The Oxfordian

Volume 17

September 2015

Cover Photograph: Janice Jackson

Our front cover is a detail of the Norman Great West Door of Rochester Cathedral in Kent, England. The selection of the door-and-key motif for this issue was prompted by a statement by Charles Beauclerk in the documentary *Last Will. & Testament*, produced by Lisa and Laura Wilson:

> No historian has penetrated, yet, the mysteries of the Elizabethan age. It's like going through a series of doors. We've got through three or four doors and maybe there are three or four to come. I've learned not to take anything for granted in the Elizabethan age and to never assume that you have the whole truth, and also never to be shocked by any of the revelations that might come out. (Beauclerk 1:00:56)

Acknowledgments

Table of Contents

* Examines and critiques the publication in 2012 of the *Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson*. * "I have long been aware of how the Stratfordian presumption skews Shakespearean scholarship. This article shows how it is also skewing Jonsonian scholarship." – Tom Regnier. * Fresh analysis and point-of-view to the manner in which Jonson presents himself in the prefatory material of the First Folio.

* Outlines the influence of Library Sciences on the Shakespeare Authorship Question. * Reviews the cataloguing practices of the Library of Congress, the purchasing practices of modern libraries, and the relationships between English departments and their libraries in a university context. * Surveys the terrain for post-Stratfordian titles and Stratfordian titles, and comes to fascinating and chilling conclusions. * Discusses the politics of academic dissent, and shows how the placement of a book within a library system, can confer or deny meaning, with far-reaching consequences for Oxfordian theory.

* Adaptation of a presentation given at the 2012 joint conference of the Shakespeare Fellowship and the Shakespeare Oxford Society. * Describes his experience at York University of lobbying for departmental approval to teach a course on the SAQ. * How he delivered such a course to 4th year undergraduates. * Includes appendixes such as an overview of the course materials, insights about organizing the SOF's Toronto conference in 2013, and the price paid by academics who speak openly of reasonable doubt about the man from Stratford.

* A reprint of an article by J.T. Looney from 1922, published in the first issue of a

British journal called The Golden Hind. * In *The Earl of Oxford as 'Shakespeare': New Evidence,* Looney deepens our understanding of the negotiations over Anne Cecil's failed engagement to Phillip Sidney, and explores how her eventual marriage to Edward de Vere is itself explored in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* * Warren provides provenance for the Looney essay, and describes how he obtained an original copy of this issue of The Golden Hind.

5. Is Greene's Groats-worth of Wit about Shakespeare, or By Him?

Examines the possible relationship between Robert Greene, William Shakespeare, and Edward de Vere * Makes the thesis that neither Greene and Shakespeare existed as writers and that Robert Greene was a pseudonym created by Oxford and that "Shakespeare" was an allonym, undertaken through a connection to the Stratford man. * Examines linguistic parallels between Greene's plays and Shakespeare's; cites the many dedications attached to Greene's works that name relations of the 17th Earl of Oxford.

6. "A Mint of Phrases in His Brain" : Language, Historiography, and The Authorship Question in *Love's Labour's Lost*

A historical summary of critical opinions on *Love's Labour's Lost.* * Reviews the generally negative appraisal of the play over two centuries, caused by misidentification of the author. * Examines the way in which this play differs from other Shakespeare comedies. * Connects sources to the text, and argues its purpose for being written becomes less problematic, if readers can accept a court insider as the author.

7. Subliminal Chaucer in Shakespeare's History Plays

Addresses the few studies of Chaucer's influence on Shakespeare's writing, how they only make connections between Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* and Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida* or between Chaucer's *The Knight's Tale* and Shakespeare's *The Two Noble Kinsmen.* * Connects many of Chaucer's lesser-known works to Shakespearean works. * Adds to our understanding of the writerly relationship between the two founding figures in the English canon.

8. The Rediscovery of Shakespeare's Greater Greek

* Summarizes and updates Showerman's previously published articles on the ques-

tion(s) of Shakespeare's knowledge of Greek, his sources, and the literary and linguistic parallels between works by Sophocles, Euripides, and Aeschylus and Shakespeare plays such as *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *Timon of Athens*, *The Winter's Tale*, and *Much Ado About Nothing*.

Compares the history of Oxfordianism, with the history of the theory of Continental Drift, first proposed by German geophysicist Alfred Wegener in 1915. * Outlines valuable insights for Oxfordians from the story of how continental drift was gradually accepted. * Surveys the issue of methodology in research, especially when belief systems are undergoing change or experiencing pressure to change.

An appreciative look at *A Question of Will*, a young adult adventure novel by Lynne Kositsky that dives into the essence of the Shakespeare Authorship Question. Inaugural column.
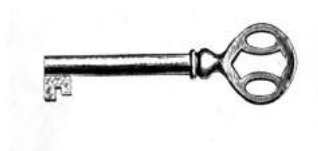
Honest Ben

and the Two Tribes He Hath Left Us

by Gabriel Ready

In the early 1620s, an already famous Ben Jonson began frequenting a tavern on Fleet Street in London. Perhaps he was trying to escape the trials of the outside world and the political realities underpinning a patronage system he relied on so dearly. Whatever the reason, the rules for inclusion, and exclusion – *Leges Convivales* or Rules of Conviviality – were engraved in marble over the mantelpiece of the room:

> Let none but guests or clubbers higher come,
> Let dunces, fools, sad, sordid men keep home;
> Let learned, civil, merry men be invited...[1]

The original Tribe of Ben was rather ambiguous and small. Today, the tribe is less ambiguous and very large.

In 2012 with great cheer and much drinking of malmsey and sack, the new authoritative modern-spelling edition of the *Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson* (CWBJ) was unveiled, succeeding the Herford and Simpson edition published over sixty years earlier by Oxford University. An electronic edition of CWBJ, originally launched in 2014 with a second release of material[2] scheduled for 2015, will further help fulfill one of the main objectives of the twenty-plus-year project – that is, to better promote the reputation of Ben Jonson.[3]

Bibliophiles can be forgiven if they gravitate to the seven-volume print edition that contains seventeen extent plays, more than thirty court masques and entertainments, and three collections of poems. In the history of early modern books and what constitutes an authoritative collection, the English satirical playwright was a pioneer. He personally oversaw his own collection published in a luxurious folio format that included, to the bemusement of some, his plays. Jonson called his collection *Workes*, a term that at least one of his contemporaries mocked but that his Cambridge editors have honoured and retained.

It is easy to forget that the 1616 *Workes* was a bold-faced effort of ego and willpower, offering some measure of the writer at the center of the production. For their part, the Cambridge editors have made the equally bold move of organizing the texts chronologically, as if guided by Jonson himself, ever-present and never more so than today. All previous major collections were organized by genre so the chronological

ordering of the entire Jonsonian canon is a singular achievement. One hesitates at the idea of an electronic edition, not because it is a bad idea – it is not – but because it undercuts the historicist approach that "aims to relocate Jonson more emphatically in his times."[4]

The recent re-examination of Jonson has opened up fascinating new vistas. The re-dating of *A Tale of a Tub*, once believed to be written in the 1590s, is now dated 1634. This astounding 40-year adjustment confounds the notion of a lyrical phase or a portrait of the artist as a young man. Two versions of *Everyman In His Humour*, each assigned to their respective periods in the writer's life (in volume 1 and volume 4), are separated by a dozen plays, a score of masques/entertainments, and countless epistles and poems. Ian Donaldson, one of the CWBJ editors, concludes that "the revised Jonsonian chronology gives an altogether more irregular, various, and inter-esting view of the canon, and of the imaginative development of the author."[5]

Donaldson's *Ben Jonson: A Life* came out a year before the CWBJ, and is in many re-spects a companion to the new collection, focusing on how a bricklayer's son became England's first literary celebrity. Donaldson begins with a description of Jonson's walk to Edinburgh in 1618. Thanks to a recently discovered diary, we now know that Jonson was accompanied by a fellow walker, a younger companion (perhaps his godson) whose principal job was to write what appears to be a testimonial, certifying that the walk from London to Edinburgh had indeed taken place, maybe to fulfill the requirements of a wager. Walking great distances on a wager was not unheard of in the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods, and was something akin to today's extreme sports – in 1589 one gentleman walked backwards for twelve consecutive days.

There is a feeling that the wager is unlikely to be the only reason for Jonson's walk. Anton Chekhov, after finally achieving recognition as a serious writer, set out in 1889, against the advice of family and friends, and quite recklessly when considering his health, on an arduous eleven-week journey from Moscow across Siberia so he could administer a census of the penal colony on Sakhalin Island. Chekhov's sojourn was officially for the purpose of social science but the real motive is less clear.

One thing is certain: Jonson's long walk to Edinburgh confirms that the writer had already achieved national stardom. He was received with pomp and feted in the towns he visited. The doors of grand country houses were opened to him, offering

Gabriel Ready *is a civil servant in Canada's federal government, working in the field of public opinion research. "Honest Ben and the Two Tribes He Hath Left Us" is his first publication. He holds a B.A. from Laurentian University and an M.A. from the University of Ottawa, both in English Literature ('96 and '98). The 1999 Harper's magazine issue "The Ghost of Shakespeare" first drew his attention to the authorship question. Gabriel lives in Ottawa, Ontario, with his wife Pam and his sons Eliot and Isaac, aged seven and ten.*

him their best beds, food, and drink. It is a safe bet that Jonson drank his fair share of Canary wine. And so begins the odyssey of this new life of Ben Jonson, which our biographer tells us is a study of how Jonson "had managed by this period of time to achieve such extraordinary fame, [and] how he had already become such a living legend."[6] This extraordinary fame was cemented two years before the foot voyage to Edinburgh with the publication of *The Workes of Beniamin Ionson* … "here was fame as Jonson might have liked to know it . . . enshrined in the seeming permanence of a printed book."[7]

Coincidently Jonson's monument to posterity was published in the same year as William Shakspere's death, an event that appears to have passed without a contemporary report. Thus, a narrative ostensibly examining one writer's fame, in the decisive chapter titled "Fame," is interrupted for the purposes of untangling a number of mysteries that involve another writer, the dispossession of fame being a far more unequivocal marker.

The Jonson biographer offers two reasons to explain the incongruence of events circa 1616: the difference between Jonson's monument to posterity represented by his *Workes* and the silence emanating from Stratford. Jonson's position at court was more prominent, he suggests. Of Shakespeare's position at court we know next to nothing.[8]

From November 1604 through February 1605, the King's Men performed eleven times at court, including seven plays by Shakespeare and two by Jonson. In the winter of 1612-13, during the celebration of a royal marriage, the King's Men gave twenty performances, including seven plays by Shakespeare, one by Jonson. Perhaps this is a reflection of Shakespeare's themes, which focus on the aristocracy whereas Jonson's comedies revolve around the follies of upward social mobility. There is speculation[9] that the court's passion for Shakespeare resulted in an influx of expensive presentation manuscripts that may have had an impact on the trade in new titles at St. Paul's Churchyard. In effect, Shakespeare's popularity at court stopped the publication of any more work by him. The same cannot be said of Jonson. Notably, Jonson wrote one masque per season and Shakespeare did not. Jonson's relationship with patrons is as clear as Shakespeare's is unclear. Comparing the courtly profiles of Jonson and Shakespeare leads us to conclude these were artists with very different objectives though their target audiences were similar.

Another reason Donaldson offers for the discrepancy between Jonson finding support to publish his collected works and Shakespeare dying without mention, is that Jonson was much more interested in promoting his work. Again, it is difficult to formulate an explanation of Shakespeare's interests in this area. Shakespeare play publication before 1623 can be grouped into three phases.[10]

Table 1: First-time publication of Shakespeare plays

YEAR	PLAY	ATTRIBUTION
1594	*2H6*	—
	Tit.	—
1595	*3H6*	—
1596	*E3*	—
1597	*LLL (0Q?)*	?
	R2	—
	R3	—
	Rom.	—
1598	*1H4*	—
	LLL	"Newly corrected and augmented *By W. Shakespere.*"
1600	*H5*	—
	MV	"Written by William Shakespeare."
	2H4	"Written by William Shakespeare."
	Ado.	"Written by William Shakespeare."
	MND	"Written by William Shakespeare."
1602	*Wiv.*	"By *William Shakespeare.*"
1603	*Ham.*	"By William Shake-speare."
1608	*Lr.*	"M. William Shak-speare: *HIS*"
1609	*Tro.*	"*Written by* William Shakespeare."
	Per.	"By William [ ] Shakespeare."
1622	*Oth.*	"*Written by* William Shakespeare."

1594-1597		**Anonymity Phase**
1598-1603		**Promotional Phase**
1604-1623		**Dormancy Phase**

The first phase was short, an anonymity phase that lasted just four years, when at least seven different plays were published without an author's name on the title page. The second phase was an equally fleeting and frenzied promotional period that lasted between 1598 and 1603, in which at least eight new plays were published with the name Shakespeare on the title page. Importantly, and a hallmark of the second

phase, most of the previously published anonymous plays were re-packaged, often times augmented, and sold under the name Shakespeare. Whether Francis Meres's remarks in *Palladis Tamia* triggered it or not, the promotional period culminated with the release of *Hamlet* in 1603. The effects of the second phase must have been readily apparent in London as the book market was glutted with Shakespeare titles.[11] Then the third and most prolonged period, best described as the dormancy phase, lasted twenty years, as if Hamlet's dying words – "The rest is silence." – were a directive aimed at stationers (Table 1, above).

In short, barring a few exceptions,[12] there was a virtual stop-work-order for printing of new plays by Shakespeare. Some might refer to the dormancy phase as the slow-cooker period, meaning that a more serious folio publication was an apple-of-his-eye project as early as 1603. Another argument put forward is that an oversupply of Shakespeare titles in the book market made publishing his new work commercially unviable, but this cannot explain the prolonged duration of the dormant period nor the fact that stationers were still taking advantage of the name.[13]

Thus, the publishing history of Shakespeare titles experienced two false starts in less than a decade, and then around 1603 unknown impediments stopped the dramatist for two decades from further bringing out new plays in print. No such impediment appears to have existed for Jonson over the same years, with his publishing record following a perceptible ascent towards the 1616 *Workes*.

Looking at Shakespeare's *First Folio* of 1623, there remains the thorny question of why he was not the executor to his own writings. The most infamous last will and testament in literary history does not mention any of the orphaned manuscripts. Indeed, the nineteen unpublished plays of 1616 are the siren song of Shakespearean studies.[14] However, the prevailing orthodox response today appears to be one of common sense, that the anaemic printing record post-1603 and the absence of plays in the last will and testament do not reflect Shakespeare's genuine attitude towards his creative work. One of the lead Shakespearean scholars to articulate this response was new bibliographer W.W. Greg, who was vigorously opposed to the idea that Shakespeare was "indifferent to the fate of his own works."[15] Greg and his generation, of course, were battling an outdated conception of Shakespeare that was rooted in the romantic tradition with William Hazlitt's essay "On Posthumous Fame – Whether Shakespeare was influenced by a love of it?" serving as a model point of view.[16]

Portraying Shakespeare as a literary dramatist who was preoccupied with legacy and revision, writing not only for spectators but rewriting for readers as well, presents its own set of problems because it recasts his relationship with the shareholders in fundamental ways. If Shakespeare is indeed concerned about his work in print, it is reasonable to assume that control over playbooks was a significant wedge issue, a

cause of disagreement, friction and division. Between 1603 and 1616, there is a total of nineteen unpublished plays and a number of competing stakeholders that included theatrical shareholders, stationers, the public, the aristocracy, and an absent, silent author… all of these variables conspire against an unfussy retirement in Stratford.[17]

When an artist offers works of deep insight into the human condition, it is a common practice to let go a bit, let our defenses down and slacken our efforts at comprehension. It is a humbling but beautiful pitfall, repeated again and again across time and space, readers and spectators falling, falling into the bottomless embrace that is the mysterious work of Shakespeare. We are face-to-face with the exception, a dreamscape that Ron Rosenbaum evokes passionately in his *Shakespeare Wars*. That this type of reaction is a sentimental cliché makes the experience no less valid. However, when attempting to make sense of an artist's life, it is a mistake to approach the subject as an exception to the rule, because if we do, we end up with the nonsensical position of Stephen Greenblatt, who chastens any doubt and posits that Shakespeare simply willed himself into the world.

The Folger Shakespeare Library hosted a conference in April 2014 on 'Shakespeare and the Problem of Biography' to mark the 450th anniversary of their faithful devotion to history's man. Attendees at the conference seemed to lament the state of their arid garden all the while leaving the authorship question wanting of husbandry and greater appreciation. The authorship question – the defiantly impolite notion that someone other than the man from Stratford wrote the works attributed to him – is deeply divided along tribal lines. Face-to-face skirmishes are infrequent, confined to the street because scholars guardedly avoid the subject, which is as attractive to them as a pus-filled boil. At the conference, the authorship question was not permitted.

Behind enemy lines, in the safety of the tribal encampment, opinions are aired with unrestrained zeal. On the challenges of writing Jonson's biography, for example, and without any sense of hyperbole, Donaldson reports "The puzzles and excitements that confront a biographer of Jonson, despite the confident pronouncements to the contrary by an earlier generation of academics, are not (in short) so very different from those that are faced by a biographer of Shakespeare, or of any other writer from the early modern period."[18]

Our idea of Shakespeare and the traditional biography is strongly shaped by a reading of Jonson. Jonson mediates our relationship with Shakespeare. He is Shakespeare's successor, his first critical reader and, long before there were general editors, his first general editor. Orthodoxy is tacitly aware of Jonson's importance to the traditional narrative. If we want to know why the biographical problem that is Shakespeare persists, we need look no further than Jonson.

Take Donaldson's handling of *Every Man Out of His Humour* (1599). *Every Man Out*

was a not-so-successful satiric play and Jonson's initial foray in the War of the The-
atres, a flameout that occurred between 1599 and 1602 among rival poets and players
in the close-knit London theatre community. The feud was started in part when play-
wright John Marston torched Jonson in *Histriomastix* (1599) through the character of
Chrisoganus.[19]

Not everyone agrees on all of the allusions during this acerbic, restless period –
there were many targets – but some allusions are more obvious than others. One of
the easy ones is Jonson's parody of the Stratford man, cited by E.K. Chambers as a
contemporary allusion in his *William Shakespeare: A Study of Facts and Problems* (1930).
Jonson attacks the Shakespeare family's acquisition of a coat of arms in the character
of Sogliardo whose crest features a boar without a head and the motto "Not without
mustard." The motto for Shakespeare's coat of arms was *Non Sans Droit* or "not
without right."

It is important to note Donaldson does not look at Sogliardo, though the character
rents a room at a London inn, owns property in the country and is predisposed to
the world of usury, exactly like history's man. After six pages on the racket of acquir-
ing arms, and adding colour to his narrative, a verdict is finally reached. The parody
is about the abuses of heraldry in the abstract because, Donaldson confesses, he
cannot accept "the picture of Jonson as plebeian underdog, barking at Shakespeare,
the pretender of gentility."[20]

This is a convincing alibi until Donaldson describes Jonson's later legendary creative
relationship with the architect Inigo Jones. The two worked together on masques
throughout the Jacobean period and were well known for their squabbles. Jonson's
class-conscious derision of Jones is faithfully noted by the biographer who writes
that "Even less kindly – even less reasonably, given his own family background –
Jonson was to taunt Jones, the son of a Welsh clothworker, on his humble ori-
gins . . . ."[21]

The life of Jones can withstand the weight of a personal attack while the life of
Shakespeare cannot: the shoulders are too narrow, the backbone is too delicate. Jones
had actually been to Italy, to cite one clue. The reasons for not looking at the char-
acter of Sogliardo in *Every Man Out* are obvious enough.[22] He is a buffoon and gull.
He is a "lump of copper." Without wit, Sogliardo is threadbare in learning, messes
up his knowledge of foreign languages when courting women and is told that he
can pass for a clown, which he takes as a compliment. In accordance with comedic
conventions, the Sogliardo character functions as an *alazon* – or imposter.[23]

More than previous generations, the *Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson* of-
fers an intimate portrayal of a combative Jonson, a complicated, multi-faceted man
whose many secrets remained mostly secret. From the very beginning of his career
Jonson was a writer to be reckoned with, a confrontational artist who resisted

pigeonholing and took on all comers. The satirical play *The Isle of Dogs* (1597), co-written with Thomas Nashe, was judged to be lewd, seditious and scandalous; one of the targets put forward is Queen Elizabeth herself. The production was immediately taken down and the 25-year-old Jonson was hauled into prison before being questioned by the authorities. The manuscript was expunged from history. Still, Jonson managed a writing career spanning three different reigns – the Elizabethan, the Jacobean and the Caroline – when the pitfalls of being a commentator were many and the consequences severe. He would be imprisoned again and questioned by authorities on numerous occasions. After forty years of wrestling with his opponents and bragging about conquests, the scurrilous Jonson never did lift the veil on *The Isle of Dogs*. Still, the Cambridge editors have provided an eight-page essay to decipher the meaning of the absent, co-authored play.[24]

Jonson's indirect forms of utterance and mediating positions are well known.[25] One art form Jonson perfected was the writing of prefaces, introductions, dedications, inductions, choruses, prologues, and epilogues. Paratextual material is used to achieve many ends, such as promoting the author, introducing the text proper, and pandering to patrons and the reading public. Among its many uses and abuses, paratexts were indispensible for outflanking the state-decipher, the politic picklock, and the invading interpreter.

Paratexts are situated in the multiple arenas of artistic licence, patronage, and the commercial practices of stationers, and are not to be confused with conspiracy theories. Speaking on behalf of authors, Jonson transforms the Induction into a social contract in *Bartholomew Fair* where a Scrivener presents "articles of agreement" between spectators and the author. Among the articles, the spectator must agree not to search out any real persons in the play such as a "concealed statesman by the Seller of Mousetraps." This conceit, used as often today as ever before, was effective in protecting the author while also extending protection to other individuals who may be alluded to and attacked in the action of the play. Sometimes the sole objective of a paratext is to shutter identification. In this the paratext is a not too distant cousin of the pseudonym. For the author who is subject to punishment – to borrow a phrase from Foucault – and for the Jacobean satirist especially, paratexts provide ready-made answers for hostile auditors.

Some twenty years after *The Isle of Dogs*, an older and more socially connected Jonson was engaged in one of his most weighty projects: the prestigious folio edition of *Mr William Shakespeares Comedies, Histories, and Tragedies*. At the request of his lifelong patron, William Herbert 3rd Earl of Pembroke, Jonson was employed with contributing two poems and overseeing the armature of the book, with his 1616 *Workes* serving as a model.

Jonson had prepared his entire life for the assignment, the official introduction of

gentle Mr. Shakespeare, the Sweet Swan of Avon. The effect of the First Folio's prefatory material cannot be exaggerated. The seventeen pages of paratext, in which five pages are blank, delivers an irresistible two-punch, an intoxicating English eclogue in one fist and a picture of platonic collegiality and nostalgia for the Elizabethan stage in the other.

Before the folio edition the Shakespearean canon was half its size and the brand was limited to the title pages of cheap quartos and the down-market. It is difficult today to think about Shakespeare minus *Macbeth*, *As You Like It*, or the romances such as *The Tempest* and *A Winter's Tale*, a thought invigorated by the idea that they were under threat by "the frauds and stealths of injurious impostors."[26] If it is difficult to imagine the canon minus the First Folio, it is even more difficult to imagine the traditional biography of history's man minus the folio's paratextual material.

Proceeding confidently, Donaldson writes "Whatever the extent of his involvement, the stamp of Jonson's authority is clearly apparent in the 1623 Folio. At the outset of the volume, opposite the title page with its famous, if ungainly, portrait of Shakespeare, stands Jonson's verses 'To the Reader,' vouching for the fact that Martin Droeshout's engraving was indeed 'for gentle Shakespeare cut,' and (to the lasting confusion of those wishing to propose an alternative authorship) that the person depicted was indeed responsible for the works presented in this volume."[27]

The tenor of Jonson's testimony is unmistakable. If anyone can be trusted on what Mr. Shakespeare looked like, it is the venerated, national poet and contemporary Ben Jonson. Honest Ben is what is referred to as a star witness. With the index finger fully extended, Donaldson points to the ocular proof of the Droeshout engraving, thus fulfilling one of the intended outcomes of the First Folio, submitting incontrovertible evidence of attribution. It would be naïve to think otherwise, that is to say, that the Jonson address and Droeshout engraving are there for any other reason than attribution.

With this in mind it must be noted that the First Folio was sold to the decision makers of early modern Europe such as bishops, earls and ambassadors, and was not, as advertised, for the great variety of readers. Only a privileged few could afford the 900-page book. So, importantly, the ocular proof was provided for an elite national and international audience.

There is a tendency to look away from the politics (and until recently, the finances) behind the First Folio, as if the collection was detached from the tediousness of history – a Romantic notion of a poet overheard. The First Folio project is often interpreted as only a disinterested, humanist endeavour aimed at recovering a lost culture, restoring manuscripts and elevating the commercial plays as a literary text.[28] However, the dumb figure depicted on the title page is unlike the stamp of humanism prevalent in frontispieces of the period, which as a rule show writers who we

are supposed to imagine sitting in a literary pantheon of a transcendent race. These demi-gods are crowned in laurel wreaths or bays, books at hand. A decision not to be taken lightly, the fathers of the First Folio chose to give history a gentleman without books, a common man.[29]

Jonson in his address, meanwhile, makes a fetish of the new medium of print, upending the oral-aural culture that served as the backdrop. Print activated an impulse to point and shoot with the eye, alluded to in one of the half-dozen or so meanings behind the expression "hit His face."[30] The marginal orality[31] of the author – and all that encompasses the rich manuscript culture of the time – was arrested, turning on the image of a face. Is it too much to ask for circumspection in reading the 'To the Reader' address from beginning to end, and heed Jonson's advice to ignore the image? The address announces at once the indeterminacy of a twisted braid:

> This figure, that thou here seest put,
>   It was for gentle Shakespeare cut;
> Wherein the Graver had a strife
>   With Nature, to out-do the life.
> Oh, could he but have drawn his wit
>   As well in brass as he hath hit
> His face, the print would then surpass
>   All that was ever writ in brass.
> But since he cannot, *reader, look*
>   *Not on his Picture*, but his book.[32]
>   [emphasis added]   (5:637)

Not only is the reader encouraged to skip the Droeshout image, the word "brass" is emphatically repeated, used twice in ten lines. Brass was another word for copper but importantly, during Jonson's time, it also meant brazenness, effrontery, impudence.[33]

In *Love's Labour's Lost*, book study is initiated by a desire of fame, something the King of Navarre refers to from the beginning as being engraved on their tombs: "Let fame, that all hunt after in their lives, / Live register'd upon our brazen tombs / And then grace us in the disgrace of death" (1.1.1-3). The brazenness reverberates in the recognition scene with Berowne confessing to Rosaline, acknowledging his disguise and scheming:

> Thus pour the stars down plagues for perjury.
> Can any *face of brass* hold longer out?
> Here stand I, lady, dart thy skill at me,
> Bruise me with scorn, confound me with a flout,
> Thrust thy sharp wit quite through my ignorance…
>   [emphasis added]   (5.2.394-9)

The "face of brass" trope is reworked by Jonson in his opening address to the folio. Consummation is delayed in both instances, for Berowne in the play, by one year and a day, and for the Reader of the First Folio, who is told to proceed straight to the plays rather than fingering the Droeshout and the other paratexts in search of an author. An additional skein of ambiguity underlies the metal brass and recalls Jonson's insight into metallurgy and smithies and the never-ending instability forced upon the audience and their victims by the characters Subtle, an alchemist, and his duplicitous partners Face and Common in *The Alchemist*.

There is a touch of vertigo in Jonson's discreet ten-line poem that opens the First Folio. The ascent is towards what is promised, an unparalleled literary creation represented by the plays themselves, containing the author's wit, juxtaposed with a descent towards the imperfections of the metal copper, the anxieties over the technology of print, and references of earthly mortality and the engraver's strife with nature that ended badly. The author is not to be found in the polarity of the address because he is suspended in the in-between, in purgatory.[34] Despite the travails of scholarship, his release from heaven's antechamber seems as unlikely today as it was in 1623.

The slyness and obfuscation detectable throughout the First Folio Preface are known, if not transparently communicated or fully acknowledged.[35] The handle 'small Latin, less Greek' has launched a thousand monographs, and many other riddles abound…

> … for his wit can no more lie hid, then it could be lost.[36]

> Or blind affection, which doth ne'er advance
>   The truth, but gropes, and urgeth all by chance;[37]

> …he seems to shake a lance,
> As brandished at the eyes of ignorance.[38]

One of the problems with the First Folio Preface is that Jonson draws upon a direct style, except when he does not. That he probably contributed in a major way to writing the letters undersigned by the fellow actors John Heminges and Henry Condell, one to the 'Noble and Incomparable Pair of Brethren' and the other 'To The Great Variety of Readers,' does not clarify the framing effects of the Preface. There is over two hundred years of suggestive commentary regarding these letters, one of which is full of Jonson's style and phrasing.[39] [40]

Classifying the letters as collaborative efforts or solely by Jonson's hand would have seen them into the CWBJ print edition, necessitating an introduction to the First Folio Preface. By omitting the letters from the print edition, the orthodox editors have

managed to side-step a task tantamount to Abraham's fear and trembling. Critically, there was no introduction for his two poetic works either. For its part, the CWBJ plans a second release in 2015 of material for what it calls a Dubia section, an online edition of the few texts which have been spuriously attributed to Jonson. The letter 'To The Great Variety of Readers' will be included, with Donaldson editing, but not the letter to the 'Noble and Incomparable Pair of Brethren.' Judging the most incriminating of the letters as a "text on the margin" and dealing with it at a comfortable distance behind the closed door of Ben Jonson Online (BJO) restricted content is one way of controlling the message. Leaving out the letters represents a startling contrast to current academic thinking, which finds itself possessed with the idea of collaboration. One assumes that appearing unfashionable was a small sacrifice.

Jonson's testimony as a star witness becomes somehow tainted, the footing less sure, if the epistles are admitted into the Jonsonian canon. At risk is a conventional understanding of the Preface. It pushes the discussion beyond rhetorical anomalies and accidental Jonsonian echoes, and raises questions about motivation and intention. Instead of Jonson's direct and indirect styles, CWBJ would have been forced to talk about misdirection. If Heminges and Condell lack the skills to write introductory epistles, how could they have possibly edited the thirty-six plays? Are they really the prime movers of the First Folio project? In short, both the credulity of Jonson and the authority of Heminges and Condell cling precariously to the slippery slopes of the First Folio letters.

We can be sure that a similar restraint would not have applied had Shakespeare been thought to have ghostwritten prefatory letters on behalf of contemporaries.[41]

Jonson held a lowly view of collaboration and actors of the loathed stage.[42] A comparison of the 1616 and the 1623 projects shows the distinct programmes of each, how *Workes* whitewashes the presence of collaboration and the theatre while the First Folio assigns the camaraderie of the fellow actors and the theatre as the primary motifs. The beloved folk heroes of the prefatory narrative are Heminges and Condell, faithful guardians who have, with great pain, allegedly collected the plays "without ambition either of self-profit, or fame: only to keep the memory of so worthy a Friend, & Fellow alive." They are caricatures of course, who could be interpreted as displacements[43] of Mr. Shakespeare himself, although they are more fittingly agents of disarmament, condensed versions of the rude mechanicals from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* where "never any thing can be amiss, when simpleness and duty tender it"(5.1.82-3).

The author presented in the First Folio Preface is a reworking of earlier models. A liberal, yet mindful approach towards the author function in Jonson's *Workes* foreshadows many of the devices to be used to full effect in the First Folio.[44] Jonson consciously organized his original 1616 collection to present an author outside

history, "removing evidence of internal development and authorial biography." He purposely "obscured the circumstances behind some of its texts" and revised "in order to convey an impression of premature maturity in himself as young play-wright."[45]

The biography that can be gleaned from the First Folio Preface is mostly an empty vessel – though the scattered fragments set the imagination on fire – and so all the more vulnerable to the vagaries and protean practices of actors, scholars, biographers and fanatics. When it comes to tracing the arc of Jonson's fame, the story is not unlike the gothic tale of Victor Frankenstein who bestows animation upon lifeless matter, only to succumb to his creation. The decline in Jonson's reputation coincided with the rise in Shakespeare's for "…fame whose uncertainty Jonson had always recognized, had proved to be an erratic friend."[46]

At present there is no complete study of Jonson's after-life. [47] Irony aside, the after-life of Shakespeare, despite an unnatural birth, is well known. Shakespeare is a commercial brand belonging to the world, representing many things, most powerfully though, the relativist values that are the sign of modern, democratic times. What we want to believe about history's man is more important than what is actually not there. It is a comforting story and a significant part of Jonson's legacy and, arguably, his most enduring contribution to the history of letters. The centripetal force that is Shakespeare was always going to be a decisive factor in an assessment of an authoritative collection of Jonson. Though this generation's Jonsonian scholars had promised not to shy away from presenting a more complicated picture of their author, they have failed to deliver on the aspect of Jonson that matters most.

A long time ago the Tribe of Ben metastasized into a professional outfit. Today the purpose and objectives are clear. The tribe supports a sleek business model based on conventional wisdom, an academic assumption that stepping back is inefficient, or worse, a symptom of disease. Advances in knowledge are few and far between yet information processing continues on apace, moving forward in one endless binge. Though the Falstaffian gormandizing has created perverse expectations, the very idea of a member of the Tribe of Ben putting down his six penny bottle of ale and getting out of his tavern chair to get the door is abominable. If only they would stop fingering the boil. If only the intolerable impudence of Freud the Dunce, Twain the Sad, and Whitman the Sordid would cease and desist. If only!

Notes

1.   *Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson* (CWBJ), ed. David Bevington, Martin Butler and Ian Donaldson, 7 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 5:418-419.

2.   The CWBJ's planned second release of material consists of poems that have, at one time or another, been attributed to Jonson; edited sections of the material thought to have been contributed by Jonson to Sir Walter Raleigh's *History of the World*; 'Ben Jonson His Motives', 'To The Great Variety of Readers', and 'Sermones fideles'; and Jonson's purported additions to *The Spanish Tragedy*. The First Folio letter is to be edited by Ian Donaldson. There will also be a series of essays on Jonson's possible involvement in the following plays: *Rollo or The Bloody Brother*; *Guy of Warwick*; *The Widow*; *The London Prodigal*; *The Fair Maid of the West*.

3.   Ian Donaldson, *Ben Jonson, A Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 440.

4.   CWBJ, 1: lxvi.

5.   Donaldson, 8.

6.   Ibid., 41-42.

7.   Ibid., 331.

8.   William Kempe, William Shakespeare and Richard Burbage of the Lord Chamberlain's Men received payment in March 1595 for performances they gave during the previous Christmas season at Whitehall. ("Shakespeare: The Evidence" by Ros Barber https://leanpub.com/shakespeare/read, Section 2.3, Bullet #1).

9   "Print publication seems to have been postponed, possibly in lieu of manuscript presentation copies for influential patrons. Whatever other reasons there may have been for this postponement – restricted playing owing to the plague, disgust over the kind of editions Pembroke complains about in his letter to the Stationers' Company, a glut in the market of printed playbook, or more specifically the great number of copies of 'Shakespeare' playbooks

which remained unsold in the early years of the seventeenth century – the time may well have come when Shakespeare and his fellows projected a collected edition and therefore refrained from publishing in cheap quartos. All things considered, the likelihood is that Shakespeare, late in his career, believed that the publication of his plays had been interrupted, not ended." Lukas Erne, *Shakespeare As Literary Dramatist* 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 138.

10   The anonymity phase consisted of at least seven new plays in four years (1594-1597): Tit., 2H6, 3H6, Rom., R2, R3 and 1H4. *Arden of Faversham* and *Edward III* were published anonymously in 1592 and 1596, respectively. The promotional phase consisted of eight new plays in five years (1598-1603): LLL, MND, MV, 2H4, Ado., H5, Wiv. and Ham. The dormancy phase consisted of four new plays that "scaped" over a 20-year span, with concentrated leaks in 1608-09 of Tro., Lr., and Per. (not to mention Son.), and the publishing of Oth. in 1622 when the Folio project was already underway.

11   There were two separate trends that appear to coincide and reinforce each other. There was the general trend of publishing plays in cheap quartos which accelerated over the 1590s and peaked in the early 1600s. There is also the trend in publishing "Shakespeare" which peaked around 1601, the same year of the Essex rebellion, something that Oxfordians should consider providential. Between 1601 and 1602 there were over twenty Shakespeare titles for sale, with the saturation extending beyond Shakespeare: "No one knew it at the time, but 1600 would be the high-water mark for literary titles in the entire STC era (1475-1640)." Douglas Bruster, "Shakespeare the Stationer," *Shakespeare's Stationers: Studies in Cultural Bibliography,* ed. Marta Straznicky (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012) 119-121.

12   The Quarto of *Troilus and Cressida* exists in two versions, Quarto **a** and Quarto **b,** both published in 1609. The British Library notes that Quarto **b** differs from Quarto **a** only in the title-page and the addition of a single leaf. Quarto **a** title-page identifies the play as "The historie of Troylus and Cresseida" and states "As it was acted by the Kings Majesties servants at the Globe." Quarto **b** title-page identifies the play as "The famous historie of Troylus and Cresseid" with no mention of any performances. The additional leaf of Quarto **b** follows the title-page and is headed "A never writer, to an ever reader. Newes." and informs the reader to "thank fortune for the scape it [the play] hath made amongst you." The additional leaf, sometimes referred to as an advertisement, suggests foremost that Shakespeare publications were under considerable control, making any new cheap publications unlikely or accidental. We can surmise that the restricted publishing agenda was first

instituted in 1604 and formally ended in 1623.

13   "We do not know why Shakespeare sold so few of his Jacobean plays. We can speculate that perhaps a larger collection was planned, or that his financ-es had changed, or that the saturated market for his works lowered what he could get for new titles to a level that made their sale an unattractive proposi-tion." Ibid., 130.

14   Plays printed for the first time in the 1623 folio are: *Tmp., TGV, MM, Err., AYL, Shr., AWW, TN, WT, Jn., 1H6, H8, Cor., Tim., JC, Mac., Ant., Cym.* Of note, *TNK* was first published in quarto format in 1634.

15   W.W. Greg, *The Shakespeare First Folio: Its Bibliographical and Textual History* (Ox-ford: Claredon Press: 1955) 8.

16   William Hazlitt's essay on Shakespeare's fame was first printed in *The Examin-er,* in 1814.

17   "… and if the plague made London revivals uncertain, then perhaps not much benefit could have been derived from early publication, and Shake-speare and his manuscripts may have been mostly in Stratford. Ultimately, however, the exact reasons for the marked decrease in newly published Shakespeare playbooks after 1603 must remain a matter of speculation." Erne, 11.

18   Donaldson, 21.

19   Ibid., 172.

20   Ibid., 164. Coincidently, in a footnote, the CWBJ editors link the dialogue between Mitis and Cordatus of *Every Man Out* (CWBJ, 1: 2.3.242-254) with the other frequent disclaimers in *Poetasters, Volpone, Bartholomew Fair,* and *The Magnetic Lady* where Jonson argues against the practice of connecting real people to the characters in his plays. However, a more sensitive reading of the Mitis and Cordatus' commentary suggests something in the opposite direction, that Jonson is attacking readers who reflexively turn his characters into abstractions where "Nero should mean all emperors… in our Sordid, all farmers," the very thing that Donaldson does when he writes that Sogliardo is a caricature of all the new self-made men who dubiously apply for arms.

21   Ibid., 202.

22   Diana Price, *Shakespeare's Unorthodox Biography: New Evidence of an Authorship Problem* 2nd ed. ([SUB] Greenwood Press 2001; paperback 2013) 66-75.

23   "The type of character involved here we may call by the Greek word alazon, which means impostor, someone who pretends or tries to be something more than he is." Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1957), 39.

24   *The Isle of Dogs* play was likely an open secret and probably resonated throughout the community for years. See CWBJ, 1:101-109.

25   John Roe suggests Jonson's evasiveness is rooted in a desire for peace, which makes "it difficult for the reader to say conclusively where or at whom he may be pointing an incidental finger." See "Style, Versatility, and the Politics of the Epistles," *Ben Jonson and the Politics of Genre*, ed. Cousins and Scott, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 97.

26   First Folio Preface, 'To The Great Variety of Readers' (quote from 1972 Riverside Shakespeare edition).

27   Donaldson, 371. In addition to the Droeshout-Jonson tautology, claims even extend to the portrait's verisimilitude; see Adam Gopnik "The Poet's Hand," *The New Yorker* (Apr. 28, 2014): 40: "We can be certain that the Droeshout engraving looked like Shakespeare because his friend Ben Jonson says that it did, in a dedicatory poem placed right beside it."

28   Leah S. Marcus, *Puzzling Shakespeare: Local Reading and its Discontents* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1988), 30.

29   For detailed discussions on the First Folio preface, see Marcus, 2-43; Price, 179-200; and Katherine Chiljan, *Shakespeare Suppressed* (San Fransisco: Faire Editions, 2011), 137-171. Also undermining the so-called "editors" Heminges and Condell, see Sonia Massai, "Edward Blount, the Herberts and the First Folio," *Shakespespeare's Stationers: Studies in Cultural Bibliography*, ed. Marta Straznicky (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 132-146. Massai's essay is a reworking of an idea advanced by Gary Taylor in his McKenzie lectures at Oxford University in 2006.

30   "One ambiguity appears in the phrase 'hit his face,' which refers to the engraver who cuts the image into the metal plate. However, 'hit' is also a past tense of 'hide.' So the line may also read, 'the engraver has hidden the face of the author.' The author may be hidden, figuratively speaking, behind the

harlequin portrait, not unlike an author who hides behind a made-up name." Price, 182.

31   Walter Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (London: Methuen, 1982), 118. The First Folio syndicate is plagued by the Enobarbus syndrome, undoing what it does, and brings to mind Plato's reactionary defence of orality in the Phaedrus and Seventh Letter. Jonson the writer is almost always backstopped by an oral-based knowledge. Those who knew what they were reading knew it very well because the Jonsonian text (that proliferated predominantly in manuscript copy pre-1700) was simply a supplement to a more fundamental understanding.

32   CWBJ, 5: 637-642.

33   The "face of brass" in *Love's Labour's Lost* exercises a more intimate aspect of the trope. For a more social aspect there is the "brazen Head" in Robert Greene's *The Comical History of Alphonsus, King of Aragon* (circa 1590) featuring the imposter Mohamet, the supreme juggler of a false religion. For the technological aspect, there is the talking metal head in Robert Greene's *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* (circa 1590). For Mohamet see JSTOR, Elie Salem "The Elizabethan Image of Islam," *Studia Islamica*, No. 22 (1965), 43-54. For a discussion of Bacon's automaton, see "The Talking Brass Head as a Symbol of Dangerous Knowledge in Friar Bacon and in Alphonsus, King of Aragon" by Kevin LaGrandeur, *English Studies*, Vol. 80, no. 5 (1999).

34   "The First Folio opens with an implicit promise to communicate an authorial identity, which it instead repeatedly displaces: Shakespeare is somehow there, but nowhere definitively there." Marcus, 20.

35   "Rather than making plain what appears obscure, however, Ben Jonson's short poem unsettles what seems direct. Shakespeare, the verses tell us, is not to be found after all in the compelling image opposite. The poem undermines the visual power of the portrait by insisting on it as something constructed and put there." Marcus, 18. "If anything, they [readers] will be subjected to special frustration, since the title page refuses to yield a clear message about the author." Marcus, 22.

36   First Folio Preface, 'To The Great Variety of Readers' (quote from 1972 Riverside Shakespeare edition).

37   First Folio Preface, Jonson's eulogy. See CWBJ, 5: 638-642.

38   First Folio Preface, Jonson's eulogy. See CWBJ, 5:638-642.

39   See Donaldson, 371. When he writes that "Part of this address is indisput-
        ably the work of Heminges and Condell themselves . . .," is Donaldson not
        admitting that Jonson indisputably wrote other parts?

40   The Jonsonian echoes include the Induction to *Bartholomew Fair*, the preface
        to *The Alchemist*, the epigram "To My Bookseller" and his *Discoveries*. See
        Greg, 26-7; Chiljan, 145-149; George Steevens, Boswell's Malone (Third
        Variorum, 1821), 2:663; Joseph Loewenstein, *Possessive Authorship* (Cambridge
        and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 175; Debora K. Shuger,
        Claude J. Summers and Ted-Larry Pebworth, *Ben Jonson Revisited* (Twayne
        Publishers, 1999), 219.

41   Face-to-face collaboration between the 51-year-old poet in Ben Jonson, the
        67-year-old grocer in John Heminges, and the 55-year-old property owner in
        Henry Condell seems highly implausible. If it must be collaboration, the task
        is most likely to have been shared between Jonson and Blount or another
        as yet unidentified agent inside the Sidney-Herbert-Montgomery patronage
        network. Whoever the collaborator was, the omission of "To The Great Va-
        riety" from the CWBJ print edition reinforces a scholarly predilection to not
        formally recognize Jonson's authority behind the project and curtail any addi-
        tional probing into the messiness that is the First Folio Preface. Attenuating
        Jonson's role in the First Folio also encourages the Heminges and Condell
        narrative to stand uncontested. Unacknowledged plays, collaborative efforts
        and lost works receive full, respectful attention in the CWBJ. Moreover, an
        unstable work not authored by Jonson is included in the CWBJ in volume
        5, *Informations to William Drummond of Hawthornden*; the copy-text for *Informa-
        tions* is not an autograph or authorial manuscript copy but a scribal transcript
        made by antiquary Sir Robert Sibbald in the eighteenth century.

42   Donaldson, 99-100 and 235-237; David Riggs, *Ben Jonson: A Life*. (Cambridge:
        Harvard University Press, 1989), 245. Ben Jonson's "Ode: To Himself" is
        popularly cited: "Come, leave the loathed stage / And the more loathsome
        age,…" CWBJ, 6:310.

43   "To speak of the restored Folio editions as 'absolute in their numbers' was
        not to speak the argot of the theatre, but that of the humanist philology,
        which had long been appropriated by the book trade. If Heminges and
        Condell could think in these terms about Shakespearean texts, so, too, could
        Shakespeare… ." Loewenstein, 100-101.

44   "The men who prepared the folio for the press (and Jonson may well have
        been one of them) remade Shakespeare in Jonson's image." Riggs, 276.

45   CWBJ, 1: Ixiv-Ixviii

46   Donaldson, 430.

47   Donaldson, 514.
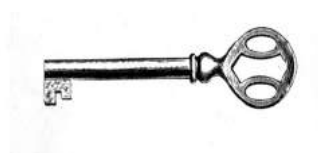
Knowledge Ill-Inhabited

The Subjugation of Post-Stratfordian Scholarship in Academic Libraries

by Michael Dudley

> [Discourses] work to define and to enable, and also to silence and to exclude by limiting and restricting authorities to some groups and not others, endorsing a certain common sense, but making other modes of categorizing and judging meaningless, impractical, inadequate or otherwise disqualified.
>
> Jennifer Milliken[1]

> The library . . . seeks to institutionalize discursive formations through formal or idiosyncratic systems of cataloging and indexing. The arrangements of statements made possible by such systems provide those spaces in which new statements can be placed, located, and given meaning.
>
> Gary Radford[2]

For all his centrality to Western culture in general and liberal arts education in particular, William Shakespeare the author is essentially a taboo subject in most universities. This is not to say that his works are not still pored over in English literature classrooms – although it appears there are fewer such required courses than there once were (according to the American Council of Trustees and Alumni). Rather, it is the poet-playwright himself who has been effectively cordoned off from scholarly investigation. While there are digitally-enhanced stylometric studies in the humanities to determine the authorship of certain Shakespearean works and passages within them, and claims made for various putative collaborators (Vickers 2011), these efforts are all premised on the traditional assumption that there is no question as to the identity of William Shakespeare the author, that he was a resident of Stratford-upon-Avon, and that he lived between 1564 and 1616.

The tide of dissent against this view – that "Shake-Speare" was a pseudonym and the traditional biography is little more than a myth that contributes nothing to our understanding of the works – has grown over the past 170 years largely because of the work of dedicated amateurs and is now reaching into the academy. For example, York University in Toronto, Ontario has offered a 4th-year course on the debate

over the authorship of the Shakespeare plays, while the world's first PhD recognizing Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford as Shakespeare was awarded in 2001 to Roger Stritmatter by the University of Massachusetts in Amherst. In 2007 Brunel University in London initiated a (short-lived) MA program in Shakespeare Authorship Studies. In 2013, the Theatre departments of both York University and the University of Guelph co-hosted the Toronto Shakespeare Authorship Conference, entitled *Shakespeare and the Living Theatre,* focusing on the contemporary theatrical history of de Vere's authorship and production of the Shakespeare plays.

These rare and noteworthy exceptions aside however, critical discourse and scholarship about the identity of Shakespeare cannot be characterized as constituting an actual *debate* within the academy. The proposition that "Shake-Speare" was most likely a pseudonym used by Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford is, almost without exception, barred from the curriculum. The alternative – conceding and coming to terms with centuries of scholarship representing uncounted thousands of books and articles being written about the wrong person – is unthinkable. All such evidence is rationalized and dismissed, its proponents ridiculed and demonized, while ensuring that adherents to the true faith are rewarded with advanced degrees, teaching positions and tenure (Chiljan, Stritmatter).

To support this sanctioned, orthodox scholarship, university libraries have collected tens of thousands of monographs and journals, the vast majority of which assume the Man from Stratford was actually the author of the plays and poems: A quick search in the WorldCat global library catalogue for the Library of Congress Subject Heading *Shakespeare, William - 1564-1616* yields 51,931 individual books, at least 1,347 of which are biographies.

Given the scale and significance of this publishing and collection-building and the controversies which have dogged the study of Shakespeare since the publication of Delia Bacon's *The Philosophy of the Plays of Shakspere Unfolded* in 1857, it would seem reasonable that these collections and their situation in the academic library

---

With an interdisciplinary academic background in theatre, library science and city planning, **Michael Dudley** *is a librarian at the University of Winnipeg in Manitoba, Canada where he has collection and instruction responsibilities in Indigenous studies, theatre, film, history, and politics. His previous publications include two articles for* Brief Chronicles*, one of which adopts a postcolonial lens to deconstruct the ideology of the "natural genius" of Shakespeare to reveal a paragon of Western exceptionalism and chauvinism* (BC 5)*, as well as a book review essay* (BC 6) *utilizing concepts in the philosophy of technology to critique the deliberately constrained Stratfordian approaches taken in the 2014 publication* Shakespeare and the Digital World. *He edited the American Library Association book* Public Libraries and Resilient Cities (2012) *and has authored numerous encyclopedia entries, online essays and book reviews.*

should have been subject to some reflection, if not investigation. As far as may be determined, however, the scholarly library literature is silent on the subject (and bibliographic implications) of what Diana Price (2001) refers to as William Shakespeare's "unorthodox biography." Being ostensibly dedicated to foundational common knowledge, his biographies are apparently deemed unproblematic and their collection, classification and description prompt no concerns over controversy, bias, or the marginalization of opposing views.

This research suggests there is bias in academic library collections related to the Shakespeare Authorship Question (SAQ) as well as in the ways they are organized, with a pronounced imbalance evident against anti-Stratfordian and Oxfordian scholarship. Holdings in Canadian university libraries were examined to determine the extent to which such titles published since 2000 are available in the country's universities, revealing three times as much recent traditional, Stratfordian literature as dissenting views. These findings will be discussed in terms of their likely causes – if they are evidence of deliberate bias on the part of library selectors, or are the result of structural deficiencies. More critically, we shall consider how these materials are made accessible in libraries and online library catalogues, and how they are described and classified, using schemes heavily criticized in the literature for their universalizing bias against all manner of marginalized bodies of knowledge (e.g., Berman 1971/1993, Olson 1998, 2002). In the field of library and information science, these processes are known broadly as *knowledge organization* or KO, for the purposes of *information retrieval* or IR.

The literature under examination is popularly referred to as *anti-Stratfordian* or, pejoratively, as *anti-Shakespearean* (e.g., Edmonson and Wells) in the mainstream media, or sometimes as *Oxfordian*. The preferred term in this paper for describing this literature will be *post-Stratfordian* to encompass both skeptical but non-partisan works debunking the traditional attribution to the Man from Stratford, as well as those setting out the case for Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford.[3]

Given the invisibility of Shakespeare's problematic biography in the library literature, we shall need to rely on critiques drawn from very different (yet equally contested) arenas such as terrorism studies in order to understand the place of post-Stratfordian studies in the academic library. At the same time, the fact that the publishing output from post-Stratfordian authors has been so robust offers us a timely sample from which useful comparisons may be made, and analysis undertaken.

The rationale for this approach is four-fold. Academic library collections are intended to support curricula, are often based on decisions made by faculty members themselves, and therefore correspond in large part to what is taught (Knightly 1975), so they should be indicative of the dominance of Stratfordian orthodoxy. Secondly, we should be able to gain an understanding of the structural nature of the bias

against certain literatures. Thirdly, we will be able to explore the extent to which the KO and IR tools of librarianship have contributed to the subjugation of post-Stratfordian knowledges and, hence, their absence in the classroom. Finally, and as a matter of pragmatism, the prospect of thousands of books potentially being rendered essentially obsolete by the official recognition of Oxford as Shakespeare has profound implications for both public and university libraries – implications of which the library profession is quite unaware.

This analysis relies in part on the modest but well-established and significant body of library literature going back to the late 1960s critiquing the profession's so-called neutrality and impartiality, and pointing out that these vaunted principles in fact disguise and facilitate a little-recognized tendency to neglect, misrepresent, or omit topics and constituencies falling outside the mainstream (e.g., Berman 1971/1993, Olson 1998, 2002). Hjorland (2008a, 2008b) implicates the positivist tradition that sees library knowledge organization schemes as passive, universalizing reflections of an external reality. Given this assumption, the library's power to constitute and reify knowledge through collection-building and schemes of indexing and classification is considerable, and, in the academic setting where collections are intended to support curricula and pedagogy, contributes significantly to determining what is taught and what domains are viewed as suitable avenues for research (Manoff).

This paper proposes that, more than being merely suppressed or neglected or, as some would have it, the victim of some sort of conspiracy (Rubie 87), post-Stratfordian discourse falls well within the parameters of what Michel Foucault called *subjugated knowledge,* or "historical contents that have been buried and disguised" by formal, mainstream scholarship (1980, 81), and which is now fuelling an *insurrection*. The purpose of this paper is not, therefore, to offer further explanations for the suppression of post-Stratfordian knowledge, but rather to situate its institutionalized subjugation within the structures of knowledge creation, dissemination, and representation.

I shall be arguing that post-Stratfordian knowledge is subjugated in the academy; that this subjugation is not only a matter of an exclusive academic culture but, as my empirical findings will show, implicates the processes and knowledge organization structures of the academic library as well.

Subjugated Scholarship: Lessons from Terrorism Studies

The question of the identity of William Shakespeare is not a fully-developed debate in the academy because it has not been allowed to become one. The questions, theories, research, and discourses of post-Stratfordian scholars are almost entirely and resolutely ignored, excluded and denied by the rest of academy, the members of which inevitably mock this work as the purview of amateurs. As Katherine Chiljan

has it, Shakespeare has been suppressed:

> The Shakespeare professor – with few exceptions – is not interested in fol-
> lowing the evidence about Shakespeare [and] apparently prefers fantasy and
> ridicule rather than investigation…He can get away with this…because he
> is considered the expert. It is his opinion and his work that is sought from
> book publishers, academic journals and the media. Thus the problem gets
> perpetuated (335).

This exclusion is, to some extent, consistent with the dominance of "normal sci-
ence" paradigms as suggested by Thomas Kuhn (1962/2012), one manifest in other
academic controversies, such as Alfred Wegener's long-pilloried theory that the con-
tinents moved (Stewart). Yet, there appears to be more at work in the suppression of
post-Stratfordian research than conventional explanations would warrant, such as the
desire to maintain academic reputations, or to adhere to hallowed traditions. Indeed,
the motivations may be more subtle and ideological. Psychoanalyst and Oxford-
ian Richard Waugaman (2012) describes a number of psychological dimensions to
Stratfordianism, including projecting inadequacies onto opponents, as well as envy
over the robustness of the biographical evidence for the skeptics' leading candidate,
Edward de Vere. In a previous publication, I also proposed that the unrecognized
legacy of imperial and colonial ideologies surrounding the "National Poet" as a
paragon of the "genius of The West" prevents the application of critical theory to
Shakespearean biography, thus forestalling the dethroning of the traditional Bard
(Dudley).

Whatever reasons motivate Shakespeare scholars individually or collectively to ex-
clude skeptical voices, they clearly dominate mainstream scholarship and publishing,
illustrating the intersections between power and the construction of knowledge.
French philosopher Michel Foucault, in a series of lectures and interviews gathered
in the book *Knowledge/Power,* explored these relationships, observing that certain bod-
ies of knowledge can become subjugated by more powerful actors:

> By 'subjugated knowledges' I mean two things. On the one hand, I am refer-
> ring to historical contents that have been buried and disguised in a functional
> coherence or formal systemization. . . . By 'subjugated knowledges' one
> should understand something else . . . namely a whole set of knowledges that
> have been disqualified as inadequate to the task or insufficiently elaborated;
> naïve knowledges, located low down on the hierarchy, beneath the required
> level of cognition or scientificity. I also believe that it is through the re-emer-
> gence of these low-ranking knowledges, these unqualified, even directly
> disqualified knowledges . . . a differential knowledge incapable of unanimity
> and which owes its force solely to the harshness with which it is opposed by

everything surrounding it – that criticism performs its work (1980, 81-2).

