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Elizabethan Views of the "Other": French, Spanish, and Russians in *Love's Labor's Lost*

Felicia Londre

The abundant use of foreign settings and characters throughout Shakespeare's canon provides us with a basis for conjecture about his own perspective on various nationalities, and perhaps that of Elizabethans in general. Admittedly, it may not always be possible to distinguish between the dramatist's personal biases and his appropriation of popular prejudices for dramatic effect. While he was not above caricaturizing foreigners (for example, the Welsh Sir Hugh Evans and the French Dr. Caius in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*),¹ Shakespeare often demonstrates a more sophisticated international outlook than what we know to have been the popular Elizabethan sense of the differences between the English and other peoples.² *Love's Labour's Lost* serves as an excellent text for examining his depiction of foreigners, because it brings together French lords and ladies, a Spaniard, noblemen masquerading as Russians, and some comic lowlife figures who seem to have wandered into the French royal preserve from an English village.³ At the same time, an understanding of England's relations with France, Spain, and Russia from the 1570s to the 1590s can illuminate some of the oddities in this charming but perplexing play.

During the reign of Edward VI (r. 1547-1553), England was inundated with French Huguenots and other foreign Protestants seeking refuge from persecution. Many of the French stayed on into the reigns of Mary (r. 1553-1558) and Elizabeth I, finding employment as tutors and teaching principles of humanism along with the French language. To the English, French culture set an unattainably high standard of excellence.⁴ French was the language of choice for many English courtiers, according to observers as early as 1550 and as late as 1591.⁵ The English nobility of the late 16th century also employed numerous French riding masters, French dancing masters, French cooks, and French instructors in the (Italian) art of fencing. French imports included

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wines, manuals of needlework, and—most notably—fashionable apparel.⁶ French visitors to the English court were treated with every courtesy. It was in the best interests of Queen Elizabeth (r. 1558-1603) to maintain good relations with France, especially in view of the Vatican's efforts to promote a Spanish invasion of England. To that end, Elizabeth prolonged for thirteen years the negotiations for a marriage between herself and a member of the French (Catholic) royal family. Even after her ally Henri de Navarre suddenly converted to Catholicism in July 1593 (in his immortal words, "Paris vaut une messe"), Elizabeth maintained their alliance, though she vented her feelings in a mildly chastising letter to him: "It is dangerous to do evil, even for a good end."⁷

Most Elizabethans did not share in the cordial sentiments of the queen and her court toward the French. Indeed, Hoenselaars claims that "the influx of foreigners during the second half of the sixteenth century placed a heavy burden on the native economy and coupled nascent national awareness with a strident form of popular xenophobia."⁸ With reference to the 1590s, he notes further that "xenophobia and clashes between Englishmen and foreigners may have been rampant among the lower and middle classes at times; but in learned circles and among the aristocracy the exchange of culture and ideas thrived in an atmosphere of cordiality."⁹ Shakespeare's history plays, according to Cumberland Clark, "reflected the national prejudice against France born of centuries of struggle,"¹⁰ and they appeal to a "crude" "patriotism."¹¹ Thomas Nashe's comment in *The Unfortunate Traveller* (1587) typifies the English commoner's view of the French: "What is there in France to be learned more than in England, but falsehood in fellowship, perfect slovenry, to love no man but for my pleasure, to swear 'Ah par la mort Dieu', when a man's hams are scabbed."¹² Estienne Perlin, a French priest who spent two years in England and Scotland, published his observations in Paris in 1558. He reported that "the people of this nation hate the French to death, considering us their old enemies, and universally call us *France sbent*, *France dog*, that is to say 'despicable Frenchman,' 'French dog,' and also call us 'whoreson,' 'villain,' 'son of a bitch,' ... It annoys me that these peasants, in their own country, spit in our faces, whereas when they come to France, they are honored and revered like little gods; that is, the French prove themselves to be open-hearted and noble-spirited."¹³

The image of the French that comes across in *Love's Labour's Lost* accords more closely with the courtly attitude than with that of the populace. With respect to Spaniards and Russians, there seems to have been less divergence between the aristocrat's and the commoner's view of the "other": Spain was the arch-enemy, and the Russians could safely be regarded as figures of fun. Even so, in consideration of vicissitudes in English foreign policy during the

reign of Elizabeth I, the date of composition of *Love's Labour's Lost* is pertinent. Its date, moreover, is germane to our interpretation of Shakespeare's treatment of the French characters in the play. In his groundbreaking studies of the historical background to *Love's Labour's Lost*, the French scholar Abel Lefranc pointed out that the play is, "in fact, the representation of a scintillating episode in our history. ... The events that form the basis for the play occurred precisely between 1578 and 1584. ... The very substance of the play, far more than previous scholars have imagined, is impregnated with quite recognizable French elements. ... Indeed, the work stands as testimony that the dramatist had a virtually impeccable and absolutely amazing acquaintance with aspects of France and Navarre of the period that could have been known to only a very limited number of people. ... One is led to suspect that the author, whoever he was, must have sojourned for a time at the court of Henri de Navarre and of Marguerite de Valois."¹⁴ If Lefranc is correct—and there is, indeed, other evidence linking the play to the early dates that he specifies—then the play offers not so much an image of "Frenchness" as an ordinary Elizabethan would have perceived it, but rather some specific portraits of individual members of the nobility who happened to be French.

Our *terminus ad quem* for the dating of *Love's Labour's Lost* is the 1598 publication of the quarto edition. We know by its title page that this was a revised version. That page reads: "A Pleasant Conceited Comedie called, Loves labors lost. As it was presented before her Highness this last Christmas. Newly corrected and augmented By W. Shakespere. Imprinted at London by W.W. for Cutbert Burby. 1598." Further indications of revision include the repeated lines in IV.3 (lines 292-314 are echoed in lines 315ff); a similar redundancy in V.2;¹⁵ and the use of generic names (King, Braggart, Boy, Clown, Constable, Pedant, Curate) in some scenes for the characters named Ferdinand of Navarre, Don Armado, Moth, Costard, Dull, Holofernes, and Nathaniel in other scenes.¹⁶

The dating of the earlier version or versions of *Love's Labour's Lost* must be conjectured according to topical references in the text. Numerous internal references point to 1578 as the original date of composition,¹⁷ and this is corroborated by the external evidence that *The Double Maske: A Maske of Amasones* and *A Maske of Knights* was presented at court on 11 January 1579 to honor the French envoy Simier, whose coming had been announced three months earlier.¹⁸ Described in the records of the Court Revels as "an entertainment in imitation of a tournament between six ladies and a like number of gentlemen who surrendered to them," *The Double Maske* may well have been the Ur-*Love's Labour's Lost*.¹⁹ A piece depicting French ladies and knights engaged in a combat of wit would certainly have been considered appropriate entertainment for Simier and his entourage. Of the internal

evidence, most compelling is the fact that Euphuism—of which *Love's Labour's Lost* is universally acknowledged to be a textbook example—was a courtly fad in 1578-79, and even a year or so later the play's witticisms and in-jokes about that linguistic affectation among members of the court would have been quite stale. Earlier in 1578 the Queen had made a progress during which Thomas Churchyard presented a pageant of Nine Worthies, apparently just as ineptly as the one we see in *Love's Labour's Lost*.²⁰

In France that same year, the Duc d'Alençon gave an elaborate entertainment which included soldiers masquerading as Russians.²¹ Pierre de la Primaudaye's *L'Académie française*, a treatise on four young gentlemen of Anjou who spend their days in self improvement through study, exercise, and moral conversation, was published in French in 1577 and may be considered a probable source for the play.²² And of particular significance is the "scintillating episode" to which Lefranc alludes: on 2 October 1578, Marguerite de Valois met with her husband, Henri de Navarre, after a two-year separation. She had travelled to the south of France with her "flying squadron" (*escadron volant*) of attractive maids-of-honor for the reunion in Nérac, but religious factionalism was so intense at the time that the Protestant husband and his Catholic wife could not safely reside in the same city, a situation echoed in the exclusion of the Princess from Ferdinand of Navarre's court in *Love's Labour's Lost*. Another concern of Henri de Navarre and Marguerite was her unpaid dowry, against which he was holding parts of Aquitaine; this too parallels the business discussed by Ferdinand of Navarre and the Princess in the play.²³ Despite these problems, the encounter was celebrated with various festivities and entertainments, including some held outdoors in the lovely park of the chateau de Nérac. Lefranc notes that textual allusions to the park that is the setting for *Love's Labour's Lost* evoke the milieu just as Marguerite de Valois describes it in her memoirs.²⁴ Her memoirs record also that "the King my Husband being followed by a handsome troupe of lords and gentlemen, as honorable as the finest gallants I've ever seen at court; and there was nothing less than admirable about them, except that they were Huguenots."²⁵ Even the "Nine Worthies" figure prominently in the gathering at Nérac. The royal chateaux at Pau and at Nérac were furnished with two series of large tapestries depicting the Nine Worthies. French court records show that in November 1578 one complete set of these tapestries was transported from Pau to Nérac, presumably for the enjoyment of Marguerite, her mother, and her maids of honor.²⁶ That Shakespeare had these tapestries in mind when he wrote the play is evident in Costard's reproach to Sir Nathaniel for his poor performance as Alexander the Great (V.2.569-70): "O! sir, you have overthrown Alisander the conqueror. You will be scraped out of the painted cloth for this."

There is some evidence testifying to an interim revision of *Love's Labour's*

Lost between 1578 and 1598, probably in 1592.²⁷ A confusing attribution of lines in II.1 of the Quarto raises the possibility that an earlier version had “only three pairs of lovers.”²⁸ This squares nicely with the fact that the names of Maréchal Biron (Berowne) and Duc de Longueville (Longaville) were well known in England even before 1591, when Elizabeth sent troops under the Earl of Essex to aid the cause of Henri IV of France, but the Duc de Mayenne (Dumain) remained Henri’s foe until 1593.²⁹ Thus, the intermediate version—making the original six generic pairs of ladies and gentlemen (Amasones and Knights) into three couples with specific personal names—would have been written before 1593, leaving the incorporation of Dumain and Katherine for the version published in quarto in 1598. What we have then is a comedy originally written as a playful spoof of Euphuism combined with a tribute to the French manners and fashions that were so admired at the English court in the 1570s; later revised to tie the attractive leading characters to actual historical figures who were sympathetically regarded by the English (possibly even using their real names, judging by the fact that the Princess of France is occasionally listed as Queen in the Quarto); and finally revised—to make the politically sensitive identities less obvious to the man in the street, while further amusing the court by giving Ferdinand and his fellow oath-takers their comeuppance at the end of the play—after 1593, when Henri de Navarre converted to Catholicism, forswearing his Protestantism. As Berowne comments in IV.3.359: “It is religion to be thus forsworn.”

Numerous other details in *Love’s Labour’s Lost* betray Shakespeare’s first-hand knowledge of personalities and circumstances at the French court.³⁰ There were, for example, at the court of Henri IV actual people with the same names as secondary characters in the play: Antoine Boyet, minister of finance; de La Motte, a squire like his namesake Moth; and Marcadé.³¹ Lefranc notes that “the art of rhyming was practiced at the court of Navarre perhaps more than at any other: Marguerite de Valois composed many love poems, as did Henri.”³² The infamously amorous Henri de Navarre also had a habit of writing his love poems on both sides of the page with verses filling the margins, folding them like letters, and drawing around the wax seal an emblem signifying a kiss.³³ Thus the Princess describes the letter she has received from Ferdinand: “...as much love in rhyme/ As would be cramm’d up in a sheet of paper,/ Writ o’ both sides the leaf, margent and all,/ That he was fain to seal on Cupid’s name” (V.2.6-9). A few lines later, Katharine speaks of her sister, who died of love; this too has its historical counterpart in the death of the lovely young Hélène de Tournon at Brabant in the summer of 1577, as recounted in the memoirs of Marguerite de Valois.³⁴ These are but a few of the many specific allusions and brain-teasing references clearly intended for the amusement of a coterie audience. From this we might generalize that in the writing of *Love’s*

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Labour's Lost Shakespeare was not thinking of the French characters as national types, but as avatars of individuals known to members of Elizabeth's court.

According to Cumberland Clark, the "anti-French feeling" of the Elizabethan chronicle plays and of "the English nation as a whole" manifests itself in the imputation of three chief faults to the French: treachery, fickleness, and cowardice.³⁵ *Love's Labour's Lost* does imply fickleness in the French king and his three lords who first break their oaths "not to see ladies" for three years, and who later swear oaths to the wrong women.³⁶ However, unlike the patriotically-motivated history plays, this comedy geared to courtly sensibilities offers largely sympathetic portrayals of the French. The four couples are physically attractive, well-mannered, quick-witted, and act with the best of intentions. Even the business dealings between Ferdinand and the Princess are conducted with the utmost grace (II.1.128-178). It is possible, however, that some of the same qualities that delighted the audience at court could have taken on quite different overtones in the popular perception. The banter of the ladies among themselves, egged on by Boyet, in IV.1 is so ribald that Costard, upon hearing it, marvels: "O' my troth, most sweet jests! most incony vulgar wit; When it comes so smoothly off, so obscenely as it were, so fit" (IV.1.143-4). Such "sweet vulgarity and smooth obscenity" is seen as very French by the 19th-century German critic G.G. Gervinus,³⁷ and it is possible that the average Elizabethan may have taken a similarly jaundiced view of fine ladies speaking smut. At the same time, the French characters' self-conscious displays of refined rhetoric and manners would have struck the level-headed average Englishman as excessive. Yet if excess of refinement is regarded as a fault, it must be admitted that such matters are relative. Among the upper-class characters, it is the Princess's attendant Boyet who truly demonstrates affectation of speech and manners pushed to the extreme. Indeed, Berowne describes him as "the ape of form, monsieur the nice ... Honey-tongu'd Boyet" (V.2.325,335). The irony of seeing Boyet as an exemplar of French excess is that the character was undoubtedly intended to be a caricature of Sir Philip Sidney, whose relationship with Edward De Vere, Seventeenth Earl of Oxford, was colored by considerable animosity, especially after their oft-reported "falling out at tennis"³⁸ in September 1579. Sidney's affectation was well known at court. Furthermore, he blatantly plagiarized lines from both Edmund Spenser and Edward De Vere for a pastoral he presented at Wilton. Sidney's habit of literary theft (many of his poems are verbatim translations from the French of Ronsard and Desportes)³⁹ undoubtedly inspired Berowne's description of Boyet:

This fellow pecks up wit, as pigeons pease,
And utters it again when God doth please.
He is wit's pedlar, and retails his wares
At wakes, and wassails, meetings, markets, fairs. (V.2.315-8).

Thus, Boyet—on balance the only less than sympathetic French character in *Love's Labour's Lost*—was, to the knowing audience at court, not representative of a Frenchman at all. Unquestionably, Shakespeare wrote *Love's Labour's Lost* from a courtly perspective, and the court's attitude toward France was cordial, at least during the period from 1578 to 1593. Could the play's 1598 publication (the first printed play to bear the name "William Shake-speare") have been a calculated step taken under Elizabeth's encouragement? She would have realized that the ordinary Englishman would view it as satire on the effete, frivolous, Catholic French. This would serve to reinforce Protestantism among the citizenry while she herself, above the fray, could maintain strong diplomatic ties with France.

England's attitude toward Spain was considerably less ambiguous. The English people hated Spain even when their queen, Mary Tudor (Elizabeth's older half-sister) was married to Philip of Spain (the future Felipe II). During Elizabeth's reign, Spain controlled the New World, Portugal, the Kingdom of Naples, the Duchy of Milan, and the Low Countries, including the commercial port of Antwerp. The Pope was urging Felipe II to employ his nation's huge "invincible" galleons in an attack on England, and thus Elizabeth sustained her tenuous alliance with France (even after Anglo-French diplomatic relations were seriously shaken by the slaughter of 30,000 Huguenots in the St Bartholomew's Day massacre in 1572) as a means of gaining time to build up England's naval force. According to Cumberland Clark, English hatred of Spain was "at once racial, imperial, commercial, and religious."⁴⁰ Anti-Spanish feelings are evident in the persistent English literary stereotype of the Spaniard "which comprises most of the vices and shortcomings known to man," according to William S. Maltby. "When the Spaniard has the upper hand, his cruelty and hauteur are unsupportable. When reduced to his proper stature by some unimpeachably nordic hero, he is cringing and mean-spirited, a coward whose love of plots and treacheries is exceeded only by his incompetence in carrying them out."⁴¹ The English view of Spain as a "cruel and barbarous nation"⁴² was corroborated by the 1583 publication of an English translation of the *Brevissima Relación de la Destrucción de las Indias* (1542) by Bartolomé de las Casas, chronicling the shocking acts of cruelty perpetrated by Spaniards against the innocent natives of the New World. Elizabeth herself sanctioned English anti-Hispanism with the official publication of her propagandistic *Declaration of the Causes Moving the Queen of England to give aid to the Defence of the People afflicted and oppressed in the Lowe Countries* (1585), which described the bloodthirstiness of Spanish troops in the Netherlands.⁴³ England's defeat of the attacking Spanish Armada in 1588 marked the high point of anti-Spanish feeling in England, and pamphleteers duly sensationalized the event. By exaggerating the size of the invading fleet, an implication of Spanish

incompetence was added to Spain's reputation for inhuman barbarism.⁴⁴

Given the vehemence of those attitudes, it seems surprising that Don Armado, the "refined traveller of Spain" (I.1.162) in *Love's Labour's Lost*, should be such a complex character in whom there is no imputation of villainy and very little of cowardice. Certainly, he is a ridiculous figure, a source of amusement for the courtiers and the butt of many jokes, verbally one-upped even by his diminutive squire Moth. Yet Ferdinand's description of him bears little relationship to either the official or the popular Elizabethan conception of Spaniards:

A man in all the world's new fashion planted,
That hath a mint of phrases in his brain;
One who the music of his own vain tongue
Doth ravish like enchanting harmony;
A man of complements, whom right and wrong
Have chose as umpire of their mutiny:
This child of fancy, that Armado hight,
For interim to our studies shall relate
In high-born words the worth of many a knight
From tawny Spain, lost in the world's debate. (I.1.163-172)

The qualities attributed to him here are: fashionable (Euphuistic) verbal display, conceit, courteous manners with perhaps an element of affectation, punctiliousness about the rules governing affairs of honor (duelling), high birth or good breeding, and a patriotic delight in bragging about little-known Spaniards. This largely sympathetic description undoubtedly survives from the 1578 version of the play, not only because of its reference to Euphuism as a "new fashion," but also because Elizabeth was then still concerned with buying time for an English naval build-up by keeping diplomatic channels open with Felipe II.⁴⁵ The more ridiculous attributes of the character may well have been added after the 1588 defeat of the Armada, at which time his name would have been changed from Braggart to Armado.

