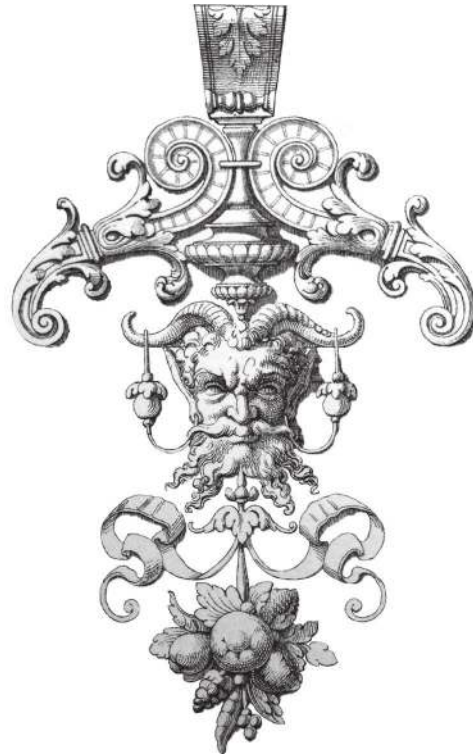# The Oxfordian

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Did Edward de Vere Translate Ovid's Metamorphoses?

by Richard M. Waugaman, M.D.

Skeptical scholars of the authorship issue sometimes ask, rhetorically, "What difference does it make who wrote Shakespeare? It makes no difference to me." Readers of the present essay may likewise wonder, "What difference does it make if de Vere translated Ovid?" So let me begin by addressing that question. First, the "Golding" translation is widely acknowledged to be one of the four most important literary sources for Shakespeare. If de Vere was the translator, it strengthens his claim to have written the works of Shakespeare. Secondly, those who love Shakespeare want to know what else he wrote. Thirdly, Shakespeare is a prime exemplar of genius, and everything we can learn about his creative development will enhance our understanding of the nature of creative genius. Among the most implausible features of the traditional authorship theory is the assumption that Shakespeare began writing at the height of his creative powers, with no developmental trajectory. If de Vere translated Ovid as an adolescent, we have a more realistic picture of the maturation of his literary genius from precocious child to author of Shakespeare's mature works. In the process, this more realistic picture of his creative development helps refute the foundationally flawed misconception as to how Shakespeare's literary genius developed.

The term *hendiadys* refers to a particular sort of word pair, defined by the Oxford English Dictionary (OED) as "a figure of speech in which a single complex idea is expressed by two words connected by a conjunction."

Hendiadys is "*not* a very common figure in Ovid" (S.G. Owen in Ovid, 1903, 83; emphasis added)—but it abounds in the English translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* by Arthur Golding, which several researchers attribute to the young de Vere, Golding's nephew.[1] In it, 390 word pairs were introduced that are not found earlier in Early English Books Online (EEBO).[2]

The first two uses of the word given by the OED are in the 1589 *Arte of English Poesie*,[3] which I have attributed to de Vere (Waugaman, 2010a and 2010b); and the 1592 *The English Secretary* by Angel Day, who served as one of de Vere's literary secretaries (Anderson 230).[4] Hendiadys is found more often in Shakespeare than in any other Elizabethan writer, so its profusion

in the Golding translation of Ovid is very convincing evidence of de Vere's hand in the work and shows that de Vere helped introduce hendiadys into English literature.

Introduction to the "Golding" Ovid

Books One through Four appeared in 1565, when de Vere was only fifteen. Its dedicatory epistle states that it was written at Cecil House, when both de Vere and his maternal uncle Arthur Golding lived there. The entire book was published in 1567 and reprinted in 1575, 1603, and 1612, attesting to its pop-

ularity. It was the only English translation of the work directly from the Latin original until 1621. In addition to its immense influence on Shakespeare, this translation also influenced Spenser and Marlowe. They each knew Latin well enough to read Ovid in the original, so their respect for this translation increases the likelihood that it was by a writer of the caliber of Shakespeare rather than of Golding.

John F. Nims, in his Introduction to *Ovid's Metamorphoses, the Arthur Golding Translation 1567*, muses about the flagrant paradox of Golding, the "convinced Puritan who spent much of his life translating the sermons and commentaries of John Calvin" undertaking to English this work of Ovid, "the sophisticated darling of a dissolute society, the author of a scandalous handbook of seduction" [i.e., *The Art of Love*] (xiv). Unwittingly supporting the re-attribution of this translation to Golding's precocious nephew, Nims calls this notion, "Hardly less striking than the metamorphoses the work dealt with" (xiv), especially given how much racier this translation is than Ovid's original. Unfortunately, attribution

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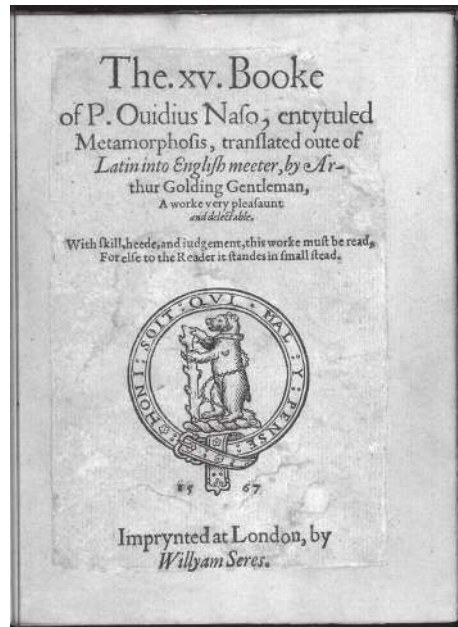
Richard M. Waugaman *is Clinical Professor of Psychiatry and 2012–2016 Faculty Expert on Shakespeare for Media Contacts at Georgetown University. His 175 publications include some 75 works on Shake-speare. His two ebooks are* Newly Discovered Works by "William Shake-Speare," a.k.a. Edward de Vere *and* It's Time to Re-Vere the Works of "William Shake-Speare": A Psychoanalyst Reads the Works of Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford. *He is indebted to Roger Stritmatter's research on de Vere's Geneva Bible for interesting him in Oxfordian research.*

of many Elizabethan works became set in stone before Marcy North's scholarship on anonymous, pseudonymous, and allonymous Elizabethan authorship was more fully appreciated. I believe that several of his contemporaries knew de Vere was the real translator, and that was probably one reason that Shakespeare was known to his contemporaries as an "English Ovid" (Ogburn 1984, 443).

We might pause to ask if it is conceivable that a juvenile of fifteen could possibly have composed the first four books of this translation. I think the answer is yes. Studies of the psychology of creativity have concluded that childhood loss often contributes to creativity in talented individuals. De Vere lost his father three years before his translation of Ovid first appeared, so turning to a work written 1,500 years earlier may have offered de Vere something of an escape from the many stresses in his young life.

Moreover, there have been child prodigies in numerous creative fields, including literature, such as the English poet Thomas Chatterton (1752-1770), who took his own life at seventeen after the exposure of his hitherto successful forgeries of the invented medieval poet, "Thomas Rowley." Or the French poet, Arthur Rimbaud (1854-1891); one of his best poems ("Ophélie") was composed when he was fifteen, and he concluded his creative writing career by the age of only twenty. A third example is Mary Shelly (1797-1851), who wrote her classic *Frankenstein* when she was nineteen.

Ezra Pound described the "Golding" translation of Ovid as "the most beautiful book in the [English] language," adding, "(my opinion and I suspect it was Shakespeare's)" (Pound 1934, 58). If only Pound had written "I suspect it was Shakespeare's *translation*," then I would be in complete agreement with him. Pound emphasized that, "I do not honestly think that anyone can know anything about the art of lucid narrative in English...without seeing the whole of the [Golding] volume" (127). Pound is hyperbolic in his praise of this translation. In another essay, he calls Golding Ovid's equal. He goes on, "Is there one of us so good at his Latin, and so reading in imagination that Golding will not throw upon his mind shades and glamours inherent in the original text which had for all that escaped him?... it is certain that 'we'...have forgotten our Ovid since Golding went out of print" (Pound 1985, 235).

Pound is not the only critic who has strongly linked the Golding Ovid with Shakespeare. L.P. Wilkinson writes, "[Shakespeare] draws on every book of the [Golding] *Metamorphoses*, and there is scarcely a play that shows no trace of its influence" (Wilkinson 410). Ovid's book is mentioned explicitly in *Titus Andronicus* IV.i. The context, interestingly enough, is the need to solve a puzzle of anonymity. Lavinia, the daughter of Titus Andronicus, has been raped, and her tongue and hands have been cut off so that she cannot name her rapists. As a first step toward communicating her plight, she looks through several books, and turns the pages of one book in particular. When Titus

asks his grandson Lucius which book it is, he replies: "Grandsire, 'tis Ovid's Metamorphosis,/ My mother gave it me" (l. 42-43). Lavinia turns the pages until she finds the story of the rape of Philomele, who also had her tongue cut off by her rapist, her sister's husband (Book VI, 526-909).

The unifying theme of Ovid's poem is transformation from one shape into another. The gods regularly transform people into animals, trees, and flowers. To quote the poem, "And aptly into any shape his persone he can shift" (XIII, l. 784). This is precisely what the young de Vere accomplished by arranging for his uncle's name to appear on the title page of his translation, and using a variety of other allonyms and pseudonyms during his long literary career.

"Alcithoe's Sisters transformed into Bats" an illustration by Godfried Maes (circa 1682) from a publication of Ovid's Metamorphoses.

Several other researchers of the period have proposed that de Vere may have been the translator of this work, among them Charlton Ogburn Jr. (1984), Elisabeth Sears (1987), Robert R. Prechter (2007), Paul H. Altrocchi (2010), Hank Whittimore (website), and William J. Ray (website).

In addition to frequent hendiadys, I discovered additional evidence of de Vere's verbal "fingerprints" in this translation. We know that Shakespeare had a compulsion for inventing new words. In this translation, he coined approximately one hundred new words, including now common words such as disbar, dribble, foredeck, hamstring, hard-faced, nightclothes, outstrip, pawing, pleasureless, Pythian, restlessly, screech owl, and sylvan.

Idiosyncratic spelling habits also link this translation with de Vere. In Book Six, lines 269-70 rhyme "naamde" with "ashaamde." In my search of EEBO, I found "naamde" only one other time, and never found another instance of "ashaamed." This matches de Vere's quirky way of doubling his vowels in his letters. Examples include "caald," "caale," "faale," "haales," and "waales." None of those idiosyncratic vowel doublings appear a single time in EEBO. Yet that is how de Vere sometimes spelled those words in his surviving letters. Quaakt (4 times), shaakt (3 times), inflaamd (3 times), spaakst, maakst, prepaarde, daarde, raazd, and blaazd appear only in this translation—and

nowhere else among the 50,000 or so fully searchable books on EEBO. So in de Vere's letters, and in the "Golding" Ovid, we find "aa" spellings that are not found at all, or not found elsewhere, respectively, in EEBO.

In his 1904 edition of the "Golding" *Metamorphoses*, W. H. D. Rouse noted that in the second complete edition of 1575, spellings are changed from the more regular forms in 1567 to more, well, original ones. There are many more double vowels, which de Vere favored in his letters. Rouse lists the following examples, which are all found in Oxford letters: bee [for be], hee, shee, wee, doo, too [for to], and moother. Rouse also singled out the following quirky spellings in the 1575 edition: bin, blud, deth [dethe in Oxford's letters], heare, hart, and hir. All of these spellings may be found in de Vere's extant letters. So it is possible that de Vere, now 25 years old, exerted more control over such matters in the 1575 edition, whereas his uncle edited his idiosyncratic (and often antiquated) spellings in the 1567 edition.

In this extraordinary work of the fifteen-year-old de Vere (that is, the first four books), he seized upon the rhetorical figure of hendiadys, which he likely knew from reading Virgil. In addition, he probably read Johannes Susenbrotus's *Epitome Troporum ac Schematum*, published in London two years earlier. T.W. Baldwin emphasizes the influence Susenbrotus had on all of Shakespeare's work. Susenbrotus was the first Renaissance writer to give a clear description of hendiadys.

In another paper I summarized George T. Wright's landmark study of hendiadys in Shakespeare:

> Wright helped draw attention to the fact that Shake-speare used this figure of hendiadys more than 300 times. Examples that have entered common use include "sound and fury," "slings and arrows," and "lean and hungry." Wright excludes from his use of the term what he derisively calls Shakespeare's "ceremonious parading of synonyms," that is, two closely related words, "without any significant increment, usually for an effect of expansion or elevation" (174). If we follow Wright in his derogation of insufficiently complex word pairs, we will deprive ourselves of taking the full measure of de Vere's lifelong fascination with word pairs, and the growth and development that his use of them underwent in his writing career. They tell us something important about his mind and spirit. One thing reminded him of another, and he linked them with a conjunction. One word alone often did not suffice, and in pairing it with a second, he drew a line that gestured toward meanings and connotations that went beyond mere words. (Waugaman 2016, 138-139)

Wright specifies that, as Shakespeare usually used the figure, "the parallel structure may mask some more complex and less easily describable dependent relation" between the two words (which are usually nouns in the later

Shakespeare) (169). Further, classical hendiadys, including in Shakespeare, should have an "element of surprise, of improvisation, and of eccentric co-ordination" (171). Wright finds that hendiadys in Shakespeare "normally but not invariably occurs in passages of a certain elevation, dignity, or remoteness from ordinary experience" (173).

In addition to Susenbrotus, another important rhetorical treatise was by Johann Sturm, translated into English in 1570 as *A Ritch Storehouse or Treasurie for Nobilitie and Gentlemen*. In my paper cited above, I demonstrated why I believe de Vere himself was the translator of this work. If so, it is telling that a word pair used three times in the *Metamorphoses*, "form and beauty," is also found in the Sturm translation ("the same did make the *forme and beautie* of the Goddesse"). When that hendiadys is used in Ovid, it is first put in the mouth of the goddess Venus; another time, it describes a nymph.

Gordon Braden writes compellingly of the Ovid translation that is tradition-ally attributed to Golding. Inadvertently, he drops numerous hints that are more consistent with de Vere rather than Golding having been the actual translator. For example, he notes that Golding did not use as much hendi-adys (which he calls "doublets") in his later works. Yet in "his" Ovid, "he often renders a single Latin word twice or more" (17). Braden implies that one source of the hendiadys in the translation of Ovid that he and others have attributed to Golding is the translator's "habit of translating by multi-ple synonyms" (5). Every translator knows that there are often no exact equivalents between words of the two languages at issue, so the use of two words in English helps capture the Latin original. By way of illustration, Italian offers the noun *sprezzatura*, from the verb *sprezzare*, "to disdain." It is variously translated as non-chalance; or as effortless mastery. French offers *l'esprit d'escaliers*, which alludes to the witty come-back that only occurs to us too late, as we are walking down the stairs from the social event at which we were at a loss for words.

De Vere continued to use the figure of hendiadys throughout his literary ca-reer. Braden notes that "In *Midsummer Night's Dream* Shakespeare apparently quotes about half of one of Golding's lines almost verbatim" (Braden 4): "a crowne of *fresh and fragrant* floures" in Ovid becomes "coronet of *fresh and fragrant* flowers" in the play (AMND, IV.1 and Ovid, Book II, 33).

Braden ascribes youthful qualities to the translation: "In a simple and even naïve way Golding just wants to be easy to follow" (49). He says that the translator's attitude toward Ovid "is not sophisticated detachment but a deep, naïve intimidation" (54). The translation "is full of moments of qui-etly spreading astonishment..." (32). And "The quality of astonishment is childlike" (33). Braden is an honest scholar, and thus does not conceal these observations, despite reinforcing our sense that "Golding's connection with Ovid is often considered a matter for surprise and something of a puzzle"

(9). Further, Braden perceptively draws parallels between the "Golding" Ovid and the later works of Shakespeare. Shakespeare understood Ovid's Latin better than did "Golding," i.e., the adult de Vere compared with the teenage de Vere. He writes, "Reading Golding, we can trace the beginnings of a particular poetic world that Shakespeare twenty years later would bring to its fullest development" (36).

Caroline Spurgeon, in her classic study of Shakespeare's imagery, emphasizes his sympathy for all living creatures, even snails. Likewise, Braden notices that Golding and Shakespeare are similar in giving Ovid's bull (II, 1063) "a much more human kind of craftiness, a kind of false, indolent innocence" (4). Not actually similar, but coming from the same mind and personality, earlier and later in his writing career, respectively. Another stylistic parallel for Braden is Golding's "casual additions" to and "off-handed expansions" of Ovid's Latin; while "Decoration lightly borne is an important part of Shakespeare's poetics" (7). One thinks of de Vere's Latin introduction to the 1572 translation of Castiglione's *The Perfect Courtier*, with its ideal of *sprezzatura*, or nonchalance. Braden admits that Golding "was, after all, a man closer to being [Shakspere's] social and cultural opposite than his fellow" (7). Braden then dismisses the Oxfordian authorship theory as created solely "by those embarrassed by [Shakspere's] low origins" (8). Ad hominem reasoning is dangerous, and here it leads Braden to ignore the abundant evidence for de Vere's authorship of the Shakespeare canon. Consequently, Braden fails to use his superb research and close reading to challenge the traditional authorship theory.

Instead, Braden falls victim to the unconsciously circular thinking that plagues orthodox Shakespeare scholarship. He looks at the utter incongruity of a sincere Puritan such as Golding writing such a prurient translation, then concludes we do not really understand the Elizabethans. First, he points out that Calvin was Golding's favorite author to translate. Further, "Moral didacticism, mixed with anti-Papist rhetoric, fills most of his prefaces—especially, with good reason, the dedications to the young Earl of Oxford—and there is nothing in their tone or in what we know of Golding's life to suggest that he might not be serious" (8).

Braden comments on the tone of Golding's 600-line dedicatory epistle, with its feeble claim that the translation is intended to warn the reader against immoral behavior. Braden then refers to the 222-line Preface to the *Metamorphosis*, presuming it was also written by Golding. No, the lines that Braden quotes from the Preface mock the squeamish reader (before advising him to emulate Ulysses and be tied to the mast to resist temptation):

> If any stomacke be so weake as that it cannot brooke,
> The lively setting forth of things described in this booke,
> I give him counsell too absteine untill he bee more strong
> (Preface, 215-217)

This Preface to the *Metamorphosis* sounds far more like the youthful de Vere, casting himself as physician whose patient is temporarily impaired by illness, and must recover before he can safely enjoy this translation. Moreover, his reference to the "simple sort" in the first line—"I would not wish the simple sort offended for to bee"—contains a variety of allusions to Puritans, such as his uncle. At that time, "simple" could mean innocent and honest. However, it could also signify common, or of low rank, for his uncle was situated far beneath de Vere in the social structure of the Elizabethan era. Recall the Puritans' aversion to fine clothing as you consider that "simple" could also mean wearing attire that lacks elegance. "Simple" likewise meant weak or feeble, anticipating the three lines quoted above about a "weake" stomacke that needs to become "more strong." "Simple" could further mean intellectually deficient, as it still does today. De Vere's exasperated uncle may have read the manuscript of de Vere's translation, then implored his nephew to write a preface that would pacify potentially offended readers. With what was later called de Vere's "perverse temperament," de Vere instead chose to mock unappreciative readers, perhaps especially the Puritans.

Hamlet famously advised the actors that the purpose of theater is to hold a mirror up to nature. De Vere used a strikingly similar image in his Preface, to justify the book's detailed description of pagan sins:

> Now when thou readst of God or man, in stone, in beast, or tree
> It is a myrrour for thy self thyne owne estate to see (lines 81-82;)[5]

The pattern of hendiadys itself helps attribute this Preface to de Vere. It contains the greatest concentration of hendiadys in the entire work. An average of 27% of its lines contain a word pair—that is, an average of once every four lines. Books I through IV, published in 1565, have hendiadys an average of every ten lines (or 10% of their lines). Word pairs then drop off to 7% of the lines of Book V; 5-6% of the lines of Books VI and VII; then 2-3% of the lines of Books VIII through XIV. It is only in the final book that their occurrence picks up to 5% of the lines, for Book XV. To the extent that his use of this rhetorical figure revealed de Vere's youthful creative exuberance, he gave it fullest vent in the Preface; less so in the first four books; then he seemed to have a bit less creative energy for this device in the remainder of his translation (published and perhaps written two years later), getting his second wind for the final book.

Gordon Braden notes another discrepancy when he writes, "Golding's most memorable intrusions of authorial comment are not Puritan at all, but show a very secular combination of impatience and amusement" (14). This description is more consistent with the 17-year-old de Vere than with the 31-year-old Puritan, Arthur Golding.

Braden also unwittingly points to a younger translator in referring to "childlike" and "naive" characteristics of the "Golding" Ovid. For example, "The quality

of astonishment is childlike…" "In a simple and even naive way Golding just wants to be easy to follow"; and "…the bashfulness of his opening lines."

I think of de Vere as "E.K." in Spenser's *A Sheepherd's Calendar* when Braden observes of Golding's substantive additions to Ovid, "These are the intruded glosses, never allegorizing but merely explanatory in an antiquarian way" (15).

Braden notes that Golding's approach "indicates a way of looking at everything, with interest, but no compulsion to interfere: a style of omniscience that sees all, knows all, and does not mind. We are in various ways close to the sensibility of the early Shakespeare comedies" (48). This is consistent with de Vere's authorship of both. Golding's "sense of humor that sometimes seems to go completely haywire" (53) is reminiscent of Sidney Lee stating, in his *Dictionary of National Biography* entry on de Vere, that his adolescent "perverse humor was a source of grave embarrassment" to his guardian, the future Lord Burghley.

Braden returns to the vast impact of the *Metamorphoses* on Shakespeare in a much later work. He includes Shakespeare as one of the many Elizabethan writers who were deeply influenced by Ovid. His chapter focusses on Ovid's poems written in exile. De Vere, whom Queen Elizabeth exiled from court for two years (1581-83) after de Vere impregnated Anne Vavasour, would have felt a special kinship with Ovid's exile for offending the Roman emperor. Braden then notes the special salience of allusions to Ovid in *The Tempest*. He likens Prospero's exile to that of Ovid. "Prospero found himself in the middle of nowhere because he was undone by his love of his books" (54). Drawing attention to a little-known detail, Braden adds that "Prospero sought his redemption in perfecting his mastery of the one book that was left to him…the imaginative guess at what that book is would be the Metamorphoses" (55). As Mary Douglas (2010) discovered, in "ring composition," the literary work returns to its beginning at the end. Just so with de Vere's literary career. In the play that has been considered Shakespeare's farewell to the theater, de Vere, as Prospero, returned to his adolescent translation of Ovid. As Braden states:

"The Enchanted Island, Before the Cell of Prospero" by George Romney (1797)

> *The Tempest* is the capstone work of the Shakespearean corpus, his summing up of the power and nature of his theatrical craft. It seems

appropriate that a centerpiece of this summing up would be the most extensive of his direct appropriations from Ovid that had characterized his writing almost from the beginning: this had always been his great book of magic... (Braden, 55)

We can be immensely grateful to Braden for his valuable help in elucidating the translation of Ovid that has been traditionally misattributed to Golding, even though he stopped short of connecting the dots he so perceptively identified.

Our name is central to our sense of identity. De Vere had been Viscount Bulbec since birth. Since his father died when Edward de Vere was twelve years old, he was known by the title of Earl of Oxford[6] as well as Lord Sanford and of Escales and Badlesmere. So even his multiplying titles may have enlarged his sense of his complex identity, sensitizing him to the rich possibilities of word pairs.

Hendiadys in Oxford's Ovid

De Vere not only helped introduce hendiadys into English literature—he also explored its rich possibilities, including various ways of "doubling" the hendiadys twins. For example, his first use of this figure is a double one—"A *heavie lump and clottred* [clotted] *clod* of seedes togither driven..." (I, line 8).

In one couplet he employs two consecutive, rhymed, double hendiadys, consisting of four adjectives modifying four nouns, joined by two conjunctions—

> "I never was in *greater care nor more perplexitie*,
> How to maintain my *soveraigne state and Princelie royaltie*"
> (I, 208-209).

Steven May, professor of English Emeritus at Georgetown College, an orthodox expert on Elizabethan poetry and on de Vere's signed poetry in particular, calls his poetic style "highly experimental" (May 13). Here, de Vere even experiments with enjambed hendiadys, with a line break between its two halves:

> More precious yet than freckled brasse, immediately the *olde*
> *And auncient* Spring did Jove abridge, and made thereof anon,
> Foure seasons...
> (I, 132-134)

As well as:

> Then to beholde: yet forbicause he saw the earth was *voyde*
> *And silent* like a wildernesse, with *sad and weeping* eyes..."
> (I, 408-409)

In Book VIII (682-683), "The Lords and Commons did lament, and maried wives with *torne/ And tattred* haire did cry alas..." combining enjambment with alliteration.

These line breaks encourage the reader not to treat the word pairs as closely related by forcing us to pause between them, giving us time to ponder the nuances of each word's respective meaning. As noted earlier, this may prime the reader to read all hendiadys with greater care and attention. The earlier pair of hendiadys is all the more arresting, as it is the sole use of "void and silent" in EEBO, and the first (of 18) of "sad and weeping."

The second half of hendiadys may amplify the first half, as in "with *sad and weeping* eyes" (I, 409). "Sad" is an emotional state visible in one's facial expression; "weeping" is a behavior that makes stronger and more concrete that emotional state of sadness. Both words come from old Saxon. Or "the *grim and greedy* Wolfe" (I, 355), the first of two instances of that phrase in EEBO. Those two words also have an old Saxon origin. The last example is especially alliterative, beginning with the same two consonants (gr-). A single line has the doubly alliterative "dowles [boundary markers] and diches," then "free and fertile" (I, 152). The first pair is unique in EEBO. Notice the play of "f" and "r" in that second pair, the first of two instances in EEBO. Not a hendiadys, but earlier the translator wrote, "The *fertile* earth as yet was *free*" (I, 115), thus echoing them 37 lines later. De Vere coins the alliterative "sort and sute" (Book IX, 109); only seven lines later, he adds the commonplace "sauf and sound," repeating the initial letters.

Alliterative hendiadys combines two of his stylistic devices. Examples abound: "meeke and meeld"; "fly and follow"; "fowle and filthye"; "wynd and weather"; "sword and spear"; "strives and strugles" (the same first *three* letters in each word).

De Vere is sometimes ridiculed for the excessive alliteration in his early signed poetry; one finds the same profusion of alliteration in this translation of Ovid. The "w" sound is repeated seven times in "The wonted weight was from the Waine, the which they well did wot" (Book II, 212). In case the inattentive reader missed this, three lines later one reads, "Even so the Waine for want of weight it erst was wont to beare."

Alliterative hendiadys is especially pleasing to the ear, making a further connection between the two linked words. "Wyde and wynding" (Book IX, 24) is a unique hendiadys using two highly similar words. Alliteration combines with assonance in the unique "meate [flesh, or food in general] and mancheate [fine wheat bread, or food in general]" (Book XI, 1330). Further, there is implicit wordplay with the verb "eat" being contained in these two words for food.

"Unforct and unconstrainde" (I, 104) recalls Shakespeare's fondness for words beginning with "un-"; he coined more than 300 such words in the canon. In this translation, de Vere coined fourteen such words.

In this work, de Vere would go a few pages without using a single word pair, then use several within just a few verses. De Vere seemed to coin new hendiadys when a given image especially intrigued him—"the thicke and foggie ayre" (I, 22) is the first of 113 uses of "thick and foggy" in EEBO; 40 lines later, de Vere coins the related "*mist* and cloudes" (I, 61), the first of 9 uses in EEBO. Fifteen lines later, he coins "shoures [showers] and rotten *mistes*" (I, 76), elaborating on this same theme.

De Vere also composes verbal themes and variations with hendiadys. He speaks of "thicke and *muddie slime*" at line 436 of Book 1; it is the first of 115 uses of this word pair in EEBO. Only 60 lines later, he turns this into "fat and *slimie mud*" (I 498); the first of 17 uses of that word pair in EEBO. Two lines later, he has "*fat* and lively soyle" (I, 500), the first of only two uses of this hendiadys in EEBO. In the latter two phrases, one or two words are repeated from the prior phrase, whereas one or two new words are introduced. Readers with good verbal memories are thus rewarded with the pleasure of *déja entendu*. Judicious repetition is inherent in good art.

Spending time with de Vere's hendiadys leads one to surmise that he did not regard similar words simply as synonyms. As when he repeats a single word in his plays because it has a different nuance each time, he is asking us to notice different shades of meaning in the words that he pairs. He was the first to use "woods and forrests" (I, 573).[7] It is easy to dismiss these words as mere synonyms but, in de Vere's time, woods were usually smaller than forests; further, the latter referred specifically to royal hunting districts. The French etymology of the latter, in contrast with the Anglo-Saxon origin of "woods," underlined this difference between king and commoners.

Caroline Spurgeon notes that one of Shakespeare's favorite images was of the human body in motion. In Book One, de Vere writes of ships that did "leape and daunce" (151); and he says that Phaeton began "to leape and skip for joye" (984).

Some examples have a parallel construction, with the same word modifying both halves of the word pair, e.g., "But one of eche, howbeit those *both just and both devout*" (I, 383).

