



# THE SHAKESPEARE OXFORD NEWSLETTER

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## In the Footsteps of Vere and Roe (Part Two)

by Robert Prechter

[Editor's note: In the early fall of 2017 Robert Prechter and his wife, Robin, spent fifteen days in Italy, much of it devoted to finding the "key spots in northern Italy about which Richard Roe wrote in *The Shakespeare Guide to Italy*." Part One ran in the previous issue of the *Newsletter*.]

### Pisa

On Sunday, October 8, we took a side trip to Pisa. Roe figured out that when in *The Taming of the Shrew* Shakespeare speaks twice of "Pisa, renowned for grave citizens," he is jokingly referring to the prominent citizens buried at Camposanto Monumentale, or Campo Santo (**photo 12**), a vast, partly covered structure adjacent to the basilica of Pisa. The Cathedral, Baptistry and Leaning (Bell) Tower make Pisa one of the most popular tourist sites in Italy, but we found Campo Santo more interesting. The graves (**photo 13**) are variously adorned, the grounds contain many fine statues, and the walls have partially restored frescoes dating from the 1300-1400s, one of which offers a particularly inventive vision of Hell. If Shakespeare visited Campo Santo, he saw the paintings when they were in much better shape. A stone placed (at what time I know not) prominently in

the floor at the main archway to the open lawn in the center of the facility features a lion rampant, which has figured into the crests and coats of arms of numerous European noble and royal families and countries, including England, beginning around the same time construction began on Campo Santo.

You need no special directions to find this collection of buildings, as the locals know exactly where every tourist is headed.

(Continued on p. 27)



12: Campo Santo, Pisa



13: Graves at Campo Santo, Pisa

## ***From the President:***

### **Evaluating Unification Five Years Later**

This is my last “From the President” message, as my tenure as president will end with the upcoming Oakland conference in October. It is now almost five years since the two major Oxfordian groups in the U.S. agreed to unite to form a single organization under the name “Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship,” and I believe that this is a good time to evaluate the success of the unification.

A brief background history for those who have joined the Oxfordian movement since the unification in 2013: This organization, which was founded in 1957, was known for most of its existence as the Shakespeare Oxford Society (SOS). In 2001, due to some disagreements within the organization, a sizeable number of SOS members split away from the SOS and formed their own Oxfordian organization, called the Shakespeare Fellowship (SF). Despite the disagreements, there were many ties between the two organizations. Many Oxfordians, myself included, belonged to both groups. In 2005, the two groups began to hold joint annual conferences, rather than each group holding a separate conference every year.

In 2012, the two organizations began negotiations to reunite. The two groups had to iron out several differences between them about how the unified organization would

be run. A new set of bylaws was proposed, which aimed to take the best features from each group’s existing bylaws to create a more vibrant, more efficient organization. The new name, Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship (SOF), was derived by combining the names of the two predecessor organizations. Unification required us to jump through a number of legal hoops, including getting approval from two-thirds of the members of each organization. We worked out a unification plan, along with the bylaws, and presented them to the members of both groups for approval. The final vote was taken by mail and by in-person voting at our joint conference in Toronto in 2013, where members of both groups approved the unification plan by votes of over 95%.

In my view, the reunification has been a great success. We have found that we could do things as a unified group that we could not do as two separate groups because we are operating more efficiently. When I started writing this message, I thought that throughout the article I would thank by name all the people who helped make these accomplishments possible. I realized very soon, however, that naming names would drastically increase the length of the article and, inevitably, I would still be omitting many individuals’ important contributions. So, let me say many, many THANKS to ALL of our members and friends who have contributed in *any* way to our progress as a unified organization! We are a team. Here are some of the accomplishments of the unified SOF in the last five years:

### **The Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter**

Published quarterly by the Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship, P.O. Box 66083, Auburndale, MA 02466-0083. <https://ShakespeareOxfordFellowship.org>.

The Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship is a non-profit, educational organization dedicated to investigating the Shakespeare authorship question and disseminating the evidence that Edward de Vere, the 17th Earl of Oxford (1550-1604), is the true author of the poems and plays written under the pseudonym “William Shakespeare.”

The Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship pursues its mission by supporting research, educational and scholarly initiatives, annual conferences, website and social media, and by publishing this Newsletter and an annual scholarly journal, *The Oxfordian*.

The Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship was formed in 2013 when the Shakespeare Oxford Society, founded in 1957, and the Shakespeare Fellowship, founded in 2001, united to form a single organization. Dues, grants and contributions are tax deductible to the extent provided by law.

#### **TRUSTEES:**

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Newsletter editor: Alex McNeil ([newsletter@shakespeareoxfordfellowship.org](mailto:newsletter@shakespeareoxfordfellowship.org))

Articles, essays, commentary, book reviews, letters and news items of interest to the Shakespeare Oxfordian community are welcome. Views expressed are not necessarily those of the Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship. As provided in the bylaws, “The conferences, publications, and other educational projects of the Fellowship will be open forums for all aspects of the Oxfordian theory of authorship.”

Advertising Rates: \$100 for full page, \$60 for half-page, \$35 for quarter-page.

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**Research Grant Program:** This was one of our first initiatives after unification. The Research Grant Program, now in its fifth year, offers grant money to fund research, often into archival materials, related to the authorship question. We have explored the canals of Italy, the probability of the notes in a book by Seneca being in Oxford's handwriting, Oxford's travels in Italy, documents in French archives and in the College of Arms, and we will be searching for clues in English archives and in the Bodleian Library in the near future. This program would not have been possible without the monetary savings that we achieved through unification, the beneficence of our members and friends who have donated so generously, and the pluck and determination of our intrepid researchers.

**New Website and Social Media:** Although both the SOS and SF had serviceable websites before unification, the SF was in the process of building a beautiful new, professionally-designed website, which it unveiled shortly before the 2013 conference. After unification was official, we moved all materials from the SOS website to the new SF website, which became the SOF website. It is a truly beautiful, professional, and eye-catching website of which we can all be proud. It contains hundreds of articles from Oxfordian newsletters and journals. It houses so much material that it requires an expert webmaster to keep it humming, and fortunately the SOF is able to pay our webmaster for the time she spends in that role.

Since unification, we have expanded our reach with the SOF Facebook page and added Twitter, Tumblr, Google Plus, and Instagram to our social media repertoire. We have spent modest sums on Facebook advertising, which has brought many new people to our Facebook page. We have started making videos of conference presentations, which are uploaded to our own SOF YouTube channel and may be accessed through our website. We have been employing MailChimp to send email blasts to our members and others who have signed up for our free email list. This allows us to keep our followers frequently updated on the latest news on the authorship question. Our online presence helps us reach potential new Oxfordians and keep in touch with our members and friends.

**"Shakespeare" Identified Centennial and Looney Headstone:** In 2014, we established an "SI-100" Committee to celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of J. Thomas Looney's *"Shakespeare" Identified* (SI), the 1920 book that introduced the theory of Edward de Vere's authorship to the world. Among the Committee's many achievements was to get in touch with Looney's grandson, from whom we learned that the father of the Oxfordian movement lay in an unmarked grave. On learning of this, the SOF immediately sprang into action and was able, within less than a week, to raise enough money to cover most of the costs of a beautiful headstone for Looney and his wife. Our email

capabilities, along with our members' enthusiasm, helped make it possible for us to act so quickly.

**Print-on-demand Journals:** By 2014, the costs of printing and mailing our newsletter and journals to our members had grown so fast that it was threatening our financial stability. In 2015, we moved away from conventional printing services and started publishing our journals through the print-on-demand services of CreateSpace, an arm of Amazon. The costs of publishing through CreateSpace are minimal compared to those of standard printing services, and our journals are now available to the whole world on Amazon! Members can buy printed copies for about \$10, or they can read the journals online. Print-on-demand was an important factor in our going from a slight deficit at the end of 2014 to a substantial surplus in 2015 and ever since.

**Financial Matters:** The SOF has an endowment of about \$57,000 that had been earning minimal interest in a savings account since the late 1990s and early 2000s. In 2017, we placed the endowment in a mutual fund, where it has been accruing much more robust earnings for us. We have also bought general liability insurance to secure the SOF's continued operation should any legal challenges threaten our existence.

**Other Projects:** Since unification, the SOF has responded to the Folger Library's 2016 First Folio tour with a special edition of *Brief Chronicles* exposing the Folio's many ambiguities, created a handout to be distributed at First Folio exhibits, and sponsored presentations in response to the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Stratford grain merchant's death. We have established a video contest that has drawn thousands of people to our website. We now have a Speakers Bureau with over thirty speakers who are ready, willing, and able to give introductory live talks on the SAQ almost anywhere in the U.S. or Canada. We have a Data Preservation Committee, which is working to ensure the continued existence of important historical materials and which recently posted on our website all the newsletters published between 1939 and 1948 by the American Shakespeare Fellowship, the first Oxfordian organization in the U.S. Since late 2015, we have been publishing a very popular website series, "How I Became an Oxfordian," in which more than sixty people have now told their stories of how they followed the evidence that led them to Oxford.

**Open Forum:** One of the key factors in the unification of the SOS and SF five years ago was that we agreed to welcome all Oxfordians. Our new bylaws state, "The conferences, publications, and other educational projects of the Fellowship will be open forums for all aspects of the Oxfordian theory of authorship." While we can and should collegially discuss and debate our different ideas about the details of the Oxfordian theory, we should not shun those who have novel or unusual theories. Since unification, we have expended less energy chastising each other and more time promoting Oxford.



Some of these achievements might have occurred without unification, but I think that the synergy that we gained with unification has powered us through many new projects and that this dynamic will continue into the future. I have greatly enjoyed being your president for the last four years, and I will remain active with the

organization. I wish the best for the next president and members of the Board of Trustees. I hope to see many of you at the SOF Conference in Oakland!

Tom Regnier, President

## What's the News?

### Sacramento Theater Company Sponsors Authorship Discussion and Play Reading

About fifty people gathered at the Central Library in Sacramento, California, on April 24 to see a copy of the Fourth Folio and to hear a panel discussion titled "Who Wrote Shakespeare?" The panelists were:

- Thomas J. Slakey, former Dean at St John's College, Annapolis, Maryland
- Lisa Tromovitch, Associate Professor of Theatre Arts, Univ. of the Pacific and Artistic Director, Livermore Shakespeare Festival
- Gerit Quealy, author of *Shakespeare's Botanical* (2018)
- Ramon Jiménez, author of *Shakespeare's Apprenticeship* (September 2018)

The panelists described their association with Shakespeare's works and their introduction to the Shakespeare Authorship Question. Each of them expressed his or her opinion about the identity of the author, and then cited evidence supporting that opinion. Quealy and Jiménez asserted that there was no credible evidence that William Shakspeare of Stratford wrote anything. Slakey and Tromovitch responded that the Stratford man had been considered the author of the plays for hundreds of years, and that there was nothing in the record that contradicted that view. Each panelist spoke only to the audience, there being no interaction among them. Although the audience was particularly curious about the claims for the Earl of Oxford, it appeared that very few opinions were changed by the discussion.

Of great interest to everyone was the Sacramento Library's copy of a Fourth Folio (1685), which was brought into the room and made available for close inspection. Often regarded as the worst of the four Shakespeare Folios, it was a reprint of the Third Folio (1663), which contained seven plays that were absent from the First (1623) and Second (1632) Folios.

The "Who Wrote Shakespeare?" event was sponsored by California Stage, a Sacramento theater company that also organized a play-reading program titled "The Lost Plays Of Shakespeare." During April and May, fifty Shakespearean actors from the Sacramento theater community joined forces to read *Edmond Ironside* and

four plays from the Third and Fourth Folios at the Wilkerson Theater in Midtown. The four "lost" plays were *The London Prodigal*, *The Puritan*, *A Yorkshire Tragedy* and *Thomas Lord Cromwell*.

At the end of the evening, panel members and hosts repaired to De Vere's Irish Pub for a late snack.

[Reported by Joan Leon]

### SOF Forum Held in Ashland, Oregon

More than fifty persons, some of whom traveled from as far away as Washington, D.C., enjoyed the day-long Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship Forum at Hannon Library on the campus of Southern Oregon University in Ashland, Oregon, on July 9. Most had attended productions of both *Henry V* and *Love's Labour's Lost* at the award-winning Oregon Shakespeare Festival (OSF) on the previous day. As was the case for the summer seminar in 2016, this year's forum focused on the plays in production at OSF this season.

Ramon Jiménez led off the presentations with "*Henry V*—Sources, Dates, and Venues," a paper he had delivered at the SOF annual conference in 2016 (a video of that presentation is available on the SOF website). Jiménez has a degree in English from U.C.L.A. and is the author of two books on Julius Caesar and the Roman Republic. He has published more than twenty articles and reviews in *The Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter* and *The Oxfordian*; his book-length study of literary and historical



evidence, *Shakespeare's Apprenticeship: Identifying the Real Playwright's Earliest Works*, will be published by McFarland & Co. in September.

Next to present was Bonner Miller Cutting. Her paper, "The Editors of Shakespeare's First Folio: Hiding in Plain Sight?" developed the web of relationships among the Earls of Pembroke and Montgomery (the "incomparable pair"), Ben Jonson, and the other contributors to the First Folio. The presentation was meticulously detailed, in stark contrast to Lauren Gunderson's *The Book of Will*, the popular, highly sentimental, feminist fantasy that is in production all summer at OSF. In a follow-up email to participants, Cutting provided a detailed bibliography of her compelling argument. She has also nearly completed working on a collection of essays for publication, *Necessary Mischief: Exploring the Shakespeare Authorship Question*.

The morning session concluded with David Rains Wallace speaking on "Shakespeare's Wilderness." Wallace has published more than twenty books on conservation and natural history, including *The Klamath Knot*, for which he received the John Burroughs Medal, "a classic of natural history that will take its place alongside *Walden* and *A Sand County Almanac*." He has written articles for the National Geographic Society, the Nature Conservancy, the Sierra Club, *Harper's Magazine*, *The New York Times*, *Wilderness* and other periodicals. His most recent book, *Shakespeare's Wilderness*, was published in 2017; in it he espouses the Oxfordian theory of authorship (see review in the Summer 2017 issue of the *Newsletter*).

During the lunch break participants were treated to an exhibit of folios and other rare 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century texts from the Margery Bailey Collection at Hannon Library. The exhibit included Shakespeare's Fourth Folio, Ben Jonson's folios, the Fletcher and Beaumont folios, Holinshed's *Chronicles*, Hall's *Chronicle*, North's translation of *Plutarch's Lives*, and William Camden's *Britannia*.

Rima Greenhill presented on "The Masque of Muscovites Revisited." Greenhill is a Senior Lecturer in Russian language in the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures at Stanford University, and is a recipient of several teaching awards. Ten years ago she turned her attention to the subject of international relations during the Early Modern era with a special focus on trade and diplomatic relations between England and Russia under the Tudors and the Stuarts. She has just completed a new interpretation of *Love's Labour's Lost* which elucidates many of the play's heretofore opaque Russian references and relationships. Her astonishing research proved to be a revelation for a number of participants.

Earl Showerman concluded the presentations with his paper, "Hercules in Shakespeare's Labours of Love." Over the past decade he has presented a series of papers and published on the topic of Shakespeare's Greek

dramatic sources, and contributed a chapter on Shakespeare's medical knowledge in *Shakespeare Beyond Doubt?—Exposing an Industry in Denial*, as well as several topics in *Know-It All-Shakespeare* (2017). His arguments focused on the significance of the numerous allusions to Hercules in *Love's Labour's Lost* and *Much Ado About Nothing*.

The session concluded with an open-ended discussion session. The faculty had a great time and is committed to supporting future programs in Ashland that explore the Shakespeare authorship question. The feedback from participants was enthusiastic. Here are a few of the comments:

- "Not often encountered in a series of talks, every presentation in this fast moving educational event was an engaging breath of fresh air, and packed with a kind of knowledge only available when the history of literature is connected to the history of the people who created it. It was one 'Ah-ha' moment after another."
- "The presentations were as provocatively diverse as Shakespeare's own works. All delved into areas that have not been much developed in the past, and reflected the genuine, scholarly inquiry and open-mindedness of their authors."
- "To see magnificent productions of Shakespeare at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival and have them deepened by Authorship scholars coming to Ashland and speaking on the same day—this is the high point of the season!"
- "An impressive educational experience. I'm better educated, informed, and motivated!"

[Contributed by Earl Showerman]

## SOF VP to Edit Web Journal on Shakespeare Authorship

*Critical Stages* ([critical-stages.org](http://critical-stages.org)), a mainstream web journal published two to three times annually by the International Association of Theatre Critics, has agreed to devote its December 2018 theme section to the authorship issue. The free journal receives over 10,000 hits a month and is read by theatre critics, theatre professionals and theatre scholars in some 100 countries.