Gustav Ungerer has proposed that Don Armado is based upon a highly visible Spanish turncoat, Antonio Pérez, who had lost his post as chief minister under Felipe II through his own treacherous attempt to undermine relations between the Spanish king and his half-brother, Don John of Austria. Pérez escaped to Europe where he carried out a propaganda war of revenge against Felipe II, arriving in England, on a mission for Henri de Navarre, in April 1593. Ungerer analyzes various ways in which Pérez resembled Armado: both are Spanish; both write letters in Senecan prose style; both are described as "peregrinate" and "odd;" Armado's relationship with Jaquenetta resembles that of Pérez with Doña Juana Coello.⁴⁶ The description of Don Armado in V.1.9-14 apparently applied recognizably to Pérez: "his humour is lofty, his

discourse peremptory, his tongue filed, his eye ambitious, his gait majestic, and his general behavior vain, ridiculous, and thrasonical. He is too picked, too spruce, too affected, too odd, as it were, too peregrinate, as I may call it." However, before we extend this commentary from Pérez to Spaniards in general, it must be noted that these lines are spoken by Holofernes, who is, if anything, even more ridiculous a character than Don Armado.⁴⁷

It is important to remember that the figure of the braggart soldier or *miles gloriosus* originated in Roman comedy and became a staple of the Italian commedia dell'arte, where it was traditional to depict the swashbuckling *capitano* as a Spaniard, perhaps in part because the foreign accent served as an added source of humor for Italian audiences. O.J. Campbell traces the evolution of the *capitano* in the Italian comedy, showing how "most of the roughness and noisy extravagance of the role disappeared to be replaced by the polished elegance of a gloved gentleman, who carries on his warfare with the utmost dignity and seriousness".⁴⁸ Campbell rightly notes that Shakespeare's Don Armado is "no swashbuckler and windy braggart, but a fop in manners and a virtuoso in speech."⁴⁹ He further points out that the most famous of all Italian commedia dell'arte *capitanos* was Francesco Andreini, who was well known for his incorporation of literary conceits into his speeches. Andreini had, like Don Armado, "a mint of phrases in his brain" (I.1.164). As a member of the Gelosi company, Andreini performed before the French court in 1571, 1574, 1576, 1599, and 1603-4.⁵⁰ It is probable that Edward De Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, saw the performances when he was visiting the court in Paris in 1576. Only three commedia dell'arte troupes are known to have visited Elizabethan England (in 1573, 1576, and 1578), and records of their performances are limited to London and to the court on progress. Yet most scholars agree with Richard David's recognition of the play's debt to the commedia dell'arte. He states: "Armado would have been impossible without the Captain and his kin."⁵¹

Other theories have been put forth to tie Don Armado to various known personages. In IV.1.99-101, Boyet says: "This Armado is a Spaniard, that keeps here in court;/ a phantasime, a Monarcho, and one that makes sport/ To the prince and his book-mates." Monarcho was a real person, a half-crazed, vainglorious Italian hanger-on at Elizabeth's court. Among the writers who recorded his antics was Thomas Churchyard.⁵² Eva Turner Clark emphasizes a political subtext to the play: she sees Don Armado as representative of Don John of Austria and Jaquenetta as Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots, who intrigued with Don John against Elizabeth.⁵³ Some have seen both Don Armado and Holofernes as caricatures of John Florio, a prominent Italian resident in England.⁵⁴ Finally, Armado is seen by Oxfordians as one facet of the probable

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author of the play, Edward De Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, who had been transformed into an “Italianated” Englishman during his European tour of 1575-6. Garbed in the latest fashions from the continent and leading the Euphuist faction at court in a “show-off” use of language, Oxford often functioned as a self-mocking “court jester” for Elizabeth.⁵⁵ The point of identifying all these optional prototypes for Don Armado is to suggest, again, that the character does not necessarily or primarily represent a Spaniard or a Spanish national type. As Cordasco observes: “For the spectator, Armado was the contemporary Spaniard; for the initiate, he was undoubtedly much more.”⁵⁶

When it comes to the Muscovites (a synonym for Russians) in *Love’s Labour’s Lost*, there can be no question that the portrayal is a caricature. The Muscovite sequence is a set piece, a masking dance, in which Ferdinand and friends assume stereotypical traits to pass themselves off as exotic foreigners. Their entrance is cued by a trumpet, and they are preceded by blackamoors. The costume references are sparse: “disguised like Russians, and visored” (V.2.157), “in shapeless gear” (V.2.303), and “in Russian habit” (V.2.368). The original intent of the four lords toward the ladies is to “with some strange pastime solace them” (IV.3.373), to pave the way to Love with “revels, dances, masks, and merry hours” (IV.2.375). Boyet reports to the ladies that “their purpose is to parle, to court and dance” (V.2.122). We learn also from Boyet that the men have taken the trouble to teach Moth to speak with a Russian accent and to adopt a certain style of movement: “Action and accent did they teach him there;/ ‘Thus must thou speak, and thus thy body bear’” (V.2.100). Presumably the disguised men adopt the same accent and movement, for Rosalind later recalls “their rough carriage so ridiculous” (V.2.306). Before they even appear, the Princess decides that “they do it but in mockery merriment” (V.2.139); and when they leave, she says: “Twenty adieus, my frozen Muscovites” (V.2.265). Returning to the ladies as themselves, the lords seem genuinely surprised that the ladies saw through their disguises (V.2.385-395). All these indications suggest that Elizabethan convention ascribed some readily recognizable traits to Russian nationals.

Russia had been “discovered” by the English only in 1553, when a ship commanded by Richard Chancellor left an Arctic expedition to seek refuge in the White Sea; Chancellor then accepted the Tsar’s invitation to visit Moscow. A Russia Company was chartered the following year to exploit opportunities for trade between the two realms. “By the end of the century,” according to Lloyd E. Berry and Robert O. Crummey, “Elizabeth’s subjects had accumulated a store of experience of Muscovite life and customs far richer than that of any other European nation.”⁵⁷ Travellers’ reports available to Elizabethan readers were: accounts of the voyages of Richard Chancellor in 1553, Anthony

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Jenkinson in 1557, George Turberville in 1568-9, and Sir Thomas Randolph in 1568-9, all published by Hakluyt in 1589; Giles Fletcher's important work, *Of the Russe Commonwealth*, describing his year in Russia, 1588-89, published in 1591. (The *Travels* of Sir Jerome Horsey, based upon his visits and years of residence in Russia between 1573 and 1591, existed only in manuscript until 1856.) Despite differences in tone (due to the different personalities of the observers), these documents are consistent in their descriptions of Russian character, lifestyle, manners, and dress. The Elizabethan travellers all viewed the Russians as backward, rude and cruel to one another, hard-drinking, and adulterous. Fletcher, for example, noted "their manner of bringing up (void of all good learning and civil behavior)... [T]he whole country is filled with rapine and murder. They make no account of the life of a man. ... As for the truth of his word the Russe for the most part maketh small regard of it so he may gain by a lie and breach of his promise."⁵⁸ The observation about Russian lying⁵⁹ might perhaps seem pertinent with reference to the lords who forswear their oaths. Rosaline's comment on the "Muscovites" after their exit—"gross, gross; fat, fat" (V.2.268)—accords with Fletcher's description of the Russians: "they are for the most part of a large size and of very fleshy bodies, accounting it a grace to be somewhat gross and burly, and therefore they nourish and spread their beards to have them long and broad."⁶⁰ Some excerpts from the verse epistles of George Turberville will further indicate what Shakespeare envisioned for the masque of Muscovites:

The Russie men are round of bodies, fully fac'd,
The greatest part with bellies big that overhang the waist,
Flat-headed for the most, with faces nothing fair
But brown by reason of the stove and closeness of the air.

....

Their garments be not gay nor handsome to the eye:
A cap aloft their heads they have that standeth very high,
Which *kolpak* they do term. They wear no ruffs at all.
The best have collars set with pearl, *rubashka* they do call.
Their shirts in Russie long, they work them down before,
And on the sleeves with colored silks two inches good or more.
Aloft their shirts they wear a garment jacketwise
High *odnoriadka* ; and about his burly waist he ties
His *portki*, which instead of better breeches be;
Of linen cloth that garment is, no codpiece is to see.

....

And over all a *shuba* furr'd, and thus the Russie goes.⁶¹

Like the French and Spanish references in *Love's Labour's Lost*, the Muscovite sequence is rooted in actual circumstances known to members of the English

court. According to Horsey, Tsar Ivan IV (“the Terrible”) was contemplating a proposal of marriage to Elizabeth in 1571. Although nothing came of that impulse, Ivan IV continued to dream of marriage to an Englishwoman, preferably a close relative of the “virgin queen.” An English doctor at his court described Lady Mary Hastings, daughter of the second Earl of Huntingdon, and the tsar determined to make her his wife, even though he was still married to his seventh wife. To that end, he sent Fyodor Pisemsky as envoy extraordinary to negotiate the marriage and to bring back a portrait of the lady. Pisemsky arrived in London in September 1582, but it was the following May before he was able to see Lady Mary.⁶² Horsey described the encounter: “Her majesty caused that lady to be attended on with divers great ladies and maids of honor and young noblemen, the number of each appointed to be seen by the said ambassador in York House garden. She put on a stately countenance accordingly. The ambassador, attended with divers other noblemen and others, was brought before her ladyship; cast down his countenance; fell prostrate to her feet, rose, ran back from her, his face still towards her, she and the rest admiring at his manner. Said by an interpreter it did suffice him to behold the angel he hoped should be his master’s spouse; commended her angelical countenance, state, and admirable beauty. She was after called by her familiar friends in court the empress of Muscovy.”⁶³ Thus, in *Love’s Labour’s Lost*, when Longaville exclaims “O sweet Maria, empress of my love!” (IV.3.53), the courtly audience would have remembered Mary’s missed opportunity to be empress of Muscovy and enjoyed a good laugh.

And again we see that—even though Ferdinand, Berowne, Longaville, and Dumain assume stereotypical traits that would identify them as Russians in the popular imagination—setting the play in its true historical context yields references to specific individuals and circumstances known to the court, and the comedic value of these in-jokes must have far outweighed that of facile caricature when performed for its intended audience. The inescapable conclusion is that while Shakespeare may not have been averse to having public playhouse audiences find humor in broad ethnic and national stereotypes, he was primarily writing for the more refined sensibilities of a coterie audience.

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Notes

¹ It should be noted that Shakespeare's use of caricature could be said to encompass his fellow Englishmen, such as the tavern lowlife surrounding Falstaff. Typical of the many observations on English character that are found in Shakespeare's work is Falstaff's comment: "It was always yet the trick of our English nation, if they have a good thing, to make it too common" (*Henry IV, Part 2, I.2*).

² See, for example, Marienstrass, 101-3; Hoenselaars, 32.

³ Campbell demonstrates that Don Armado as well as the English types (Costard, Holofernes, Nathaniel, and even Dull) have their origins in the stock figures of the Italian *commedia dell'arte*; see especially pp. 33-43 of his article.

⁴ According to Lee, for example, "in some forty French provincial towns printing presses were at work without intermission from the earliest years of the sixteenth century, and were in constant process of multiplication in the hundred years that followed. ... There is nothing in the annals of the English Renaissance which can compare with this diffusion of intellectual energy and ambition" (26).

⁵ Jacques Peletier du Mans, *Dialogues de l'Ortographie* (1550); Mellema (1591); both cited by Lee, 44.

⁶ Lee, 47-53.

⁷ Perry (her translation of Elizabeth's French), 297.

⁸ Hoenselaars, 27.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 52.

¹⁰ Cumberland Clark, 136.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 138.

¹² Lee, 50.

¹³ From Perlin's *Description des royaumes d'Angleterre et d'Ecosse* (Paris, 1558), cited by Lee, 59-60: "Les gens de ceste nation hayent à mort les Francoys, comme leurs vielz ennemis, et du tout nous appellent *France chenesve, France dogue*, qui est à dire 'maraultz François', 'chiens François', et autrement nous appellent *orsom*, 'villains', 'filz de putring' Il me desplaît que ces vilains, estans en leur pays, nous crachent à la face, et eulx, estans à la France, on les honore et revere comme petis dieux; en ce, les Francois se monstrent francs de coeur et noble d'esperit." The English translation in the text is my own, as are other translations from the French, unless otherwise attributed.

¹⁴ Lefranc's two-volume work *Sous le masque de William Shakespeare* (1919) includes an extensive analysis of *Love's Labour's Lost*. The statements cited here are from his 1936 article on the play, pp.411-2, 414-5.

¹⁵ According to David, the redundant lines are “clearly an early draft, somehow left uncanceled by Shakespeare although he had written new lines for Rosaline and Berowne, and borrowed from the old for Dumain and Katharine” (p. 180, note to lines 809-14).

¹⁶ See David, xxii.

¹⁷ Will Shakspeare of Stratford-upon-Avon would have been only fourteen years old in 1578, but it is hoped that the reader will examine the evidence objectively. It must be stated from the outset that this author brings an Oxfordian perspective to this study; that is, my research over the years has forced me, as a matter of intellectual honesty, to accept Edward De Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford (1550-1604) as the most likely author of the plays and poems published under the pseudonym William Shake-speare.

¹⁸ Simier’s mission was to negotiate a marriage between Queen Elizabeth and the Duc d’Alençon, brother of Henri III (r. 1574-1589) and brother-in-law of Henri de Navarre, the future Henri IV (r. 1589-1610). The latter, a close friend of Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, is generally acknowledged to have been the model for the character of Ferdinand of Navarre in *Love’s Labour’s Lost*. Among the textual references to the envoy Simier’s suit on behalf of François, Duc d’Alençon is Costard’s line (III.1.119): “O! marry me to one Frances—I smell some l’envoy, some goose in this.”

¹⁹ Eva Turner Clark, 136; Ogburn, 173.

²⁰ Thomas Churchyard, *A Discourse of the Queenes Maiesties entertainment in Suffolk and Norfolk: with a description of many things then presently seene* (1578). See comments on this event by Wikander, 6, 29, 32. See also Eva Turner Clark, 243. Churchyard, an associate of Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, may have been the model for the character of Costard (Ogburn 198).

²¹ Ogburn, 195.

²² T. Bowes’s English translation, *The French Academie*, was published in 1586; see excerpts in Bullough, 434-5.

²³ Eva Turner Clark, 183-4.

²⁴ Lefranc (1936), 412.

²⁵ Marguerite de Valois, 163.

²⁶ Lefranc (1936), 425-6.

²⁷ In 1592, Queen Elizabeth visited Oxford University in violation of her own 1561 statute forbidding the lodging of women on the premises of a college or cathedral; she had done this only twice before, in 1564 and in 1566. Thus she was guilty of an “oath forsworn” like Ferdinand and friends in the play. Performed at court, the play would have amused the Queen with its gently mocking reminder that she, like the Princess in the play, must be refused admittance to certain precincts (Eva Turner Clark 142-3).

See also Ruth Loyd Miller's essay in this volume.

²⁸ See David, xx.

²⁹ Civil war was at its height in France in 1589-94. In II.1.224-6 of the play, the Princess obliquely alludes to France's wars of religion when she tells her ladies that "this civil war of wits were much better us'd/ On Navarre and his book-men, for here 'tis abused."

³⁰ Edward De Vere spent time at the French court in the first months of 1575 and again in March and April of 1576. There he formed friendships with Marguerite de Valois and Henri de Navarre, the future "Reine Margot" and Henri IV. The warmth of the relationship between the latter and Oxford is evident in a letter (5 October 1595) to Oxford from the French king. The text of that letter is given in French and English in Eva Turner Clark, 131-2.

³¹ Lefranc II (1919), 60; in his 1936 article Lefranc argues for the overlapping identification of Boyet with Marguerite de Valois's chancellor Guy du Faur Pibrac (1529-1584), a political opportunist of rare eloquence, who also accompanied her to Nérac in 1578.

³² *Ibid.*, 62.

³³ *Ibid.*, 64-5.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 74-9; see also Lefranc (1936), 422-5.

³⁵ Cumberland Clark, 139.

³⁶ Henri de Navarre was a notorious womanizer, a trait which earned him the nickname le Vert-Galant. His mistresses included Jacqueline de Bueil (Comtesse de Moret), Corisande (Comtesse de Gramont), Charlotte des Essarts (Comtesse de Romorantin), Antoinette Guercheville, Henriette d'Enragues, Esther Imbert, Charlotte of Montmorency, and most importantly, Gabrielle d'Estrées.

³⁷ G.G. Gervinus, *Shakespeare Commentaries* (1877); cited by Cumberland Clark, 145-6.

³⁸ *Hamlet* II.1.58.

³⁹ Looney I, 248-50.

⁴⁰ Cumberland Clark, p. 214.

⁴¹ Maltby, 6.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 20.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 55.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 76-8.

⁴⁵ In a letter dated 20 December 1577, Elizabeth wrote to Felipe II: "We beg very affectionately that all suspicions may be banished from between us, if any such have been raised by the arts of wicked men with the object of destroying that close friendship which we enjoyed in our earlier years." On 16 March 1578, Elizabeth received Felipe II's ambassador Don Bernardino

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de Mendoza, who had been instructed that Felipe II hoped to have Elizabeth “on our side and that as a friend and sister she will turn her arms as she promises to do, to our support” (Perry, 233-4).

⁴⁶ Ungerer II, 377-92.

⁴⁷ The intermediate revision of the play undoubtedly made Holofernes into a caricature of the pedant Gabriel Harvey, who publicly praised his benefactor Edward De Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, while privately satirizing him in verses that much resemble the speech by Holofernes quoted here. Note that as the scene continues Holofernes appears to be won over by Armado (whom some have seen as De Vere’s mocking self-portrait). It is significant that in the pageant of the Nine Worthies, Holofernes is cast as Judas (Looney II, 244).

⁴⁸ Campbell, 24.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 23.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 25.

⁵¹ David, xxxi.

⁵² Churchyard was a longtime servant of Edward De Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford. See David, 67, for further references to Monarcho.