In employing the terms *naïve* and *below the required level of scientificity,* Foucault was not himself being pejorative, only situating the ways in which certain discourses are routinely disqualified by dominant ones, his examples being the voices of front-line health care practitioners and those with the lived experience of being institutionalized. While Foucault did not develop or elaborate this theory further himself, the notion of subjugated knowledge has been applied to repressed knowledge domains in a number of diverse professional disciplines, including those of oppressed peoples in social work (Hartman); preventative, social and feminist approaches to health in nursing (Gilbert); experiential learning in adult education (Brookfield); and local, grassroots knowledge of practitioners from the global South in the use of sports in international development (Nicholls et al.).

The disciplinary application of this lens with perhaps the most applicability to the Shakespeare Authorship Question was that undertaken by Richard Jackson, whose systematic analysis within his field of terrorism studies (2012) offers a near-ideal model for situating post-Stratfordian biography. According to Jackson, the field of terrorism studies is dominated by an elite body of experts, many affiliated with think tanks situated within the political power structure, whose narrowly-defined conception of their field – that only non-state actors commit terrorism, thus ignoring the actions of states, while aggressively resisting the search for structural, root causes of radicalism in poverty and repression – accords conveniently with the interests of those in power. The dissenting views of those with alternative, lived experiences of terrorism – peacemakers, journalists, victims of conflict, and former terrorists themselves – are actively shut out of mainstream discourse and are rarely called upon by the media "and thereby subjugated – for lacking in scholarly 'objectivity' or displaying the necessary standards of social science scholarship" (16). These alternative perspectives, while known to the experts, remain *unknowable* because of the exclusive manner in which discourses are constructed:

> An important initial step towards understanding knowledge subjugation . . . is to consider how the field is constituted and functions as a discourse. That is, every discourse 'allows certain things to be said and impedes or prevents other things from being said' (Purvis and Hunt 1993, p. 485), in large part, because 'discourses, by way of hegemonic closures, fix meanings in particular ways and, thus, exclude all other meaning potentials' (Jorgensen and Phillips 2002, p. 186). From this perspective, the subjugated knowledge described above represents the unsayable within the dominant . . . discourse; these subjugated knowledges represent those alternative meaning potentials which have been closed off by the closures inherent to the discourse…In other words, it is an internal functional necessity that a discourse and its authorized 'experts' will suppress and exclude knowledge and meaning which would

challenge the proper objects, boundaries and authorized speakers of the field (16).

Following the work of Reid (1993), Jackson describes this elite as an *invisible college* working within a "closed, circular and static system of information and investigation, which tends to accept dominant myths" as given, often without any empirical evidence (17). Particular energy is devoted to what he calls "taboo-enforcing practices" against certain research directions as a means of maintaining ontological enclosure (18-19), the ritual invocation of which becomes internalized, such that scholars practice not just self-governance, but self-subjugation. So committed are they to their shared belief system that, even in the face of its apparent inadequacy, they are able to maintain what Zulaika (2009) calls "a passion for ignorance" (19-20).

What particularly concerns Jackson is that when a discipline is dominated in this way, and its admissible research domains so strictly prescribed, the field itself is destabilized as certain knowledges are simultaneously known and unknown leading inevitably to ontological contradictions which are nonetheless tolerated, while "periodic eruptions of subjugated knowledge that destabilizes the discourse" are not, requiring "meanings [to be] re-sutured and the discourse re-stabilized" (20):

> I employ the term 'unknown' to mean that certain knowledge claims rooted in theoretical or empirical research remain unacknowledged in the scholarship or texts of the field. Such work is neither mentioned nor systematically engaged with, and if it is mentioned, it is dismissed as inappropriate, naïve, or irrelevant. By contrast, what is 'known' is acknowledged**,** engaged with and referenced, and therefore, legitimized (25).

While an in-depth search for parallels in the respective discourses between Shakespeare studies and terrorism studies as articulated by Jackson is beyond the scope of this paper, a few observations are warranted. Using this model, we can see that mainstream Shakespeare scholarship is dominated by a particular epistemic community – an invisible college situated close to powerful institutions within the field, including the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust and the Folger Shakespeare Library – whose mutual interests are maintained by the rigid imposition of ontological enclosures, fixed meanings, and stubborn mythologies which routinely fail to satisfy the demands of evidence. This epistemic community enforces taboos so effectively that its members self-subjugate by refusing to consider proscribed perspectives which would address otherwise inexplicable problems (e.g., the purpose and subjects of the Sonnets), while instead expressing a passion for ignorance – evident in the enthusiastic and seemingly inexhaustible embrace by Shakespeare's would-be biographers of a *tabula rasa* Bard devoid of relevant life experience. Because these revered myths are incompatible with internal and external evidence, there are, inevitably, irreconcilable contradictions in the discourse, e.g., the most erudite literature in English – the

pinnacle of Western culture – bears no sign of an advanced education on the part of its supposed author.[4] Constant efforts are therefore required to re-stabilize the discourse, a task growing increasingly difficult with the growing popularity of the "unknown knowns" of post-Stratfordianism, which are only mentioned to be dismissed as naïve.

Significantly for our purposes, Jackson echoes Katherine Chiljan in finding the major locus of this knowledge subjugation in the academy, in determining what is taught, in what contexts and with which texts, and in ensuring that only those within the approved epistemic community are invited to conferences and publish in the discipline's key journals (17-18). As such, the production, availability, and pedagogical use of monographs and journal literature in the field becomes essential in setting and enforcing these ontological enclosures, thereby ensuring their reproduction in the next generation of scholars. Unstated but implied in Jackson's analysis is the essential but underappreciated role of academic libraries in acquiring and organizing the literature required to support and facilitate sanctioned curricula and scholarship – and, in the process, institutionalizing this knowledge-subjugating function.

Libraries Subjugating Knowledge

As the venerable "backbone" or "heart" of the academy, the university library holds the fundamentally important role of supporting teaching and research through the collection of books, journals, and other scholarly outputs such as theses and dissertations, and in organizing them through classification and the assignment of subject headings to provide accurate, replicable, and intuitive access to them. In addition to being guided by a professional Code of Ethics (ALA 1939/2008), and principles of Diversity in Collection Development (ALA 1982/2014), academic libraries are also ostensibly committed to the American Library Association's "Intellectual Freedom Principles for Academic Libraries" (2000) which states that:

> The development of library collections in support of an institution's instruction and research programs should transcend the personal values of the selector. In the interests of research and learning, it is essential that collections contain materials representing a variety of perspectives on subjects that may be considered controversial (quoted in Jones 71).

As Barbara M. Jones points out, there is in the American context at least a little-appreciated difference between public and private universities, the latter of which may intentionally reject these principles and retain greater control over their libraries' collections (69). Even so, library collection-building in general has been subject to some controversy and accusations of bias, omission, and neglect. There is a modest but vigorous and significant body of critical library literature that argues that, under the guise of neutrality and impartiality, (and owing in part to selectors' own biases,

and other psychological factors [Quinn]), libraries have in fact failed to collect whole genres or categories of materials, (Berman 2001), or, by purchasing primarily from major publishers representing mainstream perspectives, passively neglect or marginalize certain topics and constituencies (Warner). Even if they are collected, materials deemed controversial or outside of the mainstream may be classified and described according to prescriptive and normative systems, often using prejudicial and pejorative language that "both reflect and create opinion" (Guimarães and Martinez-Avila, 22). These are biases in collections and cataloging, and, as will be shown below, have surely contributed to marginalizing the Shakespeare Authorship Question.

Library collections represent the cumulative product of a wide range of processes reaching from the author, through the publishing industry's agents, houses, and marketers to reviewing journals to vendors to the selecting librarian, all of which are subject to external market forces, political decision making, and the vagaries of socio-psychological factors. For this reason – and owing to the quite varied range of controversial topics investigated – it has proven difficult to establish one particular, dominant factor in the creation of biased library collections. To cite a few examples, the literature suggests that some form of inside censorship (Berman 2001) may be a factor in the failure to collect adequately in such diverse areas as African studies (Warner), graphic novels and comic books (Toren), LGBT materials (Sweetland and Christensen), evangelical Christianity (Ingolfsland), small publisher political journals (Dilevko and Grewal), multi-ethnic materials (Sykes), and pro-life titles (Harmeyer). As this brief list suggests, areas of potential bias can cross the political spectrum; as well there is a great deal of debate in the literature concerning the methods employed to reach such conclusions, and what criteria should be used to identify "unbalanced" collections (Veeh).

Market bias, for example, would occur in cases in which publishers are unwilling to take risks on new authors, or ideas. Or, if such works are published, they are not given wide distribution. As the past president of the American Library Association Nancy Kranich points out, in their quest for profitability in an increasingly challenging marketplace, major publishers tend to prefer authors and titles with proven audiences, while rejecting those with potentially critical cutting edge viewpoints on important issues, leaving authors little choice but to seek out small, independent alternative presses (Kranich). The difficulty for libraries is that such houses often fall outside the traditional distribution channels including major reviewing journals – the number of reviews and notices in trade journals being positively associated with library purchases (Sweetland and Christensen). Kranich argues that building truly balanced collections requires libraries to actively seek out these alternative publishers (Kranich 1999). Quinn (2012) however suggests that there may be significant psychological factors that lead to biases against unconventional publications. While acknowledging that "the ideal of the value-neutral collection is a myth" (282) he notes that:

> Individuals not only exhibit a bias toward positive information but are also biased toward normative information. This is information that conforms to rules, standards, customs, practices, and expectations of one's social group…. That minority behavior, deviant behavior, social taboos, and esoteric practices and ideologies strike the selector as strange or inappropriate may serve as an indicator of bias on the selector's part (287).

We should note that collection decisions are not entirely in the hands of selecting librarians, but may be driven by faculty members, or by students themselves through emerging patron-driven acquisitions (PDA), in which click-throughs in pre-packaged e-book collections trigger purchases. In the case of the former, Lee (1988) questions the extent to which the ideological biases of faculty members – who are bound by none of the ethical principles expected of librarians – will resist excluding books and journals contrary to their own disciplinary viewpoints. The PDA model, according to Sens and Fonseca (2013), is similarly subject to an inherent conflict of interest, and one not consistent with that of the librarian: that search results will be programmed to highlight backlist titles to boost commercial publishers' profits, de-emphasizing scholarly publishers in the process (363).

A tendency towards normativity can also result from the economics of collection development, particularly the use of pre-packaged approval plans. Libraries create these plans by establishing profiles of their universities' collection and curricular needs with a corporate vendor, as well as their preferred publishers, formats and price ranges, and then automatically receive only those titles corresponding with that profile. The economies of scale and deep discounts facilitated by approval plans are popular with libraries on limited budgets but inevitably favor major, well-known publishers at the expense of smaller, alternative presses, with the result that libraries are increasingly coming under fire for having homogenized collections representing only "a safe middle range of opinion…represent[ing] a consensus status quo" (Dilevko 680). Critics argue this corporate-friendly homogenization contradicts the library's core values: Jeff Lilburn (2003) asks how "can current library policies and practices be characterized as 'neutral' if our collections simply reproduce the privileges already enjoyed by established and powerful media conglomerates in every other area of our society?" (p. 30), while Sanford Berman states that libraries' "failure to select whole categories or genres of material" means that "[they] become willing accomplices in the homogenization and commodification of culture and thought" (Berman 2001, 7).

As Warner (2005) notes, the issue of bias in libraries presents a "complex picture" (184), a full explication of which is beyond the scope of the present paper. We should stress however that, whatever its causes, the overwhelming presence of the mainstream side of an academic debate – and the corresponding absence of any marginalized dissent – represents a significant positioning on the part of the institu-

tion as to the nature of legitimate and non-legitimate bodies of knowledge As MIT librarian Marlene Manoff observes,

> [W]e need to acknowledge the kind of delegitimizing functions libraries perform in their exclusion of certain kinds of materials. . . . Academic libraries, as institutions of intellectual authority, confer symbolic status on those artifacts they choose to acquire and, implicitly at least, deny it to those they do not. Moreover, libraries, like universities, help to define what constitutes knowledge, i.e., what gets into libraries, and what are legitimate areas of study i.e., those that research libraries provide the materials to investigate. Especially in disciplines in the humanities, library research collections often limit possible areas of investigation (Manoff 4, 6).

Ironically (and perhaps understandably), this normative, delegitimizing function can also be bound up in a defensive liberal reaction against the spectre of America's culture wars over the purpose and future of the academy, as exemplified in the so-called *Academic Bill of Rights* (or ABOR) written and promoted by the right-wing David Horowitz Freedom Center and its offshoot, Students for Academic Freedom. While ostensibly espousing and defending pluralism and diversity, the Bill is seen by its many critics as an assault against both critical pedagogy and modern reason itself, being a veiled means to promote "intelligent design" and other conservative priorities in the classroom (Giroux 2006; Beitko et al. 2005). Among the many regrettable consequences of such a toxically volatile public sphere is that it encourages liberal institutions and observers to fallaciously conflate a number of unrelated but marginalized views and theories – some of which are, indeed, despicable. For example, David Prosser, director of Communications for the Stratford Festival in Ontario, has publicly compared the Authorship Question to Holocaust denial (McNeil). Even Barbara M. Jones, one of the American library professions' most outspoken leaders on the issue of intellectual freedom, subtly conflated these controversies with the Shakespeare Authorship Question in her 2009 book *Protecting Intellectual Freedom in Your Academic Library*, remarking,

> The ABOR . . . assumes that all knowledge is uncertain, when in fact some discoveries have been accepted by broad consensus in the scholarly community – for example, that certain scholarship about Shakespeare is better researched and more fundamental than other scholarship (22).

Libraries depend on such scholarly consensus to impose universalized certainty over what constitutes knowledge in the form of classification and cataloguing: the disciplinary assignment and placement of books in three-dimensional space within the library, as well as the controlled vocabulary (subject headings) used to describe it in the library catalogue. The institution dominating this enterprise in academic and public libraries is The Library of Congress, in the form of its Classification system

(1897) and its Subject Headings (LCSH). The former is the Library of Congress's attempt to structure all human knowledge according to disciplines (regardless of what is published), while the latter is based on "literary warrant" (actual publishing) and which, while also dating to the late 1890s, has undergone periodic revisions since.

Widely adopted worldwide, these Library of Congress schemes have been utilized by scholars for nearly 120 years. However, beginning in the 1960s (and corresponding with the social and political upheavals of the era) they have been subject to considerable criticism for their overwhelmingly Euro- and Christian-centric nature, as well as for many examples of sexism, heterosexism, racism, and American exceptionalism, and for their use of pejorative language to describe, exclude or misrepresent marginalized knowledge domains (Berman 1971/1993, Olson 1998, 2002). As Hope Olson (1998) argues,

> The result of these factors is classification, which might be seen as…concentric circles of degrees of representation quality…a few core concepts best represented, a middle ground adequately represented, and a large periphery of poorly represented marginal concepts with some concepts outside of the limits (236).

In accordance with libraries' long-standing value of neutrality, their classification and cataloguing schemes are created with a view to objectivity and avoiding bias. Yet, as A.C. Foskett, one of the Library of Congress' earliest critics pointed out, they instead "reflect both the prejudices of its time and those of its author" (117). Indeed, as the literature argues, it is this very pursuit of objectivity that results in systemic normative biases (Olson and Schlegl 2001). As Guimarães and Martinez-Avila observe, "the prescriptive intention of neutrality and universality in the pursuit of a 'better' retrieval process" is the problem, not bias per se, which will inevitably exist in any system (24). However, as Olson and Schlegl point out in their 1999 systematic analysis of the literature, marginalized topics will inevitably be treated within a universalizing system as either

- an exception to the presumed norm
- physically ghettoized from materials with which they should be associated
- depicted with an inappropriate structure that misrepresents the field
- assigned biased terminology, often with pejorative overtones
- omitted altogether.

These findings are significant and as we shall see, apply in all respects to the Shakespeare Authorship Question.

With the ability of online catalogues to discover keywords throughout a given record, there are arguments that perhaps formalized subject headings have outlived their usefulness, that they are no longer needed. On the contrary, critics contend that

subject headings are more important than ever, because the alternative presumes users will always know or guess the necessary terms (and combinations) on their own (Mann 53). Berman (2013) concurs, noting that without an intuitive subject heading, unless the desired term actually appears in the title, it may not be discoverable at all.

Given the potency of what Olson (2002) calls "the power to name" we should understand that library classification and subject headings have tremendous potential to contribute to marginalization in many fields of study. As Guimarães and Martinez-Avila note,

> Library schemes both reflect and create opinion at the same time; they… shape reality. It is well known that a very effective way to eradicate a certain group or a people from History is by in no way naming it. An effective way to defame a thing and put an end to its aspirations is to change its meaning to the worst possible one or to place it in the wrong context. An effective way to ridicule and isolate someone is by pointing her/him out as abnormal (deviating from the norm) and to exile him/her away from the peaceful and anonymous norm (standard). And, most probably, all these biases were introduced with the unconscious or intentional purpose of reinforcing the power discourses and the status quo (22).

With a foundation in these structural biases in place, we now turn to an examination of the extent to which they may contribute in academic libraries to the marginalization of the Shakespeare Authorship Question.

Methods

To determine how well post-Stratfordian scholarship is being physically and conceptually represented in academic libraries I selected twelve titles published since 2000 that either question the traditional attribution of the plays and poems to William Shakspere of Stratford-upon-Avon, or else argue for the candidacy of Edward de Vere, (classed as *post-Stratfordian*), and compared their presence in Canadian university libraries with another twelve works of standard Shakespeare biography, or those that seek to debunk the skeptics and thereby affirm the tradition (classed as *Stratfordian*).

This research was conducted using WorldCat, the global cooperative, networked catalogue operated by OCLC (Online Computer Library Centre, Inc.), and which allows users to locate items at public and academic libraries worldwide. These searches enabled comparisons to be made between holdings of the two broad categories, as well as between the university libraries themselves.

The analysis was based on publishing, not institutions; rather than investigating the holdings of all of Canada's 98 university libraries to see which monographs they held, I was instead concerned with where these specific books on Shakespeare were

owned. Only university libraries were included in the survey; holdings in technical and religious colleges were excluded. All told, 59 university libraries were found to hold the selected titles in both categories.

The availability of these books was also considered in terms of their respective publishing venues (e.g., large, academic or independent publishers), and, related to this, their treatment by the major library collection development tools: these included YBP Library Services,[5] the review magazines *Choice: Current Reviews for Academic Libraries* and *Kirkus*. As a bookseller working directly with academic libraries, YBP provides bibliographic and ordering information, so is a primary source for selecting librarians. *Choice* was included in the study as its audience is also academic libraries, being a publication of the Association of College and Research Libraries [ACRL] (a division of the American Library Association [ALA]). *Kirkus,* a publishing industry mainstay since 1933, is a professional book reviewing service, meaning that publishers and, since 2005, self-published authors, must pay a fee to have their work reviewed. Finally – and for good measure – *Book Review Index* was consulted to see if the titles were listed, having been reviewed in these two sources but in other venues as well.

The Post-Stratfordian Titles

examined (in alphabetical order by author) were:

Shakespeare by Another Name (2005), Anderson, Mark

Shakespeare's Lost Kingdom (2010), Beauclerk, Charles

Shakespeare Suppressed (2011), Chiljan, Katherine

Dating Shakespeare's Plays (2010), Gilvary, Kevin

Shakespeare and His Authors (2010), Leahy, William (ed.)

Great Oxford: Essays on the Life and Work of Edward De Vere (2004),
     Malim, Richard (ed.)

The Earl of Oxford and the Making of "Shakespeare" (2011), Malim, Richard

Shakespeare's Unorthodox Biography: New Evidence of an Authorship Problem (2000),
     Price, Diana

The Shakespeare Guide To Italy: Retracing the Bard's Unknown Travels (2011), Roe, Richard

Shakespeare Beyond Doubt? Exposing an Industry in Denial (2013), Shahan, John and
     Alexander Waugh (eds.)

On the Date, Sources and Design of Shakespeare's the Tempest (2013) Stritmatter, Roger and
          Lynne Kositsky

The Monument (2005), Whittemore, Hank

The Stratfordian Titles

examined in alphabetical order by author were:

Shadowplay: The Hidden Beliefs and Coded Politics of William Shakespeare (2006),
          Asquith, Clare

Shakespeare: The Biography (2006), Ackroyd, Peter

Soul of the Age: A Biography of the Mind of William Shakespeare (2009), Bate, Jonathan

Shakespeare Beyond Doubt: Evidence, Argument, Controversy (2013), Edmondson, Paul and
          Stanley Wells (eds.)

The Truth About William Shakespeare: Fact, Fiction and Modern Biographies (2012),
          Ellis, David

Will in the World: How Shakespeare Became Shakespeare (2005), Greenblatt, Stephen

Nine Lives of William Shakespeare (2011), Holderness, Graham

The Quest for Shakespeare (2008), Pearce, Joseph

The Life of William Shakespeare: A Critical Biography (2012), Potter, Lois

1599: A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare (2005), Shapiro, James

Contested Will: Who Wrote Shakespeare? (2010), Shapiro, James

Shakespeare Unbound : Decoding a Hidden Life (2007), Weis, René

Finally, the Library of Congress Classification and Subject Headings assigned to the post-Stratfordian books were analyzed to assess their adequacy in organizing, and therefore providing researcher access to, this scholarship.

It should be stressed that these titles were not selected based on pre-existing or external criteria, nor were they vetted by consulted experts as being the most reputable in the field. Neither were they chosen for the frequency of their citation in the scholarly literature, or for being the best-selling. All of these might have been valid approaches. Rather – and consistent with of the paper's institutional and professional contexts – I exercised the librarian's prerogative in selecting for representativeness

in terms of portraying the major themes in the debate over the identity of Shakespeare. This approach facilitated the inclusion of controversial perspectives within both bodies of literature, such as Shakespeare's perceived Catholic sympathies as interpreted by Stratfordians (e.g. *Shadowplay, The Quest for Shakespeare*), and the divisive Oxfordian debate over the theory that Henry Wriothesley, 3rd Earl of Southampton, was the son of Oxford and Queen Elizabeth I (*Shakespeare's Lost Kingdom*, *The Monument*). Readers may disagree with these choices, but in the context of librarianship the tenets of intellectual freedom would argue for the right of students to discover these books and reach their own conclusions about these controversies.

Because the purpose of the research was to determine the extent to which post-2000 post-Stratfordian literature is available in academic libraries, the presence of this literature in general was not assessed. As such, seminal works such as J. Thomas Looney's *Shakespeare Identified* and *The Mysterious William Shakespeare: The Myth and the Reality* by Charlton Ogburn are not included. These findings await other researchers.

Another direction for further research derives from perhaps the most significant limitation to this study: that no attempt was made to empirically identify the specific *mechanism* at work in each of the 59 libraries in producing the imbalances identified, such as collection development policies and processes, selectors' understanding of the SAQ, or psychological factors identified in the literature, such as a preference for normativity (Quinn). As well, given the far fewer number of degree-granting post-secondary institutions in Canada (98) as compared to, say, the United States (4,140), the ability to generalize about the findings to other national contexts should be viewed with caution. Finally, it should be noted that this paper represents a picture of academic library holdings in Canada as of May, 2014 and may not reflect these libraries' collections at the time of publication.

Findings

Using WorldCat and comparing holdings among Canadian Universities shows that these libraries are far from achieving balance in their collections. My analysis suggests that there is three times as much recent Stratfordian literature in Canadian university libraries as titles representing post-Stratfordian perspectives published during the same period (see below). A Stratfordian title is almost exactly three times more likely to be in a Canadian university library than a post-Stratfordian one; Canadian university libraries are twice as likely to hold a recent Stratfordian title than a post-Stratfordian title. Within the sample, there were some striking contrasts: The University of British Columbia Library and the Library at York University owned each of the selected Stratfordian titles, but no library in the country held all of the post-Stratfordian titles. Indeed, extrapolating from the sample institutions, it would appear that 56 university libraries in Canada hold not a single one of these books, representing a significant knowledge gap for interested researchers in the SAQ. Queen's Univer-

sity Library is a standout with eight post-Stratfordian works, while the University of Ottawa has seven and York, Simon Fraser University, the University of Alberta and McGill University each own six. (For more details, see http://winnspace.uwinnipeg.ca/xmlui/handle/10680/845).

Holdings of Post-Stratfordian Literature

- 100 copies of selected titles available
- Copies were found in 38 university libraries
- Each University holds an average of 2.63 Anti-Stratfordian titles
- Each title owned by an average of 8.3 libraries

Holdings of Stratfordian Literature

- 299 copies of selected titles available
- Copies were found in 55 University Libraries
- Each university library holds an average of 5.4 Stratfordian titles
- Each title is owned by an average of 24.9 libraries

This lack of balance is particularly noteworthy when we see that the Stratfordian *Shakespeare Beyond Doubt* (SBD) is held at 21 libraries, while the post-Stratfordian response of the same name with the additional question mark is at only two – including the copy I purchased. What can explain these collection disparities? One likely reason is the source of these books – their publishers.

Post-Stratfordian Titles - Publishers

Shakespeare by Another Name (2005), Gotham Books

Shakespeare's Lost Kingdom (2010), Grove Press

Shakespeare Suppressed (2011), Faire Editions

Dating Shakespeare's Plays (2010), Parapress

Shakespeare and His Authors (2010), Continuum

Great Oxford: Essays on the Life and Work of Edward De Vere (2004), Parapress

The Earl of Oxford and the Making of "Shakespeare" (2011), McFarland & Company

Shakespeare's Unorthodox Biography: New Evidence of an Authorship Problem (2000), Greenwood Publishing Group

The Shakespeare Guide To Italy: Retracing the Bard's Unknown Travels (2011),
    Harper Perennial

Shakespeare Beyond Doubt? Exposing an Industry in Denial (2013), Llumina Press

On the Date, Sources and Design of Shakespeare's the Tempest (2013),
    McFarland & Company

The Monument (2005), Meadow Geese Press

Independent and small presses dominate this list; some of these books are self-published. As the literature shows, smaller press publications are less likely to be reviewed, and hence less likely to be ordered (Sweetland and Christenson). This factor will also play significantly into the popularity of approval plans, with the result that this literature from small and self-publishers is less likely to be captured unless explicitly identified as a part of a given library's profile. By contrast, major, well-known publishers dominate the list of Stratfordian titles:

Stratfordian Titles - Publishers

Shadowplay: The Hidden Beliefs and Coded Politics of William Shakespeare (2006),
    PublicAffairs

Shakespeare: The Biography (2006), Vintage Books

Soul of the Age: A Biography of the Mind of William Shakespeare (2009), Random House

Shakespeare Beyond Doubt: Evidence, Argument, Controversy (2013), Cambridge University Press

The Truth About William Shakespeare: Fact, Fiction and Modern Biographies (2012), Edinburgh University

Will in the World: How Shakespeare Became Shakespeare (2005), WW Norton

Nine Lives of William Shakespeare (2011), Continuum

The Quest for Shakespeare (2008), Ignatius Press,

The Life of William Shakespeare: A Critical Biography (2012), Wiley-Blackwell

1599: A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare (2005), Faber

Contested Will: Who Wrote Shakespeare? (2010), Simon & Schuster

Shakespeare Unbound : Decoding a Hidden Life (2007), Henry Holt

What difference would the source of publication make in a book's accessibility to library selectors? The YBP service was found to be very even-handed, listing all twelve of the Stratfordian titles, and all but one of the post-Stratfordian ones (the self-published *Shakespeare Suppressed*). The reviewing journal *Choice* covered five Stratfordian titles, but only three post-Stratfordian books, while the fee-based *Kirkus* reviewed half of the conventional titles, but only one from the post-Stratfordian list, the best-selling *Shakespeare by Another Name,* from Gotham Books/ Penguin). Finally, *Book Review Index* was found to be good at capturing both samples: eleven Stratfordian to eight post-Stratfordian publications. (See http://winnspace.uwinnipeg.ca/xmlui/handle/10680/845).

The effect of type and size of publisher, and the corresponding treatment of their books in collection tools may be illustrated in another useful comparison: the scrupulously researched but self-published *Shakespeare Suppressed* was listed in none of the tools investigated and is held in only one Canadian university library – ordered, in fact, by myself – while Stephen Greenblatt's openly imaginative *Will in the World,* published by the major publishing house WW Norton, was listed in all four collection tools and is held in 51 of the 59 libraries.

Beyond the influence of publisher size and the role of these tools (i.e., market bias) this study did not investigate additional probable mechanisms for the imbalances detected. The literature review however provides some likely factors. A preference for normative information on the part of selectors (Quinn), faculty antipathy to the topic (Lee), the sweeping insensitivity of approval plans to marginalized literature (Dilevko), and the corporatization of patron-driven e-book collections (Sens and Fonseca) may all have played significant roles.

What is more readily apparent is the biased organization to which this literature is subjected once it has been acquired and made accessible in library collections and catalogues. A quick glance at the treatment of this literature by the Library of Congress Classification and Subject Headings reveals some fairly significant problems.

Library of Congress Classification: Shakespeare Authorship

Shakespeare, William. Authorship.

2937 - General.

Bacon -Shakespeare controversy.

2939 Pro-Shakespeare (including histories of the controversy and judicial estimate).

Baconian theory.

2941 , Collections: Periodicals, societies, etc.

Controversial literature.

2943 Early (to 1880).

Recent.

2944 English.

2945 Other.

2946 Pamphlets, and other minor.

2947 Other hypotheses, A-Z.

2948 Satire, humor, etc.

2949 Manuscripts. Writing. Signatures.

2950 Ireland forgeries. By author.

2951 Collier controversy.

The Library of Congress scheme dates from 1897, and the section on the SAQ appears not to have been updated since. The results are remarkably inadequate and pejorative. Obviously, treating the SAQ as if it was primarily a "Baconian controversy" is ridiculous, as is describing anything since 1880 as "recent:" Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford has been the leading candidate for almost 100 years. Interestingly, the term *controversial literature* is supposed to be used, according to the Library of Congress as "a form subdivision [under religion] for works that argue against or express opposition to those [religious] groups or works." So the Library of Congress is essentially calling these works heretical in the strictest religious sense, particularly since its most recent edition states that the "controversial literature" heading should be:

> restricted to use under individual religions, denominations, religious and monastic orders, and sacred works for works that argue against or express opposition to those groups or works. The subdivision is no longer to be used under general religious and philosophical topics" ("Controversial Literature" 1998).

As Sanford Berman (2013) notes of this subheading:

> The result of this practice is two-fold: to segregate or ghettoize criticism of religious entities and holy books, and to make it appear – by extension – that pro-religious material is not "controversial" but rather normal, mainstream,

non-contentious and acceptable (117).

Apparently, Bardolatry is more than just a cultural phenomenon; it has been essentially institutionalized as a religion by the Library of Congress.

When considering a body of work in terms of its place in the classification scheme, there should be coherence between the two: the classification should characterize the literature both topically and functionally – that is, what it is about and what roles it plays in the discipline and discourse. In this case, the Library of Congress has failed to recognize Authorship literature for what it is: both biographical and critical, in that it seeks to connect the life of the true Author to his work. The scheme ghettoizes Authorship literature away from standard works of biography (which are placed at PR 2894), and instead situates them before *PR 2935 – Fiction based on Shakespeare's life* and notorious forgeries, as well as before *PR 2961, Criticism and interpretation*. In effect, the scheme erases the significance of more than a century and a half of scholarship.

Finally, the lack of a distinct subdivision for Oxford is a massive omission. Works about him are slotted under *PR 2947 – Other hypotheses*, again as if Bacon were the primary candidate and the only one meriting its own classification. With the 100th anniversary of Looney's book approaching, the Library of Congress needs to bring its approach to this literature out of the 19th Century.

Subject access to the post-Stratfordian literature is also highly problematic. The selected titles are without exception assigned the primary heading *Shakespeare, William – 1564-1616*, when, strictly speaking, the only titles which concern the Stratford malt merchant who lived between those years are *Shakespeare's Unorthodox Biography, Shakespeare Suppressed* and the Shakespeare Authorship Coalition's *Shakespeare Beyond Doubt?* and their purpose is to debunk the notion that he could have been an author. The remainder of these books are either focused on the characteristics of the playwright – whomever he might have been – (*Dating Shakespeare's Plays, Shakespeare and His Authors, The Shakespeare Guide to Italy*) or else are entirely dedicated to the proposition that Edward de Vere was Shakespeare (*Shakespeare By Another Name, The Monument, Great Oxford*). For all but the first three of these books the assignment of the *Shakespeare, William* subject heading aggressively misrepresents their contents. Richard Roe, for example, is quite explicit in his *The Shakespeare Guide to Italy* in arguing that Shakespeare must have gone to Italy, so the poet-playwright could not have been the Stratford Man. To describe his book with the heading *Shakespeare, William -1564-1616 – Knowledge –Italy* is to utterly confound the author's intentions. Similarly, Hank Whittemore's *The Monument* is an Oxfordian interpretation of the Sonnets; in no way does it suggest that William of Stratford wrote them. Again, *Shakespeare, William–1564-1616–Sonnets* is a complete misrepresentation.

There is another, more recently-developed layer of description available to libraries

employing the WorldCat catalogue, that of Faceted Application of Subject Termi-nology (or FAST) developed collaboratively between the Library of Congress and OCLC beginning in 1998. The purpose and strength of FAST is that it allows the creation of headings reflecting facets of topics, rather than being solely dependent on singular, higher-level headings. For our purposes, the simplification of *Shakespeare, William–1564-1616–Authorship–Oxford theory* in 2006 to *Oxford-Shakespeare controversy* is in some ways a positive advance that does legitimate Oxfordian scholarship with its own heading, and offers users a corrective to the *Bacon-Shakespeare controversy* embed-ded in the Classification scheme and a means to discover *Shakespeare by Another Name, Shakespeare's Lost Kingdom,* and *The Monument.* Unfortunately, it also serves to separate Oxford alphabetically from the browsable hierarchy of other Shakespeare-related subject headings, and will only show up in OCLC's WorldCat version of a universi-ty's library catalogue, and not in the locally-hosted one.

On the other hand, no subject access at all is offered to Edward de Vere for the books *Dating Shakespeare's Plays* and *On the Date, Sources and Design of Shakespeare's the Tempest,* both of which are fundamentally concerned with evidence for the Oxford-ian dating of the canon.

The greatest problem in accurately describing this literature is that all of it is assigned variations of the heading *Shakespeare, William–1564-1616*, a conceptual misnomer that assumes that the man with those birth and death dates is intended by the books' authors as the subject of their work, and that he was the author in question. In perpetuating the popular misconception, "who wrote Shakespeare's plays?" it mis-represents the literature to which it is supposed to provide access, both institutional-izing and fixing a fundamental mischaracterization of the Authorship question. Not only does it result in a frustratingly inaccurate research tool but provides powerful rhetorical support for the orthodox view, both reflecting and creating opinion while reinforcing the status quo (Guimarães and Martinez-Avila).

Turning to Olson and Schlegl's (1999) scheme for guidance, we can see that, as a consequence of its physical placement in university libraries and the conceptual access points with which it is made available in online catalogues, post-Stratfordian scholarship is grossly misrepresented. It is physically ghettoized, isolated away from mainstream biographical and literary criticism, being associated instead with forgeries and fiction. The effect is that Authorship literature is treated as an isolated phenom-enon, rather than a legitimate body of scholarly work addressing a problem affecting the nature and interpretation of the entire canon. The literature is also subject to bibliographic omission, because subject access to Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Ox-ford is conspicuously absent from titles which concern his identification as Shake-speare. More significant still is the problem that his candidacy is subsumed under "Other hypotheses" within the Library of Congress Classification scheme, leaving the bulk of the available alphanumeric sequence to books about Francis Bacon. This

leads to Olson and Schlegl's other criteria, that of inappropriate structure: because the scheme hasn't been revised since 1897, it is archaically oriented to the centrality of the *Bacon-Shakespeare controversy* to the detriment of most other aspects and candidates, and therefore incapable of reflecting nearly a century of Oxfordian scholarship. These schemes suffer from biased terminology, including the use of *pro-* and *anti-* prefixes when referring to partisans of contested Shakespeares, and their consistent use of the Stratford Man's dates to confusingly identify the Man from Stratford as the subject of all of this literature, when (as we have seen) this is rarely the case. Finally – and most inappropriately – the application of the heading *controversial literature*, which according to the Library of Congress's own rules should be confined to religious texts only, pejoratively identifies certain works on the Authorship question as beyond the pale, to be readily dismissed.

(For a complete list of the Subject Headings assigned to the selected literature, see http://winnspace.uwinnipeg.ca/xmlui/handle/10680/845).

We can see through this analysis that the ability to discover and explore the discourse concerning the Shakespeare Authorship Question in any given university library is dependent on the theory and practices of an entirely unrelated field: that of library and information science.

Discussion: Rising from Beneath Discursive Formations

As this research suggests, the extensive and deep subjugation of post-Stratfordian knowledge in the academy may not be entirely explained through academic culture alone in the form of hiring and tenure practices and exclusive conference and journal invitations; it has powerful structural dimensions as well. Its formal systemization relies not only upon corporatized publishing and distribution models but also on the collection and curation practices of university libraries, all of which rest upon the foundational – but highly problematic – knowledge organization structures of the Library of Congress. Without this degree of institutionalization, the fixed meanings, ontological enclosures, and "circular, static systems of information and investigation" (Jackson, 17) that so profoundly deform the study of Shakespeare could not be so easily maintained and reproduced.

In particular, the structures used to classify and describe the Shakespeare Authorship Question are almost entirely inappropriate. To borrow the words of Guimarães and Martinez-Avila, these structures serve to "eradicate" the Authorship Question from history, "defame" it and "change its meaning [by placing] it in the wrong context" (22). The language we use to describe a mode of thought either validates or negates it; as information studies scholar Ramesh Srinivasan (2012) puts it, "the ability to find information endorses its right to exist" (9). Indeed, libraries and their classification and access regimes may be understood to be, as Michel Foucault (1972)

described in his book *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, a "discursive formation." In the words of Foucauldian library science theorist Gary Radford (2003),

> discursive formations are real, just like the arrangement of books on a library shelf . . . Just by looking at the titles on the spines, you can see how the books cluster together. You can see which books belong together and which do not. You can identify those books which seem to form the heart of the discursive formation and those books which reside on the margins . . . Discursive formations are entities to be seen, touched, and experienced because the objects that make them up, such as books, are material objects. It follows, then, that because discursive formations are material, they have material effects (3).

Among the "material effects" of the discursive formations of the tools of library science is the creation and delimitation of further discursive formations. The very act of identifying what Hjorland (2001) critiqued as a universal, intersubjective "aboutness" of a given document can neglect and fail to represent other systems of meaning, other epistemological approaches to that subject. In the process, as Manoff argues, academic libraries can contribute to the delegitimization of knowledge, and determining what constitutes knowledge and suitable areas for investigation, especially in the humanities (1993).

We see these impacts in the treatment of post-Stratfordian literature. Viewing this scholarship through a Foucauldian lens (1972, 1980, 81-2) reveals its discursive formations to be profoundly subjugated – at least in part – through the discursive formations of library knowledge organization and information retrieval practices. As Foucault (1980 81-2) would have it, its "historical contents" have been "masked" for being "beneath the required level of cognition or scientificity" by means of the "formal systemizations" employed by the Library of Congress, as well as the ingrained biases against marginalized topics inherent in the economics of publishing and distribution. Like Touchstone's ignorant misappropriation of Ovid, decried by Jaques as "knowledge ill-inhabited, worse than Jove in a thatched house" (*As You Like It* [3.3]), the political economies of knowledge production and organization have relegated post-Stratfordian scholarship to the periphery of the academy, enclosing it in incongruous, inappropriate structures incommensurate with its contents and worth. Being thus both inadequately collected and misrepresented, this literature is constrained in its capacity to correct the ontological enclosures in Shakespeare studies which have, for so long, fixed Stratfordian meanings and excluded all others.

The result is an ossified canon of mainstream, mythical Shakespeare "biography" which both supports and depends upon what Jackson (2012) calls a "closed, circular and static system of information and investigation" reproduced through the disciplined self-subjugation of its practitioners and adherents; contrary theories are

"neither mentioned nor systematically engaged with" by scholars identifying with the mainstream, consensus view (17).

With their anemic, unbalanced Shakespeare Authorship collections organized and made accessible according to mostly outdated, biased and pejorative terminology and structures, academic libraries appear to be neglecting – and, most troublingly – actually preventing research and pedagogical development in one of the most important and exciting fields of study in the humanities.

Liberating Post-Stratfordian Knowledge in the Academic Library

The status of post-Stratfordian scholarship is consistent with Foucault's description of subjugated knowledge not only for the ways in which it is treated by dominant discourses, but also in terms of what it represents: an "insurrection of knowledge … against the centralizing power-effects that are bound up with the institutionalization and workings of any scientific discourse organized in a society such as ours" (2003, 9). Post-Stratfordians from Delia Bacon and Mark Twain through to 21st Century authors such as Mark Anderson and Roger Stritmatter have been waging an insurrection against both institutionalized inertia and powerful discursive formations represented by orthodox Shakespeare studies.

To be fully realized, however, this insurrection will require yet another: against the influence of conventional library collection development practices and the scientific discourse of knowledge organization. The universalizing and supposedly neutral and unbiased practices of collecting, describing and arranging literature of a contested nature have for decades been decried for their inability to adequately represent the output, ideas, theories and aspirations of a wide range of constituents falling outside the mainstream, including feminists, people of non-white races, and those with non-conforming genders and sexualities (e.g., Berman 1971/1993, Olson 1998, 2002).

Changing the normative bias against post-Stratfordian scholarship where collection-building is concerned represents a cultural shift which will require ongoing educational efforts targeting the academy in general and the library profession in particular. One such strategy could involve a cooperative effort (adjusted according to respective financial capacities of course) among the disparate publishers of post-Stratfordian works highlighted here to create a joint, professionally designed catalogue of available relevant literature in print, which could then be emailed as a PDF to collection managers at university libraries worldwide. As well, they could combine resources to fund booths at library conferences featuring their titles and distributing the catalogue, and work with librarians to organize professional conference sessions on the SAQ as an issue concerning libraries.

There may also be promising approaches to reforming knowledge organization. The solution to addressing the bias of present KO systems that is proposed in the literature is – surprisingly – *more* bias: or, more accurately, *honest bias*. Librarians need to adopt a pragmatic rather than a positivist stance, one that treats different epistemologies on their own terms, rather than seeking to equally apply a single worldview to all of them. Information science scholar Birger Hjorland argues that, rather than deny bias, we need to admit that it is impossible to avoid – and, in fact, can contribute to more accurate content analysis than merely depending on consensus view of the matter (2008b). He defends this stance as pragmatic: that knowledge organization should be undertaken as a means to describe and evaluate various knowledge *claims* in such a way as to be meaningful for users, rather than employing positivist assumptions about monolithic *knowledge* per se, and KO schemes representing a single, external reality (2008a). The difference between these paradigms, he argues, is that the pragmatic view allows to flourish

> the most important function of libraries and information systems [which] is to enable critical users to question established knowledge and investigate alternative views (2004, 500).

Adopting a pragmatic view on KO and the Shakespeare Authorship Question suggests that the Library of Congress Classification System for this subject domain will require an entirely new structure, and that new, reformed Subject Headings will need to be proposed. This is a practical step, and one to which the Library of Congress is officially open: it maintains a web-based "Subject Authority Proposal Form" through which new headings may be submitted. While the proposal of such headings is beyond the scope of this paper, even something as basic as a heading for *Shakespeare Authorship Question* (with standard subheadings such as – *History – Study and teaching* and – *Congresses*) would go a long way towards legitimating the field, and would bypass the problem inherent in associating this literature with a particular person possessing specific birth and death dates, and about whom the works in question are almost never actually concerned.

There is also a profoundly pragmatic reason for adopting new structures and authorities for post-Stratfordian literature: eventually, this task will be thrust upon libraries all over the world. As Ramon Jiminez (2009) points out, the formal recognition of Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford as "Shake-Speare" will mean that

> all the biographies of the Stratford man, and at least one of Oxford, will become comical literary curiosities. Every Stratfordian analysis of every play and poem will have to be rewritten, and dozens of speculations about sources, meanings, characters, and allusions will prove to be incorrect. The canon will be expanded, and its beginning and ending dates corrected to coincide more closely with the reign of Elizabeth (para. 59).

The implications for academic libraries are clear – but so, too, are the opportunities. A dedicated reassessment of the composition, description, and classification of entire collections devoted to Shakespeare would surely be costly, complex, and time-consuming, but would also constitute a signal contribution to addressing and repairing the damage wrought by a historic misdirection in scholarship. The alternative – perpetuating the status quo subjugation of post-Stratfordian knowledge through neglect and systematic ghettoization – will likely be viewed as untenable given the university library's avowed traditions of neutrality, critical literacy, and intellectual freedom. How this revered institution – and its bibliographic foundation, the Library of Congress – choose to respond to the post-Stratfordian challenge may well help lay the foundation for a new generation of liberated Shakespeare scholarship.

Notes

1.   Milliken, 229.

2.   Radford, 264.

3.   See: Warren, James A., *An Index to Oxfordian Publications*, 3rd edition. Somerville, MA: Forever Press, 2015.

4.   In the documentary *Last Will. And Testament*, Stanley Wells – Life Trustee and former Chairman of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust (and stalwart Stratfordian) states on camera "I see nothing in the plays to suggest that they were written by a man who couldn't have had the sort of education that Shakespeare could have acquired in [the Stratford grammar school]. The plays are not that learned." Quoted in Waugaman 2015, 86.

5.   Formerly known as Yankee Book Peddler prior to its merger with Baker & Taylor Books in 1999.

Works Cited

Academic Bill of Rights. *Students for Academic Freedom.* n.d. Web.

American Council of Trustees and Alumni. *The Unkindest Cut: Shakespeare in Exile* 2015. Washington D.C.: American Council of Trustees and Alumni. Web.

American Library Association. *Code of Ethics of the American Library Association.* Chicago: The American Library Association. (1939/2008). Web.

American Library Association. *Diversity in Collection Development: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights.* Chicago: The American Library Association. (1982/2014). Web.

Anderson, James D., and Melissa A. Hofmann. "A Fully Faceted Syntax for Library of Congress Subject Headings." *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly* 43.1 (2006): 7-38.

Beitko, Johnson and Luker. "Who's Undermining Free Speech on Campus Now*?" Inside Higher Ed* April 13 (2005). Web.

Berman, Sanford. *Prejudices and antipathies: A tract on the LC subject heads concerning people.* McFarland & Company, 1971/1993.

Berman, Sanford. "Inside Censorship." *Progressive Librarian* 18 (2001): 48-63.

Berman, Sanford. "Controversial Cataloguing" in *Not in My Library!: "Berman's Bag" Columns from the Unabashed Librarian, 2000-2013*., 2013. Jefferson, North Carolina; London: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 2013.

Brookfield, Stephen. "Unmasking power: Foucault and adult learning." *Canadian Journal for the Study of Adult Education* 15.1 (2001): 1-23.

Chiljan, Katherine. *Shakespeare Suppressed: The Uncensored Truth about Shakespeare and His Works.* San Francisco: Faire Editions, 2011.

"Controversial Literature." Library of Congress Subject Headings. Washington D.C.: Library of Congress. Web.

"Controversial Literature." *LC Cataloging Newsline Online Newsletter of the Cataloging Directorate, Library of Congress* 6.9, August 1998.

Dilevko, Juris. "An Alternative Vision of Librarianship: James Danky and the Socio-cultural Politics of Collection Development." *Library Trends* 56.3 (2008): 678-704.

Dilevko, Juris, and Kalina Grewal. "A New Approach to Collection Bias in Academic Libraries: The Extent of Corporate Control in Journal Holdings." *Library & Information Science Research* 19.4 (1997): 359-85.

Dudley, Michael. "By Nature Fram'd to Wear a Crown? Decolonizing the Shakespeare Authorship Question." *Brief Chronicles* 5 (2014): 11-30.

"FAST [Faceted Application of Subject Terminology]." OCLC Research. (2103). Web.

Foskett, A.C. "Misogynists All; A Study in Critical Classification." *Library Resources and Technical Services* 15.2 (1971): 117-121.

Foucault, Michel. *The Archaeology of Knowledge*. Trans. Alan Sheridan. New York: Pantheon Books, 1972.

Foucault, Michel, and Colin Gordon. *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1980.

Foucault, Michel, and François Ewald. *"Society Must Be Defended": Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975-1976*. Vol. 1. Macmillan, 2003.

Gilbert, Tony. "Nursing: Empowerment and the Problem of Power." *Journal of Advanced Nursing* 21.5 (1995): 865-871.

Giroux, Henry A. "Academic Freedom Under Fire: The Case for Critical Pedagogy." *College Literature* 33.4 (2006): 1-42.

Guimarães, José Augusto Chaves, and Daniel Martinez-Avila. "Library Classifications Criticism: Universality, Poststructuralism and Ethics." *Scire* (2013): 21-6.

Harmeyer, Dave, et al. "Potential Collection Development Bias: Some Evidence on a Controversial Topic in California. Commentaries on Collection Bias: Eternal Vigilance the Price of Liberty. What's Right? Adequate Representation and Numeric Equivalency: How Much is enough?" *College & Research Libraries* 56.2 (1995): 101-18.

Hartman, Ann. "In Search of Subjugated Knowledge." *Journal of Feminist Family Therapy* 11.4 (2000): 19-23.

Hjørland, Birger. "Towards a Theory of Aboutness, Subject, Topicality, Theme, Domain, Field, Content... and Relevance." *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology* 52.9 (2001): 774-778.

Hjørland, Birger. "Arguments for Philosophical Realism in Library and Information Science." Library Trends 52.3 (2004): 488-506.

Hjørland, Birger. "What is Knowledge Organization (KO)?" *Knowledge Organization,* 35(2/3) (2008a): 86–101.

Hjørland, Birger. "Deliberate Bias in Knowledge Organization." *Advances in Knowledge Organization* 11 (2008b): 256-261.

Ingolfsland, D. "Books on the Historical Jesus as a Test Case for Selection Bias in American Academic Libraries." *Journal of Religious and Theological Information* 8.1-2 (2009): 1-12.

Jackson, Richard. "Unknown Knowns: The Subjugated Knowledge of Terrorism Studies." *Critical Studies on Terrorism* 5.1 (2012): 11-29.

Jiminez, Ramon. "The Case for Oxford Revisited." *The Oxfordian* 11 (2009): 45-64.

Jones, Barbara M. *Protecting Intellectual Freedom in Your Academic Library: Scenarios from the Front Lines.* Chicago: American Library Association, 2009.

Jorgensen, M. and L. Phillips, *Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method.* London: Sage, 2002.

Knightly, John J., "Library Collections and Academic Curricula: Quantitative Relationships." *College and Research Libraries,* 36.4 (1975): 295-301.

Kranich, Nancy. "A Question of Balance: The Role of Libraries in Providing Alternatives to the Mainstream Media." *Collection Building* 19.3 (2000): 85-91.

Kuhn, Thomas S, and Ian Hacking. *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2012.

Lee, James A. "Ideology in the Library." *Academic Questions* 1.2 (1988): 39-41.

Lilburn, Jeff. "Re-Examining the Concept of Neutrality for Academic Librarians." *Feliciter* 1 (2003): 30–32.

Mann, Thomas. "Why LC Subject Headings Are More Important Than Ever." *American libraries* (2003): 52-54.

Manoff, Marlene. "Academic Libraries and the Culture Wars: The Politics of Collection Development." *Collection Management* 16.4 (1993): 1-17.

Marinko, Rita A., and Kristin H. Gerhard. "Representations of the Alternative Press in Academic Library Collections." *College & Research Libraries* 59.4 (1998): 362-76.

McNeil, Alex. " 'Authorship Appeal' Held at Stratford, Ontario, in October. Presumption in Favor of Shakspere 'Not Rebutted.' " Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter. 50 4 Fall 2014.

Miller, Ruth Loyd, ed. *Oxfordian Vistas: "Shakespeare" Identified, Volume 2*. Third edition. Port Washington NY: Kennikat Press, 1975.

Milliken, Jennifer. "The Study of Discourse in International Relations: a Critique of Research and Methods." *European Journal of International Relations*. 5.2 (1999): 225-254.

Nicholls, Sara, Audrey R. Giles, and Christabelle Sethna. "Perpetuating the 'Lack of Evidence' Discourse in Sport for Development: Privileged Voices, Unheard Stories and Subjugated Knowledge." *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*. 46.3 (2010): 249-264.

Olson, Hope A. "Mapping Beyond Dewey's Boundaries: Constructing Classificatory Space for Marginalized Knowledge Domains." *Library Trends* 47.2 (1998): 233-54.

Olson, Hope A. *The Power to Name: Locating the Limits of Subject Representation in Libraries*. Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2002.

Olson, Hope A., and Rose Schlegl. "Bias in Subject Access Standards: A Content Analysis of the Critical Literature." *Proceedings of the Annual Conference of CAIS/ Actes Du Congrès Annuel De l'ACSI*, 1999.

Olson, Hope A., and Rose Schlegl. "Standardization, Objectivity, and User Focus: A Meta-Analysis of Subject Access Critiques." *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly* 32.2 (2001): 61-80.

"Oxford-Shakespeare Controversy" *FAST Linked Data*. OCLC Research. Web.

Pratt, Allan D. "Are We Really Infallible at Book Selection?" *Library Journal* 120.18 (1995): 44.

Price, Diana. *Shakespeare's Unorthodox Biography: New Evidence of an Authorship Problem*. Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 2001.

Purvis, T. and A. Hunt. "Discourse, Ideology, Discourse, Ideology, Discourse, Ideology . . . ." *The British Journal of Sociology*, 44 (3), (1993): 473–499.

Quinn, Brian. "Collection Development and the Psychology of Bias." *The Library* 82.3 (2012).

Radford, Gary P. "Trapped in Our Own Discursive Formations: Toward an Archaeology of Library and Information Science." *The Library Quarterly* 73.1 (2003): 1-18.

Radford, Gary P., Marie L. Radford, and Jessica Lingel. "Alternative Libraries as Discursive Formations: Reclaiming the Voice of the Deaccessioned Book." *Journal of Documentation* 68.2 (2012): 254-267.

Reid, E. "Terrorism Research and the Diffusion of Ideas." *Knowledge and Policy*, 6 (1), (1993): 17–37.

Rubie, Peter. *The Everything Shakespeare Book: A Comprehensive Guide to Understanding the Comedies, Tragedies, and Sonnets of the Bard.* Avon, Mass: Adams Media Corp, 2002.

Sens, Jean-Mark, and Anthony J. Fonseca. "A Skeptic's View Of Patron-Driven Acquisitions: Is It Time To Ask The Tough Questions?" *Technical Services Quarterly* 30.4 (2013): 359-371.

Stritmatter, Roger. "What's in a Name? Everything, Apparently . . ." *Rocky Mountain Review of Language and Literature* 60.2 (2006): 37-49.

Stewart, John A. *Drifting Continents and Colliding Paradigms: Perspectives on the Geoscience Revolution.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990.

Sweetland, James H., and Peter G. Christensen. "Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Titles: Their Treatment in the Review Media and their Selection by Libraries." *Collection Building* 14.2 (1995): 32-41.

Sykes, Vivian. "Advocacy for Ethnic Collection Development." In K.T.A. Scarborough (Ed.), *Developing Library Collections for California's Emerging Majority: A Manual of Resources for Ethnic Collection Development.* Oakland, CA: Bay Area Library and Information System. (1990): 34-68.

"The Toronto Shakespeare Authorship Conference." *York University Events, York University,* n.d. Web.

Tomren, Holly. *Classification, Bias, and American Indian Materials.* Unpublished Paper. San Jose: San Jose State University. (2003). Web.

Toren, Beth Jane,. "Bam! Pow! Graphic Novels Fight Stereotypes in Academic Libraries: Supporting, Collecting, Promoting." *Technical Services Quarterly* 28.1 (2010): 55-69.

Veeh, Elese M. *Politics and Collection Diversity in California Public Libraries' Nonfiction Holdings on Two Controversial Subjects: Abortion and Same-Sex Marriage.* Master's Paper, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC, 2007. Web.

Vickers, Brian. "Shakespeare and Authorship Studies in the Twenty-first Century." *Shakespeare Quarterly* 62.1 (2011): 106-142.

Warner, Jody Nyasha. "Africa in Canadian Academic Libraries: A Continent's Voices Go Missing." *Social Justice* 32.4 (2005): 180-91.

Waugaman, Richard M. "The Psychopathology of Stratfordianism." *The Oxfordian* 14 (2012): 222.

Waugaman, Richard. "Reviews of Films Anonymous and Last Will. and Testament." *International Journal of Applied Psychoanalytic Studies* 12.1 (2015): 81-87.

Zulaika, J. *Terrorism: The Self-Fulfilling Prophesy.* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2009.
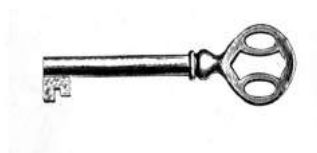
Works Investigated

Ackroyd, Peter. *Shakespeare: The Biography*. New York: Nan A. Talese, 2005.