To be called "The Question That Won't Go Away," the section is being edited by SOF Vice-President Don Rubin, a Professor Emeritus at Toronto's York University and one of the few professors in the world who has taught courses on the authorship question on a regular basis. Founder of the quarterly scholarly journal *Canadian Theatre Review* and series Editor of Routledge's six-volume *World Encyclopedia of Contemporary Theatre*, Rubin is Managing Editor of *Critical Stages* and a member of the Editorial Advisory

Board of *The Oxfordian*.

"I had been pushing for an issue on the authorship for quite some time," said Rubin. "I finally got them to agree to publish a series of articles in their essay section. That would have been a good start in this area. I reached out to a number of scholars and theatre artists working in this area and they helped create the content. When I sent it to the Editor-in-Chief, Professor Savas Patsaladis in Greece, he felt it was strong enough to be an issue theme on its own.

"The downside was that the material had to be pushed back from issue 17 (out now) to issue 18 (coming out in December 2018). But it seemed worth the extra few months for the extra promotion and notice it will get. And we may be able to add an article or two or a photo or two. Any suggestions will be appreciated."

As planned, the section includes the following topics:

**An Introduction to "The Question That Won't Go Away": Did the Man From Stratford Really Write the Plays? by Don Rubin.**

An introduction to a seven-essay section on the Shakespeare Authorship Question. The introduction suggests that there are significant irregularities in the traditional biography, that the authorship question has a history of some 400 years and that among its adherents are notable figures in many fields from Henry James, Walt Whitman, Sigmund Freud and Mark Twain to Tyrone Guthrie, Derek Jacobi and Mark Rylance. It is argued that, should a different author be identified, the *contexts* of the plays—social, political, sexual—would change, possibly leading to new insights in staging them.

**Reasonable Doubt about the identity of William Shakespeare. Derek Jacobi and Mark Rylance.** A conversation between two distinguished Shakespearean actors about why the Shakespeare Authorship Question should be accorded respect and taken more seriously by the theatre, literary and academic communities (recorded originally for the Shakespeare Authorship Coalition in April 2016).

**A Theatre Artist's Path: Questioning Shakespeare's Authorship, by Keir Cutler.** A Canadian actor with a Ph.D. in Theatre asks why, during all his years in academe, no one ever mentioned that there even was such a thing as a "Shakespeare Authorship Question." Cutler's own questioning led him to create several one-person shows on the subject.

**The Authorship Question: Literary Paper Trails, by Diana Price.** American researcher and independent scholar Diana Price provides evidence that there are significant irregularities in the standard biography of the putative author of the plays of Shakespeare. Includes a reprint of the first chapter of her book, *Shakespeare's Unorthodox Biography*, along with a chart comparing



Don Rubin

documentation on the life of the man from Stratford with two dozen other writers of the period.

**Opening New Possibilities for Transforming Productions of Shakespeare's Plays, by Gary Goldstein.**

The author explores how the authorship debate can change the ways that the plays can be produced if the true Shakespeare is identified as Edward de Vere, the 17<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford, and if the plays were first written twenty years earlier than generally thought, and were subsequently revised.

**The Argument for Edward de Vere: "Shake-speare" Was a Man of the Theatre, by Hank Whittemore.**

Whoever the author of the Shakespeare canon was, he had to be a man of the theatre. American actor Hank Whittemore argues that one of the leading candidates for the honor was himself someone with significant theatrical connections and experiences: Edward de Vere.

**John Florio, alias Shake-speare? by Michel Vaïs.** The Secretary-General of the International Association of Theatre Critics explains why he has come to believe that the real author of the plays of Shakespeare was not the man from Stratford, but rather scholar John Florio (in French).



## In Memoriam: Fran Gidley (1931-2018)

Longtime Oxfordian Frances Atkins “Fran” Gidley passed away on March 26, 2018, at the age of 86. A native of Baytown, Texas, she was valedictorian of her high school class in 1949. She attended the University of Texas at Austin, earning a B.A. in English in 1953. She was married for fifty-seven years to William “Bill” Gidley, whom she had met at college. Fran and Bill were avid travelers, beginning with their honeymoon in Acapulco, and continuing through their thirteen trips overseas, primarily to their favorite locations in the British Isles but also on a trip to Italy. Fran was active in her community, serving in various civic and social organizations throughout the years. She was a devoted genealogist and worked as a substitute teacher for many years. She was an active member of the Trinity Episcopal Church. Fran is survived by four children, two brothers, three grandchildren and two great-grandchildren (her husband predeceased her).

Bonner Miller Cutting offered this remembrance:

Fran Gidley’s Oxfordian story began in 1987 with the PBS *Frontline* episode, “The Shakespeare Mystery.” After viewing it for a few minutes with Bill, she became so furious with the idea that “Shakespeare wasn’t Shakespeare” that she turned off the television and left the room. Bill turned it back on, saying that he wanted to know more about this subject. So she came back and watched it with him. Later she decided that she “would get to the bottom of it.” We laughed when she told me this because we both have learned what a massive subject it is. Fran and Bill attended authorship conferences, traveled with an Oxfordian group to Italy, and went to Stratford-upon-Avon to see Shakespeare’s plays. She and I met for lunch on several occasions, sharing thoughts on many aspects of the authorship question.

Oxfordians should be well acquainted with Fran’s remarkable analysis of the manuscript of the Elizabethan play about Sir Thomas More. Her article, “Shakespeare in Composition: Evidence for Oxford’s Authorship of *Sir Thomas More*,” was first published in *The Oxfordian* (Volume VI: 2003) and republished in *Report My Cause Aright: Shakespeare Oxford Society Fiftieth Anniversary Anthology* in 2007. Persistent attempts by the orthodox establishment to claim the manuscript’s “Hand D” as Shakspeare’s hand are, of course, thwarted by the Stratford man’s six scrawled signatures on legal documents. Nevertheless, the orthodox effort has brought renewed attention to Hand D, and Fran’s article retains its importance as one of the best studies of the manuscript of



the *Thomas More* play and the several handwritings that appear in it.

Over lunch in Baytown a few years ago, Fran and I discussed her work on *A Hundredth Sundrie Flowres*, a book of poetry published in 1573 and again in 1575. Orthodox opinion holds that it was written by George Gascoigne, but Oxfordians question this attribution, finding substantial reasons to propose that this book was written by the young 17<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford. Again, Fran was in the vanguard of Oxfordian studies as additional poems and apocryphal plays are considered for inclusion in the Shakespeare canon.

Fran and Bill were stalwart supporters of authorship organizations, and gave generously to support authorship research. Fran was a generous supporter of the Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship’s Research Grant Program. Her gentle voice and meticulous scholarship will be greatly missed.



## SOF 2018 Conference Update: Early Registration Deadline August 31

The 2018 Annual Conference will be held from October 11 to 14 in Oakland, California, at the Marriott Oakland City Center (1001 Broadway, Oakland 94607).

Registration is available now on the SOF website or by mailing in the Conference Registration form inserted in this newsletter. Please register now during the early registration period. The full conference registration fee is \$250 for SOF members who register by August 31, \$275 thereafter. The full conference fee for non-members is \$275 for registration by August 31, \$300 thereafter. Daily fees are \$75 per day and an extra Sunday luncheon can be purchased for \$40.

A block of rooms at the Marriott has been reserved, but rooms are going fast. The special rate is \$149 per night plus tax (single or double room), a significant reduction from their published rates of more than \$350 per night. There are still rooms available for the nights of the conference (Thursday through Saturday) and for Sunday night, October 14. However, there are no longer rooms available at the special rate for Wednesday night, October 10. Some suggested nearby hotels (for a higher rate) are listed on the SOF website.

Reservations at the Marriott may be made now by telephone or through its website, and can be changed or canceled up to a week before the conference. Marriott's special group reservation line is 877-901-6632. They will ask you which city you are booking for and the name of the group. An online link for reservations is available on the SOF website.

Some presentations have already been selected. Topics will include a number of presentations with historical approaches:

- Prof. Roger Stritmatter will speak on "Shakespeare, Thou" as "Triumphal Form" in a poem published in 1632 by Warwickshire native Michael Drayton.
- Visiting UK scholar Kevin Gilvary, Ph.D., author of *The Fictional Lives of Shakespeare* (2017), will speak on "Who Was James I's Favorite Dramatist?" and "The Origins of the Curtain Theatre in 1577-78."
- Bonner Miller Cutting will continue her document-driven commentaries with "Alas, Poor Anne: The Second Best Bed in Historical Context." She has also just published a collection of her essays, *Necessary Mischief: Exploring the Shakespeare Authorship Question*, which will be available at the conference.
- James Warren will be presenting "J. Thomas Looney: An Unknown Fighter."
- Julie Sandys Bianchi will speak on "Twins separated at Birth? A Cultural and Genealogical Investigation of Two Identities Set in Stone."

- Ron Hess and Jan Scheffer will offer commentaries on the English translation of the *Commedia Erudita* and Oxford-connected *Tirata dell Giostra*, the "Tirade of the Joust."
- The modern history of Shakespeare and politics will be explored with Professor Wally Hurst's "Blame It on the Bard: Why the Author 'Shakespeare' is Responsible for World War I and World War II."
- Professor Michael Delahoyde and Coleen Moriarty will report on their ongoing Italian archival research.
- SOF President Tom Regnier will speak on his experience of "Opening a Door in Academia."
- Mark Andre Alexander will deliver "The Grand Jury Indictment for the Crime of Writing the Shakespeare Poems and Plays."
- Award-winning author David Rains Wallace will speak on "Shakespeare, Beowulf, and Wilderness."
- Professor Theresa Lauricella will speak on "The Prestige of Polonius."
- Earl Showerman will present a review of *Shakespeare and Greece* (2017).
- Panel proceedings will include the "Dark Lady Debate," featuring Katherine Chiljan, Hank Whittemore, and John Hamill, with Jeff Falzone of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival as moderator. Earl Showerman will moderate a panel on "Dating Shakespeare's Plays" with Ramon Jiménez, Kevin Gilvary and Katherine Chiljan.
- The "*Shakespeare*" Identified Centennial Committee will also present an update on developments and plans for 2020.
- Evening film presentations will include screenings of Robin Phillips's video, *Oh, Mistress Mine*, and Cheryl Eagan-Donovan's recently completed documentary, *Nothing Is Truer than Truth*.

The above presentations had been selected by the deadline for this issue of the *Newsletter*. Additional presentations will be added.

### Special Pre-Conference Event

If you're in the Bay Area before the conference, please consider attending a special event. The Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship and the Horatio Society invite you to a reception on Wednesday, October 10, from 3 to 7 P.M. at Ben August's Napa House and Castle, 1070 Orchard Avenue, Napa, CA 94558. Ben August will pour fine Napa, French and Italian wines. Cheeses, breads, fruits and pizza will be served. Suggested contribution is \$20 (payable at the door). Napa is one hour north of Oakland. We may arrange for bus transportation to this event, possibly for an additional fee.

### Reservations for this event are required:

RSVP by August 31 to [hamillx@pacbell.net](mailto:hamillx@pacbell.net).





# SHAKESPEARE

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## OXFORD FELLOWSHIP

P.O. Box 66083, Auburndale, MA 02466

### 2018 Conference Registration (Oakland, California)

**Full conference registration**, October 11-14 (includes all conference presentations and two provided meals). **Register by August 31 to save on registration fee!**

Qty.

#### **SOF members:**

(A member may buy up to two registrations at member price.):

If postmarked on or before August 31, 2018:

\$250 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_

If postmarked after August 31, 2018:

\$275 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Non-members:**

If postmarked on or before August 31, 2018:

\$275 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_

If postmarked after August 31, 2018:

\$300 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_

#### **For those attending only specific conference days:**

Single conference days (specify day(s): \_\_\_\_\_)

\$75 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_

Sunday banquet luncheon only:

\$40 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_

**Total:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

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Name on Credit Card \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Card Number \_\_\_\_\_

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## A Wedding Joust in Trebizond: Commedia Erudita and Sinister Politics in 1575

by W. Ron Hess, assisted by Jan Scheffer, A. Colin Wright and Concetta Thibideaux

### I. Introduction

Thanks to Cotticelli et al.<sup>1</sup> we have a 2008 translation of Andrea Perrucci's *Dell'Arte rappresentativa, premeditata ed all'improvviso* (originally published in 1699 in Naples), featuring parallel columns, on one side the original Italian (often archaic) and on the other a quite competent English translation. This is an invaluable treatise on the arts of acting and rhetoric which all Oxfordians should consider reading.

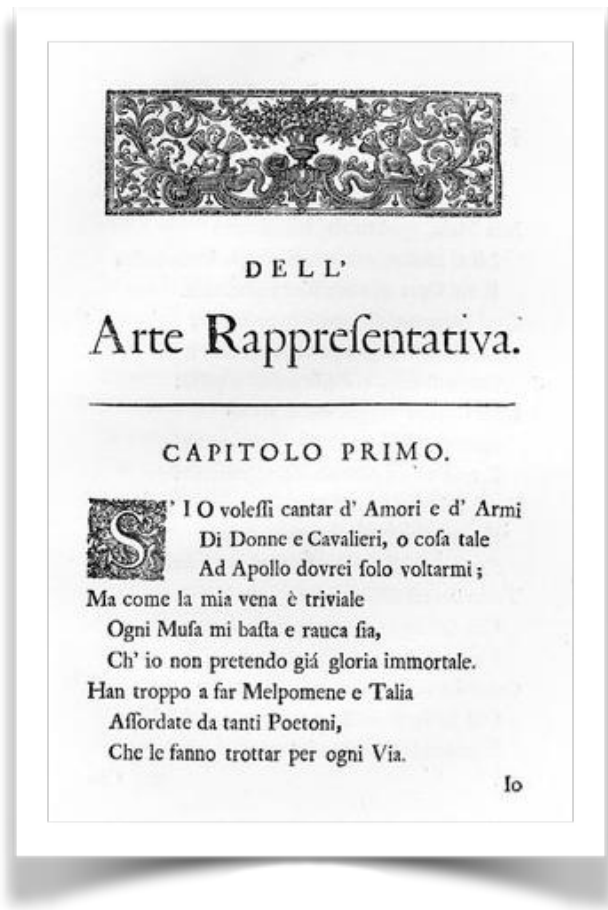
Oxfordians will recognize the original Italian of the Perrucci book as having (on pp. 137-142) the text noted in 1956 by Julia Cooley Altrocchi,<sup>2</sup> where she found that a six-page "Tirata Dell Giostra" (tirade or rant about the Joust or Tournament) had as a major character one "Elmond Milord of Oxford" in a seemingly fantastical array of jousting knights and amazons. The "Tirata" was an example Perrucci had found of the types of learned expositions often used for comic effect by Italian actors performing the role of "Il Dottore" (the Professor), a pedantic self-important stock character who declaims breathlessly for an hour or more, comically exasperating the other characters in the skit, who improvise in the background with demonstrations of all sorts (such as intense interest, grudging tolerance, utter boredom, spoofery, while acting out what was narrated, with "Dottore" comically demonstrating prodigious memory and absurd tale-telling). It would be nice to someday see a reconstruction of the "Tirata" on stage with gorgeous props and a cast of about twenty.

Yet, as accurate as the Cotticelli translation of Perrucci is, at least for the "Tirata" the translators overlooked, or decided not to address, hidden subtext. This is because the "Tirata" has constantly changing available translations due to changed spelling, truncated words, hidden myth and lore, etc. To allow for a better understanding of that often sinister subtext, an alternate "Tirata" translation and commentary is given below.

But first, let's examine whether or not the "Tirata" is an example of *commedia dell'arte*. Getting that question right will prove important for real understanding of the Italian sources of Shakespeare's comedies.