⁵³ Eva Turner Clark, 157, 161.

⁵⁴ Sells, 212.

⁵⁵ In that capacity, Oxford’s relationship to Elizabeth is echoed in that of Feste to Olivia and the Fool to King Lear. Among the many clues associating Oxford with Don Armado is the name itself: Armado is an anagram of “O drama”; that is, “O”xford’s “drama” (Ogburn 196). There is also much of Oxford in both Berowne and Longaville; Berowne’s speeches incorporate the identifying “O” almost to excess.

⁵⁶ Cordasco, 6.

⁵⁷ Berry and Crummey, xiii.

⁵⁸ Giles Fletcher in Berry and Crummey, 245.

⁵⁹ For an interesting analysis of Russian lying, see Edmund Wilson, *A Window on Russia* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1972), 203-6.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 241.

⁶¹ Turberville “To Parker,” in Berry and Crummey, 81.

⁶² Payne and Romanoff, 406-9.

⁶³ Berry and Crummey, 301; see also Bullough, 442. According to Payne and Romanoff, Lady Mary was at first intrigued by the idea of becoming an empress, but, after learning more about Ivan the Terrible, begged Queen Elizabeth to get her out of the situation. Elizabeth directed Pisemsky to explain to the Tsar that Lady Mary’s ill health would not permit her to make the difficult journey to Moscow (409).

The Queen's Hand in *The Merchant of Venice*

Elliott Baker

On the 18th of July in the year 1290, by act of King Edward I, all Jews were ordered to leave England. More than three hundred and fifty years were to pass before Oliver Cromwell tabled the motion which officially allowed their return. Being a realist, Cromwell preferred Jews to Papists, especially when he compared the commerce of Amsterdam with that of Rome. During the interim, the alien population of Elizabethan London never exceeded ten thousand and the most generous estimate of the number of Jews in the entire country has been less than one hundred. The noted Sir Sidney Lee could positively identify only five but suspected that there were several more who practiced their religion secretly.

With a population ranging between a handful and five score it's no wonder that Jews get little mention in the records of the time. One entry indicates that the payment for the whipping of a Jew was thrice that for whipping a Welshman.¹ And the last persons to die at the stake in England because of their religion (1612) were two "Aryans" whose teachings were held to approximate those of Judaism.²

The compact majority of America can identify with this. After all, the sponsors of Columbus similarly banished Jews from Spain during that watershed year of 1492. Yet, another explanation has to be found for their predilection for products of an anti-Semitic time and place.³ For none of the thousands of interpretations of Shakespeare's works have claimed that the plays deviated from conventional Elizabethan ethics, and the endless list of virtues attributed to the man himself do not include his ever advancing an unpopular opinion—with one notable exception.⁴

This, of course, is the famous speech by Shylock.

Hath not a Jew eyes? Hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? Fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer as a Christian is?

Novelist and essayist Elliott Baker has recently finished a novel centered on the Dr. Roderigo Lopez affair and trial.

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If you prick us, do we not bleed? If you tickle us, do we not laugh? If you poison us, do we not die? (III.i)

The debate about whether *The Merchant of Venice* in its entirety is anti-Semitic or not is immaterial. That one speech cannot be questioned. In a time and place when “Jew” was pre-fixed by “vile” and followed by “cur” or “dog,” of an audience no different from that at Tyburn, which the Mayor of London described as composed mostly of “thieves, horse stealers and whore mongers,” who hissed Barrabas and salivated at boar fights on the same day, this playwright, forever anxious to entertain, always careful not to offend, asked through the mouth of his villain if a Jew was any different from themselves.

Had the play been written to be performed at Court, this might not have been so dangerous. Her Majesty apparently was not unacquainted with Hebraic tradition. (Hadn't her father invoked *Leviticus* to justify the annulment of a marriage?) Dr. John Dee, her personal astrologer, was a favorite partner for conversations devoid of politics and his Kabbalistic writings show him well steeped in medieval Jewish mysticism.⁵

But Shylock was asking the *mob* if his organs, dimensions, senses, etc., weren't the same as theirs. Given the false consciousness of the age, it was a brave and noble act, probably unequaled in theatrical history and possibly adding a new dimension to the playwright who provides “the most satisfying intensity of all.”⁶ For since almost everything ever said about Shakespeare has admittedly been based on an assumption, it's fair to consider one more.

Was William Shakespeare Jewish? More outrageous suppositions have been advanced. Because 72 different kinds of birds are mentioned in the plays, he's been given an honorary degree in ornithology. And more recently in the visual arts.⁷ Experts have repeatedly cast him in their own image. So to Canon Beeching he was a teetotler⁸ and to Frank Harris a phallic narcissist.⁹ A Jewish American professor treating him as a fellow “lanzman” would only be following suit.¹⁰ Why not? The standard ploys of Shakespearean scholarship have used the architecture of the unknown to support edifices just as lacking in credibility. This one, at least, has some substance worthy of examination.

II

It is generally accepted that *The Merchant* derived from one of the tales in Ser Giovanni's *Il Pecorone*. Since this had not been translated into English at the time *The Merchant* was written, it has been necessary to credit Shakespeare with enough knowledge of Italian to have read it in the original. One authority even has him journeying to Venice with a group of players and somehow finding his way to the Nazione Tedesca section, which was the center of usury, but there is no evidence of his ever having set foot east of Gravesend.

Other source material has been suggested at times. There are traces in the

play of Robert Wilson's *The Three Ladies of London* and *The Orator* by Alexander Silvayn. The influence of Thomas Dekker's *Joseph, The Jew of Venice*, the play not extant, can only be suspected. Wilson is the most interesting connection. Fleay believes that Shakespeare learned his craft under his tutelage and Wilson's writings seemed to have disappeared after 1589.¹¹

These sources, however, provide only the basic story and some characters. None account for the texture of the play and the knowledge behind it. In spite of orthodox Jewish opposition to literature, a number of Hebrew secular plays from the early Renaissance have survived. Since some were written in Italy, they also enter the picture.

The christening of characters always furnishes some insight into those who give them fictional life. The names Shakespeare chose have been a popular guessing game; if anything, more so in this play than the others. Gobbo, Shylock's servant and the unfunniest clown in the repertoire, has sometimes owed his name to Sir Robert Cecil because gobbo means hunchback in Italian and Cecil had that deformity. But it's unlikely that Shakespeare would mock the son of Lord Burghley, the most powerful man in the kingdom. Another interpretation is that the playwright, wanting to localize the character, added an "o" to "gob" (as in mouthful) because the servant talks so much.¹² But it has also been pointed out that the name could come from Gibeonite. Some attempts have been made to link characters in the play with real people, associating the merchant, Antonio, for example, with Don Antonio, the pretender to the throne of Portugal who was then in England.

The Jewish characters, Jessica and Tubal, have deservedly received more serious analysis, for neither appears in *Il Pecorone* and both names are pre-Israelite and have parallels in the Book of Genesis.¹³ But it is Shylock who takes center stage. At this distance in time, it is impossible to say if the emotion aroused by the name has been honed by the character or if the very sound produced by the syllables conjures up an image of greed. But when a proper name becomes a byword of the language it has been well chosen.

Again, there have been varied explanations. Suggested Hebrew derivations include Saul, Seol, and Shiloch.¹⁴ The last would seem the most reasonable. There also was a 17th century pamphlet which contained the predictions of a Jewish prophet named Shillocke.¹⁵

Names, like statistics, can be used to prove anything, so we turn elsewhere. The three thousand ducats for a pound of flesh provides a possibility. Jessica's insistence that the pound of flesh be taken from the merchant's heart hints that Shylock may have had another region in mind. That might explain the play's original title—*The Comical History of The Merchant of Venice*. Though there is some comedy in the play, it can hardly be classified as such. Heywood's long-

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standing definition that “comedies begin in trouble and end in peace” applies as well to romances and fairy tales and most melodramas.¹⁶ But if Shylock’s incision in lieu of payment for the bond was to be made two feet lower down it would certainly be a focal point for farce.¹⁷ The fact that so much of English humor is rooted in the rectum and its Jewish counterpart is centered in the groin deserves contemplation.¹⁸

Left for last is the most essential consideration of all. That is the connection between Shylock, the dramatic creation, and Dr. Roderigo (Ruy) Lopez, the tragic victim.

III

The 15-volume *Oxford History of England* devotes one sentence to Dr. Roderigo Lopez.

The execution of Dr. Lopez, the royal physician, for an alleged attempt to murder the queen by poison (1594) shows the strength of the public apprehension on this score, even if the evidence that sent him to the block was not conclusive.¹⁹

The allotted space is as objectionable as the evasive phrasing. Scholars of the Tudor Age are unanimous in describing the evidence as more fraudulent than inconclusive. It’s surprising that while the exhumation of history’s injustices remains a thriving industry, so little attention has been given to this particular case.

The already mentioned Sir Sidney Lee openly confronted the villain of *The Merchant*. His essay, “The Original of Shylock,”²⁰ was the first affiliation of the Venetian moneylender with Queen Elizabeth’s personal physician. Lee also provided the entry on Dr. Lopez in the *Dictionary of National Biography*.

The year and place of birth are not certain. Lee allows a decade (1520-1530) for the former and while calling Lopez a native of Portugal adds that it’s not unlikely he was born in England. Wherever, he was a Marrano (Portugese Jew) by descent and like most of that small colony in England he converted to Christianity. The dates charting his career are more definite. By 1569, he was a member of the College of Physicians and in 1575 he was the first to hold the office of House Physician at St. Bartholomew’s Hospital.²¹ Before then he had been doctor to Sir Francis Walsingham and Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester. His association with Leicester was to become a source of scandal. Leicester’s wife, Amy Robsart, had died under mysterious circumstances, apparently removing the sole impediment to his becoming husband of the Queen. It was well known that both desired the marriage and Amy’s death had long been anticipated and poison predicted as the cause. Lord Burghley, not one to gossip, confided as much to the Spanish Ambassador. When Amy was found dead at the foot of a stairway, her neck broken, the rumors were quickly

amended to her having been fed a potion which produced dizziness and led to the fall. A pamphlet by a Jesuit priest in 1584 included Dr. Lopez as one of those whom Leicester employed to dispose of his enemies.²² The pamphlet was immediately suppressed by the Crown but continued to be secretly circulated. Two years later, Queen Elizabeth appointed Dr. Lopez her personal physician. From 1586 until his arrest in 1593 he remained so. He was executed at Tyburn on the 7th of June, 1594.

Though far from complete, Sir Sidney Lee's account of the life of Lopez amounts to a much thicker dossier than we have on William Shakespeare. But Lee's theory that Shylock was modeled on Lopez is found wanting. To equate Lopez's last words from the scaffold, "I love the Queen as well as I love Jesus Christ!" with Shylock's initial assessment of Antonio, "I hate him for he is a Christian..." (I.iii) is to attempt a new high in theoretical desperation. Yet others have followed Sir Sidney's lead. For example, the rightly esteemed John Dover Wilson so leapt on Gratiano's words in the play:

Thy currish spirit/Govern'd a wolf, who hang'd for human slaughter—"
(IV.i)

Shakespeare seemed to have enjoyed puns as much as Dr. Johnson hated them and "Wolf" is a translated pun on the name Lopez. With such thin strands have the usurer and doctor been tied together, but most modern editions of the play and program notes accompanying its production mention their possible connection.

The main source materials on Dr. Lopez consist of John Stow's *Annals*, William Camden's *The True and Royal History of Elizabeth*, the *State Papers: Elizabeth* and the records of both St. Bartholomew's Hospital and the Royal College of Physicians. The record of his trial consists of the confessions of the two spies tried with him and an account prepared by Charles Yetswiert, one of the Queen's secretaries. The confessions do not read as if voluntary, nor the account unbiased. What may be the most masterly indictment ever written, *A True Report of the Detestable Treason Intended by Dr. Roderigo Lopez*, by Francis Bacon, was not part of the judicial proceedings.

When the facts are scarce and suspect, the pseudo-science of history must make some deference to reason. An attempted assassination demands either motive or madness. That for which Dr. Lopez was tried and executed contained neither, so it has been necessary to look elsewhere. In the intricate Court of Elizabeth each twisted corridor branched into several others. Only by exploring them all is it possible to find the hidden passage where Dr. Lopez and Shylock meet.

IV

Roderigo Lopez was not an obvious choice to be Queen Elizabeth's personal physician, if for no other reason than her long insistence that none but

English hands touch any part of her, including her teeth. The fact that Lopez gained the appointment has to be attributed to the influence of both Leicester and Walsingham, especially the Secretary of State. As head of the secret service, Walsingham was always alert for signs of greed or ambition or weakness which could be turned to political purposes. Lopez had given indications of all three. He could be used.

The complexity of Walsingham's plotting died with him on the 6th of April, 1590. All his personal papers were burned the same day. But the plot involving Lopez had already been set in motion. The basis of all Walsingham's strategy had been to gather reliable information about the might and intent of the Spanish while spreading falsehoods about those of the English. Some of the fictions which reached King Philip and his advisers exaggerated Lopez's relationship with the Queen and his dislike of Don Antonio, the pretender to the throne of Portugal.

The two foreign agents implicated and tried along with Lopez, Manuel Luis Tinoco and Ferreira de Gama, featured in Walsingham's plan. So, too, the courier Manuel Andrada, who presented Lopez with a diamond and ruby ring, claiming it was an offering from King Philip. The Spanish objective was the disposal of Don Antonio and Walsingham did nothing to thwart it. Someone at the Court of the Escorial apparently believed the citing of Lopez in *Leicester's Commonwealth* as being "skilled with poisoning." This coupled with Lopez's reported antipathy toward the pretender made him the ideal executioner. A payment of as much as 50,000 crowns was hinted at.

It's possible that Lopez considered it. He had access to both Don Antonio and arsenic. Since Don Antonio had become a nuisance and liability to the Queen, he might even have convinced himself that he'd be pleasing her by carrying out the murder. But this is supposition. A much more substantial assumption is that if there had been nothing more involved than the death of Don Antonio, the Earl of Essex would not have pursued an equal fate for Lopez so relentlessly. His reason had to be more personal.

Essex had syphilis. The prominent surgeon, William Clowes, thought that half the men in England had it.²³ Lopez's duties sometimes included treating courtiers and he'd been dispatched to Essex House several times to attend the young Earl. The signs of syphilis at various stages are unmistakable and he'd detected some of them in Essex. Lopez is said to have betrayed this professional confidence at a dinner because of too much wine. It's difficult to believe. He wouldn't have maintained his sworn post for so many years if he hadn't excelled at discretion. Neither Francis Bacon nor the foppish Gabriel Harvey included the lack of it in their damnations of him. So probability again overrules taproom whispers. A more likely scenario is that, having detected the spirochete and knowing that Essex was sleeping with the Queen, Lopez had to alert his

monarch of the danger. Neither courage nor allegiance to her and Hippocrates were required. It wasn't hard to imagine the consequences if he failed to do so and she became infected. When informed about the rampart bacillus transmitted sexually, and always resentful of Essex's affairs with other women, the Queen would have accosted the Earl about what she'd learned and he wouldn't have had to be told the source of her information.

From then on, nothing short of the end of Dr. Lopez could satisfy Essex. All possible means were employed. Richard Topcliffe, unofficial Grand Inquisitor at the Tower of London, proved a useful accomplice and placed the rack at Essex's disposal. The wide gap between Ferriera's and Tinoco's initial confessions and final ones prove its effectiveness. Once both admitted, in remarkably similar terms, that the purpose of their actions had been the death of the Queen and that her physician was to administer the poison, the trial at the Guildhall became a mere formality. Any tarnish on Essex's honor was removed and Lopez's protestations of innocence ignored. These continued unaltered until his noose was tightened and the knife of disembowelment was readied.

"I love the Queen as well as I love Jesus Christ!"²⁴

Anything a man says at such a moment deserves attention.

V

Henslowe's Diary records a performance of "the Venesyon Comodey" on August 25th, 1594, but it has never been definitely established that the play referred to was *The Merchant of Venice*. Experts also disagree about the year of authorship of Shakespeare's play, it being variously dated between 1594 and 1598.

The early year seems the most likely. The Earl of Essex and his followers then had whipped up a popular wave of anti-Semitism bordering on frenzy in order to reinforce Essex's charges against Lopez. This atmosphere was sustained throughout his trial and lingered long after his execution. Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta*, presenting a human monster in the title role, received a record 15 performances during 1594. It's not unreasonable that *The Merchant of Venice* was an attempt to equal that success with a similar appeal to audience sentiment. But that famous speech of Shylock's presents problems.

It must be remembered that Essex's popularity with the people was second only to that of the Queen's. He frequented the theater often, along with his most famous supporter, the Earl of Southampton, who would someday stand trial alongside him for insurrection. Also coloring the scene and clogging the plot are the earlier dedications to Southampton by Shakespeare of *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece*. That the poet managed to ingratiate himself to Southampton during the year between their publications without having been introduced to Essex is to fault the good manners of noblemen. And it was

during this same year that Lopez incurred the wrath of Essex and the young Earl proved powerful enough to send the royal physician “west to Tyburn,” the euphemism at that time for a trip to the gallows. Would a mere player and playmaker tempt the same fate with a speech that contradicted Essex’s crusade by claiming mortality in a Jew? Those who believe so have been unable to discover an additional defiant act by Shakespeare in his lifetime.

There is another possibility. The most ardent admirers of the man from Stratford admit evidence of others’ pens in his plays. The meter employed in them has never been rivaled for inconsistency. What’s more, there is ample bibliographical evidence that the original version underwent revision.²⁵ The avowed possibility then is that Shylock’s revolutionary speech was not in the original version.

It so, two questions demand answers. Did Shakespeare compose the speech and (whether he did or not) why did he insert it? The reply to the first has usually been that he set out with the stereotype of a Jew in mind, but his great genius and sensitivity took over and gave the character dimension. The best alternative is that it was written by someone else. In that case, who? Thomas Dekker perhaps. He had the extensive knowledge of the law apparent in the trial scene and often revised plays. But Dekker had already written *Joseph, The Jew of Venice*.²⁶ With that play non-existent and its contents unknown, Dekker’s other writings must be consulted and these show his compassion going to those who borrow, not lend. Searching other Elizabethan plays for radical viewpoints yields next to nothing. John Fletcher came closest and could well have inherited notions of tolerance from a father who was once the Bishop of London.²⁷ But accepting the date of 1594 for the writing of *The Merchant of Venice* has Fletcher only fifteen at the time, and the latest possible year for the play’s creation still leaves him too fledgling in his career to have made a contribution.