Anderson, Mark. *"Shakespeare" by Another Name: The Life of Edward De Vere, Earl of Oxford, the Man Who Was Shakespeare*. New York: Gotham Books, 2005.

Asquith, Clare. *Shadowplay: The Hidden Beliefs and Coded Politics of William Shakespeare*. New York: PublicAffairs, 2005.

Bate, Jonathan. *Soul of the Age: A Biography of the Mind of William Shakespeare*. New York: Random House, 2009.

Beauclerk, Charles. *Shakespeare's Lost Kingdom: The True History of Shakespeare and Elizabeth*. New York, NY: Grove Press, 2011.

Chiljan, Katherine V. *Shakespeare Suppressed: The Uncensored Truth About Shakespeare and His Works: a Book of Evidence and Explanation*. San Francisco, CA: Faire Editions, 2011.

Edmondson, Paul, and Stanley Wells. *Shakespeare Beyond Doubt: Evidence, Argument, Controversy*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013.

Ellis, David. *The Truth About William Shakespeare: Fact, Fiction and Modern Biographies*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012.

Gilvary, Kevin. *Dating Shakespeare's Plays: A Critical Review of the Evidence*. Tunbridge Wells UK: Parapress, 2010.

Greenblatt, Stephen. *Will in the World: How Shakespeare Became Shakespeare*. New York: W.W. Norton, 2005.

Holderness, Graham. *Nine Lives of William Shakespeare*. London, Eng: Continuum, 2011.

Leahy, William. *Shakespeare and His Authors: Critical Perspectives on the Authorship Question*. London: Continuum, 2010.

Malim, Richard. *Great Oxford: Essays on the Life and Work of Edward De Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, 1550-1604*. Tunbridge Wells: Parapress, 2004.

Malim, Richard. *The Earl of Oxford and the Making of "Shakespeare": The Literary Life of Edward De Vere in Context*. Jefferson, N.C: McFarland & Company, 2012.

Pearce, Joseph. *The Quest for Shakespeare*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2008.

Potter, Lois. *The Life of William Shakespeare: A Critical Biography*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012.

Price, Diana. *Shakespeare's Unorthodox Biography: New Evidence of an Authorship Problem*. Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 2001.

Roe, Richard P. *The Shakespeare Guide to Italy: Retracing the Bard's Unknown Travels*. New York: Harper Perennial, 2011.

Shahan, John M, and Alexander Waugh. *Shakespeare Beyond Doubt?: Exposing an Industry in Denial*. Tamarac, Florida: Llumina Press, 2013.

Shapiro, James. *1599: A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare*. London: Faber and Faber, 2006.

Shapiro, James. *Contested Will: Who Wrote Shakespeare?* New York: Simon & Schuster, 2010.

Stritmatter, Roger A, and Lynne Kositsky. *On the Date, Sources and Design of Shakespeare's the Tempest*. Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 2013.

Weis, René. *Shakespeare Unbound: Decoding a Hidden Life*. New York: Henry Holt, 2007.

Whittemore, Hank. *The Monument: Shake-speares Sonnets by Edward De Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford*. Meadow Geese Press, 2005.

Spinning Shakespeare

By Don Rubin

The Yiddish term is *mishagas*. Craziness. As in "believing that Shakespeare didn't write Shakespeare is *mishagas*. Craziness." Then they point at you, roll their eyes in a what-can-you-do-with-him kind of way. "We all know he's a bit strange. We all know he is *mishuga."*

Now I begin my paper with this very basic lesson in Yiddish – using a term that has transferred quite widely into common English usage – because it is a term too often applied to the Oxfordian cause or, at the very least, the cause which has led so many to have "reasonable doubt" that William of Stratford was actually the writer of the plays of Shake-speare (with or without a hyphen).

When I first came to this issue after reading Mark Anderson's brilliant biography of Oxford, *Shakespeare By Another Name,* and followed this by reading as widely as I could in this fascinating area, I couldn't help but notice that every time I tried to share my new enthusiasm with friends and colleagues I really could see their eyes start to roll and I could hear – whether they were Jewish or not – the word *mishagas* floating somewhere around them. "Oh my God," they were thinking piteously, "he is crazy." Sometimes it was innocent family members and sometimes distinguished scholars. But the fact was all seemed united in labeling me *mishugana.*

Like Queen Victoria, I was not amused. After more than forty years as an academic, a former Chair of a distinguished Department of Theatre at York University in Toronto, and co-founder and former Director of the MA and PhD Programs in Theatre Studies at York, I tended to take my scholarship – especially in theatre areas – rather seriously. What was going on here? Why, when I casually asked a colleague from the English Department if they had read this or that book about the authorship issue, would a look of incredulity spread across their face? Were they wondering if I was really one of *those people*? At parties they would immediately turn toward the bar as quickly as possible, passing on this disheartening conversation.

I realized quickly that speaking about the authorship question in academia was not a good career move; it would be death, in fact, for younger faculty. The only reason I had survived was that I came to it so late in my academic career that I already had my tenure to keep me safe and warm. This was a comfort not shared by a young colleague at another Canadian university whose graduate work was severely undermined

when he tried to invite a distinguished Oxfordian, Roger Stritmatter to speak at an international Shakespeare conference that he was helping to plan. I won't bore you with the details because that unidentified young colleague – Sky Gilbert – has already written about it rather satirically in his own outrageous post-post-modern satire, a novelistic musing on universities called *Come Back,* a novel which features a 138-year old Judy Garland returning to university to do a dissertation on a gay Canadian theatre director whose life and academic career was destroyed because of his Oxfordian leanings. In Old Testament vernacular, one could say it was the young scholar's *mishagas* which actually did him in, and helped to destroy his not-yet established academic credibility.

What I am trying to say is simply this: whether we are reasonable doubters or full-fledged Oxfordians, it does not help our intellectual pursuits to be labelled in such a way. Whether it's the well-worn phrase "conspiracy theorist" or simply the downtown notion of *mishuganah* – the idea that we who doubt, we who believe in the reality of the Other are somehow out of touch with reality is not one that most of us are, or should be, comfortable with. We live with it, of course. Some of us even take pride in it as independent thinkers. But it starts us off in almost every conversation on the defensive and it is often hard work to get back to neutral with people we really want to share ideas with. How wonderful it would be if we could lose the rolling eyes of colleagues and even friends when this subject comes up. It is this which most bothers me and is at the core of what I call "Spinning Shakespeare."

What I am suggesting is: perhaps it is **we** who may be using the wrong words somehow, perhaps it is **we** who are creating unnecessary and irritating impressions when we bring up our favourite Earl. Perhaps there are better ways we can get into the subject, better ways to spin Shake-speare (with or without the hyphen), better ways to spin the entire authorship issue. Which is to say that I am not yet personally prepared to argue arcane issues of re-dating or the life of either the man from Stratford or de Vere

---

Don Rubin – *A former Chair of the Department of Theatre at Toronto's York University, Prof. Rubin is Editor of Routledge's six-volume* World Encyclopedia of Contemporary Theatre *series. He has lectured on theatre and related cultural topics world-wide and has been a Visiting Professor at universities in France, Sweden, Russia, Bulgaria, China, Senegal, Cameroon and South Africa. Editor of the standard volume,* Canadian Theatre History: Selected Readings*, he has been teaching courses on the Shakespeare Authorship Question for several years at York University and has been a regular speaker at SOF conferences. A past winner of York University's prestigious Walter F. Gordon Research Fellowship, he is on the Board of Directors of the SOF and is Managing Editor of the international theatre webjournal* Critical Stages. *This paper was presented at the joint conference of the Shakespeare Fellowship and the Shakespeare Oxford Society, Pasadena, California. October 2012.*

or the sonnets (whether they should be read backwards or forwards) or Will's will, or whether there was a sycamore tree in Italy, no matter how crucial they are. I must, for now, leave such stuff to better-versed colleagues whose work has taught me much, colleagues such as Mark Anderson, Roger Stritmatter, Hank Whittemore, and Bonner Cutting. Their first-rate scholarly research has been truly impressive.

For the moment I want to concentrate on what is almost a public relations issue for Oxfordians: how to get the authorship issue taken seriously in both the academic world and in the wider sphere. Need I say that not even *Anonymous* – that most expensive attempt to popularize the issue – managed to break the authorship issue away from the infernal rolling-eye syndrome that we are rather frustrated by. Is it simply "correctness" and "truth" that we need to proclaim, or is it correctness, truth, and a particular use of words, words, words that are the real key here? If it is the latter, what words might be better to establish real debate with the world when we depart from our protected enclaves? What words should we use to get our Will more effectively into the world? Even as an academic – perhaps I should say especially as an academic – I have had to learn to dance my own Oxford dance in quite specific ways even to be heard, have had to learn to "spin" my Shakespeare carefully. Doing so, I have found, is often hard and frustrating, but it is work I suggest that can pay off ultimately with increased credibility.

Let me go right to it here. Conspiracy is not the word we want associated with our approaches to the Great Shakespeare Mystery, the greatest mystery in the history of world theatre. Conspiracy, of course, in and of itself need not be construed as negative. The word simply means to breathe together, to share an idea. But the whole notion of conspiracy also suggests secrets, the bizarre and perhaps the beastly, implies plotting and plotters who choose to work away from the mainstream, who choose darkness over light. Such people, we all know, are not to be trusted, are suspicious in every sense of the word. Do we really want Oxford in that company?

Given that, as we all know, **we** are the ones working with facts in this area and that the so-called orthodox are the ones working with fantasy, the labels and the arguments should be easy to turn around but because the argument of the Other is faith-based, is religious in tone, it turns out not to be so easy and we continue to be the ones always under scrutiny. How can we turn this around?

My own academic experience in this regard may be useful here. A few years ago, I managed, after some struggle at my university, to get a course on the books – officially a one-off experimental course – on Oxford as Shake-speare. And that working concept immediately became an issue. Why? In the academic world one cannot start with a conclusion. "Oxford as Shakespeare" is a conclusion. One has to pose a question within a university and explore it from as many points-of-view as possible. That is, one needs to pose questions in spinning Shakespeare rather than attacking head-on.

But back to the course. In order to create any new course, a faculty member must make a proposal on paper to colleagues. The proposal has to include a title, an over-view and justification, an outline of what will be covered, and a bibliography. Each new course needs initial approval from the area involved (in this case from my col-leagues in Theatre Studies), approval from a Departmental Curriculum Committee, then approval from the Department as a whole, then approval from a Faculty-wide Curriculum Committee, and ultimately, approval from the university Senate's Curric-ulum Committee.

Let me say that the most difficult approval, the most debated part of the process was the most local, my own theatre colleagues, none of whom seemed to have ever really explored the issue but all of whom seemed to have pretty much rejected it. One said she wanted simply to believe in genius. Didn't I believe in genius? Another, a distin-guished former English Department professor, now in my area, led the intellectual charge against the course. He had been teaching a traditional Shakespeare course for years and was mightily offended. Born in England, he was also personally irritated that I – a mere colonial – was questioning the wisdom of the ages. This course pro-posal challenged his faith, his belief system.

As I listened to him, I could hear him saying five hundred years ago, "Of course the sun moves around the earth. The Church has told us so. And surely the Church wouldn't lie." He clearly did not wish to challenge orthodoxy. Could everything that he had ever been taught about the man from Stratford have been wrong? And how about the First Folio? Was everyone lying? Well, let's not get into that here.

His attack on the new course was built at that moment on Shapiro's *Contested Will* which had been published a few months before. I gave him a copy of *Shakespeare By Another Name*. To his credit, he read it and his unshakeable faith was, I think, slightly shaken. After extensive argument, he concluded by saying that at most, the author-ship issue should be no more than a day-long debate between "real Shakespeareans" and those who believed in "conspiracy theories." His final argument was that if such a course was offered, no one would sign up for it. "You'll be lucky to have a half-dozen students," he said.

To be fair, I must say that other colleagues in the Theatre Department were at least curious. None had ever gone into the authorship issue with any depth and, though not deeply interested one way or the other, they saw the course as an opportunity to actively learn more about it – a debate between the arguments posed by Anderson's book and Shapiro's.

I was asked to prepare a course outline for the committees to examine. Certainly, my first instinct was simply to do a course on Oxford as Shakespeare. But given the bat-tle-lines and the arguments against it, I understood that I needed to lower the tem-perature. It must not be Oxford as Shakespeare but rather a genuine intellectual look

at the authorship question as a whole. When I changed the title of the course from "Oxford and Shakespeare" to "Shakespeare: The Authorship Question" most of the academic guns lined up against me were lowered. When I suggested that the students would explore a variety of authorship candidates (including William of Stratford) the opposition softened further.

When I said I would actually include Shapiro's book along with Anderson's, when I agreed to include the opposition, victory was assured. Shapiro – though his ortho- dox point-of-view is obvious – does provide some useful background on the many challengers. The students could see at least two sides. And that was the key. I would let them look at several sides of the issue. Let them decide for themselves after the evidence was presented. I had confidence in it. Let the debate begin. I offered to conclude the course with that same day-long conference on the authorship question that I hoped would be highlighted by a keynote speaker, Mark Anderson himself.

The course was finally approved as a fourth-year elective at the area and departmen- tal levels, again with some further complaints by my English Department colleague. I knew I had achieved a victory of some sort at that time, however, when I read a book review he'd written for a Canadian journal that referred, not to "Shakespeare" as the author of the plays but rather to "the entity that was called Shakespeare" as the author of the plays. So, he had read the Anderson book. A breakthrough at last.

In its final form, Theatre 4270: Shakespeare: The Authorship Question was to be a one-semester course offered by the Theatre Department and open to any senior stu- dent. It would be offered on an experimental basis in the winter semester (January to April) of 2012. I cautiously limited enrollment to fifteen to ensure that I wouldn't be embarrassed if the registration was low. I didn't want it cancelled for low registration. The department required a minimum of ten in an undergraduate course. I needn't have worried. Through a combination of subject matter and my own reputation for stirring the pot, the fifteen places were snapped up almost immediately. The depart- ment started a waiting list. Eventually it went to twenty and then twenty-five. Thirty students showed up the first day including a doctoral student from India who asked if she could simply audit the class because Shakespeare was her passion as an under- graduate. Twenty-five completed the course.

What did it cover?

I'm sure everyone reading this would have their own ideas about how to fill 36 class contact hours for a course called "Shakespeare: The Authorship Question." I did it with a combination of lectures, discussions of specific readings, and videos that I thought would bring the material to life for a group of mostly twenty and twen- ty-one year old theatre students. Interestingly, the course also had attracted attention from outside the department and though more than two-thirds of the students were

from Theatre, the other third came from departments such as English (even though two students told me they were warned not to take the course by professors), from Psychology, Education and even Nursing. All were just plain curious. None said they were taking the course simply to fulfill a requirement, though it did that for many.

I spent the first class on the authorship question giving a lecture entitled "Exactly What Is the Question" in which I discussed the general issue of Shakespearean authorship including its history, its value to scholarship, and the parameters of what we would be looking at. I pointed out that we, of course, know that there is a body of work (including plays and sonnets and other poetry) written under the name Shakespeare (in some cases with a hyphen, a sign then of pseudonymous creation). I assured them that there was no issue there. I then pointed out there was also someone named Will Shakspere, son of an illiterate glover from Stratford who was married to an illiterate wife and who fathered illiterate children. I added that he may not have been literate himself.

I informed them that it was this man of dubious background, this man called Shakspere and not Shakespeare, this man who never seemed to have travelled outside of the Stratford and London areas who has been traditionally given credit for being the greatest writer who ever lived. The fact that he never personally claimed credit nor seemed to have had either the background or the knowledge or even a book or manuscript of Shakespeare's (or anyone else) to pass on in his will, made his being credited as Shakespeare just a might curious. I ran through the facts of William of Stratford's life as we know them, spoke about the dysfunctionality of the Elizabethan Court (Mark Anderson has compared it to the North Korean court of Kim Jong-Il), spoke about contrarian views, reasons for anonymity, and about the period generally.

My goal here was less to convince or conclude the argument than it was to open their minds to possibilities, to excite the curiosity of the students to the plays and the time and the mystery. They were excited by the Helen Mirren/Jeremy Irons film, *Elizabeth I,* which gave them a remarkably strong sense of the time and the political machinations of the court.

The next several classes were devoted to essentially doing a Looney on the sonnets. That is, each student was assigned about five sonnets and was asked to build a life of the person who might have written them. Was it a male life or female? Was it a young person or old? Handsome or not? Rich or not? We parallelled this exercise over two weeks with Course Kit readings that I had put together. These included Tanya Cooper's standard "Chronology of Shakespeare's Life" (obviously a provocative chronology of William of Stratford's dates) and Stanley Wells' orthodox chronology of the dates of composition of the sonnets and plays. There were also brief student presentations on Henry VIII, Elizabeth and Robert Dudley, and a short reading from Hank Whittemore's *The Monument.*

We then moved on to a reading of *Venus and Adonis*, a long excerpt from Bill Bryson's *In Search of William Shakespeare,* and a longer excerpt from Looney's *Shakespeare Identified.* This was followed by student presentations on Elizabethan boy companies and videos on Tudor courts and Shakespeare and his theatre.

We spent the next several weeks looking at the First Folio and the possible interpretations of the introductory material including the Droeshout etching and interpretations of Jonson's praise poem *To the memory of my beloved, The Author MR. WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: and what he hath left us.* As well, we looked at the lives of some of the less-recognized authorship candidates. These were chosen and presented by the students themselves and included ten-minute introductions on Queen Elizabeth as candidate (conclusion "no"), Mary Sidney as candidate ("maybe" but probably not), the Earls of Rutland and Derby ("probably not to be taken seriously"). As we moved further into the lives of other candidates, we also read Mark Twain's *Is Shakespeare Dead* (they loved it) and much of *Contested Will* (conclusion: Shapiro is biased in his presentations but provides some important biographical information). We also looked at Whitman, James, and Freud on the subject.

Things got exciting around this time when four of the advanced theatre students in the class presented an introduction on Marlowe arguing that *he* had to have been the author. Indeed, the class seemed to be divided at this point into three quite vocal groups: (1) the Marlovians, (2) those who believed passionately that William of Stratford could not possibly have written the plays but who were not really sure who had, and (3) those who were either genuine doubters or were genuinely baffled by it all.

A student introduction to Francis Bacon elicited some interest but not a lot of enthusiasm (except about how hard-done-by Delia Bacon had been as a 19th century female scholar) while the mystery aspect continued to fascinate them as I did my best to move the Elizabethan earth beneath their contemporary feet.

I did do one thing rather out of the ordinary here. I asked several of the students to do an introduction on John Florio as candidate. I am sure many of you will be raising your eyebrows in puzzlement here and I did myself when I first started looking into Florio. In fact, there is huge circumstantial evidence of a direct connection between the two men – Shake-speare certainly knew Florio's work though there is no record that the two ever crossed paths, not a surprise if you believe Florio was Shakespeare. But as filled with doubt as I was some years back, I must confess to having fallen under the spell of a delightful Italian-Canadian editor-writer and sometimes-scholar named Lamberto Tassinari. Born in Italy and achieving a reputation as a cultural journalist there, Tassinari later moved to Montreal where he edited a cultural magazine and began to research Florio.

Tassinari comes to his work from a purely Italian point-of-view, a view which explains Shakespeare's obsessions with Italy, with Italian literature and Italian theatre

forms and, as Tassinari has written, with themes involving religion, travel, exile, and disguise. His 2009 book, *John Florio: The Man Who Was Shakespeare* was the first serious examination of Florio in some 75 years and though it is more speculative than scholarly, it nevertheless asks some fascinating questions that should enter into the authorship debate. Did Oxford and Florio have contact? How much? When? Because the students were able to reach Tassinari in Montreal and see his son's three-minute musical Florio "rap" on YouTube, a new candidate emerged with a Canadian inflection.

The last third of the course was spent reading and debating *Shakespeare By Another Name,* a book which excited the students and gave a real focus to the final discussions on the subject. It was at this late point in the course that Bonner Cutting came to the class. She offered her time – and I could not have been more delighted to accept. She gave a brilliant lecture on Will's will, proving what real academic research is all about to these senior students, while heavily closing the case on William of Stratford as the greatest writer who ever lived.

I ended the formal part of the course with an in-class showing of Roland Emmerich's *Anonymous.* Most had already seen it by this time so a second viewing for them was useful in honing arguments for the final class. On that final day, the class was broken into six groups of about four students with each group having to argue for (and briefly against) a particular candidate or position. These final presentations were interesting and were done in place of a final exam. Some of these position presentations were offered as lectures, others as debates, as newscasts and one as a television documentary. The authorship candidates chosen by the students and positions argued included Marlowe, Bacon, Florio, de Vere, William of Stratford, and a final argument by one group which felt that the plays were collectively written by several authors.

That would normally have been the end of the course but I knew I still had one debt to pay. I needed to host that day-long conference on the authorship issue because I had promised that to my English Department colleague, the one who had caused me so much grief in the beginning. On April 7th – the Saturday between Good Friday and Easter Sunday as well as one of the first days of Passover – that Conference took place at York University and attracted (despite all those holy days) close to eighty people from across North America.

The fee was kept intentionally low and included a light lunch, coffee, and soft drinks. I was even able to generate modest funding at that point from a half-dozen different colleges on the York campus, from the English Department (which was obviously feeling a bit guilty that they had badmouthed it all in the beginning), from the Theatre Department and a significant amount from the Dean of the Faculty of Fine Arts who had early on told me that the film *Anonymous* had made her realize that

during the Elizabethan period art was political and the words of artists were taken seriously. "Your conference," she told me, "will at least make everyone understand that."

And it did. Mark Anderson came from Massachusetts to give a brilliant keynote address on why the authorship question still matters. Keir Cutler performed his delightful stage version of Twain's *Is Shakespeare Dead*. We showed Derek Jacobi's sixty-minute *The Shakespeare Conspiracy*. After lunch we had a fascinating panel debate which included a passionate defense of Florio by none other than Lamberto Tassinari (introduced by Michel Vais, Secretary-General of the Unesco-based International Association of Theatre Critics) and eloquent defenses of the Oxfordian position by Keir and Mark (including an attack on the academic world generally by Keir for failing to take the issue seriously). Additionally, there were two lively challenges from critic David Prosser – the former Literary Manager of the Stratford Festival of Canada and a Stratfordian who really didn't find it all particularly convincing – and the distinguished York Professor Christopher Innes, another committed Stratfordian who argued that nothing had been proven and that *Anonymous* was inaccurate historically.

Which brings me back to my real point and my title: "Spinning Shakespeare." How can we make the Oxfordian position, the anti-Stratford position, more acceptable and more accessible? Let me say here that even my students – who all acted as publicists for the end-of-year conference as they contacted high schools and universities, English Departments and Theatre Departments to invite them to the event – were shocked at the animosity they encountered as soon as the subject was broached by phone or in-person. Remember, these were not conspirators like us but rather university students curious about controversial ideas. But to those they were calling – high school and university English teachers mostly – the callers were perceived as infidels, unbelievers who needed to be put in their places. Perhaps that was the greatest learning experience for my students, and they spoke about it at the conference.

I suppose what all of us came to understand was that to interest the uninitiated, to bring the larger world into the authorship conversation, the subject needs to be presented in a way that is both accessible and will not threaten the modest knowledge someone might already have. That is, one must open the debate by not directly attacking the personage that is accepted traditionally as the Bard of Avon. I believe this to be one of the failings of *Anonymous*. For all the good this film did in opening the debate to a wider public – and it was brilliant in cinematic terms – its portrayal of William of Stratford as a near-idiot as well as an egotistical money-grubber shaming the temple of theatre did not help the real argument and, in fact, it undermined the confidence of many about the film. Portraying someone they were taught to worship as God as a dunce, ridiculing a "religious" position, I suggest, turned people off. It is one thing to suggest Shakspere might not have written the plays; it is anoth-

er far more serious threat to call him an illiterate. The world stops listening at that point. That suggestion – if it comes from the Oxfordian side – has to come much later in the discussion, once people are brought in. Indeed, they may have to reach that conclusion themselves.

That is, pushing the negative is not the right spin. Our Shakespeare needs to be spun positively. I suggest people will buy that a whole lot more than an attack on their faith, no matter how dubious that rock's foundation may be. A greater sense of the real objective seems essential to get the argument into a more public context, on a more general basis, and into academe. When I first said I wanted to do a course which challenged William of Stratford as the author of Shakespeare's plays, no one was with me. But when I changed the language, when I spun it differently and said I wanted to do a course looking into arguments generally around the Shakespearean Authorship Question, a question that was becoming of wider and wider interest, given the number of books coming out on the subject, then even Shapiro could be used to make the argument for the course.

Every university likes to feel it is *au courant*, that it is relevant and cutting edge. Surely, given the number of books coming out every year on this issue, how can any university English or Theatre Department continue to ignore it? The authorship question, as early 21ˢᵗ century Twitterites would put it, is trending. We must let universities know that they ignore it at their intellectual risk today. That is the spin, the way to get other courses on the subject going at other universities around the world. That is also the way to get ourselves out of the world of conspiracies, of rolling eyes and *mishagas* and into the world of possibility. The Oxfordian position (and certainly the Reasonable Doubt position) – laid out properly and intelligently and without attacking the orthodox – can spin Shakespeare, our Shake-Speare, into the consciousness of the 21ˢᵗ century world. And spinning Shakespeare in this way is, I believe, going to bring the true debate to the front of the church and will, finally, cast shame on the orthodox, the real *mishuganahs* in this greatest of all religious mysteries.

Appendix A

Many people have asked me for a copy of the official course outline so I offer it here. As any experienced teacher knows, it usually takes three iterations to get a new course right. The second time I taught this course, I built it around the presence in Toronto of the annual conference. That special occurrence pushed the second iteration totally out of normal academic shape but had real value for the students. I am about to teach the course for a third time. It will be different yet again. Hopefully it will come closer than either of the previous versions. I am determined to get it right. One final note. I was able to create a special Course Kit through the university bookstore (which obtained necessary permissions) containing excerpts and essays and other useful materials from many useful books and websites. I offer it here as well as an Appendix B.

Course Outline (York University, Toronto)

Shakespeare: The Authorship Question

Lecture One: "Exactly What is the Question?"

A discussion of the general issue of Shakespearean authorship including its history, value to scholarship, and parameters. Overview of what we know of WS, the will, the period, contrarian views, reasons for anonymity, Elizabeth and her court, the period in general.

Video: *Elizabeth I* (Helen Mirren/Jeremy Irons)

Lecture Two: "Building the Life from the Sonnets" (pt 1)

Read: Sonnets 1-75 and, in Course Kit, The First Folio (Title Pages, Dedication, introductory material by John Heminge and Henry Condell, and Ben Jonson); the Standard Chronology of Shakspere's life; Shakspere's Last Will and Testament; and Crowther's 19th century introduction "Illustration of The Sonnets"

Student presentations: "The Sonnet: A Brief History" and "Henry VIII"

Video: *In Search of Shakespeare*

Lecture Three: "Building the Life from the Sonnets" (pt 2)

Read: Sonnets 76-154

Read: WS: Life Facts and Timeline; A Conjectural Chronology; Dedication to *Venus*

and Adonis and *The Rape of Lucrece*

Presentations: "Queen Elizabeth I" and "Robert Dudley"

Lecture Four: "Building the Life from Venus and Adonis"

Read: *Venus and Adonis,* In Search of WS (Bryson); Shakespeare Identified (Thomas Looney); Shakespeare's Signatures

Presentations: "Elizabethan Theatre" and "Boy Companies"

Lecture Five: "Other Lives: the Less-recognised Candidates"

Presentations on Queen Elizabeth I (as a candidate), Mary Sidney, Earl of Rutland, and the Earl of Derby

Read: Remarks on the Life and Writings (Campbell)

Lecture Six: "Other Lives" (pt 2)

Read: Mark Twain: *Is Shakespeare Dead?*; Looking for Shakespeare (Bethell and Matus); Shapiro ("Contested Will")

Presentations: Marlowe, Freud (on Shakespeare), Twain (on Shakespeare), Whitman, Henry James, Ben Jonson, The Globe

Video: "Tudor and Stuart London Courts (1500-1668)" and "Shakespeare and his Theatre, the Globe"

Lecture Seven: "Other Lives" (pt 3)

Presentations on Francis Bacon, Delia Bacon, Mark Rylance, Derek Jacobi

Read: Shapiro (on Delia Bacon)

Video: "The Shakespeare Conspiracy"

Lecture Eight: "The Italian Plays and the Evidence of Italy"

Presentations: Shakespeare's Italian Plays, John Florio, Edward de Vere

Reading: Mark Anderson: Chapters 1 to 5

Lecture Nine: Guest Lecture, Bonner Cutting, "The Will"

Reading: Anderson: Chapters 6 to 11

Lecture Ten: Watch "Anonymous" In Class

Lecture Eleven: "So Who Really Wrote Shakespeare?"

Six 10-15 minute group presentations. Choose your group from this list:

> A. Marlowe and Jonson
>
> B. Francis Bacon
>
> C. John Florio
>
> D. Edward de Vere
>
> E. William of Stratford
>
> F. Group Written

One week later: term papers due (see Appendix C)

Required Books:

- *Contested Will* (James Shapiro)
- *Shakespeare By Another Name* (Mark Anderson)
- *The Poems* (Shakespeare) includes The Sonnets (Penguin)
- Course Kit

Appendix B

Material included in the required Course Kit:

1.   Title Page and Dedication to *The First Folio*

2.   Heminge and Condell: *Preface to the First Collection of Shakespeare's Plays*

3.   Ben Jonson: Material from *The First Folio*

4.   Standard Chronology of Shakespeare's Life (from *Searching for Shakespeare* by Tanya Cooper, Yale University Press, 2006)

5.   Shakespeare: Life Facts and Timeline (from www.william-shakespeare.info/william-shakespearefacts, 2005)

6.   "A Conjectural Chronology of Shakespeare's Works" from "A Textual Companion" by Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor

7.   "Is Shakespeare Dead" from *My Autobiography* by Mark Twain

8.   "In Search of William Shakespeare" from *Shakespeare* by Bill Bryson (Harper-Collins, 2009)

9.   "Remarks on the Life and Writings of William Shakespeare" by Thomas Campbell, from *The Dramatic Works of William Shakespeare* (London: George Routledge and Sons, 1838)

10.   "Illustrations of The Sonnets," an essay by H. Crowther from *The Poetical Works of William Shakespeare* by H. Crowther, Boston: Phillips Sampson, 1851

11.   Shakespeare's Signatures (Wikipedia)

12.   "Relevance of the Shakspere Signatures" Deconstructed by Frank Davis from www.shakespearefellowship.org (newsletter Vol. 45, No. 1)

13.   The Last Will and Testament of William Shakespeare <william-shakespeare.info>

14.   "*Shakespeare" Identified* by Thomas Looney (1920) reprinted in *The Great Shakespeare Hoax, Vol. I*, (Altrocchi and Whittemore, eds, IUniverse)

15.   "Looking for Shakespeare" by Bethell and Matus (*The Atlantic*, Oct. 1991)

16.   Declaration of Reasonable Doubt About the Identity of William Shakespeare <DoubtAboutWill.org>

Appendix C

Some student term paper topics coming from the course:

"Marlowe as Shakespeare"

"Questions of Oxfordian Autobiography in the Plays of Shakespeare"

"Mary Sidney as Shakespeare"

"Codes in the Canon"

"Interpreting Hamlet From an Oxfordian Viewpoint"

"Shakespeare As Group Written"
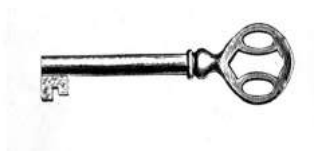
"Critical Responses to the film *Anonymous*"

"The Authorship Question and Popular Fiction: *Chasing Shakespeare* and
        Interred With Their Bones"

"The Death of Marlowe"

"The Authorship Question and the High School English Curriculum"

"My Doubts Remain: A Personal Statement."

(Not all papers are included here because many were quite similar in content.)

Nearly Forgotten Article by J.T. Looney
Additional Support for Edward de Vere as Shakespeare

By James A. Warren

In an almost unknown article that appeared in 1922, entitled "The Earl of Oxford as 'Shakespeare': New Evidence," J. Thomas Looney provided information uncovered after the publication of *"Shakespeare" Identified* that he said "may help to illustrate the general argument and to hasten the recognition of the Earl of Oxford as the greatest figure in English literature." The article with Looney's new evidence first appeared in *The Golden Hind* (Vol. 1, No. 1, October 1922), a publication of only 75 copies. His article has never – with one partial exception – been reprinted.

The Golden Hind was a beautifully constructed quarterly of art and literature put together with care by its editors, Clifford Bax and A. O. Spare, to provide their readership with visual and literary pleasure. It is a shame that the many interesting stories, poems, reviews and articles – and the prints and lithographs – that appeared in its eight issues are not better known today. Cecil Palmer, the publisher of *"Shakespeare" Identified*, was one of the subscribers to *The Golden Hind*, a link that perhaps explains the appearance of Looney's article in the quarterly's inaugural issue.

The one partial reprint was a freely edited excerpt from the middle of the article that appeared in *Oxfordian Vistas* (pages 168-176), a companion volume of articles edited by Ruth Loyd Miller that accompanied her third edition of Looney's *"Shakespeare" Identified* and *The Poems of Edward de Vere*, in 1975. Because I enjoy tracking down first editions of Oxfordian materials, I found and purchased a copy of the issue of *The Golden Hind* with Looney's article. A dozen libraries in the United States and counties of the British Commonwealth also hold copies of some issues of *The Golden Hind*.

Upon reading the original publication, I discovered that only about half of Looney's 5,300-word article had been included in *Oxfordian Vistas*, and that excerpt had been freely edited. I thus felt a bit of a thrill upon realizing that I was perhaps the first person interested in the Shakespeare authorship question in many decades to read the full text of Looney's article.

Of particular importance are Looney's thoughts on why the authorship question rose to prominence in the middle of the nineteenth century. In contrast to traditional Shakespearean scholars, who sometimes attribute the rise of interest in authorship doubt to a spread of the madness that afflicted Delia Bacon in her final years, Looney provided an entirely plausible explanation involving the intersection of two movements arising in the nineteenth century. The first was the marked interest in practical historical research, which "brought to light the disconcerting fact that the English

writer most distinguished by the brilliancy of his powers was, paradoxically, separated from all his fellows by a glaring deficiency of relevant personal records." The second was the development of a scientific study of literature, which "yielded a truer measure of the culture represented by the works." These two developments, Looney explained, "produced in many minds a definite conviction that a school of literature of the first rank had been allowed to grow up around a personality having no title whatever to the honour."

Looney then presented a newly-discovered example of how "Oxford's career and personal relationships have been distinctly embodied in the Shakespeare writings." That example is drawn from *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, and concerns the "almost exact parallel" between the financial aspects of the

---
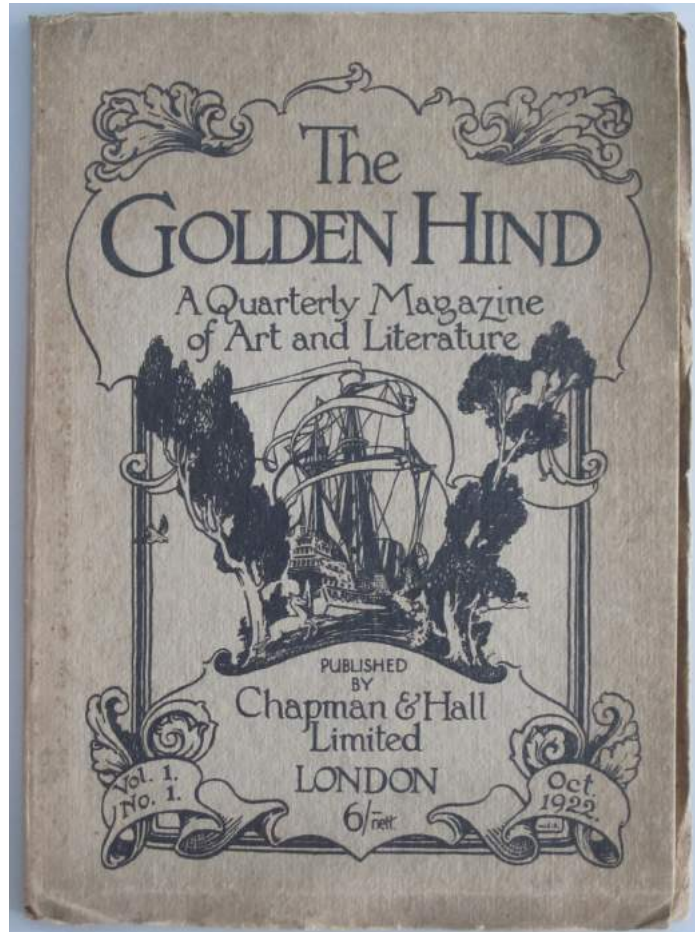
James A. Warren *was a Foreign Service officer with the U.S. Department of State for more than twenty years, during which he served in public diplomacy positions at U.S. embassies and consulates in eight countries, mostly in Asia. Following his career with the State Department he served as Executive Director of The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training (ADST) and then as Regional Director for Southeast Asia for the Institute of International Education (IIE). James is currently devoting his energies to literary pursuits, and in 2013 received the Vero Nihil Verius Award for Distinguished Shakespearean Scholarship from Concordia University for his accomplishment as the editor of* An Index to Oxfordian Publications. *He is a Fellow with the Center for the Study of the Great Ideas and the Adler-Aquinas Institute.*

marriage contract arranged by Mr. Page and Mr. Shallow regarding a marriage between Anne Page and Slender in the play, and the arrangements made by Lord Burghley and the Earl of Leicester for a marriage between Anne Cecil and Philip Sidney in real life. "The story of Slender's intended marriage to Anne Page being upset by her marriage to Fenton," Looney observed, is "in all essentials analogous to that of Sidney, Anne Cecil, and the Earl of Oxford."

Looney concluded with thoughts on how such linkages between the life of the true author and his works increases our understanding and enjoyment of them. "It is because the Shakespeare literature embodies work representing all periods of Oxford's lifetime, sometimes in a single play," he explained, "that efforts to fix a Shakespeare canon on the basis of an author younger than the Earl of Oxford have proved so inconclusive." Readers willing to accept that embodiment will "find in Oxford an author whose presence illuminates each page and transforms the literature from the most impersonal to the most personal documents in the English tongue. We have, in fact, become possessors of a new literature: a merriment heightened by personal touch with the great laughter-maker; the eternal human tragedy reinforced by a sense of the shadows that gathered around his life."

The entire text of this article follows so readers can gauge, in Looney's own words, the importance of the additional evidence he uncovered in support of "recognition of the Earl of Oxford as the greatest figure in English literature."

Note: This article reprint has been edited for consistency and to correct a few errors in the first printing. In quoted passages, Looney's italicizations for emphasis have been retained. Despite diligent effort, we have been unable to find additional information about the State Paper of 1573 as cited by Looney in this reprint.

The Earl of Oxford as "Shakespeare": New Evidence

by J. Thomas Looney

The strongest single argument in favour of William Shakespeare's authorship of the plays attributed to him is that belief in it went unchallenged for over two hundred years. What is far from generally understood is that the rapid undermining of that belief in recent years is due mainly to two movements belonging specifically to the nineteenth century.

First, there was the marked interest in practical historical research. The merely traditional was laid aside; all kinds of archives were ransacked; everywhere search was made for original sources of information. Applied to "Shakespeare" matters, this movement brought to light the disconcerting fact that the English writer most distinguished by the brilliancy of his powers was, paradoxically, separated from all his fellows by a glaring deficiency of relevant personal records.

The second movement was the development of a scientific study of literature. This threw up sounder criteria of literary criticism, which when applied to the "Shakespeare" writings, completely reversed the established opinion respecting the mental equipment of the dramatist. In the previous century, David Hume could write, without misgivings, of Shakespeare's lack of "instruction from the world or from books," and of the unfitness of the plays for "a refined and intelligent audience," and even of "the reproach of barbarism" brought by them upon the English nation (*History of England*). So long as such views prevailed, doubts respecting the authorship were practically impossible. When, however, nineteenth century scholarship had yielded a truer measure of the culture represented by the works, doubt arose immediately, almost as a matter of course, and, along with the phenomenal silence of the records, produced in many minds a definite conviction that a school of literature of the first rank had been allowed to grow up around a personality having no title whatever to the honour. Thus, the Shakespeare problem, which for all time will probably be regarded as one of the most romantic affairs in the records of literature, came to have a place in the world's history. Before the nineteenth century, however, it could hardly have arisen; during that century its rise was inevitable.

My concern here is neither with the evidence upon which William Shakespeare's claims have been rejected, nor with the haphazard handling of the problem, which brought first Francis Bacon, and afterwards a succession of other claimants, upon

the scene. I confine myself wholly to the claims of Edward de Vere, seventeenth Earl of Oxford, to whom the "Shakespeare" writings were traced, as a result of a simple scheme of research, explained two years ago in my work, *Shakespeare Identified*. The evidence then submitted still seems to me, as it has seemed to others, an adequate vindication of his title. New evidence, however, has kept on accumulating, and some of this may help, at any rate, to illustrate the general argument and to hasten the recognition of the Earl of Oxford as the greatest figure in English literature.

The discovery that Oxford's career and personal relationships have been distinctly embodied in the Shakespeare writings has already won recognition from people holding widely divergent views on the authorship question. But for hostility to the authorship theory, it would probably have been regarded as the most important discovery about the Shakespeare literature that has yet come to light. Continuing this fascinating line of research, I propose to develop an argument first noticed last year in my introduction to Edward de Vere's poems. This has to do with his marriage, in December, 1571, at the age of twenty-one, to the daughter of Lord Burghley, Anne Cecil, who was then barely fifteen years of age.

At the age of twelve, Edward de Vere had inherited one of the proudest titles in the English peerage and, as a ward of the Crown, he passed a large part of his youth in the company of Queen Elizabeth. William Cecil, being Master of the Court of Wards, Oxford made his home at Cecil's fine new residence in the Strand. Prior to Anne Cecil's marriage to the Earl of Oxford, negotiations for her marriage to Philip Sidney had been pushed forward almost to a settlement, and it is in the peculiar circumstances of this matrimonial project – quite an outstanding episode in Sidney's biography – that we find a special combination of details, with an almost exact parallel in the most significant of Shakespeare's plays. For verification of the various facts I refer the reader to the respective articles in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, and to H. R. Fox Bourne's *Life of Philip Sidney*.

Two of the most noticeable features of Sidney's career are his comparative poverty and his very dependent attitude towards his rich and powerful uncle, his mother's brother, Robert Dudley, Queen Elizabeth's Earl of Leicester. Seldom do we find Sidney's name in contemporary records except in association with Leicester's; and, as Sidney's father was absent in Ireland at the time of the marriage negotiations, the actual bargaining, for such it undoubtedly was, fell to Anne's father and Sidney's uncle, the two outstanding figures of Queen Elizabeth's Court. The first move had evidently come from Sidney's friends, for Cecil stated quite frankly that he sought a wealthier husband for his daughter. Indeed, the peculiar emphasis given to all the pecuniary details of the business, along with the social eminence and respective relationships of the two chief agents, are all so unique as to quite justify the attention which Sidney's biographers have given to the matter. The governing idea throughout was, clearly, to make Sidney acceptable financially as a husband for Anne, and, if

effect had been given to the proposed arrangements, his position would have been completely changed for the better. The amusing thing is that while Anne was being so assiduously wooed for Sidney with financial concessions from Sidney's friends, he himself showed no enthusiasm; he wished to stand well with those who were directing matters, but that was all.

Notwithstanding a most elaborate formulating of terms, the project, somehow, came to nothing and Anne was married to the Earl of Oxford, evidently with some precipitance, for Burghley had not intended her to be married till she was sixteen, and no financial arrangements like those drawn up for Sidney have been discovered. It is difficult to say definitely where the responsibility for the change lay. Cecil speaks emphatically of "a purposed determination in my lord of Oxford to marry with my daughter," and affirms that Oxford "moved it to me himself," somewhat to his surprise. (*Belvoir MSS., I., 95.*) In the same letter, he recognizes Oxford's superiority of birth, makes an uneasy reference to the project respecting Sidney, and discloses that at least one other person was regarded as a likely husband for Anne. Between the lines it is possible to read a suggestion of resistance from Burghley. On the other hand, Lord St. John, who afterwards married into the Cecil family, laid the chief responsibility at the door of Anne Cecil herself. "The Earl of Oxford," he wrote in July, 1571, "hath gotten himself a wife, or, at least, a wife hath caught him." Everything, therefore, points to Anne having made up her mind very decidedly against Sidney and having, with Oxford's co-operation, upset the plans so carefully made by her father and Sidney's uncle. A point of central importance is, that while Anne's and Sidney's affairs, in the project which miscarried, were directed by these respective relatives, Oxford stands quite alone. His father and mother were both dead. No single relative of his appears in the story, and he is represented as having initiated and carried to a successful issue, his matrimonial arrangements.

Two other remarks on the general situation are necessary. Firstly, all the details in the Sidney arrangements would naturally be strictly private at the time, and have only become known in recent years through the publication of Cecil's papers. Oxford, however, as an inmate of Cecil's house, and, doubtless, an interested listener to domestic discussions on the subject, would have many of the particulars impressed upon his mind at the time. From Anne herself, too, he would naturally learn something of the details. Secondly, as a Royal ward, much of his time would be spent at Windsor Castle, in intimate association with all the people who figure in the story.

Now Shakespeare has but one play in which he fastens himself to a particular piece of English soil, namely, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. Therefore, to any theory assigning the plays to an Elizabethan courtier, this drama must be of commanding importance. The dramatist's familiarity, both with the inside and with the surroundings of the castle, is eloquent [sic] of much more than a casual acquaintance, while the address and bearing of his characters – although townspeople – continually be-

speak the life of the Court. Our immediate interest, however, is not in the inimitable Falstaff fun, but in the thread of romance which combines the comical episodes. This is the story of Slender's intended marriage to Anne Page being upset by her marriage to Fenton – we have, also, a minor aspirant to the hand of Anne – a story in all essentials analogous to that of Sidney, Anne Cecil, and the Earl of Oxford. Such triangles of romance are, no doubt, common enough, both in real life and in fiction; it is in the combination of distinctive circumstances that we shall find, I think, clear proof of an intended identity.

It will not be agreeable to Englishmen, who have magnified Sidney into a great heroic figure, to learn that our "Shakespeare" satirized him in the character of Slender, making him in this role the key to *The Merry Wives*. It is many years however, since Horace Walpole, in his letter to Hume, first questioned the fashionable estimate of Sidney, and, although our business is with a definite group of facts rather than personal judgments, the significant point is that "Shakespeare's" treatment of Sidney, as Slender, harmonizes with Oxford's known attitude to him.

To save space, then, I must ask for a very attentive reading of Act 2, Scene 4, where the leading characters all meet at the house of Page. At once we are struck with the amusing emphasis given to Slender's money affairs, the central place that these take in the matrimonial project, and his constant clinging to the skirts of his uncle, Robert Shallow. If, in addition, Act 1, Scene 1, and Act 3, Scene 3, be read, the general sense of identity will probably be irresistible.

Only in the chief scene (Act 3, Scene 4) is Shallow spoken of as "uncle" to Slender; everywhere else the less committal word "cousin" is used, and whether accidental or deliberate the fact is equally significant. Another interesting point is that after Anne's father and Slender's uncle have discussed the business and fixed up an understanding (i.e., between Acts 1 and 3), Slender's position has manifestly improved. The marriage provision made for him, like Sidney's, was going to put him on his feet. Just, too, as the first move in the matter had come from Sidney's friends, so do we find it comes from Slender's friends. The chief agent on Sidney's side was his uncle, Robert Dudley; the chief agent on Slender's side is his uncle, Robert Shallow. The director of Anne Page's affairs, as of Anne Cecil's, is a well-to-do and financially watchful father. Slender, like Sidney, is curiously lukewarm, but anxious to please the negotiators. Anne Page, like Anne Cecil, is evidently averse to the marriage. Add to this that Fenton, who occupies the place of Oxford, appears in the same orphaned condition – he is evidently in possession of his inheritance, and no single family representative appears – he personally presses his suit with Anne's father, taking up the same determined attitude that Cecil has described in Oxford, and, like him, carries his plans through to a successful issue. Place, then, the scene at Windsor – the meeting-ground of all the parties in the romance of real life – and it becomes evident that we have an analogy, probably as extraordinary, in its way, as any in English literature. Those who

have at any time interested themselves in Elizabethan literature will not need to be told that such a use of contemporary personalities was a common practice. Now, for the first time, however, it has become possible to bring the "Shakespeare" dramas into line with the literary usages of the day.

With the facts before him, the reader may be left to follow up the parallel in the play, and to enjoy the superb satire on Sidney's lukewarmness and on Leicester's active interest. He will be able, then, to pick out single sentences, so condensing the whole historic position as to make doubt almost impossible. It is when we turn to precise details, however, that we meet with a body of evidence which ought to settle the question of identity at once and for ever. And first we shall take Slender's financial position. Shallow and Page having met, and evidently decided upon an income for Slender, and a jointure to be settled by Slender upon Anne, the young people are again brought together, whilst Shallow stands by to urge his lukewarm nephew to the encounter. Anne, having learnt something of the details, expresses her aversion in an aside:

> This is my father's choice,
> O, what a world of vile ill-favour'd faults,
> Looks handsome in *three hundred pounds a year.*
> <div align="right">(3, 4, 31-33)</div>

In Act 1, Sc. 1 (256-258), Anne's dower has been discussed in her absence, and on her return, Slender, trying evidently to recommend himself to her, remarks:

> I keep but three men and a boy yet,
> till my mother be dead. But what though? Yet I live like
> a poor gentleman born.

The fact that Slender's friends are straining their resources to make him acceptable as a husband for Anne is amusingly illustrated in Act 3, Sc. 4 (48-50):

> Shallow: He will make you a hundred and fifty pounds
>   jointure,
> Anne: Good Master Shallow, let him woo for himself.

That Slender's revenue is derived from lands is brought out in the contrast with Dr. Caius, who is "well-moneyed"; Slender is "*well landed*" (4, 4, 85).

We turn now to the actual case of Philip Sidney, and as the biographies are not quite accurate, we shall take the details direct from the Hatfield MSS. (I., 415). The first, and much longer section of the proposed settlement, deals exclusively with obligations incurred on behalf of Sidney. Here it is evident that Sidney's friends had sought the match, and that in consequence, Cecil was driving a hard bargain. Out of lands belonging to the Sidneys, valued at £1,140. 3s. 2d. yearly, only £100 a year

was to be left for younger sons, and another £100 for the payment of debts and the marriage of daughters. Philip and Anne (or their children) were ultimately to have all the rest, the following being the chief arrangements:

1. On the day of the marriage, Sidney should have an income of £266. 13s 4d. (400 marks) yearly. As lay rector of Whitford, in Flint, he already had 80 a year; so that, after all charges against the living had been met, his total immediate income would be something over "three hundred pounds a year."

2. At his father's death he was to receive an increase of only £147. 16s. 7d. a year; whilst at this mother's death an increase of £325. 14s. 3d.: "in all, £473. 10 s. 10d."

Whatever the reason for this, his mother held the key to the situation, and for a really substantial improvement in his position, he had to wait *till his mother be dead*. In fact, if she should die before his father, Philip's share of the family revenue would actually become greater than his father's share. He would have his Whitford sinecure and his mother's death would bring comparative affluence, and decided importance, to this "poor gentleman born."

3. Anne was to receive a *jointure*, the actual amount of which, however, is not stated. Two references to it appear on this side of the contract: one, that it would be *augmented* by 66. 13s. 4d. yearly on the death of "the father." (This must mean Philip's father: Cecil's undertakings form a separate section.) An original jointure of £150 would be, however, in proportion to the other items; if the various sums are added, about £133 yearly of the estate is still unappropriated.

The remainder of this section deals with minor re-adjustments. We may safely leave all these particulars to the reflection of the reader, and pass now to the other side of the bargain.

Again taking the play first, Hugh Evans (very significantly a Welsh parson – for Sidney had been brought up with Welsh associations), the friend of Shallow and Slender, raises the question of a marriage between Slender and Anne Page, and again the money, Anne's marriage portion, takes first place. Two clearly separated items are referred to, both pointedly cryptical:

1. An inheritance of *seven hundred pounds*, left by "her grandsire on his death's bed," when "she is able to overtake seventeen years old."

2. "A better penny": that is a somewhat larger sum, which, it is suggested, "her father" might bestow (1, 1, 55).

Similarly, two paragraphs exactly cover the whole of Anne Cecil's marriage portion; and, keeping to the order in the play, I shall reverse them, placing her father's gift last.

1.   After stating that the young people shall have "diet and lodging within (Cecil's) house for two years," it proceeds: "if Anne's younger brother or brethren shall die without issue, A. C. shall have, in reversion, after the death of her father and mother, £200 lands, and also a dwelling-house within 13 miles of London, meet for a gentleman of £500 lands" (an inheritance, therefore, of exactly *seven hundred pounds*.)

2.   "The sum of £1,000 shall be given with Anne Cecil" (the "better penny" than £700, which Anne Page's father was to bestow).

The chief interest centers in the first clause. Here we have two parts of a single provision, the link between them being missing. The closing phrases suggest however, that although actual possession was deferred, the house was intended for their almost immediate occupation; hence the connection with the two years' lodging at Cecil's house. As Anne would be fifteen or sixteen at her marriage, this would make her "seventeen (or eighteen) years old" when they took over this residence. I do not stress the point but it cannot be ignored.

Another gap in this reference to a £700 reversionary interest is that no indication is given of its actual source, while there are conditions attached to it which could hardly be of Cecil's own making. It placed the possible heirs of a sickly six-year-old boy (Robert Cecil) between Anne and the inheritance; it deliberately passed over Cecil's elder son Thomas (by his first wife) and his younger daughter Elizabeth (by his second wife) and fixed the property, in reversion, upon the legal heirs of his second wife. This could hardly have been a voluntary contribution to his daughter's marriage portion; it is much more likely that, such as it was, it was Anne's in her own right. On the other hand, Anne *Page's* "seven hundred pounds" came from "her grandsire on his death's bed." This raises the questions of whether Anne Cecil's grandfather had any outstanding connection with the Cecil property, whether a death's-bed will was involved, and if so, whether it throws any light on the peculiar conditions attached to the seven hundred pounds in the marriage settlement.

To all these questions an answer is to be found in another important document in the Hatfield MSS. (I.116). From this it appears that Burghley's father, Richard Cecil, whose wealth supplied the first solid foundation to his son's fortunes, was hostile to William's first marriage, and was suspected of having made a will unfavourable to his son. Cecil's second marriage being eminently satisfactory, a new will, "15 or 16 lines written on a great skin of parchment with his own hand," was shown to a Mr. Digby a few months before his death. This, he affirmed, "was his will, but *no man should know his mind before his death*." The death took place, not at his own residence, but at

Cecil's house, then in Cannon Row, Westminster (Hat. MSS., V., 69), and the question seems to have arisen whether "his father did engross" the will. Cecil's mother was reluctant to produce it, while Cecil himself had come to some kind of an understanding with her "to carry out his father's meaning more than he was bound to." It is no straining of language then, to speak of Cecil's inheritance as having come from Anne Cecil's "grandsire upon his death's bed," The matter was certainly of very considerable interest and moment in the early history of the house of Cecil.

Whatever may have been the hidden facts, it is clear that Cecil did not receive the whole of the property free from penalties arising from his father's original displeasure. It is reasonable to suppose that some of it was assigned to the heirs, male or female, of Cecil and his second wife. Such, at any rate, is the very peculiar condition attached to Anne Cecil's reversionary interest in the £700. Everything points to its having come from "her grandsire on his death's bed," and there are even indications that she was not to touch it till "she was able to overtake seventeen years old." The play, the marriage settlement, and the document respecting Anne Cecil's grandfather, therefore become but complementary parts of one consistent story. The question to be faced by those who sincerely want the truth is, whether they actually belong to one another or, have we, in these matters become the sport of the gods? Dramatic embellishments would naturally be mingled with the facts, but it is doubtful whether another case could be cited in which a dramatist so closely followed facts of this nature and placed an identification so entirely outside the range of reasonable dispute. Even if there had been no correspondence whatever, in the details, the mere accentuation of the financial side of an abortive marriage project, with parallel personal relations and identity of place, would have made the case well-nigh unassailable. With the details as they are, argument becomes superfluous.

Starting then with the identification of Slender with Sidney, we find the drama packed with corroborative trifles; the tall, "slender" body, the somewhat pinched face of Sidney's early portraits, his stomach weakness, his strained politeness, his bookishness, the rawness and forwardness mentioned by Leicester, the *three* servants in his travel license: all are in the play. The relative ages and social standing of the principals, the "sharp words" of Cecil's wife, the gambling of Leicester, the suspicion and tricky espionage of Cecil's colleague Francis Walsingham (whose place is taken, naturally by Page's friend 'Frank' Ford): all are there. Even the retention of several Christian names is startling.