### II. Commedia erudita, not dell'arte

Shakespeare's plays have several "play within a play" examples of "palace dramas," such as *Hamlet* Q2, II.ii, "The Murder of Gonzago," and *Love's Labour's Lost*, V.ii, "Mask of the Nine Worthies" (one could offer other examples, such as the "Muscovite" masque and the "Muscovite" interrogation of Parolles in *All's Well*, IV.i & V.ii, both of which include *dell'arte* gibberish). The examples are truncated: while watching "Gonzago" the King of Denmark betrays his guilt by a violent reaction and exit, a prelude to even greater violence; in "Worthies"



the noble audience hoots down Holofernes by deliberately confusing his character of Judas Maccabeas for Judas Iscariot. In "Gonzago" we have a supposedly lost play based on the 1538 murder of a Duke of Urbino,<sup>3</sup> to which Prince Hamlet adds a few lines, thus showing that stock scripts could be modified as desired for Court performances. The "Worthies" play was entirely impromptu, albeit prerehearsed and based on a rich medieval literature of various combinations of "nine worthies."<sup>4</sup> In the "Worthies" nobles were acting in a skit to entertain fellow nobles, which was possible but unlikely in "Gonzago," because the latter was too political in its subject (let lowlife actors take the blame!). No women were involved in either play. Even though there was a "female" role in "Gonzago," the earlier discussions between Prince Hamlet and the players involved a boy whose chin was beginning to show hair and whose voice was soon to crack, limiting his usefulness for playing female roles. But we know that in Shakespeare's time there were Masques at Court which involved courtier men and women taking roles, some involving members of the family of the 17th Earl of Oxford.<sup>5</sup>

Commedia dell'arte was a largely unscripted, improvisational type of comedy whose writers were generally the troupe managers; the first collection of dell'arte scripts (or actually sketches, since they were just brief summaries of simple and repetitive plot lines) appeared in 1611 in Flaminio Scala's *Il teatro delle favole rappresentative* book, much too late to have influenced Shakespeare. "Commedia dell'arte" didn't even exist as a name until the 1670s, when it was coined by a French critic. Which explains Perrucci's use of it in 1699, even though his own works were largely "palace comedies," or "commedia erudita," prepared for the King of Naples.

By contrast, commedia erudita was the premier comedy tradition from late medieval to late Renaissance times, typically written by authors who were also noted poets (e.g., Marsilio Ficino, Pietro Bembo, Ludovico Ariosto, Niccolo Macchiavelli, Baldassare Castiglione, the Intronati [a group of Siena nobles who wrote *The Deceived*], Pietro Aretino, Ruzante, Giambattista Guarini, Giambattista Della Porta, Giordano Bruno, etc.). Derived from translations into Italian of ancient Greek and Roman comedies, it evolved to original compositions, and later was adapted by French and other writers. Shakespeare directly or indirectly benefited from those writers and the Italians and French who adapted from them but, we argue, not from the commedia dell'arte tradition.<sup>6</sup>

In Table 1 below, we outline the attributes of "erudita," "dell'arte," and the "Tirata," and suggest that for the most part, both the "Tirata" and Shakespeare's

sources for comedy were principally from "erudita," and rarely from "dell'Arte."

Shakespeare's comic inspiration could not have been "dell'arte," because "dell'arte" was well on its way to dispensing with the need for dialogue; as we all know, Shakespeare dearly loved his dialogues. Although the "Tirata" as now received was a monologue, or rant, by the Il Dottore character, there may have been room for witty impromptu utterances by any of the jousters (or the imperials), particularly as the gifts were being distributed. If we're right that the "Tirata" was a 1575 product, it may serve as an interesting artifact of transition between the quite wordy comedies of "commedia erudita" before that time and the future "commedia dell'arte" skits of Scala in 1611.

### III. Exposition on The "Tirata dell Giostra" (Tirade of the Joust)

As noted, we believe there's much more to the "Tirata" than a faithful translation reveals. We provide a different translation of the "Tirata" (the Appendix below), which is accompanied by a sweeping discussion about the vast landscape of European-Mediterranean politics, geography, and "revenge motives" from c. 1453 to c. 1575. It was far more than mere fantasy.

The "Tirata" was almost certainly a relic of an actual event: the challenge to the world to engage in a joust, made by the 17th Earl of Oxford, in the summer of 1575, as reported in Edward Webbe's *Travels* (1590). That

**Table 1 – Time frame: 15th to 17th centuries**

Keys to the answers:

Yes = Almost Always

No = Hardly Ever

Tr = Transactional

#### Attributes

	<u>Erudita</u>	<u>Dell'arte</u>	<u>Tirata</u>	<u>Sh's Comedies</u>
Improvisational (sketchy scripts)	Tr	Yes	No	No
Noble, well-educated audiences	Yes	Tr	Yes	Yes <sup>7</sup>
Acted in plazas, streets, & public venues	No	Yes	?	Yes <sup>8</sup>
Often has "Il Dottore" character	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes <sup>9</sup>
Often has "Miles Gloriosus" character	Yes	Yes	Tr <sup>10</sup>	Yes
Authors were well-known, published poets	Yes	No	? <sup>11</sup>	Yes
Authors were often nobles themselves	Yes	No	?	? <sup>12</sup>
Often had women or girls in female roles	No	Yes	? <sup>13</sup>	No
Often "went on the road" in Italy	Yes	Yes	?	No
Seasonally traveled abroad	Tr	Yes	?	No <sup>14</sup>
Occasionally traveled to England	Likely <sup>15</sup>	Tr	?	Yes
Over time, dialogues gave way to gibberish	No	Yes	No <sup>16</sup>	No



challenge was issued in Palermo, the administrative capital of Spanish Sicily. As it so happens, in the summer of 1575 in Palermo there was a minor Spanish officer named Miguel Cervantes who had served in 1571 in the great Battle of Lepanto, in which the Pope's "Holy League" of Spain, Venice, the Empire, and Tuscany had gathered an armada under command of Don Juan "of Austria," the half-brother of Spain's King Philip II. We contend that in 1575, after issuing his challenge, Oxford had been "escorted" to the Neapolitan palatial headquarters of Don Juan, from which Juan had, since 1574, been preparing for another assault on the Ottoman Empire, only to be frustrated by Philip II's indecision about committing his forces so far away from Spain. Philip was equally hesitant about committing forces to a quixotic mission to free Mary Stuart, then captive in England, so that she could seize the English throne, particularly since Philip had aspirations for that throne himself (his 1554-58 marriage to Mary Tudor solidified the Spanish claim to the English throne, which derived from the first marriage of John of Gaunt to a Castilian Princess, whereas the Tudor lineage derived from an originally bastard Beaufort line from Gaunt's afterthought marriage to his mistress).

First, let's have a few teasers to show how the "Tirata" is far more complex than it appears. Let's begin with this assertion:

From 1521 to 1559 "something" was "rotten in Denmark," and a ghost of an Imperial dream of a united Europe strode the continent, while a living ghost was condemned in a tower near Elsinore and "reformers" were arriving from Wittenberg to overthrow the "rightful order" (does this sound familiar?).<sup>17</sup>

As we grapple with that assertion, let's address these questions in a 1575 time frame (look to the endnotes for answers):

1. Who was meant to be connoted by the "infant" Prince of Denmark, whose "destiny" might have been to "avenge" that ghost near Elsinore?<sup>18</sup>
2. Who was meant to be connoted by "The Emperor of Trebizond?"<sup>19</sup>
3. Who were to be connoted by "Doralba Princess of Dacia" and "Ernelinda Great Czarina of Muscovy" (hint, both of their analogues were named "Elizabeth")?<sup>20</sup>

## Appendix: Translation of the Oxford-related *Tirata dell Giostra* (Tirade about the Joust)

by W. Ron Hess, with A. Colin Wright and Concetta Thibideaux

This 2005 sometimes too-literal translation isn't the same as that offered in Cotticelli et al. (137-142).<sup>21</sup> It's abstracted from the Appendix H to my unpublished Vol. III of *The Dark Side of Shakespeare*, which is essentially being published as separate articles henceforth.

Oxfordians will recognize the "Tirata" as what Julia Altrocchi introduced to us in 1956, with the 17th Earl of Oxford as a jousting contestant in the Court of the "Emperor of Trebizond." The Italian text (with accent marks omitted it will be posted as Article #18 on <http://home.earthlink.net/~beornshall/index.html/>) was sent to me by the late Prof. Noemi Magri of Mantua, who was collaborating with me in the first ever translation of seventeen archaic Spanish letters of Don Juan of Austria to his cousin, the Duke of Savoy. She declined to translate the "Tirata" herself because she believed it was in a Bolognese dialect (every region and city in Italy has its own dialect, often unintelligible to others, and only about 150 years ago did standard Italian become dominant). In any case she felt the text was silly, but we'll see there's much more serious matter in it.

It was usual for Bolognese to be inserted as part of "Il Dottore's" comic persona, since for humor he was meant to be partly unintelligible, with the actions of the other actors helping the audience to understand. It's likely that the "Tirata" was intended to be read as well as acted, since the anomalies discussed below only show up in the writing.<sup>22</sup>

My original translation was vastly improved by Prof. A. Colin Wright and improved even more by Prof. Concetta Thibideaux. The notes included here are a small subset of my full exposition, which runs to sixty pages. My frequently "too literal" full exposition shows that the "Tirata" was complex, funny, and sinister, and that there is no obstruction to it having been written in the summer of 1575 in Naples.<sup>23</sup>

In 2005 I traced two likely chains of provenance for the "Tirata." One was through Andrea Perrucci's 1699 patroness, Donna Aurora Sanseverini, and a series of princes and dukes of Sabbionetta, Fondi, and Traetto. The other was through the Knights of the Golden Fleece.<sup>24</sup> The Knights' roll had a number of Netherlanders, mostly



from modern Belgium's southern and French-speaking Walloon area, whose official titles were Princes or Lords of "Vere" or "deVere."<sup>25</sup> Thus it's possible that, in addition to financial bribes,<sup>26</sup> Oxford was enticed in 1575 with offers to join Europe's most prestigious order, as his possible kinsmen had been. I further believe that Oxford was at the time actually on a covert mission to encounter, befuddle, and eventually destroy Don Juan, Europe's most dangerous warmonger.

Dr. Thibideaux believed the "Tirata" was written principally in her own native Neapolitan dialect (where Andrea Perrucci lived a century later), but had in it some Spanish (Spain ruled Naples and Sicily for centuries). I believe it was possible that Miguel Cervantes (author of 1605 *Don Quixote* and proud of his Italian mastery) contributed to this skit, since he was at the Neapolitan Court of Don Juan in late summer 1575. I noted a few "jokes" in English, one of which is line 161, which makes little sense in Italian. A critic might say that ten per cent of English is Latin, so possibly what I've identified is just an artifact of that; but Italian is far more Latinate than English. So, if something makes sense in English but not in Italian, we must consider whether an Englishman was involved. How many Englishmen, other than Oxford and Edward Webbe, were in southern Italy in 1575? How many had the linguistic and literary qualities to contribute to the "Tirata"? We know of only one: Oxford himself, the star of the "Tirata," as we'll see, as well as the only character who had a real name as well as a fantasy name and title.

My larger analysis of the "Tirata" uncovered eight general patterns:

a) As the comments to line 26 and others show, all the deliberate misspellings, contractions, truncations, allegorical portmanteaus, and even homonyms indicate that this "Tirata" was meant to be read, in addition to acted. Much like Shakespeare's works.

b) The characters of "milord Oxford" and "Alvida Countess of Edinburgh" (= Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots) are central, with their dramatic situation at the end of the skit and the meaning of their Imperial "awards" very important.

c) Transparently, this was a grand crusade against the Ottoman Empire (whose fleet Don Juan had defeated at Lepanto in 1571), with virtually all of the powers of the earth arrayed against that fearsome menace to Christianity.<sup>27</sup>

d) But there was a less transparent theme of another menace to Christianity, namely Protestant heretics, embodied in "Ernelinda Great Czarina of Muscovy" (or Ermelinda = Queen Elizabeth I of England), and in the shabby treatment she receives (e.g., she reflects the real-life laughable quests by Ivan the Terrible to have "the Virgin Queen" marry him, and the short lifespans of various tsarinas, with Ivan having married and murdered

no less than three within four months in 1574, having presumably found them "less than virgin"). The solution for handling Elizabeth was to ship her to Moscow, into Ivan's loving embrace!

e) In each "roster" (the menu of those to joust in a given round) Oxford's character hovers near the middle, until rosters 7 and 8, when for maximum drama he's the last male. Oxford was the primary focus of the entire "Tirata," which I believe resulted from his "challenge to a joust" to the world from Palermo, as reported by Webbe. As such, the "Tirata" was a "commedia erudita," or palace comedy.

f) Pope Gregory XIII had issued a Papal Bull in 1573 that confirmed the 1570 excommunication of Elizabeth by Pius V, deposed her, and named Mary Stuart (Elizabeth's prisoner) as the real Queen of England. Gregory then began a fairly open campaign to declare Don Juan married to Mary (even though Mary was already married), and advocated various schemes for Don Juan to take the Spanish fleet to the British Isles, free Mary, and seize the throne.<sup>28</sup> Thus, a covert theme of the "Tirata" is what was required to fulfill the schemes of that Papal Bull: specifically, a high-ranking English nobleman to act as Don Juan's covert agent, putting him into contact with Mary and the Marianist conspirators in England, and preparing the way for invasion.

g) Lines 19, 64, 65, 110, 112, 148, 176 (and others) outline a Marianist agenda for the overthrow of Queen Elizabeth, with Oxford associated with "Astolfo," or Don Juan's "Paladin." Accordingly, Oxford was on record as having pretended to adopt Catholicism while in Italy, and when he returned to England he remained aloof from his wife and her very Protestant family. Yet, later events of 1578 show Oxford's servants Denny the Frenchman and others stalking Don Juan across the Netherlands, and possibly succeeding in assassinating him (if he didn't die of "the plague," or cholera instead). It seems that Oxford was in Italy 1575-76 on assignment from the Privy Council to encounter, beguile, and eventually destroy Don Juan of Austria.

h) Remarkably, this 1575 "Tirata" has, in lines 110-111, eerie connections to the 17th Earl of Oxford, Terence, John Davies of Hereford, and Shakespeare. It also reminds us of Francis Meres's later comparison of Plautus, Terence, and other Latin comic dramatists to those English dramatists he calls "the best poets for comedy": Oxford (first), and, among others, these men in Oxford's circle of literati—Lyly, Lodge, Greene, Nash, and Munday, plus Munday's partner Chettle, and "Shakespeare." We've underestimated this "Tirata."

To emphasize the patterns noted above, a subset of my bracketed analyses are in endnotes, and some possible translations of words/phrases are retained. To save space, explication is given chiefly for the characters of Elmond (= Oxford), Alvilda (= Mary Stuart, Q. of Scots), and Ernelinda (= Queen Elizabeth).

## Organization of the “Tirata”

The “Tirata” is an elaborate description of a tourney with eighteen participants—nine men and nine women. It consists of nine sections, or what we are calling “rosters.” The first roster names the participants; the second identifies their respective mounts; the third names those mounts; the fourth describes the jousters’ colors; the fifth mentions their weapons; the sixth sets forth their mottoes; the seventh sets out the actual jousting lineup (who will face whom); the eighth gives the results of the nine jousts; and the ninth enumerates the gifts presented to the competitors.

### *Tirade about the Joust*

1/ Finding myself as Ambassador for my most Illustrious homeland of Bologna close [in friendship?] to Polidor the Emperor of Trebizond, I also found myself at the joust and the festivities for his marriage to Irene Empress of Constantinople; where there was prepared a most renowned stockade with an infinite number of Knights, Ladies and Commoners; seated by the Judge [of the Joust?], the Doge of the Noble Republic, were the Sultan of Calcutta, the Caliph of Mecca, the Mikado of Japan and the Dealkhan of Angora. They made their entry into the field.

#### [First roster; each roster features the same eighteen characters]

- 2/ Basil King of Zelconda.
- 3/ Doralba Princess of Dacia.
- 4/ Arcont Vaivade (= Chieftain) of Moldavia.
- 5/ Floralba Lady-Despot of the Serbia.
- 6/ Arfileo Prince of Denmark.
- 7/ Belinda Duchess of Lithuania.
- 8/ Isuf Pasha (or Knight-Commander) of Aleppo.
- 9/ Fatima Sultana of Persia.
- 10/ Elmond Milord of Oxford. (likely = Edward De Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford)
- 11/ Alvilda Contessa of Edemburg. (likely = Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots)
- 12/ Fiordalis Peer (or Paladin) of France.
- 13/ Armila Marchioness of Baden.
- 14/ D. (later Don) Veremond Grandee of Spain.
- 15/ Siveria Baroness of Flanders.
- 16/ Amor Sharif of Morocco. [If an Englishman helped to write the “Tirata,” this name could be “A Moor... of Morocco”]
- 17/ Belisa Her Ladyship of Alsace.
- 18/ Dealcan Great Khan of the Tartars.
- 19/ And Ernelinda Great Czarina of Muscovy (likely = Queen Elizabeth of England).

#### [Second roster]

- 20/ Basili King of Zelconda went on a jet black horse, Black Star.