I counted 20 instances of hendiadys in Book I of Ovid that are unique in EEBO. That is one measure of the prominence of this figure. Another measure is when a given example is the first instance, followed by other writers who used (or borrowed?) the same word pair. Of these, I count 35 examples in Book I. Anywhere from one to 200 subsequent examples of that hendiadys are found in EEBO. Again, this is merely the first of the 15 Books of the *Metamorphoses*.

On the first page of his preface, de Vere uses six word pairs in only two lines:

> Of *health and sicknesse*, *lyfe and death*, of *needinesse and wealth*,
> Of *peace and warre*, of *love and hate*, of murder, *craft and stealth*."
> (Preface, 21-22)

This profusion of hendiadys (unique to this translation) anticipates the stylistic plenitude of de Vere's later Euphuistic phase, characterized by verbal exuberance, and is later captured in *Loves Labors Lost*. De Vere was formally recognized as the leader of the Euphuists after another secretary, John Lyly, dedicated his second novel, *Euphues and His England*, to the Earl of Oxford in 1580.

As noted earlier, de Vere coined some 390 hendiadys in this translation, including its Preface. Some 230 word pairs were apparently first used in this work, and then used by subsequent writers. An additional 160 of the word pairs are unique, at least in EEBO. Naturally, these examples are of special interest. In Book XV, l.527 we find "away with *Risp and net*." "Risp" is first found in EEBO in 1553; the present example is only its second use. It refers to a bush used to trap birds. In 1553, it was used in a translation of Virgil's *Aeneid* into "Scottish meter," coincidentally by Gawin Douglas, another uncle of an earl (the Earl of Angus). De Vere was constantly enlarging the English language, which may have been one of his motives in linking "risp" with "net" here.

Using one hendiadys often led de Vere to use others in succeeding lines, or even in the same line. This may reflect what cognitive psychology calls "priming"—a technique whereby exposure to one stimulus influences a response to a subsequent stimulus, without conscious guidance or intention. In a single line of his Preface (l. 123) he coins two contiguous hendiadys—

> Even so a *playne and naked tale or storie* simply told...

Book IV (808-810) has three original hendiadys in only three consecutive lines:

> As *huge and big* as Atlas was he tourned in that stead
> Into a mountaine: into trees his *beard and locks* did passe:
> His *hands and shoulders* made the ridge..."

Book XV, lines 910-912 also includes three original hendiadys in three consecutive lines:

> Doo dwell, thou shouldest there of *brasse and steele* substantiall see
> The registers of things so *strong and massye* made to bee,
> That *sauf and everlasting*, they doo neyther stand in feare...

In each of these six cases, the word pairs are used many more times in EEBO.

These three word pairs constitute a continuation of an image of something so strong that it will endure—the repetition carries emphasis. According to EEBO, these word pairs are the first of 34, of 20, and of 2 uses, respectively. The first hendiadys anticipates Sonnet 120, l. 4:

> "Unlesse my Nerves were *brasse* or hammered *stele*"

There are several examples here of a hendiadys first used in a translation of the works of Erasmus, e.g., Book XV, 932 has "the wyld and barbrous nacions" (Ci verso). In a 1537 translation of Erasmus's *Declamation*, the translator uses that very phrase, "the wylde and barbarous nacions." "Sharp and eager," used first in a 1548 translation of Erasmus, is used for the second time here (lxviii verso). Thus, one strongly suspects the young de Vere read Erasmus, the foremost Renaissance humanist.

The Psalms, which were a major literary influence on Shakespeare, regularly use repetition for emphasis, and this is one effect of de Vere's hendiadys. They also have the effect of slowing down the pace of his poem, as it pauses to intensify a point.

Rhymed hendiadys are even more pleasing. Book XIII includes "quake and shake" for the first time (line 94); it was used in 40 subsequent works, including by Ben Jonson. What's more, there is an example of a triple hendiadys in Book XIII, l. 146: "But myne [shield] is *gasht and hakt and stricken* thurrough quyght."

Conversely, when the Ovid translation is the first instance of a given word pair, discovering who used it afterwards may be a clue that they read this translation, or perhaps wrote it. For example, it includes the first use of "spade and mattocke" (Book XI, l. 880). The hendiadys is later echoed in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* (V. 3) and *Titus Andronicus* (IV. 3). Two lines earlier in Ovid is the first use of "fair and sheene [beautiful]"; the second use of that hendiadys is in Spenser's *Faerie Queene*.

What about hendiadys in the Medea speech in Book Seven that Prospero alludes to in Act V, scene one of *The Tempest*?[8] There are four examples of newly coined (but later echoed) hendiadys: "Charmes and Witchcraft," "herbe and weed," "Ayres and windes," and "raise and lay." "Woods and forests" reappears after being coined in Book One, and "stones and trees" is used for the second of 105 instances in EEBO.

In Book XV, there is the twelfth instance of "hands and eyes" in EEBO. What's striking about it is that the eleventh instance is found in Arthur Brookes' 1562 *Romeus & Juliet*. The context is similar: in Brookes, "With handes and eyes heaved up/he thanks God." In Ovid, "to heaven he cast his handes and eyes."

Book VIII twice mentions a "boarspeare" (lines 459 and 553). It is the first instance of this word in EEBO, though the OED gives a usage in 1465. So the word was unusual in 1567, but we know the boar was de Vere's heraldic animal. When Rosalind and Celia in *AYLI* are discussing how to disguise their real identities with "poor and mean attire" and new names, Rosalind proposes to carry a "boar-spear" (I, 3). This is but one of two times that word is used in Shakespeare. The other time is in *Richard III* (III, 2), which was published in 1597, a year before the first play that carried the name "William Shakespeare" (but after *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece*, which used that pseudonym). So did "boar-spear" hint at the connection between de Vere and "Shakespeare"?

Shakespeare is said to have coined more than 300 words beginning with "un-". Remarkably, this translation coins fourteen such words: unreele; unfrayd; unambicious; unsurmysed; unastaunched; unsentfor; unavoyded; unwish; unhated; unwieldsome; unfaded; unbetrayed; unhackt (the OED incorrectly lists Shakespeare's *King John* as having coined the word); and unappeasd (once again, the OED erroneously credits Shakespeare with coining this word years later, in *Titus Andronicus*). This fact alone increases the likelihood that Shakespeare translated this work.

Additional Coined Hendiadys in Oxford's Ovid

There are numerous instances of Shakespeare echoing Ovid's word pairs, with the two words in close proximity to each other. While there is no doubt that this translation was one of Shakespeare's most significant literary sources, this pattern of echoes—reminiscent of Carl Jung's word association test to assess the uniqueness of each personality—further suggests a similar process of verbal association in the mind of the translator and the author of Shakespeare. Below, I list some examples.

As noted earlier, the Preface has a higher concentration of hendiadys than the rest of the book—61 examples in only 222 lines. This provides compelling evidence against the theory that the incidence of hendiadys in Books 1–15 is merely due to their presence in Ovid's original Latin. The Preface has the unique hendiadys "trees and stones," while Lorenzo in *Merchant of Venice* (V.i) says "Orpheus drew *trees, stones* and floods." Similarly, it includes the unique "strange and monstrous," while Quince in *Midsummer Night's Dream* says "O *monstrous*! O *strange*!" Note that one italicized word brings the other to mind for both translator and playwright—further evidence that they are one and the same writer.

Book I (line 101) includes EEBO's unique "shape nor hew." The title character of *Hamlet* (V.ii) verbs these two nouns in, "There's a divinity that *shapes* our ends,/ Rough-*hew* them how we will."

Book I (125) has the first of EEBO's 47 instances of "leane and barren." *Venus and Adonis* (156) has "Thick-sighted, *barren, lean*..."

Book II (301) describes the Aethiopians as "blacke and swart." That is the first of 15 uses of that word pair in EEBO. Joan la Pucelle, in *1 Henry VI* (I.ii) says, "I was *black and swart* before." Book II (1016) also includes the first of 38 EEBO examples of the hendiadys "light nor heate." In *Hamlet* (I.iii), Polonius says, "Giving more *light* than *heat*." Line 960 has the first of 26 EEBO uses of "Snakes and Todes." Tamora, in *Titus Andronicus* (II.iii) speaks of "a thousand hissing *snakes*,/ Ten thousand swelling *toads*."

Cadmus is described in Book III (7) as "kinde and cruell." In *Hamlet* (III.iv), the title character famously says "I must be *cruel*, only to be *kind*." Book III (272) includes "*over hill and dale*." That is the second EEBO instance of this hendiadys; the first was by de Vere's uncle Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, in his 1557 book, *Songes and Sonettes*. The Fairy in *Midsummer Night's Dream* (II.i. 369) sings nearly the same phrase in "*Over hill*, over *dale*."

Book IV includes the hendiadys used for the first time here, and borrowed the most often subsequently: 857 further instances of it are found in EEBO. It is "That *heart and hand* and all did faile in working for a space" (212). In Shakespeare we find:

> *I Henry VI* (I.ii) — "My *heart and hand*s."
> *Troilus and Cressida* (IV.v) — "His *heart and hand*."
> *Coriolanus* (I.x) — "Wash my fierce *hand* in's *heart*."

Book IV also contains the first of 42 EEBO examples of "neat and trim" (line 386). In *1 Henry IV* (I.iii), someone is described as "*neat*, and *trim*ly dress'd."

Book V (42) has the first of 59 EEBO uses of "powre and sway." Sonnet 65 (l. 2) includes, "But sad mortality o'er-*sway*s their *power*."

"Haaste and speed" (line 644) makes its first of 46 EEBO appearances in Book VI; Shakespeare associates these seemingly redundant words in *Measure for Measure* (III.i): "*Haste* you *speed*ily." And in *Richard III* (III.i): "make all the *speedy haste* you may." In all instances, there is an implicit allusion to and contrast with the Latin adage, "festina lente," meaning "make haste slowly."

Book VII has EEBO's first of 45 instances of "heavie and unwieldie" (line 730). *Romeo and Juliet* (II.v) has "*Unwieldy*, slow, *heavy*..." And *Richard II* has "I give this heavy *weight* from off my head/ And this *unwieldy* sceptre from my hand." Book VII also has the first of 50 instances in EEBO of "bones and dust" (line 669). These words are connected in Sonnet 32 (l. 2): "When that churl Death my *bones* with *dust* shall cover." And *Titus Andronicus* (V.ii) has, "I will grind your *bones* to *dust*."

The first of EEBO's five instances of "ghostes and soules" (line 633) is in Book VIII; *Antony and Cleopatra* (IV.i) includes "Where *souls* do couch on flowers, we'll hand in hand,/ And with our sprightly port make the *ghosts* gaze."

Book IX has EEBO's first of 21 instances of "sort and sute" (line 109). We find in *Measure for Measure* (IV, iv), "give notice to such men of *sort and suit* as are to meet him."

In Book X, we find the first of 40 uses of "shape and nature" (line 73) in EEBO; *Twelfth Night* has "the *shape* of *nature*" (I.v); *Pericles* has "*Nature*'s own *shape*" (V.prologue). In addition, "blood and hart" is used for the first of 44 times; *Antony and Cleopatra* (V.i) has "*blood* of *heart*s."

The first of 43 instances of "spade and mattocke" (line 880) in EEBO is in Book XI; Shakespeare's early play *Titus Andronicus* includes "'Tis you must dig with *Mattocke* and with *Spade*" (IV.iii). And *Romeo and Juliet* includes "We took this *Mattocke* and with *Spade* from him" (V.iii). It also includes the first of nine uses of "charge and break" (line 621); *Cymbeline* (III.iv) says "if sleep *charge* nature,/ To *break* it with a fearful dream..."

Book XIII has the first of 40 EEBO uses of "quake and shake" (line 94). *Venus and Adonis* has Venus say that her heart, "like an earth*quake*, *shake*s thee on my breast."

Book XIV also includes "heate and lyght" (line 888); as noted, it is echoed when *Hamlet* says, "Giving more *light* than *heat*" (I.3.605).

Book XV has more unique hendiadys since Book X, and even more first instances that were later used by other writers. Among the latter is "harsh and hard," (86) the first of 99 instances. In *Troilus and Cressida* we find "The cygnet's down is *harsh* and spirit of sense/ *Hard* as the palm of ploughman" (I.i.88-89).

Only in Book XII did I find no notable instances of Shakespeare later associating the same words that were first used in a hendiadys in this translation.

In conclusion, I have employed converging lines of evidence to strengthen past attributions of the "Golding" translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* to a precocious adolescent literary genius, Edward de Vere. That translation created more than 100 new words, including several still in common use. It used nine words with unusual "aa" spelling, which appear nowhere else in EEBO; this is consistent with the five "aa" words in de Vere's surviving letters that also do not appear in EEBO. Its 14 coined words beginning with "un-" are consistent with Shakespeare inventing over 300 such words. Finally, its 390 coined word pairs are consistent with Wright's estimate that Shakespeare created more than 300 examples of hendiadys. As noted at the beginning, my thesis—that the translator of this work was actually Edward de Vere—enriches our knowledge of the earlier development of Shakespeare's literary powers.

Endnotes

1. The question of de Vere's translation of Ovid has attracted even the interest of anthropologist Robin Fox, a member of the National Academy of Sciences, in his book, *Shakespeare's Education* (2012). Charlton Ogburn Jr. is one of several researchers who have proposed that de Vere had a hand in the "Golding" *Metamorphoses*. In my opinion, he stops short of giving de Vere his rightful credit for the entire translation. I suspect it would have been too distasteful to de Vere's uncle Arthur Golding to collaborate in it, and that they would have been too much at cross purposes to have agreed on how to English the Latin Ovid. Gordon Braden, in his comments on the "otiose" "doubling of adjectives" in this translation, unwittingly helps build the case for the youthful de Vere as translator, criticizing both the inaccurate translations and *childish* diction.

2. This invaluable database includes the searchable full text of some 50,000 early books, though EEBO has its limitations. First, not all early modern books are included, and I have noticed that searches for specific phrases sometimes yield different results when executed several months apart. Thus, while EEBO should be regarded as suggestive rather than definitive in the evidence it provides, it still offers scholars a repository of knowledge about the Early Modern Period.

3. "Ye have yet another manner of speech when ye will seem to make two of one not thereunto constrained, which therefore we call the Figure of Twins, the Greeks *hendiadys*" (261).

4. "when one thing of itself entire is diversely laid open…This also is rather poetical than otherwise in use" (83). By the way, it is relevant that the etymology of "secretary" involves keeping the secrets of one's employer.

5. I do not claim this was an original trope with de Vere. One need only recall the earlier editions of the *Mirror for Magistrates*.

6. He preferred the older spelling, "Oxenford," signing nearly all his extant letters "Edward Oxenford."

7. It later became the name of a department of the British Civil Service.

8. Jan Cole (2013) discovered that "Golding" mentioned Vulcano.

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The 17th Earl of Oxford in Italian Archives: Love's Labours Found

by Michael Delahoyde and Coleen Moriarty

Our research in Italian state archives over the course of three summers has uncovered four previously unknown documents from the 1570s containing news of the 17th Earl of Oxford. We are also able to provide a much expanded, corrected, and contextualized version of one of the only two catalogued Venetian ambassadorial dispatches concerning Edward de Vere during his 1575-76 continental tour.[1] Rather than present our research in order of discovery, our aim here is to explicate each find while chronologically filling the gaps in the documentary record concerning Oxford's travels.[2]

We have come to realize that the Earl's continental tour was certainly not what we thought and what perhaps many generally think: a dilettante's year-long self-indulgence away from the stifling and artistically backwards English court. His zeal for escape seems to have manifested itself when Oxford fled to the continent without license from the Queen in the summer of 1574, though he did obey when called back to England. Shortly thereafter, he was listed more honorably among noblemen who "have served and are fit to serve in foreign employments" (qtd. in Nelson 119). Even if his subsequent journey had been merely a vacation, it is inconceivable that he would not have been briefed on what to say and not to say at various continental courts "and among the network of diplomats and ambassadors whose connections he needed in order to proceed in his travels" (Anderson 74). As Mark Anderson recognizes:

> Something certainly persuaded Elizabeth to give de Vere leave to cross the English Channel. Practicality undoubtedly played a role in dispatching de Vere: The new king of France, Henri III, had scheduled his coronation for February 15, 1575, and his marriage for two days later. Elizabeth, whom Henri had once courted, would have needed an English delegate to attend the coronation—someone with enough clout in Catholic circles not to offend the French Catholic court. Furthermore, Venice had not sent an ambassador to England. The Italian city on the lagoon was still skittish about opening diplomatic relations with a Protestant realm, lest it offend the more fervent Catholic

nations of Spain or the Papal States. At the time she sent de Vere overseas, Elizabeth required the attentions of a high-ranking court- ier fluent in French and Italian for important diplomatic missions in Paris and Venice. Could it simply be coincidence that the queen gave de Vere license to travel to these two key cities at the same time she needed these tasks completed? (74-75)

Oxford left English shores very likely in early February 1575 (Nelson 121). His first major stop was the French court, and his entry onto the continent was noted in ambassadorial letters and gossipy *bolletini* (bulletins). The French ambassador in England, La Mothe Fenelon, in a late January dispatch to Henri III, "cryptically added that he'd learned that Don John of Austria—the powerful Spanish general—might have a job for the English earl to perform" (Anderson 75; Nelson 120).

The Venetian Ambassador's Letter from the French Court

The first notice of Oxford abroad came in early March 1575, in English ambassadorial letters from Valentine Dale in Paris to Lord Burghley (Nelson 121; Ogburn and Ogburn 82). In our initial foray at the Venetian archive in 2016, we viewed the original notice concerning Oxford's 1575 arrival in Paris and his departure through the French court in 1576. Excerpted bulletins have been available since the late 1800s,[3] and we owe a debt to Rawdon Brown (1803-1883) in this regard. Having initially visited Venice in search of the gravestone of Sir Thomas Mowbray, the Duke of Norfolk banished by King Richard II (in the Shakespeare play, Act I), Brown subsequently devoted fifty

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years to researching Anglo-Italian political history, eventually culling, amassing, and translating ambassadorial reports into *A Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts relating to English Affairs existing in the Archives of Venice and Northern Italy*—an enormous, multi-volume achievement funded by the British government.

However, the transcriptions and English translations are occasionally questionable or incomplete, there were confusions in the dating system, and the original documents mentioning Oxford are too frail to be circulated publicly. A tremendous and valuable effort, but with fallibilities: what else might Rawdon Brown have missed?

In 2016, we persisted in requesting access until one archivist agreed that we needed to peruse these documents for our research. Finally, we were escorted into the chambers of the cathedral-like Venice archive, where one of the main archival directors, Mr. Caniato, supervised the viewing of the documents, too fragile to be handled directly by visiting scholars, and carefully turned the crumbling pages.[4] We were promised images of the documents, including a passage in ambassadorial secret code; but the file is in need of restoration work, and we left that year empty-handed. Our diplomatic persistence was ultimately successful: in 2017 we were allowed to photograph the entire document that includes the news of Oxford's arrival.
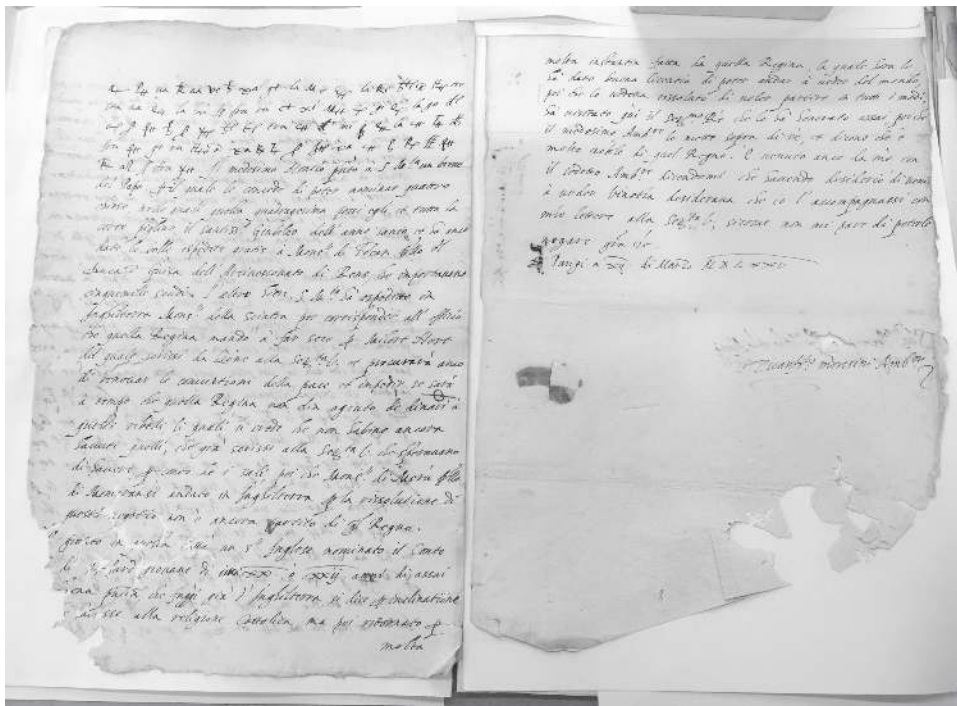
Figure 1: The original notice concerning Oxford's 1575 arrival in Paris.

For over the past century, this is what we could view as Rawdon Brown's translation from a portion of the Venetian Senate's Dispatches from Ambassadors and Residents concerning France:

> An English gentleman, whose name is the Earl of Oxford, has arrived in this city; he is a young man of about twenty or twenty-two years of age. It is said that he fled from England on account of his inclination to the Catholic religion; but having returned he received great favour from the Queen, who gave him full licence to travel and see the world, when she ascertained that he had resolved to depart under any circumstances (Brown, *VII*. 527).

The announcement comes from Giovanni Morosini, the Venetian ambassador in Paris, writing on 12 March 1575 to the Signory in Venice, and notes Oxford's "reputation for Catholicism." The final line may suggest that he might be considered a valuably independent loose cannon, but includes also an "underestimation of his age" (Nelson 121). More troubling is that this *bolletino* is incomplete and severed from its context: seven more lines concerning Oxford specifically appear in the original. Problems with the transcript include: Rawdon Brown was a slightly unreliable translator; he died before editing the materials from the 1570s, so a collaborator was working from his notes; and the text was excerpted and abbreviated, with text in the crumbling corners of the document that were ignored.

Here in Italian transcription is the longer portion of the letter (Archivio di Venezia, *Senato*, *Filza* 9)[5]:

> [After a section in code]
> Il medesimo nunzio presentò a S[ua] M[aes]tà un breve
> del Papa per il quale le concede di poter nominar quattro
> chiese, nelle quali questa quadragesima possi egli et tutta la
> corte pigliar il santiss[im]o Giubileo dell'anno santo et ha anco
> dato le bolle espedite gratis a Mons[igno]r di Fecan fratello del
> Duca di Guisa dell'Arcivescovato di Rens che importavano
> cinquemille scudi. L'altro hieri S[ua] M[aest]à ha espeditto in
> Inghilterra Mons[igno]r della Sciatra per corrisponder all'officio
> che quella Regina mandò a far seco per Milort Nort
> del quale scrissi da Lione alla Ser[eni]tà V[ostra]; et procurarà anco
> di renovar le conventioni della pace et impedir se sarà
> a tempo che quella Regina non dia agiuto di dinari a
> questi ribelli li quali si crede che non habino ancora
> havuti quelli, che già scrissi alla Ser[eni]tà V[ostra] che speravano
> di havere per conto de i sali, poi che Mons[igno]r Merù f[rate]llo
> di Mom [?] eransi andato in Inghilterra per la rissolutione di
> questo negotio non è ancora partito di q[ue]l Regno.

[Rawdon Brown's nineteenth-century translation begins with the next lines.]

> E' gionto in questa città un s[igno]r Inglese nominato il Conte
> di Oxford giovane di circa XX o XXII anni di assai
> buona p[rese]ntia che fuggì già d'Inghilterra si dice per inclinatione
> che avesse alla religione Cattolica, ma poi ritornato per
> molta instantia fatta da quella Regina, la quale hora li
> ha dato buona licentia di poter andar a veder del mondo,
> poi che lo vedeva rissoluto di voler partire in tutti i modi
> [Brown ends here, but Morosini's commentary continues.]
> ha visitato qui il ser[enissi]mo Re che lo ha honorato assai poi che
> il medesimo Amb[asciato]re lo mette sopra di sé, et dicono che è
> molto nobile di quel Regno. E' venuto anco da me con
> il sodetto Amb[asciato]re dicendomi che havendo desiderio di venir
> a veder Vinetia desiderava che io l'accompagnassi con
> mie lettere alla Ser[eni]tà V[ostra]; siccome non mi pare di poterle
> negare—gra[tia] vo[stra].
> Parigi a XII di Marzo MDLXXV

Rendered into modern Italian:

> Lo stesso nunzio presentò a Sua Maestà un breve
> del Papa che gli concede di poter nominare Quattro
> chiese in cui questa prima domenica di Quaresima egli possa insieme a
>   tutta
> la corte fruire del santissimo Giubileo dell'anno santo e ha
> dato anche le bolle spedite gratis a Monsignor di Fecan dall'onorevole
> Duca di Guisa dell'Arcivescovado di Rens che valevano
> 5000 scudi. L'altro ieri Sua Maestà ha inviato
> in Inghilterra Monsignor della Sciatra per rispondere alla missione
> che quella Regina aveva affidato a Milord Nort,
> di cui scrissi da Lione alla Serenità Vostra; e inoltre farà in modo
> di rinnovare gli accordi di pace e impedire, se farà
> in tempo, che quella Regina dia sostegno in danaro
> a questi ribelli, dato che si crede non abbiano ancora
> avuto quei (denari) che speravano
> di avere per conto dei sali, e poiché Monsignor Merù fratello
> di Mom [?] che era andato in Inghilterra proprio per risolvere
> questa faccenda non è è ancora tornato da quel Regno.
> E' arrivato in questo città un signore inglese detto il Conte
> di Oxford, un giovane di circa 20 o 22 anni, di aspetto molto
> buono, che fuggì dall'Inghilterra si dice perché propendesse per
> la religione cattolica, ma poi era ritornato per la notevole
> insistenza di quella Regina, la quale ora gli
> ha concesso la libertà di viaggiare per il mondo,

poiché lo vedeva risoluto a partire ad ogni costo.
Ha fatto visita qui al serenissimo Re che gli ha reso molti onori,
poiché l'ambasciatore stesso lo considera di grado superiore a sé, e si dice
che in quel Regno è di assai nobile lignaggio. E' poi venuto da me
con il suddetto ambasciatore dicendomi che, volendo
vedere Venezia, desiderava che io gli fornisse lettere di raccomandazione
per la Serenità Vostra; siccome non mi sembra il caso
di negargliele, se Voi siete d'accordo.
Parigi, 12 marzo 1575

Finally, in English translation:

The same nuncio presented to His Majesty a papal brief that allows
him to be able to summon four churches where on this first Lent
Sunday he might attend the very Holy Jubilee of the Holy Year and
he gave also the Papal Bulls—worth 5000 écu (scudo)—sent free of
charge to Monsignor from Fecan by the honorable Duke from Guise
of Ren Archbishopric. The day before yesterday His Majesty sent
Monsignor from Sciatra to England to be responsible for the mission
that the Queen had entrusted Milord Nort with, about which I wrote
to Your Serenity from Lyon; moreover, he will act so as to renew
peace negotiations and prevent, if he has the time, that Queen sup-
porting these rebels by giving them money, given that they are be-
lieved not to have had yet the money they hoped to get on behalf of
the salt, and since Monsignor Merù, brother of Mom [?], who had
gone to England to solve the problem, hasn't come back yet from that
kingdom.
An English gentleman, called Il Conte di Oxford [The Earl of Oxford]
arrived in this city, a 20/22-year-old young man, very good looking.
He escaped from England as he seemed to be in favor of Catholicism,
but then he had returned because of the Queen's insistence, who has
allowed him to travel all over the world as she understood he wanted
to leave [England] at all costs. I visited the Most Serene King, who
highly honored him, as the ambassador himself thinks he is superior
to him, and he is said to be of a very noble high rank. Then, he came
to me with the above-mentioned ambassador, saying that he wanted
to see Venice and wished to have reference letters to be addressed to
Your Serenity; I do not think we should deny his request, if you agree
on that.
Paris, March 12, 1575

Along with the ubiquitous ambassadorial attempts to gauge any Englishman's
degree of susceptibility to Catholicism, Morosini emphasizes the indications
of Oxford's headstrong independence from Elizabeth. One can see that the
left bottom corner of the page has deteriorated, explaining why Rawdon

Brown would have given up on trying to decipher the phrase "di assai buona p[rese]ntia" = "very good looking." It is unfortunate that Brown unaccountably omitted three things: first, the subsequent lines of superlative praise for this distinguished visitor who made such a favorable impression on the Parisian court;[6] second, the reference to Oxford's energetic focus on visiting Venice; and third, Morosini's final recommendation to the Doge that he meet with Oxford, couched in a diplomatic conditional—a careful but urgent suggestion to his superior.