Our chief concern, however must be with Fenton, who occupies the place of the Earl of Oxford. Take, then, the following references to him: 'Great of birth," "his state gall'd with expense," "his riots," "his wild societies," "he capers, he dances, he writes verses," "he kept company with the wild prince and Poins." Hardly a word that does not make such a pointed allusion to Oxford that when they are placed together, it almost seems as if it was intended that he should be recognized. Certainly,

if these phrases had been submitted, in combination, to any courtier between 1570 and 1580, he would have guessed at once that the Earl of Oxford was meant. The reference to "the wild prince and Poins" is strikingly apposite. In *Henry IV, Part One*, "Shakespeare" presents Prince Hal associated with Falstaff and his crew in a wild adventure at Gadshill, between Gravesend and Rochester. There, Falstaff and three others waylay travelers, after which the party rides "merrily to London," to meet at the Boar's Head Tavern, Eastcheap. Consider, then, the following matter-of-fact record, in a State paper of 1573:

> "William Fawnt and John Wotton (complain) to Burghley. . . . Have been assaulted between Gravesend and Rochester, by three of the Earl of Oxford's men, who escaped towards London."
>
> <div align="right">(Dom. 1547-1580, p. 461)</div>

What would readers of today not give to have a detailed account of all that transpired? Here we have the exact spot, the suggestion of a similar escapade, a party of the same size, and the same subsequent movements (the flight to London). To these we may add the fact that the last occasion in history upon which we meet with the Earl of Oxford's men was when they performed some unknown play at the Boar's Head Tavern, Eastcheap, in the very year that *The Merry Wives of Windsor* was first published (1602). The question of whether Fenton is Oxford may, I think, be left safely to the judgment of impartial readers. The only remaining point is whether Fenton is "Shakespeare." This involves the evidence as a whole, which cannot be adequately treated within the scope of this article. A few brief observations bearing mainly upon the play may, however, be submitted:

1. The entire situation is treated purely from Oxford's point of view.

2. The exceptional tenderness and reverence in the treatment of Anne Page (see Hepworth Dixon's *Royal Windsor*) rank her with Juliet and Desdemona, as the girl-wife of "Shakespeare."

3. Thirty years elapsed between the events and the pirated publication of the play. By that time Oxford was the only survivor of all who had taken part in the events represented. Twenty years more elapsed before the authorized publication.

4. Soon after his marriage (if not before) Oxford was immersed in the literary and dramatic movement of the time. Though represented as a leading force, and one of "the best in comedy," the traces of his activities are so slight in the contemporary records (see Fleay's *London Stage*) as to suggest deliberate secrecy. Puttenham, in fact, speaks of him as the chief of a band of poets whose writings could not "be found out or made public" (1598).

5.   After the death of Lady Oxford he went into retirement, during which came the great Shakespearean outburst, involving plays in which as we have just seen, the most private affairs of his youth and early manhood were represented.

6.   No single line of drama under his name has survived, although no less than 556 plays have come down to us for the classic period of English drama: 1584-1642. (*Fleay*, p. 388).

To these general considerations I would add a literary detail just recently noticed. After Oxford's marriage, Burghley attempted to exercise surveillance over his son-in-law, and thus provoked in October, 1584 a spirited protest, not published however, until recent years.

> "My Lord," [Oxford] wrote in a postscript addressed to Burghley, "the other day your man Stainer told me that you sent for my man Amis. . . . I think it very strange that your lordship should enter into that course with me. . . . I mean not to be your child or your ward. *I am that I am*, and scorn to be offered that injury to think that I am so weak as not to be able to govern myself. . . . wherefore [I] desire that your lordship will leave that course as hurtful to us both."[1]

To the Shakespeare student this immediately recalls Sonnet 121 (published in 1609):

> Or on my frailties why are frailer spies?
> . . . *I am that I am*, and they that level
> At my abuses reckon up their own;
> I may be straight, though they themselves be bevel.
> By their rank thoughts my deeds must not be shown.
> <div align="right">(Sonnet 121: 7, 9-12)</div>

Here we have the same situation, resented in the same spirit, treated in the same style and there, rooted in the centre of both outbursts, is the identical sentence, the pivot of both utterances, an unmistakeable index of personality, and, in every word of it, characteristically "Shakespearean." And so it is, whenever we are able to pierce the mists of calumny and touch directly the person of the Earl of Oxford.

Of the importance of solving the Shakespeare problem little needs to be said. To students, anxious for a canon of Shakespeare's writings, it must come first, for the basis of any such canon must be dynamic as well as static. It must embrace not only intrinsic qualities and persisting forms, but also the parallel movement of the mind and art of the author, and the mind and art of his period. And it is because the Shakespeare literature embodies work representing all periods of Oxford's lifetime, sometimes in a single play, that efforts to fix a Shakespeare canon on the basis of an

author younger than the Earl of Oxford, have proved so inconclusive. The question cannot, therefore, be shelved, except at the price of critical futility.

"Shakespeare" addressed himself, however, not to the scholastic intellect but to the human soul. And it is to those who approach "Shakespeare" in the spirit of "Shakespeare" that the authorship question matters most. Such readers will find in Oxford an author whose presence illuminates each page and transforms the literature from the most impersonal to the most personal documents in the English tongue. We have, in fact, become possessors of a new literature: a merriment heightened by personal touch with the great laughter-maker – the eternal human tragedy reinforced by a sense of the shadows that gathered around his life. In place of a colourless personality we substitute one whose very defects and excesses mark his kinship with the world's great poets. For genius, which is but specialism in its most intense form, while it enriches the race, always exacts a high penalty from the individual. Thus it is that poets, who from the greatest heights of imagination and passion have poured down treasures upon mankind, have so frequently been adrift in relation to ordinary affairs. We accept with gratitude what they give, while we tenderly and reverently draw a veil over their weaknesses and failures.

Concerning one reputed weakness in Oxford, I am bound, however, to express a carefully considered dissent. While others have said much of his relationship with Anne Cecil, he has remained strangely silent. Did he leave it to the plays ultimately to reveal the truth? The question is too large for present discussion. It seems to me that their teaching is unmistakeable: namely, that if "the sweet little Countess of Oxford" is destined to live in English literature as Ophelia, Juliet, Desdemona, and Anne Page, then, what Beatrice was to Dante, such, under widely different circumstances, did Anne Cecil become to our English "Shakespeare." It is a great thing for us, then, that she lies in Westminster Abbey, and one day, when the world has done justice to Edward de Vere, her monumental tomb there will doubtless become a shrine, where, binding in one the memory of both, fit public honours will be paid to him who has become the glory of England.

Note

1.   Feuillerat, Albert (1874-1953), *Contribution a L'Histoire De La Renaissance en Angleterre*, published in French by Cambridge University Press, 1910. p. 533.
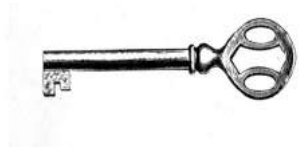
Is Greene's Groats-worth of Wit

About Shakespeare, or by Him?

by Robert R. Prechter

Biographies of Shakespeare suffer from a dearth of information about the playwright's presence in London. Perhaps the most enthusiastically cited reference to Shakespeare is from Robert Greene's *Greene's Groats-worth of Wit, bought with a million of Repentance*, a publication from 1592.

Who wrote the book? Why did the author craft its unusual mid-course transition? Was Greene's famous repentance sincere or pretended? Is Shakespeare involved, and if so, how?

One: Robert Greene Is a Pen-Name

Orville Ward Owen (1893-5) was the first to postulate that the name Robert Greene was a pseudonym; his candidate was Francis Bacon. Stephanie Hopkins Hughes (1998, 2009) and Nina Green (1999) have made a better case that Robert Greene was a pen-name of Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford. This paper offers some contributions to this line of thought.

Robert Greene's canon comprises thirty-six prose pamphlets and an estimated seven plays. Surely a writer this active would have a sound biography. Yet there is no record of a public life.

The Repentance of Robert Greene, written immediately prior to Greene's alleged death in September 1592, has the dying Greene testify to his own notoriety: "I became an Author of Playes, and a penner of Love Pamphlets, so that I soone grew famous in that qualitie, that who for that trade growne so ordinary about London as Robin Greene" (Grosart 12: 173). Yet, to the contrary, Greene's absence from the scene is a consistent theme in biographical research. Two of Greene's plays are noted, "As it was plaid before the Queenes Majestie" and "As it was plaid by her Majesties servants," yet no courtier wrote of having met the famous author or having seen his dazzling plays.

Even Greene's literary contemporaries never ran into him. Gabriel Harvey, who battled Greene quite personally in the press, in *Foure Letters* (1593) admits, "I was altogether unacquainted with the man, never once saluted him by name" (Grosart 1: 168). In *Kind Harts Dreame* (1592), Henry Chettle talks not of meeting Greene personally, but of seeing a figure in a dream "whome I supposed to be Robert Greene, maister of Artes…." A certain "B.R." (widely presumed to be Barnabe Rich) in his preface to *Greenes Newes from Heaven and Hell* (1593) similarly speaks of the ghost

of Greene but "claims he never met Greene" (Carroll 21). In B.R.'s book, Greene's ghost touches on Greene's invisibility: "I am the spirite of Robert Greene, not unknowne unto thee (I am sure) by my name, when my wrytings lately priviledged on every post, hath given notice of my name unto infinite numbers of people that never knewe me by the view of my person."

London was not that big a place in 1592. How could Robert Greene be the most popular writer of his day "for both press and stage," be "famous" and "so ordinary about London," and yet remain unseen?

The only writer who claims to have met Greene – and then "only for a carowse or two" – is Thomas Nashe, writing in *Strange Newes* (1593), published shortly after Greene's death. Even Nashe is quick to admit, "I . . . have beene two yeares together and not seene him" (Grosart 2: 283). In other words, Greene and his supposedly closest friend failed to cross paths over a two-year period at the height of his popularity right through to his dying day. No one, including Nashe, ever mentioned attending a funeral. There is no birth or death record for the writer, either.

Greene's invisibility extends even to his own pretenses. In *The Notable Discovery of Coosenage* (1591), Greene claims to have associated with criminals. But "some of the material in the pamphlets results not from personal observation at all, but from the reading of earlier exposés" (Crupi 17). Indeed "…Greene got all he knew about cheating at cards [from] the *Manifest Detection of Dice Play* (1552)" (Jordan 89). He seems to have associated mostly with books.

Gabriel Harvey is famous for a passage in his *Foure Letters* (1592) describing Greene's condition on his deathbed. Just a month after Harvey's pamphlet was published, however, Nashe charged that the manner of Greene's death was Harvey's invention. In addressing Harvey in *Strange Newes*, Nashe refers to "that fatall banquet of Rhenish wine and pickled hearing *(if thou wilt needs have it so)*." (Grosart 2: 221; emphasis in the original). In the end, Nashe denies Harvey's entire description: "For the lowsie circumstance of his poverty before his death, and sending that miserable writte to his

---

Robert Prechter *is Executive Director of the Socionomics Institute, a social-causality research organization, and President of Elliott Wave International, a financial forecasting firm. He has written/edited fourteen books, including a two-book set,* Socionomics – The Science of History and Social Prediction *(1999/2003). His paper, "The Financial/ Economic Dichotomy in Social Behavioral Dynamics" (2007), was published in* The Journal of Behavioral Finance*, and "Social Mood, Stock Market Performance and U.S. Presidential Re-Elections" (2012), was published in* Sage Open. *He has also written several papers for* The Oxfordian *and* Brief Chronicles *and a number of articles for* The Shakespeare-Oxford Newsletter *and* Shakespeare Matters.

wife, it cannot be but *thou lyest*, learned Gabriell, [with] palpable lies, damned lies, lies as big as one of the Guardes chynes of beefe" (emphasis in the original). In other words, Harvey made up the scene.

The lone likeness of Greene we have is a woodcut appearing on the title page of John Dickenson's *Greene in Conceipt* (1598). It is a drawing representing Robert Greene in his burial shroud, writing at a table. *The Dictionary of National Biography* called the image "doubtless fanciful" ("Robert Greene" DNB 8: 511).

As Hughes pointed out, four entries naming Robert Greene in university records and a mention of his name in the household accounts of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, provide barely credible evidence that Robert Greene existed. The name Robert Greene therefore may be an allonym rather than a pseudonym, matching Oxford's relationship with William Shaksper of Stratford.

Greene's Attributes Fit Oxford

Greene's sentiments mirror Oxford's position at the pinnacle of society. "To come to *Mamillia*, the first of Greene's works, after considering his life is to be struck first by an air of social pretension. . . . Greene seems to escape his Norwich origins . . . by

adopting an aristocratic pose [and] identifying with the older attitudes of nobility and gentry in his writing" (Crupi 7, 24, 36). Perhaps Greene could so fully "escape his Norwich origins" because he never had them.

Greene's battles with Gabriel Harvey make sense in the Oxfordian context. In 1580, Harvey lampooned Oxford in a Latin poem, *Speculum Tuscanismi* [*Mirror of Tuscanism*]. The two men traded barbs for some time thereafter. On July 20, 1592, Greene registered a pamphlet titled *A Quip for an Upstart Courtier*, which included a section that "offended him mortally by scornful allusions to Harvey's low-born family" (Kunitz and Haycraft 252). The idea that someone of obscure parentage – from a seacoast town lacking a noble house – would disparage a rival for his common birth is absurd. But birth status was the Earl of Oxford's trump card against Harvey, who was the son of a humble rope-maker.

In *Groats-worth*, there is "an attack against Lord Burghley in a beast fable." Allen Carroll observed, "The badger here, having lost all family and friends, has become, in effect, a ward and is urged to marry by the fox," and "a fox in the early nineties has to be Burghley" (Carroll 108). That an independent Robert Greene would know or care about such matters is dubious. But this fable reflects Oxford's personal life. He was a royal ward under Burghley's care, and Burghley pressured him to marry his daughter, Anne (as he ultimately did).

Greene's *A Notable Discovery of Coosnage* (1591) makes "a sweeping claim to know by observation the customs of Italy, Spain, France, Germany, Poland, and Denmark" (Crupi 6). There is no evidence that a writer named Robert Greene ever traveled to the continent, so most scholars rightly find this claim "difficult to take very seriously" (Crupi 6). In other words, they think Greene lied. But Oxford is known to have traveled through Italy, France, and Germany in 1574-6, and his servant William Lewin wrote to Lord Burghley about Oxford on July 4, 1575, "I am certainly induced to believe that, while traveling to Augsburg, he has turned aside into Poland, since it was once his plan to visit the Polish court" (Sutton). Oxfordians have long speculated that Oxford learned of Denmark through his association with his brother-in-law, Peregrine Bertie, who "was sent on embassy to the court at Elsinore" (Delahoyde). Thus, Oxford had at least five out of six of Greene's destinations covered.

To explain Greene's repeated selection of Italian settings for his stories, some scholars have simply presumed that he traveled. Storojenko imagined "reminiscences still fresh in Greene's mind of Italy, from whence he must have returned in the spring or summer of 1580, that he laid the scene of his first story in Padua" (Storojenko, 1: 66). Grosart, to his credit, tested this theory: "I visited the famous University of Padua expressly to see if Greene could be traced there. I found many English and Scottish names among the lists of students, but nothing of Greene" (Grosart *Robert Greene* 1: 66fn).

At least one of Greene's poems was attributed – falsely according to critics – to the Earl of Oxford. Concerning "one of [Greene's] best-known poems, his Sonetto in *Menaphon*, What thing is Love? . . . Mr. Crawford (1908) points out that Allot in *England's Parnassus* wrongly ascribes this poem to the Earl of Oxford" (Jordan 128, 28fn). Yet Mr. Allot, writing in 1600 when Oxford was still alive, may have known what he was doing.

Direct Links between Greene and Oxford

No one since Allot has tied Robert Greene directly to the Earl of Oxford, but key connections exist. Between 1580 and 1589, Greene dedicated works to at least a dozen people who were among Oxford's family, friends, and allies.

1.   In 1580, Greene dedicated *Mamillia* to "Lord Darcie of the North." According to the genealogical website (*http://geni.com*), John Darcy, the second Baron Darcy of Chiche was born circa 1532. He was the son of Thomas Darcy, the first Baron Darcy of Chiche and Elizabeth Vere, sister of John de Vere, 16th Earl of Oxford, Edward de Vere's father. In other words, she was Oxford's aunt on his father's side, so John Darcy was Oxford's cousin. The following year, Oxford acknowledged this very relative. After Darcy's death on March 3, 1581, his daughter Elizabeth – Oxford's first cousin once removed – became the second wife of John, the first Lord Lumley. Oxford wrote to Burghley in June 1582, "I have bene an ernest suter unto yowre Lordship, for my Lord Lumley, [who] hathe ma[t]ched with a near kinswoman of myne, to whose father I allwayes was behouldinge unto, for his assured and kind disposition unto me" (Nelson 2003: 291).

2.   In 1584, Greene dedicated *Arbasto* to Mary Cavendish, "Lady Mary Talbot, wife of Gilbert, Lorde Talbot." Gilbert Talbot, born in 1552, was of Oxford's generation and a baron; later he became the seventh Earl of Shrewsbury and the seventh Earl of Waterford. Talbot was an early admirer of Oxford. On May 11, 1573, he wrote to his father, the Earl of Shrewsbury, as follows: "My Lord of Oxford is lately grown into great credit; for the queen's Majesty delighteth more in his personage, and his dancing and valiantness, than any other. I think Sussex doth back him all that he can; if it were not for his fickle head, he would pass any of them shortly" ("Edward de Vere" DNB 20: 226). One "F.D." whom scholars identify as Francis Davison, in his *Anagrammata* (1603), listed Edward de Vere and Gilbert Talbot among thirteen politically aligned lords and knights. This dedication, then, was written to Oxford's friend's wife.

3.   Greene dedicated *Morando, the Tritameron of Love* (1584) to Phillip Howard, who had become Earl of Arundel in 1580. Philip was the eldest son of

Oxford's cousin, Thomas Howard, fourth Duke of Norfolk, making him Oxford's first cousin once removed. Thomas's father was Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey and Oxford's uncle, the man who pioneered English blank verse, the mode that helped make Shakespeare immortal.

4. Greene dedicated *Myrrour of Modestie* (1584) to the Countess of Derby, Margaret Clifford Stanley, whose husband, Henry Stanley, fourth Earl of Derby, had been among the dozen recipients, along with Oxford, of an honorary MA degree from the University of Oxford in 1566. Henry's maternal grandfather was Thomas Howard, patriarch of a line of Oxford's cousins. In January 1595, Henry and Margaret's son, William Stanley, married Oxford's eldest daughter Elizabeth, thereby becoming Oxford's son-in-law.

5. Greene dedicated *Euphues His Censure to Philautus* (1587) to Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex. Essex was a royal ward under Lord Bughley, as Oxford had been.

6. In 1588, Greene dedicated *Alcida: Greenes Metamorphosis* to "Sir Charles Blount, Knight," thereby acknowledging Blount's rise to knighthood in 1587. Blount's father, James Blount, 6th Baron Mountjoy, served on the commission at the trial of Oxford's cousin, Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk, in 1572. Oxford's warder, Cecil, encouraged James's alchemical experiments "between 1566 and 1572," ("James Blount, 6th Baron Mountjoy" Wikipedia) when Oxford was serving his final years as Cecil's ward. Charles Blount did not become popular with the poets of his day until 1598-1606, after becoming a Knight of the Garter in 1597 and especially after helping defeat the Irish in 1602, but Greene had tipped his hat to him a decade earlier. The timing fits a likely interaction between two men. Blount was a presence at court, and "in 1588 he was one of those who built ships at their own expense to join the pursuit of the Armada" ("Charles Blount" DNB 2: 702). Several historical accounts report that Oxford was on the coast during the engagement. The Armada was defeated on August 8, 1588. That the two men had some share in this experience fits the timing of Oxford's choice of Blount as the dedicatee for Greene's *Alcida*, which was registered four months later on December 9, 1588. There is also a historical connection between the two men, as one of Sir Charles' ancestors was Sir James Blount, who with John de Vere, 13th Earl of Oxford, crossed the channel with Henry Tudor, Queen Elizabeth's grandfather, to fight against King Richard III. The future King Henry VII "sailed from Harfleur on Sunday 1st August 1485 and landed at Milford Haven a week later, with Oxford and James Blount, who was knighted upon arrival" (Anderson 116). One might conjecture that at some time during or after the Armada engagement Oxford and Sir Charles may have conferred on this interesting parallel to their own situation.

7. In 1589, Greene dedicated *Ciceronis Amor* to Ferdinando Stanley. Ferdinando was the eldest son of Henry and Margaret, the Earl and Countess of Derby. Upon Henry's death on September 25, 1593, Ferdinando became the fifth Earl of Derby and assumed the title of Lord Strange. His father had kept players, and Ferdinando expanded them into an acting troupe, Lord Strange's Men. The company is known to have acted one or more parts of Shakespeare's *Henry VI* trilogy, and tradition has it that "Shakespeare may have been employed by Strange in his early years" ("Ferdinando Stanley" Wikipedia). Upon Ferdinando's death in 1594, the Stanleys's younger son, William, became the sixth Earl of Derby and shortly thereafter married Elizabeth Vere. Shakespeare – as both Stratfordians and Oxfordians have pointed out – elevated the Stanleys clandestinely by going "out of his way to highlight the roles of the ancestors of Ferdinando and William Stanley during the War of the Roses, even distorting facts to achieve this effect [in] dramas such as *Henry VI Parts 1-3* and *Richard III*" (Dickson 262). Shakespeare began composing the Henry VI trilogy around 1590-1, shortly after Greene wrote his dedication.

8. In 1588 and 1590, respectively, Greene dedicated *Pandosto* and *Greene's Mourning Garment* to George Clifford, Earl of Cumberland. In 1595, Oxford's daughter Elizabeth Vere married George Clifford's nephew, William Stanley. Several documents tie Oxford to Clifford. In 1589, James Lea's pamphlet on the defeat of the Armada celebrated together the Earls of Oxford, Cumberland and Northumberland. In 1592, George Dingley, under interrogation, reported hearsay that "the erle of Oxford the erle of Cumberland the Lord Strange & my Lord Percye" were among "the nobillitye being dyscontentyd for that they were not advanced nor preferyd as they happelye expected" (Nelson 2003: 339). Whatever the balance of truth and lies in these reports, we may surmise that Cumberland was an associate of Oxford's. Nelson confirmed that a letter from late 1601 or early 1602 "incidentally reveals Oxford's association with the Earl of Cumberland (George Clifford)" (Nelson 2003: 404).

9. In 1587, Greene dedicated *Penelope's Web* to two sisters, one of whom is George Clifford's wife, Lady Margaret Russell Clifford, Countess of Cumberland. She was also the sister-in-law of the dedicatee of *Myrrour of Modestie*, Margaret Clifford Stanley (George Clifford's half-sister). Their relationship linked the Stanley and Clifford families.

10. In 1591, Greene dedicated *A Maidens Dreame* to "Ladie Elizabeth Hatton," the teenaged wife of Christopher Hatton's nephew, Sir William Newport, who had adopted the Hatton surname prior to his uncle's death on November 20, 1591. Lady Hatton, born Elizabeth Cecil, was the daughter of

Lord Burghley's eldest son, Thomas Cecil. Since Oxford had been married to Thomas's sister Anne until her death in 1588, Lady Elizabeth Hatton was Oxford's niece. Lady Elizabeth is the only member of the Hatton family who was related (by marriage) to Oxford. Is it more reasonable that she received a dedication from a dissolute pamphlet-peddler such as Greene or her own Uncle Ned?

11.   In 1592, Greene dedicated *Philomela: The Lady Fitzwaters Nightingale* to Bridget Ratliffe, Lady Fitzwaters, wife of Robert Radcliffe. Oxford served in Scotland in the spring of 1570 under the command of Robert's grandfather, Thomas, 3rd Earl of Sussex. As revealed on numerous occasions, as chronicled by Nelson, Sussex remained a staunch ally of Oxford's at court until his death in 1583. It makes sense that Oxford stayed close to his family.

12.   In 1584, Greene dedicated his third work, *The Carde of Fancie*, "To the right honorable, Edward de Vere, Earle of Oxenford, Vicount Bulbeck, Lord of Escales and Badlesmire, and Lord great Chamberlain of England." Given our context, it appears that Oxford wrote this dedication to himself. It was an effective ruse.

Robert Greene Sounds Like an Early Version of Shakespeare

Oxfordians contend that Shakespeare was a pen-name of Oxford's. If Shakespeare is Oxford and Greene is Oxford, then Greene must be Shakespeare. Following this equation, Robert Greene should read a lot like Shakespeare.

Scholars have offered so many examples of parallels between the works of Robert Greene and Shakespeare that to cite them all would take a book. Greene's plays contain Shakespeare's classical references, humanism, special vocabulary, humorous sub-plots, royal and noble characters, fully realized female characters, melancholy misanthropes, wise fools, and court, pastoral and Italian settings. Both writers' plots involve disguises, tavern scenes, love triangles, hidden nobility, challenges to the throne and multiple marriages at the end. Scholars have listed "numerous parallels in plot and character [and] deeper and more subtle parallels in structure and meaning. . . . " (Crupi 100) Collins declared, "We open Greene's comedies, and we are in the world of Shakespeare" (44). The same is true of their poetry, whose parallels are often "too obvious to ignore" (Hughes 2009: 43). Storojenko concluded, "Shakespeare's obligations to Greene . . . are beyond dispute" (1: 243).

What Greene did late in his career, Shakespeare did comparatively early in his. Speaking of a play written in Greene's final year, J.M. Brown wrote, "*James IV* is the finest Elizabethan historical play outside of Shakespeare, and is worthy to be placed on a level with Shakespeare's earlier style" (Brown 1: xxxiv). In other words, the two writers'

output forms a continuum. So do their lives; Greene left the scene in late 1592, and Shakespeare debuted the following spring, "appearing to pick up – as an already fully developed artist – right where Greene left off" (Hughes 2009: 25).

To conclude, substantial evidence from disparate sources supports the hypothesis that one writer is behind both famous names. As Hughes put it, "Robert Greene sounds like Shakespeare because he was Shakespeare" (2009: 38).

Evidence so far combines to suggest that "Robert Greene" and "Shakespeare" are both pseudonyms of the Earl of Oxford. But *Greene's Groats-worth of Wit* is an unusual publication. Are its most famous passages as intimately connected to the style of Shakespeare as the rest of Greene's canon?

Two: Greene's Groats-worth and Its True Connection to Shakespeare

Pamphlets in London generally sold for a few pennies, and a groat was worth four pence, thereby explaining Greene's title. The notoriety of Greene's most famous book comes not from its quality but its topicality and mystery.

Centuries of critical reviews of *Groats-worth* have focused primarily on its open letter to three fellow playwrights, which includes Greene's complaint about a particular theatrical personage he calls "an upstart Crow, [a] Shake-scene." Critics have presumed that the target of the author's pique is William Shakespeare, a youthful playwright recently arrived from Stratford-upon-Avon. A primary reason for this presumption is the likeness of "Shake-scene" to "Shake-speare," by which it seems that Greene is playing on Shakespeare's name as a means of disparagement. From that starting point, critics have taken hints from the rest of the brief text to construct character studies and biographical sketches of the young man from Stratford. Representing the ubiquitous mainstream view, Carroll declared, "That we learn from the letter something about Shakespeare . . . is what matters most" (Carroll 30). Perhaps, but what exactly do we learn about Shakespeare?

Theories vary about the roles that Robert Greene, Thomas Nashe and/or Henry Chettle may have played in producing *Groats-worth*. Many scholars accept that it's by Robert Greene. Thomas Nashe denied involvement in no uncertain terms, yet "numerous scholars in the centuries since have disbelieved Nashe's hot denial, and he remains one of the chief contenders for authorship." (Hughes: 2009, 59). Others have asserted that the true author is Henry Chettle, the man who licensed the book. Carroll affirmed, "The case for a serious participation by Henry Chettle is much stronger. [While] Greene *may* have had something to do with the writing of *Groats-worth*, Chettle *certainly* did. If the book is indeed Chettle's, or largely his . . . then it ranks as one of the most successful creative hoaxes in our culture" (emphasis in the original). Other theories contend that combinations of these writers were involved.

None of these views is correct. I hope to show that Greene didn't write it, Nashe didn't write it, Chettle didn't write it, and there was no collaboration. Moreover, no one repented anything, no one forged anything, and no one disparaged Shakespeare. It's a hoax, all right, but the hoax is on the critics.

There are seven parts to *Groats-worth*: (1) the fictional story, (2) the transition, (3) a renunciation of prior works, (4) a set of homilies, (5) an open letter to three play-wrights, (6) a versification of Aesop's fable of the Ant and the Grasshopper, and (7) a letter to Greene's wife. While all of them are instructive, for our purposes we will focus on items 1, 2, 3, and 5.

The Fictional Story Is by Greene

The fictional story in *Groats-worth* contains numerous signs of Greene's other writing. *Groatsworth* "bears a striking resemblance to the two parts of *Greene's Never Too Late*" (Carroll 22) in terms of plot, theme, realism, and language. "Francesco's story agrees in essential details with the story in *Groats-worth*" (Crupi 19). In sum, this part of Greene's piece "appears to be by him. Its motifs and method seem to be his, and it can be closely tied to several works by or related to him. Within the last two years Greene had made repentance his literary theme and used it, as here, with the prodigal son motif. "It contains some euphuisms, which had been, at least early on, a trick of Greene's style" (Carroll 22). A careful review confirms these conclusions. We are on safe ground, then, in attributing this part of the book to the usual author.

The Transition

Greene's tale comes to an abrupt halt in mid-plot with "Here (Gentlemen) break I off Roberto's speech. Hereafter suppose me the said Roberto, and I will go on with that he promised; Greene will send you now his groatsworth of wit, that never showed a mitesworth in his life. . . ." (12: 137). Greene's devaluation of his own literature from a "groatsworth" per pamphlet to less than "a mitesworth" for the entire canon is nearly unique among authors. We will address this anomaly in due course.

Thereafter Greene's monologue adopts a tone of fire and brimstone, and his focus shifts from story-telling to haranguing, confessing, and sermonizing as it fulfills the promise of the book's subtitle, *bought with a million of Repentance*. The change in tone is so drastic that "the malicious zest of the first three quarters [is] out of keeping with the soulful anguish of the last" (Carroll 22).

The literary influences within the book from this point forward are accordingly different from what went before. Carroll's footnotes tell the tale. For the fictional story of nineteen pages, his book lists over thirty references to Greene's prior works, eighteen references to Nashe, five to Ovid and only eight to the Bible. For the rest

of the book, which at only nine pages is less than half the length, he lists ten references to Greene, seven to Nashe, one to Ovid and forty-nine to the Bible. On a per page basis, the ratio of biblical references in the second part relative to the first is thirteen to one.

It seems hard to believe this could be the same writer who has Bassanio in *The Merchant of Venice* (3.2.77-80) exclaim, "In religion / What damned error but some sober brow/ Will bless it, and approve it with a text / Hiding the grossness with fair ornament?" Is another author taking over, as many believe, or is Oxford role-playing again?

The Renunciation

Scholars of all types have established that the prose of Greene's fictional stories permeates Shakespeare's plays. If this new pulpit language is coming from the same writer, then we should see parallel prose in Shakespeare. Let's see where an investigation takes us.

Here is the renunciation from *Groats-worth*, with terms found in Shakespeare underlined for easy reference:

> Ah Gentlemen, that live to read my broken and confused lines, looke not I should (as I was wont) delight you with vaine fantasies, but gather my follies altogether; and as yee would deal with so many parricides, cast them into the fire: call them Telegones, for now they kil their Father, and every lewd line in them written, is a deepe piercing wound to my heart; every idle houre spent by any in reading them, brings a million of sorrowes to my soule. O that the teares of a miserable man (for never any man was yet more miserable) might wash their memorie out with my death; and that those works with mee together might bee interd. But sith they cannot, let this my last worke witnes against them with mee, how I detest them. Blacke is the remembrance of my blacke workes, blacker than night, blacker than death, blacker than hell.

The search engine offered on line by the University of Sydney (Farrow, n.d.) proved useful in locating the following parallels in the Shakespeare canon (minor ones underlined above have been omitted):

> "Ah Gentlemen" appears three times in Shakespeare as "O gentlemen," each time likewise at the start of an address.

> "my broken and confused lines" is approximated in the dedication of *Venus and Adonis* with "my unpolished lines," in the dedication of *Lucrece* with "my untutored lines," and in Sonnet 103 with "my blunt invention . . . Dulling my lines."

"looke not I should . . . delight" echoes in *Macbeth* (5.3): "I must not look to have."

"as I was wont" appears in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (2.4) and *Julius Caesar* (1.2).

"vaine fantasies" appears as "vain fantasy" in *Romeo and Juliet* (1.4).

"my follies" appears in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (2.2) and in *King Lear* (3.7).

"parricides" shows up as "parricide" in *Macbeth* (3.1).

"cast them into the fire" has echoes in *As You Like It* (1.2): "fall into the fire" and *The Tempest* (1.2): "dive into the fire."

"kil their Father" appears in *Macbeth* (3.6): "kill their gracious father."

"lewd line" is approximated in *Richard III* (1.3) with "lewd complaints."

"piercing . . . to my soule" appears in *The Winter's Tale* (5.3): "it is/ Now piercing to my soul."

"wound to my heart" shows up in *Henry VI Part 1* (1.4) as "wounds my heart" and in *Titus Andronicus* (1.1) as "my wounded heart"; nearly identical phrases show up in *Henry VI Part 3*, *As You Like It*, *Venus and Adonis*, and *Lucrece*.

"idle houre" shows up as "idle hours" in *Richard II* (3.4), Sonnet 61, and the dedication of *Venus and Adonis*.

"houre spent" is in *Richard III* (3.6): "hours I spent"; *Troilus and Cressida* (2.2): "hours, lives, speeches spent"; and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (3.2): "hours that we have spent."

"a million of sorrowes" echoes in *The Two Gentleman of Verona* (2.1): "a million of manners" and in *The Winter's Tale* (4.3): "a million of beating."

"sorrows to my soule" shows up as "sorrow gripes his soul" in *Henry VI Part 3* (1.4) and "my soul is full of sorrow" in *Richard III* (2.1).

"O that the teares": Shakespeare pairs O and tears eight times.

"miserable man" echoes in *The Winter's Tale* (1.2): "O miserable lady!"

"never any man" shows up three times in Shakespeare as "never a man," with the same meaning and within similar constructions.

"more miserable" appears in *Henry VI Part 2* (3.1) and *Timon of Athens* (4.3).

"wash the memory out": the same idea is expressed in *Macbeth* (5.3): "Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow,/ Raze out the written troubles of the brain. . . ."

"with my death" appears in *Much Ado about Nothing* (5.1) in the same context of wishing to obliterate distasteful deeds: "my villany they have upon record; which I had rather seal with my death than repeat over to my shame."

"those works with mee together might bee interd": The idea of one's achievements being buried with one's body is repeated in *Julius Caesar* (3.2): "The evil that men do lives after them;/ The good is oft interred with their bones."

"this my last worke" is approximated in *Pericles* (5.2): "This, my last boon."

"witness against them" appears in *King John* (4.2) as "witness against us" and in *Henry VIII* as "witness . . . against you."

"my blacke workes" shows up in *Macbeth* as "my black and deep desires."

"blacker than night" is in *Pericles* (1.1) as "Blush not in actions blacker than the night."

"blacker than death" shows up in *Hamlet* (3.3) as "O bosom black as death."

"blacker than hell" shows up as "black as hell" in *Hamlet* (3.3) and famously in Sonnet 147.

These parallels fit the case that the man behind Shakespeare, the Earl of Oxford, is still holding the pen.

The Open Letter to Playwrights

Does Greene's renowned open letter to three playwrights also have echoes in Shakespeare? Here is the opening part of that passage from *Groats-worth*, with Shakespearean phrases underlined:

> If wofull experience may move you (Gentlemen) to beware, or unheard of wretchednes intreate you to take heed; I doubt not but you will looke backe with sorrow on your time past, and indevour with repentance to spend that which is to come. Wonder not (for with thee wil I first begin), thou famous gracer of Tragedians, that Greene, who hath said with thee (like the fool in his heart) there is no God, he hath spoken unto me with a voice of thunder, and I have felt he is a God that can punish enemies. Why should thy excellent wit, his gift, be so blinded, that thou shouldst give no glory to the giver? Is it pestilent Machivilian pollicy that thou hast studied? O peevish follie!

What are his rules but <u>meere confused mockeries</u>, able to <u>extirpate</u> <u>in small time</u> the <u>generation of mankind</u>. For if *Sic volo, sic iubeo*, hold in those that are <u>able to commaund</u>: and <u>if it be lawfull</u> *Fas & nefas* to <u>do any thing</u> that is <u>beneficiall</u>, onely <u>Tyrants</u> <u>should possesse</u> the earth, and they <u>striving to exceed</u> in <u>tyrannie</u>, should <u>each to other</u> <u>bee a slaughter man</u>; till <u>the might-iest outliving all</u>, <u>one stroke were left for Death</u>, that <u>in one age</u> <u>man's life should end</u>. The <u>broacher of this Diabolical</u> Atheism is dead, and in his life had never the <u>felicitie</u> he <u>aemed at</u>: but as he began <u>in craft</u>, <u>lived in feare</u>, and <u>ended in despaire</u>. *Quàm inscrutabilia sunt Dei judicia?* This <u>murderer</u> of many brethren, had his <u>conscience seared</u> like <u>Cain</u>; this <u>betrayer</u> of him that gave his life for him, <u>inherited the portion</u> of <u>Judas</u>: this Apostata perished as ill as Julian: and wilt <u>thou my friend</u> be his Disciple? Looke unto <u>me</u>, by him <u>perswaded to that libertie</u>, and thou shalt find it an <u>infernall</u> <u>bondage</u>. I knowe <u>the least of</u> <u>my demerits</u> merit <u>this miserable death</u>, but <u>wilfull striving</u> against <u>known truth</u> <u>exceedeth</u> <u>all the terrors of my soul</u>. <u>Defer not</u> (with me) till <u>this last point of extremitie</u>; for <u>little knowst thou</u> how <u>in the end thou shalt be visited</u>.

And here are key parallels in Shakespeare (again with minor ones omitted):

"<u>intreate you</u> to <u>take heed</u>" is approximated in *Henry V* (1.2): "We <u>charge you</u>, in the name of God, <u>take heed</u>." Shakespeare uses "entreat you" 25 times and "take heed" 31 times.

"<u>I doubt not but</u>" appears ten times in Shakespeare.

"<u>looke backe with sorrow on your time past</u>": A version of this idea is in *Romeo and Juliet* (2.6), when the Friar prays, "So smile the heavens upon this holy act,/ That <u>after hours with sorrow</u> chide us not!"

"<u>endeavor</u> with <u>repentance</u>" appears in *Hamlet* (3.3) as "<u>Try</u> what <u>repentance</u> can."

"<u>time</u> past . . . <u>to spend that which is to come</u>": The same idea is expressed in *Henry IV Part 1* (5.2): "the <u>time of life</u> is short!/ <u>To spend</u> that shortness basely were too long. . . ."

"<u>Wonder not</u>" begins lines in *The Taming of the Shrew* (4.5), *Much Ado about Nothing* (3.2) and *Twelfth Night* (3.4).

"<u>with thee wil I first begin</u>" shows up in *Henry V* (1.2): "Then <u>with Scotland first begin</u>" and partially in *Hamlet* (3.3): "where <u>I shall first begin</u>"; "<u>first begin</u>" appears seven times in Shakespeare.

"<u>thou famous</u>" is in *Henry IV Part 2* (4.3) as "A <u>famous</u> rebel art <u>thou</u>, Colevile."

"Tragedians" is used twice in Shakespeare, in *All's Well That Ends Well* and *Hamlet*.

"like the fool": Shakespeare uses "like a fool" six times and "as the fool" in *Twelfth Night* (2.3).

"in his heart" appears in *Henry VI Part 1*, *Titus Andronicus*, *Hamlet* and *Coriolanus*.

"God . . . a voice of thunder" shows up in both Sonnet 5 and *Love's Labor's Lost* (4.2) in an address to Cupid: "Thy eye Jove's lightning bears, thy voice his dreadful thunder"; *Richard III* (1.4) has "Thy voice is thunder."

"a God that can punish" shows up in *Coriolanus* (3.1): "As if you were a god to punish."

"excellent wit" appears in *Henry IV Part 2* (4.3) and *Much Ado about Nothing* (2.1); variations appear three more times in the plays.

"give no glory" echoes in *Cariolanus* (5.6): "giving him glory."

"the giver" is used in a similar context in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (2.4): "we thank the giver."

"Machivilian pollicy" is approached in *Henry VI Part 2* (4.1): "By devilish policy art thou grown great"; *Henry IV Part 1* (1.3) speaks of "rotten policy."

"O peevish follie": *Henry VI Part 1* (4.6) has "O, too much folly"; Shakespeare uses *O* 1962 times, *peevish* 30 times and *folly* 78 times.

"meere confused mockeries": *Cymbeline* (4.2) has "mere confusion"; *King John* (5.2) has "confused wrong"; and "mockeries" shows up twice in Shakespeare.

"extirpate" appears in *The Tempest* (1.2).

"in small time" is in *Henry V* (Epilogue): "Small time, but in that small…"

"generation of mankind" is echoed in *The Tempest* (3.3): "Our human generation" and in *Troilus and Cressida* (3.1): "generation of vipers."

"able to commaund": *Henry VI Part 1* (1.1) comes close to this construction with "deserving to command"; "to command" appears seventeen times in Shakespeare.

"if it be lawfull" is rendered in *King John* (3.1) as "Let it be lawful," and the same conditional construction is in *Richard II* (3.3): "Because we thought ourself thy lawful king:/ And if we be. . . ."

"striving to exceed" is echoed in *Henry VI Part 2* (4.1): "striving to shine."

"each to other" is approached in *As You Like It* (5.4): "To one his lands withheld, and to the other. . . ."

"bee a slaughter man" is in *Henry VI Part 3* (1.4): "Had he been slaughter-man."

"the mightiest outliving all" has an echo in *Henry VI Part 1* (3.2): "mightiest potentates must die."

"one stroke were left for Death": "one stroke" is used three times in Shakespeare, twice in the same context of a sword causing death; Greene's clause creates a personified image of death poised to strike that is reprised in *Henry VI Part 2* (2.4): "till the axe of death/ Hang over thee."

"in one age" is in *Henry VI Part 1* (2.5) and *Lucrece* (St. 138) as "in an age."

"man's life" is used twice in this general context, in *Cymbeline* (3.6): "I see a man's life is a tedious one," and in *The Tempest* (2.1): "Ten leagues beyond man's life."

"man's life should end" is echoed in *Henry VI Part 2* with "there my life must end" and in *Henry VI Part 3* (1.4) with "here my life must end."

"broacher of this Diabolical. . . ." is approached in *Henry IV Part 1* (5.1): "a portent/ Of broached mischief."

"aemed at" is in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (3.1): "my discovery be not aimed at."

"in craft" appears with the same negative meaning of someone who is crafty in *Henry IV Part 1* (2.4): "wherein cunning, but in craft?"

"lived in feare" is in *King Lear* (4.1): "lives not in fear"; Shakespeare pairs "live" and "fear" three times.

"ended in despaire" is in *The Tempest* (Epilogue): "my ending is despair"; in *King John* (3.1) the noun is likewise linked to death: "in despair die."

"conscience seared" is approached in *Macbeth* (4.1), when the conscience-stricken Macbeth exclaims, "the spirit of Banquo . . . Thy crown does sear mine eye-balls," and in *The Winter's Tale* (2.1): "for calumny will sear/ Virtue itself"; similar phrases are presented in *Lucrece* (St. 36): "frozen conscience"; and in *Henry VIII* (2.2): "wringing of the conscience."

"inherited the portion": Shakespeare uses *portion* likewise to indicate a part of one's inheritance, as when Orlando in *As You Like It* (1.1) complains, "What prodigal portion have I spent, that I should come to such penury?"

"Judas" is mentioned 15 times in Shakespeare.

"thou my friend" appears in *Othello* (3.1): "thou . . . my honest friend"; *King John* (5.6): "Thou art my friend"; *Henry VI Part 2* (5.1): "my friend, art thou"; *Hamlet* (2.2): "thou hear me, old friend"; Sonnet 149: "thee that I do call my friend"; and "you my friend" twice in *Pericles* (2.1).

"me . . . perswaded to that libertie [by a false doctrine]" is approximated in *Love's Labor's Lost* (4.3): "Persuade my heart to this false perjury."

"my demerits" appears in *Othello* (1.2): "my demerits/ May speak unbonneted"; Shakespeare also uses "his demerits" in *Coriolanus* (1.1) and "their own demerits" in *Macbeth* (4.3).

"the least of my demerits" is approximated in *Venus and Adonis* (St. 123): "the least of all these maladies" and in Sonnet 92: "the worst of wrongs,/ When in the least of them my life hath end." In all three cases, "the least of" is tied to a negative plural noun.

"this miserable death" is in *Titus Adronicus* (2.3): "leave me to this miserable death."

"wilfull striving" toward sin echoes in Sonnet 103: "Were it not sinful then, striving. . . ."

"known truth" shows up in *All's Well That Ends Well* (2.5): "one that…uses a known truth to pass a thousand nothings…."

"all the terrors of my soul" is in *Richard III* (5.3) as "struck more terror to the soul."

"this last point of extremitie" shows up in *Richard II* (4.1) as "to the extremest point/ Of."

"little knowst thou" is used in the same way in *Cymbeline* (3.3): "These boys know little they are sons to the king."

"thou shalt be visited" is approximated in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (3.2): "thou mock'st me…look to be visited."

These parallels are compatible with the idea that Shakespeare, and therefore Oxford, is still writing *Groats-worth*.

The next part of the open letter is the most famous passage in *Groats-worth*, in which the author complains about actors, especially one "upstart Crow . . . in his owne conceit the onely Shake-scene in a countrie." Traditional scholars believe that "Shake-scene" is a derogatory swipe at Shakespeare. How could Oxford have written

a passage attacking Shakespeare when he himself is Shakespeare?

First we must determine if Oxford is still holding the pen. We will begin by showing a progression in Greene's use of the language employed, as his rhetoric expands from one instance to the next. Shared words and ideas are underlined for easy reference.

In *The Myrrour of Modestie* (1584), Greene writes,

> your honor may thinke I play like Ezops Crowe, which deckt hir selfe with others' feathers or like the proud poet Batyllus, which subscribed his name to Virgils verses, and yet presented them to Augustus. . . . I give quoth he another mans picture, but freshlie flourished with mine own colours. (3:7)

Greene refers again to Batillus in *Menaphon* and to Aesop's Crow in *Orpharion*.

Six years later, in *Francescos Fortunes* (1590), Greene turns such language into a weapon aimed not at himself but at actors and rival playwrights, the same target as in *Groatsworth*:

> . . . in Rome . . . the Actors, by continuall use grewe not onely excellent, but rich and insolent. Amongst whome in the daies of Tully one Roscius grewe to be of such exquisite perfection in his facultie, that he offered to contend with the Orators of that time in gesture, as they did in eloquence . . . which insolence made the learned Orator to growe into these termes: why Roscius, art thou proud with Esops Crow, being pranct with the glorie of others feathers? . . . what sentence thou utterest on the stage, flowes from the censure of our wittes. [Yet] it grew to a generall vice amongst the Actors, to excell in pride as they did exceede in excellence, and to brave it in the streets, as they bragge it on the stage. (8: 131-133)

Does Greene's language ring a bell? Thomas Nashe had used much the same language in the preface to Greene's *Menaphon* just a year earlier. Hibbard, echoing other scholars, observed about the preface to *Menaphon*, "much in the *Preface* seems to reflect views and attitudes that we know Greene held" (Hibbard 34). Even its language is sometimes nearly identical to Greene's. In his preface, Nashe writes of those "who . . . get Boreas by the beard, and the heavenlie bull by the deaw-lap," while inside the book Greene writes of an ewe "whose fleece was as white as the haires that grow on father Boreas chinne, or as the dangling deaw-lap of the silver Bull." Several scholars have vaguely suspected that Robert Greene wrote the preface to his own book in Thomas Nashe's name. I think we may confirm this suspicion.

Here are the key portions of Nashe's tirade:

> [Writers'] servile imitation of vainglorious tragedians [and] their idiote

art-masters, that intrude themselves to our eares as the alcumists of <u>elo-quence</u>; who (mounted <u>on the stage</u> of <u>arrogance</u>) think to out<u>brave</u> better pens with the swelling <u>bombast of a bragging blanke verse</u>. . . . Sundrie other sweete Gentlemen I know, that have vaunted their pens in private devices, and <u>trickt up</u> a companie of taffeta fooles <u>with their feathers</u>, [who] might have <u>antickt</u> it untill this time up and <u>down the countrey</u> with the <u>King of Fairies</u> and dinde everie daie at the pease porridge ordinaire with <u>Delph-rigus</u>. But Tolassa hath forgot that it was sometime sackt, and beggers [have forgot] that ever they <u>caried their fardles on footback</u>: and in truth no mer-vaile, when as <u>the deserved reputation of one Roscius</u>, is of force to inrich a rabble of counterfets.

Observe that Greene in the passage from 1590 fleshes out the tale of "<u>one Roscius</u>," expanding Nashe's brief reference in 1589 to the "deserved reputation of <u>one Ro-scius</u>."

Greene's *Farewell to Follie* (1591) presents a similar image of the strutting pretender, in similar terms: "seeing the wings of youth <u>trickt up</u> with follies <u>plumes</u>" (9:243). So, from a misty beginning in 1584, we have a sequence of highly similar expressions in three consecutive years: 1589, 1590 and 1591.

Groats-worth in 1592 reprises the attack on actors from *Francesos Fortunes*. In so doing, it uses several phrases right out of Greene's earlier writing. The first passage below is from the fictional story and the second from the open letter:

> (quoth the <u>player</u>) . . . What though the world once went hard with me, when I was faine to <u>carry my playing Fardle a footebacke</u>. …why, I am as famous for <u>Delphrigus</u>, & <u>the King of Fairies</u>, as euer was any of my time.
>
> those Puppits (I meane) that speake from our mouths, those <u>Anticks</u> <u>garnisht</u> in <u>our colours</u>. . . . Yes trust them not: for there is an upstart Crow, <u>beautified</u> <u>with our feathers</u>, that with his *Tygers heart wrapt in a Players hide*, supposes he is as well able to <u>bombast out a blanke verse</u> as the best of you: and being an absolute *Johannes fac totum*, is in his owne conceit the onely Shake-scene <u>in a countrie</u>. [italics in the original]

Observe that even when specific words differ in our four examples, the construc-tion and image are the same. The objects of the writer's scorn are respectively *deckt*, *pranct*, *trickt* or *garnisht* in others' *feathers*, *plumes* or *colors*. Likewise, *proud* in one passage becomes *insolent* in another, and *pride* in one passage becomes *arrogance* in another.

This confluence of material explains why some initial readers as well as later critics suspected that Thomas Nashe wrote the pamphlet. They might have noticed the similarity of language between parts of the diatribe in *Groats-worth* and Nashe's pref-

ace to *Menaphon*. They guessed, quite correctly as it happens, that one writer penned them both. The similarities in the items quoted above further suggest that the same brain is behind all five passages.

Could the composer of the attack on "Shake-scene" also be Shakespeare? Linguistic agreement indicates not only that Nashe's passage is written by Shakespeare but that the related one in *Groats-worth* is, too.

Here are Nashe's key lines from the preface to *Menaphon* again, this time underlined for parallels in the Shakespeare canon:

> [Writers'] servile imitation of vainglorious tragedians [and] their idiote art-masters, that intrude themselves to our eares as the alcumists of elo-quence; who (mounted on the stage of arrogance) think to outbrave better pens with the swelling bombast of a bragging blanke verse. . . . Sundrie other sweete Gentlemen I know, that have vaunted their pens in private devices, and trickt up a companie of taffeta fooles with their feathers, [who] might have antickt it untill this time up and down the countrey with the King of Fairies and dinde everie daie at the pease porridge ordinaire with Delph-rigus. But Tolassa hath forgot that it was sometime sackt, and beggers [have forgot] that ever they caried their fardles on footback: and in truth no mer-vaile, when as the deserved reputation of one Roscius, is of force to inrich a rabble of counterfets.

Here are the parallels in Shakespeare (again with minor ones omitted):

> "servile imitation" is rendered as "base imitation" in *Richard II* (2.1); "servile" appears eleven times in Shakespeare, and "imitation" appears four times.

> "vainglorious" is rendered as the noun "vain-glory" three times in Shake-speare; there is also "Vain pomp and glory" in *Henry VIII* (3.2).

> "tragedians" appears twice in Shakespeare and once in the singular.

> "idiote art-masters," where "idiot" is used in rare form as an adjective, is in Shakespeare as "idiot worshippers" in *Troilus and Cressida* (2.1).

> "intrude": The unusual position of this word just before a noun and without the preposition *upon* is repeated in *Lucrece* (St. 122): "Why should the worm intrude the maiden bud?" In these instances, the word takes on the meaning of *impose* and *invade*, respectively.

> "our eares" shows up twelve times in Shakespeare. Nashe's meaning is echoed in three instances: *Timon of Athens* (5.1): "And enter in our ears like great triumphers"; *All's Well That Ends Well* (5.3): "She does abuse our ears";

and in *King John* (2.1): "Our ears are cudgell'd."

"alcumists" appears in the singular ("alchemist") twice in Shakespeare, and both times it is employed metaphorically, as Nashe uses it.

"on the stage of arrogance" is approximated in *King Lear* (4.6) with "To this great stage of fools." Also, "arrogance" is in Shakespeare six times, and "on the stage" is in Sonnet 23.

"outbrave" is in *The Merchant of Venice* (2.1); "outbraves" is in Sonnet 94.

"better pens" echoes in "blazoning pens" in *Othello* (2.1).

"swelling" is in the canon 25 times, "bombast" three times, "bragging" six times and "blanke verse" three times.

"sweete Gentlemen" is in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (5.2).

"vaunted" as a verb is in *Henry VI Part 2* (1.3): "She vaunted 'mongst her minions."

"their pens" is approximated with "your pens" in *Henry IV Part 2* (4.1).

"in private devices" is a construction found in "in private brabble" (*Twelfth Night*, 5.1), "in private conference" (*Pericles*, 2.4) and "in private brawl" (*Twelfth Night*, 3.4).

"trickt up" appears, with the same meaning, as "trick up" in *Henry V* (III,vi).

"companie of taffeta fooles" is approximated in "company of awful men" in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (4.1); "taffeta fooles" is mirrored by "taffeta punk" and "taffeta fellow" in *All's Well That Ends Well*, (2.2 and 4.5) and "taffeta phrases" in *Love's Labor's Lost* (5.2).

"with their feathers" has the same meaning as a line in *Henry VI Part 2* (3.1): "his feathers are but borrowed."

"antickt it" is not in Shakespeare, although "antic" appears eight times, twice as a noun in a similar context, as cited below.

"untill this time" is in *The Comedy of Errors* (4.4). Shakespeare never says "until now."

"up and down the countrey" is approximated in Shakespeare in similar contexts: "stalks up and down like a peacock" (*Troilus and Cressida*, 3.3), "jaunting up and down" (*Romeo and Juliet*, 2.5), "we do trace this alley up and down" (*Much Ado about Nothing*, 3.1), "walk up and down the streets" (*Julius Caesar*,

1.3), and "our marches through the country" (*Henry V*, 3.6).

"King of Fairies" is in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, where in the list of players Oberon is dubbed "king of the fairies." (In 4.1 he is addressed as "Fairy king.")

"dinde everie daie" echoes in "one meal on every day" (*Love's Labor's Lost*, 1. 1). Shakespeare pairs "dine(s)" and "day" six times.

"ordinaire" as an eatery is implied in *Anthony and Cleopatra* (2.2): "Antony . . . invited her to supper . . . And for his ordinary pays his heart/ For what his eyes eat only."

"it was sometime" is in *Pericles* (2.1) with the same meaning: "it was sometime target to a king."

"sackt" is in *All's Well That Ends Well* (1.3): "Was this fair face the cause . . . Why the Grecians sacked Troy?" In each case, the action is applied to an ancient city (Tolosa and Troy, respectively).

"caried…fardles" is approximated in *Hamlet* (3.1) in the clause, "who would fardels bear."

"no mervaile," appears eleven times in Shakespeare, usually followed in the same way by a comma to indicate an expletive, as in *Troilus and Cressida* (2.2): "No marvel, though you bite so sharp at reasons,/ You are so empty of them."

"Roscius" is cited in Shakespeare twice: in *Hamlet* (2.2): "When Roscius was an actor in Rome" and also in *Henry VI Part 3* (5.6): "What scene of death hath Roscius now to act?"

"of force to" appears in *King John* (1.1): "Shall then my father's will be of no force/ To dispossess that child which is not his? / Of no more force to dispossess me, sir…."

"a rabble of counterfets" is well represented in Shakespeare: "a rabble" is used three times, "counterfeits" is used twice as a noun, and the entire phrase is approximated in "a rabble of his companions" (*The Merry Wives of Windsor*, 3.5) and in "a rabble more/ Of vile confederates" (*The Comedy of Errors*, 5.1).

We established above that Nashe's preface to *Menaphon* is by Robert Greene, and now we may contend that it is also by Shakespeare.

To complete the picture, we must see whether Greene's kindred passages in *Groatsworth* also appear to be by Shakespeare. If so, then we may credibly credit all these

compositions to Oxford. Here they are again, newly underlined for parallels in the Shakespeare canon:

> (quoth the <u>player</u>)...<u>What though the world once went hard with me</u>, when <u>I was faine to</u> carry my playing <u>Fardle</u> a footebacke. . . . why, I am as famous for Delphrigus, & the <u>King of Fairies</u>, <u>as euer was</u> <u>any of my time</u>.

