

‘Buried in the Open Fields’: Early Modern Suicide and the Case of Ophelia¹

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Abstract

Focussing on Ophelia’s suicide in *Hamlet*, as it is represented in the different texts of the play, this essay argues that the play mediates the diverse responses to self-murder in the early modern period. The social status of the suicide could determine the coroner’s verdict. Literary scholars have paid too little attention to the way the texts of the play are symptomatic of theological, popular and legal attitudes to early modern suicide. The culture of suicide resonates with the text in ways more complicated than some historians have assumed.

Keywords: Burial Practices, Early Modern Suicide, *Hamlet*, Popular View of Suicide.

1. *Understanding Early Modern Suicide*

The social and literary history of self-murder, which became known as suicide only in the mid-seventeenth century,² has been explored in a number of illuminating studies. Early modern historians and literary critics have engaged in fruitful dialogue about the extent to which the dramatic and poetic depictions of suicide might be said to be culturally representative, tapping into the sympathy or abhorrence of readers and audience, or whether such representations are rhetorically constructed and thus aesthetically distanced. In this short essay I aim to contextualize one literary suicide, that of Ophelia in *Hamlet*, which I will argue is a solitary example of a stage suicide which powerfully resonates with the meanings of suicide in the early modern period as described by social historians. In part, my argument follows that of Michael MacDonald (1986), but it gains fresh impetus from consideration of the variant texts of *Hamlet* and the differences in verbal nuances between these texts, together with the spectrum of responses to Ophelia’s death.

Work over the last fifty years or more has enabled detailed understanding of the meanings of suicide in various communities. The discovery of cases across Protestant and Catholic Europe, and across different social classes, has revealed remarkable similarities in the meanings attached to the act and its communal responses (Healy 2006, 909). The legal, the theological and the popular are useful contexts in which to examine early modern suicide. Common and canon law, together with popular ritual, all impinged on the social construction of suicide and in turn determined how the suicide and his/her

family were treated. As all these factors have a bearing on *Hamlet*, I offer a brief account of attitudes to suicide mediated through current historical scholarship before arguing their relevance to Shakespeare's play.

At common law – implemented through coroners, magistrates and jurors – the question was whether the suicide was *felo de se* (felon of himself) or *non compos mentis* (not sound of mind) or whether the death was accidental. If the suicide's death was attributed to insanity, it meant that his/her property may not have been automatically forfeited and in rare cases funerary rites may have been permitted. However, from the large number of cases of *felo de se* it would seem that coroners and juries returned verdicts of *felo de se* where it would have been impossible to prove that a suicidal rather than an accidental death had occurred, such as in instances of drowning. Coroners, drawn from the middling ranks of society, had no medical expertise and may well have been subjected to pressures that placed them at odds with the higher authorities or with the members of the jury. In cases of suicide goods were forfeited either to the Crown or to the lord or corporation. From 1510 in England coroners, until then unpaid, were paid one mark for every verdict of homicide returned, including verdicts of *felo de se* (MacDonald and Murphy 1990, 24). The fee was to be deducted from the forfeited property of the individual. Evidently there were inducements to return a verdict of suicide. On the other hand, juries – drawn from the community of the deceased – may have taken pity on a destitute family and determined on a verdict of *non compos mentis*. Juries did on occasions show independence, but more often than not returned verdicts of self-murder (MacDonald and Murphy 1990, 58). In general, ambiguous deaths were classified as suicide. A quarter of all deaths in Geneva from the 1540s to the end of the Republic were through drowning (a means of suicide commonly used by women), often on Lake Geneva or in the Rhone (Watt 2001, 36). The evidence can be variously interpreted. An obvious consequence of drowning was that it might appear an accidental death. For some latter-day historians, however, the number of drownings recorded as suicides seems suspiciously high. MacDonald and Murphy point out that in early modern England over one third of the deaths that were classified as self-murders were drownings, a number of which could just as plausibly have been accidents (1990, 57).