The Medici Ambassador's Letter to the Tuscan Duke

We found further confirmation that Oxford's journey was of political interest in Italy when we discovered the following among the Medici materials at the Florentine archive (Archivio di Firenze, *Filza 4604*):

> 2d di marzo 75
> [To the] Gran Duca
> …
>
>   Il Conte d'Oxfort
> genero del gran Thesauriere d'Inghilterra che hoggi governa quella Regina sen'è passato [se ne è andato è passato] in Alemagna et verrà anco [anche] in Italia per
> veder il paese. Se arrivando costì parerà [sembrerà] a V. Altezza di vederlo volentieri, l'assicuro che ogni dimostrazione d'amorevolezza sarà trovata molto buona da quella Principessa et
> il suocero di lui non potrà ricevere il maggior favore.
> …
> ~Vinc[enz]o Alamanni
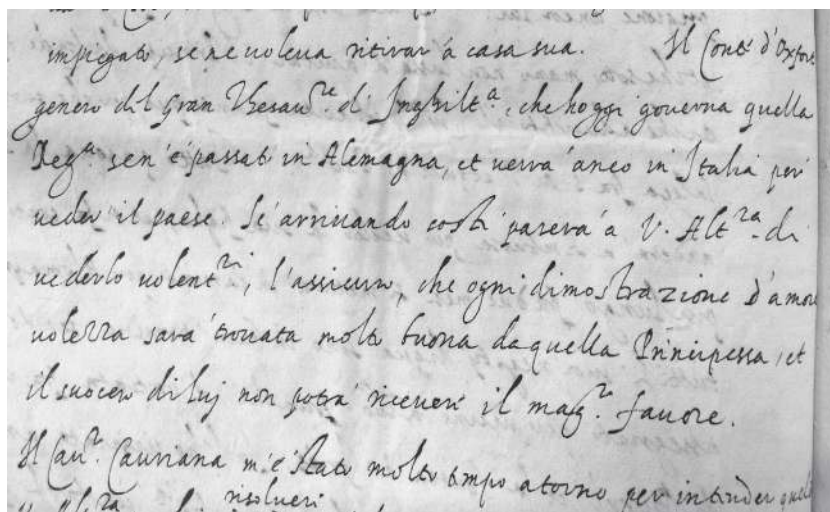
Figure 2: A letter to the Gran Duca in Medici materials at the Florentine archive.

Here is the English translation:

> The Earl of Oxford, son-in-law of England's Lord High Treasurer who now advises the Queen, has visited Germany and is going to come to Italy next to see the country. If Your Highness would like to cordially meet with him when he comes here, I can assure you that every demonstration of affection would be well appreciated by the Princess, and his father-in-law cannot receive a greater favor.

Although this letter predates Morosini's above, it concerns Oxford's post-Paris activity. Alamanni, the Medici ambassador to France from 1572 to 1576, seems a good deal more focused, politically and financially, than Morosini's report about the Earl in Paris, and his notice here betrays an opportunistic bent, as if Morosini were a fan of Castiglione's notion of the courtier and this ambassador more a follower of Machiavelli. Of course, for all their political courting of this courtier, the Italians could not have known how strained the actual relationship between Oxford and his father-in-law Burghley was.

We know that Oxford proceeded through Germany and visited Sturmius, the humanist Protestant educator; but we are not certain how exactly he entered Italy, since, as he wrote, "For feare of the inquisition I dare not pas by Milan, the Bishop wherof exersisethe such tyranie" (qtd. in Nelson 123; cf. Anderson 80; Ogburn and Ogburn 83). Oxford seems also initially to have been inclined to visit the Turkish court at some point: in a mid-March letter to Burghley, he wrote, "then perhaps I will bestowe two or thre monthes to se Constantinople, and sum part of Grece" (qtd. in Nelson 124). We have no indication that Oxford was able to travel this far; yet since he had access to Turkish connections in the Parisian and Venetian courts, we speculate about his possible covert diplomatic mission. Elizabeth was known for her practice of designating unusual terms of endearment upon her courtiers—and she bestowed upon Oxford the nickname of "Turk." Over time a variety of speculative explanations have been put forth to explain the reason for the appellation, but none appear to be definitive. Mr. Caniato of the Venice archive reports that the Turkish portion of the Venetian collection is the most deteriorated: regrettable, but intriguing and not entirely hopeless.

Oxford's Request to See Secret Chambers

We previously published and presented on our first archival discovery (Delahoyde and Moriarty, "New Evidence")[7] from summer 2015 in Venice: Oxford's signatures in Italian and Latin on a page preceded by a note from a scribe for the *Consiglio dei Dieci* (Council of Ten), recording the council's vote on Oxford's request for access to view their secret chambers in the Doge's Palace (Archivio di Venezia, *Capi*, *Pezzo* 76, 1575).
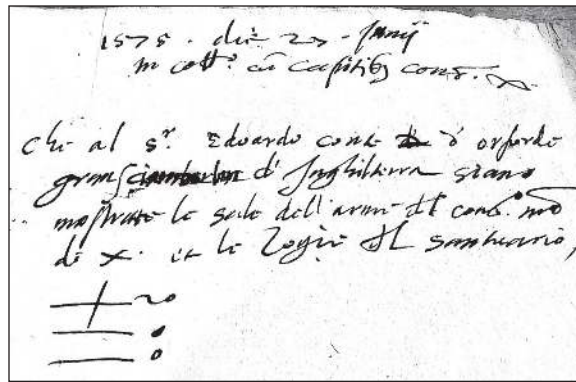
Figure 3A: A note from a scribe for the Consiglio dei Dieci, recording the council's vote.

> 1575 - day 27—June
> In the meeting with the heads of the Council of X
> [It was decided] That signore Eduardo Count of Oxforde, Great
> Chamberlain of England be allowed to be shown the chambers of
> arms of our Council of X and the places of sanctuary.[8]

Though Oxford received twenty yea votes and no nays from a council of ten, the Doge and other Venetian dignitaries often sat in during meetings (although other documents from the 1570s record only at most fifteen or sixteen attendees). This document, looking somewhat hastily scrawled, is followed by a page, originally folded, with Oxford's signatures in Italian and Latin, declaring himself:
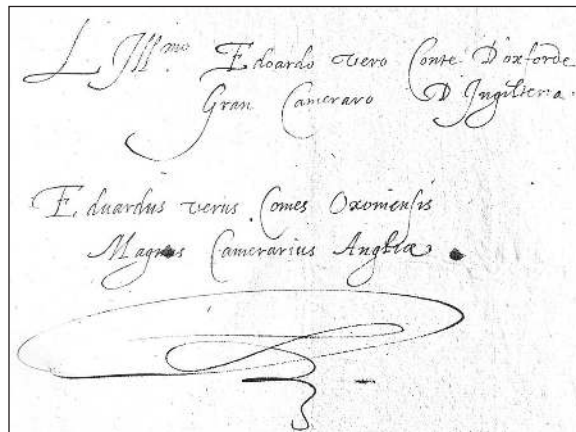
Figure 3B: Oxford's signatures in Italian and Latin.

> L'Ill[mo] [The most Illustrious] Edoardo Vero Conte D'oxforde
> Gran Cameraro D'Ingilterra [Grand Chamberlain of England].
> Eduardus Verus Comes Oxonensis
> Magnus Camerarius Angliae.

He adds a decorative swirl underneath. Unlike William of Stratford with his six scrawled signatures on legal documents, here is someone clearly taking pride not just in his status ("The most Illustrious"), but in his name and in the artful flourish of his every written word.

Uncovering these documents begins to render obsolete the frustration that "There is no definite record of Lord Oxford's whereabouts in the summer months of 1575" (Ogburn and Ogburn 84). He was in Venice at least till late June, perhaps also because the theatrical season in Venice lasted to July (Anderson 81). In spite of the growing threat of plague in Venice in mid-summer 1575, this was ample opportunity to meet the great painter Titian (Anderson 95-96); to become connected to Santa Maria Formosa and San Giorgio dei Greci (Anderson 82); and on the north side to be visiting Campo San Geremia because of Virginia Padoana (Anderson 83), the famous courtesan.

We wish to point out that Oxford was not asking the Consiglio that he be present at a meeting of the intense and intimidating Council. Rather, the rooms to which he requested access were covered with the works of Italian Renaissance masters such as Veronese, Tintoretto, Aliense, Vassilacchi, and Zelotti. Here is evidence of Oxford the aesthete, eager for new sensory experience, especially of an artistic nature entirely unavailable in England. Now that we know Oxford accessed these chambers, we are continuing our research for possible connections from the paintings in these secret chambers with the Shakespeare works, especially *Othello* and *The Merchant of Venice*.

Oxford Incognito

Since this discovery, we have been increasingly troubled by the inability to uncover other Venetian documents concerning Oxford. "The earl would have had to present his papers of introduction from the Venetian ambassador in Paris to the *doge* (duke) and his court at the Palazzo Ducale—the city's central municipal building" (Anderson 81). As we wrote previously:

> We know that a nobleman of Oxford's caliber—Lord Great Chamberlain of England—even if he had merely been indulging in a "continental tour," should have been written of, as we now have an understanding of the processes for when foreign dignitaries arrived in Italian cities such as Venice: how one had to receive licenses, permissions, letters of introduction and privileges of safe conduct, from various branches of royal courts and governments in order to move between cities and countries on the continent. When Philip Sidney traveled through in 1574, he had to register his presence and seek a license for carrying arms and maintaining a household for

which he accepted responsibility [Rawdon Brown, April 19, 1574, Consiglio dei Dieci, to Padua, arms and attendants]. Foreigners, nobility, and even locals were required to register any relocations. Sidney appears in the Venetian registry; but where is Oxford? We found him …making his special request to view the secret chambers with all the artwork. But long prior to this request of late June, on arrival in Venice and regarding his doings there, he should be showing up somewhere in the dozens of buste we scoured. There should be a record of his presentation at some of the bureaucratic offices, the first stops for anyone of note received at the Doge's Palace: the Capi del Consiglio dei Dieci, Dispacci (lettere) degli ambasciatori (dispatches of ambassadors); the Consiglio di Dieci, Deliberazioni (deliberations); the Collegio (College); Notatorio (Notary); the Senato Deliberazioni, Terra (Senate deliberations concerning land matters); the Senato Deliberazioni, Secreti; the Ceremoniali; the Notarile, Atti (acts); the Bollettino storico, notizario estero (historical bulletins and newsletters concerning foreign matters); the Cancelleria (Chancellory); the Esecutori delle deliberazioni del Senato (executors of decisions by the Senate); the Capi di Consiglio, licenze per visitare ambasciatori e personaggi esteri (licenses for visiting ambassadors and foreign persons). And he should be registered somewhere in the *Antichi Inventari dell'Archivio Gonzaga* (Delahoyde and Moriarty, "Vanishing" 27).

We became concerned when we scoured *buste* (envelopes) containing documents from branches of Venetian government that should at least confirm the Consiglio's determination and found the designation "Carta Tagliata" (= Cut Page). We then viewed the *buste* first-hand and, although we have no expertise in the forensics of vandalism, the cut did not appear to us like a yellowed, seventeenth-century page tear, but the result of a much more recent blade cut, which of course is worrisome.

Still, we do not believe that traditional Shakespeare advocates are responsible for Oxford's archival obliteration. In de Vere's odd disappearance act, one is more encouragingly reminded of Shakespeare's "astonishing capacity to be everywhere and nowhere, to assume all positions and to slip free of all constraints" (Greenblatt 242). We have asked ourselves, "Did Oxford seek to gondola under the radar, another early chapter in his eternal curse of anonymity?" (Delahoyde and Moriarty, "Vanishing" 27).

Prior to his continental tour, the Earl had already demonstrated his stealth. His semi-defection of July 1574, according to French ambassador La Mothe Fenelon's report to Catherine de Medici, had Queen Elizabeth "completely shaken and full of apprehension" about Oxford having "passed incognito across the sea to Flanders" (qtd. in Anderson 70). In May 1575, Lord Burghley,

attempting to keep track of his son-in-law's movements, received a letter from Sir Richard Shelley in Venice, reporting that Oxford turned down "a house furnished that would have cost him nothing." Alan Nelson acknowledges, "Thus Oxford declined direct surveillance along with free housing" (Nelson 126). Oxford was also subsequently able to slip away from another of Burghley's agents:

> There is no definite record of Lord Oxford's whereabouts in the summer months of 1575. [No longer entirely true, as per our discovery here.] William Lewyn, the painter, who had accompanied him thus far from Paris, lost track of his Lordship and reported to Burghley that he did not know whether he had gone to Greece or was still in Italy... Thus we find that Burghley was employing the portrait-painter, whom Ambassador Dale had recommended, as a spy. The mettlesome Earl of Oxford had obviously discovered what was up and had escaped in no little disgust (Ogburn and Ogburn 84).

Then, Anderson points to an "unusual wording—not that de Vere never made it to Milan but that he'd 'passed this way [in]visible to any English eye'—suggest[ing] that de Vere had entered Milan incognito" (Anderson 105).

Are all the disguises and dissembling in the Shakespeare plays merely theatrical, or do they also actually reveal another autobiographical element? Disguises occur in numerous Shakespeare plays: in *Love's Labour's Lost*; in *As You Like It*; in *Twelfth Night* with Feste pointlessly dressed as Sir Topas while Maria admits that Malvolio couldn't see him anyway; in *Henry V* when the King can lurk among the commoners (Anderson 104); in *Antony and Cleopatra* when the title characters go on a people-watching date—"To-night we'll wander through the streets and note / The qualities of people" (I.i.53-54)—et al. It is highly conceivable that Oxford blurred theater and reality, exploring his own identities through the adoption of alter-egos in disguises that allowed him less restricted access to all strata of his world. He may even have established a diplomatic trend: according to an ambassadorial report from 7 October 1604, "Secretary Scaramelli reports to the Cabinet that the English Ambassador ([Henry] Wotton) has arrived in Venice, but that he desires to remain incognito for two or three days to put his house in order before receiving visits and take a purge" (Brown, X.282).

In a previous article ("Vanishing"), we speculated that perhaps Oxford was able to bypass the usual obligatory paper-trail of introductions, to skirt the bureaucracies, and to have been escorted secretly and immediately into the

interior circles of power if he were on a diplomatic mission for the Elizabethan court of sufficient importance. Perhaps this scenario accounts for making the character of Othello remind all present at his death scene, "I have done the State some service, and they know 't" (V.ii.339).[9]

Was the real nature of Oxford's presence on the continent top-secret enough for the reports of him to have been encrypted? We have seen a large number of ambassadorial documents partially or fully rendered in code. We will continue searching. We intend to explore the archives in Genoa, the location at which Oxford bragged that one of his military adventures took place (Anderson 91-92). In September of 1575, Oxford was returning from Genoa due to "extreme heats" and having injured his knee on a Venetian galley (Nelson 128; cf. Ogburn and Ogburn 84-85). In early October, he appeared in Venice, apparently having visited Milan after all (Nelson 130). Late in November, Oxford was in Padua, where we also hope to discover traces of him.

Further Continental Political Interest in the Earl of Oxford

In 2017, again in Florence, we discovered another Medici document recording political interest in the Earl of Oxford (*Archivio Mediceo del Principato*, *Varie*, Doc. 122). The reference occurs in a multi-page brief, summarizing for the Medicis the essentials regarding England and its organization: its districts, nobles, councils, barons, bishops and archbishops, etc., with an eye to their power, status, and Catholic affiliation.

The last few pages describe the military prowess of England (the number of horses, soldiers, etc.) and more specifically of the Catholics (e.g., how well armed the bishops are). The writer suggests that provided that some 10,000 Spanish and Italian soldiers volunteer to join them, they already have "10,000-12,000 Catholic soldiers [*santi soldati*] and a thousand horses with spears and a thousand archbishops on horseback [who will be] certainly sufficient to reinstate the Catholic religion in the Kingdom [*rimettere la Religione Cattolica in esso Regno*]." This has been reported by "some Captains," according to the writer. Then he reports on the international trade of the kingdom, the import and export of goods: salt, for example, seems to be precious for the English too. The information comes from a merchant who was born in Milan but spent fifty years in England transporting goods to the thirty-nine "provinces" that are listed and classified in the document.

One list includes people who are either part of a particular office or a department (e.g., *tesorero delle rendite*—treasurer of the income department;

capitanio di l'armaria—captain in the military; etc.).[10] Of historic interest is the following:

> Appreso saranno il Sig[no]ri del Regno che non sono de consili e quelli che sono Cattolici sono seg[na]ti co[n] + e li partiali Catt[olic]i con ++.
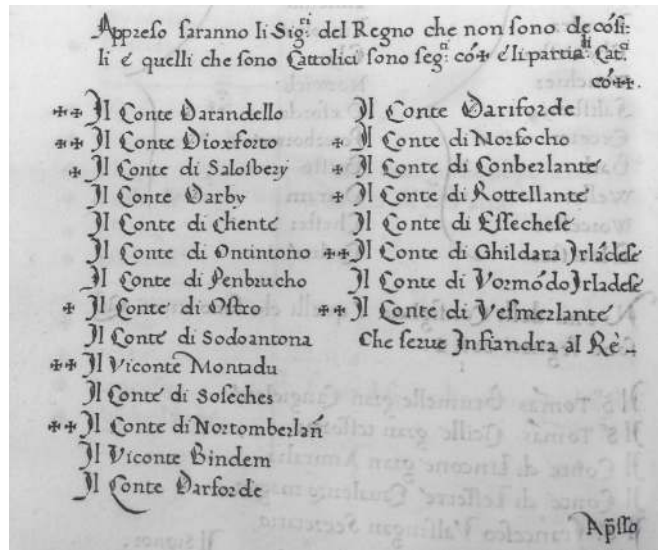
Figure 4: A Medici document listing nobles and Catholic affiliation.

The English translation:

> What follows is a list of the Kingdom's Gentlemen who do not belong to the above offices/counsels, and those who are Catholic are marked with + and those who are partially Catholic with ++.
> ++ Il Conte Darandello
> ++ Il Conte Dioxforto
> + Il Conte di Salosbery
>   Il Conte Darby
> …

Of the twenty-three names, Oxford's is the second listed (after the Earl of Arundel), and he receives the two-cross designation, indicating that the Italian Catholics consider him a potential ally. This is where the assumption that religion and politics are all that matter about Oxford goes awry. The Italians assessed Henry FitzAlan, the Earl of Arundel correctly; but de Vere's informal or secret conciliatory functions notwithstanding, in essence he was inclined towards culture and art, not the pursuit of power. In Shakespeare's play, for example, the "seduction of Brutus" into the plot against Julius Caesar details the subtle luring strategies employed by would-be assassins, and

the disastrous results of letting oneself be influenced by those consumed by extremist politics.

In the end Oxford proved loyal to the crown, realizing that his cousin Lord Henry Howard, Sir Charles Arundell, and Francis Southwell were not simply appreciating the culture of Catholic countries but were murderous in intent. After Oxford attempted, just before Christmas 1580, to alert Elizabeth to the danger posed by these traitors and would-be assassins, "Arundell's Accusations" were formulated to indict Oxford, declaring him guilty of a wide assortment of murderous, drunken, sexual, and satanic sins, including his ostensible insulting of Elizabeth's singing voice (Ogburn and Ogburn 297ff, esp. 303; Anderson 165ff; Nelson 249ff). Although another bitter and defamatory "Loss of Good Name" for Oxford, Arundell proved to be a traitor, defecting to Spain (Ogburn and Ogburn 704). The conniving Howard bided his time and eventually found himself thriving at court again after the Machiavellian manipulator Sir Robert Cecil gained power.

In mid-December, Oxford travelled to Florence (Nelson 131), from which he proceeded south to Siena. Burghley saved Oxford's Siena letter, dated 3 January 1576 (Fowler 203-247; Nelson 132; cf. Anderson 101), another in which he insisted that Burghley "sell my lands" so that he could continue his travels.

Where did Oxford stay while in Siena? Venice had the Doge; Mantua had the Gonzagas; Florence, the Medicis. In the Siena archive, we asked for help to determine who was the primary family there in 1575/76—with whom would a travelling English dignitary have resided? The librarian indicated that such an identification is impossible by presenting us with an enormous tome listing the main families of the time. No one family was supreme. Siena by the 1570s was no longer an independent *Repubblica*: its governorship was gone. It had been absorbed into the Medicis' Tuscan empire, and it was now under Florentine rule.

Another archival researcher suggested that we turn our energies from the State Archive towards the Accademia dei Rozzi, where he believed documents concerning theater history were kept. We subsequently learned that the Accademia's archival materials dating before 1690 were given to the Biblioteca Comunale degli Intronati. The Accademia degli Intronati was a sixteenth-century intellectual and creative club, collectively responsible for the *commedia* titled *Gl'Ingannati* (*The Deceived Ones*), the source play for Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* and one regularly performed in Siena on 6 January: the Epiphany, or "Twelfth Night." Clearly, finding more about Oxford in Siena in early January 1576 is a valuable enterprise.

Eventually, our research led us towards three Sienese luminaries Oxford would have wanted to meet: Piccolomini, Lombardelli, and Bulgarini. Bellisario Bulgarini (1539-1619) was an ambassador and a poet/playwright, active

when Oxford was in town, though mostly publishing later. *Gli Scambi* (*The Exchanges*),

> recited by the students of the Studio of Siena in 1574 (in 1575 according to the Cerreta) and published in 1611, presents the typical characters of the Siena *commedia* of the time, imitating closely the motives of *The Deceivers* of Intronati Academics, and in the whole was judged mediocre by Sanesi "for the overwhelming enveloping of the fairy tale, for the proliferation of flirty dialogues of inappropriate considerations and the excessive number of horrific scenes" (trans. from Agostini).

Orazio Lombardelli (1545-1608) is another Sienese person of interest, having written books on grammar and literary subjects, and having dedicated works to Englishmen such as Robert Peckham and Henry Wotton, whom he may have hosted. The most promising leads, however, point to Alessandro Piccolomini (1508-1579)—a writer, philosopher, and playwright whose comedies were produced by the Accademia degli Intronati, and who, despite the communal attribution, is probably responsible himself for having written *Gl'Ingannati*. We return to Siena in 2018 to follow up on this very promising lead.

One additional trail that we necessarily left incomplete focuses on the Venetian *filza* listed first in this article. Rawdon Brown translated not just Morosini's announcement of Oxford's arrival in Paris, but also his departure. Oxford left Venice in early March 1576 (Nelson 134), journeyed through Milan, and into Paris. On 3 April 1576, Morosini wrote from Paris to Venice (Nelson 135). Rawdon Brown records Venetian ambassador Morosini's *bolletino* to the Signory:

> The Earl of Oxford, an English gentleman has arrived here. He has come from Venice, and, according to what has been said to me by the English ambassador here resident [Dale], speaks in great praise of the numerous courtesies which he has received in that city; and he reported that on his departure from Venice your Serenity had already elected an Ambassador to be sent to the Queen, and the English Ambassador expressed the greatest satisfaction at the intelligence. I myself, not having received any information from your Serenity or from any of my correspondents, did not know what answer to give concerning this matter (Brown, *VII*. 548).

We have a discrepancy to resolve. Early in 1576, Venice had voted against appointing an ambassador to England—in favor, 44; opposed, 131—as one can read in deliberations transcribed by Rawdon Brown (though misdated). Indeed, Venice did not resume ambassadorial relations until 1603! Did the Venetians lie to Oxford as he left Italy about what the polls were indicating concerning Venice's political leanings? Or was Oxford, before his Parisian departure on 10 April, deceiving the French? We are determined to access

this document, since, like the earlier Rawdon Brown excerpt (above), the transcription may be incomplete. Perhaps with added contextual information, we may illuminate this curious diplomatic deception.

Medici Bolletino Alludes to Oxford in 1579

Although Oxford likely absorbed what he needed to become Shakespeare from first-hand experience of Italian theater, we hypothesize that he still corresponded with key cultural centers and primary families after his continental trip, perhaps seeking musical scores, if not literary and theatrical publications. Indeed, professor Roger Prior discovered that Shakespeare had used very selective, even unique, Italian sources for both *As You Like It* and *Love's Labor's Lost* derived from Torquato Tasso's play *Aminta*.[11]

We expanded our researches beyond 1575/76 to more inclusive *buste* when we exhausted the more focused resources in an archive. Consequently, we discovered a *bolletino* referencing Oxford from 1579. Many will recognize the newsworthy incident (*Archivio Mediceo del Principato*, *Varie*, Doc. 113).

The transcription:

> A i giorni passati fra il Conte di Oxford et Filippo Sidney furon parole
> di dispregio et gravi; non si sono ancora potuti accommodare, et è
> di qualche conseguenza per esser il p.º [= primo] nobiliss.º [= nobilis-
> simo], et l'altro nipote del
> Conte di Losseter.

Rendered into modern Italian:

> Nei giorni scorsi fra il Conte di Oxford e Filippo Sidney ci furono gra-
> vi offese; non si sono ancora rappacificati, e questo comporta qualche
> conseguenza perché il primo è nobilissimo, e l'altro è nipote del conte
> di Losseter.
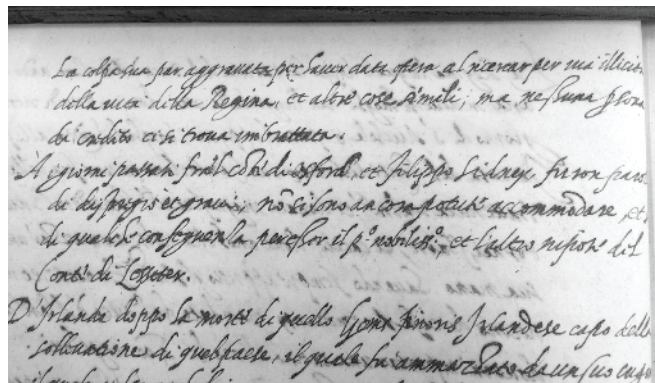
Figure 5: A bolletino referencing Oxford from 1579.

And the English translation:

> Over the past few days, the Earl of Oxford and Philip Sidney have exchanged a few grave verbal offenses; they have not reconciled yet, which entails certain consequences as the former is of a most noble lineage and the latter is a nephew of the earl of Leicester.

Once again, diplomats connected to foreign courts show a keen interest at news of strife between Protestant parties and even petty tensions among luminaries in the Elizabethan court. The "tennis-court incident" is well known (Anderson 151f; Nelson 195ff), being the most vivid of the scant sources of information concerning Oxford in the *Dictionary of National Biography*. Typically and unfortunately, interest in the Earl is limited merely to the political sphere, and his traditional biographers have judged him incorrectly.

The Oxfordian writer Charles Beauclerk has asserted, "if you get Shakespeare wrong, you get his plays wrong ... if you get Shakespeare wrong, you get the Elizabethan age wrong—its literature, its culture, its politics" (Beauclerk 16). I have added that if you get Shakespeare wrong, you get literature wrong, and probably you get the very phenomenon of creativity wrong (Delahoyde, "Preface" 1). The archival discoveries discussed here indicate that it all began with his contemporaries at home and abroad getting Edward de Vere wrong.

The State Archives concern state politics, but not all materials concerning 1575/76 have been donated and collected at the various archives, much less indexed. We think it noteworthy that descendants of Baldassare Castiglione decided recently to donate to the Mantovan archives a collection of early sixteenth-century letters. What else they and other families, in private collections outside the archives, may own from later in the century is a question we intend to pursue in discovering what transformed the Englishman Edward de Vere into the international, multi-cultural, universal "Shake-speare."

Endnotes

1. Most of the material in this article was presented at the 2017 Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship annual conference in Chicago.

2. Our findings supplement the work by B.M. Ward, Mark Anderson, and Cheryl Eagan-Donovan regarding Oxford's continental tour.

3. Rawdon Brown and G. Cavendish Bentinck, eds, *Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts Relating to English Affairs in the Archives of Venice, Vol. VII*, 1558-1580, London: 1890. We refer specifically to an ambassadorial letter from 12 March 1575, and another from 3 April 1576, each discussed in this article.

4. Mr. Giovanni Caniato, State Archivist in Venice, has given us the privilege of viewing the file in question and of photographing this first of the two de Vere documents.

5. An infinitude of gratitude is due from us to Elisabetta Gavioli and Claudio Fraccari, scholars and teachers in Mantova, for their help in transcribing and translating most of our discoveries discussed in this article, and to Mrs. Maria Luisa Aldegheri, now retired as Senior Archival Librarian at the Archivio di Stato di Mantova, who supplied detailed help with transcriptions and other subtleties. Additional acknowledgement is due to Elitza Kotzeva at Washington State University for her nuanced Italian-to-English fine-tuning.

6. Meanwhile, a group of young Venetian gentlemen were visiting the English court. Rawdon Brown misdated to a year later this simultaneous ambassadorial mission. We intend eventually to publish a fuller explanation of sixteenth-century Anglo-Italian diplomatic relations, including an explanation of the importance of the Schifanoya letters in England and of ambassador Michiel in Venice, tasked with monitoring English affairs.