> those <u>Puppits</u> (<u>I meane</u>) that <u>speake from our mouths</u>, those <u>Anticks</u> <u>garnisht in our colours</u>. . . . Yes <u>trust them not</u>: <u>for there is</u> an <u>upstart Crow</u>, <u>beauti-fied with</u> <u>our feathers</u>, that <u>with his</u> *Tygers heart wrapt in a Players hide*, <u>supposes</u> he is <u>as well able</u> to <u>bombast</u> out a <u>blanke verse</u> <u>as the best of you</u>: and being <u>an absolute</u> *Johannes fac totum*, is in <u>his owne conceit</u> <u>the onely Shake-scene in a countrie</u>.

Here are the parallels in Shakespeare (with minor and some repeated terms omitted):

> "<u>player</u>" meaning stage actor is in Shakespeare six times, as well as twenty-two times in the plural.

> "<u>What though the</u>" is used in Shakespeare three times, all in the same way as here: "<u>What though the</u> common people favor him" (*Henry VI Part 2*, 1.1), "<u>What though the</u> mast be now blown overboard" (*Henry VI Part 3*, 5.4) and "<u>What though the</u> rose have prickles" (*Venus and Adonis*, St. 94).

> "<u>the world once went hard</u>" is approximated in *Henry VI Part 3* (2.6): "nay, then <u>the world goes hard</u>."

> "<u>went hard with me</u>" is echoed in *Henry VI Part 2*: "'twill <u>go hard with you</u>" and in *The Merchant of Venice* (3.2): "It <u>will go hard with</u> poor Antonio."

> "<u>I was faine to</u>" appears twice in Shakespeare: "<u>I was fain to</u> draw mine honour" (*Henry VIII*, 5.4) and "<u>I was fain to</u> forswear it" (*Measure for Measure*, 4.3).

> "<u>Fardle</u>" appears six times in *The Winter's Tale*; it is in the plural in *Hamlet* (3.1).

> "<u>as euer was</u>" appears twice in Shakespeare: "a good plot <u>as ever was</u> laid" in *Henry IV Part 1* (2.3) and "Flat burglary <u>as ever was</u> committed" in *Much Ado about Nothing* (4.2).

> "<u>any of my time</u>" is approximated in *The Taming of the Shrew* (3.1) in the same context of boasting: "I must … teach you … More pleasant, pithy and effec-tual,/ Than hath been taught by <u>any of my trade</u>."

> "<u>Puppits</u>" appears twice in Shakespeare and eight times in the singular form.

"I meane" pops up several times in the canon in the same way as Groats-worth's inserted interjection, for example: "Command, I mean, of virtuous chaste intents" in *Henry VI Part 1* (5.5).

"speak from our mouths" is rendered in *Measure for Measure* (5.1) as "speak, as from his mouth." Shakespeare places "speak" near "mouth(s)" seven more times.

"Anticks" to indicate people shows up three times in Shakespeare, and as in *Groats-worth* all of them have negative connotations, for example "witless antics" in *Troilus and Cressida* (5.3).

"garnisht in our colours" appears in *Love's Labor's Lost* (2.1) as "garnished/ With such bedecking ornaments." Shakespeare uses "our colors" three times.

"upstart" (in "upstart Crow") is likewise used perjoratively as an adjective in *Richard II* (2.3): "upstart unthrifts."

"beautified with" is in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (4.1) as "you are beauti-fied/ With goodly shape."

"Crow…with…feathers" is approximated in *The Comedy of Errors* (3.1) as "A crow without feather?"

"Crow…beautified with [another's] feathers" recalls an image from the Pro-logue of Act 4 of *Pericles* (32-33): "With the dove of Paphos might the crow/ Vie feathers white."

"his *Tygers heart wrapt in a Players hide*" appears as "O tiger's heart wrapped in a woman's hide!" in *Henry VI Part 3* (1.4). A Shakespeare precursor play, *The true Tragedie of Richard Duke of York*, acted by Lord Strange's company for Henslowe in March 1591, contains the identical phrase.

"he is as well able…as…you" is in *Titus Andronicus* (2.1): "I am as able…as thou."

"the best of you" appears in *Othello* (2.3).

"an absolute" shows up three times in Shakespeare as an adjective describing a person: "an absolute courtier" (*The Merry Wives of Windsor*, 3.3), "an abso-lute master" (*Antony and Cleopatra*, 1.2), and "an absolute gentleman" (*Hamlet*, 5.2).

"his owne conceit" appears in *Hamlet* (2.2).

"the onely Shake-scene in a countrie" echoes faintly in *Henry V* (2.1): "And hold-fast is the only dog."

"Shake-scene": Under Oxfordian theory, Oxford coined a hyphenated pseud-onym starting with "Shake-" and here is another.

Shakespeare, by the way, also shares Greene's earlier use of *plumes*, *jets*, *prank'd*, and "to brave it in the streets," which is rendered in *Titus Andronicus* (4.1) as "I'll go brave it at the court" and in *Henry VI Part 2* (4.8) as "I see them lording it in London streets." Everywhere we turn, we see evidence that Shakespeare and Greene are versions of the same writer.

The text explored above covers the most important parts of the most famous sections of Greene's infamous book. Skimming the rest of the passages in the final sections of *Groats-worth* for colorful words and phrases uncovers numerous additional connections to Shakespeare, which are omitted from this paper. We can already see how densely Greene's language in *Groats-worth* fits Shakespeare's. Further, I am unaware of any of Greene's constructions that conclusively contradict the dual-pen-name hypothesis.

Parallels between the language in *Groats-worth* and that in Shakespeare's *Henry VI* trilogy are especially numerous. The reason appears to be that the two works are contemporaneous compositions by the same author.

In *Kind-Harts Dreame*, published before the end of 1592, Henry Chettle protested that, despite rumors to the contrary, he was not the author of *Groats-worth*. From the perspective offered here, it is clear that nearly everything Chettle says therein about his minor role in the matter is true.

We might be able to demonstrate that, in toto, the langauge parallels offered above are uncommon among most independent Elizabethan writers. But doing so would first require excluding compositions written under any other pen-names Oxford may have adopted. Such a project is outside the scope of this paper. For now, we have established that Greene and Shakespeare's shared linguistic tendencies are compatible with the hypothesis that the same writer is behind the works published under both names, including the infamous *Groats-worth*.

Who is "Shake-Scene"?

From Greene's epithet "Shake-scene," orthodox scholars have made bold, uncompromising assertions such as this: "The pun in 'Shake-scene' leaves no doubt that Shakespeare is meant" (Wilson 44). I have found matching "no doubt" statements on this issue from multiple biographers within each of four consecutive centuries, from the 18th to the 21st.

Many biographers have mined Greene's brief statement to produce analyses about the supposed activity and character of William Shakespeare. Extrapolating from a

feeling of certainty on this issue, "the commentators have sought primarily to establish the precise nature of the charge against Shakespeare" (Carroll 131).

But the charge cannot be against Shakespeare, because "Shakespeare" wrote the passage. Shake-scene is anyone *but* Shakespeare. If Shake-scene is not Shake-speare, at whom did Oxford aim with his newly mined epithet?

Marlovian A.D. Wraight (1965) was the first to attribute Greene's tag to someone other than Shakespeare, namely the famous actor and stage manager Edward Alleyn. Dyce, Hughes and Detobel provided crucial details to the case: Henslowe's diary shows that Robert Greene's *Orlando Furioso* was staged by Lord Strange's Men on February 21, 1592, a few months before *Groats-worth* came to press. Edward Alleyn is known to have acted in this drama. Directly to the point of Greene's complaint is the fact that Alleyn expanded the text of Greene's play. In Alleyn's personal copy of the play, noted Dyce, "here and there certain blanks have been supplied in a different hand-writing, and that hand-writing is Alleyn's" (Dyce 31). In other words, as Detobel put it, "the actor had had the temerity to add some 530 lines of his own" (Detobel 15).

As Detobel deduced, such audacity exquisitely explains Greene's complaint about the playwrights' mouthpiece – an actor dressed in their feathers – inserting his own (inferior) blank verse into their plays. Alleyn is the one who dared to "bombast out" some of his own lines within a play by another author, in this case the very author who complains about it: Robert Greene.

Detobel established that Alleyn trod on Marlowe's turf as well:

> Moreover, Alleyn was the owner of the play *Tamer Cam* and likely to have been the author or at the very least a collaborator. Greg comments: "I have little doubt that it was written as a rival to *Tamburlain* which belonged to the Admiral's men" (Greg 155). Like Marlowe's *Tamburlain* the play consisted of two parts. Only the plot of the first part is extant. The second part was staged by the Lord Admiral's men on 28 April 1592. Thus, in the months leading up to the composition of *Groatsworth*, the famous actor Alleyn had manifestly dared to rival both Greene and Marlowe at playwriting.
>   (Detobel 15).

So, the other writer upon whose territory Alleyn encroached is none other than the first fellow playwright to whom Greene addresses his open letter: Christopher Marlowe (as scholars widely agree), adding further sense to Greene's context.

From Greene's quoting – in italics, as if rendered aloud – the "tiger's heart" line, it seems that Alleyn probably acted in *The True Tragedie of Richard, Duke of York* and/or the ensuing version, Shakespeare's *Henry VI, Part 3*, the latter of which is estimated

to have been completed in 1592, the year of Greene's complaint. Both plays contain the line, "O tiger's heart, wrapt in a woman's hide!" Alleyn must have boomed it out nearly to the point of shaking the scenery, earning him Greene's epithet, "Shake-scene."

To summarize the case: Alleyn is an "upstart" for being a presumptuous actor who adds lines to others' plays and even writes his own play. He's a "crow" dressed in the "feathers" of others partly for being an actor dressed as playwrights did, but particularly for slipping his own lines into their works. And he's a "Shake-scene" for his dramatic portrayals. *Groats-worth*, then, does not present a "sneering allusion to Shakespeare's blank verse . . ." (Carroll 143) but alludes to a mere actor's attempts to do what Greene and Marlowe were doing far better.

To reiterate, the line about "Shake-scene" is not *about* Shakespeare but *by* him. Oxford simply invented two similar pseudonyms: *Shake-scene* for Edward Alleyn and *Shake-speare* for himself. The two constructions appear in print for the first time within months of each other, in publications registered on September 20, 1592 (*Groats-worth*) and April 18, 1593 (*Venus and Adonis*), respectively.

Though the case identifying Alleyn as the upstart crow is strong, for our purposes it isn't crucial. Whoever Shake-scene may be, we can at least re-categorize the question as one of minor import rather than the earth-shattering reference to Shakespeare that Stratfordians take it to be.

The phrase "upstart crow . . . Shake-scene" has "produced on it a small library of serious comment" (Carroll 131). We can retire that library.

Three: Why Greene Shifted from Romances to Lust-Warnings to Confessionals

Groats-worth is a mysterious book. We have concluded that the Earl of Oxford wrote it. Can we figure out why?

Robert Greene spent his first decade writing sixteen romances. Then over three years he wrote five tales showing how love can lead to ruin. In 1592, he became a wailing penitent denouncing his previous works and his life. These are dramatic changes of heart.

In his final incarnation, "Greene evidently took a morbid delight in representing himself, his actions, and all his motives, in the foulest and most repulsive colors. If we are to believe Greene, his whole life was an endless round of intoxication, debauch, and blasphemy. In a fit of self-accusation, he endeavours to paint himself and all his actions in the worst of colours" (Storojenko 1:156; 1:53).

Scholars have found themselves aghast at Greene's self-loathing. "Usually autobiographies and memoirs are written by people for the purpose of defending themselves in the eyes of posterity, and showing their actions and motives in the best light possible." But because this one "is written for a diametrically opposite purpose . . . Greene's autobiography stands unique among works of the same kind" (Storojenko 1: 156). Among all autobiographies, if one stands unique, we should search for a unique explanation for the difference.

Most scholars, while on rare occasions expressing some hesitance about aspects of Greene's confessionals, have concluded that his self-described life of fathomless depravity is sincere and his agonized repentance genuine. Here is a summary of the main commentators' views:

> Nicholas Storojenko would "fearlessly believe him when he speaks of the anguish of his soul and the sincerity of his repentance." J.A. Symonds thought "the accent of remorse…too sincere and strongly marked to justify a suspicion of deliberate fiction." As for the famous letter, there has been almost unanimous agreement that its bitterness is genuine, its "earnestness," as Dyce put it, "scarcely consistent with forgery." "Sincerity and reality," for A.B. Grosart, "pulsate in every word of these ultimate utterances."
>
> Carroll (27-28)

Additional laments are stirring to read:

> There have been too many of the Muses' sons whose vices have conducted them to shame and sorrow, but none, perhaps, who have sunk to deeper degradation and misery than the subject of this memoir [*Groats-worth*].
>
> Alexander Dyce, 1831 (57)

> The entire pamphlet [*Groats-worth*] of Greene's is, perhaps, one of the most extraordinary fragments of autobiography that the vanity or the repentance of a sinful man ever produced.
>
> Charles Knight, 1843 (VII:74)

> The devout state of mind, sincere contrition, and broken spirit of Greene, with which the *Groatsworth of Wit* is filled, stands out even more strongly in his *Repentance*. [W]e have no reason to doubt the sincerity of such a heartrending confession [in *Groats-worth*.] Sitting on the edge of eternity, Greene only concerned himself with the salvation of the souls of those he loved on earth. [In *The Repentance*,] perhaps the strongest evidence in proof of the authenticity of this work is the style and spirit in which it was written – that spirit of unaffected repentance, sincere contrition of heart and self-abasement with which it is impregnated.
>
> Nicholas Storojenko, 1878 (1:53, 148, 50, 55)

There is every probability (and no proof to the contrary or shadow of proof) that Greene was as careless of religion and as given to all evil in 1588-9 as at any time of his life.

A.B. Grosart, 1881 (*Robert Greene* 1:100fn)

Thus, in a whirlwind of remorse and contumely, affection and hatred, tears and flashes of humour, there passed away a son of storm and passion. By nature a nomad, his place was with Drake and Hawkins and Raleigh, who loved the restless element . . . .

J.M. Brown, 1877 (130)

The *Repentance* and the concluding pages of the *Groatsworth of Wit* give an impression of greater sincerity. [T]hey reveal clearly the state of mind in which he was – a sensitive being, friendless and in poverty, sick unto death, with conscience torturing him into anguish through memories of a wasted life. . . . I think the final repentance is genuine. . . . Greene was stricken with remorse . . . . He was terrified to his inmost soul.

John Clark Jordan, 1915 (72, 75, 79)

Greene was once, like Marlowe, a scoffer at religion . . . but now he has repented.

Charles Nicholl, 2002 (52)

"But there are those," wrote Carroll, "who may hear, instead, something studied, overly self-conscious and literary. It may be [that] it strikes us as out-and-out clap-trap" (28). The literary experts have indeed been duped. They have failed to spot a shiny gold dubloon lying on the side of the road for 400 years.

We must first ask: did Oxford in the early 1590s undergo a phase of guilty religiosity in which he suffered agonizing remorse over Greene's prior books? Hughes thought so: "The shift in tone in 1590 reflects his troubles of that period" (2009, 37), and in 1592 Oxford would have repented writing Greene's stories because "a man of Oxford's stature may have suffered from knowing that in his world such frivolities were considered mere toys" (2009, 31). This conclusion is doubtful, however, because there is little suggestion of such a view in Shakespeare's canon or in Oxford's life. So, what in the world was he doing?

Of all the influences in Shakespeare's works, one stands out above all: that of the Roman poet, Publius Ovidius Naso (43 BC -18 AD). Oxford's childhood fascination with Ovid culminated with his translation (Prechter 7-14) of *Ovids Metamorphoses*, published under his uncle Arthur Golding's name in part in 1565 when he was fifteen, and in full in 1567 when he was seventeen. Robert Greene was equally enamored of Ovid. He cites him numerous times and credits him for the title and theme of *Alcida: Greenes Metamorphosis.* Carroll confirmed, "Greene thought of himself, as did others,

as an Ovid" (Carroll 77fn).

Ovid wrote in three literary modes. He first issued poetic instructions on succeeding at love in *Amores* (*Love Affairs*) and *Ars Amatoria* (*Art of Love*). He shifted gears to warn about the pitfalls of love in *Remedia Amoris* (*Love's Remedy* or *The Cure for Love*). After being banned from Rome, he wrote two poetry collections titled *Tristia* (*Sorrows*) and *Epistulae ex Ponto* (*Letters from the Black Sea*), parts of which describe his misery and beg forgiveness for his former works. This sequence reveals shifts in Ovid's views, from being a champion of amorous activity to a denouncer of it, and from being a bold issuer of love poetry to an agonized apologizer for it.

Does that sound familiar?

Robert Greene, in the dedication of *Mourning Garment* (1590), explained his intent to carry out the same transformation. He says:

> Ovid, after hee was banished for his wanton papers written, *de Arte Amandi*, and of his amorous Elegies betweene him and Corinna, being amongst the barbarous Getes, and though a Pagan, yet toucht with a repenting passion of the follies of his youth, hee sent his *Remedium Amoris*, and part of his *Tristibus* to Caesar…that hee which severely punished such lascivious livers, would be as glad to heare of their repentant labours. Thus (Right Honorable) you heare the reason of my bold attempt, how I hope your Lordship will be glad with Augustus Caesar, to read the reformation of a second Ovid. (9:121)

And there we have it. He says, "*the reason of my bold attempt [is to effect] the reformation of a second Ovid*." Oxford, then, will steer his beloved Robert Greene down the same course Ovid traversed. Oxford's pseudonym will play a role, that of Oxford's most beloved role model.

Greene continues his explanation in the ensuing address "To the Gentleman Schollers of both Universities." He describes the deathbed conversion of Aristotle from atheist to fervent believer, foreshadowing the deathbed conversion of Greene in *Groats-worth* and *The Repentance*. He notes that Ovid underwent a like metamorphosis, and Greene will do the same:

> What Ovid was in Rome, I referre to his Elegies: what he was amongst the Getes, I gather from his *Tristibus*: how he persevered in his repentant sorrowes [i.e. his *Sorrows*], the discourse of his death doth manifest. The Romanes that heard his loves beleeved his penance. Then Gentlemen let me finde like favour, if I that wholly gave my selfe to the discoursing of amours, bee now applied to better labours.
>
> . . . please it you (Gentlemen) to put on my *Mourning Garment*, and see the effects that grow from such wanton affects, you wil leave Ovids Art [i.e. his

> *Art of Love*], & fall to his remedy [i.e. his *Love's Remedy*] . . . . (9: 123-125)

Just as Ovid began by writing amorous *Elegies* and *Art of Love*, shifted gears with *Love's Remedy* and ended with "his repentant *Sorrowes*," Greene will follow his lead. Having begun with love pamphlets, he will shift gears to warnings against lust and from there to sorrowful confessionals.

Greene's warnings against lust cover four and a half books: *Never Too Late* (1590), *Francescos Fortunes* (1590), *Mourning Garment* (1590), *Farewell to Follie* (1591) and the first two-thirds of *Groats-worth of Wit* (1592). His confessional phase begins with the final third of *Greens Groats-worth of Wit*, carries through *The Repentance of Robert Greene* and ends with the frame of *Greenes Vision*, published "posthumously" in 1593. Despite all that was going on in his life – including money woes and the escalating battle with Gabriel Harvey – Oxford held firm to his purpose, leading his literary creation, Robert Greene, to the end of his life in a state of profound *tristesse*, following the course of Ovid.

In retrospect, we can see that Greene had already applied the model of transformation from evildoer to penitent in *The Black Bookes Messenger . . . the Life and Death of Ned Browne* from earlier that year. He follows the same template in *Groats-worth*, except that his exhortation to avoid evil courses is directed toward his fellow playwrights rather than to the reader. He completes his personal makeover in *The Repentance* and *Greenes Vision*.

Oxford had at least two specific literary sources for the language of Greene's repentant testimony. The Puritan Thomas Stocker, who had spent some childhood years in Oxford's father's house, dedicated *Divers Sermons of Master John Calvin* to Oxford on May 6, 1581. This book is likely a primary source of Greene's forceful rhetoric. It is also known that *The Repentance* "follows…Robert Parson's *A Booke of Christian Exercise* [1582], a popular work of the time that includes terrifying images of damnation . . . and the progress of the soul" (Crupi 33). Oxford likely placed both books in his library in the early 1580s and pulled them off the shelf a decade later to serve his purpose.

With much preparation and focused intent, Oxford concocts a tour-de-force. One of Greene's most revealing statements about Ovid is, "The Romanes…beleeved his penance." Oxford set out to achieve the same effect, and it worked; nearly every reader since has believed Greene's transformations to be "no doubt" partly or wholly genuine. No wonder a battalion of biographers has attested to their veracity. No wonder critics have been fooled for centuries. It's just literature, but it's highly effective literature. Orson Welles would have approved.

Now we can account for why Greene's autobiography paints him in the worst possible light: It is not an autobiography; it is a literary exercise. We can also see

why the language is so intense. Oxford went just as over-the-top with confession as he had done with euphuism. It's finally clear, too, why Greene's transformation has fooled even the brightest of scholars of Elizabethan literature: Oxford, the consummate playwright, created a compelling role and played it to the hilt. He proved he could out-sermonize what Greene called the typical "preacher [who will] carelessly and unskilfully…utter such balde stuffe" (Robert Greene, preface to *An Oration or Funeral Sermon* [1585]). Greene wasn't wallowing in self-condemnation; Oxford was having a rollicking romp, which, he had earlier declared, "I hope your Lordship will be glad…to read."

Greene's transformation is a triumph of feigned sincerity by the Earl of Oxford, who as the writer behind Shakespeare can present a picture of genuine humanity no matter what type of person he depicts. In modern times, some critics' belief that the author of *The Repentance* is not Robert Greene but some unknown Puritan is more testimony to Oxford's ability to create any type of human character, whether king, princess, constable, villain, witch, or sinner.

This context explains why "Harvey's account notably lacks any reference to [Greene's] repentance" and why "indeed, Nashe throughout [his books] makes no comment on Greene's repentance" (Crupi 28, 30). There wasn't any repentance, and Oxford's acquaintances knew it. In the third of his *Foure Letters*, Gabriel Harvey flatly discounts Greene's conversion and labels him an "Arch-atheist." (1: 190) Harvey knew that Greene's devotional language was posturing and his conversion fictional.

Finally, there is the deceased author's own admission that *Groats-worth* is fictional. In 1593, the spirit of Robert Greene, writing in *Greenes Newes both from Heaven and Hell* (brought to press by "B.R."), makes this statement:

> For if you had but seene *Greenes farewell to folly* [and] one other of my bookes called *Greenes groats worth of wit*: why, if there were but one peny worth of wit equally distributed you shall finde no lesse cause to laugh at the one, then to beleeve the other.

Thus, Greene's own ghost – quite likely animated by the still-living Earl of Oxford – openly declares that Groats-worth is a fabrication not to be believed.

Confirmation from a Knowledgeable Admirer

Twenty-five years after Greene's death, a certain "I.H." (conjectured to be John Hind or Jasper Heyworth) appended a prose address and a poem to the 1617 quarto of *Greene's Groats-worth of Wit*. His address (rendered in full in Carroll, pages 99-103) clandestinely suggests that he knew *Groats-worth* was fiction and that "Robert Greene" was a pseudonym of the Earl of Oxford. His essay on literary creation makes at least four barely translucent references to Greene's famous book, as follows:

A Witte, that runnes this sublunarie Maze, and takes but Nature for its Originall, makes Reason, and Judgement, a payre of false spectacles, where-through [he] falles hudwinckt into the pitfall of his owne Folly.

Piping-hot Poetrie . . . notwithstanding she come cladde in the richest habite of Skill, and pranked out in the liveliest colours of Conceit; yet before Censures blinking eye, she appeares but an ill-favoured Dowdie.

Wit and Honesty cannot abide each others Company; for Necessitie is the go-betweene, to set 'em at oddes.

Now Reader . . . behold a drie and *withered shadow,* (which once was *Greene*) appeare in his native colour; new dipt, and a fresh glosse set on him; ready to enter upon the Stage of trial, to answere upon's Cu, and speake his owne part. [original italics omitted except for this paragraph] (Carroll 99-101).

I interpret his words as follows:

This book is a maze wherein even a smart person will get lost if he assumes nature is its model. If you assume the book is based in reality, reason will hoodwink you and judgment will fail you.

Critics have no idea what a skillful piece of work this book is. They don't think much of it because they don't understand the brilliance of its conception. [That is, Greene's breaking off in the middle of his story to bare his heart and mind is nothing but effective literary manipulation of the reader.]

Greene could have been brilliant or honest, but not both.

A shadow, not an actual person, once was Greene. And the shadow was an actor, speaking a part.

I.H. also uses the words *pranked* and *colours*, which feature in Greene's attacks on players, as quoted above.

After discussing the book in prose, I.H. turns to praising its author in verse. In "Greenes Epitaph," he calls Greene "Minerva's nurse child," Minerva being Pallas, the Spear-Shaker, whom Oxfordians postulate is the basis of the pen-name "Shake-speare." He also calls him "great Apollo's sonne," perhaps referring to Orpheus, who charmed Hell with his music, as Oxford was an accomplished musician and both Greene and Shakespeare's writings are full of songs. He labels him "Englands second Cicero," referring to the Roman statesman; so about whom is I.H. really talking – the commoner-hermit Robert Greene or the politically active Edward de Vere? He tells us in his final couplet:

To make's <u>not being, be</u>, as he hath beene,

> Greene, <u>never</u>-wither'd, <u>ever</u>-wither'd Greene.

In these obscure lines, I.H. says that Greene's "not being" was made to *be*; Oxford made a non-existent person exist, by way of his works. He puns on *E.Ver* in the final line, juxtaposing *never* and *ever* as Shakespeare often does. In closing, he says that Greene was *ever*-withered (being but a shadow) yet *never*-withered in that his works will live forever.

Greene's Legacy

Oxford's hoax has had a confounding effect on scholars. Storojenko lamented, "We can find no author whose writings and life are so opposed to each other, so decidedly contradictory, and seemingly so irreconcilable, as Greene's" (Storojenko 1:60). "Such phrases," noted Jordan, "are common among Greene's critics" (Jordan 75fn).

Recognizing that Greene's life is fictional and that Oxford had a model for it makes all the contradictions and mysteries evaporate. The true author is the Earl of Oxford, who wrote all the material under the names Robert Greene and William Shakespeare. Even though Oxford explained to readers exactly what he was doing, he played the part of Robert Greene so well that people believed he was real.

Works Cited

"Edward De Vere." *Dictionary of National Biography*. Ed. Stephen, Sir Leslie and Sir Sidney Lee. Vol. 17. London: Oxford University Press, 1917.

"Ferdinando Stanley." *Wikipedia*.

"Charles Blount." *Dictionary of National Biography*. Ed. Stephen, Sir Leslie and Sir Sidney Lee. Vol. 2. London: Oxford University Press, 1917. 702-03.

"James Blount." *Dictionary of National Biography*. Ed. Stephen, Sir Leslie and Sir Sidney Lee. Vol. 2. London: Oxford University Press, 1917. 708-09.

"James Blount, 6th Baron Mountjoy." *Wikipedia*.

"John Darcy, 2nd Baron Darcy of Chinche." Geni, a My Heritage Company. Web. 29 June 2014. <www.geni.com>

"John Dickenson." *Dictionary of National Biography*. Ed. Stephen, Sir Leslie and Sir Sidney Lee. Vol. 5. London: Oxford University Press, 1917. 937.

"Richard Tarleton." *Dictionary of National Biography*. Ed. Stephen, Sir Leslie and Sir Sidney Lee. Vol. 19. London: Oxford University Press, 1917.

"Robert Greene." *Dictionary of National Biography*. Ed. Stephen, Sir Leslie and Sir Sidney Lee. Vol. 8. London: Oxford University Press, 1917. 509-16.

Adams, Simon, ed. *Household Accounts and Disbursement Books of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, 1558-1561, 1584-1586*. Vol. 6. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

Anderson, Verily. *The Deveres of Castle Hedingham*. Lavenham, Suffolk: Terence Dalton, Ltd, 1993.

Bradley, A.C. *Shakespearean Tragedy: Lectures on Hamlet, Othello, King Lear Et Al*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985.

Brown, Prof. J.M. "An Early Rival of Shakespere." *New Zealand Magazine*. Vol. No. 6: *A Quarterly Journal of General Literature*, 1877. 97-133.

Carroll, D. Allen *Greene's Groatsworth of Wit*. Binghamton NY: SUNY Center for Medieval & Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1994.

Chettle, Henry. *Kind-Hart's Dreame Conteining Fiue Apparitions, Vvith Their Inuectiues against Abuses Raigning. Deliuered by Seuerall Ghosts Vnto Him to Be Publisht, after*

Piers Penilesse Post Had Refused the Carriage. Inuita Inuidiae. By H.C. Early English Books, 1475-1640 / 315:03: Imprinted at London: [By J. Wolfe and J. Danter] for William Wright, 1593.

Clark, Eva Turner. *Hidden Allusions in Shakespeare's Plays.* Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1974.

Collins, John C., ed. (1905). *The Plays & Poems of Robert Greene.* As quoted in *Robert Greene*, Charles W. Crupi, *Twayne's English Authors Series*, Kinney, Arthur F. ed., Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1986. Ed. Collins, John C. (1905). Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Crupi, Charles W. *Robert Greene.* Twayne's English Authors Series. Ed. Kinney, Arthur F. Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1986.

Das, Nandini. *Robert Greene's Planetomachia (1585).* Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2007.

Delahoyde, Michael. "Shake-Speare: Edward De Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford." Web. 25 April 2014. <public.wsu.edu/~delahoyd/shakespeare/vere.html>.

Detobel, Robert. "Henry Chettle's Apology Revisited." *Shakespeare Matters* Vol. 12. No. 3 (Summer 2013).

Dickson, Peter W. "Review of *the Assassination of Shakespeare's Patron: Investigating the Death of the Fifth Earl of Derby.*" *Brief Chronicles: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Authorship Studies* Vol. III (2011).

Dyce, Alexander. *The Dramatic Works of Robert Greene.* London: William Pickering, 1831.

Farrow, Matty. "The Collected Works of Shakespeare." University of Sydney. <sydney.edu.au/engineering/it/~matty/Shakespeare/>.

Green, Nina. "Four Letters and Certain Sonnets." (1999). <www.oxford-shakespeare.com/Nashe/Four_Letters.pdf>.

Greg, Walter W., ed. *Henslowe Papers.* London: Bullen, 1907.

Grosart, Alexander B., ed. *The Life and Complete Works in Prose and Verse of Robert Greene, M.A.* 15 vols. London: Hazell, Watson & Viney, 1881-86.

—, ed. *The Complete Works of Thomas Nashe.* 6 vols: Privately printed, 1883-84.

—, ed. *The Works of Gabriel Harvey.* Vols. 1-3. London: Hasell, Watson, and Viney, Ltd., 1884.

Hibbard, G.R. *Thomas Nashe: A Critical Introduction*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962.

Hughes, Stephanie Hopkins. "Four Hundred Years of Stonewalling." *Shakespeare Matters* 6.4 (Summer 2007).

—. "Hide Fox and All After: The Search for Shakespeare." *Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter* 43.1 (Winter 2007).

—. "Robert Greene, King of the Paper Stage." (2009): 62 pp. 04/14/14 <politicworm.files.wordpress.com/2011/03/hughes-king-of-the-paper-stage.pdf>. Originally published in 1997-1998 as "The Relevance of Robert Greene to the Oxfordian Thesis."

Hunter, G.K. *John Lyly, the Humanist as Courtier*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962.

Hutson, Lorna. *Thomas Nashe in Context*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989.

Jordan, John Clark. *Robert Greene*. 1915. New York: Octagon Books, 1965.

Knight, Charles, ed. *Comedies, Histories, Tragedies and Poems of William Shakespeare*. Vol. VII. London: Charles Knight, 1843.

Kunitz, Stanley J. and Howard Haycraft, eds. *British Authors before 1800: A Biographical Dictionary*. New York: H.W. Wilson, 1952.

M, D. F. R. de. *An Ansvver to the Vntruthes, Published and Printed in Spaine . . . Faithfully Translated by J.L.* Trans. Lea, James. Early English Books, 1475-1640 / 430:11. London : by John Jackson, 1589.

McClarran, Steven. *I Come to Bury Shaksper*. Lexington, KY: Steinberg, 2011.

Miller, E.H. *Professional Writer in Elizabethan England*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959.

Nelson, Alan H. "Oxford and the Spanish Armada: Historical Accounts." <socrates.berkeley.edu/~ahnelson/ARMADA/propagan.html>.

Nelson, Alan H. *Monstrous Adversary: The Life of Edward De Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford*. Liverpool: University Press, 2003.

Nicholl, Charles. *The Reckoning: The Murder of Christopher Marlowe*. London: Random House, 2002.

Ogburn, Charlton, Jr. *The Mysterious William Shakespeare*. McLean, VA: EPM Publications, 1984.

Owen, Orville Ward. *Sir Francis Bacon's Cipher Story.* 5 Vols. Detroit: Howard Publishing Co. (1893-5).

Prechter, R. R. Jr. "A Deeper Look at the Arthur Golding Canon." *Shakespeare Matters* 7.1 (Fall 2007): 7-14.

Puttenham, George. *The Arte of English Poesie. June? 1589.* English Reprints. edited by E. Arber and J.R. Lowell Birmingham: A. Murray, 1869.

Rich, Barnabe. *Greenes Newes Both from Heauen and Hell. Prohibited the First for Writing of Bookes, and Banished out of the Last for Displaying of Conny-Catchers. Commended to the Presse by B.R.* Early English Books, 1475-1640 / 298:06. London: Imprinted at London, 1593.

Storojenko, Nicholas (Moscow, 1878). *Storojenko's Life of Robert Greene.* As quoted in *The Life and Complete Works in Prose and Verse of Robert Greene, M.A.* A.B. Grosart. Ed. London: Hazell, Watson & Viney. Vols. 15. 1881-86.

Sutton, Dana, translator.
<oxford-shakespeare.com/StatePapersOther/SP_70-134_ff_186-7.pdf>

Wilson, J. Dover. *The Essential Shakespeare: A Biographical Adventure.* Cambridge University Press, 1932.

Wraight, A.D. *In Search of Christopher Marlowe.* London: MacDonald, 1965.

"A mint of phrases in his brain"

Language, Historiography, and The Authorship Question in Love's Labour's Lost

by Julie Harper Elb

Often regarded as the weakest of Shakespeare's plays, *Love's Labour's Lost* has long provoked discord among scholars, eluding a unified opinion. Samuel Johnson labelled it "entangled and obscure" but also "genius," and the play has even been branded as "the darling of the Shakespearean lunatic fringe."[1] The plot is thin, the characters undeveloped, and the source unknown or at least uncertain. Vilification of it began as early as the seventeenth century, and this trend became so influential in Shakespeare studies that it has been nearly impossible to shift. Critics have often repeated Johnson's judgment that it is "mean, childish, and vulgar."[2] Yet in the last few decades *LLL* has slowly gained defenders who argue that those who maligned it neither understood nor appreciated its rich and vivid language. Even after deriding the play, Samuel Johnson admitted that it contained "many sparks of genius" and even more crucially, that no play "has more evident marks of the hand of Shakespeare."[3] John Pendergast, the modern critic, took Johnson's idea a step further, suggesting that the sheer joyous vitality of the language "taps into an energy of the time in a way no other play does."[4]

The negative appraisal from seventeenth-century critics forged a persuasive and even pernicious historiography that not only prejudiced subsequent opinions of the play but also confused and clouded serious theories about the dates of composition and possible sources. This uncertainty created a situation where critics like G.R. Hibbard have essentially fabricated biographical evidence about the author in order to preserve the long-standing opinion that the play is opaque and abstruse, weak in plot and unintelligible in verse. Many of these difficulties can be resolved if we re-consider the language of the play, strip it of its damaging historiography, and re-interpret the text without trying to force it to fit the biography of Shakespeare of Stratford. In fact, a simpler, more plausible and ultimately more satisfactory interpretation of the play emerges if we consider Edward de Vere as the text's author.

Love's Labour's Lost has enjoyed a renaissance in recent years. It has been performed more frequently, turned into an opera by Nicholas Nabokov, and filmed by Kenneth Branagh in a truncated musical version where sonnets and monologues are replaced by Busby Berkeley-style musical numbers. Traditional scholarship has been slow to catch up to increased interest, and the play is still rarely taught in Shakespeare classes, despite the uncomplicated plot. Based loosely on the court of Henri IV of France, *LLL* follows the king, Navarre in the play, and his three attending lords who formally

swear off the company of women as well as other distracting indulgences in order to devote themselves to an arduous three years of study. When the Princess of France visits on behalf of her father with, conveniently, three attending ladies, the men begin to fall violently in love. One by one, they break the promises they made to study, instead composing sonnets and devising entertainments to woo these ladies, all the while trying to soothe their own and each other's consciences for their perjury.

This minimal plot has caused many critics, Hibbard among them, to categorize the play as one of Shakespeare's earliest works, perhaps even his very first effort, assuming that the Bard could have penned something so deficient only if he had been young and untrained, a fledgling writer on the London scene. Other critics justify their aversion to the play by clinging to Samuel Johnson's early opinion about its vulgarity. Johnson suggested, as a seventeenth-century Anglican moralist, that the play's earthier passages were unfit for an audience that included their "maiden queen."[5]

Love's Labour's Lost is also unusual for its ending, atypical for a Shakespearean comedy, since the four couples have an ambiguous future and do not end the play married or betrothed. A celebratory Pageant of the Nine Worthies, a play-within-a-play in the final scene, is interrupted with the grave news that the Princess's father has died, making her the new queen. The four couples are thus separated for a year and a day, the men promising to renew their courtship of the women at the end of that time, when the ladies' period of mourning is over. As Berowne says, "Our wooing doth not end like an old play/Jack hath not Jill."[6] It is left to the audience to determine if the couples reunite in the future, knowing that the men have already "play'd foul play" once with their oaths, as Berowne reminds us. This refreshingly real ending has also caused irritation among early critics who viewed it as a mark of Shakespeare's immaturity as a writer. Lewis Theobald wrote in 1733, "I think, that tho' he has more frequently transgress'd the Unity of Time by cramming Years into the Compass of a Play, yet he knew the Absurdity of so doing, and was not unacquainted with the Rule to the contrary."[7] Theobald at least had confidence that the author was deliberate in his intentions, but other scholars have not been as kind.

Julie Harper Elb *earned her PhD in history in 2003, specializing in Early Modern England. She actively presents at scholarly conferences, most recently at the* Western Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies *in San Luis Obispo. She is interested in eighteenth-century interpretations of Shakespeare. As a part-time opera singer, she also studies operatic and other musical adaptations of Shakespeare. She is especially fond of* Macbeth *by Giuseppe Verdi. She recently was awarded the Teaching Prize for 2015 from TEAMS: The Consortium for Teaching the Middle Ages. She currently teaches Ancient and European history as well as a course on the history and science of contagious diseases at The Westminster Schools in Atlanta, Georgia.*

Charles Gildon wrote in 1710 about *Love's Labour's Lost*: "I shall say no more to it but this, that since it is one of the worst of Shakespeare's Plays, nay I think I may say the very worst, I cannot but think that it is his first, notwithstanding those Arguments or that Opinion that has been brought to the contrary…"[8] He also says, and Johnson echoes this opinion later, "But tho' this play be so bad yet there is here and there a Stroak that persuades us that Shakespeare wrote it…"[9] Alexander Pope suggested that instead of the play being Shakespeare's first, that it, along with *The Winter's Tale*, and *Titus Andronicus*, might only be partly penned by him: "only some characters, single scenes, or perhaps a few particular passages were of his hand." Whoever composed the rest of these plays was of little matter, Pope argued, as it was simplest just to attribute them to Shakespeare: "They give Strays to the Lord of the Manor," he said, implying that Shakespeare's reputation as the finest author in the English language could endure the attribution of an inferior play or two.[10] It is interesting that as early as the eighteenth century there are questions about the authorship of this play.

Theobald concluded in 1733 that there was not sufficient reason to doubt the play was of Shakespeare's hand although he might have written it "in his boyish Age." Yet still he complained, "there are some Scenes (particularly in this Play) so very mean and contemptible that One would heartily wish for the Liberty of Expunging them."[11]

Hibbard and other modern critics have been infected with the harsh seventeenth-century attitude that *Love's Labour's Lost* was the product of an untested youth, a poorly-written play whose sheer delight in linguistic gymnastics was regarded as dense, impenetrable and opaque when staged one hundred and forty years later. Early twentieth-century opinion was equally severe: H.C. Hart, in 1906 wrote, "But the play taken as a whole, with all allowance for revision, is obviously a very immature production."[12]

This pattern has had a disastrous effect, for the view that *LLL* is badly written has caused scholars to ignore what some are slowly coming to realize – that the play is entirely consumed with language: a heady mixture of witty dialogue, idioms, sonnets, couplets, verse, blank verse, puns, insults, and satirical wordplay, set in silly scenes of mistaken identity but pointing to the overarching serious matter of broken promises. As John Pendergast has commented, "the verse in the play represents some of Shakespeare's most ornate and self-conscious writing."[13] Readers have been too easily misled by earlier opinions, and have not allowed the text to speak for itself. Perplexity over the verbal jousting steers readers towards the erroneous conclusion that the play must have been composed by a novice writer flexing new muscles, a mysterious beginner who would later miraculously acquire the facility to pen the more impressive *Hamlet* or *Othello*. This insistence that the play is a failed effort of Shakespeare's youth, an anomaly among his other great works, has forced an interpretation onto

the play rather than letting the individuality of the text shine as a rare, unique and exceptional insight into the canon.

Unlike most Shakespearean plays, *Love's Labour's Lost* has no known historical or literary source, or at least not one that matches the standard chronology of Shakespeare's life. This absence has led scholars to find or invent sources in order to preserve the opinion that it is one of the first of his plays to be written. The negative seventeenth-century criticism guarantees the verdict that the play was composed very early in Shakespeare's London career. The figures in the play, however, are historical. The men of *LLL*, the king of Navarre, Berowne, and others are all identifiable members of Henri IV's court. The French ambassador de la Mothe Fenelon is likely the inspiration for the character of Moth, the small, irreverent page of the fantastical Spaniard, Don Armado. Armado's name refers the reader to current events as the 1588 defeat of the Spanish Armada was a major victory in the English psyche.

Although the earliest surviving quarto dates from 1598, no first quarto has surfaced, so scholars almost universally guess at a composition date of 1594 or 95, oddly placing it after the more popular and appreciated *The Taming of the Shrew* and just before the serious melodrama of *Romeo and Juliet*, but there is no historical validity for this decision. Alfred Hart suggested, perhaps because of the character of Armado, a composition date of 1588 which indeed would put it as a very youthful play of Shakespeare, written when he was 23 or 24, even before his fame-making long poems of "Venus and Adonis" and "Lucrece."[14] H.C. Hart settled on 1590, stating boldly: "I conclude then that the first cast of *LLL* was Shakespeare's first genuine play."[15] Traditional chronology suggests that the outbreak of the Plague, which closed theatres from August of 1592 to the spring of 1594 forced Shakespeare into the poetry-writing business, yet scholars suggest he might have written up to five plays also during this time. Pendergast has pointed out the flaw in this reasoning, arguing that this early dating scheme is "a conclusion erroneously based on an assumption that [the play's] exuberance and unique dramatic development must suggest a young playwright."[16] In other words, scholars have allowed the belief that *LLL* is a bad play to precede attempts to date it, fixing it on a spot along a chronology invented from the sparse information that exists about Shakespeare's life.

Controversial theories about possible sources for the play have also led scholars to confirm the date of composition as the mid-1590s. One such theory revolves around the final act of *LLL*. Navarre and his lords, having sent favors to the ladies ahead of time, partake in a bizarre masque where they disguise themselves as Russians to court the ladies, who have switched favors beforehand so that each man woos the wrong woman. In a striking example of forcing the history to fit the timeline of the man from Stratford, Rupert Taylor suggested that 1595 or 96 must be the composition date for the play because of the famous holiday revels at Gray's Inn in 1594. In that year, the revels included a Masque of Russians, so scholars have concluded

that the Masque served either as Shakespeare's direct source for the play or at least provided him with the general idea for disguising his young men as Muscovites. On Twelfth Night of that Christmas season at Gray's Inn an "Ambassador" of Russia also came to entertain, lending even more circumstantial credibility to the theory that Shakespeare used the Gray's Inn Revels as a source for his play, therefore it could not have been composed before December of 1594.

Ruth Loyd Miller, in her 2006 article for *The Oxfordian,* argues that the play references Queen Elizabeth's 1578 progress through her eastern counties, which, if true, opens the work to a much earlier period for composition, making it less likely that Shakespeare of Stratford composed it. Miller's most persuasive point is that the Masque of Russians in *LLL* must be a parody of the Russian ambassador's visit to England in 1582, when he was sent by Ivan the Terrible to evaluate Lady Mary Hastings as his potential bride. Queen Elizabeth had not given her consent to this marriage and delayed for months until Lady Mary finally refused Ivan, much to his anger. This Russian contretemps was an infamous event at the English court, one of deliberate misunderstandings, miscommunications, and outright taunting of the Russian contingent, much like what is reflected in the play. There is even the suggestion that poor Lady Mary, to her horror, was said to have been known afterwards in court as "The Empress of Muscovia."[17] If Miller's argument is correct, the presence of these bumbling Russians in the play is a clever in-joke between the author and the Queen and her court, a work couched in very deliberate references and wordplay that would later seem cryptic and obscure when the original event was forgotten.[18]

Both Taylor and Miller assume the author knew that his audience would be amused by a Masque of Russians, a supposition inconsistent with the idea that Shakespeare wrote the play soon after arriving in London. How did he acquire enough knowledge? Did he simply choose, perhaps based on gossip, to parody Russians and hit an unlikely jackpot? Critics have scoffed at or entirely ignored the idea that the Russian visit could have been a likely source for the play because Shakespeare would have been at most eighteen, about to be married in Stratford. Critics like Taylor have forced their commentary to match the existing biography, suggesting instead that Shakespeare at some point moved to London, became a highly regarded actor and playwright and somehow attained enough intimate knowledge of the court to pen a play as sophisticated and erudite as *Love's Labour's Lost.*

This fabrication of facts to support the traditional dating scheme goes to the heart of the problem with accepting William of Stratford as Shakespeare. G.R. Hibbard assumes that Shakespeare's inexperience caused him to invent flimsy characters while the play was already in rehearsal, penning scenes and characters on the fly, as a young writer might because he saw a better way to use the actors at hand. Hibbard's argument is that the author improvised as required, changing his mind mid-play about a character's role.[19] Hibbard suggests that Shakespeare was particularly changeable

about the role of Armado, even going so far as to argue that if Shakespeare took a role for this play, "as seems quite likely in the early performances of Love's Labour's Lost, it should have been that of Armado."[20] Hibbard's subsequent interpretation of the play is based partly on this biographical creation. If he is correct, and Shakespeare did change course mid-way through composition, why not revise it for the 1598 Folio as it claims to be "newly corrected and augmented?"[21] The more pressing inconsistency is that Hibbard assumes that the playwright, because of his youth, barely knew what he was doing and was fumbling through a play concocting scenes as he went along. If that is the case, and Shakespeare was new to London, fresh from the provinces and not even a competent writer yet, how did he manage to have such intimate knowledge of the French court, its recent history, and more importantly, the refined and sophisticated language used at the English court?

Like *Love's Labour's Lost*, *The Tempest* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* have no known, confirmed sources, yet few scholars group the three plays together since *Midsummer* has become a beloved icon and *Tempest* belongs so categorically to Shakespeare's mature works, a play written seventeen years after *Love's Labour's Lost*, if the Stratfordian chronology can be believed.[22] Yet all three have masques or plays-within-plays, each interrupted dramatically. One wonders if these plays are all original plots with no source material and if so, might the author be recycling the same idea over and over.[23]

Hibbard dismisses the two masques in *LLL*, just as he does characters he thinks Shakespeare improvised, arguing that the masques were not deliberate or intentional but rather "bits of improvisation on the part of the playwright."[24] Because the Masque of Muscovites and the closing Pageant of the Nine Worthies both appear in the final act with no earlier hints of what is to come, Hibbard argues that these two scenes in particular are just "afterthoughts."[25] Few would dare make this same argument about similar scenes in *The Tempest* or *A Midsummer Night's Dream* or make the bold claim that they "invite one to look over Shakespeare's shoulder . . . [and] watch him in the act of composition."[26] Hibbard never mentions that the Pageant of the Nine Worthies could be, as William Farina suggested, "descended from a device with the same title that was arranged by Thomas Churchyard and performed before the queen in 1578."[27] In ignoring this potential source, because it does not fit the dates of Shakespeare's life in London, Hibbard must assume that Shakespeare is composing off-the-cuff, creating makeshift scenes, making mistakes as a neophyte writer, eventually producing an ill-planned and badly-written play.

The dating of *LLL* to the mid-1590s makes commentators assume that it is flawed because it is a product of Shakespeare's youth. As such, it cannot be ranked alongside his other acclaimed works, even though the same argument does not hold for *Romeo and Juliet* or *The Taming of the Shrew*, which are often placed in the same time period and are less linguistically complex. In a circular argument where scholars

highlight flaws of character and plot and therefore declare the play one of Shakespeare's earliest, they subsequently assume that because of the early date, the play must be fraught with these problems, thus they search for the supposed defects and inconsistencies they expect to find.[28] The real paradox, however, is that these same scholars who accuse the author of clumsy composition never question how he writes of his subject matter so assuredly. Even as a new arrival to London, the author writes confidently about court habits and mores, yet critics suggest he was only just able to construct this barely passable play. How does the author write so naturally of court life, as if courtiers are his equals? How does he write the characters of Navarre and Berowne, mimicking their language appropriately? How is he able to inhabit so convincingly the very voice of nobility?

What if *Love's Labour's Lost* were written even earlier than most critics believe, not by a newcomer with no connections to London, but a mature man of court, one singularly honored by his literary contemporaries? The Earl of Oxford had a complicated history at the English court, falling in and out of favor with Elizabeth over the years, but he had a gift for performing, for fiery speaking and writing, and acted as patron for more than one troupe of actors, leasing at least two theatrical companies in the 1590s. More importantly for this play, Oxford spoke and read fluent French, thereby having access to at least one of the early possible sources for *LLL*, Francois de Belleforest's *Histoires Tragiques*, before it was translated into English. We know Oxford was a courtier to whom King Henri VI had written, that he had travelled in France, and that he must have known the French Ambassador, de la Mothe Fenelon, who was at the English court at the time of Oxford's wedding. These incidents seem too many to be coincidental but if, as some contend, the play is Shakespeare's first effort, or even an early effort, can it really be, as Pendergast has argued, "an extended poetic meditation on the power and limitations of language?"[29] As Farina has written, "If Will Shakespeare was the true author, then we can only assume that he was given a unique and specific opportunity to entertain his betters, to which he responded miraculously, to say the least."[30]

Many scholars are familiar with the numerous contemporary references lauding Oxford's literary abilities. Henry Peacham's famous 1622 list of writers "whose like are hardly to be hoped for, in any succeeding Age" mentions first the Earl of Oxford and nowhere does it list the prolific Shakespeare.[31] In his dedicatory sonnets to *The Faerie Queen*, Edmund Spenser offers the customary obsequious compliments to his patrons, noting their bravery, heroism, honor, worthiness, and in the case of the ladies, their beauty. He praises the Lord Chancellor Sir Christopher Hatton's wise counsel and Lord Charles Howard's defeat of the Armada. But he singles out Oxford for a different kind of tribute, extoling Oxford's love for the "Heliconian ymps" and their adoration of him in return, he and they being "most deare" to one another. He also, as one would expect in a sonnet of praise, alludes to Oxford's noble ancestry, but refers to it as shielded by a "shady vele," under which Oxford himself will

be remembered, the veil a popular allegorical reference for things concealed from those not yet ready to see. Christopher Burlinson writes of a veil "as central to early modern allegorical theory….Here it implies not only a shielding of the allegory from eyes that are not prepared to read it, but also a gap between image and meaning." Although Burlinson makes no connection between Spenser's cryptic comment and Shakespeare, it is certainly possible that Spenser's oblique reference could suggest that he knows of Oxford's role as playwright and cheekily insinuates that a veil is drawn too over Oxford's "owne long living memory." It is unusual language indeed as Spenser bemoans the future of literature, thinking the great age is already past.[32]

Like Spenser, numerous other Elizabethan poets and dramatists dedicated works to Oxford, far too many fulsome tributes for the meagre body of poetry attributed to him.[33] Oxford was at court during the farcical Russian delegation of 1582, a more satisfying connection to the source of *Love's Labour's Lost* than the Gray's Inn Revels, since we have no proof that Shakespeare attended them, was invited, or was even in London during that year. If Oxford is the author, his Russian jokes in the play are bold references that Queen Elizabeth and the entire court would have understood immediately. If the Pageant of the Nine Worthies were drawn from Thomas Churchyard's pageant of 1578 (back to that year again of Elizabeth's progress), it would be another wistful trip down memory lane for the audience. There is also the compelling fact that "Churchyard had a long personal and literary association with de Vere lasting over thirty years."[34] And yet, Stratfordian scholars prefer to believe that Shakespeare is improvising rather than admit that a potential source for the play could come from a man so intimately known to Oxford.

Another reference to Elizabeth's past is highlighted in the play, making it difficult to imagine a commoner penning it: early in Act Two, when the Princess of France asks her ladies for gossip about the King and his attending lords, Katherine says of the Lord Dumaine, "I saw him at the Duke Alençon's once." One can imagine that this impudent line had deeper meaning for the audience, for the Duke of Alençon, almost half the Queen's age, was once her suitor. It was a match which Oxford reportedly favored, although he likely suspected it was a charade on the Queen's part, as indeed it turned out to be. In fact, when that French delegation visited Elizabeth's court on behalf of the Duke, Oxford and Philip Sidney had their infamous public dispute on a tennis court in front of all the members of the French deputation.[35] It was a memorable enough event for Spenser to parody it later.[36] So the reference to the Duke is more than just a reference to the Queen's suitor – it is possibly a reference to Oxford himself.

Elizabeth was reportedly so moved when she broke off the engagement to the Duke in 1581 that she composed the poem *On Monsieur's Departure*, a short meditation on the suppression of her feelings because of her obligations as sovereign. In the second stanza, she writes, "No means I find to rid him from my breast*,"* a sentiment

echoed in the last act of *LLL* when Navarre tells the departing Princess of France, "Hence ever then my heart is in thy breast." In *LLL,* it is the woman who leaves behind her lover in order to embrace duty, and the man who stays behind to cope with his lingering feelings. Surely, this was a satisfying reversal for Elizabeth, a play on her own words. Even the ambiguous ending of *LLL* could be a reference to the Queen's life, with no wedding and no promise that one will occur. A shared history between the Queen and Oxford makes it more likely that Oxford composed the play, for how could the neophyte from Stratford have dared to borrow Elizabeth's own phrasing much less remind her of a bittersweet relationship?

The rarified and obscure court atmosphere would certainly have been difficult for Shakespeare to understand, particularly as he would have been a lad of sixteen or so when Elizabeth ended her association with the Duke. Although Shakespeare could have been told stories of court and the Queen's suitors, would he have been daring enough to allude to events that held great emotional significance for her? Felicia Londré emphasizes this point that most scholars have ignored: "How would a young man fresh from a small rural town have dared to write one of his first plays for and about court society?"[37] She continues, arguing against the many scholars who think that the play was a parody of the flowery, ornate style of English prose, the fleeting fad of euphuism: "In fact, how could one who spoke Warwickshire dialect have acquired the verbal facility and sophistication to lampoon a linguistic fad that had flared briefly among courtiers when he was only fourteen?"[38]

Bardoloters have long used this paradox as proof of Shakespeare's "genius," but as Joseph Sobran writes, genius is not a sufficient or satisfactory answer: "*A Streetcar Named Desire* may not be as great a play as *Hamlet*, but the author of *Hamlet* couldn't have written it and Tennessee Williams could. This is a matter not of genius but of individuality."[39] In defending Shakespeare's extraordinary ability to write about his superiors, critics cite biographical certainties for which there is no historical evidence: Hibbard, for example, argues that for this play especially there must be reasons for Shakespeare's flawless use of legal terms and military language, including the ease with which he moves between cultivated and idiomatic speech. Hibbard asserts confidently that Shakespeare had regular contact with men at the Inns of Court, or was perhaps even employed as a clerk.

LLL in particular attracts critics who use the language of the play selectively to suit their case, but ignore the language when it does not. Like Hibbard, they argue that Shakespeare's accurate use of legal terms means he must have known men of law, but the fact that he can write with the voice of an insider at court simply means he was a genius. The critics are correct that the legal terms in Shakespeare's plays are significant, but they argue for the wrong reasons, ignoring the fact that many of these unusual words also appear in letters penned by the Earl of Oxford. The list of these words in *LLL* alone is lengthy: acquittances (a word appearing only in this

play and nowhere else in the canon), attainder, nominate, petitioner, precedent, tales, testimony, cause, charge, debt, grant, lawful, pardon, parties, receipt, recompense, seal, statutes, suit, sum, title, treason, and witness. The first few words are rare, even within the canon: attainder appears in only three other plays, all in legal contexts, while nominate and petitioner appear in only a handful of other plays. To build on Londré's argument, how did Shakespeare come by them, and so very early in his career? Even Alfred Hart, who praised the play's linguistic originality still sided with pejorative opinion, dismissing the inventiveness of the author by arguing that "great length and a large vocabulary do not necessarily carry with them high dramatic quality; [a] comparison of . . . *Love's Labour's Lost* and *As You Like It* . . . enforces the truth of such an obvious statement."[40] Again, in the traditional view, *LLL* is dismissed as a bad play, a one-off in Shakespeare's career, oddly sandwiched between his much worthier efforts of *The Taming of the Shrew* and *Romeo and Juliet*.