Across Europe suicides were denied burial rites, excluding them from the Christian community. In Geneva, for example, as early as 561, the date of the Council of Braga, ecclesiastical practice was to deny suicides burial honours (Watt 2001, 86). In England the Council of Hereford in 672 denied suicides funerals, including hymns and psalmody or 'rites of honourable sepulture' (MacDonald 1986, 19). In France the Synod of Nîmes in 1284 forbade the burial of all suicides in hallowed ground. Decades later, when it was learnt that a suicide had been erroneously buried in a cemetery, the Bishop of Mende requested the exhumation of the cadaver (Minois 1999, 35). Watt records

that of the 40 suicides documented in Geneva from the period 1542-1650 only one person was allowed to be buried with the traditional funerary rites. This one individual was André Caille, a wealthy merchant who suffered from 'melancholy' and shot himself in his room. Evidently, the family begged for mercy and the tribunal, the Small Council, decided that he should be buried with honour. The Council declared that his memory must not be sullied or marked with ignominy or suffer any reprisal whatsoever, permitting his relatives to bury him (Watt 2001, 81). Money as well as status must have been operative, since it is also recorded that Caille's relatives agreed to donate a hundred *écus* from his estate to the city's hospital. Caille's case was evidently atypical because he was a member of a prominent and wealthy Genevan family. If the deceased person came from a prestigious family, it appears that magistrates were reluctant to declare a death self-inflicted in spite of the evidence. In contrast, Watt cites the case of Jean Bovard, a 36 year old vinegar maker who demonstrated bizarre and violent behaviour. When attempts were made to disarm him, he kicked and tried to stab a soldier before jumping into the Rhone. Bovard's widow and mother pleaded 'alienation of spirit' – a less socially privileged form of melancholy – but the Small Council denied him funerary honours and ordered that he be buried behind the shooting range (2001, 21).

People of all social classes took their lives, although in a period in which poverty was a main cause of misery, the poor would have had more cause to do so. MacDonald and Murphy cite cases of destitute suicides (1990, 266). As with the case of the Genevan Caille, it was possible for noble or wealthy families to seek to present a suicide as an accidental death or as one which occurred because the balance of the individual's mind was disturbed. In France in 1578, François de Saignes, seigneur de La Garde and a *conseiller* of the higher court of the Parlement de Paris, who was suffering from an unidentified physical illness, drowned himself. He was declared insane to avoid confiscation of his estate, which had been bequeathed to the son of the *premier* president of the Parlement. De Saignes was buried in the choir of the Cordeliers church with full ceremony (Minois 1999, 60-61). Although they cite no case from the same period in England, MacDonald and Murphy also conclude that the nobility and members of the gentry were also more likely to be given the benefit of the doubt by juries or protected by bogus verdicts. Somewhat ironically, men and women of quality were more likely to be found *non compos mentis* than their social inferiors.³

Denial of traditional burial rites was often the minimum punishment for suicide. As C.M. Koslofsky has commented in his discussion of practices in early modern Saxony, burial location was a powerful and evocative symbol of inclusion even in a Lutheran community which rejected the concept of consecrated ground (2004, 52). In England, following the canons of the Anglican Church, ministers could not refuse or delay the burial of corpses brought to the church or churchyard, but they could decide on how to bury. R.A. Houston cites the

case of John Bradley of Thirsk in the North Riding, Yorkshire, who was buried '*non per ministerium* having drowned himself' (2010, 196).

Parish registers record different treatments of the ungodly dead. The Parish Register of Birstall, Yorkshire, for example, records amongst Burials that on 23 June 1586 William Grym had 'drowned himself in a pitt nere unto Adwalton Townes end and was buried on the top of the common' (Nussey, ed., 1983, 175). Practices varied from region to region and from rural to urban community. The corpse of a widow, Elizabeth Wickham, who had hung herself in November 1595 'upon a garden pale by her apron strings' in the parish of St. Botolph, Aldgate, London, was ordered to be buried in the same alley where she had killed herself, with a stake driven through her (Seaver 2004, 26).

Local customs and rituals often entailed further degradation for what was judged a terrible crime against God. Again, such desecrations varied from country to country as well as from region to region, but the strong popular abhorrence for suicide was reflected in these popular rituals. In Sweden bodies of suicides were taken to woods and burned unless they were deemed insane, in which case their corpses were buried outside the cemetery (Jansson 2004, 84). In Geneva, those guilty of suicide were at best to be buried after sundown outside the regular cemetery, typically being interred at the shooting range or in the cemetery for plague victims (Watt 2001, 81-82). According to Minois in his study of suicide in France, popular belief in the satanic origin of suicide and the pastoral role of the clergy colluded in the enactment of superstitious practices. Corpses were placed in the ground face down, lying in a north-south direction rather than in the south-westerly direction most favourable for resurrection. A further custom – *novaire* or *navoyer* – entailed the removal of the roof of the house in which the suicide had taken place and the practice of dismantling the walls on either side of the hearth was prevalent in certain French provinces, including Maine and Anjou (Minois 1999, 36). In some cases in Geneva, denial of funerary honours was deemed insufficient punishment and the corpse was dragged on a hurdle through the streets of the city or the body was strung up for all to gaze at. Occasionally the corpse was placed in a barrel and tossed into the river (Watt 2001, 82-83). In England burial took place by a highway with a stake driven through the body, although this was a practice unknown in Scotland and unusual in the North of England (Houston 2010, 6). The authorities in Zurich treated the body in accordance with the manner of death: those who had stabbed themselves had a wooden wedge driven into their skulls; those who had drowned themselves were buried in sand five feet from the water's edge while those who died in a fall were buried under a heap of stones, with large stones at their head, stomach and feet (Minois 1999, 35).