- 21/ Doralba Princess of Dacia mounted an ermine-colored horse [white with black tufts].
- 22/ Arcont Vaivode of Moldavia whipped a dapple-grey horse with three white socks.
- 23/ Floralba Despotess of Serbia bridled-restrained a light bay horse.
- 24/ Arfileo Prince of Denmark spurred a Moor-faced horse.
- 25/ Belinda Duchess of Lithuania pressed on the back of a dapple-grey horse.
- 26/ Isuf Pasha of Aleppo pushed a thin Turkish horse to a run.
- 27/ Fatima Sultana of Persia guided a sorrel horse.
- 28/ Elmond Milord of Oxford drove a tawny horse. [= light brown to orangish gray]
- 29/ Alvilda Countess of Edinburg was on a spotted dapple-grey horse.
- 30/ Fiordalis Peer of France came on a piebald horse.
- 31/ Armila Marchioness of Baden appeared on a mare.
- 32/ Don Veremond Grandee of Spain appeared on a Jennet horse from the Tagus [river].
- 33/ Silveria Baroness of Flanders entered on a Frisian [horse].
- 34/ Amor Sharif of Morocco was sitting bareback on a swift barbary [horse].
- 35/ Belisa Her Ladyship of Alsace was seated on a tawny honey-colored [or apple horse].
- 36/ Dealcan Great Khan of Tartars for a horse used an Elephant.
- 37/ And Ernelinda Czarina of Muscovy availed herself of a Giraffe.

#### [Third roster]

- 38/ The Giraffe of Ernelinda Grand Duchess of Muscovy was called Intrepid.
- 39/ The Elephant of Dealcan Great Khan of Tartars, Bronze Bull.
- 40/ The honey-colored [or apple horse] of Belisa Her Ladyship of Alsace, Shining.
- 41/ The Barbary [horse] of Amor Sharif of Morocco, Earthquake [or World Terror?].
- 42/ The Frisian [horse] of Silveria Baroness of Flanders, Creeper [or Climber?].
- 43/ The Jennet [small Spanish horse] of Don Veremond Grandee of Spain, Zephyr.
- 44/ The Mare of Armila Marchioness of Baden, Intrepid [or Undaunted?].
- 45/ The Piebald [horse] of Fiordalis Peer of France, Hair Piece [or False-front?].
- 46/ The Dapple-grey spotted [horse] of Alvilda Countess of Edinburgh, Sweetish.
- 47/ The Tawny [horse] of Elmond Milord of Oxford, Oltramarin. [By truncating the *e*, possibly “Oltramarin” = in advance of Mary. “Oltramarine,” or overseas, was the French Crusaders’ name for the Holy Land. In addition to an anti-Turk crusade, Oxford’s character appears to be on a Marianist crusade].



- 48/ The roan [horse] of Fatima Sultana of Persia, Break-bridle [or Crazy, Flametrap?].  
 49/ The Turkish [horse] of Isuf Pasha of Aleppo, Iron Heart.  
 50/ The dapple-gray [horse] of Belinda Duchess of Lithuania, Beauty [or Belligerent].  
 51/ The Moor-faced [horse] of Afileo Prince of Denmark, Lightning.  
 52/ The light bay [horse] of Floralba Despotess of Serbia, Parts rivers.  
 53/ The dapple-gray [horse] of Arcont Vaivode of Moldavia, Frankish lance.  
 54/ The Ermine-colored [horse] of Doralba Princess of Dacia, Snowflake.  
 55/ And the Black horse of Basili King of Zelconda, Furious.

#### [Fourth roster]

- 56/ The King of Zelconda Basili on the black horse, Furious, carrying the over- / clothes of color of fire.  
 57/ The Princess of Dacia Doralba on the Ermine-like Horse, Flower of snow / was dressed in color of gold.  
 58/ The Vaivode of Moldavia Arcont upon his grey-coat horse, Frankish Lance, had on / the tawny finery.  
 59/ The Dispotess of Serbia Floralba on the bay horse, Parts rivers, had / of flame-red.  
 60/ The Prince of Denmark Arfileo on black-faced horse, Lightning, had / the crimson ornament.  
 61/ The Duchess of Lithuania Belinda on the dapple grey horse, Beautiful-belligerent, had the device-uniform-plan / greenish grey [or child's cap, malignant].  
 62/ The Pasha of Aleppo Isuf on the Turkish horse, Heart of ferocity, had the badge green-verdict.  
 63/ The Sultana of Persia Fatima on horse, Broken bridle [or crazy], had the over- / clothes flesh color [or incarnate, incorrigible].  
 64/ The Milord of Oxford Elmond on his Tawny horse, Ultramarine-overseas, had the color / violet.  
 [Truncation allowed "violent," in English no less. The text often forced us to interpolate the word "called" or a comma before each horse's name, thus allowing for this line to be written and translated "...violently over Mary"].  
 65/ The Countess of Edinburg Alvilda on a dapple grey horse, Sweetish, was dressed / in color redwood.  
 66/ The Peer of France Fiordalis on his piebald horse, Hair-Piece, had a deep blue overgarment sewn with lilies.  
 67/ The Marchessa of Baden Armila on the mare, Undaunted, had a steelish trimming.  
 68/ The Grandee of Spain Don Veremond on the Jennet horse, Zephyr, had colors of a Lioness.  
 69/ The Baroness of Flanders Silveria on the Frisian horse, Climber, was in iridescent color [or singing-teasing?].  
 70/ The Sharif of Morocco Amor on the Barbary horse, Earthquake, had ornaments [or grazing strokes] of rose-violet.  
 71/ Her Ladyship of Alsace Belisa on the honey-colored [horse called] Shining had silver trimmings.

- 72/ The Great Khan of Tartary Dealcan on the Elephant, Bronze Bull, was in black.  
 73/ And the Czarina of Muscovy on the Giraffe [horse], Intrepid, was in pure white.  
 74/ Each of the jousts or Knights, or Amazons, had the arms of their taste:

#### [Fifth roster]

- 75/ Ermelinda [now = ermine, symbol of virginity] was armed with an axe.  
 76/ Dealcan with an iron mace.  
 77/ Belisa with a pike.  
 78/ Amor with a sabre.  
 79/ Silveria was armed [or "d'arm" can mean "disarmed"] with a spear.  
 80/ Don Veremond with a dagger [or "stoc" can mean a sudden demand for money].  
 81/ Armila with a small spear.  
 82/ Fiordalis with a ceremonial sword [or dirk].  
 83/ Alvilda with a Germanic lance.  
 84/ Elmond with a broadsword. [Oxford's title "Lord Great Chamberlain" entitled him to bear "the Sword of State" in royal ceremonies]  
 85/ Fatima with quiver and bow.  
 86/ Isuf with a scimitar.  
 87/ Belinda with a shot-grenade.  
 88/ Arfileo with a halberd.  
 89/ Floralba with a dart-arrow.  
 90/ Arcont with a blade.  
 91/ Doralba with a large broadsword.  
 92/ And Basil with a lance.  
 93/ Each of them bore on their Shield an emblem with a motto [or motive] derived from the most celebrated Authors [or perpetrators].

#### [Sixth roster]

- 94/ Thus Basili armed with a lance, in a fire-colored costume, had for an emblem a lion, with motto derived from *Tragic Seneca*:  
 95/ *The swords are bared*.  
 96/ Doralba armed with a long sword, colored in gold, had painted on her broccchiere [shield with spike in its center] a butterfly, with the motto from *Petrarch*:  
 97/ *Love inflames me more where it burns me more*.  
 98/ Arcont armed with a blade, in chestnut color, had outlined on his shield a Tiger, with the motto from *Horace*:  
 99/ *More bold for having considered death*.  
 100/ Floralba armed with a dart, with flame color, on her breastplate neither on her shield / on the contrary-back a Phoenician [= Dido], with the motto derived from *Tasso*:  
 101/ *And with the death is gained immortal life*.  
 102/ Arfileo armed with a halberd, in crimson, bore on his crest a Palm from Java, with an iron core, with the motto from *Tibullus*:  
 103/ *Hard are the iron-hearted*.

- 104/ Belinda armed with a shot, with the color greenish-grey, portraying the painting on / her breast a Roman column; with the motto of *Marin* ["of the Sailor" or "of Mary"]:
- 105/ *She is still beautfiul, and superb, in the ruins.*
- 106/ Isuf armed with scimitar, in green, bore on his turban a diamond, with the motto from *Ovid*:
- 107/ *Sexual purity [or virtue] in adversity.*
- 108/ Fatima armed with a bow and arrow, and quiver, with the color flesh-rosy-pink, wore for adornment [or "decoration"] with the head of [or "headstrong," "obstinate"] a Rose with motto derived from the *Bracciolini* [or "*Brazen line*," "*tongue*"]:
- 109/ *Armed with points the gatherer [or coxcomb, fop] threatens.*
- 110/ Elmond armed with broadsword, in violet, raised as an emblem a Falcon with the motto taken from *Terence*:
- 111/ *Virtue seeks out difficulties [or challenges?].* [Compare the "Terenz" here with John Davies of Hereford's epigram #159 from *The Scourge of Folly* (1610), that "Shakespeare" was "Our English Terence." It also compares to Francis Meres's 1598 likening of Plautus, Terence, and other Latins with Oxford (first), many in Oxford's circle of comic playwrights, plus Shakespeare. It's ironic that Terence was aimed at Oxford in 1575. Or he may have aimed it at himself if he helped write this "Tirata"!]
- 112/ Alvilda armed with a German lance, in redwood color, bore between the feathers of her crest an oak with the epigraph taken from the *German*:
- 113/ *And with the proud panting of the twenty jousts [or the jousting winds?].*
- 114/ Fiordalis armed with a ceremonial sword, in deep blue, bore on his overgarment a rock with the motto from *Catullus*:
- 115/ *Smashes everything.*
- 116/ Armila armed with a small lance, in steelish trimming, had for her shield a mirror, with the motto taken from *Preti* [or *Priests?*]:
- 117/ *That still throws flames [or love?] from afar.*
- 118/ Don Veremond armed with a dagger, lion-coloured, had as emblem on his shield, called a clipeus, an Eagle, with the motto from *Virgil*:
- 119/ *Hostile to long snakes.*
- 120/ Silveria armed with a spear, in iridescent colors bore for the band of her shield a crossbow with the motto from *Guarin*:
- 121/ *What is calmly expected often happens.*
- 122/ Amor armed with a sabre, in pale lilac, bore on his shield called a Pelta [an ancient Greek light shield] a crescent like a half moon, with the motto from *Claudianus*:
- 123/ *Set fire to the lands with wars [or with prettiness?].*
- 124/ Belisa armed with a pike, in silver, had on a shield called a Parma a Panther, with the motto from my kinsman *Grazian* [unitalicized]:
- 125/ *It both threatens and entices with sweet severity.*
- 126/ Dealkhan armed with a mace of iron, in black, showed on his standard a laurel, with the motto from *Propertius*:
- 127/ *In glory there is no death.*
- 128/ And Ernelinda armed with an axe, dressed in White, showed on her gladiator shield a comet with the motto from *Test* [unitalicized, a truncation or misspelling?]:
- 129/ *The greater someone is, the more he threatens.* [Johann Tetzl was inquisitor of Poland and Saxony, whose selling of indulgences sparked Luther's "95 Theses" and the Reformation. Ignoring the "Test" attribution, Cotticelli (p.141) gives this as: "...motto by Tasso: *The bigger, the more threatening*. But Tasso was already used above for lines 100-101, making reuse here unlikely. English joke: Could this motto simply be an English "Test" in that a contestant need not be large or belligerent to win? If so, no better place for an English joke than under Ernelinda = Queen Elizabeth of England]
- 130/ These famous warriors passed across the camp, they each took their place in the lists [jousting areas], and, waiting for the sound of the trumpet, this being given as a sign with kettle-drums, fifes and tambourine, they drove their horses to a gallop.
- [Seventh roster]**
- 131/ The King Basil of Zelconda on the black horse, Furious, dressed in fire color, armed with a Lance, with the emblem of a Lion, met with
- 132/ Dealcan Great Khan of the Tartars, on the Elephant Bronze Bull, dressed in black, with the emblem of the Laurel.
- 133/ Doralba Princess of Dacia on the Ermine Horse called Snowflower, dressed in gold, armed with a broadsword, with the emblem of the butterfly found herself confronting
- 134/ Ernelinda Czarina of Muscovy, on the giraffe called Undaunted, dressed in white, armed with an axe, with the emblem of the Comet.
- 135/ Arcont Vaivode of Moldavia, on the dapple-grey Horse, Frankish Lance, in tan color, armed with a blade, with the emblem of the Tiger, came to blows with
- 136/ Amor Sharif of Morocco, on the Barbary Horse, Earthquake, in lilac, armed with a sabre, with emblem flame-crescent (or "Faz" can mean "handkerchief," suggesting surrender).
- 137/ Floralba Despot of Serbia, on the bay Horse Parts rivers, in flame red, armed with Dart, with the Phoenix, entered to contest with
- 138/ Belisa Her Ladyship of Alsace, on the honey-colored horse Shining, dressed in silver, armed with the Panther.
- 139/ Arfilei [now = "arch son" or heir] Prince of Denmark, with moor-faced Horse, Lightning, dressed in crimson, armed with a halberd, with the palm, facing
- 140/ Don Veremond Grande of Spain, on the Jennet horse,

Zephyr, lion colored, armed with a dagger, with the eagle.

141/ Belinda Duchess of Lithuania, upon the dapple grey horse, Beauty, dressed in greenish grey, armed with a grenade, with the Column, fought with

142/ Silveria Baroness of Flanders, upon the Frisian horse, Climber, dressed in iridescent colors, armed with a spear, with the crossbow.

143/ Isuf Pasha of Aleppo, on the Turkish horse Iron Heart, dressed in green, armed with a scimitar, with Diamond, took his chance with

144/ Fiordalis Peer of France, on the piebald horse, Hair Piece, in deep blue, armed with ceremonial sword, with the scoio (possibly "scogliera," cliff).

145/ Fatima Sultana of Persia, on the bay horse Break-bridle, dressed in carmine, armed with a bow, with the rose, collided with

146/ Armila Marchiness of Baden, on the mare Undaunted, in steelish trim, armored with spear, with the Specc. (possibly "Mirror," which can mean "bait" for the simpleminded).

[Note on line 147: In Ariosto's 1516 *Orlando Furioso*, Canto 10.81, the virtuous "Astolfo's" men paraded thru Paris with a falcon banner, and an Earl of Oxford's colors were "sable and azure" (= ultramarine?). That should be compared here with colors of Oxford's retinue on his entry into London in 1562. Did Oxford in 1575 help write this "Tirata," choosing the emblem and colors he'd used in 1562 from Ariosto's epic?]

147/ And Olmond [= the pure] milord of Oxford, on the tawny horse Oltramarin [= overseas, or the Holy Land], dressed in violet, armed with broadsword, with the Falcon, charged on [Marianist option: ...on saving (Falv with a long s = salvare) ...to go forward (= oltrare) ...Marian (= mariano)]

148/ Alvida Countess of Edinburgh, on the dapple-grey spotted horse Sweetish, dressed in redwood, armed with a Germanic lance, with the Oak. [The Tudor Age was "the Age of Oak" because of non-Catholic traditions in architecture and furniture, and the Tudor Rose was carved in oak (= sub rosa). Though Mary Stuart had Tudor blood, this "Oak" forebade bad news for Elizabeth Tudor.]

**[Eighth roster]** [Here, each pair parades from the "ground" or spectators' level up to the second level, where the actual jousting occurs (below the imperial couple and their honored guests seated on the third level), then parades back down to the ground. This helps explain line 157, where "Edward and Alvilda went from a planking (dais) right to the ground."]

149/ And everyone striking their blows in the scuffle, Basili struck Dealcan's visor, and Dealcan wounded Basil's horse.

150/ Doralba stripped Ernelinda of her plume, and Ernelinda struck Doralba in her gorget (throat protector). [Per lines 3 and 19, this was Elizabeth Bathory pitted against Elizabeth Tudor, thus helping confirm identification of both.]

151/ Arcont dazed Amor with a blow of his flat sword and Amor cut off the reins of Arcont's horse.

152/ Floralba confused Belisa in her saddle, and Belisa disarmed Floralba of a shoulder-piece.

153/ Arfileo struck at the collar of Don Veremond, and Don Veremond unseated Arfileo.

154/ Belinda hit Silveria on the glove, and Silveria struck the buckler-hold of Belinda's lance.

155/ Isuf ran the arena in vain against Fiordalis, and Fiordalis hit Isuf on his armour.

156/ Fatima caused Armila to lose her stirrup, and Armila forced Fatima to drop her shield.

157/ And at last, Elmond and Alvilda went from a dais ("Facs" short for "fasciame," or planking) to the ground. [Or a misspelling of "Facs" suggesting "facilita" or easiness; thus Oxford and Alvilda (= Mary Stuart) performed more gracefully than the other jousting.]