7. Presentations include " 'Shake-speare' in Italy and Archival Spritzatura" at the Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship Conference in Ashland, Oregon, September 2015 (available online as "New Evidence of Oxford in Italy," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6D4SkN7UGPs); "Vanishing Vere in Venice" at the Shakespeare Oxford Fellowship Conference, Boston, November 2016; and "Loves' Labours Lost and Found in the Italian Archives" at the SOF Conference in Chicago, October 2017.

8. According to Elitza Kotzeva, the less literal translation for "places of sanctuary," sounding more natural in English, might simply be "sanctuaries." The noun preceding "sanctuary" is plural, but it is unclear whether these are "luoghi del santuario," or rather "loghi" del santuario." In the Venetian dialect, luogo was often used as "logo" (*Dizionario del dialetto Veneziano*).

9. That Oxford may have been given some diplomatic work to do on the continent is proposed by Anderson (esp. 74-75, 461), and W. Ron Hess.

10. Elitza Kotzeva has provided this overall assessment of the document. Mrs. Maria Luisa Aldegheri helped us with the translation.

11. See Prior, "Tasso's *Aminta* in Two Shakespearean Comedies." In particular:

> Shakespeare's borrowings from the *Aminta* raise the question: what text of the play did he use? After its first performance in 1573, several different versions were in circulation. The Epilogo, for example, or "Amor Fuggitivo," appears in only one extant edition, the Baldiniana of 1581, and in two manuscript copies. The short musical interludes between the acts, or "intermedi," are even rarer. They are found in no existing manuscript, and do not appear in print until an edition of 1666 (Rome, Dragondelli), where it is said that they used to be performed during stage performances. There is no doubt, however, that the text that Shakespeare used, probably in 1593, contained both the Epilogo in *As You Like It*, and from the "Intermedio secondo" in both *Love's Labor's Lost* and *As You Like It*. He had available, therefore, a text of the *Aminta* which was more "complete" than any that has come down to us from that time. This means that he is likely to have obtained it from an unusually privileged and knowledgeable source. It also suggests that he knew what a complete text was, and took the trouble to get hold of one. There were plenty of incomplete editions of the *Aminta* available in England in the 1590s but Shakespeare seems to have rejected them (Prior 275).

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"The Knotty Wrong-Side": Another Spanish Connection to the First Folio

by Gabriel Ready

> Translations (as says a witty Spaniard) are, in respect of their Originals, like the knotty wrong-side of Arras-Hangings: by his wits leave, as the fair outside could ill be seen, without help of the knots within; no more can the fame of well-deserving Author be far spread, without the labor of a Translator. [1]
>
> Leonard Digges, *Gerardo the Unfortunate Spaniard*, 1622

Secondary literature on Shakespeare is replete with commentary about Ben Jonson's address "To the Reader," though it is difficult to find an analysis that goes beyond its message and the hypnotic power of the Droeshout engraving it faces. For a few, the small poem conceals a cryptographic message awaiting a worthy codebreaker; for others, it is folly to look too deeply into the ten-line poem. What is remarkably absent in the commentary is an attempt to analyze the poetic form used by Jonson.

One may be tempted to dismiss the metrics in Jonson's poem because there was no established tradition in England of a ten-line eight-syllable stanza. However, that would make it an anomaly among poems of its day, which were known to pay obeisance to precedent and to European models, ancient and modern.

Imitation and varying degrees of translation were the standard practice among Jonson and his peers at this time, a period marked by what Sidney Lee called a "mosaic of plagiarisms, a medley of imitative or assimilative studies" (Lee 170). The dream of poetic regulation was so enveloping that generations of scholars have said that the shorter poetic works of the early modern period were but mere exercises in form to demonstrate a poet's facility, as if repetition was an end in itself.

It so happens that there is a Spanish verse form with identical metrics to Jonson's address. The verse form is called the *décima* and it is a stanza of 10 eight-syllable lines.[2] Could the shared metrics between Jonson's "To the Reader" and the Spanish *décima* be intentional or was it just a coincidence?

In the early modern period England was ever watchful of its rival, Spain, and during the years preceding 1623 the level of anxiety was acute, as the Stuarts in London and the Habsburgs in Madrid were negotiating to finalize the Spanish Match, a proposal to marry Charles, Prince of Wales to King Philip's sister, the Infanta Maria. A dynastic marriage between Protestant and Catholic families would mean a prolonged peace while the alternative would most assuredly mean war. England was sharply divided over the direction of King James's foreign policy, which led to a parliamentary crisis from 1621 to 1623 and widespread Protestant fears that the country would revert to Catholicism.

Knotty cultural politics drove the two European empires into a public match of social criticism and commentary. England, for its part, was utterly transfixed with Spain: Catholic Spain became a subject of importance in English pamphlets and served as the subtext for the private letters of diplomats and spies. Jacobean writers were plagiarizing wholesale from their Spanish counterparts, a phenomenon that resulted in an overabundance of Hispanic inventions and motifs: plotting Spaniards, Jesuitical Spaniards, Machiavellian Spaniards, Roguish Spaniards, Spanish Bawds. The dramatist and poet Ben Jonson satirically mocks London's Hispanic turn[3] in his play, *The Alchemist* (1610) where he portrays "the fashion for all things Spanish… a play in which even pretending to be a Spaniard guarantees success" (Fuchs 141).

Playwrights such as Thomas Middleton and John Fletcher both appropriated Spanish plots, despite Protestant affiliations. Protestant families, hedging their bets, sent their children for Spanish lessons (Pérez Fernández 10-11). Wealthy families politically opposed to King James' Spanish policy saw to it that their names were promoted in prefaces of translated Spanish literary works.[4] In 1623 alone there were approximately 30 English translations of Spanish texts (Samson 91). Just one year earlier Jonson's commendatory verse for James Mabbe's translation of Mateo Alemán's picaresque novel *Guzmán de Alfarache* was published in English as *The Rogue*. Professor Barbara Fuchs, quoted above, describes the English encounter with Spain during this period as *translatio* writ large (Fuchs 23).

What if the Spanish *décima* is a model for Jonson's first poem in the *First Folio*? What if the number of lines of the stanza is not an accident? Even

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when considering the English fixation with Spain (Samson 100), it is nonetheless surprising that an English classicist such as Jonson would draw inspiration from another modern language, a vulgar tongue, in order to introduce the face of Shakespeare, the English bard.

Between mid-October and early November 1623, the prefatory material to the First Folio, including Jonson's ten-line poem, was prepared for printing by Isaac Jaggard in his shop at exactly the same time that English Protestants were breathing a sigh of relief that the Prince of Wales returned safely from an eight-month sojourn in Madrid. So, why would Jonson look to Spain for inspiration at a time when the relationship between his country and Spain was so strained and when the consequences of the failed Spanish Match were not yet fully known?

Jonson wrote a second poem about Shakespeare in the preface to the First Folio as well, entitled "To the Memory of My Beloved the Author, Mr. William Shakespeare." The two poems were designed with a purpose. "To the Reader" is very different from Jonson's eulogy, "To the Memory of My Beloved the Author, Mr. William Shakespeare," with the latter's verse in heroic couplets and classical intonations, seemingly a poem for the omnipresent and "all time."

The English octosyllabic couplet in 1623

"To the Reader" appears on the first page of the First Folio, on the left page, opposite the Droeshout engraving. When analyzing the meter of Jonson's poem, two basic aspects of its construction are relevant: (1) the total of ten lines in each stanza, and (2) the verse, with each line having eight syllables with an iambic beat which, when paired in a rhyme, form octosyllabic couplets.

Jonson was an individualist in that he frequently wrote in octosyllabic couplets despite a prevailing view among contemporaries that such verse was old-fashioned and belonged to a previous epoch. Jonson used octosyllabic couplets in 18 of his works before 1623, and coincidentally, two songs in his play *Poetaster* (sung by Crispinus and Hermogenes, 2.2) have the same dimensions as "To the Reader."[5]
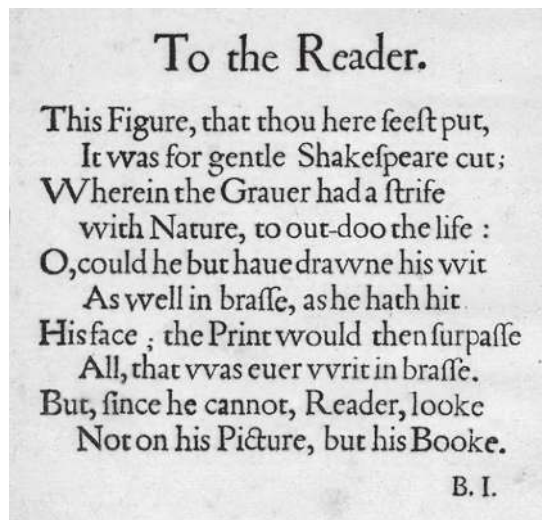
The French invented the octosyllabic couplet in the 10th century and it was quickly adopted by the English, Italians, Spanish and Portuguese. The Middle English poet Geoffrey Chaucer wrote two important poems using octosyllabic couplets: *The Book of the Duchess* and *The House of Fame*. Chaucer's near contemporary John Gower wrote his religious epic *Confessio Amantis* in octosyllabic couplets.

The octosyllabic couplet was typically used in the miracle and morality plays, and in hymns and songs. Even Shakespeare used octosyllabic couplets in his plays; *Pericles* has the most octosyllabic lines of any of his plays and Jonson described it as moldy and stale.[6] The primary source for the play is Gower's *Confessio Amantis*. Well-known in the Elizabethan period, Gower was fittingly resurrected by Shakespeare for the choral role, speaking in a pastiche of clunky octosyllabic couplets: "To sing a song that old was sung, / From ashes ancient Gower is come" (*Pericles*, 1.1.1-2). Jonson admired Gower's low mimetic style, his plain vernacular; thirty-two of the 118 quotations in Jonson's *English Grammar* come from *Confessio Amantis* (Yeager 229-30).

Around the 15th century the octosyllabic couplet was overtaken by a longer line, the ten-syllable line, or pentameter. While the English octosyllabic couplet did not fall entirely into desuetude, it was endangered by delimited categorization, predominantly used in the pastoral mode, as the newer verse line gained in popularity in the 16th and 17th centuries.[7]

Among English treatises on versification of the early modern period, the octosyllabic couplet receives little attention. In 1575, George Gascoigne, championing verse that was as English in origin as possible, announced the supremacy of the iambic pentameter verse line for English poets in his poetic manual *Certain Notes of Instruction*. Among his precepts, the ten-syllable rhyme royal verse line is especially good for "grave discourses," whereas ballads, with fewer syllables per line (e.g. the octosyllabic line), are for "light matters" (Gascoigne 471). On the Sonnet in particular, Gascoigne writes:

> Then have you Sonnets: some think that all Poems (being short) may be called Sonnets, as in deed it is a diminutive word derived of *Sonare,* but yet I can best allow to call those Sonnets which are of fourteen lines, every line containing ten syllables… . There are Dizaines, and Sixaines, which are of ten lines, and of six lines, commonly used by the French, which some English writers do also term by the name of Sonnets. [spelling modernized] (Gascoigne 471-472)

Alluding to the Latin meaning of *sonetta*, "a little sound or song," Gascoigne considers poetic stanzas totaling ten or even six lines to be "sonnets." The French *dizain* is defined by Gascoigne in the context of the longer ten-syllable line, even though examples of the French *dizain* using shorter eight-syllable

lines were extant. Gascoigne was possibly thinking of Maurice Scève's *Délie* (1544), which was a collection of 449 influential *dizains*; each of Scève's stanzas has 10 lines of 10 syllables, sometimes referred to as the 10 X 10.

Similarly, in 1591, English courtier, author and translator Sir John Harington equated the sonnet with other small poems in his glossary of literary terms, *Brief Apology of Poetry*. Harington writes that "As for the Pastoral with the Sonnet or Epigram, though many times they savour of wantonness and love and toying…" (Harington 197). For the unromantic Jonson, the operative word here is "toying".[8] In 1602 Samuel Daniel, in his *Defense of Ryme,* writes that the sonnet is "ordered in a small-room," and that even smaller stanzas, as few as 7-8 lines, share a common "happiness" with the traditional fourteen-line sonnet (Daniel 45-46).

George Puttenham in his *The Arte of English Poesie* (1589) captures the prevailing attitude best when writing about Gower, but clearly makes a critical late 16th-century value judgement of octosyllabic couplets:

> Saving for his [Gower's] good and grave moralities, had nothing in him highly to be commended, for his verse was homely and without good measure, his words strained much deal out of the French writers, his rhyme wrested, and in his inventions small subtlety. (Chapter XXXI) [spelling modernized]

The Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics lists the following recognized stanzas for the octosyllabic line: quatrain (various languages, four lines); triolet (French, eight lines); *redondilla* (Spanish, four lines); *décima* (Spanish, ten lines); and the Pushkin Onegin stanza (Russian, fourteen lines) (970). By the early 17th century the octosyllabic couplet verse appears to have been primarily linked to the pastoral and as a stand-alone stanza, loosely categorized as a sonnet. As noted above, English poems using octosyllabic couplets are quite often based on quatrains.

The quatrains can be stuck together to form one stanza and appear as a sonnet, as is the case for Jonson's poem titled "A Sonnet" (published in 1640):

> Though I am young, and cannot tell
> Either what Death, or Love is well,
> Yet I have heard they both beare Darts,
> And both doe aime at humane hearts.
> And then againe I have beene told,
> Love wounds with heat, and death with cold,
> So that I feare they doe but bring
> Extreams, to touch and meane one thing.
> As in a ruine we it call,
> One thing to be blowne up and fall,

> Or to our end like way may have
> By a flash of lightning, or a wave:
> So Loves inflamed shaft, or band,
> Will kill as soone as Deaths cold hand:
> Except Loves fires the vertue have.
> To fright the frost out of the grave.

Note that Jonson's "sonnet" does not follow the fixed form of the Petrarchan-English sonnet.

Not all English "sonnets" were constructed using iambic pentameters of fourteen-line stanzas. Again, in *Hymns of Astræa* (1599), Sir John Davies presents twenty-six poems, each titled "sonnet." The acrostic poems of sixteen eight-syllable line stanzas were dedicated to Queen Elizabeth. Davies does not use the expected quatrain, though. Thematically, "Sonnet XII: To her Picture" (1599) is not unlike Jonson's address:

> **E** xtreme was his Audacitie;
> **L** ittle his Skill did finisht thee,
> **I** am asham'd and Sorry,
> **S** o dull her counterfait should be,
> **A** nd she so full of glory.
> **B** ut here are colours red and white,
> **E** ach lyne, and each proportion right;
> **T** hese Lynes, this red, and whitenesse,
> **H** auve wanting yet a life and light,
> **A** Majestie, and brightnesse.
> **R** ude conterfait, I then did erre,
> **E** ven now when I would needs inferred
> **G** reat boldnesse in thy maker;
> **I** did mistake, he was not bold,
> **N** or durst his eyes her eyes behold:
> **A** nd this made him mistake her.

Octosyllabic couplets in prefaces up to 1623

In the sub-genre of English prefaces, poems using octosyllabic lines or verse with octosyllabic couplets were extremely rare. A survey of *Paratexts in English Printed Drama to 1642* contains only two poetic examples of octosyllabic couplets out of hundreds of prefaces published prior to 1623. Neither of these two examples has a ten-line stanza, and only one of those examples is actually an address to the reader. The only explanation for the prejudice against the octosyllabic couplet is that it was not as new as the ten-syllable line. Prefaces were a relatively new genre in literary history—a genre fundamental to the marketing and selling of books. The octosyllabic couplet represented

the previous epoch, before the printing press, associated with scribal culture and even oral cultures (Birge Vitz and Kittay).

When the eight-syllable couplet was used in a preface, there was a reason for it. In the collected works *The Posies of George Gascoigne Esquire* (1575) there is a commendation of the author by the printer (though it is believed to be written by Gascoigne himself) where the explicit mention of Geoffrey Chaucer and John Gower determined the length of the line.

> *Chawcer* by writing purchast fame,
> And *Gower* got a worthie name:
> Sweete *Surrey*, suckt *Pernassus* springs,
> And *VVyat* wrote of wondrous things:
> Olde *Rochfort* clambe the stately Throne,
> VVich *Muses* holde, in *Hellicone*.
> Then thither let good *Gascoigne* go,
> For sure his verse, deserueth so.
> (Berger 537)

What we are given here is a list of poets long dead: Chaucer (died in 1400), Gower (1408), Henry Howard Earl of Surrey (1547), Sir Thomas Wyatt (1542), and George Boleyn 2nd Viscount Rochford (1536).

Commendations to dramatic works before 1623 were often in verse rather than prose and used the more modern ten-syllable line, or pentameter. What we expect to find in prefaces is verse like that found in *The Duchess of Malfi* by John Webster, published in 1623. The three commendations from Thomas Middleton, William Rowley and John Ford are all in heroic verse, the preferred longer rhymed iambic lines. Gascoigne's 1575 commendation is the only one among all commendations of dramatic works of the period that uses an octosyllabic line.

In the genre of prefaces to dramatic literature published prior to 1623, the addresses to the general reader and most dedications were almost exclusively in prose. For instance, in Jonson's published works, the addresses to readers were exclusively in prose for *Sejanus his Fall*, *Catiline his Conspiracy*, *Poetaster*, *The Alchemist* and *The Staple of News*. Though they are not given the title "address to the reader," the "epistles" in his *Hymenaei* and *Volpone* as well as the "induction" in *Bartholomew Fair* are essentially addresses to the reader, as opposed to speeches given to a spectator. In a survey of Jonson's early published works, all of his addresses to a general reading public were in prose. Even for Jonson, "To the Reader" in the First Folio is exceptional. Not to be overlooked, the First Folio also contains a second address to the reader, in what was the standard prosody, prose, entitled "To the great Variety of Readers," undersigned by John Heminges and Henry Condell but often attributed to Jonson.

In published plays of the period, there is only one example of an octosyllabic couplet verse being used in an address to the reader—an eighteen-line stanza in the preface of *The Masque at Lord Hay's Marriage* by Thomas Campion, published in 1607. The masque celebrated the aristocratic wedding of Scotsman Sir James Hay and Englishwoman Honoria Denny, daughter of Edward, Lord Denny. The joining of the Scottish and English houses was not without controversy, but King James was still credited with the peaceful union where "bloods devided mixe in one… bring together two separate lands into one, and make them forever one in name and fact" (Berger 330-332). Campion's address "To the Reader" hints at a specialized function of the octosyllabic couplet.

> Neither buskin now, nor bayes
> Challenge I, a Ladies prayse
> Shall content my proudest hope,
> Their applause was all my scope
> And to their shrines properly
> Revels dedicated be:
> Whose soft eares none ought to pierce
> But with smooth and gentle verse,
> Let the tragicke Poeme swell,
> Raysing raging feendes from hell,
> And let Epicke Dactils range
> Swelling seas and Countries strange.
> Little roome small things containes
> Easy praise quites easy paines.
> Suffer them whose browes do sweat
> To gain honour by the great.
> It's enough if men me name
> A Retailer of such fame.
> (Berger 330-332)

Campion created two categories of readers based on gender. He wants to solicit the "Ladies prayse" rather than "gain honour by the great" poets and actors who are men. Campion's reference to prosody hints at why he chose octosyllabic couplets rather than the far more popular verse options that use a ten-syllable line. Rather explicitly, Campion will not write in "Epicke Dactils" but rather in a "gentle verse" for a "Little roome small things," an obvious echo of Daniel's metaphor, sonnets being "ordered in a small-room."

Thus, the octosyllabic couplet had a reputation among English poets in the late 16th and early 17th century as being less serious, a toy, a light verse, possessing a low, base, plain and homely style. Whereas a verse line that is for "the great" and the "heroic," indicative of the high elevated style, and even modern, required the longer ten-syllable pentameter verse.

The Spanish *décima* before 1623

Spanish for tenth, *décima* also refers to the number of lines in a Spanish stanza:

> A stanza consisting of ten octosyllabic lines, rhyming ABBAACCD-DC. It is sometimes referred to as an *espinela*, after Vicente Espinel (1550-1624), who is usually credited with its invention, though it is used by Juan de Mal Lara in a poem written before 1571. Espinel's own term for this kind of stanza was "redondilla de diez versos": it consists, in fact of two *redondillas* of the ABBA type joined by two link-verses. (Terry xlix)

The Spanish also call the *décima* a "little sonnet" because of its diminutive size in comparison to the traditional sonnet of fourteen lines of fourteen hendecasyllables (*Princeton Encyclopaedia of Poetry and Poetics*, 255). The Spanish little sonnet was more versatile and concise than the traditional fourteen-line sonnet, and before 1623 it was widely used in epigrams, addresses, dedications, glosses on other literary works, devotional pieces, and interludes in novels. While it could be seen as a countrified version of the "learned poetry" associated with the Italian-inspired sonnet (Bleiberg 485), this was not always the case.

The *décima* was used to comment on philosophical, religious, lyrical, and political subjects and themes.[9]

Partly because of its size and partly because of its haphazard use among Spanish poets, the *décima* was not that well known in the English world. English literary dictionaries such as *The Harper Handbook to Literature* (Harper Collins, 1985) and *A Handbook to Literature* (Odyssey Press, 1960) provide definitions of *débat* (an obsolete verse form popular in the Middle Ages) and *the divine afflatus* (doctrine of divine inspiration for poets advocated by Plato, also obsolete) but leave out a Spanish verse form that continues to be used in Latin America today.[10]

Playwright and poet Félix Lope de Vega y Carpio wrote an instructional manual entitled, *Arte nuevo de hacer comedias* (*New Rules for Writing Plays at This Time*, 1609), describing *décimas* as good for complaints (*buenas para quejas*). He contrasts the *décima* with other verse forms of various sizes, providing brief descriptions of the sonnet (fourteen lines), ottava rima (eight lines), quatrain (four lines), and triplets or tercets (three lines):

> *Acomode los versos con prudencia*
> *a los sujetos de que va tratando;*
> *las décimas son buenas para quejas,*
> *el soneto está bien en los que aguardan,*
> *las relaciones piden los romances*

> *aunque en octavas lucen por extremo,*
> *son los tercetos para cosas graves,*
> *y para las de amor las redondillas.*
>
> [Shrewdly select the verse-forms you employ
> to fit the various matters that you deal with.
> The *décima* is suited to complaints,
> the sonnet's fine for characters left waiting;
> narrative speeches call for ballad-metre,
> though they sound splendid in *ottava rima*;
> tercets will serve for solemn, weighty matters,
> and *redondillas* for romantic scenes.]
> (Trans. Victor Dixon, 2009)

Lope de Vega's thumbnail definitions illustrate that the selection of the verse form was a fundamental creative decision strongly governed by basic metrical elements, such as stanza size and verse line. The genre-based poetics was typical during the Renaissance and practiced in England too, where the poetic form was supposed to impart meaning and circumscribe expectations. It provided a program for the poet and reader alike: how poems were to be written and how they were to be read. A banality of metrics thrive on "numbers and measures." It is in numbers and measures that we get precepts such as blank verse is for tragedy (Daniel) or rhyme royal is for grave discourses (Gascoigne).

The Spanish *décima* and the 1623 event honoring Prince Charles

My literary investigation focuses on the year 1623, which leads us to humor-laden, satiric *décimas* that were used as vehicles for attacking other persons.

Many festivities were held in honor of Prince Charles during his eight-month visit to Spain, one of the most significant being the *juego de cañas* that took place at the Plaza Mayor in Madrid on 21 August 1623. The *juego de cañas* turned out to be the climax of Charles' extraordinary trip. It was a large scale, one-day festivity that captured the attention of writers and politicians from across the continent. One of the many Spanish *relaciones*,[11] or news pamphlets, was immediately translated into English and published in London by Henry Seyle in 1623: Dr. Juan Antonio de la Peña's "A relation of the royall festiuities and juego de cañas (a turnament of darting with reedes after the manner of Spaine)." (Peña STC19594)

Translated literally as "game of canes," the *juego de cañas* was a popular merrymaking activity in early modern Europe that typically featured noble-men on horseback participating in mock battles using replica spears made

of reeds. The spear-shaking game was reminiscent of tournaments of the medieval period and was intended to:

> Recreate an idealized battlefield on which nobles and the urban patriciate, all of them caught up in the feverish revival of courtly culture and enchanting romances, could show their mettle without risk of falling victim to a peasant's arrow, a lance, or distant artillery. (Ruiz 195)[12]

Juan de la Corte's painting *Fiestas en la Plaza Mayor de Madrid, 1623* provides a detailed depiction of the historical event. In the center foreground are two sets of ushers, in black and red plumage representing the Spanish and English. The ushers are holding sets of reed-spears (*un juego de cañas*) for their lords; two of the ushers point in the direction of reed-spears (barely visible) lying on the ground and the larger action in the courtyard. The man holding a reed-spear while sitting on a light-colored chestnut horse (left foreground) is the guest of honor, Prince Charles. For added detail, numerous arras hangings are affixed to the balconies. There are many other servants needed to stage the event and mentioned in the news reports but not depicted in the painting: grooms of the stable, farriers, pages and officers.

Fiestas en la Plaza Mayor de Madrid, 1623, by Juan de la Corte.

Coincidentally, the *juego de cañas* of 21 August was the cause of a major literary incident involving the most important writers living in Madrid at the time. One of the central political figures vying for the King's attention was aristocrat Don Francisco Gómez de Sandoval y Padilla, Count of Ampudia and Duke of Cea. With the objective of ingratiating himself with King Philip IV, the Count commissioned the poetic services of one Juan Ruiz de Alarcón y Mendoza. The Count envisioned a collection of poems, *con motivo del famoso*

juego de toros y cañas celebrado en Madrid en Agosto de 1623, on the occasion of the famous game of bulls and canes celebrated in Madrid in August 1623.

Alarcón accepted the commission but outsourced the actual work and soon became an object of ridicule within the writing community. Some ghost-writers were allegedly not paid and some may have even purposely submitted shoddy work, thereby sabotaging the collection. Alarcón did not realize the full extent of the fiasco until it was too late. In the end, Alarcón became the poet broker and "writer" of a horrible collection of 72 ottava rimas entitled "Elogio Descriptivo" (Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes, editor's note #2, online edition). More humiliation was to follow.

Alarcón's peers attacked him severely for the authorship deception and his unscrupulous management of the poetic material in a collection of follow-up poems entitled *Las Décimas de la academia de don Francisco de Mendoza.* The satiric *décimas* circulated just days after the August 21 event, featuring a "who's who" of the Spanish literary scene. Amescua, the writer who provided the foolhardy advice to Alarcón, contributed a *décima*, as did the famous Lope de Vega. Even rivals Luis de Góngora and Francisco de Quevedo were momentarily united against the folly of Alarcón. Góngora, the representative of the style that the "Elogio Descriptivo" failed to imitate, was so offended that he wrote a *décima*. Quevedo, the leader of the group, was strongly opposed in principle to the Gongorismo style but even more emphatic was his prejudice towards Alarcón, a Novohispanic and therefore an outsider.[13]

Several of the *décimas* mock Alarcón's physical deformity: his hunched back. One wrote that *todo un juego de cañas te cupiese en la córcova*—"a whole set of spear-reeds could fit on his hump" (Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes, online edition, *décima* by Luis Vélez). The subtext of the criticism is twofold: Alarcón's body reflects the poor quality of the octavo verse in the "*Elogio Descriptivo.*" At the same time, poets and dramatists of the period often referred to physical impairments as an indication of moral fault (e.g., thieves were often characterized as physically deformed). All the writers connected Alarcón's deformity with his purported stealing. Alarcón is given all sorts of names that translate loosely as dwarf camel, cucumber, tortoise, bag of bones, swimmer with pumpkins, and owl face.

The English contingent in Madrid, especially the Spanish-speaking members of Prince Charles' entourage, would likely have been fascinated by the squabble and the airing of dirty laundry.[14] Presumably this juicy collection of *décimas* was carried back to England along with Dr. Juan Antonio de la Peña's *relation* and other Spanish reports that also covered the spear-shaking game. Setting sail for home on 18 September, Prince Charles landed on English shores on 5 October (Redworth 136-138), a cache of Spanish writings in the ship's hold—well in advance of the printing of the preface and title page of the First Folio, which was printed in mid-November.

Two *décima* in the preface to Don Quixote

Sometimes within a preface a variety of verse forms are used as foils to highlight their innate attributes. The contrast between the traditional sonnet (fourteen-line stanza) and the little sonnet (ten-line stanza) was used to comic effect by Miguel Cervantes in the preface to *Don Quixote* (1605). In Cervantes' preface there is a catalogue of burlesque sonnets—traditional fourteen-line stanzas and ten-line *décimas*—that follow the prologue written in prose. After the sorceress Urganda's 70 lines of chained *décimas*,[15] there are ten sonnets that include two *décimas*, one for the squire Sancho Panza and one for Quixote's horse Rocinante.

While the fourteen-line stanza is perceived to be more refined, residing on a moral high-ground of romance and love, the ten-line stanza is situated on less dignified, dubious ground. Figuratively speaking, as the sonnets appear in this preface, the *décima* is a verse for squires, the lower class and herdsmen, while the traditional fourteen-line sonnet is a verse for hidalgos and courtiers, whom readers associate with learned poetry. Five of the eight traditional fourteen-line sonnets are dedicated to Don Quixote. The organization of the dedicatory poems (under the heading *elogios*) is outlined below.