This issue of Shakespeare's facility with language is certainly an arresting one, especially for the play in question whose substance is driven by language itself. Shakespeare was, after all, known as a poet before he was acknowledged as a playwright.[41] Given that the playful but poetic dialogue of *LLL* is so unique, critics seem unable to resist analyzing it, even while disparaging it, searching for clues about the author's life. But in their conclusions they prove that they have been influenced by the historically negative opinions of the play. Hibbard complains that there could have been "less obscurity in fewer words," a charge levelled at *LLL* and few other plays.[42] On the subject of the play's wordiness, Hibbard notes that it "contains, as Alfred Hart showed more than forty years ago, a larger number of new words – new in the sense that Shakespeare had not used them before – than any other play, with the single exception of *Hamlet*…and *Hamlet,* it has to be remembered, is nearly half as long again as the comedy."[43] What is the reader to make of this feature that Shakespeare's supposedly worst play shares with his best?

The author of *LLL* emphasizes over and over again the importance of language, its newness, and its excesses, not just in the legalese mentioned above, but in the very rhetoric of his characters. Navarre sets the scene early in Act One by ridiculing Armado's pompous use of language, saying:

> That he hath a mint of phrases in his brain;
> one whom the music of his own tongue
> Doth ravish like enchanting harmony.
>
> (1, 1, 164-166)

This "mint of phrases" is not only a sign of the subject matter of the play about to unfold, but it may also explain why Hibbard suggests that Shakespeare himself played the role of Armado. Hibbard assumes that Armado, a veritable font of linguistic originality, was a character close to the author's heart, maybe even a reflection

of the author himself. Or perhaps because Armado is given the final lines in the play, Hibbard thinks Shakespeare reserved these last words for himself as an actor, but the supposition that Shakespeare played Armado is one for which there is not a shred of evidence. What Hibbard ignores is that the author, through Navarre, is parodying Armado's ability with language, suggesting that his loquaciousness is not one of ease and proficiency but rather one of ineptness and even impotence. How would a young author, surely trying to be accepted as a serious contender by the literary elite, have the confidence to parody linguistic convention so brazenly? Would he be willing to mock himself so readily by playing such a ridiculous character onstage? And in his first play?

As pointed out above, the vocabulary between Oxford and Shakespeare, if indeed they are two different men, is astonishingly alike, and both owe a vast debt to Ovid, particularly evident in this play.[44] Joseph Sobran has already paralleled the distinctive phrasing of Oxford's letters and known poems with Shakespeare's plays.[45] For *LLL* in particular, Sobran examines Oxford's popular poem "In Praise of a Contented Mind" and lifts out two phrases: "he do pine and die" and "no princely pomp, no wealthy store." He suggests these particular words are more than just similar to Dumaine's oath where he proclaims, "To love, to wealth, to pomp, I pine and die."[46] I suggest that the word pine is particularly significant in this play, for Longaville too uses it in his oath, declaiming eloquently that "The mind shall banquet, though the body pine." Oxford uses the word again in his poem, "If Care or Skill could Conquer Vain Desire," ending with the phrase, "though he do pine and die," demonstrating that Oxford repeated both vocabulary and phrasing from one work to another.[47]

This same poem shows other linguistic similarities to *LLL* in the distinct phrase, "what worldly wight can hope for heavenly hire" which is echoed in Berowne's "These earthly godfathers of heaven's lights," and then mirrored again in the phrase "that sings heaven's praise with such an earthly tongue" (read by Sir Nathaniel, but the line is Berowne's). Longaville imitates the same sentiment when he says, "My vow was earthly, thou a heavenly love."[48] Sobran also suggests that Costard's cheeky line "Truth is truth" that he speaks to the Princess is much like a letter of Oxford's where he writes, "For truth is truth though never so old." It may also be a tongue-in-cheek reference to the de Vere punning motto, *Vero Nihil Verius*, nothing is truer than truth.[49]

This overwhelming similarity between Oxford's known work and the plays is routinely ignored by scholars, partly because they have been conditioned to recognize the garrulity of the play as the unrestrained effort of a young and inexperienced playwright. But what if the historical assumptions are wrong? What if the play is not an early attempt fraught with errors but rather a sophisticated commentary on court life, stuffed with private jokes and personal references that quickly became obscure? To reach this conclusion, the reader must disengage from the over three hundred

years or more of criticism that belittles the play.

The life of Edward de Vere certainly provides the circumstantial proof for which G.R. Hibbard was searching in the life of Shakespeare. Not only was Oxford a military veteran and trained in law, but his Cambridge education provided the linguistic ability to read the sources used in the plays in their original form. The Churchyard text of 1578 and other potential sources used by the author are routinely overlooked because they fit the chronology of Oxford's life, not Shakespeare's. Much of this source material was only available and appropriate to a man of Oxford's age and education. This evidence, including Oxford's relationship with his retainer and fellow-poet Churchyard, has been ignored in favor of inventing biographical "proof" to fit the life of Shakespeare of Stratford. Thus, scholars have allowed improbable theories about Shakespeare's life to trump the testimony readily available from the life of Oxford.

If *LLL* were penned by the Earl of Oxford rather than the man from Stratford, the play becomes not a "childish and vulgar" product of an immature playwright but the creation of an experienced writer, misunderstood for centuries because it was written for an exclusive and elite audience. If written by Oxford, *LLL* ceases to be a strange anomaly within the canon, but becomes instead a poised, confident, even experimental extravagance on the part of a skilled author who, secure in his audience, ignores common plot and character conventions in order to indulge himself in semantics, producing a work teeming with contemporary references.

This cultivated language of the play far better suits the lauded Earl, so eloquently praised by his literary contemporaries, than the rural actor Shakespeare. Attempting to date the play is important, but when scholars prejudice the process by beginning with the assumption that the play is undeveloped or puerile, it becomes difficult to recognize the ripe and mature flavor of the text. Oxford, perhaps in his mid-forties by the time *LLL* is written, would be naturally more adept at writing a play that flouted the usual conventions, composing instead a work motivated and propelled by language.

It is astonishing to think that Shakspere of Stratford alluded to a suitor of the queen, a dangerous task for anyone, much less a commoner new to London. Could he have been confident enough to borrow her own phrasing and re-make it for his own play? Even more shocking is how adeptly the author satirizes the complex political relationship among England, France, and Spain while effortlessly weaving in relevant legal terms, all the while hinting at events in Elizabeth's past that occurred when he was still a teenager. Leaving aside the issue of how Shakespeare knew enough of court life to make all these references, is the reader meant to believe that a young, untested author used this acquired knowledge in such an unconventional way? Oxford, on the other hand, was not only familiar with but steeped in the conventions, rituals, routines, traditions, and customs of Elizabeth's court in a way Shakespeare

could not be. More importantly, he was immersed in the English *and* French linguistic habits relevant to the play which are exhibited so effortlessly in the text and in the phrasing of his own poems and letters.

Ironically, it may be Samuel Johnson who offers the reader the answer to the riddle of *Love's Labour's Lost*. He suggests that a play like this one, too topical and too trendy, will soon be lost to the ages. He writes:

> It is the nature of personal invective to be soon unintelligible; and the author that gratifies private malice – *animam in vulnere ponit* – destroys the future efficacy of his own writings, and sacrifices the esteem of succeeding times to the laughter of a day. It is no wonder, therefore that the sarcasms which, perhaps, in the author's time set the playhouse in a roar, are now lost among general reflections. [50]

To be fair, Johnson was addressing the speculation among prior critics that some of the play's characters are satires of real, identifiable figures. If so, he accuses Shakespeare of almost unconscionable malice, hence his accusation that the play is mean and childish. But his argument about the play's specificity applies as well to the other personal allusions and the setting of *LLL*. Johnson argues, in the Latin phrase, that the author puts his very soul into these wounds, but does he not invest just as much into the play's sonnets, compliments, praise, wit and humor? Would a young and inexperienced writer, wanting to build and enhance his reputation, be capable of writing a work so trenchantly connected to the audience who would see it performed?

If Miller is correct, and the inspiration for *LLL* is Elizabeth's progress of 1578, that event too would soon be forgotten. If the Masque is a reference to Ivan the Terrible's delegation and the Pageant a re-telling of Churchyard, both of these sources would also be relevant for only a short time, out-dated and unintelligible to audiences by the eighteenth century. The references to Elizabeth are so timely and specific that hundreds of years later they would be confusing to Johnson. When Johnson complained that the play was unfit to be shown to Elizabeth, he failed to realize that it was written for her, and even about her.

Alfred Hart, who was not arguing for an author other than the Stratford man, pointed out "about a fifth of the poet's vocabulary dates after the year 1586." Remember that Hart argued for a composition date of 1588, so he claims "Our greatest dramatist intuitively understood that he must use words current in his own generation."[51] Unwittingly, he too offers evidence matching Johnson's idea that the language and context of the play was almost impossibly current, too fashionable and voguish to last. The language and allusions in *Love's Labour's Lost* were so fresh, so new, and so unique in the canon, that real interpretation has been almost impossible, but within this "mint of phrases" can be found not only keys to understanding the context of the play, but unlocking for the reader a clear picture of its author.

Notes

1 Johnson, 180.

2 Johnson, 182.

3 Johnson, 182.

4 Pendergast, ix.

5 Johnson, 182

6 The author picks up this theme again in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* when Puck predicts "Jack shall have Jill . . . and all will be well." Shakespeare repeats the line "a twelvemonth and a day" twice near the end of the play and as Hibbard points out, that distinctive phrase "so reminiscent of Gawain, Wife of Bath – occurs twice in the last 100 lines of *Love's Labour's Lost* and nowhere else in the whole of Shakespeare's writings." Hibbard, 26.

7 Theobald, *The Works of Shakespeare*, 1733 in Vickers, 498.

8 Gildon, *The Works of Mr. William Shakespeare*, in Vickers, 242.

9 Gildon, 311, in Vickers, 242. Elsewhere, Gildon says again that the "false Numbers and Rhimes" are convincing enough that this play "was one of his first." Gildon, *Shakespeare's Life and Words*, 1710 in Vickers, 181.

10 Alexander Pope, *Edition of Shakespeare*, 1725, see Vickers, 413.

11 Theobald, in Vickers, 497.

12 H.C. Hart, x.

13 Pendergast, 8.

14 Alfred Hart, 246. It should be noted that some scholars see echoes of the two long poems in *Love's Labour's Lost*, so it is not unusual to theorize that they were all composed within the same time span. Edmond Malone, as early as 1778, suggested one of the earliest composition dates at 1591 and E.K. Chambers argued for 1595.

15   H.C. Hart, xviii.

16   Pendergast, vii.

17   H.C. Hart, xxvi.

18   William Farina argues for another event entirely – a masque in 1579 before
        the Queen and the French ambassador. The text of this lost masque could be
        an early version of *Love's Labour's Lost* or a source for the play, but it definite-
        ly sets the dating earlier that most other scholars. (see Farina, 49, for more)
        Farina argues the play was not for mass consumption, but meant for a small,
        rareified group, which makes sense if the source is a reference to the Russian
        visit to England.

19   Hibbard, 32.

20   Hibbard, 29.

21   Hibbard, 29. Revision is a tricky subject in Elizabethan drama, and we know
        that not all plays that claim to be revised have been so. Nonetheless, the idea
        needs investigation.

22   Hibbard goes so far as to group *LLL* and *MND* together because they have
        so much rhyme, the former having 43.1% of total lines in rhyme and the
        latter 45.5% according to his calculations.

23   Of course, the most famous play-within-a-play appears in Hamlet, but it too
        has complicated theories about its source. If it is original, we see Shakespeare
        again reverting to a plot device that has worked for him in the past. Although
        some scholars suggest the theory of an Ur-Hamlet (for which there is zero
        historical evidence) there is also the theory that it too was adapted from
        Francois de Belleforest's *Histoires Tragiques* (1576), which had not yet been
        translated into English when Shakespeare adapted it. However, one ought to
        remember that the Earl of Oxford's facility with languages put him within
        reach of any number of sources that were likely inaccessible to Shakespeare.

24   Hibbard, 44.

25   Hibbard, 34.

26   Hibbard, 34. Even though Hibbard's view of the play is not as critical as that
        of some of his predecessors, claiming it is "lyrical," (in the words of E.K.

Chambers) he is still determined to subordinate the play to others.

27   Farina, 51.

28   Hibbard, 43.

29   Pendergast, vii.

30   Farina, 50. He continues: "Bullough noted that among the English nobility, Peregrine Bertie, Lord Willoughby, had the chance to extensively interact with King Henry during concerted (but ultimately thwarted) military operations in 1589, without mentioning that Bertie was de Vere's brother-in-law." William Carroll also argues, "I believe this play can profitably be read as a debate on the right uses of rhetoric, poetry, and the imagination," (Carroll, 8). But even Carroll lets himself believe in the early date because that is what best fits Shakespeare's life. Like other scholars, he too thinks it is a revival of euphuism.

31   Peacham, 95.

32   Burlinson, 13.

33   As Joseph Sobran points out, a myriad of strange questions arise when one begins to scrape the thin surface of the official biography: why did no one eulogize Shakespeare, especially in an age given to extravagant praise of literary giants? England, especially theatrical England, was a small place and it is improbable, bordering on impossible that the two playwrights, if indeed they were two, never met.

34   Farina, 51. Oxford had also been admitted to Gray's Inn as a teenager and studied law, so there is a possibility that the Revels of 1594 made Russians topical again, but it is equally possible that *Love's Labour's Lost* was written prior to that celebration and served as the influence for it rather than the other way around.

35   Some scholars think the character of Boyet in the play is a thinly-veiled caricature of Philip Sydney.

36   See Spenser's *The Shepherd's Calendar*, the month of August, for a word-duel between the characters of Perigot and Willy.

37   Londré, 8.

38   Londré, 8.

39   Sobran, 9.

40   Hart, "The Growth of Shakespeare's Vocabulary," 242.

41   Sobran elaborates, "At least six of his plays were printed between 1594
        and 1597 – that is, after his poems had made his reputation. Yet none of
        these plays bore his name. Shakespeare was never publicly identified as a
        playwright before 1598. Why not? His name on the title pages would have
        increased sales considerably. The scholars have not attempted to explain this
        fact." (38).

42   Hibbard, 24.

43   Hibbard, 36.

44   Oxford's maternal uncle was Arthur Golding, the great English translator of
        Ovid; for some time Oxford and Golding lived in the same household, that
        of William Cecil, Lord Burghley. William Carroll writes: "*Love's Labour's Lost*
        is in fact permeated with other reminders of Ovid: from the echo of *tempus
        edax rerum* in "cormorant devouring Time (1.1.4), through the imagery of
        love's warfare and hunt, to the whole theme of transformation." (Carroll,
        126).

45   *Love's Labour's Lost* has a number of words that appear only in this play.
        According to Hart, "l'envoy" appears fourteen times, "Muscovite" three and
        "pricket" six. (See Hart, 244.) "In writing *LLL* Shakespeare seems to have
        resolved to renew in part his existing stock of words; over twenty-one per-
        cent of the vocabulary consists of fresh words" (Hart, 253). Even Hibbard
        himself points out the unusual vocabulary and experimentation with words,
        pointing out for example that "Promethean" only appears again in *Othello*.
        See Hibbard, 38.

46   Sobran, 262.

47   Sobran, 242-43.

48   Sobran, 242. See also Sobran's " 'Shakespeare' Revealed in Oxford's Poetry"
        in Richard Malim's *Great Oxford: Essays on the Life and Work of Edward De
        Vere*. For the full text of Sobran's paper on Oxford's poetry, see it online at
        the website of the Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship.

49   Sobran reminds us that Oxford, in his letters, often used his name as a pun, easily moving between Latin and English and in the plays, we see 'A truth's a truth' (*All's Well*); 'But truth is truth' (*King John*); 'Is not the truth the truth?' (*1 Henry IV*). See 275-276.

50   Johnson, in Creighton, 316.

51   Hart, "The Growth of Shakespeare's Vocabulary," 243.

Works Cited and Bibliography

Burlinson, Christopher, *Allegory, Space and the Material World in the Writings of Edmund Spenser.* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2006).

Carroll, William C., *The Great Feast of Language in Love's Labour's Lost.* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1976).

Cole, Howard, *A Quest of Inquirie.* (New York, Bobbs-Merrill, 1973).

Creighton, Charles, *Shakespeare's Story of His Life.* (London: Grant Richards, 1904).

Farina, William, *De Vere as Shakespeare: An Oxfordian Reading of the Canon.* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2006).

Hart, Alfred,"Vocabularies of Shakespeare's Plays" and "The Growth of Shakespeare's Vocabulary" *The Review of English Studies* 19 (1943).

Hart, H.C., *The Works of Shakespeare: Love's Labour's Lost.* (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1906).

Johnson, Samuel, *Samuel Johnson on Shakespeare*, ed H.R. Woudhuysen. (London: Penguin Books, 1989).

Lewis, C.S. *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century, Excluding Drama.* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1954).

Londré, Felicia Hardison, Ed. *Love's Labor's Lost: Critical Essays.* (New York: Routledge, 1997).

Malim, Richard. *Great Oxford: Essays on the Life and Work of Edward De Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, 1550-1604.* (Tunbridge Wells: Parapress, 2004).

Miller, Ruth Loyd, "Oaths Forsworn in *Love's Labour's Lost*" *The Oxfordian*, Oct 2006, vol. 9.

Peacham, Henry, *The Compleat Gentleman*. (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1634). Original, 1622.

Pendergast, John S., *Love's Labour's Lost: A Guide to the Play*. (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2002).

Shakespeare, William, *Love's Labour's Lost*, edited by G.R. Hibbard. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990).

Sobran, Joseph, *Alias Shakespeare*, (New York: The Free Press, 1997).

Sobran, Joseph, " 'Shakespeare' Revealed in Oxford's Poetry" in Richard Malim, ed. *Great Oxford: Essays on the Life and Work of Edward De Vere*. (Tunbridge Wells: Parapress), 2004.

Spenser, Edmund, *The Tears of the Muses*, (1591).

Spenser, Edmund, The Faerie Queen, edited by A.C. Hamilton. (London: Routledge, 2006).

Spenser, Edmund, The Shepherd's Calendar, edited by Theodore Bathurst (Ulan Press, 2012).

Taylor, Rupert, *The Date of Love's Labour's Lost*. (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1932).

Vickers, Brian, *Shakespeare, The Critical Heritage, Volume 2 1693-1733*. (London: Routledge, 1974).
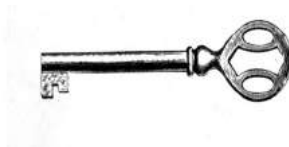
Subliminal Chaucer

in Shakespeare's History Plays

by Michael Delahoyde

O ne would think library shelves would be sagging under the weight of all the scholarship concerning Chaucer's influence on Shakespeare: they are the giants of English literature. E. Talbot Donaldson, the grand old master of early English literature, responsible for two of the very few books examining the Chaucer/Shakespeare connection (and my own "academic grandfather," having been my late mentor's mentor), says of Shakespeare, "Until Marlowe and Spenser almost in his own time, there were no poets in English besides Chaucer who had anything to teach him."[1] Yet, the surprisingly few scholars who have examined the connection have generally produced comparative source studies with the obvious cases: Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* with Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida* and Chaucer's *The Knight's Tale* in *The Canterbury Tales* with Shakespeare's *The Two Noble Kinsmen*. Shakespeare, however, has made much subtler use of his Chaucer than has been previously detected.

The importance of Chaucer to Shakespeare is difficult to overestimate: "The sheer quantity of the material involved implies that Shakespeare did not merely use Chaucer for a plot or two (as he did some authors) but knew him so well that he recalled his work (often unconsciously, one would imagine) in virtually every play."[2] Subtle Chaucerian allusions are woven throughout the canon, and, Ovid notwithstanding, Chaucer may be the single most important influence on the "poetry" in Shakespeare's works. Yet despite Chaucer's eventual reputation as the "father of English poetry" (ever since John Dryden declared it) and also the "father of English literature," we should not take for granted that Shakespeare would have known Chaucer's works so well. Samuel Daniel in his *Defence of Rime* (1602) touts English medievals such as the Venerable Bede, Roger Bacon, and Occam, but not poets of the later Middle Ages. And "Of Chaucer's 'ancient' English rhyme, Daniel has nothing to say."[3] We should ask how it was possible that Shakespeare became acquainted with Chaucer. As Ann Thompson notes, "vernacular literature was not read at school, and there is no sure way of ascertaining when, how, and in what variety a middle-class schoolboy might have come across English books; for the most part we are thrown back upon the internal evidence of the plays themselves"[4] – circularly.

The record shows that the Earl of Oxford purchased a copy of Chaucer along with his Plutarch and his Geneva Bible in 1570. But more compelling is the family con-

nection, for it is known that shortly after Chaucer's death the early 15th-century de Veres owned, and it is surmised commissioned, the first most glorious copy of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, the Ellesmere manuscript, celebrated for its marginal illuminations of the pilgrims, including Chaucer himself on a diminutive horse.

Though he somewhat restricts his otherwise admirable explorations to the obvious plot borrowings, we can also agree with Donaldson "that Shakespeare read Chaucer's poetry with understanding and great care, more carefully, perhaps, than some of his [Chaucer's] critics."[5] In addition to Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* and *Troilus and Criseyde*, Shakespeare was a careful reader of Chaucer's so-called Minor Poems. For example, Aaron in *Titus Andronicus* claims, "The Emperor's court is like the house of Fame, / A palace full of tongues, of eyes, and ears" (2.1.126-7),[6] a reference to Chaucer's enigmatic and surreal *House of Fame*.[7] Though the most obscure of Chaucer's Minor Poems, the incomplete *House of Fame* yields an assortment of details demonstrably echoed in the works of Shakespeare. In Chaucer's poem we read of a white and red garland (135), colors Shakespeare uses repeatedly in *Lucrece* and elsewhere to signify the Tudor rose and Queen Elizabeth. We read of the Greek spy Sinon (152) and of King Priam of Troy slain (159), heated Shakespearean concerns in *Lucrece* and in *Hamlet*. We read of a "tempeste" (209). We read that "Hit is not al gold that glareth" (272), a message Shakespeare will paraphrase and insert in a gold casket in *The Merchant of Venice*. Chaucer writes, "But that is doon, nis not to done" (361), inspiring a phrasal obsession in *Macbeth*: e.g., "What's done cannot be undone" (5.2.68).

For Hamlet's utterance of the memorable line, "I am but mad north-north-west. When the wind is southerly, I know a hawk from a hand-saw" (2.2.378-9), Shakespeare borrowed from an equally peculiar moment in Chaucer's *Parliament of Fowls* where the poem's narrator refers to "Citheria" (embodied in the planet Venus) being "north-north-west" (113, 117).[8] This has remained a Chaucerian puzzle, since Venus is never seen that far north from the vantage-point of England. Hamlet's enigmatic utterance originated in Chaucer's enigmatic utterance. And this from lesser-known works of Chaucer; we may be assured Shakespeare would have found much more

---

Michael Delahoyde *is a Clinical Professor of English in his 23rd year at Washington State University teaching Shakespeare, Mythology, and interdisciplinary arts and humanities courses. He earned undergraduate degrees in English, Music, and Education at Vassar College in his hometown of Poughkeepsie, New York, and his Ph.D. in English Literature at the University of Michigan. Delahoyde has published articles on Oxford, Chaucer, dinosaur films, toys for children, and meat ads. He served as Senior Editor for the MLA journal, The Rocky Mountain Review, for fourteen years before becoming Managing Editor of* Brief Chronicles. *His Oxfordian edition of* Anthony and Cleopatra *will soon be published, and he has met with his first success in archival research in northern Italy, thanks to an SOF project grant—soon to be revealed.*

of interest in Chaucer's exploration of character, voice, and dramatic narrative in his masterpiece, *The Canterbury Tales*.

In *Henry IV, Part 1*, the Gadshill robbery plotted by Prince Hal, Falstaff, and others aims to waylay "pilgrims going to Canterbury with rich offerings" (1.2.126). Falstaff later calls the Hostess "Dame Partlet the hen" (3.3.52) and editors, evoking sunny bucolic Warwickshire scenes, explain in footnotes that Dame Partlet is a traditional name for a chicken. This is absurd. Farmers "traditionally" don't tend to name their chickens anything more glamorous than "Sunday Afternoon Dinner." "Dame Partlet" is really an inside literary joke and poetic reference to Chaunticleer the rooster's wife/sister in *The Nun's Priest's Tale*. In *Henry IV, Part 2*, the "Master Gower" with whom Falstaff spends time cannot be intended to represent John Gower, the other poet besides Chaucer in the Ricardian court. Nevertheless, Falstaff does mention recollections of *the* John a' Gaunt (3.2.324) and is credited with having "break Scoggin's head" (3.2.30), a likely reference to the Scogan to whom Chaucer wrote "Lenvoy de Chaucer a Scogan."[9] In this short poem, Chaucer describes himself, like Falstaff, as being "rounde of shap."

We can sense Shakespeare's identification with the entertainer/philosopher Feste in *Twelfth Night*, so it is intriguing that to visit Malvolio in the darkhouse, Feste takes on the disguise of "Sir Topas" (4.2.1-2), superfluously, since Maria later remarks, "Thou mightst have done this without thy beard and gown, he sees thee not" (4.2.64-65). Just as Chaucer creates his own Canterbury pilgrim persona who in turn brings forth the character Sir Thopas in his aborted tale, so does Shakespeare have his own persona create a Sir Topas character.

Consider also the apothecary scene in *Romeo and Juliet* with its absolutely extraneous character the apothecary (the film *Shakespeare in Love* makes a joke of it), termed a "caitiff wretch," "[w]hose sale is present death" in the form of poison to Romeo and who is called a "beggar" even though he owns a shop in Mantua (5.1.51-56). In Chaucer's *Pardoner's Tale*, a strange wandering figure symbolically points out the way to some young men in search of "Death," a concept they foolishly misunderstand and personify. Chaucer's "cherl" (VI 750), a "restelees kaityf" (VI 728; the noun Shakespeare also uses), sends the youths towards a cache of gold, while Shakespeare's Romeo rails inappropriately, since it is not a theme in the play nor a relevant moral concern: "There is thy gold, worse poison to men's souls, / Doing more murther in this loathsome world, / Than these poor compounds" (5.1.80-2). Later in Chaucer's poem, one of the young men visits "a pothecarie" in the town to purchase "Som poyson" with which to kill his companions (VI 852, 854). Surely Shakespeare was more than subliminally influenced by Chaucer here.

Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, possibly Shakespeare's favorite source, appears on stage as a prop in *Titus Andronicus*, and the other much lesser Ricardian court poet Gower

serves as a chorus in *Pericles*. Why, then, is Chaucer never represented as a charac-
ter in Shakespeare's works? For nearly all of Chaucer's career, Richard II was king.
Richard's uncle, John of Gaunt, was Chaucer's patron, brother-in-law, and friend.
Shakespeare represents Gaunt as a noble character in the play, giving him the de-
livery of "the most stirring paean to England ever written"[10] – those beloved lines
ending with "This blessed plot, this earth, this realm this England" (2.1.50). So one
would naturally expect at least an oblique mention of the father of English poetry
in Shakespeare's *Richard II*. But though the poet Chaucer is never mentioned, Shake-
speare infuses *Richard II* with his spirit and with his shadow.

Chaucer's most immortal lines are those that begin *The Canterbury Tales*. If you had
a responsible "old-school" secondary-school English teacher, you had to memorize
the first eighteen lines of the *General Prologue*.

> Whan that Aprill with his shoures soote
> The droghte of March hath perced to the roote,
> And bathed every veyne in swich licour
> Of which vertu engendred is the flour;
> Whan Zephirus eek with his sweete breeth
> Inspired hath in every holt and heeth
> The tendre croppes, and the yonge sonne
> Hath in the Ram his half cours yronne,
> And smale foweles maken melodye,
> That slepen al the nyght with open ye
> (So priketh hem nature in hir corages),
> Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrimages,
> And palmeres for to seken straunge strondes,
> To ferne halwes, kowthe in sondry londes;
> And specially from every shires ende
> Of Engelond to Caunterbury they wende,
> The hooly blisful martir for to seke.
> That hem hath holpen whan that they were seeke.
>
> (I 1-18)

In the second scene of Shakespeare's *Richard II*, John of Gaunt, speaking with his
sister-in-law the widowed Duchess of Gloucester, immediately begins:

> Alas, the part I had in Glousters blood,
> Doth more solicite me then your exclaimes,
> To stirre against the Butchers of his life.
> But since correction lyeth in those hands
> Which made the fault that we cannot correct,

Put we our quarrell to the will of heaven,
Who when they see the houres ripe on earth,
Will *raigne* hot vengeance on offenders heads.

(1.2.1-8)[11]

The "rain" of vengeance initiates a pattern of natural horticultural imagery we will hear throughout the play and that will be made literal for us in the scene of the gardeners. The effect of the image here is certainly not that of Chaucer's "shoures soote" ("sweet showers"; line 1), but then Gaunt's widowed sister-in-law rails:

Findes brotherhood in thee no sharper spurre?
Hath love in thy old blood no living fire?
Edward's seven sonnes (whereof thy selfe art one)
Were as seven violles of his Sacred blood,
Or seven faire branches springing from one *roote*: ["roote"; line 2]
Some of those seven are *dride* by natures course, ["droughte"; line 2]
Some of those branches by the destinies cut:
But Thomas, my dear Lord, my life, my Glouster,
One Violl full of Edwards Sacred *blood*, ["bathed every vein"; line 3]
One flourishing branch of his most Royall roote
Is crack'd, and all the precious *liquor* spilt; ["licour"; line 3]
Is hackt downe, and his summer leafes all vaded
By Envies hand, and Murders bloody Axe.
Ah Gaunt! His blood was thine, that bed, that *wombe*,
That mettle, that self-mould, that *fashion'd* thee, ["engendred"; line 4]
Made him a man: and though thou liv'st, and *breath'st*, ["breathe"; line 5]
Yet art thou slaine in him: thou dost consent
In some large measure to thy Fathers death,
In that thou seest thy wretched brother dye, ["the yonge sonne"; line 6]
Who was the modell of thy Fathers life.

(1.2.9-28)

The word "liquor" is especially unusual and obsolete as Shakespeare uses it; and he opts for an even subtler but not uncommon word-play with Chaucer's "sonne" (son). Later in Shakespeare's Act I, we hear reference to "smale foweles" (line 9) when John of Gaunt tries cheering up his son on the occasion of Henry's banishment: "Suppose the singing birds musicians" (1.3.288). At the same time, Gaunt also offers this piece of very Chaucerian advice: "Teach thy necessity to reason thus: / There is no virtue like necessity" (1.3.277-278), certainly a conscious paraphrase from Chaucer's *Knight's Tale*: "Thanne is it wisdom, as it thynketh me, / To maken vertu of necessitee" (I 3042). Ultimately, the "hooly blisful martir" (line 17), or at least the "martir," will be King Richard himself.

Most unambiguously Chaucerian is the idea of "pilgrimages" (line 12). A banished Henry kneels to Richard, saying oddly that "Mowbray and myself are like two men / That vow a long and weary pilgrimage" (1.3.48-9). But how is banishment into exile in any way like a pilgrimage *to* a sacred shrine? Similarly, a philosophical and conciliatory Gaunt and an impatient Henry say goodbye to one another, the latter off on "an enforced pilgrimage" (1.3.264; cf. 1.3.230).

Much later in the play when Richard suffers in prison, Sir Pierce Exton speaks with his servant about something the usurper Henry had said: "Have I no friend will rid me of this living fear?" (5.4.2). Exton interprets this as meaning that he should kill Richard at Pomfret. "There may well be a resonance, too, with Henry II's famous query about Thomas à Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, in 1170: 'Will no man rid me of this meddlesome priest?' "[12]

In the end, Henry will put on the appearance of sorrow, an "absurd hypocrisy that closes the play"[13]: "Lords, I protest my soul is full of woe / That blood should sprinkle me to make me grow" (5.4.45-6). He vows a show of piety:

> Come mourn with me for what I do lament,
> And put on sullen black incontinent.
> I'll make a voyage to the Holy Land
> To wash this blood off from my guilty hand.
>
> <div align="right">(5.6.47-50)</div>

He never will. By the way, now the correct word *is* "pilgrimage," not "voyage" – but he doesn't use it. The Chaucerian era is over. Chaucer himself, historically, will soon be dead.

I have intended to show how Shakespeare embedded a pattern of Chaucer allusions in *Richard II*, the very play in which the "father of English poetry" ought to have appeared in some form of tribute, considering how steeped in Chaucer Shakespeare is, but where Chaucer surprisingly receives not even a mention. Chaucer seems to have died very early in the reign of the usurper, Henry IV. As if pleased with the subtlety and effect of embedding Chaucer's most famous lines subliminally in that play, Shakespeare repeats his technique within the very opening lines of his play *Henry IV, Part 1*, honoring the subtle spirit of Chaucer just when the poet's world and ethos were rapidly being dismantled by the new regime.[14]

The first line of the play reads, "So shaken as we are, so wan with care" (1.1.1). The word "wan" is homophonic for the Middle English "Whan[ne]": the very first word of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. "Whan" appears twice more in the first eighteen lines of the *General Prologue*: "whan Zephirus eke" (line 5), and the last phrase, "whan that they were seeke" (line 18). This last "whan" phrase – when they were sick – actually captures the atmosphere of the Shakespearean play's opening.

So shaken as we are, so wan with care,
Finde we a time for frighted Peace to pant,
And breath shortwinded accents of new broils
To be commenc'd in Stronds a-farre remote.
No more the thirsty entrance of this Soile,
Shall daube her lippes with her owne childrens blood:
No more shall trenching Warre channell her fields,
Nor bruise her Flowrets with the Armed hoofes
Of hostile paces. Those opposed eyes,
Which, like the Meteors of a troubled Heaven,
All of one Nature, of one Substance bred,
Did lately meete in the intestine shocke,
And furious cloze of civil Butchery,
Shall now, in mutuall well-beseeming rankes,
March all one way, and be no more oppos'd
Against Acquaintance, Kindred, and Allies.
The edge of Warre, like an ill-sheathed knife,
No more shall cut his Master. Therefore Friends,
As farre as to the Sepulcher of Christ,
Whose Souldier now under whose blessed Crosse
We are impressed and ingag'd to fight,
Forthwith a power of English shall we levie. . . .

(1.1.1-22)[15]

In the second and third lines of the play, Chaucer's "Zephirus eek with his swete breeth" (line 5) – the west wind with his sweet breath – appears in the form of "pant" and "breath[e] short-winded." By "swete breeth" Chaucer means "sweet," but Shakespeare puns on Chaucer's "swete" and includes the concept of "sweat" in the frantic panic of the times Henry feels pressured and harassed by.

The fourth line of the play refers to "Stronds" (capitalized in the First Folio), an unusual word for tracts of land and always glossed as "strands" in editions of the play; but Shakespeare is specifically borrowing Chaucer's "straunge strondes" (line 13), and this form of the word is unusual by Shakespeare's time.

The fifth line of the play, referring to both thirst and soil, echoes Chaucer's "droghte," remedied by April's showers having "perced to the roote" (line 2). The sixth line of the play concerning literal "blood" echoes Chaucer's "every veyne" (line 3). The play's eighth line extraneously brings up "Flowrets," an odd import since the primary image is of horses' trampling hooves, but it matches Chaucer's engendered "flour" (line 4).

The ninth line of the play refers to "opposed eyes," echoing the "open ye" (line 10) of Chaucer's "smale fowles," or small birds sleeping restlessly at night in springtime.

The opening sentence of Chaucer's *General Prologue* has supplied the key material for Shakespeare's opening speech by Henry, but absolute alignment between the two passages after the first line comes only, and significantly, with the term "Nature": in the play's eleventh line and, I think not coincidentally, in Chaucer's eleventh line. Chaucer's *reverdie* opening is a thorough celebration of the natural order, and what follows in his "great chain of awakenings" is the impulse towards the spiritual: towards a pilgrimage. In Shakespeare's subliminal use of Chaucer, Henry accidentally, unwittingly, and momentarily aligns with this idea of the healthy and natural; but what follows now in Henry's scheme is turned militaristic, not into a pilgrimage, but into a crusade. Shakespeare creates a palimpsest effect, overwriting Chaucer and nearly obliterating him. The technique, though, also provides a nearly invisible critique of Henry, who may promise post-war peace but who admits that we are in a period when "Armed hoofes" trample flowerets.

If Oxford knew what modern medievalist Terry Jones has recently asserted about the suppression and attempted elimination of Chaucer,[16] then he understood this in terms of the pattern whereby governments eliminate poets and prophets. For example, Ovid was famously sent into banishment for what he claimed in his poem "Epistulae ex Ponto," was "a poem and a mistake." Shakespeare knew of Ovid's punishment under Caesar Augustus. He also would have sensed that Chaucer did not thrive, or perhaps fared much worse, under the new authoritarian regime of Henry IV. With access to antique Tower records, Oxford may have known as much, if not more than modern Chaucerians do about the final disappearance of the man christened the father of English poetry. Shakespeare, naturally identifying with literary artists living in police states (as Tudor England has been designated), and especially identifying with his only significant predecessor in English literature, demonstrates that, unlike the poets, the works of the poet cannot be so easily erased. Shakespeare demonstrates that Chaucer can survive just below the surface of other texts, virtually undetectable by those who are unaware that they have been subliminally influenced by the words of those poets they have tried to marginalize. Chaucer the person, the character, does not appear in Shakespeare's history plays set in the Ricardian court of Chaucer's own time. But Chaucer the poet remains, his words having been renewed and newly contextualized by English literature's new Bard, both poets ultimately insuppressible.

Notes

1   E. Talbot Donaldson and Judith J. Kollmann, eds., *Chaucerian Shakespeare: Adaptation and Transformation* (Detroit: Michigan Consortium for Medieval and Early Modern Studies, 1983), 5. The other key works are Donaldson's *The Swan at the Well: Shakespeare Reading Chaucer* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), and Ann Thompson's *Shakespeare's Chaucer: A Study in Literary Origins* (NY: Barnes & Noble Books, 1978).

2   Thompson, 59.

3   Alice Miskimin, *The Renaissance Chaucer* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975), 21.

4   Thompson, 2. For a closer look at Oxford's Chaucer-steeped background, see my "Lyric Poetry from Chaucer to Shakespeare" in *Brief Chronicles* V (2014), 69-100; rpt. in *Soul of the Age: Building the Case for Edward de Vere as Shakespeare, Vol. 9*, ed. Paul H. Altrocchi (iUniverse, 2014), 365-402.

5   Donaldson, *The Swan*, 4.

6   Unless otherwise indicated, all Shakespeare references are to *The Riverside Shakespeare*, 2nd ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1997) and given parenthetically in the text.

7   The connection is acknowledged by May A. Klipple, *Chaucer in the Sixteenth Century* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1920), 11.

8   All Chaucer references are to *The Riverside Chaucer*, 3rd. ed. by Larry D. Benson (NY: Oxford University Press, 2008) and given parenthetically in the text. Fragment number and line numbers appear for quotations from *The Canterbury Tales*.

9   Laila Z. Gross, "The Short Poems," in *The Riverside Chaucer,* 2nd ed. by Larry D. Benson (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1987), 636; cf. Thomas H. McNeal, "*Henry IV, Parts I* and *II*, and Speght's First Edition of *Geffrey Chaucer*," in *The Shakespeare Association Bulletin* 21.2 (April 1946), 91-92.

10   Herschel Baker, Introduction, *Richard II*, in *The Riverside Shakespeare*, 843.

11   Italics are mine; otherwise I have provided here the spelling and typography of the *First Folio*.

12   Marjorie Garber, *Shakespeare After All* (NY: Pantheon Books, 2004), 268.

13   Harold Bloom, *Shakespeare: The Invention of the Human* (NY: Riverhead Books, 1998), 270.

14   Terry Jones, et al. *Who Murdered Chaucer?* (NY: St. Martin's Press, 2004).

15   Again, the spelling and typography of the *First Folio*.

16   Terry Jones. Yes, the Terry Jones from Monty Python. A legitimate medieval-ist.
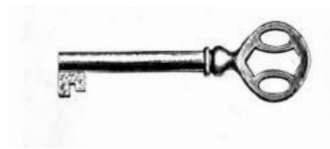
The Rediscovery

of Shakespeare's Greater Greek

by Earl Showerman

There has been a rebirth in appreciation for the dramatic power of ancient Greek tragedy in twenty-first century American culture. Wyatt Mason's recent *Harper's Magazine* article, "You are Not Alone Across Time: Using Sophocles to Treat PTSD," reported on the use of Greek tragedy to mitigate the trauma of military combat. The Theatre of War is a five-year Pentagon-sponsored program that has staged more than 250 dramatic readings of Sophocles' *Ajax* or *Philoctetes* at military installations and veterans groups all over the world. Bryan Doerries is the creative force behind this project. Doerries studied Greek in college and translated the texts for these dramatic readings. Mason's report lends credence to the conviction that 2,500 year-old Greek drama still has cultural relevance today:

> These dramas enact the rage and sorrow and fear that linger in witnesses of tragedy, connecting stored emotion with the memory of the event that brought it about. Not diminution through repetition, tragedy is deliverance through intensification. It performs a magic act – the release of seized emotion – by giving suffering a form.[1]

Doerries is only the latest artist to adapt narratives and themes of Greek tragedy to contemporary theatre. The great American playwrights, Eugene O'Neill, T.S. Eliot, and Arthur Miller, were all directly inspired by the playwrights of the fifth-century Attic stage. O'Neill's tragic trilogy, *Mourning Becomes Electra* (1931), was based on Aeschylus' *Oresteia* and *Desire Under the Elms* reflects many elements of Euripedes's *Hippolytus*. T.S. Eliot was once elected president of the Classical Association and he wrote the introduction to a 1932 edition of Thomas Newton's 1581 *Seneca His Tenne Tragedies*. Several of his dramas, including *Murder in the Cathedral* and *The Cocktail Party*, were based directly on Greek models. Arthur Miller also looked to the Greeks for inspiration, once commenting, "From Orestes to Hamlet, from Medea to Macbeth the underlying struggle is that of the individual attempting to gain his rightful position in his society."[2]

R. R. Khare's study, *Shakespeare, Eugene O'Neill, T.S. Eliot and the Greek Tragedy* (1998), extended the long thread of tragic narratives and themes through yet another period of cultural explosion, through the Elizabethan era and the dramas of Shakespeare. The resonances between Greek tragedy and Shakespeare has long been the subject of scholarly interest. In *Attic and Elizabethan Tragedy* (1908) Laughlan Maclean Watt

engaged the analogous dramatic flowering in a historical context that equally suits the modern era:

> Perhaps in all the history of the fluctuation, conflict, and yearning of the world, there are not recorded any periods more fraught with influences, environments, and provocations of greatness than in the age in which Attic Tragedy rose and flourished, and that in which the genius of the Elizabethan era found its highest utterance on the English Tragic stage.[3]

Watt's detailed comparative analysis of ancient Greek and Elizabethan drama identified a number of remarkable similarities between these traditions, that the "irony of fate" was strong in both traditions, and that in Aeschylus and Shakespeare evil was overcome by good, and that Sophocles and Shakespeare shared a "pride of race, deep sympathetic insight, and knowledge of humanity unexcelled, bringing them often into contact, one with another . . . both in spirit aristocratic. . . ."[4] Watt, however, never argued that Shakespeare might have been directly inspired by Greek tragedy, nor that his plays and poems included specific textual connections to these dramas. Perhaps Watt's reluctance to make such an assertion was tempered by the prevailing scholarly opinion as expressed by his contemporary Robert Root in *Classical Mythology in Shakespeare* (1903), that Shakespeare "nowhere alludes to any characters or episodes of Greek drama, that they extended no influence whatsoever on his conception of mythology."[5]

Professor Root's century-old opinion has recently come under challenge on multiple fronts. For twenty-first century Shakespeare authorship studies, this represents a philological Achilles heel to the traditional attribution. No one has contextualized this conundrum better than Andrew Werth, whose presentation on "Shakespeare's 'Lesse Greek',' at the 2002 Shakespeare Authorship Studies Conference at Concordia University was my initiation. Werth, then an undergraduate, deftly exposed one of the great gaps in contemporary Renaissance scholarship: the near-complete absence of published studies of Shakespeare's indebtedness to Greek literature. Werth provided

---

Earl Showerman *graduated from Harvard College and the University of Michigan Medical School, and practiced emergency medicine in Oregon for over thirty years. A longtime patron of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, after retiring from medicine in 2003, he enrolled at Southern Oregon University to study Shakespeare and to pursue his decades-long love affair with the authorship question. Over the past decade Earl has presented a series of papers at authorship conferences and published on the topic of Shakespeare's "Greater Greek." He is the executive producer of Mignarda's recording,* My Lord of Oxenford's Maske*, wrote the chapter on Shakespeare's medical knowledge in* Shakespeare Beyond Doubt?*, and is an honorary trustee of the Shakespearean Authorship Trust and past president of the Shakespeare Fellowship.*

numerous examples and critical commentaries that supported the conclusion that Shakespeare drew directly from Greek epic and drama, and noted how scholars have often expressed conflicted opinions over the significance of these intriguing textual echoes. Initially published in *The Oxfordian* V (2002) and later reprinted in *Report My Cause Aright* (2007), Werth's arguments have been cited by no less an authority than Professor Stanley Wells, who praised Werth's insights during a speech to the World Shakespeare Congress in 2011.[6]

The Claim That Shakespeare Didn't Know Greek

The reluctance to recognize Shakespeare's knowledge of Greek drama has been reiterated continually over the past century. In *Shakespeare's England* (1916), John Edwin Sandys asserted that any proposed textual parallels "…have failed to carry conviction with calm and cautious critics. They have been justly regarded either as 'no more than curious accidents – proof of consanguinity of spirit, not of any indebtedness on Shakespeare's part' – or as due to the 'general literary and theatrical tradition' that had reached the Elizabethan dramatists 'through Seneca'."[7] Seventy-five years later, critical opinion remained absolute in its skepticism. In *Shakespeare and the Uses of Antiquity* (1990), Michelle and Charles Martindale similarly argued that the difficulty in translating Greek dramatic poetry and the absence of scholarly interest in this question has undermined the viability of any such claim:

> Any Greek language Shakespeare had would not have been sufficient to allow him to read the extremely taxing poetry of the fifth century BC. Renaissance culture remained primarily Latin-based. . . . Moreover, despite all efforts, no one has succeeded in producing one single piece of evidence from the plays to make any such debt certain, or even particularly likely.[8]

This discounting of Attic dramatic influence was reinforced again a decade ago in *Shakespeare and the Classics* (2004), an essay collection edited by Charles Martindale and A.B. Taylor. In "Action at a Distance: Shakespeare and the Greeks," A.D. Nuttall wrote:

> That Shakespeare was cut off from Greek poetry and drama is probably a bleak truth that we should accept. A case can be made – and has been made – for Shakespeare's having some knowledge of certain Greek plays, such as Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*, Euripides' *Orestes*, *Alcestis*, and *Hecuba*, by way of available Latin versions, but this, surely, is an area in which the faint occasional echoes mean less than the circumambient silence. When we consider how hungrily Shakespeare feeds upon Ovid, learning from him, or extending him at every turn, it becomes more evident that he cannot in any serious sense have found his way to Euripides.[9]

In the book's following essay, "Shakespeare and Greek Tragedy: Strange Relation-ship," Michael Silk admitted that there are numerous "unmistakable" commonalities between Shakespeare and the Greeks, but then he echoed the platitudes of accepted authority: "There is no reason to suppose that Shakespeare ever encountered any of the Greek tragedians, either in the original language or otherwise."[10]

Several critics have maintained that Shakespeare learned the conventions and plots of Greek drama by way of Thomas North's translation of Plutarch's *Parallel Lives of the Noble Greeks and Romans* (1579). In *Shakespeare and the Classics* (1952), J.A.K. Thompson wrote that he was "content with throwing out the suggestion that, through the medium of North's *Plutarch*, Shakespeare divined the true spirit of Greek Tragedy."[11] Thompson's suggestion that Plutarch was the surrogate literary mediator for Shakespeare's adoptions from Greek drama was reinforced recently by Colin Burrow in *Shakespeare & Classical Antiquity* (2013). Burrow included extended chapters on Virgil, Ovid, Roman Comedy, Seneca, and Plutarch as sources for Shake-speare, but rejected the possibility that Shakespeare was influenced by the dramatic literature of fifth century Athens:

> Shakespeare almost certainly never read Sophocles or Euripides (let alone the much more difficult Aeschylus) in Greek, and yet he managed to write tragedies which invite comparison with those authors. He did so despite the limitations of his classical knowledge, and perhaps in part because of them. He read Plutarch in North's translation rather than reading Sophocles in Greek. This means that he read a direct clear statement about the rela-tionship between divine promptings and human actions rather than plays in which complex thoughts about the interrelationship between human and divine agency were buried implicitly within a drama. Having 'less Greek' could therefore have enabled him to appear to understand more about Greek tragedy, and its complex mingling of voluntary actions and divine prompt-ings, than he would have done if he had actually been able to work his way through Aeschylus and Euripides in the first place.[12]

Shakespeare Actually Knew a Lot of Greek

A century-old tradition of scholarship also exists, however, which engages the ques-tion of Greek tragedy and tragicomedy and directly connects it to many Shakespeare dramas. J. Churton Collins was the first twentieth century critic to take this broader view. In *Studies in Shakespeare* (1904), he identified sixteenth century Latin translations of the tragedies of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides that were published on the Continent, and he asserted that it was "improbable, almost to the point of being incredible, that Shakespeare should not have had the curiosity to turn to them."[13]

Other twentieth-century critics who have investigated this question include the

renowned Greek translator, Gilbert Murray,[14] and Shakespeare scholars Jan Kott[15] and Louise Schleiner,[16] who have all argued that Aeschylus' *Oresteia* influenced *Hamlet*.[17] Inga Stina-Ewbank[18] has proposed that Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* was a source for *Macbeth*, and others have similarly identified Greek dramatic elements in the Scottish play.[19] Jonathan Bate,[20] Sarah Dewar-Watson,[21] and Claire McEachern[22] have all acknowledged that Euripides' tragicomedy *Alcestis* influenced the final scenes of both *The Winter's Tale* and *Much Ado about Nothing*.[23] George Stevens, J.A.K. Thompson, and Emrys Jones have argued that *Titus Andronicus* was indebted to Euripides' *Hecuba* and Sophocles' *Ajax*, while A.D. Nuttall has detected evidence that Sophocles' *Oedipus at Colonus* influenced *Timon of Athens*. However, like so many before him, Nutall is obliged to refer to his comparative analysis as only "pressing an analogy." [24]

Oxford Professor Laurie Maguire has contextualized the argument over Shakespeare's knowledge of Euripides in *Shakespeare's Names* (2007).

> Reluctant to argue that Shakespeare's grammar-school Greek could read Euripides, critics resort to social supposition to argue their case. Charles and Michelle Martindale suggest that 'five minutes conversation with a friend could have given Shakespeare all he needed to know' as does Nutall: "If we suppose what is simply probable, that he (Shakespeare) talked in pubs to Ben Jonson and others . . . ." I agree with these suppositions, as it happens, but invoking the Mermaid tavern is not a methodology likely to convince skeptics that Shakespeare knew Greek drama.[25]

Maguire devoted six pages to examining the availability in England of continental European editions of Latin and Italian translations of Euripides' plays. London printers evidently "lacked the expertise and experience to print Latin and Greek texts of this high quality."[26] Citing contemporaneous literature that alluded to or quoted Euripides in dramas, sermons, political treatises and commonplace books, Maguire concluded, "The availability of parallel-text editions with clear Latin translations and explanatory apparatus made it easy for anyone with an interest to read Euripides."[27] However, it should be noted that continental translations of the dramas of Aeschylus and Sophocles were quite rare and therefore difficult to establish as Shakespearean sources. In *Ancient Scripts & Modern Experience on the English Stage 1500-1700,* Bruce Smith states:

> In the same period, there were, to be sure, eighteen translations of the plays of Sophocles, but they were concentrated almost exclusively on only three plays, *Antigone*, *Oedipus Rex*, and *Electra*. By 1600, there was not even one translation of a play by Aeschylus in Italian, French, English, German or Spanish.[28]

This controversy has profound implications regarding the very origins of dramatic art and superimposed blinders of literary biography on philological considerations.

Like the great twentieth century playwrights, Shakespeare's mythopoetic imagination was fired by the Greek example. That he incorporated numerous plots, themes, dramaturgy, allusions, tropes, allegory, and words taken from the Greek canon is credible and worthy of detailed play-by-play investigations.

Hamlet[29]

My inquiries into Shakespeare and the Greeks was launched while researching a paper on *Hamlet* for a class at Southern Oregon University in 2004. I was impressed by the number of classical allusions in the text and the repeated references to Hercules and Alexander the Great. The themes of royal assassination, inherited fate, ghostly visitation, intergenerational murder, tainted food and wine, violated sanctuary, and maimed burial rites woven into *Hamlet* echo the tragic narratives of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides. To my great delight, the university's Hannon Library possessed a copy of Gilbert Murray's 1914 Shakespeare Lecture to the British Academy, *Hamlet and Orestes: A Study in Traditional Types,* which identified many remarkable similarities between Aeschylus' *Oresteia*, Euripides' Orestes dramas, and Shakespeare's *Hamlet.*

> There are first the broad similarities of situation between what we may call the original sagas on both sides; that is, the general story of Orestes and Hamlet respectively. But secondly, there is something much more remarkable: when these sagas were worked up into tragedies, quite independently and on very different lines, by great dramatists of Greece and England, not only do most of the old similarities remain, but a number of new similarities are developed. That is, Aeschylus, Euripides, and Shakespeare are strikingly similar in certain points which do not occur at all in Saxo or *Ambales* or the Greek epic.[30]

Murray was England's foremost Greek scholar during the first half of the twentieth century, and is credited with numerous translations of Attic dramas and the revival of classical Greek theatre in London. He noted "extraordinary similarities" between Hamlet and Orestes, "respectively the greatest or most famous heroes of the world's two great ages of tragedy." Murray stopped short of claiming that Shakespeare was directly influenced by Greek tragedy, repeating that "all critics" have opposed this theory. As an alternative explanation, Murray proposed there exists a set of universal principles particular to tragedy that help explain these anomalies:

> Are we thrown back then, on a much broader and simpler though rather terrifying hypothesis, that the field of tragedy is by nature so limited that these similarities are inevitable? . . . I do not think that in itself it is enough to explain those close and detailed and fundamental similarities as those we are considering . . . there must be a connection somewhere.[31]

In the century since Murray published his remarkable insights, other scholars have confirmed his judgment. Another Greek specialist, H.D.F. Kitto,[32] has also identified Greek dramatic elements in *Hamlet*. Twenty-five years ago the *Shakespeare Quarterly* published Professor Louise Schleiner's detailed analysis, which went farther than any other twentieth-century argument in proposing a direct influence of Aeschylus' trilogy on *Hamlet*, mediated through one of the continental Latin translations.

> I am convinced that at least some passages of Euripides' *Orestes* and Aeschylus' *Oresteia* … by some means influenced *Hamlet*. The concrete theatrical similarities between the Shakespearean and Aeschylean graveyard scenes and between the roles of Horatio and Pylades … are in my view too close to be coincidental. Furthermore, the churchyard scene of Hamlet does not occur in any of the play's known sources or analogues: if it was not a sheer invention … it has some source not yet identified.[33]

Schleiner proposed several possible sources of Latin translations of Aeschylus, including the Saint-Revy edition (Basel, 1555) and the Vettori Aeschylus editions published by Henri Estienne (Paris, 1557, 1567). She noted that Ben Jonson owned a copy of the Saint-Revy *Oresteia* in 1614.[34]

> … The Greek subtext of *Hamlet*, if such it is, will not only help account for the rebirth of full-fledged tragedy after 2,000 years, it will also clarify Horatio's role and correct our century's overemphasis on Oedipal qualities in Hamlet. For Shakespeare's Hamlet is much more a version – even a purposive revision – of Orestes than Oedipus. Hamlet is at no risk of marrying or having sex with his mother. He is at considerable risk of killing her.[35]

Martin Mueller has recently recognized a direct connection when he says "the drama at Elsinore self-consciously engages the legacy of ancient tragedy through a process in which a web of allusive ties link this playwright to Orestes . . . ."[36] Mueller insightfully notes that Shakespeare's contemporaries left literary evidence that they thought of *Hamlet* as an Orestes-inspired play.