158/ The Emperor Polidor now turned to honor all the Knights, and the Empress Irene all the Amazons, giving each one a present from the wardrobe of Antiquity.

**[Ninth roster]** [For reasons of brevity interpretations of many of the gifts below are not included. It should be noted that, with the exceptions of those to Ermond and Alvida, almost all of the gifts are associated with suicide or other unpleasant fates.]

159/ So that Polidor gave to Basili the helmet once belonging to Mambrin,

160/ And to Arcont the buckler once belonging to Epaminonda,

161/ And to Arfileo the Column of Manlius Torquatus, [English Joke: the cologne (sweat) of manly twisting-turning. There is no Italian word "manli" (or our English "manly") as was used here, with "virilis" (English "virile") as the Latin-based equivalent word. Titus Manlius Torquatus (fl. 340 BC) was a Consul and Dictator who disciplined the early Roman army and executed his own son for disobedience (similar to Shakespeare's fictional *Titus Andronicus*). Ironically, in *Hamlet* a similar result was the ghostly father driving his son to his death.]

162/ And to Isuf the turban of the Ottoman,

163/ And to Ermond the horn of Astolf, [Astolfo = sexually pure English Paladin in Boiardo's 1485 *Orlando Innamorato* and Ariosto's 1516-32 *Orlando Furioso*; his name derived from his magic Spear (which he did shake!). His magic horn routed his enemies, the evil Saracens of lands later under the Ottomans. His mission was to save Christendom



from the Saracens, restore sanity to Orlando, resist the bewitchments of the sorceress Angelica, and help lead an attack on the Saracen capital. Note: Here “Ermond” may be a portmanteau of Eroë (Hero) and Mondo (cleaned), thus matching Astolfo’s personality.]

164/ To Fiordalis the (plural) glove (singular) of Orlando,  
[Note: getting a glove (singular) meant Orlando’s insult of honor, or a challenge to the death in a duel.]

165/ To Don Veremondo the goliglia of King Bambara,

166/ And to Amor the codpiece of Mohammed,

167/ And to Dealcan a horse of the race of Bucephalus of Alexander, (risque Latin: Bucerus [horned] + phallus [male member])

168/ And now the Empress gifted to Doralba the comb of the Queen Semiramis,

169/ To Floralba the belt of the Amazon Hippolyta,

170/ To Belinda a breastplate of Thalia,

171/ To Fatima a Pearl of Cleopatra,

172/ To Alvida the zealous-hot saddle of Zenobia, [Note that Don Juan had a Sicilian mistress, Zenobia Saratosia, who in 1574 had given him his only known son, a crib death, before she entered a convent. Septimia Zenobia, Queen of Palmyra, rebelled from Rome, and briefly conquered most of the mideast lands later under the Ottomans. After she was defeated by Emperor Aurelian in 272 CE, Zenobia was taken as wife by a Senator from Tivoli, but her son Vaballathus disappeared from history. Was this the plan for young James VI of Scotland in 1575 after his mother, Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots, had been taken captive in 1567? Note here “Alvilda” (“of evilness”) ends up as “Alvida” (“of the life, lively”) and joined Oxford in a promising end, compared to most of the others.]

173/ To Armida a curling-iron of the Empress Julia,

174/ To Silveria the club wielded by Iole,

175/ To Belisa the Scepter of Queen Dido,

176/ And to Ernelinda the enchanted wand of Medea,  
[Medea = the sorceress from Colchis-Georgia (later under the Ottomans), who killed her sons to spite her Greek husband Jason, then committed suicide. As a stand-in for Queen Elizabeth, the “Tirata” has her “the Virgin Queen” only because she killed her children.]

[Thus ends the series of nine rosters (balancing the nine male and nine female jousting), with (curiously) Oxford and Alvida as the only mixed-gender pair. They also seem to have received better gifts than the others. Below, the “Tirata” wraps up with a deceptive double meaning]

177/ So at last each one received prizes

178/ According to their caprice, grace, and fortitude;

179/ And to you they will give **the strength, and the reins.**

[Sinister option: ...give you **the gallows**, and **the hangman’s noose**.

[Here Cotticelli et al. (p. 142) for once prefer the sinister option by offering this pleasing non-literal rhyme for the last two lines:

For novelty, grace, or strength, and yet

The gallows or a halter are what you will get.]

#### Endnotes

1. Cotticelli, Francesco, Anne Goodrich Heck and Thomas F. Heck (editors & translators), *A Treatise on Acting, From Memory and by Improvisation (1699) by Andrea Perrucci: Bilingual Edition in English and Italian Bilingual Edition*, 2008, Scarecrow Press, Lanham, Maryland.

2. *Shakespearean Authorship Review*, Vol. 5, No. 2, Autumn 1995. See Hank Whittemore’s URL <https://hankwhittemore.com/tag/commedia-dellarte/>.

3. <https://journalhosting.ucalgary.ca/index.php/ariel/article/viewFile/31783/25856> and [www.geni.com/people/Francesco-Maria-I-della-Rovere-duca-di-Urbino/6000000015133327263](http://www.geni.com/people/Francesco-Maria-I-della-Rovere-duca-di-Urbino/6000000015133327263) describe *Hamlet*’s “Gonzago” play within a play and Francesco Maria I Della Rovere, Duke of Urbino (1490-1538), who married Elionora Gonzaga in 1508/9 and then was murdered by his nephew Luigi in 1538, allegedly by pouring poison in his ear. The real debate is which were the few lines that Prince Hamlet added to the stock drama in order to turn it into a “mousetrap.”

4. See [http://medieval\\_literature.enacademic.com/436/Nine\\_Worthies](http://medieval_literature.enacademic.com/436/Nine_Worthies).

5. See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Masque\\_of\\_Blackness](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Masque_of_Blackness), which had a January 6, 1604/5 sequel, “Mask of Beauty,” by Ben Jonson and Inigo Jones, performed before King James I, and had in it Oxford’s daughter the Countess of Derby, and other Vere relatives.

6. See <https://shakespeareoxfordfellowship.org/a-scholar-and-ripe-good-one/> by Dr. Dan Wright, who states (abbreviating): “his acquaintance with Italian art, narrative, and dramaturgy is everywhere evident in such plays as *MOV*, *R&J*, *OTH*, *JC*, *A&C*, *TGV*, *MA*, *TOS*, *TN*, *AW*, *MND*, *AYL*, *LLL*, *COR*, and even sections of *WT*, *CYM*, and *1&2H4*.” The French adapted or translated from Italians, though in most cases Shakespeare likely was familiar with both sources, and often with the original Greek and Latin.

7. Shakespeare’s principal audiences were those at Court or other elite venues, since the Lord Chamberlain’s Men were often summoned to perform, usually during Christmas seasons. Yet, as practice for courtly performances, versions of highbrow plays could be performed at public playhouses, where lowbrow audiences were in attendance alongside of “slumming” nobles and literati.

8. “Commedia erudita” = “learned/erudite comedy,” but due to its usual venues we often call it here “palace comedy,” whereas “dell’arte” (= “of the art”) was “anywhere comedy.” Here we focus on venues, but scholars also recognize “commedia grave” (serious) and “tragicomedy,” among other types. As noted, Shakespeare’s works were principally aimed at palace performances (or at least in manor houses), but later were adapted for public playhouses. Did Shakespeare’s company

ever perform on street corners and other public venues? Of course The Theatre and The Globe were “public,” but those were often rehearsal venues for Court performances. Another venue, Blackfriars, was semi-public, since it was typically used for boy companies to perform, again in rehearsal for Court performances. A note left by William Lambarde shortly before his death in August 1601 tells us that, as Queen Elizabeth reflected on the Essex Rebellion of the prior February, which was aimed at overthrowing her regime, she suddenly asked Lambarde, “I am Richard II, know ye not that?” and went on to reflect on the ingratitude of the executed Earl of Essex: “He that will forget God will also forget his benefactors; this tragedy was played forty times in open streets and houses.” In fact, several members of the Lord Chamberlain’s Men (Shakespeare’s company) had been arrested and compelled to testify about their involvement in presenting *Richard II* the day before the rebellion, but not Shakespeare himself. That’s because he had nothing to do with whatever interlude (something short enough to be presented forty times in an afternoon) was repeatedly exhibited in the London streets. The deposition scene was not in the play until the 1608 “good” Q4. So, we doubt that Shakespeare’s company did any street-acting in London, though some of their actors may have, and the company may have done so in the provinces.

<sup>9</sup> The characters of Holofernes in *Love’s Labours Lost* and Malvolio in *Twelfth Night* seem to derive from “Il Dottore.” Also in *Hamlet*, Corambis/Polonius benefited from “Dottore,” as well as from the real-life admonitions of William Cecil, which were published in 1611 as *The counsell of a father to his sonne*.

<sup>10</sup> All of the “Tirata” jousting characters were versions of “Miles Gloriosus,” though they were essentially speechless (their swagger and antics would convey their pride). In Shakespeare’s plays, Falstaff, Pistol, Bardolf, Fluellen, Parolles and boasting lords in the histories and tragedies all qualify. Indeed, some have theorized Shakespeare had been a soldier himself.

<sup>11</sup> The “Tirata” author(s) is/are anonymous. I believe that one contributor to it was Miguel Cervantes and another was an Englishman then present in Naples. In the early summer of 1575 Cervantes was a minor officer in Palermo, after having served Don Juan at Lepanto, Tunis, Sardinia, and then Palermo. In late summer he went to Naples, obtained letters of introduction from Don Juan, and in mid-September sailed for Spain, when his ship was taken by pirates and he was enslaved and held for ransom for five years. It was likely in the summer of 1575 that Edward Webbe (then a mercenary gunner for Don Juan) saw the Earl of Oxford in Palermo, challenging the world to a joust, as he described in his 1590 book, *Trauailes*:

One thing did greatly comfort me which I saw long since in Sicilia, in the citie of Palerms, a thing worthie of memorie, where the right honourable the Earle of Oxenford a famous man for Chiuallrie, at what time he trauailed into forraine countries, being then personally present, made there a challeng against all manner of persons whatsoever, and at all manner of weapons, as Turniments, Barriers with horse and armour, to fight and combat with any whatsoever, in the defence of his Prince and countrie: for which he was very highly commended, and yet no man

durst be so hardie to encounter with him, so that all Italy ouer, he is acknowledged euer since for the same, the onely Chiuallier and Noble man of England.

It is possible that Cervantes escorted Oxford from Palermo to Don Juan in Naples, and mid-voyage the two began what was later to become the “Tirata.” This might also explain “Cardenio,” a plot theme in Cervantes’s 1605 *Don Quixote* which had much the same theme as did *Much Ado About Nothing*, as well as an allegedly “lost” *Cardenio* Shakespeare play of c. 1610.

<sup>12</sup> Will Shakspeare of Warwickshire wasn’t a noble. But many believe he was a front for someone, like the Earl of Oxford, who was Elizabeth’s highest ranked Earl.

<sup>13</sup> I argue that, aside from the non-European visitors described in the first paragraph of the “Tirata” (roles which could be acted by anyone) and “Il Dottore” (who needed to be a practiced professional), all other roles may have been acted by Don Juan (as the Emperor), his mistress Diana Fallanga (as the Empress), and the officers and their wives or significant others. On the other hand, since this would have obviously been celebrated as a palace comedy, the women’s roles may have been acted by boys, and the men’s roles by professionals. I suggest that the role of Oxford would have been played by Oxford himself, or one of his servants.

<sup>14</sup> Shakespeare’s known play companies didn’t travel abroad. Yet, if Oxford was Shakspeare’s hidden patron, it’s notable that the 1580-86 Oxford’s Men may have “amalgamated” with Worcester’s Men as early as 1586, and traveled to the Netherlands and Germany until circa 1598, where Oxford’s cousins, Francis and Horatio Vere, were in command of the English expeditionary forces (i.e., Oxford’s Men were patriotically “entertaining the troops”). By 1602 the amalgamated companies were acting at the Boar’s Head Inn in Aldgate, before they became Queen Anne’s Men.

<sup>15</sup> Scholars count as “commedia dell’arte” any references to “Italian players.” But, from 1572 to 1593, the French and Netherlands Civil Wars made it difficult for troupes to get to Paris, let alone to London, because royal free passage guarantees were dubious. What we now call “dell’arte” actually had begun only circa 1565 with the formation of Scala’s troupe, which, as noted, had its improvisational skits published only in 1611. The chances were greater that any Italian troupes reaching England in the 1570s to 1590s were “erudita,” with payments and guarantees for royal performances in London part of the lure for their dangerous passage.

Erith Jaffe-Berg in 2008 wrote an excellent book dedicated to the *Multilingual Art of Commedia dell’arte* (2009, New York, Legas), which describes the progression of improvised comedy from Italy to the rest of western and central Europe. As it did so, the need for erudite lyrics diminished altogether, substituting animated activity, gibberish and noises to convey meaning. Today’s heirs to dell’arte, miming and the Cirque du Soleil, have eliminated dialogue entirely, and Harpo Marx similarly used a bicycle horn instead of speaking.

<sup>16</sup> “Dottore,” the narrator, had his spoken lines. But all other actors were mimes, conveying their emotions and meaning with gestures, action, and possibly gibberish. Shakespeare’s

comedies are full of erudite dialogue, supplemented by erudite acting. So erudite, in fact, that we return to the argument that the “Tirata” (and Shakespeare’s works) were meant to be published and read, as well as performed (witness all the deliberate misspellings, contractions, etc.).

<sup>17</sup> See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian\\_II\\_of\\_Denmark](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_II_of_Denmark) for Denmark’s last Catholic King, whose wife Isabella/Elizabeth of Hapsburg was a sister of Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, whose domains included Germany, Austria, the Empire, Milan, Naples, Sicily, Spain, the Netherlands, several enclaves in north Africa, and much of the New World. Christian was first imprisoned in South Jutland and later in a castle on the far side of Zeeland island from Elsinore. Still, as King he reigned from and was married in Elsinore.

<sup>18</sup> Note that Christian II’s son was Hans/John, who was seven years old when his father was deposed by his father’s uncle Frederick I in 1521-22, nine when his father was first imprisoned after an invasion fleet financed by Charles V went awry in Norway, and eighteen when he died of dysentery while being nursed by his uncle, the Emperor, in 1532 in the Netherlands. I suggest that after Charles’s death in 1549, it may be that through his Chamberlain, Don Juan’s foster father, he left instructions that Don Juan be raised with a mission, among many missions, to avenge the loss of Denmark from Catholicism.

From a Catholic perspective, Christian II remained King of Denmark all the way to his death in 1559 (outliving his usurping uncle Frederick I and cousin Frederick II). Christian’s daughter Christina (b. 1521), who married the Duke of Lorraine in 1541, gave birth to the future Duke Charles III, who likely was thought a rightful heir to Denmark, and would later be a primary rival to King Henri IV of France during the French Civil Wars. Christina was not only regent of Lorraine from 1545 to 1552, but also a claimant to the thrones of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden from 1561 to 1590, as was her son Duke Charles.

<sup>19</sup> See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John\\_of\\_Austria](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_of_Austria). Born c. 1545 of a German woman, widower Emperor Charles V’s natural son Don Juan (“of Austria” because he was an illegitimate birth from the Hapsburg line) was first raised at Charles’s imperial Court in Ghent. Ghent was also the Netherlands headquarters of the chivalric Order of the Golden Fleece, a Burgundian order founded by Charles’s ancestor with the express purpose of organizing a crusade to avenge the 1453 sack of Constantinople by the Turks, and to rescue the last vestige of the Eastern Roman or Byzantine Empire (called the Empire of Trebizond) on the Black Sea near to today’s Georgia. The Turks took Trebizond in 1461, but the Golden Fleece continued, especially under Charles V, who tried to use it to sew together his polyglot empire through a chivalric code. When Charles died in 1559, he left Austria and the Imperial title to his brother Ferdinand, but all the rest of his empire to his legitimate son, Philip II, King of Spain, who was, from 1554 to 1558, King Consort of England as husband of Mary Tudor. Juan was left a princely income from extensive properties in southern Italy. The order divided when Philip refused to swear fealty to his uncle; separate Spanish and Austrian orders remain to this day.

Raised after age eight in Philip II’s court, and winning his first joust at age sixteen, in 1569 Don Juan was made

commander of suppressing the Moriscos Rebellion in Granada. In 1571, with the Pope’s urging, Juan was made commander of the Spanish fleet and Captain-Vicar of Spanish possessions in Italy, heading the Pope’s “Holy League” against the Turks, which briefly united Spain, Venice, the Empire, and Tuscany, with a mission to relieve the Turkish siege of Famagusta in Cyprus. In August 1571 the combined fleet met the fleet of Ali Pasha in the headwaters of the Gulf of Corinth, offshore from Lepanto, and their ragtag fleet of 150 ships annihilated all but a few of the 200 Turkish vessels in the “miracle” of Lepanto (as the Pope dubbed it). From that day forth Don Juan was “The Victor of Lepanto,” and next only to Philip II (who was Grand Master) in esteem within the Spanish line of the Golden Fleece.