Sir Walter Raleigh also has to be considered. He had the incentive of his rivalry with Essex and he certainly possessed the talent. A phrase like his “All wounds have scars but that of phantasy,” tossed off in a letter to Sir Robert Cecil, would have tripped smoothly from the tongue of Hamlet or the melancholy Jacques. So a scenario can be imagined with Raleigh attending a performance of the play and watching Essex relish the hissing of the audience each of the nine times that the Jew is identified with the devil; then of Raleigh, out of spite or conviction or both, writing the new speech for Shylock and ordering Shakespeare to insert it in the first scene of the third act. The playwright would then have to decide whether to please the Queen’s former lover or her present one. Given the fresh memory of the fate of Dr. Lopez, there’s little doubt which choice he’d have made.

There is one more serious contender for the authorship of the speech, and this time some blank verse to supply validity.

Where is the hell full of travail, pain, mischief and torment?
Where is the pit of cursedness, out of which doth spring all despair?
Is there any hell so profound that is sufficient to punish the tenth part of
my sins?

Not exactly on Shakespeare's level, agreed, but Queen Elizabeth I was only eleven when she wrote it. Still, the technique employed in Shylock's speech is already there. As her famous tutor Ascham reported, "She loved metaphor and simile, antithesis and epigram," and throughout her reign was to use sequential questions as a technique both in writing and speaking.²⁸

The Queen was not only capable of writing Shylock's speech, but more importantly, she had good reason to. All indications are that she never believed Lopez guilty. When Essex first tried to implicate him in a conspiracy with the Spanish, she rebuked him in front of the Cecils for being "a rash and temerarious youth." The execution of Lopez was scheduled for the 18th of April but was stayed by her orders. Her most respected biographer believed she had Lopez kept in the Tower for his own protection and that Essex managed to get him out and onto the tumbril to the scaffold by trickery (ibid).

After Lopez's death, the Queen had all of his possessions and the leases he held in London returned to his widow. The possessions did not include the diamond and ruby ring which was supposedly from King Philip of Spain. Lopez had presented it to the Queen as a gift from himself.

So a different scenario is called for. In this one the Queen, hearing of the content of the new play, demanded to see the prompt book, then composed the speech that made all Jews as human as her late physician. She might have sent for the playwright and personally commanded him to insert it. But it's questionable that Shakespeare was ever in her presence as anything but an actor. Besides, she had numerous courtiers at hand to deliver her composition to the theater. My casting would be of Sir Robert Cecil, who had sufficient political heft and was characterologically suited for such an errand.

Whatever the procedure, the speech went into Act III, scene i, and when Essex first heard it with disbelief and stormed backstage to demand that it come out, he was shown the royal decree. Then the Earl hopped on his white charger and rode swiftly to Hampton Court or Windsor and confronted the Queen about it and was promptly told, as she'd once told Leicester whom she'd loved more than any man, that "I will have here but one mistress and no master."²⁹ She might have cuffed him once or twice to drive her point home, but Shylock's new speech was probably blow enough. Had the Earl taken heed his head wouldn't have been separated from his shoulders at such a ripe young age. In any event, the speech remained in the play from then to now and it will never be known how many years elapsed before audiences stopped jeering it.

Removing the speech from *The Complete Works* leaves us a bard with

conventional Tudor prejudices. It is only those lines to be accounted for. If a more plausible explanation of them exists than that presented here, it has yet to surface.

Notes

1. Ipswich records, 1572.
2. Cecil Roth, *A History of the Jews in England* (London, 1940).
3. J.E. Neale, *Essays in Elizabethan History*. "In my post-war reading about the Hitler regime, I was struck by its resemblance to personal monarchy in the 16th century with many of the stresses and strains familiar to me in Elizabethan history."
4. For purposes of the argument advanced in this essay, "Shakespeare" is used in the conventional sense.
5. G. Lloyd Jones, *The Discovery of Hebrew in Tudor England*.
6. Stephen Greenblatt, *Shakespearean Negotiations*. 1988.
7. James R. Siemon, *Shakespearean Iconoclasm*. 1985. "Shakespeare himself seems to have done work as a visual artist, making an impression for James I in 1613."
8. Canon (H.C.) Beeching, *William Shakespeare: Player, Playmaker, and Poet* (London, 1908).
9. Frank Harris, *The Man Shakespeare and His Tragic Life-Story*. 1909.
10. J.L. Cardoza, *The Contemporary Jew in Elizabethan Drama*. 1925. "The writer of the play (*The Merchant of Venice*) had to be a good Hebrew scholar since the four Jewish names in the play occur in the Old Testament."
11. Frederick Gard Fleay, *A Chronicle History of the Life and Work of William Shakespeare*. 1886.
12. Leonard Tennenhouse, *The Counterfeit Order of The Merchant of Venice*. 1980.
13. S. J. Schonfeld, "A Hebrew Source for The Merchant of Venice," *Shakespeare Survey*, 1979.
14. Barbara K. Lewalski, *Biblical Allusion and Allegory in The Merchant of Venice*. "Shylock's name is probably taken from Shalach, translated by "Cormorant"—an epithet often applied to usurers in Elizabethan English." (The OED lists "peasant" and "tyrant" in the middle English etymology of "cormorant.")
15. Cecil Roth, *Personalities and Events in Jewish History*.
16. Thomas Heywood, *Apology for Actors* (London, 1612).
17. In Anthony Munday's *Zelato*, the Christian usurer demands the right eyes of those failing to repay a loan.
18. Frederick S. Boas, *Shakespeare and His Predecessors*. "The tale of the Bond, with a pound of flesh as the forfeiture, has been variously traced back to Eastern,

Teutonic and Roman sources.”

19. *The Oxford History of England*, Volume VIII (“The Reign of Elizabeth, 1558-1603”), 1936.
20. *The Gentleman’s Magazine*, 1880.
21. *Medical History* (The Official Journal of the British Society for the History of Medicine), Volume XVII, 1973.
22. The pamphlet, entitled *Dialogue Between a Scholar, A Gentleman, and A Lawyer*, was nicknamed “Father Parson’s Green Coat” because Robert Parsons was suspected of authoring it. Later, it became known as *Leicester’s Commonwealth*.
23. William Clowes, *A Short and Profitable Treatise Touching the Cure of the Disease* (London, 1579).
24. John Stow, *The Annales of England* (London, 1614). William Camden, *The True and Royal History of the famous Empresse Elizabeth* (London, 1625).
25. *The Merchant of Venice*. Clarendon edition. Eds. Clark and Wright. Arden edition. Ed. John Russell Brown.
26. Kenneth Muir and others refer to the play by this title. The only entry of the play in the Stationer’s Register (1653) lists it as *The Jew of Venice*.
27. Philip J. Finkelpearl, *Court and Country Politics in the Plays of Beaumont and Fletcher*. 1990.
28. J.E. Neale, *Queen Elizabeth I*. 1934.
29. Sir Robert Naunton, *Fragmenta Regalia*. Naunton was Secretary of State to King James I.

Was William Byrd's "The Battell" Composed for the Theater?

Sally E. Mosher

William Byrd (1543-1623) is generally considered the greatest composer of the English Renaissance, at once prolific and highly original. Among the nearly 70 pieces by Byrd included in the most famous collection of works for solo virginal from the period, *The Fitzwilliam Virginal Book* (c. 1609-19), there is one entitled "The Earle of Oxfords Marche." The same piece also appears in the best-preserved manuscript of the period, *My Ladye Nevells Booke* (1591), which contains 42 pieces by Byrd for solo virginal, where it is entitled "The Marche Before the Battell." Here it introduces "The Battell," a multi-sectioned piece depicting a battle from call to arms to final retreat, and the whole group is concluded by "The Galliarde for the Victorie."¹

A shorter instrumental version of the same march appears in Thomas Morley's 1599 collection, *The First Book of Consort Lessons*. Here it is entitled, "My Lord of Oxenfords Maske."² The scoring is for "broken consort," a mixed group of viol and lute-type instruments. Although there is no attribution in Morley's collection, this version is identical to Byrd's keyboard setting in melody, time signature, key, and harmonies.

Only in Nevell does the March appear in conjunction with the Battle pieces. The Battle appears in four other manuscripts without the March as introduction, although in two of them it is followed by "The Galliard for the Victory."³

A number of scholars have suggested that the March, the Battle and the Galliard were composed at different times and then assembled as a group for *Nevell*. The grounds for this are principally the difference in key: the March and the Galliard are both in G Major, while all sections of the Battle are in C Major. The March and Galliard, therefore, are like symmetrical pillars in G Major flanking a group of C Major episodes.⁴ This would suggest that the Galliard may have been composed for *Nevell* in order to produce this symmetry. Further, both March and Galliard are musically self-contained, and both are far more complex than the battle pieces. The strong appeal of the Battle lies in its

Music critic, concert manager and musician, Sally Mosher can be heard playing the harpsichord on the 1995 CD, William Byrd: Songs, Dances, Battles, Games. She is presently working with choreographer Charles Maple, formerly a soloist with American Ballet Theater, on a ballet using Byrd's battle pieces.

combination of rhythmic vitality with a kind of onomatopoeia evoking the sounds of drums, marching feet, horses, and various musical instruments, but musically it is quite simple.

During his career, Byrd composed about 100 pieces for virginals or harpsichord; scholars have differed on the exact number.⁵ (A virginal is a small box-shaped harpsichord that was popular in 16th century England.) Both virginal and harpsichord were in use in England during Byrd's career as a composer, which spans nearly 60 years, from 1563 until his death in 1623. Moreover, harpsichords were readily available from the 1580s onward, when Flemish craftsmen were making instruments in England, and Flemish instruments were being imported.⁶

There is considerable extrinsic evidence of Byrd's authorship. Among other sources, Byrd is listed as composer of the 42 pieces in *My Lady Nevell's Book* (his name appearing only at the end of two pairs of pavans and galliards, and the three numbers of the battle suite), approximately 70 pieces in the *Fitzwilliam Virginal Book* (in which there are some duplications from *Nevell*), and eight pieces in *Parthenia*, the first printed collection of music for the virginals in England, published circa 1612. Byrd also composed religious choral music for both Protestant and Catholic church services, instrumental works and songs, and is credited with having created the verse anthem form.

Byrd was a recusant—that is, someone who continued to profess the Catholic faith, yet this never disturbed his relationship with the Queen, who was a noted music lover and regarded by her contemporaries as being an excellent virginal player. She gave frequent indication of her favor to Byrd, describing him as “a stiff Papist and a good subject,” and while some suffered greatly for their faith, the worst that Byrd experienced was a heavy fine.⁷

Until recently, Byrd's reputation has rested primarily upon his sacred vocal works. In the last generation, however, excellent replicas of period harpsichords using modern materials have become available, and Byrd's keyboard repertoire is beginning to receive more attention. The difference in style between Byrd's religious choral music and his secular keyboard music is comparable to that of J.S. Bach's large sacred choral works and his French and English Suites (groups of stylized dances for solo harpsichord).

In examining the origin of the March and the Battle pieces, it is important to distinguish between their musical style and their content. While the style of keyboard writing is characteristically Byrd's, some of the musical material may have come from other sources. Byrd used the melodies of well-known contemporary songs and dances in many of his virginal pieces, only occasionally mentioning the source. A number of these tunes were also set by other composers. Typically, Byrd will first state the familiar tune simply and in a straightforward manner, going on to elaborate and vary it in a number of

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disparate individual sections. We could call this a “theme and variations” approach, and he employs it often. A number of Byrd’s pieces appear in multiple manuscripts (e.g., “The Carman’s Whistle” is present in seven), indicating a high degree of popularity. Indeed, Byrd’s use of popular tunes prefigures Liszt’s 19th century piano paraphrases of operatic and symphonic works, which also enabled people to play arrangements of their favorite music in the privacy of their homes.

This brings us to the content of the Battle pieces. Although battle pieces for harpsichord became a genre by the 17th century, these are still the longest and most detailed battle pieces extant, and also the first written for harpsichord.

Why would Byrd compose such a lengthy work depicting a battle? The dramatic character of the pieces suggests they could have been used for theatrical performances. However, solo harpsichord was not used for accompaniment at this time, and this hardly seems the type of music for private enjoyment. Could the Battle music have had another pre-1591 life in an instrumental version used to accompany theatrical performances? Perhaps Byrd arranged the Battle for virginal because it was already popular, like many of the other pieces in *Nevell*. If this is the case, when was the instrumental version composed, and for which plays was it used?

The best place to begin is the obvious connection between the 17th Earl of Oxford and William Byrd and his Battle pieces: the use of Oxford’s name in the title of the March in two collections, and its appearance before the Battle in My *Lady Nevell’s Book*.

A type of processional, “The Earl of Oxford’s March” is full of the sound of drum beats and trumpet calls. It seems to have been universally known as “The Earl of Oxford’s March,” and the absence of the title only in *Nevell* could be the result of enmity between the Neville family and Oxford since the head of the Neville family was disciplined for striking Oxford in the Queen’s Presence Chamber sometime during the 1580s.⁸ The March apparently became well known on the Continent, and it is possible that it became a kind of personal theme music for the Earl both in England and Europe.

Byrd and Oxford began their careers at Elizabeth’s Court at about the same time—1570 and 1571. Byrd became a Gentleman of the Chapel Royal at Windsor in 1570 and, by 1573, was organist there as well, which gained him the favor of the Queen. Sensitive to music and himself gifted, Oxford would have had both the opportunity and the taste to notice Byrd, especially when Byrd became organist at the Chapel.

Indeed, this seems to have been the case, for connections between Byrd and Oxford are noted by Byrd scholars, including Edmund Fellowes. Records show that, in 1573, Oxford gave Byrd the lease on a manor named Battails Hall in the County of Essex, exercise of which was contingent upon the death of

Oxford's uncle, Aubrey de Vere. In 1582, Byrd sued to obtain possession, but was unsuccessful.⁹

A more definite working relationship is suggested by the 1588 publication of Byrd's *Psalmes, Sonets and Songs of Sadnes and Pietie*, in which he set Oxford's poem, "If Women Could be Fair." (Although Oxford's authorship of the sonnet recently has been challenged, it is listed as Oxford's in the collected works of William Byrd.¹⁰) The sprightly syncopations of the setting recall some of Byrd's virginal pieces, and it is one of the songs that Byrd describes in his Epistle to the Reader as being for those who desired "to be merrie."

There is also documentary evidence of the Earl of Oxford's serious interest in and talent for music, including two dedications by composer John Farmer, the latter one stating that the Earl, though an amateur, was more proficient as a musician than were many professionals.¹¹

Contemporaries also referred to the 17th Earl of Oxford as an excellent playwright, although no plays survive under his name. Of greater import is that, like other nobleman at Court (such as the Earl of Leicester), Oxford patronized troupes of players, including two acting companies during the 1580s. One (Oxford's Men) performed throughout the provinces, while the second, composed of boy actors and choristers (Oxford's Boys), played in London at such private theaters as Paul's Church and the Blackfriars.¹²

Yet another link between the two is displayed by the military character of the March and the Battle pieces. Brief melodies known as "calls" and rhythmic patterns played by drums were used throughout the 16th century to maintain marching order among troops and to convey directions to soldiers in combat, since the human voice was incapable of carrying over the din and distance of the field. (Machiavelli, for instance, describes the use of rhythms and calls at some length in his *The Art of War*, written for his patron, Lorenzo de' Medici.¹³) Trained as a soldier, Oxford had served as a young man in the field during the Rising of the English Lords in 1569-70, and had briefly held command of English cavalry in the Netherlands in 1585. He thus would have been familiar with these devices, and could have provided them to Byrd to add greater verisimilitude to the battle music. As Oxford was musically gifted, he may have suggested some of the melodies as well.

Since it was customary for plays to be accompanied by instrumental music throughout the performance, Oxford's relationship with Byrd would have provided the Earl with easy access to a brilliant and prolific composer who could supply his troupes with music. Thus, the Battle pieces could have been ordered expressly for Oxford's plays or players—or for mock battle "entertainments" for the Queen, such as was choreographed by Oxford at Warwick Castle in 1572, with 200 men.¹⁴ If this be the case, the Battle could date as early as the

1570s, although it is more likely to date from the decade when Oxford was actively patronizing two companies of players.

Notes

1. Byrd, William. *My Ladye Nevells Booke*. Ed. Hilda Andrews. 1969. Originally published in 1926. Blanche Winnogron supplied a new introduction for the 1969 edition.
2. Morley, Thomas (collector). *The First Book of Consort Lessons*. Ed. Sydney Beck. 1959. The first edition was published in London, 1599.
3. Byrd, William. *Musica Britannica*. Vols. XXVII & XXVIII. Ed. Alan Brown. 2nd rev. ed. 1976.
4. Neighbour, Oliver. *The Consort and Keyboard Music of William Byrd*. 1978.
5. Byrd Studies. Eds. A. Brown and R. Turbet. 1992.
6. Byrd, William. *Musica Britannica*. Vols. XXVII & XXVIII. Ed. Alan Brown. 2nd rev. ed. 1976.
7. Byrd, William. *My Ladye Nevells Booke*. Ed. Hilda Andrews. 1969.
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9. Fellowes, Edmund H. *William Byrd*. London, 1936. Also, "William Byrd," *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians*. 5th edition. Vol. 1. Ed. Eric Blom. 1965.
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11. Farmer, John. *The First Set of English Madrigals: to Four Voices*. London, 1599.
12. Chambers, Sir. E.K. *The Elizabethan Stage*. 4 volumes. 1923.
13. Machiavelli, Niccolo. *The Art of War*. 1965. (*Machiavelli: the Chief Works and Others*. Trans. Allan Gilbert. Vol. ii, 561-726)
14. Ogburn, Charlton. *The Mysterious William Shakespeare*. 1984.

Allusions to Edmund Campion in *Twelfth Night*

C. Richard Desper

The Elizabethan Age underwent a continuing crisis of religion that was marked by a deepening polarization of thought between the supporters of the recently established Protestant Church and the larger number of adherents to the Roman Catholic faith. Of these latter, Edmund Campion may be taken as the archetype. Well known as an Englishman who fled to the Continent for conscience's sake, he returned to England as a Jesuit priest, was executed by the English government in 1581 and was canonized by the Roman Catholic Church in 1970.