Attention to the treatment of suicides in the early modern period is revealing about mores and mindsets. In the disposal of those who took their lives, it was ritual – or the denial of ritual – rather than theology which mattered

to the populace. Even in reformed countries there was a reluctance to let go of rituals of death. In England, according to the Book of Common Prayer the burial would be preceded by a church service, a sermon, hymns or psalms, a procession to the graveyard or cemetery, prayers over the grave and burial in sacred ground. These were forfeited in the case of suicide, and replaced by other rituals, part pagan and part Christian, unless social privilege or insanity prevailed to mitigate sanctions.

2. *Representing Suicide*

In his study of suicide and despair in Jacobean drama Rowland Wymer has convincingly argued that suicide is a dramatic convention which becomes fully tragic only when there is a balancing of opposed implications, for example, when dignity grapples with despair (1986, 156).⁴ Further, suicide produces definitive theatrical images for female virtue, passionate love or the honour of an 'antique Roman'. Prominent among such images are the suicide of Lucrece in *The Rape of Lucrece* and in Thomas Heywood's play of the same name, Mark Antony in *Antony and Cleopatra*, and Horatio's wish at the end of *Hamlet* to drink from the poisoned cup and follow his friend. To this commentary on the rhetorical construction of suicide, Wymer adds a telling caveat: 'In considering how an audience might respond more favourably to suicide than official morality and laws of the age would suggest, it is not enough just to draw attention to the competing philosophies of the Renaissance. There is also the more basic fact of ordinary human sympathy' (157).

The suicide in English Renaissance drama which most resonates with Wymer's statement is that of Ofelia in *Hamlet*, an act which evokes pathos rather than high drama. Unlike the tragic deaths presented on the Renaissance stage with their resounding or confident assertions of self – Antony, Cleopatra, Brutus, Bussy D'Ambois – we are offered no insights into Ofelia's motivation. The representation of her death is closer to the early modern records of distressed men and women who took their own lives than it is to the aesthetics of tragedy.

I approach the scenes alluding to Ofelia's death somewhat tangentially. As is well known, two editions of *Hamlet* were published before the Shakespeare Folio of 1623. The first printed edition (1603) is considerably shorter and much less literate than the 1605 text and that published in the Folio edition of 1623. It is beyond the scope of this essay to engage with the many critical and bibliographical studies of the text. Suffice to say, that the first printed text is generally regarded as a performance text and its idiom is more popular than the more poetic texts which followed in 1605 and 1623. Until recently, the 1603 Quarto (Q1), has been ignored by editors as corrupt and spurious. Nonetheless, it has a clear stage dynamic affirmed by the testimonies of directors and actors in the late twentieth and twenty-first centuries.⁵ Its stage

directions – ‘Enter the Ghost in his night gown’; ‘Enter Ofelia playing on a lute, and her hair down singing’; and ‘Hamlet leaps in [Ofelia’s grave] after Laertes’ – which are present only in Q1, are especially illuminating about early performance.

In comparison with the more discursive and sustained psychological, philosophical and moral meditations of the later texts, Q1 can seem sparse and homely in its diction. Hamlet is ‘the joy and half heart’ of his mother; he appears to Ofelia with ‘his garters lagging down’; the Ghost walks ‘within his truncheon’s length’ of Marcellus and Barnardo. The opening line of the famous soliloquy ‘To be, or not to be – I there’s the point,’ has been quoted as proof that Q1 is a corrupted text.⁶ But the line is perfectly metrical and ‘the point’ has a sharpness and immediacy for a man contemplating suicide, anticipating the ‘quietus’ of the ‘bare bodkin’. As Robert Weimann has commented, in the brevity and directness of the Q1 soliloquy there is far more emphasis than in the received texts on the hardness of ordinary living (2000, 20).