7 chained décimas	*Urganda la desconocida*
4 sonnets	*Amadís de Gaula a don Quijote de la Mancha* *Don Belianís de Grecia a don Quijote de la Mancha* *La señora Oriana a Dulcinea del Toboso* *Gandalín, escudero de Amadís de Gaula, a Sancho Panza, escudero de don Quijote*
2 décimas	*Del Donoso, poeta entreverado, a Sancho Panza y Rocinante* *A Rocinante*
4 sonnets	*Orlando Furioso a don Quijote de la Mancha* *El caballero del Febo a don Quijote de la Mancha* *De Solisdán a don Quijote de la Mancha* *Diálogo entre Babieca y Rocinante*

The juxtaposition of the longer sonnet stanzas and the *décimas* is not arbitrary. In a subversive twist on the formula, further heightening the burlesque tone, Cervantes injects a fourteen-line sonnet for the squire Gandalín addressed

to his counterpart Sancho Panza, and in one final exaggerated parody of the prefaces of his day, there is the traditional sonnet for the talking horses, Babieca and Rocinante.

Cervantes's parody illustrates that verse forms in the genre of dedications were class-conscious and calibrated according to social authority. The overall design of the dedicatory poems in the preface to *Don Quixote* is governed by kinship and social protocol, where knights address knights, ladies address ladies, squires address squires, and even horses address horses. An approach that would be no different in England occurs in Edmund Spenser's *Fairie Queen*, which has 12 dedicatory sonnets arranged in order of the dedicatees' political importance and hereditary rank, from highest to lowest.

Also noteworthy is the fact that the verse form has a moral function. The themes of commerce and thievery evoked by the allusions to Celestina and Lazarillo are reserved for the *décimas* of Sancho Panza and Rocinante, respectively. On the other hand, the traditional fourteen-line sonnets addressed to Quixote focus on the themes of love and chivalry.

Del Donoso, poeta entreverado, a Sancho Panza y Rocinante

Soy Sancho Panza, escude- [I'm Sancho Panza, squire by right
del manchego don Quijo-. To Don Quixote, La Mancha's knight;
Puse pies en polvoro-, I took flight, and beat retreat
por vivir a lo discre- To live the life of one discreet,
que el tácito Villadie- Light taciturn Villadiego,
toda su razón de esta Whose sum of bliss it was to find
cifró en una retira-, A spot retired and to his mind;
según siente Celesti-, 'Tis Celestina tells us so –
libro, en mi opinión, divi- A book divine, I humbly take it,
si encubriera más lo huma-. Were human things in it less naked.]

A Rocinante [I'm Rozinante, steed of fame,
Soy Rocinante, el famo- Great Bavieca's grandson I;
bisnieto del gran Babie-. Into one Quixote's power I came
Por pecados de flaque-, For sin of being lean and dry.
fui a poder de un don Quijo-. A coupled race I idly ran,
Parejas corrí a lo flo-; But never by the merest span
mas, por uña de caba-, Did I my barley ever miss;
no se me escapó ceba-; From cunning Lazarillo this
que esto saqué a Lazari- I cribbed, and left him but the straw
cuando, para hurtar el vi- Through which the blind man's wine
al ciego, le di la pa-. to draw.]
(Trans. James H. Montgomery, 2009)

The contrast in verse forms in this preface clearly reinforces the prejudice that avarice and gluttony are sins belonging to the servile class.

Jonson could only have read these *décimas* in the original Spanish because Thomas Shelton omitted the unfamiliar verse form from part one of his translation, *The History of the Valorous and Wittie Knight-Errant Don-Quixote of the Mancha* (1612).[16] While it is possible that Jonson had seen other décimas in the original Spanish that were written prior to 1623, those examples are unlikely sources of influence for his "To the Reader" address. There is Pedro Calderón de la Barca's collection *A San Isidro* (composed c. 1620–1622) and his undated *A la Muerte* (1620s?). There are a number of *décimas* in Céspedes y Meneses' novel *Poema trágico del español Gerardo, y desengaño del amor lascivo* (1615), but these too are unlikely to be connected with Jonson's small poem.

It is undeniable that a poetic form with identical metrics to Jonson's poem was used in Spain and appears in the preface of the most famous of Spanish publications, the novel *Don Quixote*—part one published in Spanish in 1605 and part two in 1615. It is remarkable that the width and length of Jonson's "To the Reader," a form of address not found in any preface for English dramatic works of the period, happens to have the same dimensions as the verse form used in *Don Quixote*, published many years before the First Folio. The English translations were published in 1612 (part one) and 1620 (part two)—though Jonson was familiar with *Don Quixote* in the original Spanish. Professor Martin Hume notes that Jonson "knew Spanish well, constantly refers to *Quixote* before Shelton's translation was published in 1612" (Hume 276). Quixote is referenced in *The Silent Women* (1609) and *The Alchemist* (1610) (Hume 154). Jonson's knowledge of the celebrated prose prologue in Cervantes' *Quixote* would have to be more than cursory.

As a respected verse form in its own right, the *décima* was probably not very well known or understood by the English. Indeed, Leonard Digges may have been referring to the *décima* verse form when he wrote pejoratively in his preface, "Some of the Verses in the Spanish Copie… [are] vnworthy to bee ranked with the Prose." The *décimas* in Digges' 1622 translation of *Gerardo the Unfortunate Spaniard* are nearly unrecognizable. For example, the "Vile Pandora" interlude in the original Spanish verse contains five linked *décimas* (a total of 50 lines on signature pages D5v-D6r), whereas Digges provides an abbreviated, loose translation of the interlude, adopting the octosyllabic couplet rhyme scheme (26 lines on page 52 of the English translation). Digges' transmission of the poetic form was haphazard, but at least Digges made an effort at translation, something generations of translators had denied the *décimas* in *Don Quixote*.[17]

Discussion

A number of points stand between the *décima* and Jonson's address in the First Folio. The eight-beat line has a common European literary tradition via French poets, so it is only natural that Jonson's poem would share characteristics with the *décima*. By 1623 the octosyllabic couplet was considered old-fashioned, but Jonson was a noted champion of the verse and used it often. Also, the octosyllabic couplet verse was commonly used when the speaker occupied a lower social rank, a hallmark verse of the pastoral and its social relationships, though this type of usage cannot be called exclusive.

It is also true that the rhyming pattern is wrong. Jonson's rhyming couplets bear no resemblance to the sophisticated *décima*'s pattern of ABBA:ACCD-DC. Nevertheless, whenever a poetic form was adopted by English poets they changed the pattern to accommodate the natural restrictions of the English language, and this often meant simplifying the pattern, as witnessed by Digges' rendering of Céspedes y Meneses' *décima*s into the English straight-jacket of rhyming couplets. The transmission of the Petrarchan sonnet form to English represents another case of simplifying rhyme schemes to accommodate the English language.[18]

Another argument is that Jonson's poem "To the Reader" clearly draws on structural components from a well-established sonnet tradition in England. By 1623 the vogue for English sonnets had already passed and its construction was almost a fixed entity. At fourteen lines it was organized around quatrains and an end couplet; in contrast, the Petrarchan sonnet was divided into an octave and sestet. Jonson's poem follows an English construction, using the familiar quatrains and requisite English end couplet. The quatrains themselves are often seen in English octosyllabic verse, joined and in separated stanzas. There is also a sonnet-like movement, an unfolding in thought, that culminates with a *volta*, or turn, found in the ingenious instruction, "do not look at the picture." If England did have a fixed "little sonnet" form such as Spain's "little sonnet," we could easily nominate Jonson's epigrammatic address as a prime example.

Finally, my investigation uncovered no explicit verbal fingerprint that would lock "To the Reader" down in a Spanish key. However, the scope for identifying a source is not so finite. Conscious and unconscious borrowing associated with source studies has been augmented by intertextuality, which goes beyond recognizable sources and analogues, and considers texts in relation to other texts. Intertextuality was first described by literary theorist Julia Kristeva in 1966 to signify the interdependence of literary texts, and soon it was the currency of post-structuralist criticism:

> the word [intertextuality] originates in the Lat. *intertextos*, 'intertwined,' and derives from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Ovid tells how the female

weaver Arachne challenges the goddess Athena to a weaving contest by producing a tapestry woven with stories of gods and mortals: 'The edge of the web with its narrow border is filled with flowers and clinging ivy intertwined [*intertextos*]' (6.126-127). For [N.K.] Miller, Kristeva, and others [post-structuralists], intertextuality becomes a term for speaking about the *wovenness* of texts, their *interconnectedness*, their participation in a *web* of discourse… (*Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*, 717)

While there are arguments against the original hypothesis, the fact is there was no recognizable fixed English poetic form with a ten-line stanza that used eight-beat lines. In a word, there was no English tradition that would decisively eliminate the Spanish *décima* from the discussion. When talking about the transmission of poetic forms across different European languages, the number of lines is a crucial aspect of identification. The number of lines in the stanzaic form is much more important than, say, the rhyming pattern or inner structural components. In fact, most stanzaic forms derive their names from the number of lines. Numbers and measures are deceptively simple and rarely arbitrary. For a serious, authorized folio edition, the choice of the opening verse form, octosyllabic couplets, appears wholly inappropriate. One thing is certain, in England octosyllabic couplets lacked the gravity that a folio publication should have demanded. For an introduction to England's national poet, a traditional sonnet would have been much better suited. At the same time, it was almost impossible that Jonson landed on the number of lines accidentally.

English knowledge of the Alarcón incident and *Las Décimas de la academia de don Francisco de Mendoza* fits perfectly within the timeline of 1623.[19] Given the historical context and the atmosphere around London in the autumn of 1623, English awareness of the Spanish imbroglio seems more than highly probable. In many ways the Alarcón incident recalls London's *Poetmachia*, or War of the Theatres, that took place between 1599 and 1602, featuring Jonson's *Poetaster*, among other plays. Obviously, Jonson could identify with a foreign literary controversy because he played such a central role in one at home. A manuscript of *Las Décimas* would have been of particular value, especially among English diplomats, because the poems offer a keyhole view into the world of the Spanish court,[20] delicious intelligence on the internal politics behind the "shaking of spears" event that was held in honor of England's dynastic heir.

Both sides of the political debate in England would have been interested in the Alarcón incident. For unflattering news *about* Spain, Prince Charles and the Duke of Buckingham could use *Las Décimas* as evidence of poor etiquette, thus underwriting their revisionist history of a debacle that was of their own making. For unflattering news *from* Spain, those opposed to the

Spanish Match in the first place, such as the Pembrokes (dedicatees of the First Folio), could view the Alarcón incident as further proof that Prince Charles had completely misjudged the Spanish position: underneath all the highly ritualized formalities was a teeming energy of Mediterranean sycophancy so reminiscent of past Popish abuses.

There are a number of ways *Las Décimas* and news about the Alarcón incident would have circulated in London in the fall of 1623. Certainly, informal reports would have been communicated within Hispanist circles, which must include Leonard Digges and James Mabbe,[21] Jonson's co-contributors to the preface of the First Folio. All three would have had their own motives for seeking out authoritative sources related to the most recent news from Spain. For his part, Jonson was preparing to write, or had already started writing, a masque for the upcoming 1623/24 Christmas holidays entitled *Neptune's Triumph for the Return of Albion*, a symbolic representation of Prince Charles' return to England (subsequently cancelled for political reasons). It is hard to imagine that such an extraordinary example of Spanish satiric verse would not be shared with England's pre-eminent satirist.

It is also possible that a manuscript of *Las Décimas* was circulated via Hugh Holland, author of a traditional sonnet praising Shakespeare printed in the First Folio, and one-time putative servant of court favorite Buckingham, Prince Charles' traveling partner. Buckingham was one of the main reasons the Prince's surprise visit to Madrid failed. The incentive for Buckingham to spread gossip was especially high because it would deflect attention away from himself. Also, Peña's news report (mentioned above) was published by Seyle, whose print shop was in the same district as Isaac Jaggard's, another possible point of dissemination. Finally, Edward Blount, publisher of the First Folio and no less than 17 Spanish works, could have viewed a copy of *Las Décimas* as a commercial investment opportunity, thereby sharing it with Jonson.

In short, Jonson could have acquired direct and immediate knowledge of *Las Décimas* and the Alarcón incident from his close proximity to multiple recognized authorities with whom he was working, at a time when Spain was at the forefront of public discussion, and in the weeks when we would logically expect Jonson to be composing his "To the Reader" address and orchestrating the prefatory material for the First Folio. That is to say, Jonson would not have acquired his knowledge of *Las Décimas* from a travelling merchant in the Mermaid Tavern.

The Shakespeare authorship issue provides us with a number of startling relationships.

There is the latent symbolism of the *juego de cañas*. The spear-shaking game is an allusion to Edward de Vere's *nom de plume*, Shake-speare. In Spain, the

spear-shaking game instigated its own short-lived authorship question. The poet broker Alarcón here corresponds to the play broker from Stratford. Even the physiognomy of Alarcón is not without meaning and has an uncanny correspondence to the deformity of the Droeshout engraving.[22]

The two *décimas* among the catalogue of dedicatory verses in *Don Quixote* are teasingly suggestive. One might see the practical-minded Sancho Panza's service to his hidalgo and his subsequent return to his wife and children as evocative of Shagspere's service to an earl and his retreat to the comforts of Stratford. Sancho Panza is inspired by the commerce of the infamous bawd Celestina, who is well known for taking financial advantage of her aristocratic clients. Sancho Panza swears by the book of Celestina. Celestina is one of the Renaissance's most celebrated villains, a "humanist's nightmare" (Pérez Fernández 28, Introduction). There is also the subject of theft in the Rocinante *décima*, represented by Lazarillo, who steals from his blind master.[23]

Spanish connections to the First Folio

In the years leading up to 1623, when accommodation of Spain was a guiding principle for much of England's affairs, authorities were prone to turning a blind eye to acts of recusancy. Pardons for Catholics were dispensed and English subjects were at liberty to read such passages as "O *Spaine, Spaine*, my beloved Country, Faith's true keeper, God uphold thee with his hand." Such a sentiment printed in 1622 is not, as some orthodox scholars would have us believe, reckless and troublesome, a signal of dangerous impetuosity or a confession of faith (Yamamoto-Wilson 329-331).

If Jonson's "To the Reader" is an abstraction of the *décima*, the case for a Spanish connection to the First Folio grows ever stronger. It is rare for orthodoxy to note the political context of the First Folio—there is, for example, no reference to the Spanish Match policy in *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare's First Folio* (2016). Yet the preface as a whole and Jonson's address in particular can only be appreciated in the political context. I think Jonson was addressing not just any reader but the Infanta herself, thereby transforming the First Folio into an epithalamium, an ode to a bride and bridegroom. The Infanta would thus join a long list of Jonson's preferred addressees, the wives of powerful patrons: throughout his career, Jonson addressed ladies of the court repeatedly, including Henrietta Maria, Queen consort of England, Scotland and Ireland (Sanders 260). Digges and Mabbe, for their part, could have fulfilled the role of ceremonial attendants when the time came to present a copy of the First Folio to the Infanta.

Orthodoxy would deny the historical context for the First Folio but thanks to advances made by post-Stratfordian scholars Peter Dickson and Roger Stritmatter, we can now see innumerable Spanish connections to the First Folio.

While very few in orthodoxy have taken notice of these connections, Gary Taylor is an exception.

In "The Cultural Politics of Maybe," Professor Taylor examines the correspondence of Mabbe, Blount, diplomat William Trumball and George Abbot, Archbishop of Canterbury. Some of the correspondence in Taylor's essay appears in publication for the first time, with a number of subsequent academic papers responding to his essay. Taylor makes the arresting conclusion that Mabbe was a Catholic spy, that he found the "smoking gun" and that "we can be certain about Maybe" (Taylor 251).

If Taylor had ended his investigation here he would have had to change the title of his essay—"The Cultural politics of Definitely Maybe"?—and thus abandon his original project. So enamored with the noun and adverb "maybe,"[24] Taylor turns his attention to the publisher Blount and declares that he cannot categorize Blount as an underground Catholic the way he can with Mabbe. Apparently the "Maybe" of his article's title is now in reference to Blount, not the translator James Mabbe at all, as in "maybe Blount is a Catholic or an atheist; maybe he is not; how can I know?" (254).[25] Anticipating a rebuttal that he is upholding religious essentialism, Taylor argues that Blount "demonstrates the fragility and fungibility of the categories Catholic and Protestant. After all, many men and women in early modern England, in early modern Europe, moved from one category to another" (252).

Taylor wants to argue two points about the complex personalities at work on the First Folio project. First, he wants to place a crypto-Catholic agent on the inside of the First Folio publication, transforming the preface into "crypto-Catholic preliminaries" (250). Second, Taylor wants to depict Blount as a materialist above the religious fray, a savvy agent of commodification, someone who recognized the future commercial value of Shakespeare in a secularized world, stripped of explicit religious affiliations, something akin to Michelangelo's David, a work of art disrobed of its religious aura. Taylor writes that Blount was a spectator, ambivalent about religion, someone objective enough to see that England's playwright had successfully transformed "religious trauma" into a "secular affective commodity" (255).

Where does Taylor's Bard come to rest? Is Taylor's Shakespeare an active crypto-Catholic like Mabbe or is his Shakespeare an intelligent spectator and go-between like Blount? Taylor's premonition is that the secret Catholic messages that the plays "may have had" were encrypted and now lost. Taylor chastises the playwright for the macro historical movement towards secularization (à la Blount), making the execrable claim that the Bard is the embodiment of a "falsification" and "misrepresentation" of the religious debate during the Counter-Reformation. Taylor concludes his essay by contending

that the religious beliefs of the Bard "himself" count for nothing and "what is within does not matter, if it does not come out" (256). The operative phrase in this most slippery of orthodox essays is, "if it does not come out."

Taylor's essay appeared in an orthodox publication investigating the idea that the playwright was embedded as an operative within a crypto-Catholic network in northwest England during his formative years. Following E.K. Chambers's suggestion made in 1944—that the young Shakespeare was possibly "William Shakeshaft," a player or musician working in Lancashire in the 1580s—Ernst Honigmann published *Shakespeare: The Lost Years* (1985), speculating that his Shakespere/Shakeshaft was a schoolmaster for a noble Catholic family in Lancashire. The Lancashire theory has attracted adherents in some circles because it helps explain one of the central mysteries about the traditional biography: the whereabouts of William of Stratford in the mid-1580s. The belief is that a Catholic Shakespeare is a Shakespeare with a worldview and an inner life, something more than the meager documentary record that exists.

Apparently for Taylor and other adherents to the Lancashire theory, there is the promise of a Catholic codebook for the plays in the First Folio. A revival in ciphers provides Shakespearean studies with an amusing sense of history repeating itself, as if the antiquated fight with Baconians in the 19th century has now come full circle, with one small faction of 21st century traditionalists resorting to methods of decryption to uncover their long buried Catholic candidate. Of course, the suspicions of these Stratfordians, like the Baconians before them, are warranted.[26] They know that there is something deeply unsatisfactory about the traditional history.

Untangling the religious turmoil from the cultural politics and emerging internationalism[27] is an unenviable task. It seems impossible to discuss the politics of the failed Spanish Match and its impact on the publication of the First Folio without the issue of religious affiliation muddying the waters. Religious affiliation is only one of the many identities that any individual possesses. The mysterious master translator Mabbe is a case in point. Whether it is Mabbe or Blount or the Bard himself, each individual possesses multiple intersecting identities, each one changing over time, often in unpredictable ways. I propose that religious belief was less furtive and more fluid. While the religious question no doubt occupied much of the authorities' time, it was often used as an excuse for righting a political wrong or as a power play, a means to an end.

On religion specifically, the placement of *The Tempest* at the beginning of the collection of plays in the First Folio remains a vital piece of evidence. As Professor Stritmatter did before him, Taylor cites the placement of *The Tempest*, linking it to the planned dynastic marriage of Charles and the Infanta.

What Taylor does not say is that this most Spanish[28] of Shakespeare plots is framed by an interfaith wedding, between Alonso's daughter Claribel and the King of Tunis—Tunis being the geographic symbol of Islam (*Tempest* 2.1). Alonso's wedding party were crossing the Mediterranean from North Africa when the storm landed them on Prospero's island. As such, *The Tempest* is a symbolic break with endogamy, against religious reification and the zero-sum game of competing worldviews. The First Folio is woven of much finer stuff.

Epilogue

It was the age of tapestries. For years European aristocrats resided in cold and drafty castles, and even as they moved into more comfortable manors in the 16th and 17th centuries, arras hangings, as they were called, remained symbols of power and prestige, warmth and belonging. Tapestries continued to be used as insulation on walls and shown on special occasions such as weddings, entertainments, and pageants. Artists used them for the backgrounds of portraits and for the recording of important events such as the signing of treaties. As portable artifacts, they were prized gifts. As manufactured works, they were difficult to make and required a team of skilled craftsmen. As commodities they were immensely expensive.[29]

At the zenith of this most esteemed art form were the Raphael Cartoons, a set of drawings trumpeting papal supremacy. Though normally referred to as drawings, the Raphael Cartoons are really a series of large scale paintings (they were painted in a glue distemper medium on many sheets of paper glued together and today are mounted on a canvas backing). The Raphael Cartoons are 10 feet high and 10 to 16 feet wide, with the figures being larger than lifesize.

In January 1623 Prince Charles had made up his mind, as his father had before him, to travel to the Continent to retrieve his intended bride. One month before setting out for Spain, however, he attended to important business. So it was that England's very Protestant prince issued a directive on 18 January to purchase from a Genoese collection Raphael's very Catholic drawings depicting the Acts of the Apostles.[30] The supposition is that England's new Mortlake Tapestry Works on the Thames would later produce the series of 16 tapestries using the templates ("drawings") of the Raphael Cartoons.

After weeks in disguise Charles arrived in Madrid on 7 March. The Spanish court was stunned at Charles' audacity and the lengths to which England was willing to go to win the heart of Spain and her Infanta.[31] Needing time to prepare for the festivities of the official ceremonial entry into the city of Madrid, a public procession was arranged a few days after Charles' arrival. The parade featured the exhibition of one of Europe's finest collections of

tapestries. Charles was undoubtedly impressed. Shortly after the event, in a letter dated 28 March (Brotton 13), Charles wrote to Sir Francis Crane about an urgent matter, asking about the ongoing negotiations to purchase the Raphael Cartoons. The drawings must be bought immediately, regardless of price.

We can surmise why Charles was set on becoming the grand possessor of these particular religious drawings. His actions of 1623 were those of a young man intent on enacting a chivalric romance, and what better way to solicit favors from a love than to offer a token as magnificent as the Raphael Cartoons? Such an acquisition would impress the in-laws and their friends in Rome and, more critically, appeal to his very devout wife. Perhaps it was even going to be a wedding gift, an example of art being used to dispel the harsh realities ahead, which living in Protestant England would certainly represent for the Infanta. The drawings were not yet tapestries, but they held the promise of what could be.

Unfortunately, the intention behind many of Charles' efforts in 1623 was lost on the knotty wrong-side. Much like his escapade to Spain, the purchase of the Raphael Cartoons was another impolitic scheme of mixing business with pleasure. For the Spanish, Charles' eagerness was perceived as a signal that England was converting back to the old faith, an augur of a reunified Christendom. The Spanish could not be more wrong. Today the Raphael Cartoons in the British Royal Collection are curated and publicly exhibited at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, largely as Charles had conceived them, secular artifacts stripped of their religious aura. The Catholic messages are neither buried nor encrypted. The messages are there, unchanged from 1623, for all who care to see them.

Endnotes

1. The "witty Spaniard" is the title character Don Quixote. In Part II (62) of Cervantes' novel, Don Quixote uses the translation-tapestry analogy in a Barcelona printing house. In the same scene, he also expounds on self-published authors, copyright, religious books, and the expectation that books of fiction adhere to verisimilitude.

2. I am not a Hispanist and I cannot read Spanish. Since a good deal of Spanish lyric poetry from the period is not available in English translation, it was an inauspicious undertaking having to first rely on Google Translate to learn about the *décima*. With much gratitude, many of the *décimas* were retranslated by Professor Emeritus José María Ruano de la Haza of the University of Ottawa. I am very grateful to Professor de la Haza, who read an earlier draft of this paper and provided much needed direction. In late 2016, I also had a brief email exchange with Hispanist Professor Rafael Iglesias of the Benedictine University in Chicago, the editor of *Las Décimas* for the Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes. Professor Iglesias concurred that the Spanish-speaking English contingent would have been aware of the Alarcón incident and *Las Décimas*.

3. A "Catholic turn" in Shakespeare studies emerged in the late 20th century as interest peaked in the theory that William of Stratford was in Lancashire during his "lost years."

4. Juan de Luna's picaresque novel *The Pursuit of the History of Lazarillo de Tormez* (1622) was dedicated to William Earl of Derby and Countess Elizabeth, "a fruitful branch of the Ancient and Illustrious House of Oxford." The novel was translated by David Rowland and published by Thomas Walkley. Also in 1622 Walkley published Q1 *Othello*.

5. Chronologically arranged in the print edition of *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson*, the following pre-1623 works have some octo-syllabic couplets: *Cynthia's Revels*; *Poetaster*; *Entertainment at Althorp*; *A Private Entertainment at Highgate*; *The Masque of Blackness*; *Eastward Ho!*; *Hymenaei*; *Volpone*; *An Entertainment at Theobalds*; *The Masque of Beauty*; *The Masque of Queens*; *Epicene*; *Oberon*; *Love Freed*; *Love Restored*; *The Irish Masque at Court*; *The Forest*; *The Gypsies Metamorphosed*.

6. From Jonson's "Ode (to Himself)," assigned the date 1629:
    No doubt some mouldy tale,
    Like Pericles; and stale
    As the Shrieve's crusts, and nasty as his fish—
    Scraps out of every dish
    Throwne forth, and rak't into the common tub…

7. A comprehensive survey of poems using octosyllabic couplets is beyond the scope of this paper. I have not considered the "rounding couplet," for example, which was used to "round off" a scene or idea in Elizabethan and Jacobean drama. Even a cursory glance at anthologies and miscellanies reveals the level of unpopularity at the time with the verse. For example, less than one in ten of the 150 poems in the miscellany collection *Englands Helicon* (1614) use octosyllabic couplets.

8. Harington likens the transmission of poetic inventions (e.g. the sonnet) to translation: "But I had rather men should see and know that I borrow all than that I steal any: and I would wish to be called rather one of the worst translators then one of the meaner makers, especially since the Earl of Surrey and Sir Thomas Wyatt, that are yet called the first refiners of the English tongue, were both translators out of Italian" [spelling modernized]. Surrey and Wyatt were known for translating from their European model, Petrarch.

9. On the *décima* in general, I have consulted a number of reference works (Hirsch 153-154; Bleiberg 485, 559-60; Terry xlix; Ward 148, 191).

10. Today, the *décima* is an important folk verse, giving voice to the concerns of the lower classes, and in rural settings in Latin America. In Puerto Rico, Cuba, and Mexico, it is often improvised as a song, accompanied by *cuatro*, guitar, and *güiro*; it can feature two or more singers in a mock duel or a test of wits. These spontaneous performances verge on the point of buffoonery (Ihrie 283, Bleiberg 485).

11. It is difficult to overstate the impact of Prince Charles' trip to Spain on news publishing in Britain. Professor Henry Ettinghausen has written extensively on what was once described as the greatest news story since the Resurrection. He noted "there were at least five news pamphlets published in England on Charles' visit to Spain" (Ettinghausen 62, How).

    At the same time, Calderón's debut as a playwright saw *Amor, honor y poder* performed at the Royal Palace on 29 June 1623, with Prince Charles believed to be in attendance.

12. In *A King Travels* Professor Ruiz writes that shaking spears in mock battle has Moorish origins. In addition to spear-reed battles, the day's festivities would include dances, mummery, running of bulls, banquets, largesse and theatrical skits (*entremeses*). The battles themselves were conducted with background music, featuring trumpets and drums (Ruiz 218).

13. Benedictine University's Rafael Iglesias edited a new Spanish version that can be freely accessed on the Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes. Professor Iglesias used as his textual source volumes 20 and 52 of the *Biblioteca de autores españoles* (pages XXXII-XXXIV and 587-8 respectively). http://www.cervantesvirtual.com/obra/poemas-satiricos-creados-por-diversos-autores-como-parte-de-un-conocido-vejamen-literario-contrario-a-juan-ruiz-de-alarcon-y-a-su-elogio-descriptivo/

14. Editor Iglesias believes that the Spanish-speaking Englishmen would have been aware of the Alarcón incident (email correspondence dated November 17, 2016).

15. In the Spanish edition edited by Riquer, he categorizes them as *décimas* in footnotes 2 and 3, and the stanzas are indented, as we find in the English translation by Edith Grossman for HarperCollins. The Penguin edition translated by John Rutherford also refers to them as *décimas* in the footnote.

