classes) at Camden County College. He has taught English Composition at the college since 1968.