It has been observed that the author of the Shakespeare plays displays a considerable sympathy and familiarity with the practices and beliefs of the Roman Catholic Church.¹ The intent here is to show a link between this English Catholic leader and the writer of the drama, *Twelfth Night*, as revealed by allusions to Edmund Campion in Act IV, scene ii of that play.

A Brief Outline of Campion's Life

Though Edmund Campion (1540-1581) was a scholar at Oxford University under the patronage of Queen Elizabeth I's court favorite, Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, Campion's studies of theology, church history, and the church fathers led him away from the positions taken by the Church of England. From Campion's point of view, to satisfy the new orthodoxy of the Church of England, a reconstructionist interpretation of church history was being set forth, one that he found difficult to reconcile with what he actually found in the writings of those fathers.² Had the veil been swept away? Were St. Augustine and St. John Chrysostom really Anglicans rather than Roman Catholics? Or were the church authorities trimming their sails to the exigencies of temporal policy? Questions such as these dogged Campion, and eventually his position at Oxford became untenable since he could not make the appropriate gestures of adherence to the established church.³ Instead, Campion retreated from Oxford to Dublin in 1569, where he drew less attention and enjoyed the protection of Sir Henry Sidney, Lord Deputy for Ireland, and

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the patronage of Sir James Stanihurst, Speaker of the Irish House of Commons, who planned to have Campion participate in the founding of what was to become Trinity College in Dublin.⁴

During this period a number of significant events took place. In 1568, the Catholic Mary, Queen of Scots, was driven from her realm into England, where she came under the protection and custody of the English Crown. Immediately after came the rebellion of the northern Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland in the winter of 1569, who sought to place Mary on the English throne. Then, in the spring of 1570, Pope Pius V issued a *bull* excommunicating Queen Elizabeth and releasing her subjects from their obligation of obedience to her. After the death of Pius V, an inquiry to Rome regarding this bull elicited the response that “as long as the Queen [Elizabeth] remained *de facto* ruler, it was lawful for Catholics to obey her in civil matters and cooperate in all just things... that it was unlawful for any private person, not wearing uniform and authorized to do so as an act of war, to slay any tyrant whatsoever, unless the tyrant, for example, had invaded his country in arms” (Waugh 94-5).

In short, English Catholics were rejoined to follow the path of Sir Thomas More, being the Crown’s loyal servant in all matters save religion. However, as Waugh concedes, “It was possible to deduce from this decision that the [English] Catholics were a body of potential rebels, who only waited for foreign invasion to declare themselves. This was the sense in which [William] Cecil [Lord Treasurer and the Queen’s most trusted councillor] read it, for he was reluctant to admit the possibility of anyone being both a patriotic Englishman and an opponent of his *regime*” (Waugh 95). The English government then enacted laws more restrictive to English Catholics. In 1570, the year of the Papal Bull, it was made an act of high treason, punishable by death, to bring into the country “any bull, writing, or instrument obtained from the Bishop of Rome” or “to absolve or reconcile” any of the Queen’s subjects to the Bishop of Rome (Waugh 117).

In this atmosphere even Dublin became dangerous for Campion. He fled Ireland for Belgium in June of 1572, arriving at the English College founded by exiled English Catholics in Douai. The next year he went on to Rome to join the Society of Jesus. After training in Vienna, he became Professor of Rhetoric at the new Jesuit University in Prague, where he was ordained a priest in the Society of Jesus in 1578 (Waugh 81-4). It was in Prague in 1580 that he received the call to return to England to minister to English Catholics (More 72-3). During his ministry, which lasted from the summer of 1580 to the summer of 1581, Campion traveled from town to town in disguise, passing via an underground network of English Catholics, offering the Mass and other Church sacraments to Catholics. He was arrested in the town of Lyford by

English authorities, with the assistance of a paid informant, in July 1581, and conveyed to the Tower of London.⁵

Since his ministry had attracted a great deal of public attention, the government initially made an effort to persuade Campion to abandon his faith. Failing that, it made a second effort to discredit him. Four times in September, Campion was brought from his dungeon in the Tower for public “conferences,” at which scholars and clergymen representing the Crown and the Church of England disputed with him in an effort to best him intellectually. William Cecil (Lord Burghley) and First Secretary Sir Francis Walsingham, Burghley’s spymaster, also sought to taint Campion with the brush of treason by maintaining that the primary goal of his mission was to incite the English to rebel against Queen Elizabeth and replace her with Mary, Queen of Scots. While Campion’s ministry was in itself, by English law, sufficient for the death penalty (in that he offered Mass and heard confessions), the government preferred to show that his ministry also involved stirring English Catholics to rebellion. Finally, on November 20th, a trial was held in which Campion and seven other Catholics taken with him were charged with treason. Suitable witnesses endeavored to make the label of traitor stick; the trial ended in a guilty verdict, and Campion was executed by hanging at Tyburn on December 1, 1581.^{6,7}

Twelfth Night and Edmund Campion

The allusions to Campion are found in a single scene—Act four, Scene two—in which Feste the Clown disguises himself as “Sir Topas the Curate” to harangue the unfortunate Malvolio, who has been shut up in a cellar as a lunatic as the result of pranks engineered by Feste, Sir Toby Belch and Maria. In the following speech by Feste to Maria and Sir Toby, the Campion allusions are highlighted in boldface.

Clown: Bonos dies, Sir Toby: for, as **the old hermit of Prague**, that never saw pen and ink, very wittily said to a niece of King Gorboduc, “**That that is is**”; so I, **being master Parson**, am **master Parson**; for, what is “that” but “that”; and “is” but “is”? (IV.ii.15-19)⁸

In this speech of less than 50 words, which appears to resemble nothing but clownish nonsense, there are no less than five phrases which refer directly to Edmund Campion and his 1580-81 mission to England.

The old hermit of Prague: Prague was Campion’s last assignment before his mission to England; indeed, nearly six of his less than nine years on the Continent were spent in Prague. He may be thought of as a hermit in either of two ways: in that hermits were holy men who sought solitude in their quest for holiness, or that Campion’s stay in Prague was considered to be an exile not

only from England but from Englishmen. Waugh notes that, while at Prague, “the only Englishmen with whom he appears to have had any contact (besides Father Ware, who was at the college with him), is Philip Sidney [son of the former Lord Deputy for Ireland], who arrived in 1576 as English Ambassador to congratulate the Emperor Rudolph on his succession” (Waugh 81-2).

Never saw pen and ink: This refers to an episode which occurred in the “conference” of September 24, 1581, the third of four such conferences, in which Campion was opposed by one Master Fulke:

“If you dare, let me show you Augustine and Chrysostom,” he [Campion] cried at one moment, “if you dare.”

Fulke: “Whatever you can bring, I have answered already in writing against others of your side. And yet if you think you can add anything, put it in writing and I will answer it.”

Campion: “Provide me with ink and paper and I will write.”

Fulke: “I am not to provide you ink and paper.”

Campion: “I mean, procure me that I may have liberty to write.”

Fulke: “I know not for what cause you are restrained of that liberty, and therefore I will not take upon me to procure it.”

Campion: “Sue to the Queen that I may have liberty to oppose. I have been now thrice opposed. It is reason that I should oppose once.”

Fulke: “I will not become a suitor for you.” (Allen 15)

In this exchange, we see that Campion, having been deprived of the means of preparing a defense, such as access to books containing the teachings of St. Augustine and St. John Chrysostom, seizes upon Fulke’s apparent offer of writing materials. Fulke immediately realizes that he has made a tactical error, for the government’s plan in no way involves providing Campion with the means to write, since much of Campion’s success lay in his writings. First there had been an exposition and explanation of his mission, written by Campion in the summer of 1580 immediately after arriving in England, which circulated throughout the country in handwritten copies, yet comes down in history under the ironic title of “Campion’s Brag.” In it, Campion disavows any political aspect to his ministry. Then a book bearing the name *Ten Reasons* was published by an underground Catholic press (Edwards 19). It first appeared at the Oxford University Commencement of June 27, 1581, having been surreptitiously placed on the benches of the church at which the exercises took place.

In the exchange quoted above, Campion plainly had bested Fulke in their battle of wits, for Fulke denies Campion the wherewithal to write even though he himself had challenged Campion to do so. Nonetheless, it may be said of Campion with good reason that he “Never saw pen and ink.”

Niece of King Gorboduc: Gorboduc was a mythical King of England and

the subject of an early Elizabethan play by Norton and Sackville.⁹ Since the play contains no role for a “niece,” the allusion is not to be found in the text. Let us look at the issue from another point of view: did Queen Elizabeth I have an uncle who can be identified as a “mythical King of England?” Arthur, Prince of Wales, was the first son of King Henry VII and older brother to Elizabeth’s father, Henry VIII. This prince would have become “King Arthur” except that he died before his father, who was succeeded instead by the younger brother, Henry. If you are seeking the niece of a mythical King of England, the niece of a potential King Arthur might do.

A second possible link between Elizabeth and the “niece to King Gorboduc” may be found through one of the dramatists, Thomas Sackville, Lord Buckhurst, and later 1st Earl of Dorset. The father of Lord Buckhurst, Sir Richard Sackville, had been a first cousin to Anne Boleyn, Queen Elizabeth’s mother.¹⁰ Given the predilection of people of the time for imprecision in designating family relationships (cousin, uncle or niece was taken to mean almost any blood relationship), it is not farfetched to consider Queen Elizabeth I to be a “niece” of one of the authors of *King Gorboduc*.

“**That that is is**”: Spoken by the Hermit of Prague, this is taken as a religious affirmation, just as Campion’s mission to England was a religious affirmation. The reconstructed church history that Campion was expected to embrace at Oxford was, from the Catholic viewpoint, a denial of reality, and his mission was to affirm the truth in the face of official displeasure.

On a deeper level, this could be an allusion to one of the most profound passages in the Old Testament, in which the Lord, speaking to Moses (who had asked what name he should give for the Lord) declares, “I am that I am.”¹¹ This may be interpreted as, “Because I exist, I exist,” which very neatly identifies the subject “I” in scholastic logic. In other words, all that exists owes its existence to a separate Creator, save one, the Creator of all, who is the source of all existence, even his own. The Hermit of Prague is not the Creator; thus, he renders the phrase in the third person, declaring that God Is, because He Is; he owes his existence to no earthly agency, certainly to no King or Queen. To such a Person, Campion owes a higher allegiance than his allegiance to the Crown. Thus, “**That that is is**” is the essence of Campion’s position vis-a-vis his God and his Queen.

Master Parson: Robert Persons was a fellow Jesuit who traveled with Campion from Rome to France; the two separated to enter England and, for reasons of security, pursued their ministries in England individually, meeting each other occasionally. Persons, sometimes referred to as Parsons and a former Oxford classmate of Campion’s, was in charge of the Jesuit mission to England, including the clandestine press that was used to set forth the Catholic position until its capture.¹² Persons continued his ministry within and without England

for several decades after Campion's death.

The allusions referred to here should not be thought of as topical in being timely references from which the theatrical audience would be expected to recognize and draw delight. Certainly, events during 1580-81 would no longer be timely in 1602, the first production of *Twelfth Night*, as noted in Manningham's diary. Moreover, considering the official attitude toward Campion and his fellow Jesuits, inserting sympathetic allusions to Campion into a play would have been quite risky during the 1580s, and would remain so well into the next century. Nonetheless, one would have needed specific background knowledge about the Campion situation to recognize the allusions, and by 1602, most of the principals in the capture, interrogation and trial of Campion—including Lord Burghley, Sir Francis Walsingham, and the Earl of Leceister—were deceased. Others, such as Anthony Munday, would not have been admitted to a private performance at the Middle Temple intended for members and their guests. Further, we should not expect that the Queen would be in attendance at an Inns of Court performance. (This is deduced from the historical record of the *Gorboduc* performances, in which the Inner Temple performance was followed by a second performance at court.) I think instead that the allusions were intended for posterity, and were written into the text in the hope that the play would some day appear in print.

It should also be recognized that the allusions to Edmund Campion have little bearing on characterizations and allusions outside their immediate context. Thus, Malvolio is identified as a Protestant, specifically as a Puritan, earlier in the play (II.iii.151-56), but in the Campion allusions, he figures as a Catholic priest. This is not a contradiction since the audience for the play was not expected to hear the Campion allusions. Indeed, it could have boded ill for the playwright had they done so. On one level, the dramatist may have been using the Malvolio character as a caricature of the courtier Christopher Hatton, as some have proposed. For one scene, however, the author has Malvolio imprisoned and sees the opportunity for inserting something he has been suppressing for decades: his bitterness over the trial and execution of one he saw as an innocent man. The average audience member was expected to take the allusions as theatrical nonsense and then to forget about them as the next speech was delivered.

Further Allusions to Campion in Act Four, Scene Two

Having established the allusions to St. Edmund Campion in the Clown's opening speech (IV.ii.5-12), the tenor of the remainder of the scene, in the context of Campion's imprisonment, becomes apparent. The Clown is seen assuming the role of the learned man to dispute with the prisoner, just as men of learning brought Campion to dispute at the aforementioned conferences.

The dramatist's attitude is revealed early on by Sir Toby, as the Clown, posing as Sir Topas the Curate, begins his encounter with the prisoner:

Sir Toby: The Knave counterfeits well, a good knave. (IV.ii.21-22)

Thus is established at the outset that the playwright regards the conference to be held, like the conferences Campion was brought to, as a sham, a counterfeit, with a knave posing as a learned man acting as the examiner. "Sir Topas" proceeds to deal with Malvolio as a man possessed and in need of exorcism, even though, as the Clown, he knows full well that Malvolio, whatever his faults might be, is neither insane nor possessed.

Clown: Out, hyperbolic fiend! How vesext thou this man! Talkest thou nothing but of ladies? (IV.ii.29-30)

The irony in the play now develops to match that of the Campion conferences, where Campion was called upon to assent to facts which, from his point of view as a scholar and a Catholic, were not facts at all.

Malvolio: Good Sir Topas, do not think I am mad. They have laid me here in hideous darkness.

Clown: Fie, thou dishonest Satan!... Say'st thou that house is dark?

Malvolio: As hell, Sir Topas.

Clown: Why, it hath bay windows transparent as barricadoes...

Malvolio: I am not mad, Sir Topas. I say to you, this house is dark.

Clown: Madman, thou errest. I say, there is no darkness but ignorance, in which thou art more puzzl'd than the Egyptians in their fog. (IV.ii.33-48)

Next the dramatist shows us the dishonesty of the situation from his own perspective. Malvolio asks for a test of his lucidity, and the Clown asks a question, to which Malvolio gives what would be, to any Christian scholar, the correct answer in terms of the teachings of their faith.

Malvolio: ...Make the trial of it in any constant question.

Clown: What is the opinion of Pythagoras concerning wild fowl?

Malvolio: That the soul of our grandam might haply inhabit a bird.

Clown: What think'st thou of his opinion?

Malvolio: I think nobly of the soul, and no way approve his opinion.

Clown: Fare thee well. Remain thou still in darkness. Thou shalt hold th' opinion of Pythagoras ere I will allow of thy wits... (IV.ii.52-63)

Thus, rather than maintaining the Christian teaching of the resurrection on the last day, the Clown chides Malvolio for not upholding the pagan teaching of Pythagoras concerning the transmigration of souls. Likewise, Campion, first during his days at Oxford and then at his conferences, was expected to provide answers which, by his view, were illogical and indefensible, but which accorded with the needs of the political powers of the day. The playwright thus demonstrates for us a world turned upside down, with clowns passing themselves off as men of learning, while men of learning such as Campion are pressed

to deny what they believe to be true to serve political ends. I think the dramatist's opinion about such proceedings is revealed early on in the scene, when the Clown dons an academic gown for his impersonation of Sir Topas:

Clown: Well, I'll put it on, and I will dissemble my self in't; and I would I were the first that ever dissembled in such a gown. (IVii.5-7)

Campion's Innocence or Guilt

As noted earlier, the English government wanted to convict Campion not for his religion but for treason against the Crown; specifically, for plotting the assassination or overthrow of Queen Elizabeth I. Despite questioning scores of witnesses under duress, they were unable to show any treasonable aspect in Campion's speech, writing or activities during his English ministry. The first indictment drawn up against Campion stated that he "did traitorously pretend to have power to absolve the subjects of the said Queen from their natural obedience to her majesty," with a blank space left farther down the indictment for the name of a prosecution witness who had been absolved as stated (Waugh 206-7).

No suitable witness could be found to testify against Campion to this effect, however, and so this count of the indictment was dropped. Eventually, witnesses were obtained, the chief being Anthony Munday, a journeyman writer and traveler who had presented himself to exiled English Catholics as a co-religionist. He accused Campion of having formed a conspiracy in Rome and Rheims in 1580 to assassinate Queen Elizabeth, to encourage a foreign Catholic invasion and also foment a rebellion of English Catholics. The evidence brought forth to support these charges has been found wanting by the *Dictionary of National Biography* and the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.¹³ Campion's own writings deny such a charge. In the previously mentioned Campion's Brag he is "strictly forbidden... to deal in any respect with matter of State or Policy" (Waugh 236). Simpson reports that Campion "determined, therefore, as far as he might, to confine himself to the merely religious aspects of the controversy... and to refuse to make himself an umpire between two high contending parties so far above him as Pope and Queen" (Simpson 274).

Religious Attitudes in *Twelfth Night*

If the passage cited alludes to Edmund Campion, one must also ask in what spirit is the allusion to be taken: as tribute or jeer. To properly answer the question, we should examine the religious leanings of the author indicated elsewhere in the play as well as in the other Shakespeare plays. Mutschmann and Wentersdorf see that "Sir Topas," the pose of the clown Feste in the scene, "is of the same stamp as other Protestant ministers in Shakespeare's plays and was conceived with the deliberate intention of creating an undignified and ludi-

crous impression” (329). The steward Malvolio, protagonist of the play, is portrayed as a Puritan with “overweening” pride, and given to vanity and foppery—all in the most unflattering spirit. In contrast, the priest who secretly marries Sebastian and Olivia, while appearing only in scenes IV.iii and V.i with a single speech, is depicted as someone we can confide in with complete trust. Indeed, the entire drama is steeped in sympathy toward the Catholic faith.