<sup>20</sup> See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elizabeth\\_Bathory](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elizabeth_Bathory). The only possible bar to the “Tirata” having been written entirely in 1575 might be if the character of Doralba Princess of Dacia was Elizabeth Bathory, now known as “the Blood Countess of Transylvania.” Her infamous crimes began only after 1585. But the “Tirata” never links Doralba to grotesque crimes, just to the general geographic region of “Dacia.” Still, Bathory may have inspired part of the character in that her May 1575 wedding was attended by thousands, at a time when the Turks ruled her whole region. Also, line 150 has this Elizabeth in a joust with a character we identify as another Elizabeth, each character thereby strengthening the other.

<sup>21</sup> In their “Tirata” (pp. 137-142), Cotticelli and the other translators generally prefer the least controversial possible translation, ignoring more risque or seditious translations. The latter devolve from truncations, misspellings, jokes, portmanteaus, etc., which invite variation. In my 2005 translation, I tried to highlight both types of translations, which yielded a sixty-page document.

<sup>22</sup> In line 125 “Dottore” will claim he’s actually from Florence—which is more evidence that the “Tirata” was written to be read, as well as performed, since this flip-flop as an intentional joke would be hard to appreciate during performance.

<sup>23</sup> A later tinkering that might have modified some “Tirata” details is possible, though unlikely. There were names listed (e.g., in lines 94 to 129) which make little sense for a writing after 1575, such as Tasso in line 101 (who started going insane in 1576, and was later committed to an asylum). Certainly the grim fate planned for Emelinda Tsarina of Muscovy (= Queen Elizabeth) made no sense after Ivan the Terrible’s death in 1584. Similarly, a marriage for Don Juan made no sense after his 1578 death. Appendix C to My Vol. II of *The Dark Side of Shakespeare* (2003, pp. 309-398) and Mark Anderson’s “*Shakespeare*” by *Another Name* (2005, pp. 90-91) independently dated Oxford’s visit to southern Italy to the summer of 1575, following an excursion to Greece, and returning to Venice in late September via Genoa. By contrast, Charlton Ogburn’s *The Mysterious William Shakespeare* (1984, pp. 544-545, 773) and B.M. Ward’s biography of Oxford (1930, p. 111), were less specific (Ward implied a visit to Sicily in 1576). The Edward Webbe who saw Oxford in Palermo was not “a senior English army officer” (Ogburn, 551), but rather a mercenary who was enslaved more than once by the Turks or their Tartar allies, then became a “master gunner” for Don Juan, and later for France’s King Henri IV, before returning to England to write his 1590 book.



<sup>24</sup>. See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_Knights\\_of\\_the\\_Golden\\_Fleece](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Knights_of_the_Golden_Fleece) for a list of names (but not membership numbers).

<sup>25</sup>. E.g., Wolfart de Borsele, Seigneur de Vere (1430-1487); Philibert, Seigneur de Vere (d.1512); Maximilien de Bourgogne, Marquis de Vere (1514-1558).

<sup>26</sup>. Oxford allegedly boasted in 1579 or 1580 about bribery from Don Juan, Philip II, and the Pope “in Naples,” if the 1581 Libels by Oxford’s likely Marianist cousins are believed.

<sup>27</sup>. The female lion alluded to in line 68 may be a contrast with the huge maned lion that Don Juan inherited on conquering Tunis in 1573, formerly a pet of the Turkish “King of Tunis.” The Pope then awarded that title to Juan, which is why, as the only Christian ever styled “King of Tunis,” Juan was referred to several times in *The Tempest* backstory in dialogue between characters (“first in Afric, at the marriage of the [Naples] King’s faire daughter Claribel to the King of Tunis”). The irony is that, after conquering Tunis, Juan’s fleet sailed toward Sicily and was scattered by a tempest, with his command ship lost for three days until it appeared out of the fog off Palermo. Shakespeare’s *Tempest* was set precisely in 1573-74, shortly before Oxford’s encounter with Juan in 1575, when the

prospects of marriage for Juan were viable. The “Tirata” was similarly oriented in time and intent. See my *Dark Side of Shakespeare* Vol. I (pp. 170-174, 206, 451-472). A last point is that the lion clearly was a symbol of “lese majestie” to Juan, as he explained in one of the seventeen 1576-77 letters to the Duke of Savoy which Dr. Magri helped me to translate. Sadly, the lion died before it could be transported overland to Don Juan in the Netherlands, where Juan’s fate neared its conclusion.

<sup>28</sup>. For references concerning Don Juan, see chapter 3 of my book, *The Dark Side of Shakespeare*, 2002, Writer’s Club Press, NY, particularly pp. 95-155. My principal source there was William Stirling-Maxwell, *Don John of Austria, or Passages from the History of the Sixteenth Century 1545-1578*, 2 vols. (London, 1883, Longmans, Green, & Co.). My allusions to myth and history were principally from *Encyclopædia Britannica* or various internet sites, the details of which are in my unpublished manuscript, but for lack of space are omitted here.



## Researching de Vere in Paris

by Emma Jolly

[Editor’s note: Emma “Eddi” Jolly received a 2016 SOF Research Grant. This is a report of her efforts.]

In 1575 and 1576 Edward de Vere stayed in Paris on his way to and from Italy. The dates for his stays in Paris are fairly clear (25 February to 17 March 1575, and 21 March to 10 April 1576). While he was there in 1575 he received letters (presumably of introduction) from the Italian ambassador, Giovanni Francesco Morisini, prior to traveling to Venice. He also met the French King, Henri III, and his wife, Louise of Lorraine, and received letters from him too. Dr. Valentine Dale, the English ambassador, reports this. De Vere was traveling with several named persons on his outward journey and his return (Nathaniel Baxter, William Lewin, Ralph Hopton and William Russell); on his return to Paris de Vere gave a letter for Burghley to a Mr. Corbek. All this can be found in Ward’s and Nelson’s biographies.<sup>1</sup> De Vere must also have met a painter, since a picture of him was sent back to his wife, Anne, and he had unnamed persons in his entourage.<sup>2</sup>

There are records for 1575 and 1576 in Paris, held at the *bibliothèque nationale de France* (BnF). Their online SINDBAD research facility offers a maximum of two hours for any enquiry. Investigating de Vere required a personal visit. Books are on the Mitterand site, but manuscripts are on the Richelieu site, a few miles away. Books are easily ordered and retrieved; manuscripts, however, require individually approved permissions, and need advance planning.

Following the French Revolution in 1789-99, there was a concerted effort to gather and preserve all documents concerning France’s history in *Les Archives Nationales*. These documents are now largely housed on the site of the Hotel de Soubriese and the Hotel Rohan, in a modern building called the Caran; there are a limited number of regional archives as well.

### Mitterand site

The online catalogue does give a dozen or so titles associated with de Vere. The Mitterand library itself offered the chance to find out more about the environment de Vere would have found in Paris in 1575 and 1576.

In March 1575 Ambassador Vale wrote to Lord Burghley that he had “presented my Lord of Oxford also unto the King and Queen....”<sup>3</sup> Oxford wrote that the King had given him letters to Venice. Robert Knecht describes how the French court was extremely crowded and accessible:

Access to the court was easy; anyone decently dressed or who could claim acquaintance with a member of the royal entourage was admitted.<sup>4</sup>

The King, however, disliked the crowds and lack of privacy, even going so far as to have a barrier placed around his table at mealtimes,<sup>5</sup> which was so unpopular it had to be removed. To attend the court (the King lived at the Louvre Palace)<sup>6</sup> would not have been difficult; to

converse with him, and receive the favor of letters from the King, was somewhat more special.

It was clear that the earl of Derby had a more dramatic reception when he arrived in February 1585. Jacqueline Boucher tells us that Derby awarded Henri III with *l'ordre anglais de la Jarretière*,<sup>7</sup> the Order of the Garter. Derby had some fifty men with him, and Henri gave him *une crédence garnie d'orfèverie d'une valeur de 4000 écus*<sup>8</sup> (a sideboard decorated with wrought gold, worth 4000 écus).

Note that when Henri's brother and predecessor Charles IX died on 30 May 1574, Henri became King of France. He returned from Poland to France, via Venice. He eventually arrived in France in September 1574. In Venice he had greatly enjoyed the *commedia dell'arte*, so much so that he requested they come to perform before him in France. Boucher tells us that the Italian ambassador, Morisini, wrote:

Le roi désire extrêmement les voir et il désire surtout que la femme qui jouait aussi cet hiver soit de la compagnie....

(The king is extremely keen to see them and he desires above all that the woman who was playing that winter also be in the company....)<sup>9</sup>

It wasn't a straightforward request, since the troupe was intending to go to Mantua. They made their way northwards through France, were captured by Huguenots, and released after the King paid a ransom.<sup>10</sup> They arrived at Blois (south of Paris) in mid-January 1577, where the King and his court were staying. Boucher tells us:

Avant-hier est arrivée à la cour la compagnie des comédiens Gelosi. On les attendait et désirait vivement, aussi ont-ils été reçus fort joyeusement. On les logés aussitôt et bien traités. Le soir même ils ont joué...

Quant à l'actrice qui tenait dans la troupe les rôles d'amoureuse, ce n'était plus Vittoria, mais la fameuse Isabelle Andreini.... La scène de comédie italienne... parmi lesquels une toute jeune femme qui pourrait être Isabelle... Ce fut une actrice exceptionnelle.<sup>11</sup>

(The day before yesterday the troupe of comedians, the Gelosi, arrived at court. We were waiting for them, and longed for them to arrive, and they were received very joyfully. They were found lodgings at once, and treated well. The same evening they put on a show.... As for the actress who played the role of the female lover, it wasn't Vittoria, but the famous Isabelle Andreini... the scene of Italian comedy... among whom [was] the very young woman who



The beautiful Isabelle Andreini

would be Isabelle.... She'll be an exceptional actress.)

The troupe included women, because that was normal for the *commedia dell'arte* at the time. After delighting the court,<sup>12</sup> the troupe went on to Paris, where they stayed at the hotel opposite the Louvre.<sup>13</sup> They would return in later years.

There seem to be faint echoes of such a scene in *Hamlet* in these accounts of the Gelosi's visit in 1577: the players arrive, are welcomed, Hamlet insists on them being well accommodated, he exclaims at how one, addressed as "your ladyship" (II.ii.388), has grown the height of a "chopine" (II.ii.399; Italian courtesans in Venice wore chopines) since he last saw her. (Editors generally gloss "your ladyship" with a reminder that Elizabethan actors were all male. The implication is that Hamlet is supposed to recognize a member of the troupe, a boy actor young enough to play female roles. Could it indicate instead a playwright recalling a *commedia dell'arte* troupe with both male and female actors?)

Isabelle Andreini was fourteen in 1574, and seventeen in 1577, enough time to grow the height of a moderate chopine. It is a great pity the Gelosi arrived in France almost a year too late for de Vere to experience the *commedia dell'arte* on that occasion. The French accounts do suggest a realistic element to what we meet in *Hamlet*, and may reflect that de Vere himself had seen the troupe during his time in Venice. And after reading this account of the troupe visiting Henri III, some might be more inclined to believe the author of *Hamlet* is describing a *commedia dell'arte* troupe.



Examples of chopines, which could be up to 51 centimeters high, and a Venetian courtesan, wearing chopines



A second line of inquiry concerned the Pléiade and the *Académie du Palais*, the palace academy. Pierre de Ronsard had told Charles IX, Henri's brother and predecessor, that:

Sire, ce n'est pas tout que d'estre Roy de France...  
Un Roi, pour estre grand, ne doit rien ignorer.<sup>14</sup>  
(Sir, it is not enough to be King of France...  
A King, to be great, must know everything.)

Partly as a consequence, an *Académie de Poesie et de Musique* was created during Charles's reign, a group mainly of men that met to discuss poetry, music, philosophy, and other learned subjects. It met in places such as the home of one founder, Jean-Antoine de Baïf, and also in Madame de Retz's townhouse.<sup>15</sup> This group was *La Pléiade*. Names like those of Ronsard, d'Aubigny, Pibrac, Desportes as well as Baïf and many more are associated with it.<sup>16</sup>

But that happened under Charles IX. Under Henri III there was a major shift. Surviving in the French archives is a letter Henri wrote, describing himself as the *grand amy*, the great friend, to "Monsieur de Piebrac" [Pibrac],<sup>17</sup> asking him for advice on *Le Façon de faire bien harangues* (the way to make good speeches)—in other words asking for help on learning the skills of rhetoric. Henri was not as well educated as he would

have wished. So it was that a new role emerged for certain members of the Pléiade, namely a role in the new palace academy. This began in mid-January 1576 in the *cabinet de roi* in the Louvre palace. Morisini, the Italian ambassador, writes home about them. So does Vale. Sealy uses "contemptuous" to describe Vale's comment, though I think that "dismissive" would be exaggerating; the King's habit now was:

to call certain poets and philosophers to his chamber to hear them dispute three or four hours together *de primis causis de sensu et sensibili* and such like questions. The auditors are none but the King, the Queen of Navarre, the Duke of Nevers, the Countess of Retz, and another lady or two.<sup>18</sup>

Sealy looks carefully at this, and with the help of Édouard Frémy's account in *L'Académie des derniers Valois* (the Academy of the last of the Valois family), provides an outline of the first lectures, by learned men who have carried out much research. Note the dates (see table below).

Frémy quotes verbatim the lectures, or talks, for many of them survive complete. Later topics include, for example, ambition, and discussions on which was the stronger emotion, joy or grief. Sealy sees the talks as

Speaker	Date	Subject
Guy Du Faut Pibrac	Friday 24 Feb. 1576	On anger, and moderating it
Amadis Jamyn	Tuesday 28 Feb.	On anger, and moderating it
? Duc de Nevers	Friday 2 March	On the value of anger in a prince
?	Tuesday 6 March	? on anger. Missing
Bertaut	Friday 9 March	On anger



scholastic; certainly they are full of classical references.<sup>19</sup> D'Aubigny, once of the Pléiade, wrote:

(c'estoit une assemblée qu'il faisait deux fois la sepmaine en son cabinet pour ouyr les plus doctes hommes qu'il poivoit, et memes quelques dames, qui avoyent estudié sur un problème tousjours propose par celui qui avoit le mieux faict à la dernière dispute.<sup>20</sup>)

(It's a meeting held twice a week in [the King's] cabinet/office in order for him to hear the most learned men he can, and even some women, who have studied an issue which is put forward by [the speaker] who spoke the better in the previous dispute/debate.)

Names involved as listeners or participants not yet mentioned also included Ronsard, Doron, Tyard (*Évêque*, modern *évêque*—bishop—de Chalons), Baïf, Desportes.<sup>21</sup>

As the dates show, the first lectures in the palace academy were taking place in Paris just as de Vere was returning from Italy. But it is not known whether the March lectures definitely took place then, or later, because religious unrest in France meant that Henri was so concerned about restoring peace that he “suppressed the sessions of the academy during March and April.”<sup>22</sup> The palace academy resumed its twice-weekly sessions “in all probability” on Tuesday, 5 June 1576.<sup>23</sup> Considering de Vere's sudden departure from Paris and his refusal to return to his wife when he reached England, a few lectures on anger might have been pertinent. However, since Henri was busy making peace among French religious factions, it is not surprising de Vere is not recorded as meeting him again. Did Valentine Dale tell de Vere of the palace academy then, or later? That palace academy—“Our court shall be a little academe”—was to last three years, just like a certain King's suggestion, a “three years' term” (I.i.13, 16), in *Love's Labours Lost*. Some Shakespeare scholars believe that idea is based upon Pierre de la Primaudaye's book, *L'Académie Française*, published in French in 1577, the year after Henri III established his palace academy. The palace academy at the court of the King of Navarre was formed in imitation of the palace academy of Henri III.<sup>24</sup>

Nelson<sup>25</sup> tells us that on 21 March 1576 Dale informs Burghley of Oxford's arrival in Paris. Nelson gives a modernized spelling version of Dale's letter, which in the British Library manuscript room reads:

My L of Oxford hath passed thr' all the camp very well, and is arrived here in very good health, and Mr Will: Russel with him.

The British Library copy continues: “The rest it may please your lordship to read in my letter to Mr

Secretary<sup>26</sup> [Walsingham].” Do we know whether such a letter to Walsingham survives?