16. The translator Shelton would have been challenged by the comic twist of *versos de cabo rato*, lines with unfinished endings. The earliest English translators neglected these stanzas: Thomas Shelton (1620), Charles Jarvis (1742) and Tobias Smollett (1755) did not translate Cervantes' *décimas*. Based on my research it appears that John Ormsby (1885) was the first English translator to tackle these particular *décima* verses. Ormsby wrote dismissively in a footnote that the Cervantes' *décimas* possess no meaning. https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Don_Quixote_(Cervantes/Ormsby)/Volume_1/Commendatory_Verses#cite_note-13

17. Prominent early 20th century Hispanist James Fitzmaurice-Kelly wrote of English attitudes towards the Spanish that there is "little or no interest taken in Spanish lyrical poetry" (Fitzmaurice-Kelly 24-5).

18. When a poetic form is transmitted into a foreign tongue, a departure from the rhyming scheme is the rule, not the exception. English's appropriation of the Italian fourteen-line sonnet saw several evolutions in the rhyming scheme, from Thomas Wyatt to Philip Sidney to Shakespeare. Sidney Lee observed, "His [Shakespeare's] sonnets aim at far greater metrical simplicity than the Italian or the French" (Lee 165; for a more recent discussion see Hurley 76-7).

19. Prince Charles arrived in London in early October just as the long printing schedule for the First Folio was ending. The last sections to be printed were *Cymbeline* (early November), Preface and Title page (mid-November?), *Troilus and Cressida*, and then *Troilus and Cressida* plus prologue (Higgins 44).

20. King Philip and court favorite Olivares were "on friendly terms with many of the writers of the time" (Terry xvi).

21. The Magdalen College Register records a series of long-term leaves granted to Mabbe, including a three month leave starting on 16 February 1623: "Although it is tempting to speculate that Mabbe coincided in Madrid with Charles and Buckingham, we lack any evidence that can prove or even suggest it other than these records" (Pérez Fernández 8, a theory also posited by Russell 80).

22. Prince Charles arrived in London in early October and the printing of the engraving took place around the same time, perhaps even a few weeks later. It is likely that the Droeshout engraving was inspired by a well-established superstitious belief in physiognomy. In the literature of the period, and art in general, physiognomy was a significant aspect of characterization where physical malformations could be linked with purloining, pinching and pilfering. In the "The Tale of Beryn," a 15th century addition to *The Canterbury Tales*, one of the earliest definitions of the term in English reads: "I knowe wele by thy fisnamy, thy kynd it were to stele" (*OED*). In *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals* (1886), Charles Darwin put to rest the "science" of physiognomy and turned to quoting who else but Shakespeare to illustrate the power of simulation.

23. Jonson's chameleon-like persona in the First Folio preface is encapsulated in Cervantes' pseudonymous *poeta entreverado*, variously translated into English "motley" (Ormsby 1885), "eclectic" (Grossman 2005), "bifurcated" (Montgomery 2009).

24. "His given name was James; his family name was usually spelled Mabbe (or Mebbe), but he at least apparently pronounced it 'Maybe'; his regular pseudonym '*Puede-Ser*' means 'maybe', and is apparently a pun on his surname" (Taylor 242).

25 Professor Stritmatter is more decisive about Blount's Protestant sympathies (Stritmatter 32, Small).

26. In his capacity as general editor of the new Oxford University edition of Shakespeare, Taylor's cryptographic proclivities have been realized through stylometry.

27. Stritmatter alludes to an animating spirit of internationalism behind the preface of the First Folio: "they were internationalists, sharing an appreciation of literature and great arts that was fundamentally humanist and broadly ecumenical" (Stritmatter 33, Small). Hispanist Alexander Samson counts Mabbe among a cadre of "intercultural agents" (Samson 11).

28. See Stritmatter and Kositsky's *On the Date, Sources and Design of Shakespeare's* The Tempest*:* "Less obvious, especially to the modern reader, is that *The Tempest* (among other things) is a play about Spain and dynastic Spanish politics" (Stritmatter and Kostisky 55).

29. I have consulted the works of Alan Haynes and Thomas P. Campbell on tapestry, as well as the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts website: "In England, from the 16th century onwards, the noble classes left their cold and draughty feudal homes for more comfortable palaces and manor houses, however, the importance of tapestries as status symbols did not diminish." (https://sites.google.com/site/splendor319/sarah/the-last-supper-vmfa, accessed October 15th, 2017)

30. On Charles' "often overlooked artistic investment" in the Raphael Cartoons, I have used the research of Professor Jerry Brotton: "Charles' renewed interest in the cartoons needs to be seen in the context of the early stages of the diplomatic negotiations concerning his marriage to the Infanta" (Brotton 13). Not mentioned by Brotton, though certainly a backdrop, the Spanish might have interpreted the purchase of the Cartoons in the context of the Council of Trent (1545-63) that aimed at elevating art to serve Catholic objectives.

31. For the dates of Charles' visit to Spain, I have used Glyn Redworth's standard history on the subject, *The Prince and the Infanta*. The collection of essays in *The Spanish Match: Prince Charles's Journey to Madrid, 1623*, edited by Alexander Samson, has also been invaluable.

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Ben Jonson's "Small Latin and Less Greeke":

Anatomy of a Misquotation (Part 2)

by Roger Stritmatter

Ben Jonson's 80-line poem of praise in the 1623 Shakespeare First Folio (FF) constitutes a remarkable illustration of the ingenious constructive powers that led Jonson's admirers to call him the "prince of numbers."[1] Like Jonson's "To the Reader" epigram written to accompany the Droeshout engraving, the encomium is constructed on a very deliberate numerical design, as has been recognized at least since C.M. Ingleby's 1879 *Century of Praise* volume of Shakespeare allusions. I call it an encomium, but it may actually be more accurate to think of it as Jonson's own drily ironic *tour de force* of the genre of the "mock encomium," a form closely allied in the Renaissance to the idea of paradox and traceable back to the 5th Century BC, in which ironic praise is heaped on an unworthy object. Peter G. Platt analyses the genre as one designed to "bring readers astonishment, surprise, and shock, as they experience a deviation from the norm, and must re-evaluate conventionally held opinions and beliefs" (20).

Analyzing in any detail the complex mathematical structure of the poem is not the main purpose of this essay, any more than offering a comprehensive and detailed Oxfordian understanding of it. Many matters of detail including Jonson's artful use of "number" in the Folio prefatory materials are covered in Waugh and Stritmatter (forthcoming). More modestly, I propose here to focus attention on the sole consideration of the meaning of Jonson's phrase "small Latin and less Greek."[2] Our understanding of this phrase, however, will benefit from a brief summary of Jonson's design, which has been carefully and deliberately constructed from numerical principles chosen in part for their symbolic significance.

Occupying signatures A4ʳ–A4ᵛ in the Folio—just following the two dedicatory essays with the names of Heminges and Condell subscribed to them—Jonson's poem could also be classified as a "column" or "pillar" poem, a form which *The Arte of English Poesie* identifies as signifying "stay, support, rest, state and magnificence" (110), as printing the two halves together reveals. The examples used in *Arte* to illustrate the form are somewhat more obvious pillars than is Jonson's poem. But if we re-examine Jonson's encomium with care we will see that this poem, like the examples of the genre in *Arte*, has a very distinct capital, in this case composed of Jonson's ornately tablatured title, "To the memory of my beloued, THE AUTHOR," etc.

Jonson's poem might most specifically and constructively be categorized, as John G. Demaray suggests, as a *triumph*: "Jonson, in praising the playwright and the British theatre, presents Shakespeare as a participant in a triumph" (1). The triumph, as Alastair Fowler documented in copious and telling detail (1970), is a literary genre closely tied to renaissance and medieval (not to mention ancient) ideals of mathematical order used to construct representations of complex and typically hierarchical social relationships. Demaray even helpfully suggests the triumph is "a theatrical form characterized by the surprise entry and revelatory unmasking of disguised aristocrats" (1).

The triumphalism of Jonson's encomium becomes even more interesting in view of what is now known about Jonson's reputation for complex forms of literary equivocation. As Richard Dutton emphasizes, Jonson has become one of the most widely misunderstood of all early modern writers. He suffers from "a familiarity that has bred not contempt but complacency, a feeling that he is known, weighted up, comprehended—a colorful character, perhaps, but not the most exciting of writers" (1). Far from being out of keeping with Jonson's practice in other contexts, the linguistic subtlety attributed to Jonson in our analysis, says Dutton, is a signature of his method and an expression of his abiding convictions about language:

> As a satirist, Jonson is the supreme tactician, an unusually inventive strategist (Dutton 4)...behind [Jonson's work] lies an attitude to language itself, an assumption that it is a precision instrument, a divine gift, and to be respected as such by both parties in its interchange. Jonson has little patience for those who cannot or will not appreciate this. (Dutton 83)

This assessment of Jonson's fascination with negotiating the boundary between esoteric or forbidden knowledge to articulate the unspeakable without

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suffering a penalty from offended authority, has grown in recent decades to be widely shared by Jonson scholars interested in early modern censorship and censorship theory. Jonson is a central figure in Annabel Patterson's "hermeneutics of censorship"; she describes him as one who "throughout his life…meditated" on problems of censorship, developing a "political and social theory of literature, a poetics of censorship" (57). Concurs William Slights: "I have become convinced that the driving social force, distinctive dramatic techniques, and persistent interpretative puzzles in [Jonson's later] plays are related in one way or another to *the topic of secrecy*" (13). Jonson, in other words, was a master of inducing "astonishment, surprise, and shock" in readers obliged to "experience a deviation from the norm" and re-evaluate their own "conventionally held opinions."

Jonson's 80-line iambic pentameter "triumph" is composed of 400 feet arrayed in lines of five feet per line and neatly divided into four sections[3]:

- **A 16-line *exordium (introduction)*.** Line 17, following this exordium, then states, "I, therefore, will begin."

- **A 48-line narratio**. This is composed of two exactly symmetrical 24 line segments, with the center falling between lines 40-41, and the second segment commencing "triumph my Britain." This structure is a textbook example of the role of the "privileged center" in triumphal forms (See Fowler, 23-33 for an outstanding introduction to the importance of ethnographically ubiquitous concept of the "privileged center," and further commentary, including Appendix 1, below).

- **A 16 line *peroration* (conclusion)**. This commences with line 65.5, "Look how the father's face lives in his issue."

Let us consider these parts in greater detail and see how the design of Jonson's poems contributes to the significance of his utterance about "small Latin and less Greek."

The Exordium and First Narratio

Orthodox Shakespeare commentators rarely if ever attempt to explain or consider why Jonson's exordium develops at length the theme of misinterpretation, and unambiguously equates Jonson's position with someone writing under duress: "But these ways/ were not the paths I meant to take unto thy praise" (5-6). He fears that Shakespeare's work, in consequence of his own praises, will become the object—conjuring the image of a hawk with its eyes sewn shut—of "seeliest ignorance"; he will be subject to "blind affection" directed by "chance," or even become the victim of "crafty malice" that "thinks to ruin" where it "seems to raise."[4]
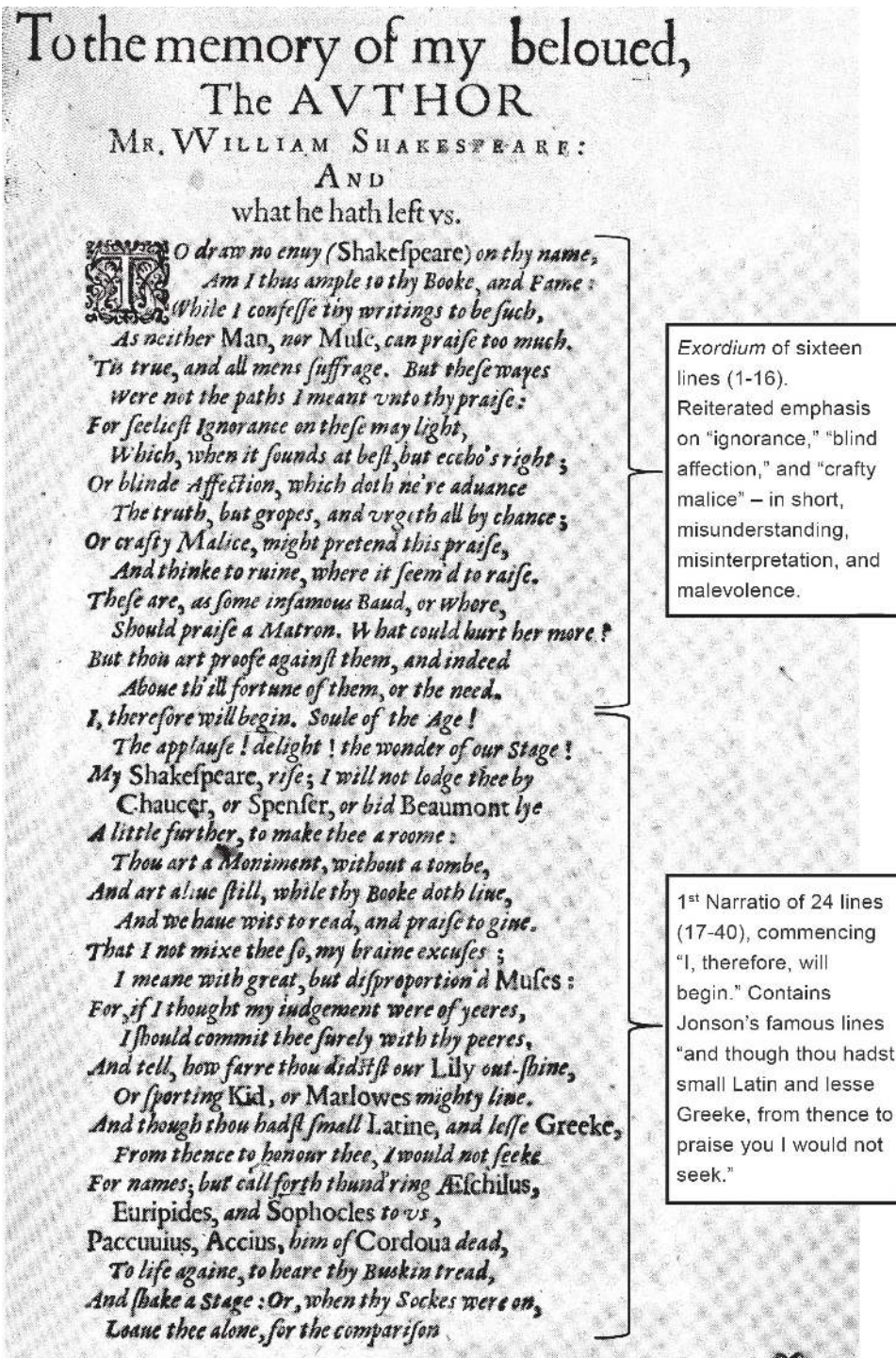
To the memory of my beloued,
The AVTHOR
MR. WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE:
AND
what he hath left vs.

To draw no enuy (Shakespeare) on thy name,
    Am I thus ample to thy Booke, and Fame :
While I confesse thy writings to be such,
As neither Man, nor Muse, can praise too much.
'Tis true, and all mens suffrage. But these wayes
    Were not the paths I meant vnto thy praise :
For seeliest Ignorance on these may light,
    Which, when it sounds at best, but eccho's right ;
Or blinde Affection, which doth ne're aduance
    The truth, but gropes, and vrgeth all by chance ;
Or crafty Malice, might pretend this praise,
    And thinke to ruine, where it seem'd to raise.
These are, as some infamous Baud, or whore,
    Should praise a Matron. What could hurt her more ?
But thou art proofe against them, and indeed
    Aboue th'ill fortune of them, or the need.

Exordium of sixteen lines (1-16). Reiterated emphasis on "ignorance," "blind affection," and "crafty malice" — in short, misunderstanding, misinterpretation, and malevolence.

I, therefore will begin. Soule of the Age !
    The applause ! delight ! the wonder of our Stage !
My Shakespeare, rise ; I will not lodge thee by
    Chaucer, or Spenser, or bid Beaumont lye
A little further, to make thee a roome :
    Thou art a Moniment, without a tombe,
And art aliue still, while thy Booke doth liue,
    And we haue wits to read, and praise to giue.
That I not mixe thee so, my braine excuses ;
    I meane with great, but disproportion'd Muses :
For, if I thought my iudgement were of yeeres,
    I should commit thee surely with thy peeres,
And tell, how farre thou didItst our Lily out-shine,
    Or sporting Kid, or Marlowes mighty line.
And though thou hadst small Latine, and lesse Greeke,
    From thence to honour thee, I would not seeke
For names ; but call forth thund'ring Æschilus,
    Euripides, and Sophocles to vs,
Paccuuius, Accius, him of Cordoua dead,
    To life againe, to heare thy Buskin tread,
And shake a Stage : Or, when thy Sockes were on,
    Loaue thee alone, for the comparison

1st Narratio of 24 lines (17-40), commencing "I, therefore, will begin." Contains Jonson's famous lines "and though thou hadst small Latin and lesse Greeke, from thence to praise you I would not seek."

Figure 1A: Jonson's "column" poem in the First Folio with major sections marked.

Of all, that infolent Greece, or haughtie Rome
    fent forth, or fince did from their afhes come.
Triúmph, my Britaine, thou haft one to fhowe,
    To whom all Scenes of Europe homage owe.
He was not of an age, but for all time !
    And all the Mufes ftill were in their prime,
when like Apollo he came forth to warme
    Our eares, or like a Mercury to charme !
Nature her felfe was proud of his defignes,
    And ioy'd to weare the dreffing of his lines !
which were fo richly fpun, and wouen fo fit,
    As, fince, fhe will vouchfafe no other Wit.
The merry Greeke, tart Ariftophanes,
    Neat Terence, witty Plautus, now not pleafe;
But antiquated, and deferted lye
    As they were not of Natures family.
Yet muft I not giue Nature all: Thy Art,
    My gentle Shakefpeare, muft enioy a part.
For though the Poets matter, Nature be,
    His Art doth giue the fafhion.   And, that he,
Who cafts to write a liuing line, muft fweat,
    (fuch as thine are) and ftrike the fecond heat
Vpon the Mufes anuile : turne the fame,
    (And himfelfe with it) that he thinkes to frame;
Or for the lawrell, he may gaine a fcorne,
    For a good Poet's made, as well as borne.
And fuch wert thou.   Looke how the fathers face
    Liues in his iffue, euen fo, the race
Of Shakefpeares minde, and manners brightly fhines
    In his well torned, and true-filed lines :
In each of which, he feemes to fhake a Lance,
    As brandifh't at the eyes of Ignorance.
Sweet Swan of Auon! what a fight it were
    To fee thee in our waters yet appeare,
And make thofe flights vpon the bankes of Thames,
    That fo did take Eliza, and our Iames !
But ftay, I fee thee in the Hemifphere
    Aduanc'd, and made a Conftellation there !
Shine forth, thou Starre of Poets, and with rage,
    Or influence, chide, or cheere the drooping Stage;
Which, fince thy flight frõ hence, hath mourn'd like night,
    And defpaires day, but for thy Volumes light.

BEN: IONSON.

Line 40 – the triumphal center of Jonson's encomium

2nd Narratio of 24 lines (41-65.5), commencing "Triúmph, my Britaine," and ending "and such wert thou."

Peroration of sixteen lines (65.5-80), commencing "Looke how the father's face lives in his issue," i.e. returning to the iconoclastic message that the true Shakespeare is to be discovered in the works.

Figure 1B: The second half of Jonson's "column" poem in the First Folio with line 40 and the next major sections marked (below).

These themes of misinterpretation are reiterated for emphasis in the peroration, which alludes to "the race of Shakespeare's mind" which "brightly shines" in the bard's "Well torned and true-filed lines."

We may be tempted here to wonder about the potential ironic application of the warnings of the exordium to Jonson's own poem. If we are at risk of misunderstanding Shakespeare, what about Jonson himself? Whose "eyes of ignorance" does Jonson have in mind? What can he be implying about the risk of misunderstanding, not only Shakespeare's words, but his own? According to Richard Dutton, Jonson's works are marked by "an oblique invitation to the audience to discover in the work precisely what he is disowning" (52). Dutton's observation about Jonson's paradoxical methods of indirection is applicable to the passage about Shakespeare's "small Latin and less Greek." About halfway through the first *narratio*, comes the key phrase "and though thou hadst small Latine, and lesse Greeke" (Figure 2).

Figure 2: "small Latine and lesse Greeke" detail.

Although it has been acknowledged at least since C.M. Ingleby's *Century of Praise* allusion book (151), that this is in the subjunctive voice, Shakespeare scholars have been reticent to follow this admission to its logical conclusion: the statement is a mixed contrary-to-fact conditional of the kind familiar to all students of Greek and Latin (Table 1).

Table 1: Contrary to fact statements in Classical texts and in Jonson's Folio encomium.	
Sî mê citius invênissês, líber nunc essem.	And though thou hadst small Latin and less Greek [which you do not], from thence to praise you I would not seek, for names, but call forth thundering Aeschylus….
If you had found me sooner [but you did not], I would be free now [but since you did not, I am not]	
Or, somewhat more obliquely,	
Though thou hadst found me sooner [but you did not], I would be free now [but since you did not, I am not]	

The contrary-to-fact conditional consists of two parts, the first of which—the protasis—denies a condition under which the second—the apodisis—would *be* true. Jonson is not saying that the real Shakespeare "has *small* Latine and Less Greek"—he is instead elliptically praising his proficiency in these languages. Many parallel examples from Jonson can illustrate this usage (Table 2); he frequently uses the auxiliary "had" in similar conditional constructions.

Table 2: Contrary to fact statements from Jonson.
I *would thou hadst* [but you do not] some Sugar-candied to sweeten thy Mouth (CR)
O, *hadst thou known* [but you do not] the worth of Heav'ns rich gift,/Thou wouldst have turn'd it to a truer use. (*CR*)
Fortune, thou hadst no Deity, if Men Had wisdom [but they do not] (Sej.)
And though all praise bringing nothing to your name, Who (herein studying conscience and not fame) are in yourself rewarded*   *An Epigram to the Honored Countess of _____, *Epigrammes*.

As does Shakespeare himself (Table 3):

Table 3: Contrary to fact statements from Shakespeare.
Tis well thou art not fish; *if thou hadst* [but you are not], thou hadst been poor John.
And thou hadst been set i' the stocks for that [but you were not] question, thou hadst well deserved it.
Thou *shouldst not have been* old [but you are] till thou hadst been wise.

And the KJV New Testament (Table 4):

Table 4: Contrary to fact conditions from the KJV of the New Testament.
Then saide Martha vnto Iesus, Lord, *if thou hadst* bene here [but you were not], my brother had not died. (John 11:21, KJV)
Saying, *If thou hadst known* [but you didn't] even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. (Luke 19:41, KJV.)

Some may object that none of the cited examples use Jonson's word "though" to introduce the protasis of the conditional. But this objection is plainly mooted by the fact that the OED (3299) prominently recognizes "though" as the equivalent of "even if" (definition II), "formerly used with a verb in the

subjunctive" or "even supposing that" in introducing subordinate clauses. It even cites *The Tempest* as an example: "he'll be hang'd yet, *though* every drop of water sweare against it" (1.1.62). Jonson's usage thus represents a modest variation on clearly established conventions of meaning and logic, well attested from contemporaneous documents. As the cited examples illustrate, the variations of surface structure used to convey the deep grammatical logic *even if x, then*...is a wide one: "*If* thou hadst," "*and* thou hadst," and "*would* thou hadst" all can introduce the past tense protasis of contrary to fact conditionals. The formula is not dependent on a particular surface structure, but can be represented in a variety of ways in correct English.

Closer examination of the entire logic of Jonson's *narratio* confirms the relevance of these analogues; the passage in question forms the climax of a series of negations, each serving to define the bard through by what he *is not* or *cannot be* compared to:

> *I will not* lodge thee…. [with the English greats] (l. 19)
>
> *I will not* mix thee with "great but disproportioned muses" (l. 25)
>
> If I thought my judgment were of yeeres (I would compare thee to Lily, Kid or Marlowe) [but *it is not*, so I will not] (l. 27)
>
> And though thou hadst Small Latin and Less Greek [but *you do not*] (l. 31)

Figure 3 allows the reader to examine the entire passage with this series of statements in context:
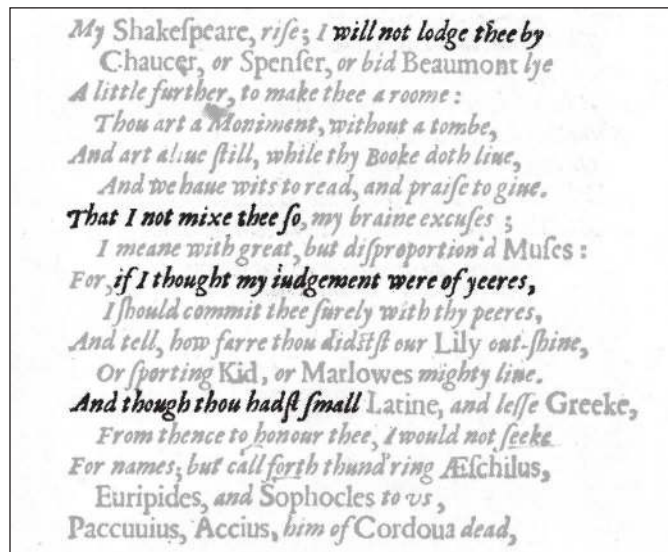
Figure 3: Jonson's Negations defining "Shakespeare" through a series of negations in the first narratio of his Folio encomium.

No one disputes, in fact, that the immediately precedent statement ("If I thought my judgment were of years") is a contrary-to-fact; Jonson is saying, in effect, "*since my judgment is not* of years (*i.e.* 'does not concern establishing historical contemporaneity'), *I will not* classify you with your contemporaries, Lyly, Kid, and Marlowe." The "small Latin and less Greek" statement is built on the same syntactical and logical framework, extending and completing the thought of the previous three negations, with the result that Jonson has by the conclusion of the thought in line 40 produced the apotheosis of the author and he can begin again a new thought in line 41:

Triùmph, my Britaine, thou has one to showe.

That Jonson is *not* saying what Stratfordians have claimed for over two hundred years he *is* saying (that Shakespeare had "small Latin and less Greek") is confirmed by close attention to his diction and syntax now that we are aware of the contrary-to-fact character of the expression. Baldwin (1944) and other orthodox apologists implicitly take the word "thence" as referring to an idealized abstraction extrapolated from the previous line, as if referring to a kind of fund of classical knowledge—not "small Latin and less Greeke" but *much Latin* and *most Greek*, or some similar notion. This is neither satisfying syntax nor credible logic. The much more obvious and logical antecedent of the passage is the actual phrase, "with thy peers" (ln. 32, Figure 4).

Figure 4: "Thence" (ln. 32) refers to "with thy peeres" (ln 28).

Any accurate and comprehensive paraphrase of the traditional reading yields the pretzel logic of Jonson predicating his comparison of Shakespeare with Aeschylus, Euripides, and Sophocles on his classical ignorance, as if to say "because you have small Latine and less Greek, I will not seek among the ancients for names to praise you, but will instead call forth thundering Aeschylus, etc." We notice, also, the particular force of Jonson's "thence" ("*that* place"), as contrasted to "hence" ("*this* place"). Had Jonson intended the referent to appear in the immediately adjacent line, "hence" would have been a more apt word choice.

Logically, reading "with thy peers" as the antecedent also makes much more sense. Now Jonson is no longer contradicting himself. Instead he is

saying—more complexly but also more logically—that even if Shakespeare had "small Latin and Less Greek" [which he does not], he would still call forth the ancients, and not the Elizabethans, as his apt peers. This, it deserves notice, is the logical predicate of Jonson's final point, established in the second half of the *narratio*, that even the ancients hold no candle to Shakespeare. He places the bard above them not *only* because of his knowledge of ancient languages, but *in addition to* it.

Triumph, My Britain...

Jonson's encomium, in the words of Alastair Fowler, "consists in effect of a triumphal procession of authors, with overgone ancients and moderns figuring as the captives, Shakespeare as the national Triumphator" (Fowler 70). A defining feature of the genre, Fowler also notes, is a ritual emphasis on the center: "This position once carried a generally recognized iconological significance: it was the place, if not for an image sovereignty, at least for a 'central feature' (to use an idiom still current)" (23). Jonson's 80-line poem, consistent with this definition, discloses a very distinctive center (Figure 5), falling between lines 40-41, with line 41 marking the hiatus with a new start, "Triúmph, my Britaine, thou hast one to show."
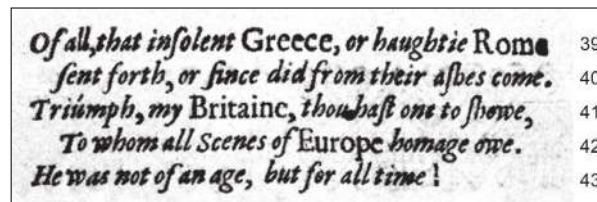
Figure 5: The ritual center of Jonson's encomium: "Triumph my Britaine..."