> In Thomas Heywood's *The Iron Age* (1611), a dramatization of the Orestes myth, we find a closet scene between Orestes and Clytemnestra. And *The Tragedy of Orestes Written by Thomas Goffe, Master of Arts, and Students of Christ Church in Oxford and Acted by the Students of the Same House* in 1616, while full of Shakespearean echoes in general, reads at times like a *Hamlet* cento. It is evident that Heywood and Goffe saw Orestes as Hamlet because they had seen Hamlet as Orestes.[37]

If Shakespeare's contemporaries appreciated his use of Greek drama in *Hamlet*, and twentieth-century Greek scholars have recognized these numerous analogues, why has this controversy never been fully addressed by editors of modern editions of

Hamlet? There is even more compelling evidence for Shakespeare's debt to Aeschylus in the other northern tragedy, *Macbeth*, and critical commentaries recognizing the importance of these connections are lacking.

Macbeth[38]

In 2009, the Oregon Shakespeare Festival produced a chillingly supernatural *Macbeth* at the same time that I was in a seminar on Aeschylus' *Oresteia*. The many parallels between these tragedies were obvious, but the *Oresteia,* as a direct source for *Macbeth,* had never received the critical attention bestowed on *Hamlet*. Remarkably, one early scholar recognized that of the entire canon, "*Macbeth* most resembles a Greek tragedy,"[39] and J.A.K. Thompson even noted this close association in *Shakespeare and the Classics*:

> *Macbeth* is in many respects the most classical of all Shakespeare's plays. It employs more powerfully and overtly than any other, the method of tragic irony, which gets its effects by working on the foreknowledge of the audience – here communicated by the Witches -…. And the killing of Duncan is, in the Greek manner, done off stage.[40]

In his detailed commentaries on the sources of *Macbeth*, however, Thompson ignored the Greek tragedies, and focused primarily on Seneca's *Hercules Furens* and Ovid's *Metamorphoses* as more likely to have been Shakespeare sources.

Thompson is not the only scholar to identify analogues to Greek tragedy in *Macbeth* and then drop further investigation. In *Shakespeare Survey 19 Macbeth* (1966), Kenneth Muir writes that "*Macbeth* has long been considered one of Shakespeare's 'most sublime' plays, if only because of the analogues between it and Greek tragedies -"[41]. Muir's essay collection included commentaries by Arthur McGhee on "*Macbeth* and the Furies."

Among the early critical opinions linking *Macbeth* to the *Oresteia* that are cited in Horace Howard Furness' *Variorum* edition (1901) was expressed by Lord Campbell, author of *Shakespeare's Legal Acquirements Reconsidered* (1859). Campbell determined that *Macbeth* reminded him of Aeschylus primarily because both playwrights employed conceptions too bold for easy representation:

> In the grandeur of tragedy, Macbeth has no parallel, until we go back to *The Prometheus* and *The Furies* of the Attic stage. I could produce … innumerable instances of striking similarity between the metaphorical mintage of Shakespeare's and Aeschylus's style – a similarity, both in beauty and in the fault of excess, that, unless the contrary had been proved, would lead me to suspect our great dramatist to have been a studious Greek scholar. But their resemblance arose only from the consanguinity of nature.[42]

Of all the twentieth-century Shakespeare scholars, J. Churton Collins provided the most detailed consideration of a direct link between *Macbeth* and Aeschylus' trilogy. Citing a number of potential inter-textual echoes to Greek tragedy, Collins noted these similarities in characterization:

> Clytemnestra in *The Agamemnon* might well be the archetype of Lady Macbeth. Both possessed by one idea are, till its achievement, the incarnations of a murderous purpose. In both, the motive impulses are from the sexual affections. Both, without pity and without scruple, have nerves of steel and wills of iron before which their husband and paramour cower in admiring awe, and yet in both beats the women's heart, and the fine touches which Aeschylus brings this out may well have arrested Shakespeare's attention. The profound hypocrisy of the one in her speech to Agamemnon answers to that of the other in her speeches to Duncan.[43]

Collins described how the build-up to Duncan's murder and the murder itself, with Lady Macbeth waiting in suspense outside the King's chamber, have a "strong generic resemblance to the catastrophes of the *Choephoroe* (*Libation Bearers*), the *Electra* (of Sophocles), and the *Orestes* (of Euripides)."[44]

Collins was aware that the works of Aeschylus had never been published in England, and finally simply accepted that for his later plays "we must assume that *instinct* led Shakespeare to the Greek conception of the scope and functions of tragedy and that by a certain natural affinity he caught also the accent and tone as well as some of the most striking characteristics of Greek tragedy."[45] Despite the intriguing possibilities proposed by Collins, only a handful of Shakespeare scholars have continued to explore various dramatic elements that link the Scottish play to Greek tragedy.

In *Ethical Aspects of Tragedy (*1953), Laura Jepsen compared *Macbeth* and the *Oresteia* and focused the principle of "poetic justice" and the tension between individual responsibility and hereditary guilt as defining the heroic struggle. "Like Aristotle, the Greek tragedians and Shakespeare generally conceive of a universe in which standards of morality are absolute."[46] Jepsen argued that the guilty conscience assailing Macbeth was akin to Nemesis, which furiously pursued Clytemnestra, and she notes that both characters never showed a sign of repentance. Macbeth is at "the end, deceived by the witch's prophecies, but like Clytemnestra calling for the battle-axe, he dies defiantly presenting his shield."[47] While Jepsen presented a detailed comparative analysis of the plots, characters, and ethics of these two tragedies, she never contended that Aeschylus directly influenced Shakespeare.

In *Tragedy: Shakespeare and the Greek Example* (1987), Professor Adrian Poole noted that Aeschylean tragedy is uniquely rich in the "power to represent fear, its symptoms, sources, objects and consequences. *Macbeth* is in this sense Shakespeare's most Aeschylean tragedy."[48] Poole accurately portrayed the restless confusion and insomnia

from painful memories that possessed the characters of both the *Oresteia* and *Macbeth*, giving rise to a "vertiginous apprehension." Poole noted that Lady Macbeth, like Clytemnestra, "exhibits an astonishing self-control, a violent seizure of language through which she seeks to control herself and others." [49]

Poole's analysis even included a recognition of the similarities of the dramatic situations of the avenging sons, Orestes and Malcolm, and he goes so far as to suggest that the English Siwards in *Macbeth* serve as the equivalent of Aeschylus' Pylades, as "guarantors of a justice whose source lies elsewhere, beyond the confines of natural corruption." [50] However, Professor Poole stopped short of ever making the radical proposal that Shakespeare drew directly from Aeschylus.

Despite these obvious parallels in plot, dramaturgy, characterization, and supernatural terror, no current edition of *Macbeth* includes Aeschylus as a possible source. The images, allusions and thematic parallels that connect these tragedies are summarized in my article, "Shakespeare's Greater Greek: *Macbeth* and Aeschylus' *Oresteia*" (*Brief Chronicles 3,* 2011). The arguments therein concern parallels related to the fatal "trammel net," the dramaturgy of bloody knives, ghostly visitation, night terrors, the "damned spot," poisoned breast imagery, avian augury, and the Weird Sisters as latter day Furies. These all represent new textual and thematic evidence which draws Shakespeare ever closer to Aeschylus than previously recognized, and establishes *Macbeth* as Shakespeare's closest representation of Attic tragedy.

Finally, in a recent report, "Striking Too Short at Greeks: The Transmission of *Agamemnon* to the English Renaissance Stage" (2005), Professor Inga-Stina Ewbank remarked on the "eclecticism of Shakespeare's inter-textualizing" included her "growing sense that Shakespeare learned from the Aeschylean chorus, with its intimate (and totally un-Senecan) connection with the house and the city." [51] Ewbank's commentaries traced the history of neoclassical representations of Aeschylus' characters. According to Ewbank, the Saint-Revy translation "appears to have been the version of Aeschylus commonly read by humanists on the Continent and in England." Importantly, the Saint-Revy edition was based on an incomplete manuscript which compressed the *Agamemnon* and the *Libation Bearers* into one play in which Agamemnon never appears as a character. [52]

Professor Ewbank also recognized that Thomas Goffe's *The Tragedie of Orestes* (1616) reveals another recognizable connection between Shakespeare and Aeschylus. She noted that in Goffe's drama, "Aegisthus and Clitemnestra become like the Macbeths: he invokes the 'sable wings' of Night and Clitemnestra 'unsexes' herself, and together they stab Agamemnon in his bed . . . . Orestes, meditating on his father's skull, Hamlet-fashion, finds assurance in a Macbeth-like visit to an Enchantress and three witches who produce, to the accompaniment of '*Infernall Musique*', a dumb show of Aegisthus and Clytemnestra '*with their bloody daggers*' killing Agamemnon." [53]

Ewbank failed to satisfactorily answer the question of how, in 1616, Goffe incorporated dramatic elements later found in *Macbeth*, which was not published until seven years later in the *First Folio*. Nonetheless, her conclusion sounded a positive note: "We need to know more about the part played by Greek texts in Elizabethan and Jacobean literary culture, but evidence seems to mount up that some form of first-hand contact with Aeschylus has left traces in Shakespeare's dramatic imagination."[54]

Timon of Athens[55]

Compared to other Shakespeare plays, *Timon of Athens* is an austere and static drama, almost completely lacking in action. In his annotated bibliography, John Ruszkiewicz noted the generically mixed qualities of *Timon*, "a play conceived as tragedy, but incorporating elements of morality, comedy, farce, satire, masque and pageant."[56] Opinion has been mostly critical of *Timon*, although G. Wilson Knight praised this drama as being tremendous, "of universal tragic significance."[57] That we have a text at all is remarkable as some editors have concluded it was never intended for publication, being mysteriously inserted in the place of *Troilus and Cressida* in the *First Folio*. That there were no designations for acts or scenes in the *Folio* text also suggests we should view *Timon* as unique.

The potential co-authorship of *Timon* with Thomas Middleton has been embraced by a number of scholars, although there is still considerable uncertainty over the date of composition based on performance records or allusions to a dramatic production. While there were a number of English literary allusions to *Timon* during the later sixteenth century, none specifically refer to a Timon-drama except one: William Warner's reference to the Athenian misanthrope in *Syrinx or A Sevenfold History* (1584).

> And yet, let his coy prophetess presage hard events in her cell, let the Athenian *misanthropos* [printed in Greek] or man-hater bite on the stage, or the Sinopian cynic bark with the stationer; yet, in *Pan his Syrinx*, will I pipe at the least to myself.[58]

Warner's coy prophetess is most likely an allusion to Cassandra, the seer who rejected Apollo and became Agamemnon's ill-fated slave at the end of the Trojan War. Further, this is quite possibly a reference to a character in the lost drama, *History of Agamemnon and Ulisses,* performed at court in December 1584 by the Earl of Oxford's Boys. In *English Dramatic Companies, 1558-1642* (1910), J. T. Murray speculated that this play "may have been written by the Earl of Oxford himself, for he was reckoned by Puttenham and Meres among 'the best for comedy' of his time."[59] The Sinopian cynic is clearly a reference to the fifth century Greek cynic philosopher, Diogenes, a character in John Lyly's *Campaspe*, which was also staged by Oxford's Boys during the same court revels in 1584. *Campaspe* was published later that same year, thus the allusion to the stationer. The Athenian *misanthropos* biting on the stage is almost certainly

an allusion to a contemporary presentation of a Timon drama. Warner's letter opens the door to the possibility of topical and allegorical interpretations of Shakespeare's *Timon* that relate to the events in the Earl of Oxford's life in the early 1580's.

A significant dispute exists over the acknowledged sources of *Timon*. Scholars readily accept Plutarch's *Life of Marcus Antonius* and Lucian's dialogue, *Timon The Misanthrope*, as primary sources, but controversy continues over the part played by an unpublished, anonymous manuscript of a satire, *MS Timon*, possibly written for the Inns of Court or a university audience. *MS Timon* was published for the first time in 1842 by Alexander Dyce. H. J. Oliver has effectively argued that it is hard to understand how Shakespeare could have known this unpublished academic comedy, and Muriel Bradbrook has interpreted it to be more likely a derivative parody of Shakespeare's tragedy.

Oxford editor John Jowett noted that neither Plutarch nor Lucian embodied the bleak cynicism found in Shakespeare's tragedy, and that Timon's pessimism seems to belong to a "more complex textual field," one that depicts, he notes, the economic ruin of the nobility. Shakespeare radically recast Timon in the mold of a classical tragic hero, and did so by adapting the dramatic structure, poetics, dramaturgy, and allegory inherent to Greek tragedy. A.D. Nuttall, author of *Shakespeare the Thinker* (2007), noted that in *Timon*, Shakespeare dramatized inhumanity in such a way as to reflect the stiff archaic formalism of Greek tragedy and employed expressions that "are a classic expression of irony, running at full Sophoclean strength."[60]

Shakespeare's *Timon* possesses a three-part structure that parallels a traditional Greek tragic trilogy. Rolf Soellner has insightfully suggested that *Timon* "follows the tripartite design offered by Renaissance humanists: *protasis, epitasis, catastrophe*." The Folio text of *Timon* does not include act or scene divisions, but the play explores three distinct, progressively darker dramatic moods, all approximately of equal length. I have labeled these divisions: Prodigal Timon (Act 1 plus the Masque of the Amazons), Timon's Misfortune (Acts 2, 3, & 4, Scenes 1 & 2), and Timon's Fury (Act 4, Scene 3 & Act 5). A.D. Nuttall seems to agree as regards Act 4 of *Timon*, noting that the structure and character of the scene are "astonishingly Greek."

> We have the pattern of the humiliated hero, apart from society, in a wild place. To him come, in succession, various figures to upbraid him or (more importantly) to solicit his aid. It is a pattern of great power in Sophocles, strong in Aeschylus, less strong in Euripides. In *Oedipus at Colonus* the protagonist, blind, filthy, and ragged is visited in turn by Theseus, Creon, and Polynices. . . . Oedipus, for all his strange aura of sanctity, is more like Timon than one expects. He embraces his own wretchedness and curses those who have wronged him.[61]

Nuttall identified three plays with a structure similar to the final part of *Timon of Athens*:

Sophocles' *Oedipus at Colonus* and *Philoctetes*, and Aeschylus' *Prometheus Bound*. In each of these three Greek tragedies, a betrayed and wounded hero survives in a desolate wilderness, but is pursued by needy visitors. Of *Timon*'s succession of supplicants, Nuttall wrote, "We seem to have traveled back to the earliest period of Greek drama, in which the 'second actor' has not yet been invented and where . . . the same speaker came forward to address the audience in a succession of different masks."[62]

Many critics, including Nuttall, Maurice Charney, G. Wilson Knight, H.J. Oliver, and James Bulman have noted this tragedy's unprecedented use of Greek-like choric passages. The term "gods" also appears more often in this play than any other Shakespeare work.[63] Shakespeare's *Timon* begins in the Greek fashion with an oracle, which as Adrian Poole has noted, creates an "apprehension of temporal convergence at once fearful and hopeful," and is "characteristically Sophoclean." Further, Timon dies off-stage and his death is reported by a messenger, also fitting the classical model. Timon's excess of bitter emotion to the point of madness is a theme that is often incorporated in Attic tragedy. James Bulman and Frank Kermode have both argued that, of all the plays of Shakespeare, *Timon* most closely adheres to an Aristotelian moral scheme. Critics have also commented on how *Timon* employs Greek versification, especially stichomythia, and cannibalistic imagery, another characteristic of the Attic tragedy.

Timon of Athens presents a matrix of Greek dramatic elements that imbue the tragedy's plot, characterization, poetics, ethics, imagery, and dramaturgy with a classical aura. Nuttall's deductions about the similarities between Shakespeare's *Timon* and Sophocles' *Oedipus* are particularly important, though Nuttall is obliged to disclaim Shakespeare's knowledge of this untranslated tragedy. Shakespeare's *Timon* is the playwright's most Sophoclean creation, both in the hubris of his prodigality and the cynicism of his misanthropy. Timon's fury-driven death in the wilderness comes without the benefit of self-reflection. A Renaissance adaptation of Greek tragedy, *Timon* is a self-consciously literate creation, one which adapts a mosaic of Greek sources that would most likely have been appreciated only by a well-educated audience.

Oxfordian biographers have strongly suggested that *Timon* is a political allegory, one specifically reflecting Edward de Vere's financial and social misfortunes in the early 1580's, when the Timon-drama was performed.[63a] That de Vere was the archetypal bankrupt patrician who wasted a fortune to end up as a Queen's pensioner reinforces the claim that *Timon* is ultimately about the economic ruin of the author and that Timon's dramatic flaws may well reflect Oxford's emotional condition at a very low point in his life. E.K. Chambers believed that Shakespeare wrote *Timon* under conditions of mental and perhaps physical stress, and that he had a breakdown.

How closely Timon fits the mold of the Earl of Oxford during this period is

remarkable. Timon's patronage of the Poet and Painter reflects Oxford's support of many writers. Having received a dozen literary dedications by 1580, Oxford sat for at least two paintings, the Welbeck and Ashbourne portraits. Like Oxford, Timon supported performance art in the Masque of the Amazons, a device that may mirror the *Masque of Amazons* performed before Queen Elizabeth and the French ambassador in 1578. Timon even claims the troupe 'Entertain'd me with my own device' (1.2.146). At this time, Oxford supported two theatre groups, Oxford's Men and Oxford's Boys, and he was also known to have written interludes and performed before the queen himself.

The Winter's Tale[64]

In the fall of 2005, the Classical Greek Theatre of Oregon produced *The Alcestis*, Euripides' tragicomedy, originally performed in 438 BCE as a satyr play following a tragic trilogy. One review of the performance suggested that the final scene of the play bore a remarkable resemblance to the statue scene of *The Winter's Tale*. As I would soon discover, a full century had passed since the last Shakespeare scholar had written coherently about the evidence which supported the reviewer's intuitive observation.

Critics have long recognized that the plot of *The Winter's Tale* was derived primarily from Robert Greene's 1588 romance, *Pandosto, The Triumph of Time*. While there are many verbal echoes from *Pandosto* in Shakespeare, the differences and similarities between Greene's tragic prose novella and Shakespeare's romance are striking. Shakespeare seems to have (again) structured his drama as classic Greek trilogy. First, it is a tragedy set in Sicily, marked by Leontes' escalating murderous jealousy, climaxing with the death of Mamillius and the disappearance of Hermione; second it includes a Bohemian romantic pastoral ending with the elopement of Florizel and Perdita; and third, the scenes of reconciliation in Sicily conclude with the reanimation of Hermione. G. Wilson Knight has reverentially referred to the statue scene as "the most strikingly conceived and profoundly penetrating moment in English literature."

The classical names of the characters, largely adopted from Plutarch's *Lives*, the preeminence of Apollo, the themes of extreme jealousy, attempted regicide and infanticide, and the mysterious resurrection of the queen after sixteen years absence, all point to sources from the classics. Nineteenth century Shakespeare scholars including W.W. Lloyd (1856), Israel Gollancz (1894), A.E. Haigh (1896), and H.R.D. Anders (1904) all recognized Euripides' *Alcestis* as the primary source for the statue scene, but during the twentieth century acknowledgment of this connection essentially disappeared. Of recent editions, only the 1963 Arden includes a brief footnote. Most scholars now would consider Ovid's Pygmalion story from *The Metamorphoses* as the primary source of the reanimation of the statue of Hermione.

What is noteworthy, but overlooked by most critics, is the preeminence of Apollo in both *The Alcestis* and *The Winter's Tale*. The few references to Apollo in Greene's *Pandosto* are traditional appeals to the god, unlike *The Winter's Tale* where there are an overabundance of allusions to him or his oracle. In Euripides' *Alcestis* Apollo delivers the prologue, then argues with Death over the fate of Queen Alcestis and prophesizes the possibility of her rescue. Apollo is also featured through two songs of the *Alcestis* chorus.

Although Apollo does not appear on stage, the extent to which Shakespeare has invested his play with manifold aspects of the god is detailed by David Bergeron in his article "The Apollo Mission in *The Winter's Tale*" (1995). "Of the twenty nine references to Apollo in his canon, thirteen come in *The Winter's Tale*…. Only in [this] romance does Shakespeare refer to Apollo's power as an oracle."[65] Shakespeare includes a detailed description of the sacred temple at Delphos and the oracle itself is presented formally during the Queen's trial with great pomp. In the scene of Hermione's resurrection, Paulina's mastery as a priestess of Apollo is consummate. The mystical tone of her speeches, combined with the effects of the music and the "many singularities" of art, epitomizes the spirit of Apollo, according to Bergeron.

> We recall that traditions link Apollo to the Nine Muses, to music and art. Paulina creates a complete Apollonian moment at her house where music, art, and theatre interconnect at a propitious time. Like Romano and like Apollo, Paulina sculpts his experience to produce mystery, wonder, faith, and eventually catharsis.[66]

Doubt that Shakespeare would have had access to Greek or Latin editions of *The Alcestis* made twentieth-century scholars reluctant to claim that Shakespeare knew Euripides' drama. Over a century ago however, a handful of classically-trained scholars took notice of the remarkable similarities between the statue scene and the final scene of *Alcestis*. Greek scholar A.E. Haigh's comparative analysis, *The Tragic Drama of the Greeks* (1896), detailed many parallels between *Alcestis* and *The Winter's Tale*.

Every critic has admired the pathos and dramatic effect of the final scene, in which Alcestis is brought back disguised as a stranger, and received at first with reluctance, until she is gradually recognized. Two points in the scene deserve notice. The first is the curious resemblance to the conclusion of *The Winter's Tale*, where Leontes is taken to see, as he imagines, the statue of his dead wife and finds instead the living Hermione. Second is the silence of Alcestis after her return from the grave. The silence is due, not to theatrical exigencies and the absence of a third actor, as some critics have supposed, but to the deliberate choice of the poet. For one who has just been restored from the darkness of the tomb, no form of words could be as appropriate as the mute and half-dazed torpor in which she stands.[67]

A century later however, in *Shakespeare and the Uses of Antiquity*, Michelle and Charles

Martindale dismiss these similarities to as merely "fortuitous." The dramaturgic elements in *Alcestis* that bear a resemblance to Shakespeare's romance, however, go well beyond the parallels of a mysterious return of a presumed dead queen and her restoration to a grieving husband. Music and prayerful thanks conclude both dramas. In both plays the queens are described with the same idealized language ("sacred lady," "blessed spirit," "peerless," "the best and dearest"). Both are honored by tombs that are described in their respective dramas as sacred shrines, monuments that bear evidence of their husbands' shame.

Although Alcestis does not return to Admetus in the form of a statue, Euripides' King promises to have a lifelike statue made of her: "Your image, carven by the skilled hands of artists, shall be laid in our marriage-bed; I shall clasp it, and my hands shall cling to it and I shall speak your name and so, not having you, shall think I have my dear wife in my arms – a cold delight, I know, but it will lighten the burden of my days" (326-47). Alcestis was the ancient model of wifely goodness. Depicted in Plato's *Symposium* as the ultimate example of altruism, she was also the subject of Chaucer's lengthy prologue to *The Legend of Good Women,* where, married to the God of Love, she counsels the poet to write of the great women of antiquity. Shakespeare seems to have picked up where Chaucer left off. Standing on the shoulders of Euripides, Plato, and Chaucer, he brings to modern life this ancient figure of feminine goodness. So compelling is the emotional effect of the statue scene that during the ninrteenth century, it was known to have been performed quite frequently as a stand-alone scene, often as a prelude to other dramas.

Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale* is a paean to Apollo, populated by a dramatis personae named symbolically for famous fourth and fifth century Greek heroes, which concludes with a miraculous restoration of an Alcestis-like figure of loving goodness. What many nineteenth century scholars understood about Shakespeare's knowledge of Euripides' drama has been disregarded too long. Sarah Dewar-Watson, in her 2009 Shakespeare Quarterly article, "The Alcestis and the Statue scene in *The Winter's Tale*," offered a renewed acknowledgement of what earlier scholars recognized as Shakespeare's inspiration for the most revered scene in the entire canon.

Much Ado About Nothing[68]

While there were a number of early scholars who recognized Shakespeare's debt to *Alcestis* for the statue scene, no critic argued for the possibility that the concluding scenes of *Much Ado About Nothing* were similarly influenced by Euripides' tragicomedy. Two Shakespeare editors, however, have recently published works that recognized the distinctly Euripidean dramaturgy in the last act of *Much Ado*. Jonathan Bate and Claire McEachern have both suggested that *Much Ado*'s final scene is also likely based on Euripides' tragicomedy. McEachern's introductory commentaries in the 2006 Arden edition noted that Shakespeare's dramaturgy in the marriage scene is much

178

closer to Euripides' depiction in *Alcestis* than to Bandello's story, which is the primary source of the Hero-Claudio plot:

> Unlike Sir Timbreo, but like Admetus, Claudio must accept his second bride without seeing her face . . . and [this] forces him to have faith where once he lacked it. Hero's mock funeral, in turn, recalls and prefigures other of Shakespeare's mock deaths, such as Juliet's or Helena's or Hermione's, in which heroines undergo a trial passage to the underworld. Euripides' *Alcestis* is also structurally similar to *Much Ado* in its use of comic scenes (those of Hercules' drunken festivities during the heroine's funeral) to counterpoint the apparent tragedy and hint at the comic ending to come.[69]

Jonathan Bate has also said that *Alcestis* was a possible Shakespeare source in his essay, "Dying to Live in *Much Ado about Nothing*" (1994).[70] Though he neglected to cite or quote any of the older scholarship on *The Winter's Tale*, he was the first modern Shakespeare scholar to make this claim for *Much Ado*.

> One way of putting it would be to say that *The Winter's Tale*, with its hinged tragicomic structure, is the logical conclusion of Shakespeare's work. That play is certainly the fully matured reworking of *Much Ado*…. The ultimate "source" for the Hero plot of *Much Ado* is a Greek myth, that of Alcestis.[71]

Bate refers to this moment as the very heart of the play. To him, Hero's apparent death and silence are reminiscent of the myth of Hero and Leander, where Hero drowns herself rather than live without her beloved. According to Bate, Hero was probably named as a representative of Ovid's *Heroides*, the catalogue of the worthy women of antiquity who were betrayed and abandoned by their husbands and lovers.

> The Hero and the other heroines of the *Heroides* are essentially tragic figures; in that Ovidian text there are no second chances. *Much Ado* is more in a romance mold, and this suggests a generic link with Euripides' *Alcestis*. The latter was a kind of transcended tragedy; it was performed in the position usually held by the comic satyr-play, as fourth in a group of dramas, following and in some senses defusing or providing relief from three tragedies. It is a potential tragedy but with last-minute relief. Life is heightened because of the process of going through death: the pattern is that of many works in the romance tradition and of several of Shakespeare's later comedies – *Much Ado, All's Well that Ends Well, Pericles,* and *The Winter's Tale*.[72]

Bate asserts that *Alcestis* may not be the primary source of the Hero plot, but Euripides' heroine nonetheless serves as a "powerful, mythic prototype" for women who are silenced by a temporary consignment to the grave.

> As in *All's Well that Ends Well* and *The Winter's Tale*, the actual death of the

myth is replaced by a self-conscious stage trick. Theophanies like that of Apollo and super-human interventions like that of Herakles are replaced by domesticated divine agents: the Friar's scheme, Helena's self-contrived devices, Paulina's priestess-like art. Silence is not given a mythico-religious cause but becomes a psychological and social reality.[73]

In Ovid's *Heroides*, the heroines often refer to their tombs and several of them inscribe their own epitaph. Bate notes that "the epitaph and tomb scene makes Hero recognizable as one of the *Heroides*. Her name makes this link: it sets up a prototype that can be recognized by the audience."[74] Bate's argument on the symbolic significance of Hero's name is relevant, but he fails to note the distinct parallels between the Chorus near the conclusion of *Alcestis* and the tomb rites in Act 5 of *Much Ado*. In Euripides' drama, the Chorus sings its lamentation that neither knowledge of "Orphic symbols" nor "the herbs given by Phoebus to the children of Asclepius" avails against man's mortality, that Fate's "fierce will knows not gentleness." The last stanza of this Chorus serves as a paean to Alcestis, the "blessed spirit," and includes expressions suggestive of Shakespeare's epitaph and song dedicated to Hero:

> Ah!
> Let the grave of your spouse
> Be no more counted as a tomb,
> But revered as the Gods,
> And greeted by all who pass by!
> The wanderer shall turn from his path,
> Saying: 'She died for her lord:
> A blessed spirit she is now.
> Hail, O sacred lady, be our friend!'
> Thus shall men speak of her.
>
> (*Alcestis*, 986-1005)[75]

The tomb scene in *Much Ado* is very short, only 33 lines long, and half the lines comprise the epitaph and dirge. This very solemn scene concludes with Don Pedro's description of dawn in an allusion to Apollo, "the wheels of Phoebus" (5.3.26), who is preeminent in *Alcestis* and *The Winter's Tale*. Hero's epitaph, remarkably, sounds very much like the *Alcestis* Chorus in that both proclaim the particular sacrifices of the deceased women, which merits their fame:

> Done to death by slanderous tongues
> Was the Hero that here lies:
> Death, in guerdon of her wrongs,
> Gives her fame which never dies:
> So the life that died with shame,
> Lives in death with glorious fame.
>
> (*Ado*, 5.3.3-8)

As soon as the epitaph is hung, Claudio calls for music and this "solemn hymn."

> Pardon, goddess of the night,
> Those that slew thy virgin knight,
> For the which with songs of woe
> Round about her tomb we go.
> Midnight, assist our moan,
> Help us sigh and groan,
> Heavily, heavily.
> Graves yawn and yield your dead,
> Till death be uttered
> Heavily, heavily.
>
> (*Ado*, 5.3.12-21)

If Claudio is modeled after Euripides' Admetus, whose contrition and shame is well developed, then his vow of an annual visit to Hero's monument must be serious. The "goddess of the night" here is an allusion to Diana, goddess of the moon and of chastity. Greek choruses danced when they sang, often circling in unison and alternating directions with each stanza. The *First Folio* edition of *Much Ado* substituted the words, "Heavenly, heavenly" for line 21, which could certainly be an allusion to the possibility of resurrection. Both the tomb scene in *Much Ado* and the Chorus in *Alcestis* reflect a sober, melancholic pathos. Both are immediately followed by joyful reunions with mysteriously veiled women returned from the grave.

Neither Bate nor McEachern commented on another potential Euripidean element in Shakespeare's comedy, the four allusions to Hercules. In Euripides' *Alcestis,* Hercules is first made ridiculous through a drunken burlesque, and then redeems himself by performing the role of *deus ex machina*. The allusions to Hercules in *Much Ado* suggest that Shakespeare was not only familiar with Euripides's treatment of Hercules, but also with other untranslated, non-dramatic sources including Homer's *Iliad* and the satirist Lucian.

In *Much Ado*, the first allusion to Hercules identifies him as a matchmaker. Don Pedro swears to "undertake one of Hercules' labors, which is to bring Signor Benedick and the Lady Beatrice into a mountain of affection th'one to th'other" (2.1). Don Pedro's allusion very likely references Euripides' drama, where Hercules grapples with Death to save Queen Alcestis and return her to the living, like Hero, veiled to conceal her identity. Importantly, this episode is the only one among Hercules' many labors, adventures, and romances in which he performs such a matchmaking duty.

Hercules is portrayed quite satirically in *Alcestis*. Following a series of pathetic scenes centered on death and grief, Hercules staggers drunkenly on stage, raving about the blessings of wine and perfections of Aphrodite, unwittingly offending the horrified servants of the grieving household. In this regard, Euripides' Hercules is similar to

Shakespeare's Benedick, who is made a literal fool for love by Don Pedro's campaign. Later Benedick will be dispatched by Beatrice, who invokes Hercules to get him to agree to risk death and challenge Claudio in order to restore Hero's honor.

Shakespeare alludes to Hercules 35 times in his dramas, far more often than any other classic hero. In this, he followed the example of many classical poets. These Herculean narratives, depicting a hero in his struggle against supernatural forces, inspired many Renaissance writers. As an archetypal tragic hero, Hercules provided the personal template for doomed characters found in Marlowe, Chapman, and Shakespeare. In *The Herculean Hero* (1962), Eugene Waith made a compelling case for interpreting Coriolanus and Mark Antony as tragic heroes closely identified with Hercules. Waith focused exclusively on the tragic Hercules as a Renaissance model. Likewise, Euripides' Hercules provides a template for the comic excesses exhibited by Shakespeare's hero, Benedick in *Much Ado about Nothing*.

Shakespeare's Greater Greek and the Authorship Challenge

In *Attic and Elizabethan Tragedy*, (1908) Laughlin Mclean Watt proclaimed that there has been no period of history more conducive to "provocations of greatness" than the ages of Attic and Elizabethan tragedy. That the "grandeur, depth, and breadth" of the literary production of both of these eras "took up the most momentous questions – life, death, God, man, judgment, and all the huge ethical shadows that, on the skirts of these, haunt men's being and conduct."[76] Watt's assertions underline the cultural significance of recognizing the profound imprint Greek dramatic literature had on Shakespeare's creative imagination. The mythopoetic narratives of the Greek playwrights have endured over 2,500 years, inspiring Shakespearean adaptation and modern translation through twentieth-century tragedies.

The four main reasons scholars have avoided establishing philological connections between the Greeks and Shakespeare are:

- the enduring legacy of Jonson's ironic reference to Shakespeare's "lesse Greek"
- the limitations imposed by Shakespearean biography
- the deficiencies of a sixteenth-century English grammar school education in the Greek classics, and
- the dearth of editions of Greek dramas or Latin translations in England.

The enduring assumption has been that England's Renaissance culture was Latin-based and that Attic tragedy had not influenced the English stage. However, evidence of intertextual connections of structure, plot, imagery, theme, allegory, dramaturgy, and topicality presented here directly challenges this. To have overlooked the

myriad connections between Shakespeare and the Greeks is to have missed a critical link in understanding Shakespeare's literary foundations.

The controversy over Shakespeare's use of Greek sources is heating up. In July, 2014, the Center for Renaissance and Early Modern Studies at the University of York sponsored a day-long colloquium on "Greek Texts and the Early Modern Stage," which explored the impact of the Greek canon on Shakespeare and his contemporaries. The colloquium website noted: "Greek provokes strong associations for a number of reasons: its controversial associations with Erasmus, Protestantism, and heresy; the specter of democratic governance; the rebirth of interest in Galenic medicine; the pervasive influence of Greek culture on Latin literature; and the identification of Greece with the origins of theatre."

In the abstract of her paper, "*Hamlet* and the Ghost of Sophocles," Sarah Dewar-Watson argued that the verbal echoes of Sophocles' *Antigone* in *Hamlet* suggested Shakespeare was also familiar with the anthology of seven Greek plays, *Tragediae selectae Aeschyli, Sophoclis, Euripidis*, published in Paris in 1567 by Henri Estienne. The edition included Latin translations of *Antigone*, *Hecuba*, *Alcestis*, and *Iphigenia at Aulis*.[77] Still, Oxford University's Colin Burrow is set on Plutarch as Shakespeare's primary source for understanding the conventions of Greek theatre, while Jonathan Bate has expressed similar feelings that Ovid, not Plutarch, mediated Shakespeare's Greek: "…it cannot be proved that Shakespeare knew any of the plays of Euripides. But there is no doubt that he derived a Euripidean spirit from Ovid. Euripides taught Ovid what Ovid taught Shakespeare: the art of tragicomedy . . . ."[78]

There is much work yet to be done on this subject. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Shakespeare's one Athenian comedy, reflects numerous elements that are recognizably based on Greek Old Comedy and was directly influenced by Aristophanes' masterpiece, *The Birds*.[79] *Troilus and Cressida* incorporates imagery that references a number of untranslated passages from Homer's *Iliad*. Other scholars have reported that *Troilus and Cressida* echoes passages from Sophocles' *Ajax* as well as Euripides' *Phoenessiae*. Richard Grant White (1886) and J. Churton Collins (1904) made a compelling case for the Ulysses' eye metaphor speech in 3.3 to have been based on another untranslated Greek work, the *First Alcibiades* of Plato, which James Hanford called "the closest parallel between Plato and Shakespeare ever brought forward." *Cymbeline* and *Pericles, Prince of Tyre* arguably incorporate elements adapted from Euripides' tragicomedies, *Ion* and *Iphigenia at Taurus*.

The only published works that have systematically examined the Greek canon for elements incorporated by Shakespeare are by R.R. Khare (1998) and Myron Stagman (2011). In *Shakespeare's Greek Drama Secret*, Stagman argued that there are many unmediated textual correspondences between Greek dramas and the plays of Shakespeare, and that Shakespeare's achievement was unique precisely because of his mastery of Attic

drama. Stagman cataloged many potential textual connections between Shakespeare and the Greeks, and he speculated that the poet's education must have included readings from Homer, Lucian, Pindar, and the Athenian playwrights.

The long-held reticence to fully address the question of Greek dramatic sources, may be at least partly related to the Shakespeare authorship challenge and the candidacy of the seventeenth Earl of Oxford as the primary alternative. Oxford arguably had an outstanding classical education and would have had access to the texts of Attic tragedies during his youth through his tutor, Cambridge University Greek scholar, Sir Thomas Smith.[80] Smith was clearly familiar with the conventions and texts of the classical theatre as he helped produce Aristophanes' plays *Plutus* (in 1536) and *Peace* (in 1546) at Cambridge.[81]

Oxford had access to continental editions of Greek texts for nearly a decade while he lived at Cecil House where he was in close contact with England's leading translators: Arthur Golding (Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, 1567), George Gascoigne (Euripides' *Phoenissiae*, 1572), and Arthur Hall (the first ten books of Homer's *Iliad*, 1581). Smith and Cecil possessed Greek editions of Homer, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides and Plato in their personal libraries. Mildred Cecil was an accomplished Greek translator. John Strype (quoting Roger Ascham) said, "Mildred Cecil spoke and understood Greek as easily as she spoke English."[82] The inventory of her Greek editions makes clear that Edward de Vere had ready access to the Attic tragedians.

The Earl of Oxford attended the Greek Church in Venice during his Italian travels in 1575 and was accompanied there by Nathaniel Baxter, Sir Phillip Sidney's Greek tutor. Thus, throughout his early life Oxford was surrounded by scholars versed in the Greek canon. Whether Oxford actually travelled to Greece during this sojourn is not relevant to this inquiry, but there is irony in the possibility that Oxford's claim to the attribution may have adversely influenced the intellectual vigor of Shakespeare studies simply because he represents a far superior candidate as regards the creation of dramas based on Greek sources.

Finally, I have learned that interpreting Greek drama in translation has pitfalls with respect to establishing specific intertextual analogues with Shakespeare. Twentieth-century translations of Aeschylus show wide variations in text, and there appears to be a distinct possibility that translators unconsciously employ language and imagery that are closely associated with Shakespeare.[83] Nonetheless, the collective evidence presented here would confirm that Shakespeare belongs within the lineage of dramatists that stretches directly from Aeschylus to O'Neill.

Notes

1   Wyatt Mason, "You Are Not Alone: Using Sophocles to treat PTSD," *Harper's* 329:1973 (2014), 65.

2   Rachel Galvin, National Endowment for the Humanities Jefferson Lecture, 2001.

3   Laughlin Maclean Watt, *Attic and Elizabethan Tragedy* (Port Washington: Kennikat Press, 1908, 1968), 2.

4   Watt, 345.

5   Robert Kilburn Root, *Classical Mythology in Shakespeare* (New York: Gordion Press, Inc. 1965-1903), 6.

6   Stanley Wells cited "Shakespeare's 'Lesse Greek'" in a presentation to the World Shakespeare Congress in Prague in July, 2011. Werth's identification of the untranslated **Greek Anthology** as the source for **Sonnets 153** and **154** impressed Wells, who commented that Werth should not be condemned for being an Oxfordian. A report on Wells' comments is available at Stephanie Hughes' blog, politicworm.com.

7   John Edwin Sandys, "Education" in **Shakespeare England Volume I** (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1916), 265.

8   Michelle and Charles Martindale, **Shakespeare and the Uses of Antiquity** (London: Routledge, 2003), 41.

9   A.D. Nuttall, "Action At a Distance: Shakespeare and the Greeks" in **Shakespeare and the Classics.** ed. Charles Martindale and A.B. Taylor, (2004), 210.

10   Michael Silk, "Shakespeare and Greek Tragedy: Strange Relationship" in Martindale and Taylor, 241.

11   J.A.K. Thompson, **Shakespeare and the Classics** (London: George Allen,1952), 250.

12   Colin Burrow, **Shakespeare & Classical Antiquity** (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 247.

13   J. Churton Collins, *Studies in Shakespeare* (Westminster: Archibald, Consta-
      ble & Co. Ltd., 1904), 41. Although Collins mentions the existence of Latin
      editions of Aristophanes, he states that he found "no trace in Shakespeare of
      any acquaintance with Aristophanes."

14   Gilbert Murray, *Hamlet and Orestes: A Study in Traditional Types*, Pro-
      ceedings of the British Academy, (June, 1914), 1-24.

15   Jan Kott (trans. Boleslaw Taborski), "Hamlet and Orestes," *PMLA* 82:5
      (1967), 303-313.

16   Louise Schleiner, "Latinized Greek Drama in Shakespeare's Writing of *Ham-
      let*," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 41:1 (1990).

17   Earl Showerman, "Orestes to Hamlet: Myth to Masterpiece," *The Oxfordian
      VII* (2004).

18   Inga Stina-Ewbank, "Striking Too Short at Greeks: The Transmission of
      Agamemnon to the English Renaissance Stage," in *Agamemnon in Perfor-
      mance 458 BC to 2004*, ed. Fiona Macintosh, Pantelis Michelakis, Edith Hall
      and Oliver Taplin (Oxford University Press, 2005), 51.

19   Earl Showerman, "Shakespeare's Greater Greek: *Macbeth* and the *Oresteia*
      of Aeschylus," *Brief Chronicles* Vol. 3 (2011), 37-70.

20   Jonathan Bate. "Dying to Live in *Much Ado about Nothing*." In *Surprised by
      Scenes: Essays in Honor of Professor Yasunai Takahashi*, edited by Yasunari Taka-
      da, 69-85. (Tokyo: Kenkyusha, 1994).

21   Sarah Dewar-Watson, "The *Alcestis* and the Statue scene in *The Winter's
      Tale*." *Shakespeare Quarterly* 60 (2009), 73-80.

22   Claire McEachern ed. *Much Ado about Nothing*. (London: The Arden Shake-
      speare, 2006).

23   Earl Showerman, "Shakespeare's Many Much Ado's: *Alcestis*, Hercules and
      Love's Labour's Wonne," originally published in *Brief Chronicles* Vol. 1 (2009),
      109-140. Reprinted in *Shakespeare Criticism Vol. 141*, Gale, Cengage Learning,
      2012.

24   A.D. Nuttall, *Timon of Athens*, (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1989).

25   Laurie Maguire, *Shakespeare's Names* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 98.

26   Maguire, 100.

27   Maguire, 103-4.

28   Bruce Smith, *Ancient Scripts & Modern Experience on the English Stage 1500-1700* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 203.

29   Earl Showerman, "Orestes to Hamlet: Myth to Masterpiece," *The Oxfordian VII* (2004).

30   Gilbert Murray, "Hamlet and Orestes: A Study in Traditional Types." *Proceedings of the British Academy*, June, 1914, 14.

31   Murray, 15.

32   H.D.F. Kitto, *Form and Meaning in Drama: A Study of Six Greek plays and Hamlet* (London: Methuen, 1956).

33   Louise Schleiner, "Latinized Greek Drama in Shakespeare's Writing of *Hamlet,*" Shakespeare Quarterly 41:1 (1990), 30.

34   Schleiner, 32.

35   Schleiner, 36-37.

36   Martin Mueller, "Hamlet and the World of Ancient Tragedy," *Arion* (1997), 22-45.

37   Mueller, 27.

38   Earl Showerman, "Shakespeare's Greater Greek: *Macbeth* and the *Oresteia* of Aeschylus," *Brief Chronicles* Vol. 3 (2011), 37-70.

39   Thomas Wheeler, *Macbeth: An Annotated Bibliography* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1990), 442. T. Francis Glasson published "Did Shakespeare Read Aeschylus?" in the *London Quarterly and Holborn Review,* 173 (1948), 57-66. Text of Wheeler's abstract: "Glasson points to eight examples of *Macbeth* and Aeschylus' *Choephori*. Some are verbal, some based on similar situations (e.g., Orestes' knocking on the door of Aegisthus' house

and the delayed response of the servant). Having surveyed the scholarship and evidence for and against Shakespeare's knowledge Greek – Aeschylus had not been translated into English, and the Latin translation does not resemble *Macbeth* as much as the Greek original – Glasson concludes that the question posed by his title cannot be answered definitively. But he points out that, of all Shakespeare's plays, *Macbeth* most resembles a Greek tragedy."

40   J.A.K. Thompson, *Shakespeare and the Classics* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1952), 119.

41   Kenneth Muir, *Shakespeare Survey 19 Macbeth* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966), 5.

42   Lord Campbell, *Legal Acquirements of Shakespeare* (1859) in *Variorum Macbeth*, 480.

43   J. Churton Collins, *Studies in Shakespeare* (Westminster: Archibald Constable & Co., 1904), 72-3.

44   Collins, 73.

45   Collins, 87.

46   Laura Jepsen, "Poetic Justice: The *Oresteia* and *Macbeth*," 8-31, in *Ethical Aspects of Tragedy: A Comparison of Certain Tragedies by Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Seneca and Shakespeare* (New York: AMS Press, 1971, reprint of 1953 edition), 6.

47   Jepsen, 31.

48   Adrian Poole, *Tragedy, Shakespeare and the Greek Example* (New York: Basil Blackwell, 1987), 15. Chapter 2, " 'The Initiate Fear': Aeschylus, Shakespeare" (15-53) includes an extended discussion of the similarities in the representation of prophesy, fear and the inevitability of suffering in the *Oresteia* and *Macbeth*. Poole also co-edited *The Oxford Book of Classical Verse in Translation*.

49   Poole, 19.

50   Poole, 49.

51   Inga-Stina Ewbank, " 'Striking Too Short at Greeks': The Transmission of

Agamemnon to the English Renaissance Stage," in *Agamemnon in Performance 458 BC to 2004*, ed. Fiona Macintosh, Pantelis Michelakis, Edith Hall and Oliver Taplin (Oxford University Press, 2005), 51.

52   Ewbank, 39. Lines 311-1066 and 1160-1673 are missing from Aeschylus' original text of the *Agamemnon* in the Saint-Revy edition.

53   Ewbank, 49.

54   Ewbank, 52.

55   Showerman, "*Timon of Athens*: Shakespeare's Sophoclean Tragedy," *The Oxfordian* XI (2009), 207-234.

56   John Ruszkiewicz, *Timon of Athens: An Annotated Bibliography* (New York: Garland Publishing Co., 1986), xviii.

57   G. Wilson Knight, *The Wheel of Fire: Interpretations of Shakespearean Tragedy* (London & New York: Methune, 1930, 1983), 207.

58   William Warner, *Syrinx or A Sevenfold History*, ed. Wallace A. Bacon. (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1950).

59   John Tucker Murray, *English Dramatic Companies, 1558-1642* (New York: Russell and Russell, 1963, original printing 1910). 345.

60   A. D. Nuttall, *Twayne's New Critical Introduction to Shakespeare: Timon of Athens* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1989), 42.

61   Nuttall, 107.

62   Nuttall, 89.

63   In *Classical Mythology in Shakespeare*, Robert K. Root writes, "Eleven mythological allusions are, with two exceptions, to Divinities and personify either the powers of nature or the moral influences in the life of man." These allusions include: Neptune, Plutus, Hyperion, Jove, Moon, Amazons, Mars, Diana, Cupid, Hymen, and Phoenix. The allegorical figure of Fortune seems to reign over Timon, as the word fortune occurs 30 times in the play.

63a   Mark Anderson, *Shakespeare By Another Name*, (New York: Gotham, 2005), 184.

"Exile and banishment also figure prominently in a second Shake-speare play that comments on the events of 1582. *Timon of Athens* charts the downward spiral of a man who cannot manage power, money, or responsibility."

64   Showerman, " 'Look Down and See What Death is Doing': Gods and Greeks in *The Winter's Tale*." *The Oxfordian* X (2007), 55-74.

65   David M. Bergeron, "The Apollo Mission in *The Winter's Tale*." In *The Winter's Tale: Critical Essays,* ed. Maurice Hunt (New York: Garfield, 1995), 362.

66   Bergeron, 377.

67   A.E. Haigh, *The Tragic Drama of the Greeks* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1896), 285.

68   Showerman, "Shakespeare's Many Much Ado's: *Alcestis*, Hercules and *Love's Labour's Wonne*" *Brief Chronicles* Vol. 1 (2009), 109-140.

69   Claire McEachern, ed. *Much Ado about Nothing* (London: The Arden Shakespeare, 2006), 21-2.

70   Jonathan Bate, "Dying to Live in Much Ado about Nothing" *Surprised by Scenes: Essays in Honor of Professor Yasunai Takahashi*, edited by Yasun-ari Takada (Tokyo: Kenkyusha, 1994), 69-85.

71   Bate, 79.

72   Bate, 83.

73   Bate, 81.

74   Bate, 82.

75   Euripides, *Alcestis*. Trans. Richard Aldington in *The Complete Greek Drama*. ed. Whitney J. Oates and Eugene O'Neill. (New York: Random House, 1938), 709-710. Subsequent quotations from *Alcestis* included.

76   Watt, 2.

77   Sarah Dewar-Watson, "Hamlet and the Ghost of Sophocles" (Presentation at the University of York, 2014).

"There is growing recognition of Hamlet's particular engagement with Greek tragic sources (e.g. Schleiner, 1990). Most recently, Tanya Pollard has high-lighted the significance of Watson's *Antigone* (1581) for our reading of the play. This paper argues for further intertextual relationships between *Hamlet* and Sophocles' *Antigone*.

78   Jonathan Bate, Shakespeare and Ovid (Oxford,: Clarendon Press, 1993), 239.

79   Earl Showerman, "*A Midsummer Night's Dream*: Shakespeare's Aristophan-ic Comedy" **Brief Chronicles** Vol 6 (2015), 107.

80   Stephanie Hopkins Hughes, "Shakespeare's Tutor: Sir Thomas Smith," **The Oxfordian** 3 (2000), 20.

81   Katherine Lever, "Greek Comedy on the Sixteenth-Century English Stage," **The Classical Journal** 42:3 (1946), 169.

82   Caroline Bowden, "The Library of Mildred Cooke Cecil, Lady Burghley." **Library**, ser.7,6 (2005), 6.

83   Showerman, Letter to the Editor, **Brief Chronicles IV**, p.137-141: regarding Lady Macbeth's "damned spot."
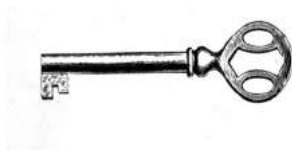
Oxfordian Theory, Continental Drift
and the Importance of Methodology

By James A. Warren

M uch can be learned about why literary scholars have not accepted Oxford-
ian theory by comparing it with another theory introduced around the
same time, continental drift. Admittedly the idea that the literary works
traditionally attributed to William Shakespeare were actually written by Edward de
Vere, Earl of Oxford, appears to have little in common with the idea that the major
features of the earth's crust were formed by movement of its continents in the past.
A close comparison of the two theories, however, reveals important reasons why
literary scholars continue to reject the idea of de Vere's authorship of Shakespeare's
works even though scientists have accepted continental drift as fact.

This paper is an examination of the two most important reasons: the incomplete
nature of Oxfordian theory itself, and the prevalence in academia of a methodology
for literary studies that is unreceptive to consideration of the Shakespeare authorship
question. It is not intended to be a full statement of Oxfordian theory, its develop-
ment or its reception by the academic community over the past century. But I believe
the two factors discussed here will form important parts of any comprehensive
history of the Oxfordian movement once one is written.

Similarities Between Continental Drift and Oxfordian Theory

Around 1920, two innovative thinkers proposed highly radical theories that directly
challenged existing explanations for phenomena in their respective fields. Alfred
Wegener proposed the idea that the major features of the earth's geography – its
continents and oceans – had changed shape, size and location over time, a theory
that became known as continental drift. Also, in that year, J. Thomas Looney proposed
that the literary works attributed to William Shakspere of Stratford-upon-Avon had
actually been written by Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford.

The two theories were examined by their respective intellectual communities of
scientists and literary scholars in the 1920s, and both were adamantly rejected. Forty
years later, in the 1960s, continental drift was reborn under the name plate tectonics,
"heralded as a major scientific breakthrough . . . and established as scientific fact."[1]
Oxfordian theory, however, was not resurrected in the 1960s. Even after an additional

fifty years, it has not been accepted by the majority of literary scholars, who continue to teach their students that Shakespeare's works were written by the man from Stratford.

Both new theories were attempts to explain anomalies in existing theories. In the case of continental drift, the reigning belief among American geologists was permanence theory, the idea that the earth's features had always been the size, shape and location they are today. That theory, however, was unable to explain the origin of mountains, the complementary jigsaw puzzle shapes of the continents or similarities in the flora, fauna and rock formations on continents thousands of miles apart.

Wegener, a German geophysicist, argued in *The Origin of Continents and Oceans* (1915, 1928) that if the continents had moved over time, many of the largest problems of earth history would be solved. As Naomi Oreskes observes in her study of continental drift, the movement and resulting interaction of the continents would explain the existence of mountain chains and "resolve the seemingly conflicting data of geophysics and paleontology."[2]

Regarding the authorship of Shakespeare's works, by 1920 the suspicion that they could not have been written by the man from Stratford had been growing for more than fifty years as the disconnect between the biographical details of his life and the qualities, experiences and types of knowledge that the author must have had in order to write the works became known.

J. Thomas Looney, a Durham county schoolmaster, sought to find the real author, and in

James Warren *was a Foreign Service officer with the U.S. Department of State for more than twenty years, during which he served in public diplomacy positions at U.S. embassies and consulates in eight countries, mostly in Asia. Following his career with the State Department he served as Executive Director of The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training (ADST) and then as Regional Director for Southeast Asia for the Institute of International Education (IIE). James is currently devoting his energies to literary pursuits, and in 2013 received the Vero Nihil Verius Award for Distinguished Shakespearean Scholarship from Concordia University for his accomplishment as the editor of* An Index to Oxfordian Publications. *He is a Fellow with the Center for the Study of the Great Ideas and the Adler-Aquinas Institute.*

"Shakespeare" Identified (1920) he described how his systematic search revealed "a most exceptional set of resemblances"[3] between the qualities the author had to have had and only one person living at the time Shakespeare's works were written: Edward de Vere. If de Vere is accepted as Shakespeare, Looney wrote, "the accumulation and combination of anomalies"[4] arising from authorship by Shakspere that had haunted literary studies for more than half a century melts away.

Both new theories were supported by circumstantial evidence. Continental drift was supported by similarities between flora and fauna on continents thousands of miles apart. By the 1920s, paleontologists had established 57 flora and fauna similarities between Australia and India, Africa and Brazil, Madagascar and India, and Europe and North America, and geologists had documented extensive similarities between fossil records and rock formations.

Oxfordian theory was likewise supported by a large number of similarities, in this case between events and people important in the life of Edward de Vere on one hand, and events and characters in Shakespeare's plays on the other. One notable example was the Gad's Hill robbery perpetrated by servants of Edward de Vere in real life and portrayed in *Henry IV, Part 1*. Early researchers such as Eva Turner Clark documented scores of other similarities between events depicted in the plays and events in de Vere's life and in Elizabeth's court and government that took place fifteen years too early for the man from Stratford to have been the author. As Looney comments on this point, "It is because the Shakespeare literature embodies work representing all periods of Oxford's lifetime, sometimes in a single play, that efforts to fix a Shakespeare canon on the basis of an author younger than the Earl of Oxford have proved so inconclusive."[5]

To Wegener and Looney, the large number of coincidences proved their cases. Wegener believed that "Taken individually, any one of these matches might be dismissed as coincidence, but the totality of these points of correspondence constitutes an almost incontrovertible proof."[6] Looney similarly explained that "The predominating element in what we call circumstantial evidence is that of coincidences. A few coincidences we may treat as simply interesting; a number of coincidences we regard as remarkable; a vast accumulation of extraordinary coincidences we accept as conclusive proof."[7]

Although both new theories explained anomalies arising from existing theories, both were incomplete in a major way – a way similar to both – that enabled believers in the older theories to cling to them.

The principal weakness of continental drift theory was the lack of a causal mechanics to explain continental movement. Wegener's theory did not identify a force strong enough to push continents through the rigid ocean floor nor a reason why such a force, if one existed, would actually do so.

Oxfordian theory suffered from similar failures to identify a motive (why) and a mechanics (how). Looney's original theory did not explain why Edward de Vere would have wanted to hide authorship of his plays and poems. He purposefully did not question de Vere's motive for hiding his works, explaining that:

> It is made as clear as anything can be that he [de Vere] . . . had elected his own self-effacement, and that disrepute was one, if not the principal, motive. We may, if we wish, question the sufficiency or reasonableness of the motive. That, however, is his business, not ours. The important point for us is that he has by his sonnets disclosed the fact that he, "Shakespeare," was one who was concealing his real name, and that the motive he gives, adequate or not, is one which unmistakably would apply to the Earl of Oxford.[8]

Again, "When, therefore, he [de Vere] tells us, in so many words, that "vulgar scandal" had robbed him of his good name, and that although he believed his work would be immortal he wished his name to be forgotten, we are quite entitled to take his own word for it, and to demand no further motive for the adoption of a disguise."[9]

And yet, this is insufficient. The extraordinary nature of the works demands a fuller explanation for the author's motives in hiding his authorship, and for why other people during de Vere's lifetime and for decades after his death would have wanted his authorship hidden.