### Richelieu site

The manuscript room is at the Richelieu site. Research there permits much more refined searches than generally online; time spans can be months instead of centuries. My aim was to see if there were any mentions of de Vere in the months of his visits, or in the manuscripts of those he definitely met in Paris, or in the manuscripts of those who were either poets, as de Vere was, or members of the Pléiade, or of the palace academy.

The time periods examined were February-March 1575, and March-April 1576. The searches were facilitated by being digitized, though there was a lot to check. Requests for materials had to go through the president of the room, and gain approval from unseen figures. Manuscripts came in (very) large leaf books, with the ancient scripts entered into the books. The best handwriting was tolerably legible and the content accurately summarized.

But there was nothing on any spelling of “de Vere” or “comte/conté d'Oxford,” with or without a Christian name. There were some manuscripts appertaining to the Pléiade/palace academy members, but no relevant ones.

### Caran: National Archives

The national archives at the Caran site are systematically divided into subsections. Here the search was for the whole archives (rather than one of the subsections) for de Vere. There were, however, no entries for de Vere in the sixteenth century, though there were a significant number for the ancient family of de Vere, from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

### Conclusions

Five days of total immersion in the BnF and national archives was somewhere between stimulating and grueling! But this helped to produce a reasonably detailed picture of the preoccupations and way of life of the Parisian court when de Vere passed through in 1575, and the changes that had occurred when he returned in 1576.

Henri III's palace was crowded, with family (including two prisoners), retainers, servants, ambassadors, Catholic and Huguenot plaintiffs, and the current, ambitious members of the Pléiade in 1575 and the members of the Palace Academy in 1576. Henri was also disturbed by endless *querelles* in the court and the numerous religious clashes in his kingdom, and wanted more privacy. Meanwhile the Pléiade were falling into decline; but for some of them to be initiating a palace academy instead, there must have been discussion and planning for this in 1575. For de Vere, if he had the opportunity to do so, engagement in court life might have been exciting and stimulating.



How much he wished to be observed is a different matter. It is hard not to remember that William Lewin, a Cambridge graduate, was also Burghley's retainer; while Lewin seems to have been intended as a traveling companion (Valentine Dale recommends him, too), by 4 July 1575 Lewin writes from Strasburg that he doesn't know whether de Vere has gone to Greece or is still in Italy. Might de Vere deliberately have chosen not to have a high profile, to avoid reports going back to Burghley?

Even if no direct link was found between de Vere and events and personages at the French court, it is possible that he may have seen elsewhere the kind of welcome the Gelosi or other commedia dell'arte troupes received on their travels, a welcome similar to that presented in *Hamlet*. Even if there is no direct link between de Vere's experience and the palace academy and its three years of lectures, Dale knew about it, and on his return visit to Paris de Vere arrived just as the palace academy's programme of lectures was apparently temporarily suspended. It may be that Shakespeare used the English translation of La Primaudaye's book, or that he knew first hand that the French court in Paris had a palace academy which for three years educated its king?

### Further study?

Is there a letter from Valentine Dale to Walsingham with any more details about de Vere's return through Paris? The date would be late March 1576. French archives seem to be in a more limited number of places than in England, where each county has its own archives. An initial online search in the Archives départementales du Rhône, the most likely archives to have any references to de Vere's return journey through France, was also unsuccessful. While our research has not uncovered anything new about de Vere, it may be worth trying to see if there are any archives in Wittenberg, where de Vere reportedly visited Sturmius.

It would also be reassuring to know that *all* public record offices in England have been checked, in case they have any information about de Vere.

### Postscript

We recently visited Lincolnshire. The county public record offices in Lincoln are accessible online by searching for "Lincolnshire public records office."

The seventeenth earl of Oxford had a sister, Mary, who married Peregrine Bertie, later Baron Willoughby, sometime between Christmas 1577 and March the next year. Their eldest son was Robert Bertie, born 16 December 1582. Their home area was Lincolnshire, so it is not surprising that some records relating to them are held in Lincoln.

Reference Name 8-ANC/7/67-87 covers some of these records; it is a collection of copies of letters written by Robert Bertie to his father and others while he was abroad. Robert was obviously busy writing on 3 March

1598; there are three letters written in French on this date, to the earl of Essex, to his father, and to Edward de Vere, his uncle. The letter to his uncle, preceded by its reference, has been typed up from the pale brown handwriting of the original document, and reads:

8-ANC/7/77 1598-9, March 3. To the Earl of Oxford. —“Monseigneur, je desire infiniment de vous faire paroistre par quelque effect l'honneur que je vous porte, ayant este tousjours bien veu de vous: mais d'autant que je n'ay trouve encores aucun subject assez digne de vous divertir de vos plus serieux affaires, je n'osoy pas prendre la hardiesse de vous escrire, de peur d'estre trop mal advise de vous importuner de lettres qui ne meriteroyent pas d'estre seulement ouvertes: si non en ce qu'elles vous asseureroient de l'eternelle service que je vous ay vouë et a toute vostre maison; vous suppliant tres humblement, Monsieur, de l'avoir pour agreable et de me tenir pour celuy qui est prest de recevoir vos commandemens de telle devotion que je seray toute ma vie vostre tres humble serviteur et neveu.”

The letter is not particularly interesting in content. Robert is respectful to his uncle (*l'honneur que je vous porte*, the respect I bear towards you); he scarcely dares write letters that don't really merit being opened (*lettres qui ne meriteroyent pas d'estre seulement ouvertes*), because he hasn't anything to say on any subject worthy enough to distract his uncle from his very serious affairs (*aucun subject assez digne de vous divertir de vos plus serieux affaires*). Robert was a teenager of sixteen or so, a little older than the earl of Oxford was when he wrote a letter in French to Sir William Cecil, the letter Alan Nelson thinks was probably a copied exercise. Should we regard this copy of a letter by Robert Bertie as one which wasn't sent? Or is it possible that one of the ways in which the young learned how to “network,” as we would call it today, was to stay in contact through letters that might at times be no more than a nominal “hope you are well” attempt to keep in touch? Can we regard it as an indication that the Earl of Oxford kept in touch with his sister and her children and was reasonably affectionately regarded? What were the *plus serieux affaires* which engaged Oxford's attention at this time?

Whatever the answer to those questions, the letter, being written in French, would suggest the Earl of Oxford did know French, regardless of Nelson's disparaging comment on that earlier letter.

### Acknowledgments

I should like to record my gratitude for the funding the SOF provided for this research, and to Dr. C. K. Jolly, who did the tedious setting up of web pages, ordering, and the pictures. Nina Green was also helpful in drawing attention to her website, since she too has been seeking to

find out if there are any Paris records, though over a wider time scale. While the outcome provides mainly background, it is salutary to remember how many centuries have been spent on researching Shakespeare of Stratford.

### Endnotes

1. B. M. Ward, *The Seventeenth Earl of Oxford* (John Murray, London; 1928) and Alan H. Nelson, *Monstrous Adversary* (Liverpool University Press, Liverpool; 2003).
2. Ward, 101 (Hatfield MSS.146.13).
3. Ward, 101.
4. Robert J Knecht, *Hero or Tyrant? Henry III, King of France, 1574-89* (Ashgate, Birmingham; 2014), 92.
5. Knecht, 96.
6. It is perhaps necessary to write that the Louvre Palace Henri III lived in was much smaller than today's palace. He was still upgrading the original twelfth century fortification, though his father, Henri II, had made some substantial additions. Henri III was criticized for not being a builder, but his mother, Catherine de Médici, did eventually have her own apartments built. Henri III's palace fitted into approximately one-third of the huge, enclosed courtyard that exists today at the Louvre. His palace probably did seem very crowded.
7. Jacqueline Boucher, *Société et Mentalités autour de Henri III* (Honoré Champion, Paris; 2007), 299.
8. Boucher, 285.
9. Boucher, 778.
10. Knecht, 132.

11. Boucher, 779.
12. The Gelosi did not delight the local population. The locals complained to the King, who considered them to have *étroitesse d'esprit*, narrowmindedness; Catherine de Médici asked the locals if the court was supposed to live as if in a convent. Boucher, 782.
13. Boucher, 780.
14. Abel Lefranc, *La Vie Quotidienne au Temps de la Renaissance* (Librairie Hachette, 1938), 52.
15. Robert Sealy, *The Palace Academy of Henry III* (Librairie Droz, Genève; 1981), 19.
16. Cf. Frances Yates, *The French Academies of the Sixteenth Century* (UK, Norwich: Jarrold and Sons Ltd., 1947).
17. Found in the Richelieu archive records.
18. Sealy, 7.
19. Édouard Frémy, *L'Académie des derniers Valois* (Slatkine Reprints, Genève; 1969), 274.
20. Sealy, 6, quoting d'Aubigny: *Histoire*, V, 3-26.21.
21. Sealy, 7.
22. Sealy, 47.
23. Sealy, 48.
24. Yates, 123.
25. Nelson, 135.
26. British Library Add. MS 4104, 263v. A letter to the Lord Treasurer (Burghley) from Dr Valentine Dale. 31 March 1576.



## Shapiro “On the Media”: Name-Calling and Bullying Students and Doubters

by Bryan H. Wildenthal<sup>1</sup>

For far too long when it comes to the Shakespeare Authorship Question (SAQ), orthodox academics, whatever their motivations, have largely avoided the simple duty that any serious scholar has: to engage forthrightly with the evidence. Instead, such scholars, when they deign to mention the SAQ at all, have focused almost entirely on trying to denigrate or psychoanalyze authorship doubters.

In its most insulting and ridiculous forms, this has involved suggestions of snobbery, mental illness, and even comparisons to Holocaust denial (see, *e.g.*, Edmondson & Wells 2011; Shahan, SAC Letters to SBT & RSC, 2010–15); Wildenthal, “Rollett and Shapiro,” 2016, pp. 7-9). A milder version—almost more maddeningly smug and condescending—has been to retreat behind a fog of fashionable academic jargon, analyzing authorship doubt as a purely contingent product of modern times and cultural preoccupations (for typical examples, see Shapiro 2010, and many of the essays in Edmondson & Wells 2013).



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Somehow, from the orthodox perspective, it is never about the simple factual and historical issue at the heart of the SAQ: Does the available evidence, fully considered in context, raise reasonable questions about who actually wrote these particular works of literature?

Professor James Shapiro of Columbia University, as so often, illustrates the problem all too well. He spoke at length about the SAQ in a December 2016 interview with Brooke Gladstone on her public radio show *On the Media*. One cannot begrudge Shapiro his strongly held opinions, but one might have hoped Gladstone, a respected journalist, would try to be a bit more fair.

Sadly, while she claimed that “we won’t fix on resolving that [authorship] question,” Gladstone joined Shapiro in scornfully dismissing skeptics with the poisonous and nonsensical epithet “*Shakespeare deniers*” (once by Gladstone, three times by Shapiro; see Gladstone & Shapiro, “Our Shakespeare, Ourselves,” 2016; *On the Media* is produced by New York City’s WNYC and syndicated on numerous public radio stations nationwide).

The latter phrase appears to be intentionally crafted to invoke a noxiously offensive comparison with Holocaust deniers. See my 2016 essay discussing the blatant comparisons to Holocaust denial by Professor Stephen Greenblatt of Harvard University and Professor Gary Taylor of Florida State University—along with Shapiro’s own weak and disingenuous attempt to distance himself from such reckless and outrageous comparisons (Wildenthal, “Rollett and Shapiro,” pp. 7-9).

Both Shapiro and Gladstone embraced the stock meme—which I pointed out as blatantly false in my talk at the SOF Annual Conference in Chicago in October 2017—that authorship doubts did not arise before the mid-19th century (see Wildenthal, “Early Shakespeare Authorship Doubts”). While they briefly acknowledged a few anti-Stratfordian arguments, both made clear they were “far more interested,” “*not [in] what people thought, but why they thought it.*”<sup>2</sup>

And why *do* doubters doubt, in Shapiro’s condescending psychoanalytical imagination? First, he unsubtly suggested it is a mere infantile obsession, mockingly imitating the childish voice of an apparently well-informed fourth-grader who dared to ask him an authorship-doubt question. Shapiro suggested he felt inhibited from bullying that innocent young questioner into silence, “like I do in my Columbia classrooms, and say, that’s rubbish and I’ll fail you if you ask that question again.”

We must assume, I suppose, giving Shapiro the benefit of the doubt, that this was sarcastic humor. But his offhand comment, even if a joke, is revealing about the level of orthodox conformity that chills any discussion of the SAQ in academia. Would even an adult student hearing this, who perhaps hoped to obtain Shapiro’s coveted support as a mentor, or his supervision of a thesis, feel free to openly express authorship doubts?

Threats of ridicule, leave aside a failing grade, are a very effective social sanction. In fact, like name-calling, they constitute a form of psychological bullying. Most authorship doubters among Shapiro’s students probably stay fearfully closeted. Does he truly feel comfortable about that? What is it about the SAQ that reduces even leading public intellectuals, even professors at our finest universities, to this kind of irrational fever? As a career teacher myself, I find it deeply troubling.

Shapiro then mentioned what he conceded were “some of the smartest people” in the history of authorship doubt: “Mark Twain, Sigmund Freud, Henry James, Helen Keller, it’s a long list.” Indeed it is. And yes, speaking of infantile obsessions, Shapiro the amateur shrink went on to psychoanalyze Freud. (How is *chutzpah* spelled again?)

But why—*why*—did this long line of brilliant, diverse, and thoughtful people join what Shapiro called “this company of Shakespeare deniers”? Well, according to Shapiro, “for really complicated and very interesting and sometimes sad reasons” they apparently just “had to deny his authorship.”

At that point, Gladstone interrupted to ask whether the SAQ might “start with the fact [that] there’s very little documentary evidence” for the Stratfordian theory. By gosh, she might be on to something there. *Could it be* that people of this caliber might actually be affected by a reasoned assessment of facts?

But Gladstone promptly backed off, as Shapiro’s own students perhaps often feel compelled to do, when he kept talking right over her, recycling the stock Stratfordian claim that we allegedly have more relevant evidence about Shakespeare than most of his peers. We don’t.<sup>3</sup>

And so it goes.

#### Endnotes:

<sup>1</sup> Professor Emeritus, Thomas Jefferson School of Law (San Diego); A.B. & J.D., Stanford University; Trustee and Secretary, Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship (SOF). Most of my scholarly writings relating to law or Shakespeare (some relate to both) are available online (<https://ssrn.com/author=181791>). Thanks to my beloved husband, Ashish Agrawal, for his patient support for all my endeavors.

<sup>2</sup> Gladstone & Shapiro, “Our Shakespeare, Ourselves” (2016) (first quotation by Gladstone, second by Shapiro) (emphases added). Gladstone led into Shapiro’s statement by saying: “[W]e won’t fix on resolving that [authorship] question. We’re far more interested in the way that war has been waged across centuries.” This was consistent with the primary focus of Shapiro’s 2010 book, in which he mainly analyzed the SAQ as a cultural phenomenon, making little effort to engage its merits.

<sup>3</sup> See Price, ch. 8, pp. 112-58, ch. 17, pp. 296-307, and pp. 309-322 (“Appendix: Chart of Literary Paper Trails”); see also Shahan & Waugh, ch. 3, pp. 41-45 (summarizing and providing a useful graphic of Price’s findings). Lukas Erne, an unusually candid and thoughtful Stratfordian scholar, supported Price’s point in an article predating her book by three years. Erne

conceded: “With possibly no other English author is there a greater discrepancy between the scarcity of extant historical documents that reliably deal with the author’s life [much less, Erne might have added, his literary career] and the precision with which biographers have tried to trace his life.” Erne conceded this “created a gap between how much” we really know about Shakespeare “and the inferences that can be drawn ... with a reasonable degree of certainty.... Apocryphal stories have contributed their share ....” Erne, “Mythography” (1998), pp. 438-439.

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### Vere and Roe Part 2 (continued from page 1)

#### Milan

On Wednesday, we hopped a high-speed train to Milan. It was quite an experience going 110 miles per hour while working with people nearly 5,000 miles away on a laptop connected by cellphone hotspot.

In *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Silvia and her father, the Duke, would have lived within the grounds of Castello Sforzesco, in the Cortile della Rocchetta, which is adjacent to the Corte Ducale. Their wealthy friends would have lived all around them, on the periphery of the vast courtyard within the Rocchetta, whose walls today provide several examples of what the front of such homes looked like. A sign on the grounds explains, “These facades [authentic but moved from elsewhere in the city] offer important records of the typical 15<sup>th</sup> century upper-class residences organized

around an internal courtyard.” Roe’s book does not offer photos of these representative facades, so I have included two of them (**photos 14 and 15**). They offer a glimpse of the privileged world in which the play’s characters lived.