This central placement of the key phrase "Triúmph, my Britaine," framed against the "ashes" of "insolent Greece" and "haughtie Rome," and the "scenes of [contemporary] Europe"—with the bard announced as "one to show," a "triumphator" who will transcend both antiquity and contemporary pomp and circumstance—had, in 1623, very distinct, local, and particular connotations that are lost as soon as the passage is abstracted from the surrounding context of the ongoing debate over the Spanish marriage, a contextualization originally proposed by Peter Dickson (1997) and summarized in detail in Stritmatter (2017), the first half of the present discussion. More particularly, when Jonson sets Shakespeare at the center of his own literary triumph, he can hardly fail to be thinking of this triumph as one *mirroring*, or even, given the patronage network supporting the Folio, in *competition with* Prince Charles and Buckingham's "triumphal" procession (the members of which were leading domestic opposition to the Spanish marriage) into Madrid, which occurred on March 26, 1623—less than 7 months prior to the publication of the folio.

The Spanish Marriage Crisis
And the Design of the First Folio

Published at height of the Spanish crisis, the Shakespeare First Folio printing timeline coincides, as we have seen (Stritmatter 2017), with remarkable exactitude to the dates of imprisonment of Henry de Vere, 18th Earl of Oxford, jailed in the tower for opposing James' plan to marry Prince Charles to the Spanish Infanta. According to the publishing timeframe established in his classic bibliographic study, Charlton Hinman determines that the Folio printing started in or around March/April, 1622, and we know that it was completed in approximately nineteen months, by around November 1623—de Vere being subsequently released in December.

The evidence suggests that Pembroke had been laying the groundwork for the Folio publication at least since October 1621, when the Upper Palatinate was seized by Catholic troops and Elizabeth and Fredrick took refuge in The Hague. The July death of Phillip III had accelerated plans for the Spanish match, and both Southampton and Oxford (the latter for the first time), against the backdrop of these fast-moving events, were also jailed that summer. By the summer of 1622 it was also becoming apparent that Ben Jonson, for some time a confidante of the Stuart clique, was no longer welcome at court. The coincidence in timing is difficult to ignore: on October 5 Pembroke awarded Jonson with the reversion of the post of Master of the Revels, a position Jonson had long coveted, and simultaneously is rumored to have increased Jonson's stipend to 200 pounds per annum. Meanwhile throughout the period 1620-24 Thomas Scott, Pembroke's protégé and chaplain, kept up a steady barrage of pamphlets opposing the match. Defending himself for his use of fictional techniques in his *Vox Populi*, in *Vox Regis* (1624) published not long after the Shakespeare Folio, Scott more than once makes reference to the traditional license of the theatre, insisting that, "Kings are content in plays and masques to be admonished of diverse things" (Ev).

Born in an epoch marked by intense domestic struggle and constitutional crisis foreshadowing the open violence of the mid-century—during which Kings were sometimes far from content to be admonished, even in plays and masques—the Folio, including Jonson's poem, embodies the nationalistic aspirations of the so-called 'patriot earls'—Pembroke, Montgomery, Oxford, Southampton and Derby—but also expresses England's participation in an international literary sphere that transcended local politics. If we need any reminder of how poignant this contradiction was we need look no further than then intense involvement of Folio agents Jonson, Digges, Mabbe, Blount, Pembroke and Montgomery, in preparing, facilitating, or endorsing, such Spanish works as *The Rogue* (1622) or Don Gonçalo de Cespedes' *The Unfortunate Spaniard* (1622).[5] As much as this faction opposed the Spanish marriage as policy, they were also proponents of Spanish literature and culture.

They saw the Folio in this international context and shaped its conscious relationship to their translations of Spanish literature.

One common motif evident in both Digges' translation of *The Unfortunate Spaniard* and the Shakespeare Folio is that both works deconstruct the boundary between art and nature, or, as modern literary scholars would more likely think of it, between non-fiction and fiction. If, as James Shapiro blithely assures us, "the evidence strongly suggests that imaginative literature in general and plays in particular in Shakespeare's day were rarely if ever a vehicle for self-revelation" (268), then one must wonder how Digges, Jonson, and Mabbe failed to get Shapiro's memo on this topic. More specifically, in his introduction to the reader, Digges insists that the author Cespedes is "a Spanish gentleman, who in the time of five years of his Imprisonment, *under the borrowed name* of Gerardo, personates himself in his owne misfortunes" in his novel (A3; emphasis added). "Partly with truth," and "partly with fiction"—so insists Digges—Cespedes weaves his picaresque narrative of "the unfortunate Spaniard," who "personated" himself under a "borrowed name."

To Stratfordians it must seem like a coincidence bordering on an "imaginative conspiracy"—to use the potent phrase of Supreme Court Justice John Paul Stevens (1991)—that during the months Digges was preparing his translation of work based on the author's life experiences as "personated….under the borrowed name" of the protagonist and narrator of his own novel, he was involved with Jonson in publishing a posthumous encomium introducing "Shakespeare's" complete plays to the world. Moreover, when they did so— as we have already noticed—it was in a literary genre "characterized by the surprise entry and revelatory unmasking of disguised aristocrats" (Demaray 1).

As Peter Dickson has vigorously argued, for hundreds of years the period of the Spanish marriage crisis "drifted off into obscurity," suppressed as an embarrassing fiasco, and it was not until Thomas Cogswell's 1989 *The Blessed Revolution* that the period began to come back into focus for early modern historians. For three centuries powerful nationalist impulses assigned the history of the marriage crisis to the margins, with the enduring result that 21st century Shakespeare scholars are still reluctant to recognize the relevance of the crisis for the publication and reception of their "book."

Taking a geopolitical perspective on the Folio allows us to see not only the close interrelatedness of the books that Jonson's Folio collaborators were producing in 1622, but also to better apprehend the implications of the paratexts that make up the volume's introduction of the plays to the world. It also allows us to perceive how the folio's elements are constructed to make the volume "speak" to its publication circumstances, as in Jonson's identifying of his encomium with a "triumph" at a moment when all of Europe was focused on the immense triumphs, at which Prince Charles was being fêted at Madrid and throughout Spain.

Acknowledging the Spanish marriage crisis as part of the folio's context also generates new insights into the arrangement of the plays in the Folio. For hundreds of years of European culture, long before publication of the folio, the emblem of the shipwreck had become a metaphor for political disaster. Thus we see that England's deepening sense of political crisis, leading up to the Folio publication during what Michael Drayton called the "evil years" of 1621-23, when catastrophe seemed imminent to many—may be reflected in the placement of the opening scenes of *The Tempest*, the first play of the folio. Even more direct and eloquent testimony to the explanatory force of the Spanish marriage context of the volume is the case of *Cymbeline*, the last play in the Folio, a fact long considered a glaring anomaly of FF bibliography, as the play is not generally classified as a "History" but is placed as the concluding play in the final section of "History" plays in the folio. An early Arden editor conjectured that its placement may have been "the result of late receipt of the 'copy' in the printing house" (Nosworthy xiii). W.W. Greg supposed that it may have been "through a misunderstanding that Jaggard placed it at the end of the volume instead of the section [containing the comedies]" (8, n. 8).

In fact, the placement eloquently proclaims the close association in the minds of the volume's designers, between the Shakespearean plays and the marriage crisis. With *Cymbeline* slipped into emphatic final place as the last of the volume's plays, as has recently been argued by several scholars (see, e.g. Stritmatter 1998), the volume itself ends with a declaration of "published peace" that perfectly expresses the nationalist eirenism of the Pembroke faction, whose motto was, "peace with English honor":

> Laud we the gods;
> And let our crooked smokes climb to their nostrils
> From our blest altars. Publish we this peace
> To all our subjects. Set we forward: let
> A Roman and a British ensign wave
> Friendly together: so through Lud's-town march:
> And in the temple of great Jupiter
> Our peace we'll ratify; seal it with feasts.
> Set on there! Never was a war did cease,
> Ere bloody hands were wash'd, with such a peace.

Conclusion

As we have seen, contrary to many decades of well-fortified belief, Ben Jonson does not say in the First Folio that "Shakespeare" had "small Latin and less Greeke." Instead he concedes that the Bard has significant Latin and Greek, but says that this is not the only or the most important reason for

his literary greatness. However satisfying this conclusion, in the sense that it follows the grammar and logic of Jonson's utterance, it cannot be denied that it raises as many new questions as it resolves old ones. Why would Ben Jonson, if he really considered the bard to be superlatively trained in the classics, express this conviction in such an oblique and easily misconstrued fashion? Why has it been so difficult for so long to set the record straight?

The answers to such questions may in part lie in the study of how Shakespeare the author has interacted ideologically with core legitimating principles of colonialist or post-colonialist ideologies, according to Michael Dudley, who suggests that "totalizing and essentialist rhetoric concerning the 'natural genius' of both Shakespeare and 'the West' (and the Author's singular position within it) have proven an impediment to advancing acceptance of—let alone solution to—the authorship question. By interrogating the centrality of Shakespeare to western identity, we can begin to chart a more reflexive Shakespeare scholarship" (13).

Certainly, the misinterpretation of Jonson's poem has long supported the idea of the bard as a *sui generis* author, the embodiment of a pure form of *essentially* English genius, "warbling his wood notes wild," as Milton puts it in "l'Allegro." As we have seen, from the very start the Folio, while slyly alluding to the "triumphal" events recently celebrated at Madrid, mystifies its own moment of historical production. Jonson's encomium, in other words, seeks to universalize the bard as one "not of an age, but for all time!" and concludes by apotheosizing him, not as a man, but as the constellation of Cygnus.

Jonson's high-flying, mythopoeic rhetoric about Shakespeare in the Folio forms a striking and apparently deliberate contrast to the homely, personable tone he assumes when writing of Shakespeare's Warwickshire colleague Michael Drayton only six years after the folio, which begins:

> It hath been questioned, Michael, if I bee
> A Friend at all; or, if at all, to thee….

And concludes:

> And till I worthy am to wish I were,
> I call the world, that enuies mee, to see,
> If I can be a Friend, and Friend to thee.
> (1-2, 92-94)

Like many other patterns of fact surrounding "Shakespeare," the contrast between the cozy intimacy of Jonson's words to Drayton and the abstract,

mythologizing logic of his Folio encomium reinforces rational doubts about authorship. Anticipating the pregnant remarks of John Keats that "Shakespeare lived a life of allegory" and "his works are comments on it," Jonson attests in his own words in his own way, what that the bard "personates himself" in his own plays. To discover the "real" Shakespeare, the discerning reader should look not on the purposive enigmas of the Folio paratexts, but to the plays themselves. For hundreds of years, Jonson's advice has been neglected or ignored; instead the better part of posterity has persisted in quoting him out of context to suborn his testimony. As Jonson warned, significantly through the misconstruction of his own words, the bard has been transformed into a national idol and a tourist trap.

The misinterpretation of Jonson's Folio poem has over the centuries become a critical linchpin in the construction of this commercial mythopoeia. As early as 1712, a mere three years after Nicholas Rowe's first edited edition of the plays, and half a century before David Garrick would establish the idea of Shakespeare as a tourist attraction through the Stratford Jubilee, John Dennis connects the strands of our inquiry with his patriotic assertion of the co-dependency of the myth of the unschooled bard and the concept of English national identity as it was expanding under emerging colonialist and mercantile influence: "He who allows Shakespeare had learning, and a learning with the ancients, ought to be looked upon as a detractor from the glory of Great Britain" (1712). The passage is quoted approvingly by Dr. Richard Farmer, in his 1776 *Essay on the Learning of Shakespeare*, perhaps the most sadly influential work ever written on the topic, as an illustration of "great patriotic vehemence." Such nationalist faith in the pureness of Shakespeare's English genius has had a long half-life in Shakespeare studies. As Collins notes, summarizing the tradition in which Dennis forms a critical linchpin:

> One of the strongest arguments advanced by the party in favour of the independent recognition of our own literature was the supposed case of Shakespeare. Why, it was asked, should the study of English literature be associated with the study of languages and literatures of which the greatest of English writers was all but wholly ignorant, and to which he owed nothing immediately?.... Shakespeare has been, for nearly three hundred years, the stock example of what can be achieved by a poet and a philosopher who had no pretension to classical scholarship, and who knew nothing, except what he picked up in conversation or through versions of his own tongue, of classical writers. (Collins 1904, 2)

These misplaced pieties should not deter the student motivated by an authentic desire for encounter with the past in all its rich complexity. In Jonson's own

words from his posthumously-published *Discoveries*, many—even, sometimes, scholars,

> Labour onely to ostentation; and are ever more busie about the colours, and the surface of a work, then in *the matter*, and *foundation*: For that is hid, the other is seen.
> (emphasis supplied)

In focusing on both the *matter* and the *foundation* of the 1623 folio, as opposed to the surface and the colors, it is hoped that this paper has revealed some significant but otherwise covert dimensions of the Shakespeare problem. Jonson's Droeshout epigram, printed on the first preliminary leaf of the volume—in a passage that no less an orthodox authority than Leah Marcus tells us is designed to "set readers off on a treasure hunt for the author" (Marcus 19)—advises, "look not on his picture but his book". In his 80-line encomium a few pages later, Jonson, as if confirming Demaray's observation that the triumph is "a theatrical form characterized by the surprise entry and revelatory unmasking of disguised aristocrats," reiterates the message that the real author will be found not in the externalities of the Stratfordian biography, in "what he hath left us" in the Folio, as well as in the memories of those who live after him: "Look how the father's face/ lives in his issue, even so, the race/ of Shakespeare's mind, and manners brightly shines/in his well-t[u]rned and true-filed lines" (78-80).

Certainly, these latter words take on new immediacy and import when we recognize that the two dedicatees of the volume included Edward de Vere's son-in-law, the Earl of Montgomery, and his brother, William, Earl of Pembroke, but beyond this they return us to Shakespeare's "well torned and true-filed lines/In each of which he seems to shake a Lance,/as brandish't at the eyes of Ignorance." In the larger sense, however, Jonson is shaking his own spear at the scholarly tradition that has paid lip service to a superficial reading of the prefatory materials of the First Folio while systematically avoiding both the larger circumstances of the Folio's production and the post-Stratfordian logic of Jonson's mock encomium.

Endnotes

1. See Jasper Mayne in *Jonsonus Virbius*, who states that while alive Jonson was the "prince of numbers," in death he "mightst in *Numbers* lie" (29), punning of course on the proverbial "honest Ben" topos by suggesting that Jonson's use of "numbers" enabled his intellectual duplicity.

2. I am indebted to an anonymous reviewer for pointing out that, according to Early Modern English Books Online (EEB0), Francis Mason's 1613 *On the Consecration of Bishops* was the first instance in English print of the phrase "small Latin."

3. In this it varies, for example, from Jonson's "To the Reader" epigram, which is written in iambic tetrameter verses, with ten lines totaling forty feet.

4. Although sometimes mistranslated as "silliest", *Seeliest* is a Jonsonian coinage referring to the practice of sewing shut the eyes of hawks to keep them from being distracted or frightened before they are set to fly on the hunt (Peterson 153). In this context it belongs to a series of words and images that convey ethical blindness.

5. As noted in Part 1 of this article in *The Oxfordian* (2017), Digges's translation of de Céspedes novel, *Varia fortuna de soldado Píndaro*, appearing under the title of *Gerardo, The Unfortunate Spaniard* is pointedly dedicated to Pembroke and Montgomery; Mabbe's *The Rogue or the Life of Guzman de Alfarache* contains dedicatory verses "On the Author, Worke, and Translator" of the book by Ben Jonson (Herford & Simpson VIII: 389). Both books, capitalizing on the Spanish vogue of the period, were published by Foliosyndicate member Edward Blount in 1622.

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The True Story of Edward Webbe and Troublesome Travailes

by Connie Beane

In 1590 a 32-page pamphlet entitled *The Rare and most wonderfull thinges which Edvvard VVebbe an Englishman borne, hath seene and passed in his troublesome travailes,...* (*Travailes*) was published in London. In it is a short paragraph in which the author claimed to have seen Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, at a tournament in Palermo, Italy, at an indeterminate date. Although there is no corroborating documentation, this bit of information has been incorporated into de Vere's biography.

Since it emerged from bibliographic obscurity in the early nineteenth century, *Travailes* has been deemed by modern scholars to be a mostly factual Elizabethan travel narrative. Edward Arber edited and published a new edition in 1868 which cemented this identification. However, a careful re-examination of *Travailes* suggests that it is not a genuine travel narrative, but a parody that blends elements of the "captivity tale" with the classic travel narrative, a genre Elizabethans viewed with skepticism (Warneke 23-34, 61-62) due to its practice of carelessly mingling report, rumor, and legend without differentiation.

The title page of Troublesome Travailes*, curtesy of "Reading East, Irish Sources and Resources", sponsored by University College of Dublin and the Irish Research Council (*www.ucd.ie/readingeast/essay8.html*).*

This article will present evidence that *Travailes* is a parody, not a genuine travel narrative; re-examine the meaning of the story about the earl of Oxford; and speculate on the identity of the author and his motives for mentioning de Vere in this context.

On the nature of literary hoaxes

Brian McHale, in his article, " 'A Poet May Not Exist': Mock-Hoaxes and the Construction of National Identity," discusses the phenomenon of literary hoaxes at some length:

> It would be convenient if literary hoaxing were a unitary phenomenon, a single thing that we might unequivocally identify…: unfortunately, it is not. We need to distinguish among at least three types of literary hoax. First, there are the "genuine" hoaxes, perpetrated with no intention of their ever being exposed….
>
> Second, there are "entrapments" or "trap-hoaxes," designed with didactic and punitive purposes in mind. The intention here is for the hoax to be exposed by the hoaxer himself or herself when the time is right, to the discomfiture of the gullible….
>
> Finally, there is the class of phenomena that I propose to call "mock-hoaxes." The deception here, as with trap-hoaxes, is temporary, but where trap-hoaxes depend for their effect on the dramatic moment of exposure ("gotcha!"), mock-hoaxes are meant eventually to be seen through without any traps being sprung. To that end, *they typically refer in a more or less veiled manner to their own double nature* [emphasis added], leaving it to their readers to draw the relevant inferences…. (236-237).

The history of *Travailes* before 1868, and evidence from the book itself, demonstrate that it has many of the hallmarks of a literary hoax of the third kind described by McHale.

McHale continues:

> it might be inferred that the distinction among types of hoax…is entirely determined by the poet's motives or intentions…. Intention does play a determining role—not, however, the poet's "actual" intention…, but rather the intention that readers, in the process of reception, ascribe to the author….

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> This approach to intention accommodates the disparities that often arise between what hoaxers appear to have intended and *public responses beyond their control* [emphasis added]…. It also allows for…shifts in classification over time. Texts initially perceived as belonging to one category are apt to migrate to another as subsequent generations of readers come to construe them differently, sometimes clean against the intentions of the original hoaxers (237-238).

The history of *Travailes* shows that in the interval between 1626 and the beginning of the 19th century the author's original intention was largely forgotten, resulting in a shift in readers' perceptions and thereby transforming the book from literary parody to travel narrative.

The publishing history of *Troublesome Travailes*

In the last decade of the sixteenth century *Travailes* was published three times. This is unusual, since few titles received a second printing, much less a third. It may be supposed that the printings were small, as only a handful of copies survive; the current *Universal Short-Title Catalogue* lists just five. Of these, three printed by John Wolfe for William Wright in 1590, constitute the illustrated *editio princeps* (Webbe 1590). A second, undated printing, also illustrated, was issued *circa* 1592 by A. I. (probably Abel Jeffs) for William Barley (Webbe 1592). A third printing, not illustrated, was registered in 1600 by Ralph Blower (or Blore) for Thomas Pavier (Webbe 1600).[1]

It is important to note that *Travailes* was not printed or even mentioned in the second edition of Richard Hakluyt's monumental compendium of travel literature, *Principal Navigations* (1598). Nor was it printed by Samuel Purchas in his continuation of Hakluyt's work (commonly known as *Purchas his Pilgrimage*), in editions published in 1613, 1614 and 1626. Purchas does mention Webbe in a brief note: "…[no unicorn] hath beene seene these hundred yeeres last past, by testimonie of any probable Author (for *Webbe*, which sayth he saw them in *Prester Iohns* Court, is a meere fabler[2])…." (Purchas 564) (spelling modernized). *Travailes* was not reprinted in any other collection of travel narratives published between 1626 and 1868, although sale catalogs beginning about 1813 show that it was then being classified with books of history and travel (*Biblioteca Stanleiana* 63).

Two new editions of *Travailes* were published more or less simultaneously in 1868. One was a facsimile of the 1590 Wright text with the original woodcuts, which appeared under the original title in volume one of Edmund Wm. Ashbee's *Occasional Facsimile Reprints of Rare and Curious Tracts of the 16th and 17th Centuries* (Webbe 1868). The other, heavily edited by Edward Arber, bore the title, *Edward Webbe, Chief Master Gunner: His Travailes (1590)* (Arber).[3] Arber's became the standard edition and is now virtually the only one cited by scholars.

Although modern scholars Jonathan Sell and Daniel Vitkus have both addressed the long-standing doubts regarding the veracity of *Travailes*'s content, and have made strong statements regarding the unreliability and fictional nature of parts of Webbe's narrative, neither has taken the next logical step of questioning *Travailes*' identification as non-fiction. They suggest that it should be treated as a blend of fact and fiction rather than straight fact. Both contend that Webbe's narrative is essentially a truth-analog, and that departures from fact should be excused on the grounds that Webbe and/or his publisher were simply engaged in heightening and embellishing reality for political, patriotic or economic motives.

Travailes: the paratext

Leaving aside the veracity of the contents of Webbe's narrative for the moment, an investigation of the paratextual elements reveals a constellation of hidden messages. In conducting this examination, it was necessary to set aside Edward Arber's edition, based on the Pavier text and its misleading notes and corrections. The EEBO text of Wright 1590 and the Ashbee facsimile were utilized instead. All references in this article are to the Ashbee edition (Webbe 1868).

The title-page

The full title of *Travailes* is prolix indeed:

> *The Rare and most wonderfull thinges which Edvvard VVebbe an English-man borne, hath seene and passed in his troublesome travailes, in the Citties of Jerusalem, Dammasko, Bethelem and Galely: and in the Landes of Jewrie, Egipt, Grecia, Russia, and Prester John. // Wherein is set foorth his extreame slaverie sustained many yeres togither, in the Gallies and wars*

> *of the great Turk against the Landes of Persia, Tartaria, Spaine, and Portugall, with the manner of his releasement, and coming into Englande in May last. Newly enlarged and corrected by the Author* (Webbe 1868) (spelling modernized).

An illustration of Prester John from Travailes.

Lengthy titles were once common in publishing, as they informed book browsers of the book's subject and provided some indication of its tone. In the case of *Travailes*, however, the subject and tone indicate mendacity. The reader will eventually learn that Webbe never set foot in Bethlehem, the Galilee, or Greece during his travels. Prester John's "land" is mythical, as

Webbe's educated readers were well aware. Moreover, while the Turks were at war during his time with them, it was not with Tartaria, Spain or Portugal, although Webbe mendaciously claims participation in decades-past attacks by the Ottomans on Portuguese colonies in India.

The last sentence—"Newly enlarged"—insinuates that the 1590 Wright copy is not the first edition: another falsehood. No trace of any earlier edition has been found in the records of the Stationers' Company, and twentieth-century bibliographical research has determined that the 1590 date assigned to the Barley and Pavier printings in the nineteenth century were in error and should have been 1592 and 1600, respectively. Webbe's own internal statements reveal that he omitted a great deal for various reasons, thus contradicting the title's claim of *added* material. (The corrections to the Epistle to the Reader are discussed below.)

The Epistle Dediciatory (A2v-r)

This is literally a textbook example of the *epistle dedicatorie*. William Fulwood's *The Enimee of Idlenesse*, published in 1568, was the most popular of the books on epistolary writing published in England, with a fourth edition coming out in 1586.[4] Webbe's phrasing parallels some of Fulwood's exemplars so closely that *Idlenesse* must have been his inspiration.

One of these exemplars mentions a person "lately returned from Turkie," another recommends that a certain man be granted knighthood for his services "against the Turkes and Infidels… with great pain and travail of his bodie," and a third urges his companions that in the fight "for the maintaining of the faith of Jesus Christ against the Turke, we ought to spare neither body nor goods….[lest] we be cowards, traitors, wicked heretics and worthy of perpetual reproach…"

In places we find that Webbe followed Fulwood's advice. In others he flouts it:

> If we speak or write of or to our superiors, we must do it with all honour, humility and reverence, using to their personages superlative and comparative terms: such as most high, most mighty, right honorable, most redoubted, most loyal, most worthy, most renowned, altogether according to the quality of their personages. And it is to be noted that of superlative, comparative, positive or diminutive terms, *we must use but three at once at the most* [emphasis added] (Fulwood "First Booke, Instructions on how to endyte Epistles and Letters")

Against advice Webbe piles on the superlatives: "most mighty," "gracious and renowned," "most gracious and dread," "dread," "most excellent."

His request, "that I may be employed in such service and affaires, as may be pleasing to God, and found profitable to my Prince and Countrey" (A2r), is

a standard trope recommended by Fulwood in letters requesting a "corporall benefit."

Two points suggest something of the author's identity and/or true social status. First: the dedicatee is Queen Elizabeth. Protocol would normally inhibit, if not prohibit, a simple commoner or mere member of the gentry from dedicating a book—except perhaps a religious treatise or a serious work of scholarship—to her personally. To dedicate a flagrant hoax to the Queen suggests that the author was either confident of a favorable reception (Sell 2), or at worst, reasonably sure he would not be imprisoned for presumption.

Second, the author speaks of praying for his release and "…[longing] inwardly until I came to *see* [emphasis added] your Highness…and this my native country" (A2v). He almost seems to be suggesting that he had a face-to-face meeting with the Queen upon his return from captivity. The statement has the ring of authenticity, as if the author had in fact endured the fear and uncertainty of captivity at the hands of foreigners, and experienced the joy of "releasement."

The Epistle to the Reader (Webbe 1868 A3r)

In the Epistle to the Reader Webbe's first statement is a vow: "I have undertaken…to *utter*…[emphasis added]." The use of "utter" instead of the more usual "write" is ambiguous. At one time it meant "to offer for sale," and it also had the connotation (as it still does today) of putting into circulation something *forged* or *counterfeit*. The author may be playing with both meanings, on the one hand emphasizing the commercial objectives that motivated him to publish, and on the other slyly hinting that his book is a forgery or a counterfeit.

In his next statement he vehemently protests the truth of the book's contents. The reader may be forgiven for wondering why Webbe is so certain that people will say "that *these are lies and fained fables* [emphasis added]: and that *it containeth nothing else* [emphasis added]." Had word leaked out, or is the author simply warning the reader not to believe a word he says?

According to accepted rhetorical practice, one should bring forward witnesses to testify to the truth of one's claims. Webbe observes this custom, but in a way that renders the gesture valueless: "he…that shall find fault and doubt of the truth hereof, let him but…make inquiry of the best and greatest travelers and merchants about all this land." Instead of producing witnesses, Webbe advises doubters to search them out for themselves[5]—and then handicaps the search by naming no names. Webbe may be giving us a clue as to where to find his "witnesses," however, because as H. W. L. Hime noted in 1916, "The whole might have been written anywhere by any one conversant with books of travel" (Hime 465).

Though promising that he will speak about the things he saw, the author proceeds to qualify this statement by saying that his story will consist for "the *most part* [emphasis added] of such things as I saw." Webbe goes on to confess that he has left some things out of his account (contradicting the title page which claimed *added* material), things "which now I cannot call to remembrance, for that my *memory* [emphasis added] faileth me." The issue of memory will surface again.

The corrections

At the end of the Epistle to the Reader, the author makes reference to "the [non-existent] first edition of this book," and informs the reader that "a great fault in number did negligently escape" in this earlier edition. But then he does something strange: he gives both the *correct* numbers— which have been "corrected" in the text—and the original *wrong* numbers, which are *not* in the text and are in any case no longer relevant.[6]

Without knowing what the numbers represent, there is no context by which to judge the significance of the errors as opposed to their mere magnitude. Webbe once again throws out a stumbling block: he gives the approximate location of the errors in the (nonexistent) first edition, but not their location in the *current* edition (at B2v). If the reader wishes to discover the full context, he must search the text for the missing information—like Webbe's missing witnesses—himself.

Jonathan Sell addresses the literary roots of this anxiety among sixteenth-century travel writers to not only *be* correct, but to be *seen* as correct:

> …Webbe's numerical nicety, and its foregrounding in the epistle to the reader, has greater significance than at first sight may appear… the correction of the numerical *errata* is mentioned immediately after Webbe has confessed that his memory has been impaired by his 'travail'. What, then, are we to make of his extraordinary capacity for numerical recall? It might be suggested that poor memory is here a conventional trope or commonplace which Webbe unthinkingly reproduces, that, as such, it is devoid of truth content (or its truth is beside the point), and that we are to take the precision of the numbers in good faith. However, *I have found no other references to poor memory in the texts I have read* [emphasis added]; what is more, any such reference would sit awkwardly in the *admirabile genus* since what was at stake was, precisely, a persuasive illusion of factual accuracy.