The comic knight Sir John Falstaff is also cited (Mutschmann and Wentersdorf 345-49) as being a caricature of the Puritan type, leading a licentious life but counting himself among the saved. Significantly, the original name given to the character was Sir John Oldcastle, a 15th century Lollard who was executed during the reign of Henry V. The author was evidently compelled by authority, in response to objections by Oldcastle’s descendants, to change the character’s name to that of Falstaff. Interestingly, a rival play, *Sir John Oldcastle*, written by the same Anthony Munday who testified against Campion, was staged in 1599 and portrayed the historical figure of Oldcastle in a much more favorable light. Yet this same Munday is regarded as the author of the play, *Sir Thomas More*, which offers a highly favorable portrait of this Catholic martyr.¹⁴ (In the play, More is condemned for refusing to lend his signature to certain unspecified articles; historically, these constituted King Henry’s Act of Supremacy, allowing them to assume supreme power over the Church in England.) Whether Munday wrote the play as author or copyist has been the subject of much debate.¹⁵ One must conclude that Munday’s contribution to *Sir Thomas More* as author or copyist was made when Munday was an apparent Catholic, before his testimony against Edmund Campion. Indeed, Munday’s later publications, including a pamphlet which detailed the execution of Edmund Campion and his companions, were aggressively anti-Catholic.

Campion and *Gorboduc*

The historical record offers other links between *Gorboduc* and the Campion allusions in *Twelfth Night*. There is the coincidence with the title of the latter play, for *Gorboduc* originally was intended for a single performance on Twelfth Night; that is, January 6, 1562.¹⁶ A second performance was given at Whitehall at the command of the Queen, on January 12, 1562. (The original performance of *Gorboduc* took place in the Inner Temple, one of the four Inns of Court in London.) Remarkably, the only known performance of *TN* during its author’s lifetime was at another Inn, the Middle Temple, as reported by Manningham in his diary: “At our feast we had a play called Twelve Night, or *What You Will*” (Neilson and Hill 279). Such a performance would have been a private one, limited to those connected with the Middle Temple or invited by its members.

Yet another coincidence relates to one of the dramatists of *Gorboduc*—Thomas Norton, listed in the original edition of 1565 as the author of Acts I-

III (Cauthen xxix). Norton played a prominent role on the English government's behalf in the suppression of Catholics, traveling in 1579 as far as Rome, where he sought out damaging information about English Catholics living in the city. In 1581, he was one of the commissioners at the trial of Edmund Campion. The following year he complained to Sir Francis Walsingham about the nickname, "Rackmaster General," that was being applied to him for his part in torturing Catholics (Simpson 266; Cauthen 80).

Concluding Thoughts

During the Feast of the Epiphany in Elizabethan times, which took place on January 6 and was commonly known as Twelfth Day, gifts were exchanged in commemoration of the gifts of the Magi. It was a holiday of feasting, celebration and revelry. This is the tradition usually associated with the origin of the name of the play *Twelfth Night*. On the other hand, if the playwright had allusions to Edmund Campion in mind, then a covert meaning for the title could have been intended. In this regard, one should recall the spirit associated with these revelries: that nothing is what it seems; that meanings are turned inside out. To quote Feste: "Nothing that is so is so" (IV.ii.9). Perhaps this spirit explains the paradox of a play which, on the face of it, is a boisterous, rollicking comedy, yet also contains allusions to that fateful time of Campion's mission, and so serving as the playwright's *Ave Atque Vale* for this tragic figure of the period.

Notes

1. H. Mutschmann and K. Wentersdorf, *Shakespeare and Catholicism*. 1969. 16-21, 329-351. Roland M. Frye, *Shakespeare and Cristian Doctrine*. 1963. Hugh R. Williamson, *The Day Shakespeare Died*. London, 1962. 11-25.
2. Henry More, *The Elizabethan Jesuits: Historia Missionis Anglicanae Societatis Jesu (1660)*. Trans. Francis Edwards, SJ. London, 1981. 43.
3. Evelyn Waugh, *Edmund Campion*. London, 1946.
4. *Dictionary of National Biography*. Eds. Sir L. Stephen and Sir S. Lee. Oxford, 1921. III, 851.
5. William Cardinal Allen, *A Brief History of the Glorious Martyrdom of the 12 Revenend Priests: Fr. Edmund Campion and his Companions*. 1584. Ed. H. Pollen, SJ. London, 1908. 10.
6. Francis Edwards, SJ, *The Jesuits in England: from 1580 to the Present Day*. Kent, 1985. 20.
7. Richard Simpson, *Edmund Campion*. London, 1848. 279-313.
8. All quotations of Shakespeare are taken from *The Complete Plays and Poems of William Shakespeare*. Eds. W.A. Neilson and C.J. Hill. 1942. 279.
9. Thomas Sackville and Thomas Norton, *Gorboduc, or Ferrex and Porrex*.

1565. Ed. Irby B. Cauthen Jr. Regents Renaissance Drama Series. 1970. iii.
10. DNB, XVII, 585-589.
11. Exodus, III, 14 (King James). The phrase "I am that I am" also appears in Shakespeare's sonnet 121, a particularly poignant verse about a good man unjustly perceived as an evil person. "Tis better to be vile than vile esteemed..."
12. The name "Persons," sometimes rendered as "Parsons" in writings of the day, was pronounced with something of a Irish lilt, the first syllable rhyming with "fair." According to Simpson (387), "Pearsons" might well stand as a modern rendering of the name. Also see DNB, III, 851.
13. DNB, III, 850-854; *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*. 1973. 4, 721.
14. The play *Sir Thomas More* survived as a manuscript written largely in a hand identifiable as that of Anthony Munday, surfacing in 1727 in the possession of one Alexander Murray and his patron, the 2nd Earl of Oxford (of the Harley creation).
15. *Sir Thomas More*. Attributed to Anthony Munday. Eds. V. Gabrieli and G. Melchiori. 1990. 12-16.
16. *The Diary of Henry Machyn*. 1565. Ed. J.G. Nichols. London, 1848.

Reviews

This Lost Land: Ireland in Elizabethan Times

The Twilight Lords: An Irish Chronicle
by Richard Berleth. 1994.

Reviewed by Alan Cheney, Ph.D. Dr. Cheney is a member of the editorial board of the Journal of Business and Psychology.

That the intertwined histories of England and Ireland have been complex through the ages should be no surprise. The unhappy coupling began long before the Elizabethan age and it has not ended yet. But the relationship that one Elizabethan Vice Treasurer called “the sink of the treasure of England” took on increased importance during Elizabeth’s reign, when the stage was set for reverberations and repercussions on both islands that are with us even today.

Ireland was England’s first colony off the island of Great Britain and, in the vestige known as Northern Ireland, arguably remains its last. Long before Elizabeth’s birth, England had tried, mostly unsuccessfully, to conquer and tame the native Irish Celts. Since their conquest of the island between the 6th and 1st centuries BCE, these people had developed a society based strongly on independence and autonomy. The Celtic Gaels had formed over a hundred *tuatha*, or petty kingdoms, independent of one another but sharing a common language and Brehon Law. Even in religion, a distinctive Celtic Christianity had evolved early to rival the Roman Church, with the Irish sending missionaries of their own throughout Europe. But unlike strongly centralized Roman Christianity, the Celtic “Church” was built upon numerous autonomous monasteries. In Ireland, historically untouched and unconquered by the Roman Empire and not yet under the Roman Church, there was no longing for or toleration of either foreign or centralized power.

Elizabeth’s father had been the latest to try to reconquer Ireland. Since Henry II, the Roman Church had backed England’s claim over Ireland, primarily to bring Celtic Christianity more in line with Roman standards, but Henry VIII’s severance of ties with Rome had complicated things. For one thing, there was virtually no sympathy for the Protestant cause among the native Gaels or the remaining Anglo-Irish colonists, who reportedly had become “more Irish than the Irish.” Nevertheless, Henry VIII had been

somewhat successful at undermining Celtic society by compelling hitherto elected Irish chieftains to accept English lordships and privileges, thereby imposing the laws of feudal monarchy, including the law of succession (primogeniture), on those who had elected them. Having made that “advance,” Henry followed the tradition of his royal predecessors and quickly turned to other issues, leaving most Irish largely “outside the Pale,” literally, of English influence. And so it remained until the third decade of his daughter Elizabeth’s reign.

It is at this point that Richard Berleth picks up with his excellent book, *The Twilight Lords: An Irish Chronicle*. As he sets the scene for what he calls “the tragedy of Elizabeth’s Ireland,” Berleth writes:

The glories of Elizabethan England are well fixed in the popular mind... all are at the heart of that age which was also the flowering time of English-speaking culture and national sentiment. Now to insert the Irish debacle seems rude, except for the fact that popular accounts have passed silently over that subject, relegating it to the backwater of specialized history or dismissing its brutal nature.... *The Twilight Lords* opens this matter not to revel in old horrors or to deflate the triumphs of a legendary reign. The book only means to suggest the underside of Elizabethan virtues, the negative force of certain Renaissance values, for those values have certainly descended to us. (xiii-xiv)

In chronicling the events and characters of Elizabethan Ireland, Berleth is neither pro-Irish nor anti-Elizabethan—neither side in the conflict is painted as without fault or self-interest. While the English may be arrogant in their presumption that Ireland and the Irish people are “theirs,” the Irish hold their own against their enemy for cunning, betrayal and brutality. That is, the Irish earls do. For as the story unfolds, it is the historical, endless disregard on both sides for non-combatants that horrifies. To a smaller but lethal degree, the English settlers, and to a staggering and exterminating extent the native Irish, are the innocent victims of this struggle. Even contemporaries were often disgusted:

Never since I was a man of war, was I so weary with killing of men, for I protest to God, for as fast as I could I did hew them and paunch them, because they did run as we break them [these victims were prisoners who had surrendered], and so in less space than an hour this whole and good field was done. (173)

Berleth begins his book not with Ireland, but with three situations that form a backdrop. First, there is Elizabeth’s courtship of the French Duke of Alencon and the subsequent “marriage crisis,” which becomes the Virgin Queen’s greatest preoccupation. Berleth outlines and discusses the impending marriage in great depth. At the same time, England is preparing to join in battle with

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other Protestant powers against the Counter-Reformation forces in the Netherlands. Finally, there is intelligence that Philip II's Spanish armies are making extensive preparations at Antwerp and other sites, possibly for a Channel crossing against England.

The only English concern in early 1579 for Ireland (and this becomes a refrain even into our own century) is that the enemies of England might invade Ireland or persuade the Irish to aid them against England: "England could not afford a hostile and undefended Ireland at its back." (217) For much of its history, Ireland's worth as a colony was considered more as a strategic military buffer to England's west than as a colonial exporter or source of farmland and grazing meadows. Berleth emphasizes that, if Elizabeth had had her way, affairs in Ireland would not even have made her list of concerns; it was "a land always to be reformed tomorrow, never today... she preferred to ignore it." (3)

In the autumn of 1579, however, Ireland thrust itself into Elizabeth's concerns, where it would remain until her death, twenty-five years later. Before her successor took the throne, the list of Elizabethan characters directly involved with Ireland would grow to include Peter Carew, Warham St. Leger, Edmund Spenser, Walter Raleigh, Francis Walsingham, Henry Sidney, John Perrot, William Pelham, Nicholas Matby, Arthur Grey, Charles Blount, John Cheke, and William Stanley. Thomas Norris and five of his brothers would die in Ireland; the fall of the great Earl of Essex would begin there. Unnamed are the two waves of English settlers who were exterminated and the innocents who made up half of the Irish population that would die through war, famine, and plague. These Berleth calls "the common people, the pawns at risk, [who] were sacrificed by both sides without compunction." (xiii) No wonder, as the author points out, specific events of that time are still recounted in parts of Ireland today.

The first of the three Elizabethan Irish rebellions began in 1565 when James Fitzmaurice, the self-proclaimed Captain of Desmond, led forces to oust English settlers from confiscated Desmond land in south Munster. Fitzmaurice's cousin and rival, the Earl of Desmond, had been imprisoned in England after a particularly bloody internecine battle, creating a vacuum among the balancing forces of Irish baron-chieftains. Without the help of the English, however, Fitzmaurice probably could not have united the midland clans as successfully as he did. Sir Peter Carew, stationed in Munster to protect English colonists, caused an uproar when, during a foray to punish a band of cattle thieves, his soldiers invaded the territory of a loyal chieftain and sacked and burned the town of Kilkenny, one of the few prosperous county towns in Ireland. Carew's actions, for which he was dismissed by Whitehall, prompted Fitzmaurice's fellow lords to thron to his rebellion. Before the First Desmond War was over, four years later, "the Munster colony, the settlers, and a large part of Elizabeth's army and resources had vanished." (25)

The bulk of *The Twilight Lords* describes the rebellions known as the Second Desmond War and the rebellion of Hugh O'Neill in Ulster. Although Berleth aptly chronicles the political and military details surrounding these abstractions, what stands out again and again is the barbarity of the treatment of the Irish people, word of which even reached Elizabeth: "Troubling her most were charges that she was methodically exterminating her Irish subjects..." (154) Berleth gives a too-telling example in the 1580 siege, under Arthur Grey, the Queen's Lord Deputy of Ireland, of Smerwick. Walter Raleigh was present and leading troops:

There followed that ghastly scene so often repeated in Ireland during the wars. Women pleaded their bellies [claiming pregnancy], and Grey's troops strung them up, nevertheless, with requisite speed and efficiency... The women hanged at Del Oro fared better than the men... The prisoners had already been stripped of their armor, they were defenseless against pike thrusts, and those who dodged the long poles were slashed by the swordsmen. As could be expected, the killing was heavy work, the prisoners clung to one another in a corner of the enclosure and had to be dragged free... the pleas and cries fell on deaf ears... While Mackworth and Raleigh carried out their assignment, others tallied the spoils... and then stripped the dead of all valuables, including their clothing. The bodies were carried to the sea face, flung over the wall, and allowed to roll down onto the narrow beach below... Raleigh never mentioned Smerwick thereafter. (173-4)

Raleigh did later call Ireland, "This lost land... this commonwealth, or rather common woe." Berleth himself seems sickened by the scene he has described, for he comments:

The grim particulars of the Smerwick massacre are described in order that the close and personal nature of such things be understood... Worse atrocities occurred during the sixteenth century, worse massacres occurred in Ireland alone, yet of all the arguments summoned to dismiss or justify Smerwick, none seems more patently false than the broad historical, the view that such things were less objectionable to an earlier and more barbaric age. To say that mercy or compassion had a different value for Elizabethans, that they found the slaughter of prisoners more congenial, is to miss their shame and horror. (174)

Though *The Twilight Lords* is primarily about the Irish rebellions, students of Elizabethan times will find more: descriptions of military operations, down to Captain Barnabe Rich's coining of the word "hubbub" to capture the Irish war cry at the Battle of Monaster. Berleth also includes scattered but well-written looks at various aspects of Elizabethan life, going to contemporary sources for descriptions of the layout of Irish castles and village life in

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Elizabethan Ireland, as well as describing the jostling and sycophancy of courtiers back at Whitehall. He strays from the battles for a lengthy discussion of Edmund Spenser, both as landowner and poet, with a particularly touching view of Spenser's last days, death and funeral. He chronicles Essex's downfall and gives a detailed account of the trial of Teig McGilpatrick and Connor MacCormac under Lord Justice Henry Wallop, a trial Berleth describes as "among the most bizarre in English legal history" and "the last instance of trial by combat in the British Isles." (212)

He has some intriguing commentary on the implications of English colonialism for Catholicism in Ireland, describing the step-wise strengthening of the Church each time English influence waned, and suggesting a role for Irish Catholicism as largely a nationalistic reaction to the ascendancy of Protestantism and colonialism in neighboring England. Berleth suggests that the famed sensuality of Celtic women drew blame and anger from the English overlords and their armies. And he deftly reminds us how Elizabethan England's Irish policy reverberates: before the invasion of Scottish and English settlers during James I's Ulster Plantation, the O'Neill (Tyrone) rebellion created political consequences that still effect the troubles in Northern Ireland today.

Lord Burghley figures prominently in the story and, for the most part, is treated sympathetically. Berleth sees him as one who served as a source of restraint, preferring benign neglect in matters Irish. Cecil's concern with Ireland was primarily one of bringing Brehon Ireland under English Common Law and avoiding the stellar costs of war with the Gaels.

He paints Burghley as at least prescient if not prophetic in his counsel to Elizabeth to calm her growing wariness and frustration with Ireland: that the "plan to dispossess the Irish and colonize Ireland with English settlers was beyond the power and scope of the Crown." (54) His steadfast distrust of military solutions to Irish problems would change only somewhat in his old age with the impending Armada. Berleth relates a strange event that occurred when the aging Burghley received Hugh O'Neill, Earl of Tyrone (and soon after called by the Queen "my Arch Traitor" and "my Monster of the North") to give advice on the procurement and use of lead for roofing O'Neill's proposed country house. Cecil became an inadvertent traitor.

Importation was strictly controlled, for obvious [military] reasons, and Cecil might well have been the only man in England capable of circumventing the restrictions. In any event, Hugh got his lead, a whole shipful... Before the Battle of Yellow Ford [two years later], Burghley's lead was melted down and molded into shot and ball. (251)

Burghley's death had direct implications for Ireland. With his passing went the chief voice of military toleration, so that "with Cecil gone, no one remained

to restrain the hot-heads or encourage Elizabeth's native caution." (274) At Yellow Ford in Ulster, English troops under Henry Bagenal suffered a terrible defeat; the news reached Whitehall during Burghley's funeral. Essex was soon sent to Ireland to subdue the Tyrone rebellion and, with Cecil gone, Elizabeth raised the largest expeditionary force of her reign, numbering more than 25,000 over the next three years. She proclaimed, "This is therefore the cause that after so long patience we have been compelled to take resolution to reduce that kingdom to obedience by using an extraordinary power and force against them." (287) As history and Berleth show, her eventual victory was pyrrhic. By the time the last and greatest of the Irish "twilight lords" had surrendered, the Queen was three days in her grave, two waves of English settlers had been exterminated, almost half the Irish people were dead, and much of Ireland had become a barren wilderness.

The Voice of God

William Tyndale: A Biography
by David Daniell. 1994.

Reviewed by Warren Hope, Ph.D. Dr. Hope is writing a life and study of the British poet Norman Cameron.