It is probable that the text of *Hamlet* which is recorded in the second, more literary, quarto (Q2) is closer to Shakespeare’s composition, but that does not invalidate Q1 as a staged version of the play which edges closer to popular performance. The different texts of the play are independently and simultaneously valid. Indeed, critical interpretations of *Hamlet* which are historically inflected need to take into consideration the possibility that the illiterate playgoer may have known *Hamlet* only as it is in the Q1 text. For the literate, Q1 and Q2 were both available on the bookstalls. Reading the two texts side by side with their differently nuanced presentations of Ofelia’s suicide enriches perceptions of what suicide meant to ordinary people and within a community. The sequence of scenes which present Ofelia’s death and burial – the Queen’s report of her drowning, the clowns digging her grave, the funeral procession and burial – follows the same pattern in Q1 and Q2, but the scenes differ in expression. James Holleran has compared Gertrude’s account of the drowning as ‘exactly the sort of eye-witness testimony that would have been given to a coroner and his jury’ (1989, 76). But the Queen’s reporting of Ofelia’s drowning reads like a set piece in both plays and its lyrical meditation is at some distance from the idiom of a factual account. The Q1 version, however, gets much more to the heart of the matter. Instead of Gertrude’s delicate and ceremonious description familiar from the later texts, the first quarto simply and eloquently conveys the pathos of Ofelia’s death:

... the young Ofelia,
 Having made a garland of sundry sortes of floures,
 Sitting upon a willow by a brooke,
 The envious sprig broke. Into the brooke she fell,
 And for a while her clothes spread wide abroade,
 Bore the yong lady up: and there she sate smiling,

Even mermaide-like, 'twixt heaven and earth,
 Chanting olde sundry tunes uncapable,
 As it were, of her distress. But long it could not be,
 Till that her clothes, being heavy with their drinke,
 Dragg'd the sweete wretch to death. (H3v)

The lines are graphic and incisive, although scant in detail, even vague at times when compared to the two later texts, which are more explicit and elaborate: Gertrude in Q1 reports that Ofelia makes a garland of 'sundry sorts of flowers' whereas Q2 and the Folio name them individually and even discourse briefly on alternative names, evoking a contrast between maidenly and vulgar (male) usage:

Therewith fantastique garlands did she make
 Of Crowflowers, nettles, daises, and long Purples
 That liberall shepheards give a grosser name,
 But our cull-cold maydes doe dead mens fingers call them.
 There on the pendant boughes her cronet weedes
 Clambring to hang, an envious sliver broke
 When downe her weedy trophies and her selfe
 Fell in the weeping Brooke. (M1r-M1v)

There are no prettifying touches in Q1 to compare with the 'weedy trophies' and the 'weeping brooks' of the other texts.⁷ Q1, on the other hand, comes much closer to a spontaneous report.

At the same time, in both texts Gertrude is at pains to minimize any implications of suicide. Agency is transferred from Ofelia onto her clothes and the brook-side trees, implying accidental death. The envious sprig 'broke' and Ofelia falls. She is sitting not by a river with a torrent, as she would if contemplating drowning herself, but by an innocuous 'brook'. As she falls she is 'uncapable' of recognizing the danger and saving herself. In Gertrude's rendering of the scene, her death is an accident and the would-be suicide – to use the terminology of the time – 'alienated' from herself: an alienation we have already seen in the earlier court scene as she sings wildly and presents flowers to the courtiers. She is, in Laertes's words, a 'document in madness'.

Immediately following the Queen's poignant description of Ofelia's drowning, there is a bold scene change and with the entry of the clowns we encounter a different kind of dramaturgy. The 'gravediggers', designated clowns, are the only popular voices of the play. In Q1 they are presented *in medias res* debating whether Ofelia should be allowed a Christian burial or not. The first clown is definite that she should not:

Clown I say no, she ought not to be buried in christian burial.
 2 Why sir?