Looney also did not explain the mechanics of how the effort to hide de Vere's authorship could have been accomplished, given the number of people who would have been aware of it. Charlton Ogburn comments that the extraordinary effort that would have been needed to hide Oxford's authorship was "highly implausible" and "its implausibility is what has chiefly blocked a more general acceptance of "Shakespeare" as having been a pseudonym."[10]

If the lack of a mechanics and motive were the major flaws with both new theories, they were also flaws in the older theories. Permanence theory could not explain how it was that similar flora, fauna, rock formations and fossils existed on continents thousands of miles apart. Stratfordian theory could not explain how an uneducated

provincial could have acquired the depth of knowledge in so many areas needed to write the learned plays.

Thus, all four theories, old and new, were incomplete in major ways. It is not sufficient merely to say that these four things happened. Nor is it sufficient to wave a magic wand and say that the continents moved, or to chant "genius" to explain how the man from Stratford acquired the extensive knowledge in so many areas exhibited in the plays. Given these weaknesses, it was a toss-up at the time as to which of each pair was correct.

The factors determining which theories would be accepted were the framework and methodology dominant in the respective scientific and academic communities at the time the theories were introduced.

The Scientific Environment for Continental Drift

Both new theories were initially received with interest by professionals in their respective fields. Regarding continental drift, British geologist Philip Lake expressed the surprise he and his colleagues felt: "A moving continent is as strange to us as a moving earth was to our ancestors, and we may be as prejudiced as they were," but he also recognized that "if continents have moved, many former difficulties disappear."[11] On the Shakespeare authorship side, literary scholar D. Willoughby similarly recognized that "Half the most baffling Shakespearean riddles could be answered by assuming that Lord Oxford was the author."[12]

Scientists and literary scholars soon moved beyond their initial surprise to examine the theories more closely. They did so within the frameworks or structures already in place in their respective intellectual communities. Those frameworks included a guiding idea, "facts" already believed to be true, and a methodology believed to be the correct process through which new knowledge in their field could be uncovered. The guiding idea defined the major task to be carried out by the scientists or literary scholars and steered them toward fruitful areas of investigation. The existence of facts already known, together with the principle of coherence, meant that new data was suspect if it conflicted with existing facts.

Methodology was the most critical of the three factors in the frameworks because it determined that new theories would be suspect if they were not formed in accordance with the existing methodological process. Naomi Oreskes, author of *The Rejection of Continental Drift*, recognizes the key point that:

> Science – the search for truth – is not about belief; it is about how belief gets formulated. . . . At any given moment, only a finite set of knowledge satisfies the reigning criteria for the formulation of scientific belief, and only this knowledge is eligible as truth.[13]

In comments equally applicable to literary scholars, she observes that scientists are "constantly making choices: about the questions they pursued, about the methods they used to answer them, and about the ways in which they interpreted and presented their results."[14] These choices are made within the internal cultures of each discipline, cultures that "are, at least in part, constituted in advance of any given theoretical debate."[15] Oreskes also notes a point critical for acceptance or rejection of both theories: that "internal cultures" and methodologies change over time. As she explains, "[T]he discriminating criteria are historically contingent; over time and across communities, they shift, they evolve, they are overthrown, they transmute."[16]

At the time Wegener introduced the theory of continental drift, the guiding idea in the American geologists' framework was that of permanence theory or uniformitarianism. That assumption provided the context for their work and influenced the theories they formulated to explain the origin of the geological formations they studied. They subscribed to that principle, Oreskes explains, "because it was enabling. It enabled them to interpret field evidence in a consistent and logical way. It enabled them to build a science of the past that would otherwise have remained logically inaccessible."[17]

Equally important was American geologists' adherence to the strictly inductive methodology that had resulted from their experiences exploring an enormous continent over more than a century. Their methodology was that of the field scientist, and consisted of travelling to the sites of rock formations, outcroppings and other geological features to map, study, and classify them.

Because so little was known about North America's geology when that long-term effort to explore it began, geologists believed it was good scientific practice to conduct their investigations without preconceived explanations for that they might find. One historian notes that "With a vast, largely undefiled geological laboratory stretching before them, American geologists devoted themselves to exploration and observation rather than to speculation and to theory building."[18] Another observer described their insistence of keeping "explanations for what they observed . . . clearly separate from the facts. Only after such appraisal did one know what was in need of explication."[19]

American geologists believed that adherence to an inductive methodology was necessary to defend against the natural human tendency to seek support for theories already held, and to reject evidence that contradicts them. Because this point has great relevance for the reception of both new theories that this paper considers, it is worth pausing to note geologist T. C. Chamberlin's justification for his field's methodology.

> Once any theory is held in a preferred position . . . There is the imminent
> danger of an unconscious selection and a magnifying of phenomena that
> fall into harmony with the theory and support it, and an unconscious neglect

> of phenomena that fail of coincidence. . . . Instinctively, there is a special searching-out of phenomena that support it. . . . the mind rapidly degenerates into the partiality of paternalism. The search for facts, the observation of phenomena and their interpretation, are all dominated by affection for the favored theory until it appears to its author or its advocate to have been overwhelmingly established. . . . a premature explanation passes first into a tentative theory, then into an adopted theory, and lastly into a ruling theory.[20]

A methodology in which general theories were formed only after extensive geological facts were obtained through field work was perhaps an appropriate methodology for geologists exploring a new continent.

Wegener's theory of continental drift came as something of a shock to American geologists, and reaction to it was "almost entirely negative."[21] They were predisposed to reject it not only because it violated their guiding principle of permanence theory, but more importantly because the process through which Wegener formulated and promoted his theory violated practically every aspect of the American geologists' methodology. Oreskes explains that

> One can see why Americans so reacted to Alfred Wegener's argument for continental drift. In content, in manner, and in purpose, Wegener's work contradicted the edifice and rhetoric of practice that Americans had laboriously constructed and articulated over the course of nearly a century. . . . The theory of continental drift was universalist and comprehensive, it was presented as the result of sudden inspiration rather than long labor, and the format in which he presented it violated the American pattern of putting facts first.[22]

American geologists believed that Wegener's having put theory first and then seeking facts to support it was bad scientific practice. One prominent American geologist, Bailey Willis, felt that Wegener's book gave the impression of having been "written by an advocate rather than an impartial investigator."[23] Americans were further incensed because Wegener, in his own words, had hit on the idea "by accident" and through "hasty analysis" rather than through the hard work of field investigations that geologists are supposed to engage in.

> Wegener . . . could hardly have said anything more likely to inspire American indignation. For Americans, coming to an important idea "by accident" looked like a summary dismissal of the role of hard work in the formation of reliable scientific knowledge. Wegener's [method] . . . looked like Joseph Seingewald's "selective search through the literature for corroborative evidence."[24] Chamberlin too had explicitly warned against the unconscious selection of facts that fit preconceived theories. And Wegener freely admitted to conscious selection of such facts![25]

The Academic Environment for Oxfordian Theory

Looney introduced the idea of Edward de Vere's authorship of Shakespeare's works into a more receptive intellectual environment than did Wegener when he introduced continental drift. The guiding idea in Shakespeare studies at the time was that the works had been written by William Shakspere of Stratford, but, as noted, doubts about his authorship had been in the air for more than half a century.

"The undermining of that belief," Looney explains, was due "mainly to two movements . . . [arising in] the nineteenth century." The first was the marked interest in practical historical research, which "brought to light the disconcerting fact that the English writer most distinguished by the brilliancy of his powers was, paradoxically, separated from all his fellows by a glaring deficiency of relevant personal records." The second was the development of a scientific study of literature, which "yielded a truer measure of the culture represented by the works." These two developments "produced in many minds a definite conviction that . . . a school of literature of the first rank had been allowed to grow up around a personality having no title whatever to the honour."[26]

These doubts penetrated less deeply into the academic/scholarly community than in the wider cultural world though, and authorship by the man from Stratford remained the guiding idea in academia. Given the "facts" already known to them – that Shakespeare's authorship had been confirmed by the First Folio and that the plays had been written for the public stage – scholars' efforts were focused on fleshing out their understanding of the context in which the works had been written, with that context defined by the timeline of Shakspere's life.

Stratfordians, then, in contrast to the American geologists, were guided by a methodology that could be described as deductive. Just how limiting this approach was is shown by the case of Charlotte Carmichael Stopes, who spent decades searching for evidence of ties between William Shakspere and the Third Earl of Southampton, the dedicatee of Shakespeare's two long poems. Unable to find even a single scrap of evidence to connect the two men, she regarded her search as a failure. With a more open-ended methodology, she might have come to realize that her assumption of Shakspere's authorship was mistaken.

For Stratfordians, authorship by other candidates could not possibly be correct regardless of the lack of correspondences between Shakspere and the works and regardless of the number of coincidences uncovered between events in the plays and events in the lives of other purported authors, just as for adherents to permanence theory continental drift could not have occurred regardless of the number of similarities in flora and fauna found on continents thousands of miles apart. With correspondences between the life and works ruled out as an acceptable form of evidence by their methodology, Shakespearean scholars felt justified in concluding that

insufficient evidence existed to justify academic consideration of the Shakespeare authorship question.

Looney's methodology was similar to that of the American geologists in that he sought to investigate the authorship question guided only by qualities he thought the author must have had and without prejudging what he might find. In approaching the authorship question in this manner, Looney was acting in the role of an investigator. Because what he was investigating took place in the past, he was in effect conducting the work of a historian. It is appropriate, then, to consider the methodology most appropriate for historians.

"History," writes noted historian David Hackett Fischer, "must begin with questions. Questions for historians are like hypotheses for scientists."[27] In asking an open-ended question and in presenting his results "in the form of a reasoned argument," Looney seems almost to be following the process of "adductive reasoning" that Fischer describes fifty years later as most appropriate for historians.

Once Looney had discovered de Vere authorship, Oxfordians began to follow a process resembling the methodology of the Stratfordians. Both sought to establish the facts of "their" candidate's life, and both also employed Fischer's adductive process as they sought to write coherent accounts of how their candidate had come to write his works.

In sum, at the time Looney introduced the idea of de Vere as Shakespeare, Shakespeare studies were characterized by the idea of authorship by the man from Stratford within academia and growing doubts about his authorship outside it.

The Two New Theories Are Rejected

Proponents of both older theories tried to explain away the anomalies their theories could not account for, in part by resorting to ad hoc explanations. Geologists who held to permanence theory had somehow to account for the similarities in flora, fauna and fossil records found on continents thousands of miles apart. To do this, they proposed the ad hoc idea of sunken continents – land masses that had once connected continents existing today, but which had sunk after having served as transit territory for the flora and fauna.

One such continent was supposedly located between what are today India and the island of Madagascar. Because lemurs are found in both India and Madagascar – and only in those two places – and because the lemurs are too similar to have evolved independently, the British zoologist Philip Sclater postulated that a now-sunken continent that he called Lemuria had once connected the two places.[28]

Stratfordians also invented ad hoc explanations for things that otherwise could not

be explained in any rational way if the author was born in Stratford in 1564. As one example, when evidence arose that a play with a character named Hamlet had existed by the end of the 1580s, far too early to have been written by Shakspere, they fantasized about the existence of an anonymous play they called ur-Hamlet on which Shakespeare based his play. Since the ur-Hamlet play no longer exists, perhaps it too, like Lemuria, has sunk in the Indian Ocean.

After sunken continents were shown to have been impossible, prominent geologists such as Bailey Willis and Charles Schuchert launched a new ad hoc idea, that of intermittent land bridges to explain how flora and fauna could be so similar on continents so far apart, even though "no independent evidence" supports the idea "that the postulated land bridges ever existed."[29]

What is so odd about these episodes is that American geologists – the very same individuals – who had objected so strongly to the speculative nature of Wegener's theory were now engaging in speculation of their own. Their fantasies about sunken continents and intermittent land bridges show just how powerful the desire to justify beliefs already held can be, and perhaps how justified American geologists had been in adopting such an extremely inductive methodology to defend against that temptation. This episode should also show Oxfordians just how strongly Stratfordians can be expected to continue to defend their existing belief in authorship by the man from Stratford.

The two new theories were also both subjected to unscientific and un-academic attacks by scientists and scholars. Critics of continental drift, for example, continued to attack an outdated version of the theory from the early 1920s rather than the more sophisticated version published in 1928. In 1943, paleontologist George Gaylord Simpson "framed his response on the now anachronistic 1924 Skerl translation of Wegener and ignored du Toit's more recent first-hand work."[30] Critics of the idea of de Vere's authorship followed a similar practice, often criticizing the ideas of Delia Bacon from the 1850s, rather than addressing the most sophisticated evidence in support of de Vere's authorship presented by Charlton Ogburn and others.

Opponents also used spurious arguments against both theories. George Gaylord Simpson, again, argued "that evidence from mammalian evolution did not support drift" at a time when it was already widely accepted that mammals evolved after the time when continental drift had separated most of the continents.[31] Similarly, Stratfordians repeatedly cited the "fact" that de Vere could not have written many of the plays because they had been written after his death in 1604, while knowing full well that the date of composition has not been established for any of the plays.

Supported by fantasies and ad hoc explanations to explain anomalies and by unscientific and un-academic attacks on the new theories, the older theories remained the accepted explanations in their respective intellectual communities.

Regarding continental drift, Oreskes notes that "If the geologists did not agree to a man to accept isthmian links, many of them did." With "faunal homologies . . . removed from the list of arguments in favor of drift," because they could be explained by land bridges, "Wegener's argument was drastically undermined."[32] Acceptance of land bridges "effectively marked the end of active debate over continental drift in the United States."[33] The theory was "officially rejected by the influential American Association of Petroleum Geologists"[34] in 1928, and from that point on, "for the better part of three decades, American geology students were taught that flora and fauna had migrated among ancient continents via narrow, intermittently emergent land bridges."[35]

Observing this situation, Oreskes concludes that continental drift theory was rejected by American geologists not because it lacked an explanation for the mechanics of continental movement, but because Wegener's methodology conflicted so drastically with what they believed was good scientific practice.

> American earth scientists rejected the theory of continental drift not because there was no evidence to support it (there was ample), nor because the scientists who supported it were cranks (they were not), but because the theory, as widely interpreted, violated deeply held methodological beliefs and valued forms of scientific practice. The idea of the motion of continents, the empirical evidence for it, and the mechanical explanations of it . . . have all been corroborated by contemporary earth science. But to accept all these ideas in the 1920s or early 1930s would have forced American geologists to abandon many fundamental aspects of the way *they did* science. This they were not willing to do.[36]

To cite two examples in support of this idea, geologist Rollin Chamberlin noted in 1928 that "if continental drift were true, geologists would have to forget everything which has been learned in the last 70 years and start all over again."[37] "Very naturally," geologist Chester Longwell explained, "we insist on testing this hypothesis with exceptional severity, for its acceptance would necessitate the discarding of theories held so long that they have become almost an integral part of our science."[38] Stratfordians today surely have similar sentiments.

American geologists sought to protect themselves from bias in favor of data supporting existing theories by adhering to an extremely inductive methodology. Yet ironically it was the strength of their adherence to that methodology that led them into a related error – that of rejecting another theory (not other data) because it had been formulated through a methodology that was believed to be flawed. As we will see, the reluctance to abandon long-held beliefs and methodologies – and to blindly reject theories formed and facts discovered under different methodologies – are factors with direct relevance to Stratfordians and cultural theorists in academia today.

Turning to the authorship question, although the weight of academic opinion was opposed to the idea that William Shakespeare was a pseudonym behind which lay the pen of Edward de Vere, some scholars remained open to it. Henry Clay Folger, founder of the Folger Shakespeare Library, was so intrigued by Esther Singleton's novel Shakespearian Fantasias (1930), in which characters from Shakespeare's plays quote poems by Edward de Vere and describe other characters using words that were actually used to describe de Vere, that he purchased a dozen copies and sent them out to major players in the field of Shakespearean research. He also purchased the original manuscript, which is now part of the Folger Library's collection.

Although Oxfordian theory was not officially rejected by an academic body in the 1920s as continental drift had been, it was rejected just as definitively. Most scholars did not take the authorship question seriously because for them Shakspere's author-ship had been confirmed by statements in the First Folio, and many were not even aware that de Vere had been proposed as a candidate for authorship.

Statements by directors of the Folger Library who succeeded Henry Folger are indicative of how the authorship issue was viewed within academia. Louis B. Wright, Director of the Folger Library, characterized those who doubt authorship by the man from Stratford as

> 'disciples of cults' that 'have all the fervor of religion,' prey to 'emotion that sweeps aside the intellectual appraisal of facts, chronology and the laws of evidence.' They are 'fantastic sectarians' who 'rail on disbelievers and con-demn other cultists as fools and knaves,' and 'who welcome a new convert to their beliefs with the enthusiasm accorded a repentant sinner at a Holy Rollers' revival,' while 'a fog of gloom envelops them.' They have developed a 'neurosis . . . that may account for an unhappy truculence that sometimes makes them unwelcome in polite company.' Indeed, 'one gets the impression that they would gladly restore the faggot and the stake for infidels from their particular orthodoxy.'[39]

Showing just how little has changed within academia since Wright published those comments in the The Virginia Quarterly Review (VQR) in 1959, the VQR selected Wright's article as one of only four from the 1950s included in *We Write for Our Own Time: Selected Essays from 75 Years of The Virginia Quarterly Review*,[40] published in 2000. Given the viciousness of the characterizations of those doubting authorship by the man from Stratford by Wright and other leading academics, it is not surprising that almost all English professors continue to teach their students that Shakspere wrote Shakespeare's works whether they believe that to be the case or not.

Continental Drift Completed and Accepted

Development of the two theories continued under the radar for several decades after they were rejected. Then, in the 1960s and 1970s, their paths diverged. The scientific community accepted the idea of continental movement but literary scholars continued to reject the idea that de Vere had written Shakespeare's works. One key reason for the different outcomes was differences in the progress of the theories' development.

Even before continental drift had been formally rejected, technological advances outside geology – such as the harnessing of electricity and the invention of the internal combustion engine – began to give geologists new technical capabilities for examining geological formations. New tools, including sonar developed during the Second World War, had enabled oceanographers to map the sea bed for the first time, revealing the existence of the mid-Atlantic and Java trenches and chains of volcanoes running through the centers of several other oceans. Other tools enabled scientists to determine that the sea floor was expanding or spreading on either side of the undersea mountain chains. Still others, such as David Christian, established the key point that "the uppermost layer of the earth . . . consists of a number of rigid plates, like a cracked eggshell. . . . [which] move over a layer of softer materials just below them."[41]

American geologist Harry Hess, in 1962, was the first person to begin to put these and other facts together in a coherent explanation of the mechanics of continental movement. That explanation, which became known as plate tectonics, describes how

> Lava, seeping up through cracks that ran through most of the major ocean systems, was creating new seafloor. . . . As new oceanic crust was formed, it reared up in huge ridges of basalt . . . [that] acted like a wedge, driving apart seafloor that already existed. As a result, some oceans, such as the Atlantic, appeared to be widening.[42] . . . In other words, it is the heat of the earth's interior that provides the power needed to move great plates of matter about the surface of the earth.[43]

Plate tectonics thus resolved several conflicts that had blocked acceptance of continental drift. Continents did not need to push their way through rigid ocean seafloors, nor did they drift at random like icebergs. Rather, plates containing both continents and oceans were pushed apart by forces within the earth and carried by convection currents in the heavier but softer material on which the plates rested. One of the principal places of seafloor spreading was the Java Trench in the Indian Ocean, which split what is now Madagascar, with its lemurs, toward the west, and what is now India, with its lemurs, to the east.

Here, then, was an explanation of the mechanics powerful enough to move

continents and to fill the hole that had existed at the core of the theory of continental drift.

Oxfordian theory also continued to develop after it was rejected by academia in the 1920s. One line of research has documented just how doubtful the evidence supporting authorship by the man from Stratford really is. Another line has established the facts of Edward de Vere's life and the tightness of the correspondences between it and Shakespeare's works. And yet, even with significant advances in knowledge in those two areas, the academic community remains firm in its belief that the man from Stratford wrote Shakespeare's works and that de Vere did not.

Part of the justification for their belief is that the "how" and "why" questions that Looney pointedly did not address have not yet been definitively answered. The traditional explanation is that de Vere could not acknowledge authorship of his literary works because of his status as a courtier. In addition, he and others would have wanted his authorship hidden because of the portrayal and ridicule in his works of prominent personages in the court and government. Hiding his authorship would make identification of the people portrayed in them less likely.

There is a lot to be said for this explanation, and practically all Oxfordians agree that these factors play a significant role in the explanation for why de Vere's authorship was hidden. However, a substantial minority of Oxfordians believe that explanation is not emotionally weighty enough to account for the shame that de Vere repeatedly expresses in the Sonnets, or explain why the effort to hide his authorship continued for decades after the deaths of de Vere and those ridiculed in the plays. That explanation also does not adequately explain how such an extraordinary effort could have been carried out successfully. If they are right, the hole at the core of Oxfordian theory remains unfilled.

The incompleteness of Looney's theory can be compared not only with the incompleteness of Wegener's theory, as already noted, but also with Charles Darwin's theory of the origin of species through natural selection. All three theories generated widespread interest and comment when they were introduced, yet none was immediately accepted as fact in their original form because all were incomplete: all three lacked an explanation for the mechanics of how they worked.

Two of the theories – continental drift and evolution through natural selection – became widely accepted as fact only after a mechanics explaining their processes were discovered and developed to complete them. Continental movement, as noted, was not accepted until it was completed by the mechanics explained in plate tectonics in the 1970s. Darwin's theory of natural selection was not widely accepted as fact until the formulation of population genetics in the 1920s, which explained the mechanics of how traits selected by the environment were passed on to succeeding generations. The completed theory of evolution is now known as The New Synthesis.

Oxfordian theory remains unaccepted by academia in part because the second phase in the development of the theory has not yet taken place. Unlike plate tectonics and the New Synthesis, a gaping hole remains at the heart of Oxfordian theory because Oxfordians themselves have not yet united behind an explanation for the motives of those involved in hiding de Vere's authorship or a mechanics to explain how his authorship could have been successfully hidden.

Some of those not satisfied by the traditional explanation for why de Vere hid his authorship have proposed an alternative or supplementary explanation, the so-called Prince Tudor (PT) theory. Proponents of the theory believe that it is in accordance with the facts revealed in historical documents and by Oxford himself in his plays and poems, especially the Sonnets. Others, however, believe that this thesis is too speculative or simply incorrect.

The PT explanation centers around the idea that the effort to hide de Vere's authorship was related to his sexual involvement, in some manner, in the succession to Queen Elizabeth. If so, the sexual and even incestuous aspects of the situation would have been emotionally weighty enough to account for the shame that de Vere describes in the Sonnets. The potential threat to King James's reign by a natural descendant of Elizabeth sired by de Vere – the Earl of Southampton – would have provided strong political reasons for the use of state power to hide those facts throughout James's reign. That de Vere inserted veiled references to his liaison with the queen and the birth and status of Southampton into his plays and poems provides a motive for the use of state power to hide his authorship throughout the Jacobean/Stuart era. The case for this explanation has been made most powerfully by Hank Whittemore and Charles Beauclerk.[44]

At the Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship conference in 2014, I presented a paper on the use of state power to explain the mechanics of the effort to hide de Vere's authorship. In that presentation I urged the audience to keep an open mind about the Prince Tudor theory until a fuller examination of it has been undertaken. That effort has already begun, with Peter Rush's forthcoming book, Hidden in Plain Sight reaffirming and extending Whittemore's insights in The Monument that the Sonnets recount the story of the Earl of Southampton's imprisonment after the Essex Rebellion and provide justification for concluding that he was the son of Edward de Vere and the queen. The following table shows one way Oxfordian theory might be completed.

Issue under Examination	Initial Version of New Theory		Mechanics/Motivating Force Added Later		Complete Theory
Origin of species	Natural selection: Charles Darwin	+	Population genetics: Th. Dobzansky, G. Simpson, E. Mayr	=	New Synthesis
Features of earth's crust	Continental drift: Alfred Wegener	+	Sea floor spreading and movement of plates rather than continents per se: H. Hess, W. Menard	=	Plate Tectonics
Authorship of works attributed to Shakespeare	Edward de Vere as author: J. Thomas Looney	+	Veiled references to Southampton's royal origins in de Vere's works is the motive for hiding his authorship; use of state power explains the mechanics: Percy Allen, Hank Whittemore, others	=	Oxfordian Theory Completed

Two phase introduction of three theories.

We now turn to the second reason why continental drift has been accepted and Oxfordian theory hasn't: changes in the dominant methodologies in each area since the 1920s. In short, the methodology of geologists became more favorable to the acceptance of continental drift, while the methodology of literary criticism moved in a direction unfavorable to the Shakespeare authorship question.

A case will be made here that the critical event leading to acceptance of the idea of continental movement was not the formation of a mechanics that explained how that movement was possible but rather the change in methodology that preceded the formation of the mechanics. Neither the investigations that led to the formulation of the new theory nor geologists' acceptance of it would have been possible without the prior movement away from the overly restrictive inductive methodology that had led to rejection of Wegener's theory.

The new methodology was initially resisted by most geologists because they attributed their success in mapping the geological terrain of North America to their inductive methodology. Those few who supported the new practices faced the question of how to move to them before they had proved themselves, when the methodology that supported them had not yet been formulated, and when current methodology and bureaucratic pressures pushed against them.

Understanding the process through which geologists succeeded in breaking free of the older methodology and the bureaucratic supports for it is a story with some relevance for literary scholars who recognize the importance of academic consideration of the Shakespeare authorship question but who face methodological constraints and institutional pressures against it.

The new technical capabilities spurred a change from geology to geophysics, from a methodology of direct observation of geological formations in their original physical surroundings, to one emphasizing instrumental determinations and calculations of physical property of the earth in laboratories. This change was reflected in the type of data considered most relevant, the older being "observations described in words or pictures, the newer of numerical data," and in the tools used. "The tools of the continental drift debate were hammers, hand-lenses, and field notebooks; those of the plate tectonics revolution seismographs, magnetometers, and computers," according to Oreskes.[45]

Clashes occurred between those who were quicker to adopt the newer practices and those who adhered to the older methods. Oreskes notes that each group, "affirmed the values and strengths of its chosen methodological approach and implicitly or explicitly denied the values and strengths of others. Laboratory scientists promoted exactitude, precision, and control; field geologists promoted authenticity, accuracy, and completeness."[46] Most geophysicists, she observes, "assumed that geologists were simply mistaken, while geologists either ignored geophysics or lived uncomfortably with the contradictions. As time went on, each side became increasingly frustrated with the other."[47]

At the same time, as the value of the newer geophysical practices became better known, more geologists began to incorporate them into their own work. They did so, however, to reach goals they already held, including that of showing the impossibility of continental movement. In doing so they were, in their own eyes, not abandoning the older practices but merely adding more quantitative practice to it. As Oreskes recounts, geologists "had never argued for laboratory methods as a replacement for field geology. They saw it as a complement to it."[48]

Yet that step of using the newer practices alongside the older proved fatal to the older methodology. At some point a line was crossed, and geologists began to give preference to data produced by the new geophysical practices even when it conflicted with data from their own field.

These changes in geologists' practices mirrored the change in methodology occurring in the natural sciences more generally. As formulated by Karl Popper in the 1940s, science progresses through a series of "conjectures and refutations."[49] Conjectures – scientific theories or informed guesses – are proposed, and attempts made to refute them. The more critical tests a theory passes, the more justified scientists are

in relying on it. In this methodology the place for intuitive leaps in thinking comes at the beginning of the process, not the end as in the geologists' inductive method. The geologists' fear that scientists would be tempted to cherry-pick data to prove theories formulated in advance of investigations is avoided by Popper's insistence that investigations should attempt to disprove conjectures rather than support them.

In sum, the older inductive methodology in which geologists' activities had been defined by visible geological outcrops, had been replaced by the newer deductive and theoretical methodology necessary to examine features often no longer visible with the naked eye. This change took place long before the formation of plate tectonics theory and was a necessary precursor to it.

Although most prominent geologists initially resisted changes to practices and methodology, the transition to them was helped immensely by a small number of senior geologists who publicly acknowledged that the older practices were outdated. The most prominent example is that of William Bowie, the leader of American geodesy and the namesake of the American Geophysical Union's annual William Bowie Medal. Bowie was "the man who saw the significance of these developments most clearly" and who recognized that "everything he had believed was being challenged."[50]

At the 1936 American Geological Union General Assembly, Bowie publicly stated that the Pratt model of isostasy – an idea that he had spent his career establishing as fact and that formed the single strongest piece of evidence cited against the possibility of continental movement – could no longer be regarded as proven. He acknowledged that "what he had 'proved' twenty-five years before was now being unproved," and he raised "once again the question of the Wegener hypothesis: . . . Ten years after he had called continental drift impossible, William Bowie now suggested" that not only was it possible, but that "the geodeists would be the ones to prove it."[51]

The courage and dedication to truth that Bowie showed in publicly acknowledging that his life's work had become outdated might serve as a model for senior Stratfordians today.

Changes in the Methodology of Literary Criticism

It would be pleasing to say that literary scholars seriously investigated the merits of Edward de Vere's authorship of Shakespeare's works before rejecting the idea in the 1920s and 1930s. It would also be pleasing to describe how the methodology of literary criticism evolved in ways more favorable to the authorship question since then. Unfortunately, neither happened. Since the middle of the twentieth century the methodology of literary criticism has evolved in ways increasingly unreceptive to consideration of the Shakespeare authorship question and Edward de Vere's part in it.

At the time Looney introduced the idea of de Vere's authorship, literary criticism consisted of two complementary approaches to the study of literature. One approach sought to explain the significance of works of literature by considering them as works of art important in themselves. Practitioners of this approach, who we could call literary connoisseurs, sought to understand and demonstrate the technical perfection or artistic unity of a work. They helped readers understand the genre, literary devices and rhetorical figures used, and express a judgment about how successfully the author used them.

The other approach sought appreciation of works of literature through knowledge of the life and times of their authors. We might call practitioners of this approach literary historians. Their work is of greater relevance for the Shakespeare authorship question because they seek to understand the author's intentions and how he or she was influenced by the political, economic, social and literary currents of his or her society. Because authors lived and worked in times different from our own, the general reader can benefit from the expert knowledge of the author's life and times that literary scholars bring to the discussion.

Given what was to come, it is important to emphasize that the two approaches are two sides of one methodological coin, the coin being the humanist tradition of literary criticism. In that tradition, professor Jonathan Culler explains,

> the task was the interpretation of literary works as the achievements of their authors, and the main justification for studying literature was the special value of great works: their complexity, their beauty, their insight, their universality, and their potential benefits to the reader.[52]

The two approaches were in rough balance in the middle of the twentieth century – a balance that was not to last long because the humanistic tradition itself began to lose favor around this time with the academic and scholarly world. By the last few decades of the twentieth century, that tradition – one not unfavorable in itself to consideration of the Shakespeare authorship question – was largely replaced by a new methodology that does not value close readings of literary works and in which the intentions of the author are largely irrelevant.

One of the first developments in the transformation of literary criticism came from within the historical approach – the change in emphasis from seeking to understand those aspects of an author's society that he consciously and purposely sought to portray in his works to what he unconsciously revealed about it. It is a change in focus from what Lionel Trilling identifies in The Liberal Imagination as "the explicit statements that a people makes through its art . . ."[53] to that of "a culture's hum and buzz of implication . . . the whole evanescent context in which its explicit statements are made. It is that part of a culture which is made up of half-uttered or unuttered or unutterable expressions of value."[54]

Literary scholars can bring expert knowledge to help readers "to reconstruct the original context of production (the circumstances and intentions of the author and the meanings a text might have had for its original readers)," and to "expose the unexamined assumptions on which a text may rely (political, sexual, philosophical, linguistic)."[55]

In seeking to "expose the unexamined assumptions" of an author, we have reached what W. K. Wimsatt and Monroe Beardsley called "the intentional fallacy," in which "the design or intention of the author is neither available nor desirable as a standard for judging the success of a work of literary art."[56] "The meaning of a work is not what the writer had in mind at some moment during composition of the work, or what the writer thinks the work means after it is finished," Culler explains, "but rather what he or she succeeded in embodying in the work."[57] Thus, a fuller examination of works of literature is required, one that examines both the conscious and unconscious results of the author's efforts.

Another development came from within the artistic approach to the study of literature. After the heyday of The New Criticism, some critics adopted its practice of separating works of literature from their authors, but did so not in order to examine them as works of art as the New Critics did, but to examine their political and social content unencumbered by the intentions of the author – exactly those aspects of the work that The New Critics had sought to get away from by isolating works from their authors and history.

With both approaches focused on the contents of the work of literature rather than the author, there was, some thought, no need to consider the author at all. Why not eliminate consideration of him or her completely in order to focus directly on the contents without distinguishing between its intentional or unintentional origin? With this line of thinking we have reached what Roland Barthes called "the death of the author."

The approach of examining works of literature in isolation from consideration of their authors is obviously not one favorable to the Shakespeare authorship question. We have already seen attempts to cut off consideration of the strongest type of support for the idea of de Vere's authorship – the correspondences between his life and Shakespeare's works – by denying the validity of circumstantial evidence. We now see another tactic that would have the same effect: that of denying the importance of the author and thus the importance of any linkages between de Vere's life and Shakespeare's works.

Oxfordians have speculated among themselves for years about the extent to which the "death of the author" approach to literary theory arose as a response to the mismatch between Shakspere's life and Shakespeare's works. It is perhaps not unreasonable to consider the extent to which literary scholars, convinced that the man

from Stratford was Shakespeare the writer, deliberately overstated "the death of the author" as a way of preserving their belief in his authorship.

There is yet one more significant change to consider: the change from studying works of literature through the history of their times, to studying societies and cultures through works of literature. In this methodology, literary criticism is no longer an independent field of study, but one that has been largely subsumed as a subfield within the larger subject of Cultural Studies.

Rather than being the ends to be studied, literary works have become merely one means through which non-literary subjects are studied. Cultural theorists regard literary works of all types as mere cultural artifacts to be mined for data about the society from which they arose in the same manner that advertising or other anonymously-written documents are examined. Considering works of literature as works of art important in themselves – the work of literary connoisseurs – has little place in this methodology, and has largely ended within academia. Gone is any sense that literature has something meaningful to say about the larger aspects of what it means to live as human beings on planet earth. The focus is now on what specific works can tell cultural researchers about specific political, economic, social or sexual practices in the culture from which they arose.

Let us be clear that when the so-called "death of the author" is discussed, what is also implied is the death of literary criticism itself. The standard anthology in the field, The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism, declares that

> Literary texts, like other artworks, are neither more nor less important than any other cultural artifact or practice. Keeping the emphasis on how cultural meanings are produced, circulated and consumed, the investigator will focus on art or literature insofar as such works connect with broader social factors, not because they possess some intrinsic interest or special aesthetic value.[58]

The introduction to another widely used text, Cultural Studies, specifies that "although there is no prohibition against close textual readings in cultural studies, they are also not required."[59] Literature, Jonathan Culler explains, can be mined for information about cultural issues unrelated to any consideration of the intentions of the author.

> Interpreting *Hamlet* is, among other things, a matter of deciding whether it should be read as talking about, say, the problems of Danish princes, or the dilemmas of men of the Renaissance experiencing changes in the conception of the self, or relations between men and their mothers in general, or the question of how representations (including literary ones) affect the problem of making sense of our experiences.[60]

In all of these potential "interpretations," the play is treated as just another cultural artifact, in which what is most special about it – that it was created by a specific human being for a specific purpose or purposes – is intentionally ignored.

The Department of Literature still exists on university campuses today, but often it functions as a Department of Cultural Studies. As professor James Seaton observes, "in some of the most influential academic centers literary criticism has been replaced by cultural studies."[61] The situation is not that cultural studies courses are taught alongside literature courses in those departments. It is not even that cultural studies have influenced the methodology of literary criticism to include new factors in literary criticism. It is, rather, that a take-over has occurred in which there appears to be little room left for the traditional humanistic approach to literary studies. Seaton notes that "From the viewpoint . . . of influential English graduate programs, prestigious academic journals, authoritative anthologies of criticism, and the most prominent academic theorists, the humanistic tradition in literary criticism seems to be invisible."[62]

As one example, the editors of *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism* could not find much space in their 2,785-page volume for the giants of traditional humanistic literary criticism in the twentieth century. Lionel Trilling, for instance, is not represented at all, and Edmund Wilson is represented only by one unrepresentative essay, even though the book claims to "present a staggeringly varied collection of the most influential critical statements from the classical era to the present day."[63]

To sum up, the humanistic tradition of the study of literature has been replaced by one unreceptive to the authorship question. The methodology of seeking correspondences between events and characters in literary works and events and people in the life of a purported author has little resonance in an environment in which the author is regarded as an outmoded "construct" that is bypassed in favor of cultural forces which determine the content of literary works. Simply put, the authorship question is not one that most literary scholars find attractive in the current environment.

Methodology and the Future of Oxfordian Theory

When I began drafting this paper I had expected to find that the incompleteness of the two theories was the principal reason they had been rejected in the 1920s, and that the completion of the scientific theory and the continuing non-completion of the literary one explained the difference in their fate. However, as disconcerting as the incompleteness of Oxfordian theory may be for many Oxfordians, I have concluded that it is only a contributing factor to the theory's failure to gain traction within academia.

It now appears the most important factor affecting acceptance or rejection of new

theories is that of methodology, that of the process through which scientific or academic communities pursue new knowledge and interpret and judge new ideas and data. Several conclusions about the critical nature of methodology can be drawn from this paper that account for academia's continuing rejection of the Shakespeare authorship question.

First, methodologies differ from field to field and must be suited to the nature of the objects being examined and the explanations being sought. For historical studies, the appropriate methodology is the "adductive reasoning" explained by historian David H. Fischer that asks open-ended questions and answers them in the form of reasoned argument. For literary criticism, the appropriate methodology is one that recognizes the two distinctive features of works of literature: that they are unique and so deserve careful study in themselves as works of art, and they are produced by specific individuals for specific reasons at specific points in time, so awareness of the author's intentions and the details of his life and times will increase our understanding of them. The Shakespeare authorship question, being a study of the historical aspects of the origin of works of literature, will best be studied through a methodology blending history and literary criticism.

Second, focus must remain on substantive accomplishments, not on adherence to any given methodology. Facts, data and theories must be considered separately from the methodology in place when they were discovered. Not doing so was the mistake made by American geologists when they rejected Wegener's theory, and it is a mistake being made by literary scholars who reject findings by Oxfordians today.

Third, the right type of data must be selected and it must be judged objectively. Data cannot be invented, but must be found. Inventing new data in the absence of facts was the flaw in the creation of the ideas of sunken continents, land bridges, and the play *ur-Hamlet*. Ad hoc explanations are not legitimate explanations.

And fourth, circumstantial evidence is a legitimate form of evidence in historical investigations, just as it is in courtrooms. Correspondences between events and characters in literary works ascribed to a pen name and similar events and people in the life of a purported author are legitimate grounds for establishing authorship.

If the study of literature is to occur under a new methodology, it must take place outside the dominion of and domination by Cultural Studies. Because the two fields study different subjects they require different methodologies, and thus need to be housed in different departments dedicated to maintaining high standards in their respective methodological areas.

In the effort to separate literary studies from cultural studies, it could be the case that the authorship question will be the issue that triggers changes in the broader methodology of literary criticism. The difficulty of the effort to reconcile the life of the

man from Stratford and the works of Shakespeare could be the catalyst leading to the return of genuine literature programs in our universities.

Once truly independent literary studies departments are established or re-established, safe havens will exist for the methodology of literary studies. In them, literary scholars will be free to cultivate what one historian describes as "the ability to enter imaginatively into the life of a society remote in time or place, and produce a plausible explanation of why its inhabitants thought and behaved as they did."[64] Applying this ability to the study of literature, they will seek to step outside their own personal experiences, to see the world as the author saw it in another time and place and to understand what he or she had to say about it.

A methodology of literary criticism that is able "to make the great works of literature more consequentially available not only to academics but to general readers without any special intellectual equipment beyond the educated good sense of their time,"[65] as James Seaton phrased it, is one in which the study of the Shakespeare authorship question would finally receive a fair hearing.
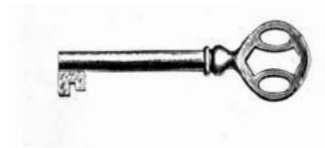
Works Cited

Continental Drift

Christian, David. *Maps of Time: An Introduction to Big History*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013.

Du Toit, Alexander L. *Our Wandering Continents: An Hypothesis of Continental Drifting*. Edinburgh and London: Oliver and Boyd, 1937.

Oreskes, Naomi. *The Rejection of Continental Drift: Theory and Method in American Earth Sciences*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Popper, Karl. *Conjectures and Refutations*. New York: Basic Books, 1962.

Wegener, Alfred. *The Origin of Continents and Oceans*. Translated by John Biram. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1966.

Literary Criticism

Culler, Jonathan. *Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Elliott, H. J. *History in the Making*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012.

Fischer, David Hackett. *Historians' Fallacies: Toward a Logic of Historical Thought*. New York: HarperCollins, 1970.

Fish, Stanley. *Save the World On Your Own Time*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Seaton, James. *Literary Criticism from Plato to Postmodernism: the humanistic alternative*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014.

Trilling, Lionel. *The Liberal Imagination: Essays on Literature and Society*. New York: New York Review Books, 2008. [reprint of the 1950 edition]

Wimsatt, William K. Jr. and Monroe C. Beardsley. "Intentional Fallacy," [1946, revised in 1954], from <letras.cabaladada.org/letras/intentional_fallacy.pdf> March 2015.

The Shakespeare Authorship Question

Looney, J. Thomas. *"Shakespeare" Identified*. London: Cecil Palmer, 1920.

——— "The Earl of Oxford as 'Shakespeare: New Evidence." *The Golden Hind*, Vol.

1, No. 1, October, 1922, p. 23-30.

Ogburn, Charlton. *The Mysterious William Shakespeare*. McLean, VA: EPM Publications, Inc., 1992.

Ward, Colonel B. R. "The Shining Possibilities of Anne Vavasour." *The Shakespeare Pictorial*, September, 1931, p. 148.

Wright, Louis Booker. "The Anti-Shakespeare Industry and the Growth of Cults." *The Virginia Quarterly Review*, Vol. 35, No. 2 (Spring 1959). Reprinted in Alexander Burnham (editor). *We Write for Our Own Time: Selected Essays from 75 Years of the Virginia Quarterly Review*, pp. 105-115. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia. 2000.

Notes

1   Naomi Oreskes, *The Rejection of Continental Drift*, p. 5.

2   Oreskes, Rejection, p. 62.

3   J. Thomas Looney, *"Shakespeare" Identified*, p. 151.

4   Looney, Identified, p. 493.

5   Looney, *The Golden Hind*, Vol. 1/1, p. 30.

6   Oreskes, Rejection, p. 57. Internal quote is from Alfred Wegener, *The Origin of Continents and Oceans*, p. 76.

7   Looney, Identified, p. 80.

8   Looney, Identified, p. 174.

9   Looney, Identified, p. 175.

10   Charlton Ogburn, *The Mysterious William Shakespeare*, p. 198.

11   Oreskes, Rejection, p.125.

12   B. R. Ward, *The Shakespeare Pictorial*, p. 148.

13   Oreskes, Rejection, p. 6.

14   Oreskes, Rejection, p. 313.

15   Oreskes, Rejection, p. 313, 316.

16   Oreskes, Rejection, p. 6.

17   Oreskes, Rejection, p. 314.

18   Oreskes, Rejection, 126.

19   Oreskes, Rejection, p. 145.

20   Oreskes, Rejection, p. 139.

21   Oreskes, Rejection, p. 124-126.

22   Oreskes, Rejection, p. 153.

23   Oreskes, Rejection, p. 126.

24   Oreskes, Rejection, p. 154.

25   Oreskes, Rejection, p. 154.

26   Looney, *The Golden Hind*, p. 23, 24.

27   David Hackett Fischer, *Historians' Fallacies*, p. xx and 4.

28   Oreskes, Rejection, p.56-57.

29   Oreskes, Rejection, p. 218.

30   Oreskes, Rejection, p. 295.

31   Oreskes, Rejection, p. 295.

32   Oreskes, Rejection, p. 218.

33   Oreskes, Rejection, p. 218.

34   David Christian, *Maps of Time*, p. 69.

35   Oreskes, Rejection, p. 218.

36   Oreskes, Rejection, p. 6.

37   Oreskes, Rejection, p. 313.

38   Oreskes, Rejection, p. 156.

39   Louis Booker Wright, "The Anti-Shakespeare Industry and the Growth of
        Cults," quoted in Charlton Ogburn, *The Mysterious William Shakespeare*, p. 154.

40   Alexander Burnham (editor), *We Write for Our Own Time: Selected Essays from
        75 Years of The Virginia Quarterly Review.* Charlottesville: University Press of
        Virginia, 2000, pp. 105-115.

41   Christian, Maps, p. 71.

42   Christian, Maps, p. 70.

43   Christian, Maps, p. 71.

44   See, for instance, Hank Whittemore's *The Monument* (2005) and Charles Beau-
        clerk's *Shakespeare's Lost Kingdom* (2010).

45   Oreskes, Rejection, p. 275.

46   Oreskes, Rejection, p. 290.

47   Oreskes, Rejection, p. 279.

48   Oreskes, Rejection, p. 289.

49   Popper explains this method most completely in *Conjectures and Refutations*.
        (New York: Basic Books, 1962, pp. vii, 37, 46, 55 and 69-70.)

50   Oreskes, Rejection, p. 260.

51   Oreskes, Rejection, p. 260-261.

52   Jonathan Culler, *Literary Theory*, p. 47.

53   Lionel Trilling, *The Liberal Imagination*, p. 205.

54   Trilling, Imagination, p. 206-207

55   Culler, Literary Theory, p. 68-69.

56   William K. Wimsatt, Jr., and Monroe C. Beardsley, "Intentional Fallacy," p. 1.

57   Culler, Literary Theory, p. 67.

58   Vincent B. Letich (General Editor), *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism, 2nd edition.* New York: Norton, 2010, p. 2478. Quoted in James Seaton, Literary Criticism from Plato to Postmodernism, p. 20.

59   Lawrence Grossberg, Cary Nelson, and Paula Treichler (eds.) *Cultural Studies* (New York: Routledge, 1992, 2. 4. Quoted in Jonathan Culler, Literary Theory, p. 50.

60   Culler, *Literary Theory*, p. 33.

61   James Seaton, *Literary Criticism from Plato to Postmodernism*, p. 1.

62   Seaton, *Literary Criticism*, p. 6-7.

63   Letich (General Editor), *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism, 2nd edition.* New York: Norton, 2010, p. 2478. Quoted in Seaton, Literary Criticism from Plato to Postmodernism, p. 20.

64   H. J. Elliott, *History in the Making*, p. xi.

65   Seaton, *Literary Criticism*, p. 10.

My Oxfordian Bookshelf

A Question of Will
by Lynne Kositsky

To my knowledge, *A Queastion of Will* is the only book for younger readers ever written on the Shakespeare Authorship Question. Published in 2000, *A Question of Will*, stands far above its Stratfordian competition such as *William Shakespeare* in the Usborne Young Reading series (2008).

Surprisingly, it was never reviewed by an Oxfordian publication. This is a real shame because changing minds about William of Stratford and Edward de Vere and the relationship of each to the plays and poems of Shakespeare has been, and will continue to be, a long-term project. It should start in high school where, coincidentally, this book begins.

Kositsky's main character, Perin Willoughby – known through most of the novel as Willow – is also the narrator. The premise of the book is that she is a Canadian girl, attending school in England. While on a school trip to the restored Globe theatre in London, she slides backward through time to 1595. Much of the action takes place in and around London's first playhouse, the Theatre. Willow addresses the first boy she encounters:

This new column for *The Oxfordian* examines an overlooked or otherwise forgotten book that deals with the seventeenth Earl of Oxford or issues surrounding the authorship question. By definition, books featured here will not be newly-published. Reviews of new Oxfordian publications will continue to be featured by *Brief Chronicles* and the *Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter*. Any reader who would like to write an appreciation of a book sitting on their own Oxfordian bookshelf, is invited to contact the editor and propose a title. This issue, Chris Pannell examines *A Question of Will* by Lynne Kositsky, published by Roussan Publishers, in Montreal.

> "'Scuse me," I whispered, mouse-like, before he drifted out of range. He made a fed-up sound like chalk squeaking, and stopped a second time.
>
> "Could you tell me the way to the Globe?" Sheez how dumb could I get? Here I was in the middle of history somewhere, still one rose short of

> a bouquet, and trying to find my way to a playhouse that maybe didn't even exist yet. In fact, everything was so weird, I couldn't even be sure I was in England.
>
> "The Globe?" Not a flicker of understanding lit up those baby blues. "Yes, you know, Shakespeare's theatre."
>
> He must have understood that at least, cos suddenly he was making noises like a pop can exploding. "Will Shakspere, you mean? Certainly, certainly; you'll find him at the Theatre."
>
> Heavenly creatures, wasn't that just what I'd asked him in the first place?
>
> (Kositsky 14-15)

From this interplay between the modern and Elizabethan world, comes a great deal of the novel's energy and tension. Willow represents the modern mind in the sixteenth century, yet her vivacious and infectious narrative transforms this 'fish-out-of-water' story into much more than the question of how will she get back to her own time. She manages, against perilous odds, to thrive by means of her intelligence, her 20th century knowledge of business and human relations, and a little psychology.

Travelling in disguise as a boy, she sees her share of unwanted romantic attention from de Vere's daughter Bridget. She encounters Will Shakspere and quickly falls into the role of his servant. She also becomes part of the acting company, the Lord Chamberlain's Men, largely on the strength of four years of dance lessons and the critically important fact that she can read. She experiences her share of bullying. She observes discrimination against Jews, the ingrained misogyny of the times, and the easy way in which the upper classes will take whatever they want from their social inferiors:

> But the lady didn't care one iota. She abandoned [Pyke] and Blossom in the hall, and, as soon as we were out of sight, she tucked up to me like I was an orange, squeezing herself against my skinny body like she was trying to extract juice from me (46).

The hidden joy of this book is the way the language pops in such passages. Kositsky handles the Elizabethan idiom very well. In the early pages, Willow must very quickly figure it out too: what she calls "the lacy language." We are also engaged by the very reasonable idea that some of Willow's twentieth-century speech will rub off on those closest to her.

For many things, she relies on her mentor and older-boy guardian, John Pyke (whom she quickly dubs The Pykester). Thinking like an entrepreneur, Willow convinces Pyke they can overcome their chronic poverty by establishing a business to sell what we would recognize as French fries during performances at the Theatre.

"Let us go via Cheapside," I advised, the doggam puppy gnawing on my shoes like they were chew toys. I gave her a sneaky kick when John Pyke wasn't looking, and she bared her teeth at me. "That way, if you've got some cash, we can buy some potatoes, and start frying them up for the spectators."

"Sure thing," replied my friend, for the umpteenth time that week. Another apprentice, a little prig named Thomas, bent his head our way before getting on with his work. I could have sworn he was listening.

And I'd have to warn John Pyke about tongue-tickling a phrase to death. "Say OK Pykster." He neatly obliged. "Good stuff," I replied. "Let's go" (41).

The sights and smells of London are vivid. Willow's difficulties of dressing as a boy and hiding her body in the close confines of her shared bed are done well enough to make the reader squirm.

Of particular interest to Oxfordians will be Kositsky's portrait of Edward de Vere, who appears several times in the book.

I was still majorly puzzled when I thought of Vere, cos although he was obviously immensely popular with the crowd, and though John Pyke had given him a good say-so, he remained a sinister mystery to me. I thought back, remembering his visit to the Theatre. Dark, stooped and inscrutable, he hung out in the gallery like a Mafia boss. I was sure that he, not my blockhead master, had to be the brains, the man behind any plot, and I only prayed it didn't involve killing anyone (40).

Twice Willow has to be the go-between, ferrying a play manuscript from de Vere's residence to Shakspere. On another occasion she meets de Vere in her room, the room she shares with Will Shakspere:

As I reached our bed-chamber, I spied the faint flicker of light within. Had our landlady kindly left a candle to light our way, or was some dude loitering there, waiting to have a word with Shakspere? Only one way to find out. I trickled open the door.

Vere. Verily. Another of the brown paper packages was in his hand. Lounging on the bed, wrinkling his nose like he smelled a bad, bad smell. Which, this being Shakspere's room, he did.

"Ah, Willow," was all he said, but he mouthed my name, sadly, slowly, and the air squirted out of me like toothpaste from a tube. My scrumptious victory in the Theatre crashed and burned. As usual, I was a flop.

"Yes sir? Perhaps I offended you in some way with my performance?"

"No child, not in the least; your portrayal was more than passable, though I never understand our custom of following a tragedy as painful and

poignant as that of *Romeo and Juliet* with a prancing jig. Think of the message Willow, the research and the countless hours that contribute to the creation of such a work."
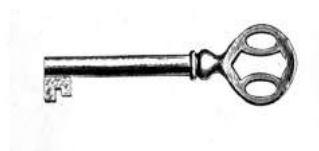
Wow! He'd admitted it. Or as good as. Hinted he was the playwright. Now I was almost positive he'd scribbled this play, and all the others too.
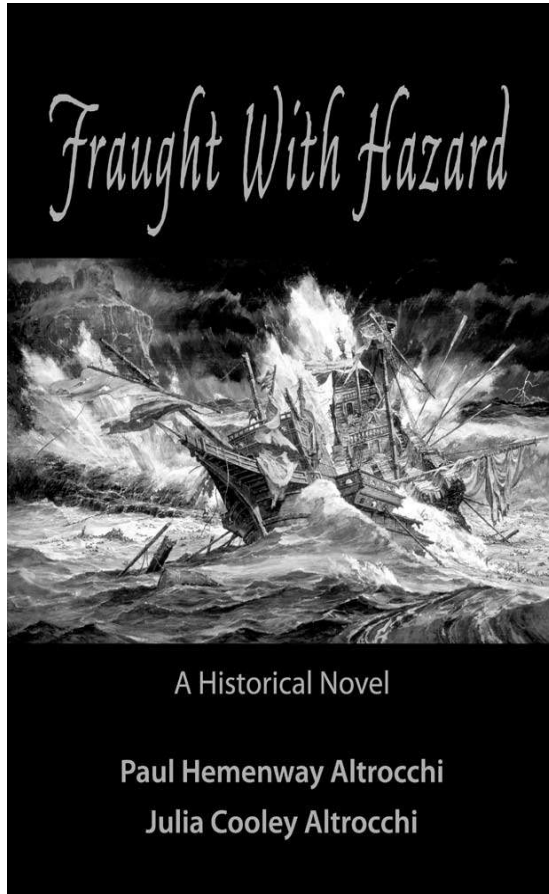
(66-67)

Willow's involvement with the authorship question begins when she hears – and becomes fed-up hearing – a classmate in her 20th century school arguing with their Stratfordian teacher about who wrote the plays. As early as page two, the students are expressing their frustration with studying *Macbeth*, and Willow begins as at least an agnostic on the question of authorship. Through her experience in the past – and because at a very early point, she has been thrust into a stage role, by Burbage – she comes to a much deeper understanding of many aspects of the plays.

Lastly, the book succeeds because its dramatization of the SAQ and its principals – Shakspere, Edward de Vere, Burbage, Queen Elizabeth – is not heavy-handed. It seems like a book a Stratfordian could enjoy because of these characterizations and Kositsky's gifts with language exert more force, than any message the story carries. The minor characters – lesser-known figures like Willow's friend John Pyke, a thief named Gabe Spencer, the lustful Bridget Vere, and the benign Mistress Lewes – all serve to make the novel's progress smooth and entertaining. The lost play Cardenio even makes an appearance.

Willow does make it back to her own time, to the classroom where she began, and there is a very surprising outcome to her time-travels, which I won't reveal. The book concludes with a five-page afterward, where Kositsky places her fiction in the context of the Shakespeare Authorship question. When this book was published, reviewers were uniformly positive on it as a recommendation for teen and young adult readers. One called it 'entertaining, educational, and amusing.' Another identified *A Question of Will* as 'an excellent addition to the recent abundance of Shakespeare stories; a rich, quick read that could fill requests for sci-fi, comedy, or historical fiction in one fell swoop.'

Errata (The Oxfordian 16)

We would like to apologize for and correct errata that appeared in *The Oxfordian*, Volume 16 (2014).

On page four, in the second to last paragraph: "William Shaksper . . . got Anne Hathaway pregnant [in 1582], and so had to marry her. They had twins a few months later."

In fact, it was Shaksper's daughter Susannah who arrived a few months later. The twins were born two years after Susannah.

On page eleven, in the second paragraph: "The poems' subsequently pirated publication by Thomas Thorpe in 1607 under the title *Shake-speare's Sonnets* with a teasing dedication to a "Mr. W.H." . . ."

In fact, the sonnets were published in 1609 under the title *Shake-Speares Sonnets*.

On page seventy-three, in the second paragraph: "[Richard] Roe's book is illustrated with his and Stephanie Hopkins Hughes eloquent photographs captioned with witty and often illuminating comments."

In fact, Hughes did not contribute photos to Richard Roe's book. Pictures were contributed by Sylvia Holmes.