One of the most enlightening events in English history took place on October 24, 1526. On that date, Cuthbert Tunstall, then the Bishop of London, delivered a remarkable sermon at St. Paul's. No copy of the sermon has been preserved, unfortunately, but the substance of it and some of its supporting arguments were recorded by witnesses. As a result, it is still possible to gain a sense of the effect of the talk. Tunstall raised his voice that day to denounce a book and to call for the collection and burning of copies of it. The book, he contended, was an heretical work, full of errors—errors of the kind that could mislead readers into damnation. In sum, the book constituted "strange learning" and was not to be tolerated. Within days of this talk, servants of the Church and State brought copies of the pestiferous book to St. Paul's and publicly put them to the torch. In time, people found with the book in their possession were also publicly burned.

What handiwork of the devil was it that so exercised the Bishop of London?
The New Testament.

Nothing to my mind so clearly shows the contradictions in Tudor society, the strains caused by the clash between what was once called the Dark Ages and the Renaissance, than this single event. Do not misunderstand me, though.

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Tunstall did not want *all* of the New Testaments in the realm gathered up and burned. He did not want to eradicate the gospel from the land. No. Latin Testaments could, of course, flourish and be of use to priests and nobles in their good works. Greek testaments should, of course, be available for the perusal of scholars. What Tunstall objected to was the New Testament in English, the translation by his fellow humanist, William Tyndale, the man who, for English speakers, deserves to be known as the voice of God. For it was Tyndale who gave God his voice in English. And the Bishop of London could not permit that voice to reach the people of England. After all, next to God, Bishops and Kings, Cardinals and nobles look pretty puny and can sound ridiculous.

Tyndale, although a priest, was a man of God rather than a man of the Church—and while there need not be a difference between these two, there certainly can be. Tyndale seems to have possessed the attributes later urged in the words of an old evangelical hymn—

Dare to be a Daniel,
Dare to stand alone,
Dare to have a purpose firm,
Dare to make it known.

Tyndale fixed on his firm purpose early in his career, made it known, and no doubt realized that it would require him to, at times at least, stand alone—with only his faith in God to support him. That story, first told by Richard Webb, is repeated by Tyndale's most recent and best biographer, David Daniell:

...Master Tyndale happened to be in the company of a learned man, and in communing and disputing with him drove him to that issue that the learned man said, we were better be without God's law than the Pope's: Master Tyndall hearing that, answered him, I defy the Pope and all his laws, and said, if God spare my life ere many years, I will cause a boy that driveth the plough, shall know more of the scripture than thou dost.

This story—and there is no reason to think it is apocryphal—not only states Tyndale's purpose but also identifies his audience: "a boy that driveth the plough." Tyndale's aim was to allow ordinary laboring people to have direct, unfiltered, uninterpreted contact with the word of God. Why? There can be little doubt about that, given his willingness to "defy the Pope and all his laws." He wanted to break up the Church's monopoly on salvation, a monopoly based, as Bishop Tunstall's stance shows, on the distortion of the word of God. Tyndale was convinced that salvation comes only from faith, a faith inspired by familiarity with God's word, and open to all regardless of rank, wealth or leaning. The rites and rituals, the superstitions and dogmas of the Church meant less than wind to Tyndale when compared with the word of God. "Let not your hearts be troubled," Tyndale wrote, delivering his master's message

in words that could reach and relieve a 16th century ploughboy as well as a 20th century commuter.

Tyndale was, more than anything else, an educator. Education, at root, means to lead out—to lead out of darkness into the light, to lead out of Egypt and slavery into Canaan and liberty. Tyndale exemplifies this full rooted meaning of the word. He lived in a time for which transition is far too weak a word. Feudalism fell and capitalism rose, Roman Catholicism weakened and Protestantism strengthened, monarchies were shaken and republics flourished, a manuscript culture was replaced by the printing press, literacy spread and gullibility diminished, and all of these shifts mirror a shift in the relation between God and men. With direct access to the word of God, men were free to work out their salvation as individuals, communing directly with God, rather than relying on the intermediaries of an institution, the Church. This relationship between God and men—a relationship based on the word rather than the image and therefore the distant and invisible rather than the local and readily graspable—influenced the relations between men, having a leveling and liberating effect in economics, politics, the arts, as well as religion. Tyndale's role in this educational movement was crucial. David Daniell provides us with an understanding of how he prepared himself for that role and how he conducted himself in it to the end, when he was strangled and burned at the stake in Brussels as a heretic—an act performed by the Emperor Charles V but financed by English gold.

Daniell is a match for his rich, complex and controversial subject because his knowledge is as great as his sympathy. The result, therefore, is neither an ignorant praising of Tyndale nor a learned attack on him, but rather a sober evaluation of his immense contribution to the life and culture of the English-speaking world—as translator, writer, theologian, thinker, and remarkable man of God.

Daniell traces the background of Tyndale's family, explores his early life and influences in Gloucestershire, and carefully maps the traditions, tropes and thinkers he would have come in contact with at Magdalen College, Oxford. He also examines the intricacies of international publishing (much of Tyndale's mature life was spent on the Continent), the complexities and implications of the period's theological disputes, and the state of learning at the time. Daniell demonstrates extraordinary patience in gathering evidence, good judgment in weighing evidence, and writes with clarity and wit. His book is a fundamental contribution to our knowledge of the Tudor period and a model for other biographers. I can think of no better introduction to the life and work of one of humanity's heroes and benefactors than this book.

Shakespeare's Censored Personality

Censorship and Interpretation: The Conditions of
Writing and Reading in Early Modern England
by Annabel Patterson. 1992.

Reviewed by Roger Stritmatter. Mr. Stritmatter is a doctoral candidate in Comparative Literature at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

Hailed a decade ago as a signal analysis of the sociopathology of censorship and an important contribution to early modern European cultural studies, the 1992 reprint of *Censorship and Interpretation* places Annabel Patterson among the most sophisticated theorists applying an inter-disciplinary model of social history to the interpretation of literary texts. Patterson's model of censorship departs from the concept that contested forms of discourse invariably involve unpublished, tacit modes of communication which leave no *transparent* imprint in the historical record, but which can be *inferred* by reading:

There is evidence [in Elizabethan texts], if we look carefully, of a highly sophisticated system of oblique communication, of unwritten rules whereby writers could communicate with readers or audiences (among whom were the very same authorities who were responsible for state censorship) without producing a direct confrontation. (53)

Patterson's model of the interaction between writers and censors depicts the ruling class as a complex entity, fraught with internal and politically consequential divisions. Censors, Patterson urges, are also readers, albeit readers with an unusually direct and conscious affiliation to the state's apparatus of domination.

Patterson's interest lies in weighing the sociocultural contradictions which give rise to the emergence of literature: her paradoxical central thesis is that "it is to censorship in part that we owe our very concept of 'literature' as a kind of discourse with rules of its own, a concept that has for centuries been thought to be capable of protecting writers who abide by those rules." (4) Citing Somans on the special dangers which highly placed writers posed for the stability of a regime, Patterson's new introduction imparts an intriguing perspective to her project of repoliticizing contemporary visions of the Elizabethan Renaissance: "It was the *highest placed author* who was capable of giving the greatest offense, but who was at the same time the least vulnerable" to reprisal from officials reluctant to transform rebels into martyrs. (italics added)

Vital to Patterson's thesis are the countervailing principles of *authorial intention* and *purposeful ambiguity*. In the hermeneutics of censorship, the latter becomes the governing principle by which a dangerous writer—of any

social class—transmutes social criticism into a literary modality which can evade the constricting nets of censoring officials. The technique is not new; Patterson quotes the advice of Quintillian, known to 16th century writers with university educations, as well as to modern students of Elizabethan literature:

You can speak as openly as you like against... tyrants, as long as you can be understood differently... if danger can be avoided by some cunning ambiguity of expression, everyone will admit its cunning. (Patterson, 15)

Surely it is no hyperbole to infer that the hermeneutic implications of Quintillian's principle have been overlooked by Professor Patterson's distinguished colleagues. Patterson, however, has at least glanced in the right direction. In her theory, the cunning intention to express offensive social criticism, cloaked in an ambiguous literary narrative or a "noted weed" (Sonnet 76), gives rise to the phenomenon we study under the category of literature. As Hamlet says, "the play's the thing, wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king." (II.2.634) Indeed, Patterson's theory suggests that the idea of a literary figure, author or character who does not somehow intend to express an offensive social criticism—like comparing the king's conscience, as Hamlet does, to a small furry creature which squeaks and eats cheese—would be a monstrous oxymoron. Unlike some contemporary theorists, however, Patterson does not indulge in professorial contempt for the motives and literary intentions of writers. She seems to authentically admire Hamlet's courage at evading zealous censors.

Instead of rejoicing in the enigmas of obscure texts, then, Patterson offers "an account of fictional ambiguity, in which the indeterminacy inveterate to language was fully and knowingly exploited by authors and readers alike." (18) Her approach

Does not privilege either writer or reader, or eliminate either. It is hospitable to, and indeed dependent on, a belief in authorial intention, yet it is incapable of reduction to a positivistic belief in meanings that authors can fix. Indeed, what this study of the hermeneutics of censorship shows happening over and over again is that authors who build ambiguity into their works have no control over what happens to them later. (18)

I want to quibble with the phrase "no control" without discarding Patterson's basic premise that the evasion of political censorship through purposeful ambiguity—like Hamlet's pseudo anonymous mousetrap—involves a loss of control over the fate of the author's intended meaning. Patterson shows convincingly, for instance, that Ben Jonson's *Sejanus* became subject to retroactive allegorical interpretations which were almost certainly not intended by its author. Surely, though, for ambiguity to remain functional, a sophisti-

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cated literary mind like Shakespeare's must deposit some clues and set some guideposts for unborn readers.

Patterson's Elizabethan author, like Jacob, must wrestle with the Angel of Censorship; his modern counterpart, however, is as much detective as wrestler. Knitting together clues which have been rent asunder under the modern division of intellectual labor, such an author will want to consult a variety of sources to arrive at a more complete version of things as they were. Patterson's approach to literature as cultural politics, for example, assumes certain axioms about the historical configuration of literary discourses which might profitably be discussed in a more explicit theoretical spotlight. In her essay, "Lying in Politics," Hannah Arendt describes how:

Secrecy—what diplomatically is called "discretion," as well as the *arcana imperii*, the mysteries of government—and deception, the deliberate falsehood and the outright lie used as legitimate means to achieve political ends, have been with us since the beginning of recorded history... whoever reflects on these matters can only be surprised by how little attention has been paid, in our tradition of philosophical and political thought, to their significance. (1969, 4-5)

Elizabethans, of course, paid abundant attention to the Tacitean doctrine of politically justified "secrets of empire," and Patterson's hermeneutics of censorship implies that Elizabethan readers were probably correspondingly more conscious of the power of these secrets to generate literary forms of expression than are we moderns. Manipulation of public perception by a few power brokers in and around the Privy Council, writes Womersley in a recent monograph, was standard fare for an Elizabethan populace. As the 1590s—the decade of publication of the Shakespeare quartos—progressed without a clear solution to the looming succession crisis, national anxiety over the intersection between private secrets and public policy reached a fever pitch with the abortive Essex Rebellion in 1601. Such circumstances, writes Womersley, hinder our modern comprehension of Elizabethan realities. If

we now return to the question of the political interpretation of literature, we will appreciate that this restriction of significant political life to a small group of men immediately attendant on the monarch and operating in a closed environment further hinders our understanding of sixteenth century actuality, and thus our political interpretation of literature. As Cecil implied in likening the heart of Elizabethan politics to the dealings of lovers, the essence of that political life was quite private. (1991, 340)

The Shakespearean character, Troilus, cites Tacitean doctrine, as Cecil must have conceived it in the fin-de-siècle hothouse of Elizabethan London: "This is *a mystery in the soul of the state*—with whom relation durst never meddle." (III.iii.202) [italics added]. The hermeneutics of censorship draws attention

to an interpretative principle often obscured in critical discussions of the phenomenology of an Elizabethan drama such as *Troilus and Cressida*. By placing such a line in the mouth of a character, the author reveals his awareness of the problematic existence, in theory if not in actual practice, of *arcana imperii* and his contradictory relation to them. The insight invites a conjecture. Does the “mystery in the soul of the state” to which Troilus alludes have an identifiable Elizabethan content, or is merely a passing theatrical metaphor for a long-dead Trojan secret?

Patterson, for her part, seems to authorize the search for allegorical parallels, at least in the work of “real authors” exploring the boundaries of the acceptable in literary discourse. “It is because of my respect for the psychological component in interpretation,” writes Patterson in her introduction, “for the value of the devious traces real authors leave of themselves in their writing, that I have wished to tell a more intricate story about censorship than is still, I believe, the norm.” (30)

While scholars can applaud Professor Patterson’s desire to tell a more complex story about censorship than has been the norm, we need not agree with everything in this book. Patterson’s analysis of the political implications of *King Lear*, for instance, is particularly troubling, for she assumes long-standing chronological axioms of Shakespearean orthodoxy which fail to merit the credibility with which they have traditionally been invested.

A contrast here is instructive. Patterson offers keen insight into how the Jonsonian corpus developed in relation to the actual life of its real author, nicknamed “Honest Ben”—whose repeated confrontations with censoring authorities stimulated the development of a “social theory of literature, a poetics of censorship” (57) informing his poetry and drama as well as the theoretical criticism of his important but rarely read *Timber*. In contrast, Patterson’s theory falls flat when she attempts to explicate *Lear* and its purported author. Shakespeare remains in this book a cipher without a signification, a man without a politics, an *oeuvre* without a soul. Confined within the Stratfordian paradigm, Patterson’s theory stretches its wings but cannot fly. Her hermeneutic principles slip back into the same equivocating speculation which has always distinguished the arcane world of Shakespeare criticism from historical study of real Elizabethan authors.

If we *assume* a date of late 1605 to late 1606 for the composition of *King Lear*, we can *also assume* that it followed all of the other contributions to the Union controversy... (77) ...*if, then, we assume* that Shakespeare’s play was indeed a response to the Union controversy, but one deliberately shaped by its author’s understanding of the hermeneutics of censorship, we can recognize its first scene as a preliminary statement of the controlling discursive conventions, dramatizing restraints that the

play, by being a play, acknowledges and to which it makes formal submission. (79)

To her credit, Patterson acknowledges the arbitrary nature of the conventional dating of *Lear* to 1605. One suspects her candor to be motivated by misgivings over the paltry nature of the intellectual harvest gleaned from such a chronological assumption, however sanctioned by traditional authority, when one applies the hermeneutic principles elaborated in the book. The disappointment is proportional to the expectations aroused by the significance of Patterson's observation of that first scene's enactment of the hermeneutics of censorship. When Patterson discerns a confrontation between incestuous state authority and the ironically polyvocal "true author" speaking in the figure of the youngest daughter, she unlocks the scene's hidden power as a parable of censorship. In *Lear*, as in history, the politics of intrafamilial desire can determine the fate of nations, deform the history of epochs, and transfigure the authorship of texts practically beyond recognition. Cordelia, like the author of the sonnets, finds that art, "tongue-tied by authority" (66), must speak from the heart while employing all the rhetorical devices of a classically skilled orator. The play, of course, abounds with prolific reverberations of this opening motif of censored truth: the banishment of the "plain speaking" Kent, Edmund's conspiratorial forgery of the letter incriminating his brother of patricidal intrigue, and the ironic blinding of honest Gloucester for daring to "support a published traitor" (IV.vi.231) all spring to mind.

But Patterson's attempt to link this parable of censorship to the apparently "Learlike" behavior of James around the time of the 1605-06 Union controversy will fail to inspire confidence in critical readers. Relying on the censorship theme to support such a date of composition leads us so far from the resonant particulars of the text and the supposed context that it could be used as evidence for composition in any one of several previous decades—during which Elizabeth and other European monarchs were not unknown to have behaved in a "Learlike" manner.

In analyzing *Lear*, then, Patterson's hermeneutics don't come full circle, as they do when she discusses the complex mediations between Jonson's life and his art. In place of illumination, we get another "Stratfordian" litany of self-reinforcing assumptions. Patterson's method is circular, but it fails to yield the harvest of human reasoning which dignifies the "hermeneutic circle" as the method *sine qua non* of the human sciences. The profoundly revealing motif of author-as-censored-social-critic—a continuous presence in the Shakespeare corpus, from Jacques to Cordelia through Prospero and the author of the sonnets—while temporarily endowed with a veneer of plausibility, is finally sacrificed before the altar of orthodox Shakespeare chronology.

Patterson's pioneering analysis of the sociological dynamics of censorship,

however, does supply welcome analytical tools for refuting commonplace accusations that anti-Stratfordian premises are unhistorical or implausibly assume the presence of a malevolent conspiracy to defraud the literary public. In postulating the existence of a tacit system of “oblique communication,” Patterson leads the way in “reconstruct[ing] the cultural code” which informed the rhetorical strategies of Elizabethan writers and readers communicating via the nascent public sphere being brought into being by means of publication and the Protestant democratization of literacy. From Patterson’s account, it is clear that the rigorous evaluation and control of printed matter by Ecclesiastical censors—operating, in part, through the self-policing judicial organs of the Stationer’s Company in a pre-market context—left a distinct imprint in the literature of the period, one which can profitably be examined and analyzed through the illuminating theoretical spectacles of her “hermeneutics of censorship.” Elizabethans, confirms Patterson, “were far more sophisticated about the problems of interpretation than we might suppose... their sensitivity to both the difficulties and the interest of interpretation is remarkably well documented.” (52) This tacit system of oblique communication—encoding the *open secrets* which no loyal subject would commit for publication without the modesty of rhetorical ornament, lest naked truth betray both state and subject—is what contemporary orthodox scholars, unnerved by the glare of public exchange about the Shakespearean authorship, are accustomed to deride as conspiracy.

Perhaps it is a fitting irony, worthy of the complex and internecine history of the authorship controversy, that Patterson, who otherwise has voiced an imperious disdain for Oxfordian scholars, should become the author of a work which goes so far toward dismantling the epistemological presumptions on which orthodoxy has constructed its house of cards. In the present context of the failing orthodox paradigm of Shakespearean authorship, Patterson’s principles of interpretation, though still not appreciated for their implications, are of the greatest significance. Shakespearean orthodoxy has survived this century, in part, by cultivating the illusion that its experts can dispense with the hermeneutic enigmas of the Shakespeare canon by indefinitely rescuitating the 19th century romantic concept of a disembodied, transcendental and universal author, possessed by the *daimon* of an incomprehensible genius. Patterson’s method, instead, returns readers to a close inspection of a textual corpus which exhibits continuous signs of the author’s premeditation of her hermeneutics of censorship.