Clown Mary because shee's drown'd.
 2 But she did not drowne her selfe.
Clown No, that's certaine, the water drown'd her.
 2 Yes but it was against her will.
Clown No, I deny that, for looke you sir, I stand here,
 If the water come to me, I drowne not my selfe:
 But if I goe to the water, and am there drown'd,
Ergo I am guiltie of my own death:
 Y'are gone, goe y'are gone sir.
 2 I but see, she hath christian burial,
 Because she is a great woman.
Clown Mary more's the pittie, that great folke
 Should have more authoritie to hang or to drowne
 Themselves, more than other people. (H3r-H3v)

The clown's mock syllogism ('if I go to the water... *ergo* I am guiltie of my own death') also suggests some kind of stage business, an imitation of Ofelia's putative steps, concluding with the bathos 'y'are gone'. Beneath the clowning, there is a clear enough message: there is one law for the powerful and another for the commoners. Great folk have more authority to hang or drown themselves than 'other people'. In Q2 'greate folke' have liberty to drown themselves 'more than they even Christian': a reference clearly more religious in its overtones. Q2 has a more legalistic edge as the clown announces that the coroner has decreed that Ofelia should have a Christian burial:

Clowne Is she to be buried in Christian buriale, when she wilfully seekes her own salvation?
Other I tell thee she is, therefore make her grave straight, the crowner hath sate on her, and finds it Christian buriall. (M1v)

The clown mocks the coroner's logic: 'If the water come to him, and drowne him, he drowns not himselfe, argall, he that is not guilty of his owne death, shortens not his owne life'; and, in response to the other clown's quizzical response, 'Is this law?', he replies ironically 'I marry i'st, Crowners [in]quest law'. His companion takes his meaning, 'Will you ha the truth, an't, if this had not beene a gentlewoman, she should have been buried out a Christian buriall'.

In a seminal early work that sought to contextualize *Hamlet*, R.M. Frye argued that in deciding that Ophelia is to have a Christian burial, the coroner must have judged her *non compos mentis* and that the priest is indeed 'churlish', as Laertes claims, in disallowing full burial rites (1984, 248). Frye claims that no Elizabethan audience seeing the play would have found Ophelia guilty of intentional suicide and that it would have seemed only natural that the coroner's jury sitting on the case would allow Christian burial rites. But, according to R.A. Houston, coroner's juries seldom found suicides insane,

often preferring a mixed verdict which found the deceased reprehensible and insane (2010, 176). The coroner's verdict is as much a social pointer as to how the death should be viewed and dealt with, as a judgment about personal responsibility. Verdicts took into account the circumstance of the event, the character of the person, the likely outcome and the need for ideas of justice to be served (Houston 2010, 176). In Ophelia's case there is more than her alleged madness affecting the coroner's verdict, as the two texts testify.

As Hamlet and Horatio join the clowns in the graveyard, the mood created by their banter changes. Hamlet's musings on power, temporality and mortality are cut short by the funeral procession thus described in Q1: 'Enter King and Queen, Laertes and other lords, with a Priest after the coffin'. Laertes demands more ceremony, eliciting the priest's response that she has had as much ritual as the church will allow:

My Lord, we have done all that lies in us,
And more than well the church can tolerate.
She hath had a Dirge sung for her maiden soule:
And but for favour of the King, and you,
She had bene buried in the open fieldes,
Where now she is allowed Christian buriall. (I 1v)

Ofelia, in contrast at normal practice, has had a dirge sung for her. The 'dirge' here is a reference to the choral service which was adapted from the ancient office of the dead (*Officium defuncti*). Printed as one continuous service, its component parts consisted of evensong, matins and lauds (Wyatt 1918, 6). In asserting Ofelia's privilege, the priest evokes the fate of more vulnerable classes of suicide who would be 'buried in the open fields' away from hallowed ground.

The exchange in Q2 between Laertes and the 'Doctor' who takes the role of Q1's priest is differently nuanced and invites different staging. Ofelia is not coffined; the marginal stage direction reads simply 'Enter K. Q. Laertes and the corse'; and Hamlet knows immediately from the observances taking place that this must be the funeral of someone of fairly high social status who has committed suicide:

Who is this they follow?
And with such maimed rites? this doth betoken,
The corse they follow, did with desprat hand
Foredoo it owne life, twas of some estate . . . (M4r)

In response to Laertes's demand for more ceremonial, the Doctor bridles at further secular intervention, implying that in her 'doubtful' death, there may have been a mixed coroner's verdict. Again, the privileges granted Ofelia are set against the rituals that discriminated against suicides and their punitive burials:

Her obsequies have been as farre inlarg'd
 As we have warrantie, her death was doubtfull,
 And but that great commaund ore swayes the order,
 She should in ground unsanctified have lodg'd
 Till the last trumpet: for charitable prayers,
 Flints and pebbles should be throwne on her:
 Yet heere she is allow'd her virgin Crants, [garlands]
 Her maiden strewments, and the bringing home
 Of bell and burial. (M4r)