From the Castello, one can follow the probable eastward route of the characters to reach a city gate called the Porta Orientale (later replaced by the Porta Venezia, or Venice Gate), to the left of which was a postern, a semi-secret doorway through which friars ministering to plague victims could enter and leave the city after hours and adjacent to which was the Franciscan abbey in or near which Friar Patrick had a cell. **Photo 16** shows an old map of Milan (undated but available on the web), on which a building compatible with such an abbey is depicted. Possible remains of the abbey and the postern, which Roe identifies as lying “about twenty meters west of the site of the old Porta Orientale,” are implied by ancient walls



14: Façade within Cortile della Rocchetta, Milan



15: Façade within Cortile della Rocchetta, Milan





16: Old Map of Milan



17: Ruins at Site of Abbey Near Former Porta Orientale, Milan

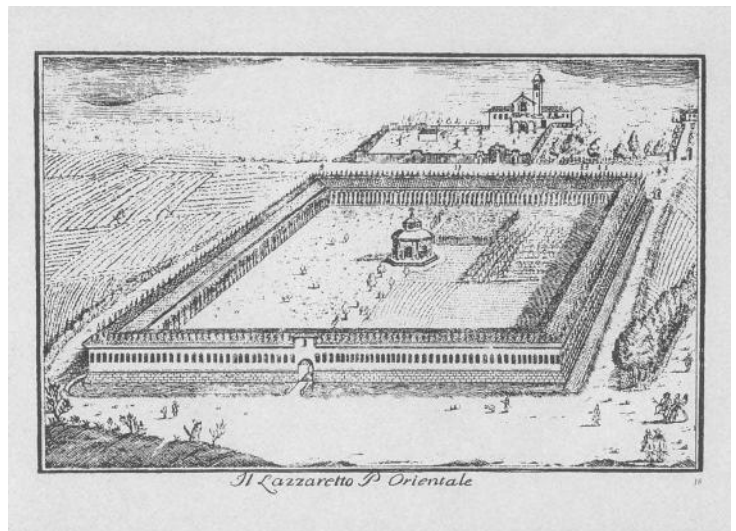


18: Remnants of Masonry at Abbey Site, Milan

and cement-fused stones jutting out from grass at the edge of Indro Montanelli Park (**photos 17 and 18**). The park originated as the Public Gardens, created in the 1700s. A sign at the site explains, “the Gardens were eventually built on land belonging to the San Dionigi and Carcanine monasteries, following their suppression under Austrian rule.” Even after the Public Gardens became a city park, “for many years they remained largely a rendezvous point and leisure spot for the Milanese aristocracy.” Shakespeare’s characters, who were members of the aristocracy in the 1570s, rendezvoused very near the same spot.

The next site we visited was the location of the infamous Il Lazzaretto, a walled quarantine facility for plague victims covering the equivalent of twenty square blocks that went under construction in 1488. It contained Il Pozzo di San Gregorio, or St. Gregory’s Well, a mass grave for tens of thousands of victims of the plague, a hellish place to which Proteus directs the unsuspecting Thurio in the play. **Photo 19**, also from the web, shows an old depiction of it. Our walk took us right past the location of Il Lazzaretto’s only entrance.

We visited the church within Il Lazzaretto now called San Carlo al Lazzaretto that in the 1500s was named Santa Maria della Sanita. Just outside the border of that area is the current Church of San Gregorio, built around 1900, whose priest provided Roe with some information. The priest told Roe that the new structure was built “on top of the bones,” but he could mean only bones within the churchyard, not those within Il Lazzaretto, whose border was across the street; or perhaps he was using a bit of poetic license. Finally, we located the site of the original church of San Gregorio, which had stood outside the Lazzaretto. According to the old map reproduced in Roe’s book and Roe’s modern-day delineation of the border of Il Lazzaretto, the original church was, as the



19: Depiction of Il Lazzaretto, Milan





20-21: Site of Original San Gregorio Church, Milan

priest told Roe, on the same side of Via San Gregorio as the new church. It was not, however, adjacent to the street but rather occupied an area one-half to one block northeast of the street. Happily, that precise area is now a park (**photos 20 and 21**), so you can stand directly on the spot. It was a satisfying place to end our pilgrimage.

To get there: The Castello Sforzesco is a tourist site, so all the maps show it. To get from there to the Porta Venezia following the most likely path of the characters, exit the grounds on the northeast walkway, which at the cross street Foro Buonaparte becomes Via Tivoli, then Via Pontaccio, then Via Fatebenefratelli. Five blocks later, bear slightly left at a multi-street intersection to reach the Piazza Cayour. To its right side, locate Via Palestro and follow it as it skirts Indro Montanelli Park. Turn left on Corso Venezia until you reach the end of the park. Straight ahead is the Porta Venezia. Turn left on Bastioni di Porta Venezia, and a few yards down the street on your left, you will find a park gate, which is situated near the old abbey site. There and toward the right are the ruins.

Next, cross Bastioni di Porta Venezia and walk toward your left, passing entrances to Via Alessandro Tadino, Via Lecco and Via Lodovico Settala until you reach Via Lazzaretto. You have just traversed the southwestern edge of the site of Il Lazzaretto. In the middle of that walk you passed the location of its only entrance, on your right. Turn right onto Via Lazzaretto. In two blocks, turn right onto Via Lazzaro Palazzi and walk two blocks to find, on your left, the original Santa Maria della Sanita, renamed San Carlo al Lazzaretto around 1630. Retrace your steps to Via Lazzaretto, turn right and walk three blocks. At the Piazza Cincinnato, turn right onto Via San Gregorio. At the end of the first block, on your left at the corner of Via Lodovico Settala, you will see the old church's replacement, the new San Gregorio. Walk one more block in the same direction

until on your left you spot a walkway, a fountain and a grassy park. Turn left onto those grounds, walk about two-thirds of a block, and you will be standing on the location of the original church of San Gregorio.

We did not visit the only intact portion of Il Lazzaretto, and Roe does not say where it is. He includes a photo and says that the Russian Orthodox Church possesses it. A bit of web searching turned up nearly an exact copy of one of his photos of the place, so I can confirm that it is located at #5 Via San Gregorio, home of the Parish of Saints Nicholas and Ambrose at Lazzaretto, which is about a block southeast of the park, just past Via Alessandro Tadino.

What a memorable trip it was. We pre-booked small, centrally located, locally run, medium-budget hotels, and we loved all of them. Our hotel in Florence was so unassuming that we passed its entrance twice before spotting a sign noting it was on the third floor of the building. Aside from two rude government employees at the Milan airport, the people of Italy were friendly, and our hosts in Milan were gracious. Almost every meal was memorably good (we mostly avoided the ubiquitous pizza and pasta). The best wine we had was Amarone, from the Veneto region near Verona. The early fall weather—being either sunny or overcast but consistently mild—was perfect for our trip. The lesser concentration of tourists late in the season made it easy to visit even the most popular sites. Miraculously, the stock market was so calm throughout our trip that a widely followed measure of market volatility slipped to record lows. In retrospect, we couldn't have chosen a better time to go.



## Book Review

*Shakespeare Confidential* by C. V. Berney  
(Somerville, MA: Forever Press, 2017)

Reviewed by Michael St. Clair

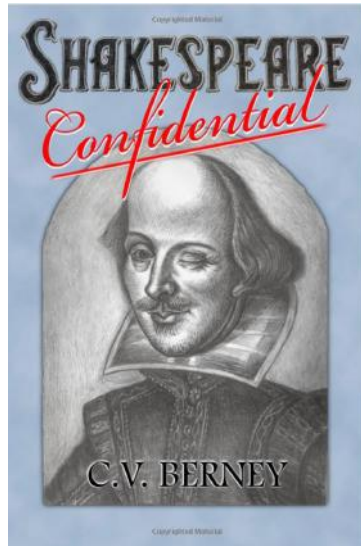
*Shakespeare Confidential* is a collection of thirty-three essays on Shakespeare's plays and related issues written from an Oxfordian viewpoint. The majority of the essays first appeared in *Shakespeare Matters*, the journal published by the Shakespeare Fellowship beginning in 2001.

The first ten essays concern which video versions of Shakespeare's plays were most effective in presenting the dramas. Perhaps the most helpful idea for me in these initial essays was the author's insight that the most entertaining versions were based on a stage production (19). He speculated that stage actors before an audience were working as an ensemble and with an audience—even an audience watching a video has a different mental stance, aware that the actors were trying to engage and please an audience, and the audience responds with a different kind of engagement.

I especially liked Berney's comment about a video of *King Lear* where he states, "Part of the enormous power of Shakespeare's plays is their resonance with the life of their creator, Edward de Vere" (33). That is another, and a more accurate, way of saying what many traditional scholars have noted, that a subtext in the plays is the parallel between the dramatis personae in plays such as *Hamlet* and real-life historical figures at the Elizabethan court. For me, the strength of a number of the essays is how Berney exhibits a deep knowledge of the Elizabethan court and the resonances in the text of the plays.

Berney picks up and develops the subtext theme in a number of the essays. Indeed, part of the value of the Oxfordian perspective is experiencing the plays with an appreciation of echoes from figures from Oxford's life and times at court: "one gets the jokes," as Berney puts it (44). Berney summarizes the richness of subtexts by the suggestion that "there are no arbitrary names in Shakespeare[']s plays]" (45).

The essays on Sir Walter Scott as a Paleo-Oxfordian left me somewhat unpersuaded, however, as did the essay on Herman Melville's *Billy Budd*. I was dubious of the value of seeing both Scott and Melville, writing prior to Looney's book, as having some intuitive sense of de Vere as the author of the plays. I would have preferred Berney's scholarly firepower be directed to the plays themselves and their subtexts as he does in the majority of the essays, especially in the second half of his collection.



In the four essays on *The Spanish Tragedy*, a popular play from around 1580 long attributed (on thin evidence) to Thomas Kyd, Berney's orderly and scholarly fashion makes a strong case for de Vere as author rather than Kyd. Especially helpful is his analysis of "topicalities"—references to contemporary events, personalities and political situations that amused knowledgeable members of the contemporary audience and which add another layer of meaning to the fictitious events on stage. These topicalities take on heft if one considers Oxford as the author of *The Spanish Tragedy*. The thesis is even more compelling if we accept that the Shakespearean plays were frequently

and substantially revised. Berney correctly points out that the myriad quotations and allusions to classical poets make more sense if the well-educated Oxford is credited with authorship of the play. The classical allusions and allusions to travel suggests that the play was written during Oxford's youth when there was an adolescent or youthful need to show off his learning.

Essay 21 elaborates on five lines from the funeral elegy on the death of the actor Richard Burbage in 1618:

He's gone and with him what a world are dead  
Which he review'd, to be revived so.  
No more young Hamlet, old Hieronimo  
Kind Lear, the Grieved Moor, and more beside,  
That lived in him have now forever died.

The reference to Hamlet and Lear are self-explanatory. The "Grieved Moor" is of course Othello and Hieronimo is the principal figure in *The Spanish Tragedy*. Berney argues that if indeed *The Spanish Tragedy* is an early de Vere play, then the author of the Burbage elegy cleverly links four roles all crafted by the same author, namely Shakespeare/Oxford (130).

The last few essays in *Shakespeare Confidential* are on Leicester and *Cymbeline* and *The Winter's Tale*. I learned much from them and admire Berney's knowledge of key figures from Elizabethan times as well as his encyclopedic knowledge of the plays themselves.

Oxfordians will be grateful to find under one cover these varied essays. Like most collections, some essays are stronger than others. Those new to Oxfordian ideas and scholarship need not fear reading this collection as Berney capably fills in any needed background and will reward knowledgeable readers with satisfying insights.



## Making a Planned Gift to the SOF

by Tom Regnier, SOF President

For me, as for many of you, study of the Shakespeare authorship question has become a fascinating aspect of my life. Not only is it, as Derek Jacobi has said, “the best whodunit in the world,” but it’s also the greatest literary mystery of all time. Additionally, it concerns giving proper credit where credit is due and reaching new understandings about the creative process and the relationship between genius and experience. I see the Oxfordian theory gaining acceptance every day, and I hope to see much more widespread recognition of Oxford’s authorship during my lifetime, as I’m sure many of you do.

But even if that doesn’t happen during my life, I intend to leave a legacy that will keep the flame burning after I am gone. That is why, a few years ago, I included the SOF in my estate plans. A certain percentage of the residue of my estate, after taxes are paid, will go directly to the SOF. This was a very satisfying action for me and seems a fitting culmination of my activities in service of the Oxfordian cause.

If you feel as I do—that the current and future efforts of the SOF are of paramount importance to the Oxfordian mission—then you may wish to consider making a planned gift that the SOF will receive at a later date. To that end, we have listed below a number of ways that you can benefit the SOF in a way that fits your particular situation. Please look them over and give some thought to what makes sense for you. Should you have any questions about planned giving opportunities, I would be happy to chat with you about them in the strictest confidence. Feel free to contact me at the postal address or email: Tom Regnier c/o Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship, P.O. Box 66083, Auburndale, MA 02466, or Email: [info@shakespeareoxfordfellowship.org](mailto:info@shakespeareoxfordfellowship.org).

### Bequests

One of the most popular ways to make a planned gift to a nonprofit organization is by including a bequest to the organization in your will or trust. This can be in the form of a specific amount or a percentage of the estate. An example of the latter is the Trust of T. Robert Chapman, a longtime member of the Shakespeare Oxford Society, who died in 1997. Mr. Chapman specified that five percent of the assets remaining after the death of his final trust beneficiary would go to the SOS (now SOF). As a result, we received \$52,600 in 2012. To include a bequest in your will, you will need to use language similar to the following: I hereby give, devise and bequeath \$\_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ (specific asset), or \_\_\_\_\_ % of rest, residue and remainder of my estate to the Shakespeare Oxford Society (d/b/a the Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship), a

501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation incorporated under the laws of the State of New York.

### A Payable on Death (POD) Account at your Bank

By far the easiest and quickest way to make a planned gift to the SOF is by a “Payable On Death” (POD) account at your financial institution. This can be a new account opened for this purpose, or an existing account for which you change the beneficiary to the SOF. You will continue to retain complete control of the account during your lifetime, adding or withdrawing funds at will. After your death, the remaining funds will go to the beneficiary without probate. These accounts used to be known as Totten Trusts. Banks have forms already printed up for these accounts. The forms ask for the following information: Name: Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship, Address: P.O. Box 66083, Auburndale, MA 02466, Tax Identification number: 13-6105314.

### IRA and Retirement Plan Assets

A donor can name the SOF as the designated beneficiary of a retirement plan such as an IRA, 401(k) or 403(b). This is an effective way to make a charitable gift since it is not subject to estate or income taxes, which would be incurred if the funds were left to someone other than a spouse.

### Life Insurance

For many of us there comes a time when a life insurance policy that was necessary years ago is no longer needed. Such policies are ideal charitable gifts. One makes a gift of life insurance by irrevocably designating the SOF as the owner and beneficiary of the policy. Paid up policies (i.e., where there are no more premiums payable) work best. A donor can also name the SOF as a partial or contingent beneficiary of a policy on the donor’s life while retaining ownership of the policy.

### Charitable Gift Annuity

This type of gift allows the donor to make a charitable gift and still receive income. The donor (and possibly others) may receive immediate or deferred income through this arrangement. Age and amount limitations apply, so it will most certainly require the participation of the donor’s professional advisor, but it does allow the donor to support the SOF, receive an immediate charitable income tax deduction, and lock in fixed, partially tax-free payments for life.

### Charitable Remainder/Lead Trusts

The donor can realize the tax advantages of making a gift



now—especially of appreciated assets—while still receiving income from the assets through a charitable remainder or charitable lead trust. With a charitable remainder trust, after providing income to the donor (and possibly others) during one's lifetime, the remaining assets are donated to the SOF. With a charitable lead trust, the gift "leads" in the sense that the trust distributes income to the SOF for a period of years or during the donor's lifetime at which point the remaining assets return to the surviving family members.

### Securities

A gift of securities (e.g., stocks, bonds or mutual funds) offers a number of advantages including significant tax savings. If the securities have appreciated and have been held for at least twelve months, you can donate them to the SOF while deducting their full fair market value. To

avoid a capital gains tax, it is necessary to donate the securities themselves rather than to sell them and donate the cash.

**SOF Legacy Society.** In 2016, we announced the formation of the SOF Legacy Society to provide lifetime recognition to those who have included the SOF in their estate plans. If you have arranged for a planned gift to the SOF by any of the methods described above, please let us know about it at [info@shakespeareoxfordfellowship.org](mailto:info@shakespeareoxfordfellowship.org).

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at the above addresses.



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