Patterson’s revived focus on the complexly mediated consciousness of Elizabethan writers will come as a welcome surprise, then, to students aware of how imperfectly and incompletely orthodox academicians have come to grips with the hermeneutic and epistemological perils of Renaissance texts. As

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Patterson stresses, despite a renewal of interest in the politics of Elizabethan drama among contemporary critics, “there is as yet no systematic account of the strategies of indirection” employed in public modes of discourse—in sermons, speeches or poetry as well as theater. (53) Although Patterson sets forth a blueprint for the development of such a comprehensive account, by admission of the 1992 introduction, her present book surveys only a fraction of the relevant territory. Patterson’s work opens new vistas in Shakespeare studies that are destined to be explored by the many students of her ideas, who will, as “time unfolds what pleated cunning hides,” more and more count themselves, overtly or covertly, as apostates to a withering Shakespearean orthodoxy.

Notes

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A Groatsworth Variorum

Greene's Groatsworth of Wit.
edited by D. Allen Carroll. 1994.

Reviewed by David Chandler, a doctoral candidate in English at Corpus Christi College, Oxford University.

Greene's Groatsworth of Wit became suddenly, almost explosively, interesting in 1778, when the following note, communicated by the scholar Thomas Tyrwhitt (1730-86), was published in George Stevens’s revised edition of Johnson’s Shakespeare:

Though the objections, which have been raised to the genuineness of the *three plays of Henry the sixth*, have been fully considered and

answered by Dr. Johnson, it may not be amiss to add here, from a contemporary writer, a passage, which not only points at Shakespeare as the author of them, but also shews, that, however meanly we may now think of them in comparison with his later productions, they had, at the time of their appearance, a sufficient degree of excellence to alarm the jealousy of the other playwrights. The passage, to which I refer, is in a pamphlet, entitled, *Greene's Groatsworth of Witte*, supposed to have been written by that voluminous author, Robert Greene, M.A. and said, in the title-page to be *published at his dying request*; probably, about 1592 [Greene died early in September 1592]. The conclusion of this piece is an address to his brother-poets, to dissuade them from writing any more for the stage, on account of the ill treatment which they were used to receive from the players. It begins thus: *To those gentlemen, his quondam acquaintance, that spend their wits in making playes, R.G. wishesth a better exercise, & c.* After having thus address himself particularly to *Christopher Marlowe* and *Thomas Lodge*, (as I guess from circumstances, for their names are not mentioned;) he goes on to a third (perhaps *George Peele*); and having warned him against *depending on so meane a stay* as the players, he adds: *Yes, trust them not; for there is an upstart crow beautified with our feathers, that with his tygres head [sic] wrapt in a players hyde, supposes hee is as well able to bombaste out a blanke verse as the best of you; and being an absolute Johannes fac totum is in his own conceit, the onely Shake-scene in a countrey.* There can be no doubt, I think, that *Shake-scene* alludes to Shakespeare or that *his tygres head wrapt in a players hyde* is a parodie upon the following line of York's speech to Margaret, *Third Part of Henry the Sixth*, act I, sc. iv: *Oh tygres heart, wrapt in a woman's hide.* (Vol. 6, 565-6)

Tyrwhitt's was a sensational discovery barely done justice in its brief mention in Samuel Schoenbaum's *Shakespeare's Lives*. His was a sophisticated reading too; not only did he infer the reference to Shakespeare (a point that few have disputed), but he correctly identified the parodied line (he had clearly seen only a late quarto that substituted "head" for the original "heart," the latter being even closer to the line in *3H6*), and accurately guessed the identity of the playwrights addressed (Marlowe and Peele are still accepted, modern critics tend to favor Nashe as the third, but Lodge still has his supporters). Altogether, it was an astonishing piece of scholarship. Yet Tyrwhitt hardly seems to have recognized the full significance of his discovery, for while he saw the *Groatsworth* reference as primarily solving a textual problem, it soon became evident that it was a godsend to the skeletal state of Shakespeare biography. Malone welcomed it as such in the same edition: "That Shakspeare [sic] had commenced a writer for the stage, and had even excited the jealousy of his

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contemporaries, before September 1592, is now decisively proved..." (Vol. 1, 277)

The question of the precise meaning of the "Shake-scene" passage soon led to controversy though; after having caused a stir in 1592 and then been forgotten, *Greene's Groatsworth of Wit* has, since 1778, provided much heated discussion. So much so that, in 1928, John Semple Smart was moved to declare, "This passage from Greene has had such a devastating effect on Shakespearean study that we cannot but wish it had never been written or never discovered." Traditional areas of dispute have been the biographical significance of the passage with respect to Shakespeare, what it has to say about Shakespeare's early writing practice (was he a plagiarist?), and to what extent the main narrative can be read as an (auto)biography of Greene (or Lodge). In our own century, the question of the authorship of the *Groatsworth* has come to the fore. Lesser areas of dispute include whether Lodge or Nashe is being addressed, and what the *Groatsworth* has to say about Marlowe. Then again there are two animal fables of disputed—but undeniable—significance. And more. For those of us who like to argue about literature instead of just reading it, the *Groatsworth* is an Elizabethan work *par excellence*.

Dr. Carroll's superb new edition—the first fully annotated one—is designed for such readers. For those who wish to approach the *Groatsworth* as a work of literary art (I suspect there are few), this edition offers little new; for those who wish to know the precise state of play on all the controversial points, as well as the history of diverging opinions, it will be absolutely indispensable. It is difficult to imagine any future edition that will not be simply a revision and updating of Dr. Carroll's. The painstaking tracing of what must be almost every thing ever written about the *Groatsworth* is, quite simply, breathtaking.

The last statement needs to be qualified only slightly. The views of Oxfordian and various other anti-Stratfordian critics have not been included, although they have broadened the realm of debate and dramatized the importance of correct reading. In 1984, for example, Charlton Ogburn declared: "The Stratfordian scholars pledge their fortunes and their sacred honor, if not their lives, upon its [the *Groatsworth* passage] proving that in 1592 Will Shakspeare of Stratford-on-Avon was recognized as both an actor and a writer of plays" (*The Mysterious William Shakespeare*, 56). Such an overstatement, of course, actually reveals how much Ogburn has staked on its *not* proving that. An entirely comprehensive account of the disagreements provoked by the *Groatsworth* would need to incorporate such unorthodox views (by way of partial compensation, and to stimulate curiosity, I include a brief account of, and challenge to, Ogburn's thesis in an appendix).

In other respects, this new edition is not afraid of controversy. Although the title-page diplomatically describes the work as "Attributed to Henry Chettle

and Robert Greene,” and although the arguments for Greene are put forward with commendably objective clarity, the much stronger case for Chettle’s authorship is not disguised. In this respect, Dr. Carroll actually agrees with Ogburn rather than Schoenbaum; the latter’s rather summary dismissal of the Chettle case must now appear something of a desperate rearguard action. One of the nicest touches of this new edition is, in my opinion, the way that Dr. Carroll delicately points out the romantic conceptions underlying the traditional tenacious clinging to Greene. The preface includes a beautiful quotation from J.A. Symonds that serves as a kind of nexus to this view: “we cannot withhold a degree of pity from the dying Titan [i.e., Greene], discomfited, undone and superseded, who beheld the young Apollo issue in splendour and awake the world to a new day.” If Chettle penned the attack on Shakespeare, such hellenistic romanticism becomes rather absurd, of course.

Dr. Carroll’s introduction is almost entirely concerned with the authorship question. There follow a description of all previous editions, a thoroughly annotated text, a list of variants in later quartos, a splendid series of appendices dealing with the major areas of dispute, a glossary, and a detailed index. There are a few minor errors in the published text, most of them insignificant. It is annoying to find, however, that the “Tygers hart” line that Chettle or Greene parodied from Shakespeare is said to be taken from “2H6” (84) when this seems to be the only full reference. It could also be wished that there was some sort of standard abbreviation for these plays, also given as “2Hen6” (86) and “2Henry VI” (140). But these are trifling faults in what is an exemplary edition. For anyone interested in Elizabethan literature, this is a book worth saving for.

Appendix. The Ogburn Thesis.

In his *The Mysterious William Shakespeare*, Charlton Ogburn attaches enormous importance to the *Groatsworth* passage discovered by Tyrwhitt, as will be seen from the quotation above. In the same paragraph he continues (almost apocalyptically): “the testimony on which these claims are based, on which Stratfordian biography rests, like a pyramid inverted upon its apex, collapses when we read what it actually says.”

Ogburn accepts the allusion to Shakespeare (or “Shaksper”) in the passage, but denies that he is being referred to as a writer. His argument is that “bombast out a blanke verse” means to indulge in extempore stage elaboration, and he cites Hamlet’s advice to the players: “let those that play your clowns speak no more than is set down for them.” It is an interesting argument that may even seem supported by Dr. Carroll’s explanation of “bombast” as “rhetorical elaboration.” Had Chettle/Greene written simply “[Shakespeare] supposes he is well able to bombast out a blanke verse,” it would certainly be valid reading. But Chettle/Greene did not simply write that: he wrote “[Shakespeare] supposes he is as well able to bombast out a blanke verse *as the*

best of you" [my emphasis]. The difference seems to count crucially against Ogburn's reading, for if Chettle/Greene meant simply extempore rhetorical elaboration (i.e., on stage), Shakespeare's presumptuous supposition that he could do this as well as Marlowe, Peele and Nashe (or Lodge) would be pointless, as these men were not known actors, so would not have had a reputation for extempore stage elaboration. Thus, "As the best of you" must make the "bombast[ing] out a blanke verse" something that Shakespeare, Marlowe, Peele and Nashe all did, and that the latter three were esteemed for: and that can only be writing. The introductory parody of a line—preceded by the pronoun "his" [i.e., Shakespeare's]—from a play later known as Shakespeare's, cited in support of Shakespeare's alleged presumption, is also powerful testimony to the form that writing took, as Tyrwhitt, Malone and most readers since have allowed. Ogburn's argument leaves us with an odd coincidence that he does not attempt to explain—i.e., that it *just so happens* that the actor "Shaksper" is being condemned with a line parodied from the writer "Shakespeare." It is only by assuming that Shakespeare challenged the professional playwrights in their own field that his boastful claims and "conceit" make any sense.

I would actually suggest the very opposite of Ogburn, and urge that the "upstart Crow" is *not identified* as an actor. Greene warns "those Gentlemen... that spend their wits in making plaies" not to trust the actors, by whom they may be "forsaken." But he does not say that the actors *include* a playwright in their number; he implies, I think, merely that they have proved fickle and changed their allegiance. Arguments that make "those Anticks" include the "upstart Crow" rely on the tradition of Shakespeare's acting, but ignore the grammatical structure of the *Groatsworth* passage. As for the "our feathers," I would accept E.A.J. Honigmann's argument (quoted by Carroll on page 140) that this refers simply to "pilfered *sententiae* and examples." Ogburn's paraphrase of "the onely Shake-scene in a cuntry" as "the only actor of power in the country (57) is part of a circular argument; it is not self-substantiated at all.

I find no evidence at all for Ogburn's assertion that "[Greene] urged his *friends* to desert the actors... The implication surely is that the actors would then be left in the lurch." (58) "The implication" is, rather, that Marlowe, Peele and Nashe (or Lodge) will "be left in the lurch" if they do *not* desert the actors. Chettle/Greene writes simply, "let those Apes [i.e., the actors] imitate your past excellence, and never more acquaint them with your admired inventions... seeke you better Maisters; for it is pittie men of such rare wits, should be subject to the pleasure of such rude groomes." In other words, the "wits" are advised to withhold their (superior) productions, but for their own dignity, rather than for any trouble this will cause the actors. It is, of course,

Ogburn's own view of the situation—a view that denies that the “upstart Crow” is identified as a writer—that puts the actors “in the lurch.”

Books in Brief

Shakespeare, In Fact
by Irwin Matus. 1994.

Reviewed by Publius, an academic who prefers to remain incognito for reasons of professional safety.

Whatever digressions the author makes in pursuit of his game, Irwin Matus has written *Shakespeare, In Fact* in response to two powerfully challenging and complex books—*“Shakespeare” Identified in the Seventeenth Earl of Oxford* (Looney, 1920) and *The Mysterious William Shakespeare: The Myth and the Reality* (Ogburn, 1984). Of course, Matus has trained his eyes on B.M. Ward's 1928 biography of the Earl of Oxford, and perhaps he's even acquainted himself with William Fowler's 1986 study of Oxford's correspondence. What's disturbing about all Matus's reading, however, is that what passes before the eye seems to register so dimly in the representation which comes forth from the pen. Matus does not disdain to actually argue with his intellectual opponents; he simply pauses over their strong points with a sneer before moving to another topic on which he finds it easy to make them appear ridiculous.

In so doing, Matus takes enormous liberties with the views of those he actually cites for the purposes of refutation. In fact, his compulsion to construct straw men seems beyond hope of clinical intervention. For instance, Matus makes it appear that Ward claimed that the Earl of Oxford had written plays attributed to John Lyly. As the most sophisticated Oxfordian scholar since J.T. Looney, Ward is someone Matus cannot afford to let escape unscathed from his tirade against Oxfordian scholarship. But in mauling Ward, Matus misreads, and misrepresents, him.

Ward conjectured not that Oxford had authored the Lyly plays, but that they resulted from a “collaborative” relationship (275) between Lyly and his employer during the period 1579-1590—while Lyly was Oxford's secretary. Ward offers this conjecture—and it is not, contrary to what Matus would have his readers believe, more than an aside from his major thesis—in pursuance of a more definite, important and ultimately decisive conclusion: there is an intimate association, documented in the researches of Albert Fucillerat, Warwick

Bond and E.K. Chambers, between Oxford's Men, John Lyly and the Queen's Men during the 1580s. In 1593 the latter troupe was disbanded and reconfigured under the nominal patronage of Henry and then George Carey, as the Lord Chamberlain's Men. This conclusion has profound, and still relatively unexplored, implications for a stage history which does credit to the Earl of Oxford's vital role as the Hamlet-like patron to Elizabethan theater companies from 1576 until his death in 1604.

Ward's purpose was never the narrow one which Matus falsely attributes to him, of claiming the Lyly plays as part of the Oxford canon. Ward wanted to document the circumstances which would lead any reasonable person to conclude for the likelihood of a literary collaboration between Oxford and his "fiddlestick" (to quote Gabriel Harvey), Lyly. One would think Ward's *quodlibet* would be music to the ears of a critic like Matus, who has been hired to explain away the more or less explicit references by William Webbe (1586), Francis Meres (1598) and the author of *The Arte of English Poesie* (1589) to Oxford's reputation as a pseudo-anonymous author of comic drama. If Matus were less obsessed with savaging Ward's well-deserved reputation as one of the most thoughtful Elizabethan scholars in our century, this would have been just the place to position a strategic agreement. He might then have followed Ward in arguing that some of Oxford's reputation as a comic writer resulted from the hypothesized collaboration between employer and secretary, which would seem to exonerate him from the accusation of having written *Troilus and Cressida*, among other works appearing in the Shakespeare quartos and folio.

But this would be a strategic concession which Matus cannot afford to make. To admit Ward's sagacity would be a sin against the revisionist agenda which makes this book such a post-modern monument to Stratfordian babble. Instead of reading Ward through Matus's near-sighted perspective, we might weigh his testimony, like that of others, in historical context. Thomas Nashe, for one, seems to have held a higher estimate of Oxford's comic sensibility that Matus does: often regarded as the greatest satirist of the age, Nashe describes himself as one that "enjoy[s] but a mite of wit in comparison of his [Oxford's] talent" and hypothesizes that if Oxford was to take Harvey "in hand" again "there would more gentle readers dies of a merry mortality engendered in by his eternal jests he would maul thee with, then there have done of his last infection." (Ward, 91)

Such contemporary testimony must be weighed against the revisionist claims of Matus that "it is impossible to imagine Lyly's style owed anything to Oxford, whose style was old-fashioned to begin with..." The declaration fails to inspire confidence in Matus's knowledge of the development of 16th century prose and also suggests a rather diminished lexicon of literary criticism; apparently, calling someone "old fashioned" becomes a convenient euphe-

mism for a style most students would term *euphuistic*. Either Matus is completely ignorant of the subject on which he presumes to enlighten his readers, or he is too much of a shark for contemporary intellectual fashions to know the difference between what is impossible and what is merely probable.

In anatomizing such liberties with conscientious scholarship, we must not lose sight of the larger dynamics of Matus's operating method: why would anyone devote almost three pages of a short chapter on the Earl of Oxford to "refuting" a non-existent and, in any case, irrelevant claim that he was the author of the Lyly corpus? A metaphor will serve. When a magician wants to pull a rabbit out of his hat, he distracts attention with linguistic patter. Good patter follows the structure of a *periphrasis*—the object is to spend so much time rhapsodizing that one is on the threshold of the promised land, that the audience never notices that they are still standing in the same dull room. *Voilà—a rabbit.*

Of course, it would never do to mention that Ogburn and others have argued convincingly that the historical figure Matus pompously proclaims could not possibly have influenced John Lyly is the historical prototype for Euphuus himself. Such a reality might have some bearing if one were to consider that Oxford exercised some influence over the historical style named after that "fictional" character. Matus's purpose is to amuse and distract long enough to pluck the rabbit of his so-called refutation from the well-lined tophat of the Shakespeare Industry without getting any intelligent, troublesome methodological questions from his audience.

All in all, the fantasy of Stratfordian authorship is a little like the smile on the Cheshire cat in *Alice in Wonderland*: first it has nine lives and then, after using all of them up in various blunders over the past two hundred years, we at last get to appreciate the company of a giant grin that just won't disappear.

Shakespeare: Who Was He?

by Richard Whalen. 1994.

Organized into complementary sections which present the traditional and Oxfordian cases for authorship of the Shakespeare canon, *Shakespeare: Who Was He?* has accomplished the difficult task of impartially selecting the most cogent arguments for each side and delivering these with understatement and accuracy. This well-written book has opened the door onto a much misrepresented age that often leaves academics adrift in uncertainties about... well, who wrote Shakespeare. As an introductory text that lays out the essential evidence for the contending and contentious sides, Whalen's book is a much needed anodyne for those who have been exposed to reams of polemical writings that, regrettably, have mostly misinformed or defamed the living and the dead.

The Elizabethan Review

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