'She should in ground unsanctified have lodged' replaces 'buried in the open fields': a more distant, less poignant evocation of popular rites of desecration. To Laertes's repeated urge for more sacred obsequies, the Doctor now invokes Christian burial:

No more be doone,
 We should prophane the service of the dead,
 To sing a Requiem and such rest to her
 As to peace-parted soules. (M4r)

The contrast with Q1 is curious. Ofelia in the earlier text is allowed a dirge; here she is to have no mass (requiem) sung for the repose of her soul.⁸ The Doctor's resistance is forced home when he invokes other hostile rites – throwing flints and pebbles – bestowed on those who, like Ophelia, had, in the terms of the time, put themselves down (Houston 2010, 23). Interestingly, the practice of throwing stones on the corpse – 'shards' are included in the Folio text – is not usually mentioned by historians.

Several critics have examined the treatment of Ofelia's suicide, yet without noting the arresting verbal and visual discrepancies between the *Hamlet* texts. Considerable emphasis has been placed on the 'maimed rites' of Ofelia's burial and Laertes's angry response to his sister's abbreviated funeral. For J.V. Holleran, 'maimed rites' are a motif of the play: no one is given a proper burial until the funeral motif comes full circle at the end of the play and Fortinbras orders that Hamlet be given a soldier's burial. Frye and Holleran assert that the Globe audience would for the most part have endorsed Laertes's view both emotionally and ethically (Frye 1984, 298-299; Holleran 1989, 70). Such a speculation has been contested by MacDonald, who has stressed both the popular abhorrence of suicide, regarded by many as diabolic possession, and the severity of the official responses to suicide before 1660 (1986, 311).

Close reading of the respective scenes in the two versions of *Hamlet*, in the contexts of attitudes to and the meanings of suicide in the early modern period, lead to rather different emphases than those of the above interpretations. At no time does the text reveal an abhorrence of suicide. Ophelia is a victim – a pitiful example of 'alienation from self' induced, it is intimated, by court politics. We

are left to guess at her motivation. At the same time, the levelling voices of the clowns, whose livelihood depends on burying the dead, represent shrewd commentaries on the social inequalities found even in death. As the clowns affirm, in preparing Ofelia's grave they are enacting their own subordination. To say that a Globe audience would have endorsed Laertes's view of the 'churlish' priest is to impose a totalizing view on an audience which would have been made up of men and women of different social status and mentalities. Besides, in imagining the reception of the play, we need to take into account not one but a number of different venues with differently constituted audiences. Q1 title page informs us that *Hamlet* was performed in London, at the universities and 'else-where'. To assume that this range of spectators uniformly sided with Laertes is greatly to over-simplify the diversity of possible responses to Ophelia's suicide, intimated within the texts themselves. Indeed, *Hamlet* offers a glimpse of communal perceptions of suicide at the turn of the sixteenth-century undisclosed in the archives.

¹ I retain the Q1 spelling 'Ofelia' when referring to this edition. All quotations are from the Scholar Press facsimiles of the first and second quartos of *Hamlet*.

² The term was coined by Thomas Browne in *Religio Medici*; see Langley 2009, 203. A common Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century phrase was 'putting down' oneself (Houston 2010, 23).

³ MacDonald and Murphy provide statistics: 67% of peers and gentlemen whose deaths were reported to the government during the Tudor and Stuart periods were convicted. 93% of their social inferiors met the same fate (1990, 127).

⁴ For a discussion of suicide connected with the 'dishonour' experienced by victims of rape, see Pallotti in this volume, 211-239.

⁵ See, for example, Loughrey 1992 and Thompson and Taylor, eds, 2006.

⁶ Bednarz 2001, 244. Bednarz takes the line 'along with all major modern editors of the play' that a text similar to the one behind F1 was memorially reproduced in Q1 (244-245).

⁷ As the Folio text follows closely Q2, it is not included in this discussion.

⁸ Both Q1 and Q2 convey a sense of more elaborate burial rites than those prescribed by the *Book of Common Prayer* (1559). The first edition of the latter (1549) follows the medieval *Officium defuncti* [The office of the dead], but the Elizabethan edition of 1559 gave a much more pared down version of burial rites. The processional element was removed; the office of the dead was eliminated; and there were no prayers at the graveside. See Cummings, ed., 2011, 716, 742.

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