> …Webbe's quibble over number is, I think, a generic tic or reflex that refers us back to More's *Utopia*. …So great was the influence of More's work on sixteenth-century England in general, and on all matters relating to the discovery of new worlds in particular, that

traveller-writers often deliberately distanced their own works from More's in an effort to distinguish their truth from his fiction….

they also derived from the introductory matter to *Utopia* a series of tropes that served to configure the genre of travel writing. In More's letter to Peter Gilles, which accompanies the little book he has written…, he raises two doubts [both concerning exact measurements]…. It is as if the credibility of the narrative depends on the reliability of memory, the best index of which is its capacity for numerical recall. Within the fiction, the truth of More's report…hinges on the accuracy of his recollection of a number. The same might be said of Webbe's work, the *irony being that Webbe seeks to enhance his truth with a stratagem derived from a work of fiction* [emphasis added]. It is easy to imagine that the first edition of his work had met with such skepticism that in the revised edition Webbe had to up its truth value by intoducing this quibble over number. (Sell 69-70)

The acrostic poem

Scholars ignore the acrostic poem entitled, "The Verses Written Upon the Alphabet of the Queen's Majesty's Name":

E ternal God, who guideth still your grace,
L engthen your life, in health and happy days [*state*].
I nspire your subjects' hearts in every place:
Z ealous in Love, and free from secret hate,
A nd shorten life in those that breed debate.
B ehold her Lord, who is our strength and stay
E ven he [*she*] it is, by whom we hold our own:
T urn not thy face from her in any way,
H ew down her foes, and let them all be known.
R enowned Queen, your highness's subjects' joy,
E ven for to see the fall of all your foes:
G od of his mercy shield you from annoy
I ntending treasons, still for to disclose:
N one of us all, but will most duly pray,
A lmighty God preserve you night and day.
      FINIS.

The acrostic was a little-used poetic form, dating back to the Greeks, which was briefly in fashion in Elizabethan court circles during the last two decades of the sixteenth century. There can be little doubt that this effusion is intended

as a parody of similar poems circulating at court, but given the double nature of *Travailes*, there is likely to be more to it than appears on the surface.

The first thing of note is that the verses are unsigned, although the implication is that they were written by Webbe. (No one has questioned the ability of this confessedly ill-educated man to write competent, if undistinguished, poetry.) The double nature of *Travailes* might prompt the reader to question both Webbe's authorship and a singular hand. It would be thoroughly in the spirit of *Travailes* for the author to have taken individual lines from different poems—as he took his tales from different sources—and grafted them together into one gloriously overblown pastiche. To have the intended effect, moreover, it would be necessary that the lines be recognizable to his readers.

The acrostic's second line—"Lengthen your life, in health and happy state"—is a paraphrase of Edmund Spencer's *Faerie Queene*'s, "Long may you live in health and happy state" (canto II, verse 23, line 8). Line 10 may be modeled on James Aske's *Elizabetha triumphans* (1588) which refers to the Queen as "Renowned Queen of this renowned land" and "sacred and renowned queen." Line 12 may be a paraphrase from Anthony Munday's "The Paine of Pleasure" (1580). Finally, line 13 may refer to a broadside published *circa* 1586, "A Short Discourse expressing the substance of all the late *intended Treasons* [emphasis added] against the Queenes Maiestie."[7]

Identifying Edward Webbe

In the dedication and the Epistle to the Reader we are presented with only the sketchiest outline of the *persona* of Edward Webbe. Modern scholars have searched for a person bearing that name, but found an "almost complete absence of Webbe in the historical record" (Sell 1-2). Vitkus admits that, "Aside from the pamphlet, we have no other evidence of his existence" (8). Webbe's biography in the *Dictionary of National Biography* (LX 109-110) is essentially the one Edward Arber invented to append to his 1868 edition of *Travailes*.

Without evidence that Edward Webbe was an actual person, the next likely possibility is that the name is a pseudonym, a widely practiced method in Elizabethan literature given the strict state censorship laws promulgated by Elizabeth and her Privy Council.

A pseudonym can be formed by simply picking a name out of the air, but there are often connections and parallels between the names and words which resonate with the real author's name and *persona*, themes being explored in the book, historical references, and so on.

The baptismal name "Edward" was too common in Elizabethan times to carry special significance except perhaps in a personal, individual context.

King Edward VI reigned from 1547 to 1553, and a significnt number of male children born during those years were undoubtedly given "Edward" as a baptismal name. Arber calculated that Edward Webbe was born in 1553 or 1554. Oxfordians will note that "Edward" was de Vere's baptismal name and that he was born in 1550 during the reign of Edward VI.

Web: the noun

The late Andrew Hannas examined Gabriel Harvey's 1578 comment about de Vere, "*vultus/Tela vibrat*" and noted that while, in Latin, *tela* could mean an object that could be thrown with the hand, such as a dart, stone or spear, there was a second meaning: "web of cloth: also any enterprise business or worke" (Hannas). In English, "web" denotes something woven, or a net-like structure such as a snare. It is associated with the verb "weave," which derives from Old English *wefan* (Online Etymology Dictionary) meaning to form by interlacing yarn. Figuratively it can also mean *devise*, *contrive* or *arrange*. It also had the meaning from *c*.1200 "to move from one place to another." Several of these meanings resonate with *Travailes*, underlining its trap-like character as a "mock-hoax," and reflecting its narrative structure as an intricately contrived journey, going first one way and then another.

Web/Webb/Webbe: The surname

The author's surname—spelled variously "Web," "Webb," or "Webbe"—while not as common as the baptismal "Edward," was by no means rare in Elizabethan England.

Possibly the best-known Webbe of this period was William Webbe (*fl* 1568-1591), author of *A Discourse of English Poetrie* (1586)[8] who was the first commentator to praise Edward de Vere in print for his poetry. While it may be only a chance congruence of words, Webbe refers to *Discourse* as "my poore trauell" (15) and "this small trauell" (96), and to an earlier work as "my simple trauelles" (16). *Discourse* is also peppered with the words *true*, *truth* and *truly*, especially in the repeated phrase "*true* poetry."

Genealogy

In the first line of his narrative proper, the author gives the reader a clue to his background by announcing that "I, Edward Webbe, was[9] the son of Richard Web, master gunner of England" (Webbe 1868 A4r). Arber did not follow up on this clue to Webbe's parentage, but it happens that there was a Richard Webbe (Web or Webb) who was a master-gunner during the early Elizabethan period.[10] No one seems to have researched his biography, so there is no confirmation whether or not he was married, or if he had any children.

If the author was a London resident, as seems likely, he might have known of Gunner Webbe's existence, and simply appropriated his name and profes-

sion for the father of his authorial *persona*, but would such a straightforward solution have been satisfactory to him? Might there be more nuances to the name "Richard Webbe" than just his profession? A cursory Internet search reveals the existence of a number of Richard Webbes who lived during the Tudor period. The phrase, "[Travelers] may lie with authority," appeared in connection with one of these men, which prompted further investigation. This individual's biography revealed associations which were remarkably apposite to the theme of *Travailes*.

Richard Webbe, a bookseller from Bristol, had what might be termed a walk-on part in Sir Thomas More's *The Confutation of Tyndale's Answere* (1538):

> Men say that he which hath been once at Jerusalem *may lie with authority* [emphasis added], because he shall be sure seldom to meet any man that hath been there, by whom his tale might be controlled…. (Book VII, 812, ll. 30-32)

Sir Thomas then mentions finding "…the selfsame wily folly in Richard Webbe" (813, ll. 9-11).

Webbe was accused of selling heretical books and summoned to London to answer the charges. Before presenting himself to More, he consulted with a London friend to coordinate their stories; unknown to Webbe, this friend had confessed everything to More, who cunningly invited Webbe to tell his version of the tale. *The Confutation* reports that Webbe "answered on his oath many a false answer…, *saving* the salve of his *remembrance*. For ever, for the most part *he referred and restrained all to his remembrance*." When More accused Webbe of being untruthful, Webbe responded "if yet find any one [answer] false,…never trust me after while ye live" (814, ll. 16-17). [emphasis added]

More then told Webbe that he knew at least one of his statements was false; Webbe responded by claiming that "he swore no further than he *remembered*." After further questioning, Webbe conceded that he had told a lie—but just one—and begged to be forgiven. "…for in good faith, sir, there is *not* in all mine answers any *one thing untrue but that*…and yet find any one more…then never believe me while ye live, but *take all for lies that ever I tell you*, and put me to open shame, and *make me an example to all the false, perjured knaves in the realm*" (814, ll. 35- 815, ll. 1, 4-7). [emphasis added]

By giving his father the same name as that of one of England's most notorious liars, and using language in the Epistle to the Reader nearly identical to the words ascribed to Richard Webbe in *The Confutation*, the author of *Travailes* clearly expected his educated readers to draw the obvious parallel between "father" and "son."

Troublesome Travailes and Lucian's *True Histories*

This review of the paratext of *Travailes* clearly establishes that the book qualifies as a mock-hoax, as defined by Brian McHale.

In retrospect, the alternative interpretation of *Travailes* as a parody should have been as obvious to modern scholars as it apparently was to many of its contemporary readers. *Travailes*'s putative genre—the travel narrative—has been a staple of imaginative literature from Homer's *Odyssey* to *Orlando Furioso* to *Euphues and his England*. Given that the author of *Travailes* all but labeled himself a liar, the most probable model for *Travailes* is the *Verae Historae* of Lucian of Samosata, which "was so supremely wrought that most subsequent travel parodies are mere variations on its themes" (Cambridge 5). Significantly, the author of *Verae Historiae* begins by calling himself a liar:

> everything here by me set down doth in a comical fashion glance at some or other of the old poets, historiographers, and philosophers, which in their writings have recorded many monstrous and intolerable untruths….

> I could not…but wonder at them,…writing so manifest lies…. this made me also ambitious to leave some monument of myself behind me, that I might not be the only man exempted from this liberty of lying: and because I had no matter of verity to employ my pen in (for nothing hath befallen me worth the writing), I turned my style to publish untruths, but with an honester mind than others have done: for *this one thing I confidently pronounce for a truth, that I lie*: and this, I hope, may be an excuse for all the rest, when I confess that I am faulty in: for *I write of matters that I neither saw nor suffered, nor heard by report from others*, which are in no being, nor possible ever to have a beginning. *Let no man therefore in any case give any credit to them.* (Lucien 5, 9, 11). [emphasis added]

Although the works of Lucian were not available in English translation until 1634 (Hickes), numerous translations in French, Italian and Latin were in print more than a century earlier, including those by Desiderius Erasmus—which were among his most frequently reprinted works. T.W. Baldin's monumental work on the English grammar schools of the Elizabethan era is sufficient evidence that the average Elizabethan boy educated under this system would have had exposure to Lucian both in Latin translation, and in the original Greek, if he was sufficiently diligent.

Lucian's body of work frequently addressed the questions of truth and fiction.

> In the *VH*, Lucian…sets out to make fun of the extravagant fictions of poets, historians and philosophers alike, and does so in a narrative which manages to blend fact and fiction, and the incredible with the

credible, so successfully that the dividing line between truth and lies is no longer clear. The *VH* is, at the same time, a demonstration of how to recognize lies and of how to make them convincing. The authorial voice, speaking in the Introduction, emphasizes the untruthfulness of what follows, while the narratorial voice which tells the story strives to make it seem believable. By setting up this tension at the beginning, Lucian has exemplified the way in which the true and the false are constantly threatening to coalesce. The reader is hard pressed to keep the authorial voice from being subsumed into the narratorial voice…. (Georgiadou 3).

The text of *Travails* follows in *VH*'s footsteps in these concerns. The very beginning of Webbe's narrative consists of his "reports" of a pair of actual historical events, accounts of which were not only published in Hakluyt's *Principal Navigations* (1589), but were printed on facing pages. Webbe's narrative conspicuously reverses their chronological order.

Like Lucian, Webbe makes use of the narratives of earlier writers, in his case that of "The worthie enterprise of John Fox an Englishman…," also printed in Hakluyt (1589). A comparison of the events in "Worthie Enterprise" and the story arc of *Travailes* show significant parallels and equally significant differences. Both heroes are gunners, and both are captured by the Turks. But Webbe inflates his experiences so that they are higher, wider, and more dramatic than those of Fox. His ship is bound for a more distant, more exotic destination and carries a larger crew. It fights against a much larger force of Turkish galleys; the battle continues for two days and two nights, and the majority of the crew is killed. Many events in Fox are matched by similar occurrences in *Travailes*.

Webbe's main story arc is interrupted three times, as that of *Verae Historiae* was interrupted by three subsidiary journeys (Georgiadou 15). In his first side-excursion, Webbe-the-slave becomes Webbe-the-artillerist and goes off with the armies of the Turk to have adventures throughout the Middle East. On his second, the newly-freed Webbe adventures his way through Italy, and on his third he takes himself off to fight in the very recent Battle of Ivry in France before returning to England for the second and final time.

VH uses famous literary characters and places them in situations where they meet Lucian and his crew (Pinheiro 28). Webbe's narrative is littered with references to both historical and mythical characters, like Prester John, whose stories he has lifted from Hakluyt, Sir John Mandeville, etc. With the notable exception of H.W.L. Hime, modern scholars have deemed these sources as corroboration of Webbe's tales rather than identifying them as his models.

Episode by episode, feature by feature, Webbe follows Lucian's trail: *VH* begins with a sea-voyage (Georgiadou 8); *Travailes* begins with a sea voyage.

Lucian is obsessed with numbers, and Webbe litters his narrative with them, especially flagging numerical *errors* in his Epistle to the Reader. In *VH* the narrative ends with references to further, unwritten adventures (Mheallaigh 253); *Travailes* ends with Webbe's tantalizing references to unwritten past adventures:

> I have omitted therein my service done at the taking of Tunnis, and what I did in the Royal under Duke John of Austria; and many other thinges which I coulde heere discover unto you: onely let this suffice. (D4r)

The most interesting and tantalizing parallel between *Travailes* and *VH* is the fact that Lucian maintains his pose as the unnamed fictional narrator until near the end, where he requests Homer to write an epigram for him to engrave on a pillar. The epigram reads:

> *Lucian* [emphasis added], the gods' beloved, did once attain
> To see all this, and then go home again. (Hickes 195)

This epigram finally and explicitly identifies the narrator with the author.

Webbe maintains his pose as the named fictional narrator throughout *Travailes*, but near the end of the book (D1v-D2v), between his first return to England after being ransomed and his departure to France to fight for the King, he inserts three anomalous stories which have no links to one another, no links to anything else in his narrative, and no fixed points in time. The middle story of the three is the tale of Oxford in Palermo.

The Palermo Episode

When viewed in the context of *Travailes* as a geniune travel narrative, Webbe's description of de Vere's "challeng" in Palermo is frustratingly vague.

> Many things I have omitted to speak of, which I have seen and noted in the time of my troublesome travel. One thing did greatly comfort me, which I saw long since in Sicilia, in the citie of Palermo, a thing worthy of memory, where the right honorable the Earle of Oxenford a famous man for Chivalry, at what time he traveled into foreign countries, being then personally present, made there a challenge against all manner of persons whatsoever, and at all maner of weapons, as Tournaments, Barriers with horse and armor, to fight and combat with any whatsoever, in the defence of his Prince and country: for which he was very highly commended, and yet no man durst be so hardy to encounter with him, so that all Italy over, he is acknowledged ever since for the same[11], the only Chevalier and Noble man of England. This title they give unto him as worthily

> deserved. (Edward Webbe, *Troublesome Trauails…* (1590) (Webbe 1868 D2v). [spelling modernized]

There is so little meat on these dry bones that most scholars and biographers simply throw a brief acknowledgment in Webbe's direction and move on. However, there is meat here, and the bones are not as dry as they appear.

In sixteen lines the reader is given four pieces of data: (1) a general time-frame, (2) a locale, (3) the wording of "a challeng," and (4) the gist of a compliment given to the Earl by his Italian hosts. By this point, it should be apparent to the reader that this story, like everthing else in *Travailes*, is almost certainly not based on truth. Why, then, was it included and what does it signify?

Like the epigram in *Verae Historiae*, this episode—which clearly refers to Edward de Vere, the 17th Earl of Oxford—serves to point to the true identity of the author of *Travailes*.

The date and place

It is literally impossible to tell from the narrative when this event occurred because the Palermo episode and the tales which precede and follow it occupy a bubble of timelessness with respect to the rest of the narrative. For what it may be worth, historical records show that there was a general outbreak of the plague in Palermo during the 1575-1576 period when Oxford was in Italy, making it unlikely that there was a tournament there at that time (Anderson 492).

The location Webbe gives is specific, but no documentation has been found which actually places de Vere in Palermo. If the event was "worthy of memory," as Webbe asserts (D1v) it should have made some impact on the historical record. Webbe's own itineraries as outlined in the text of *Travailes* do not place him any further south than Naples.

Looking at the other stories in this time bubble, the reader will note that the first recounts an alleged rumor that Queen Elizabeth had been captured by the Spanish in 1588: in reality, the Queen was never in Italy. In the third grouping of "wonder tales" Webbe is not present at all. If the three stories are meant to be seen as parallels, this may suggest that Oxford was never in Palermo either. Which leaves the question: why did Webbe specify Palermo? Why not another—any other—Italian city? What is significant about Palermo in the context of *Travailes*'s particular concerns?

A clue may lie in the career of the printer of the first edition of *Travailes*: John Wolfe.

The Elizabethan printing industry was tightly controlled, with only a small number of influential printers being allowed to print the most lucrative classes

of books. In addition, the monarchy prohibited the printing of some titles or types of books for political or moral reasons. Wolfe, who had lived and worked in Italy for several years as a printer, specialized in Italian authors and had a comfortable niche in that market. Unluckily, many of the prohibited works (which were naturally in high demand) were by Italian authors, which negatively impacted Wolfe's income. In order to evade the prohibition on English printers publishing the highly popular works of Nicolo Machiavelli, for instance, Wolfe surreptitiously published five titles between 1584 and 1588, *Discourses, The Art of War, The Prince*, etc., in the original Italian, concealing his involvement by the expedient of naming an Italian city as the place of publication on the title page. Instead of bearing "London" as the place of publication, Wolfe's first three titles were falsely identified as having been printed in Palermo. The other two were "printed" in Piacenza and Rome.

Therefore, Palermo in this context does not mean a *place*, but points the reader to Wolfe and his association with other publications meant to deceive the reader in some way.

The challenge

The scope of de Vere's alleged challenge is so broad as to be ludicrous. It sounds more like theatrical posturing than anything else, suggesting the tournament might have been a play-joust or a masque in which de Vere took part, although no historical record has been found describing such an event.

It would have been a supremely arrogant gesture, and although some readers might believe de Vere capable of such an outrageous display, Webbe dismisses any question of reality when he adds that "no man durst be so hardie to encounter with him" (D1v). In the unwritten code of chivalry, such a refusal would have reverberated around the whole of Europe. Which of course it did not.

The compliment

Since there was no challenge, there must not have been a compliment from the Italians either, but Webbe records one:

> This title they giue vnto him as worthely deserued, so that all Italy ouer, he is acknowledged *euer since for the same* [emphasis added], the onely Chiuallier and Noble man of England (D1v).

This identification of Oxford as "the onely Chiuaillier…of England" unmistakably links him with one of the three major English figures in the medieval knight-errant tradition: Astolfo. Oxford was already associated with the second, Euphues, as dedicatee of the second Euphues novel (*Euphues and His England*) published in 1580 by playwright John Lyly, and to the third knight, Palmerin d'Oliva, by virtue of Anthony Munday's translations of several tales

in the Palmerin cycle, part one of which was published in 1588, also dedicated to the Earl of Oxford. In this regard, it is important to note that Lyly and Munday had both served as secretaries to the Earl of Oxford.

Famed as one of Charlemagne's twelve knights, Astolfo played a role in Boiardo's *Orlando Innamorato* and in Aristo's continuation of the story under the title of *Orlando Furioso*. Ariosto's *Furioso* was perhaps better known, but the author of *Travailes* may have been familiar with a later translation of Boiardo's *Innamorato* as well.

There are actually two different Astolfo's, although they are technically the same character. Boiardo's work is a burlesque of the medieval romance, and his Astolfo is cast in the traditional mold of "impudent buffonery and irrepressibility, craven lack of courage, and bad horsemanship" (Marinelli 36). Boiardo depicts him as a lover of practical jokes, provocative and insulting, (Marinelli 39). When Boiardo describes Astolfo, we are reminded of Oxford's reputation for extravagant display:

Astolfo, you should know, my lords
was English, handsome past compare,
very rich, but more courteous,
his clothes as charming as his air.
His strength was not as clear to me,
for often he fell off his steed,
but when he did, he'd blame bad luck
and fearlessly return to fall.
Back to the story. He was dressed
in armor worth a treasure chest,
his shileld encircled by large pearls,
and he wore mail of solid gold.
His helmet was more costly yet,
due to a gem set in its work
that was, if Turpin does not lie,
a ruby of a walnut's size.
On his horse cloaked in leopard skin
with furnishings of fine-spun gold.
(Ross 10)

From Orlando Furioso*, Astolfo leading the giant, Caligorante.*

Ariosto does not introduce Astolfo until the sixth canto of his continuation of the Orlando saga, but when he does Astolfo undergoes a metamorphosis worthy of Ovid. He transforms Boiardo's buffoonish Astolfo into the perfect knight, savior of Orlando's sanity, possessor of every virtue and the true protagonist of what is titularly Orlando's saga. Jo Ann Cavallo calls him "the knight of second chances" who "acts consistently as an exemplary Christian knight, using his newfound virtues in the service of humanity" (Cavallo 97).

Webbe's linking of Oxford to Astolfo might be waved off as mere puffery, except for the fact that the two *Orlando* poems are, like Lucian's *Verae Historiae*, classic examples of the imaginative travel narrative. In both poems Astolfo is constantly on the move.

Prince Astolfo of England is already a world traveller in the *Innamorato*, setting out from Paris across the expanse of Eurasia into Cathay, then heading on a circuitous journey that takes him west to Morgana's Lake, to the extreme north at Manodante's realm, and then in a southwesterly direction to the shores of Alcina's kingdom. He continues to traverse the globe in the *Furioso*, travelling by sea, land, and air, from the easternmost reaches of Asia through the Middle East and to Africa…. (Cavallo) Although Webbe's travels are not as extensive as Astolfo's—he does not fly to the moon or descend to Purgatory for instance—he and Astolfo visit many of the same places: Jerusalem, Damascus, Cairo, the Red Sea, and India, and both of them encounter the mythical Prester John.

Given the extensive parallels between Lucian's *Verae Historiae* and *Travailes*, it is plausible to see the Palermo episode as overtly making the linkage of Oxford = Astolfo = Webbe = Oxford. In this vein, it is perhaps significant that one of the changes made by Barley in the second printing of *Travailes* was to delete the phrase "ever since for the same" from Webbe's description of Oxford as the only Chevalier and Nobleman of England.

Who was Edward Webbe?

Although the author of *Travailes* did not give the reader any verifiable biographical information about himself, he nonetheless provided a sufficient number of clues to postulate that Edward Webbe was Edward de Vere.

Oxford, being specifically named in *Travailes*, would have been within his rights as a peer of the realm to object to its publication. The fact that three editions occurred within his lifetime suggests his tolerance of, if not his full agreement with the contents—which would be true if he were the author. Only de Vere himself, with his sense of the ridiculous, would have written a tale like the Palermo episode with a challenge that makes him appear an arrogant fool, and a fake encomium from the Italians that makes hyperbolic comparisons between himself and the Astolfo of *Orlando Innamorato* and *Orlando Furioso*, two of the classics of Italian literature.

The dedication to Queen Elizabeth of what was an obvious tissue of untruths, including an undignified portrait of herself as a prisoner, was a risky business. "…would a writer seeking self-promotion knowingly lie to his Queen? If so, either Webbe was a foolhardy writer or Elizabeth a foreseeably gullible audience…" (Sell 2). Perhaps neither, but an "allowed Fool"

exercising the kind of liberty that Elizabeth surely would not have tolerated from anyone else.

The author's plea that he might be employed "in such service and affaires as may be pleasing to God, and found profitable to my Prince and Country" (Webbe 1868 A2v) was one frequently voiced by de Vere, and may have been at least part of his purpose for publishing *Travailes*.

The author's statements in the dedication in which he expresses the fear of the captive and the joy of release reflect the kind of authenticity which suggests de Vere's experience of being captured by Danish pirates on his return from Italy in 1576.

The evidence of the pattern

Lucian was a staple in English education—"All the Elizabethans felt his spell" (Casson xvii)—and educated Englishmen would have been thoroughly familiar with *Verae Historiea* as well as many of Lucian's 80-odd works. In *The Dream*, for instance, he describes a sneering audience response to his own tale (Goldhill 68), just as Webbe anticipates audience criticism in his Epistle to the Reader.

Lucian is funny, irreverent, and controversial, which probably made him a favorite with young iconoclasts, but he was also a superb writer, whose wit, humor, irony, exuberant comic fantasy, and craftsmanship with words (Casson *xv-xvi*) made him the ideal model for an author who sought mastery of dialog and narrative.

The pun imbedded in the Latin title of Lucian's work—*Verae Historiae*—must also have made using it as a pattern irrestistible: a *Vere* publishing an *untrue* history based on a Greek parody of true history.

The evidence of the author's sense of humor

Jonathan Sell characterized Webbe's *Travailes* as "an early modern bar-bore's tedious litany of tall tales…" (63). This description bears an uncanny resemblance to the picture of Edward de Vere seen in the accusations that Henry Howard and Charles Arundel leveled against Oxford in 1580/1 in an attempt to discredit his charges of treason against themselves. In the course of these accusations, Howard cataloged a long series of misdeeds:

> his horrible untruths which he hath uttered so many times and with such confidence that he takes and swears them for approved verities. Of this sort is that constant and continual affirmative of his that the meanest shoemaker's wife in Milan…is more gallant and more delicately suited every common working-day than the Queen our mistress is at Whitsuntide; that he hath abused and polluted almost all the

> noblewomen of account in England; that he took a principal town in Flanders by the Duke of Alva's direction, and had taken another but for the coming of Mr Bedingfield; that his judgment was demanded touching the fortification of Antwerp, and the curtain altered; that he should have had the government of Milan; that Don John sent him fifteen thousand men to surprise the state of Genoa during the civil war; that he might have had I know not how many thousand pounds a year at Naples; that the Countess of Mirandola came fifty mile to lie with him as the queen of Amazons did to lie with Alexander; that a greater lady far by some degrees than she made court to him in France; that St. Mark's church at Venice was only paved with diamonds and rubies; that a merchant in Genoa hath a mantel of a chimney that cost more than all the treasure in the Tower doth amount unto; that he read the rhetoric lecture at Strasbourg; …that he had oftentimes copulation with a female spirit in Sir George Howard's house at Greenwich (Howard 6-7).

Travailes echoes the same kinds of "horrible untruths" complained of by Henry Howard, and the flights of fancy that ornament its pages—the Tartarian children who do not open their eyes until they are nine days old (A4v), the blue swans (C1r), and the Holy Sepulchre with its seven doors and seven steps (C2r)—are precisely the kinds of over-the-top tales that flowed from de Vere's imagination a decade earlier.

The evidence of the author's learning

The author of *Travailes* displays a polished writing style which would have been difficult for a merchant seaman to acquire, let alone one who supposedly endured years of slavery under Turkish masters. Edward de Vere's educational attainments are well-known: childhood spent in the care of Sir Thomas Smith; adolescence as a ward of state under William Cecil, Lord Burghley; honorary degrees from both Oxford and Cambridge universities; and study at Gray's Inn. It requires no special pleading to suggest that he was fully capable of writing *Travailes*.

The author's use of such sources as Lucian's *Verae Historiae,* Hakluyt's 1589 *Voyages*, the two Italian poems *Orlando Innamorato* and *Orlando Furioso*, and many other books as the armature upon which to construct portions of his narrative indicates not only the eclecticism of the author's reading, but that he had access to materials which would not have been readily available to the general public. In particular, Oxford's interest in exploration is well documented: in the second and third Martin Frobisher voyages of 1577 and 1578, for example, the Earl of Oxford invested and lost more than 3,000 pounds in the hopes of finding a North West Passage to China. In 1581, Oxford invested another 500 pounds in Edward Fenton's North West voyage. Although

this expedition was a failure too, in 1584 Oxford became a shareholder in a new company known as "The Colleagues of the Fellowship for the Discovery of the North West Passage," which fitted out an expedition in 1585 under Captain John Davis. Thus, we could expect him to have been familiar with most of the written literature on the subject circulating in Elizabethan England.

Conclusion

I believe this re-examination of Edward Webbe's *Troublesome Travails* has produced sufficient evidence to repudiate the common assessment that it is a genuine travel narrative written by an historical (if obscure) Elizabethan merchant seaman. Without this conception clouding the reader's view, it becomes possible to see *Travails* for what it is: a splendid example of the "wonder tale"—a literary genre employed by authors from Lucian of Samasota to Sir John Mandeville to Sir Thomas More.

The identity of the author may never be known, but the buried reference to Edward de Vere in the mythical episode of the tournament challenge in Palermo, Italy, coupled with the book's almost obsessive ringing of changes on the subject of truth, half-truth and lies, strongly suggests a connection to the Earl of Oxford, if not actual authorship.

From the viewpoint of biographers of Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, the debarring of *Travailes* as an historical narrative requires us to delete information we thought we knew about an important period of his life. However, as nebulous as this fact was, it is no great loss, and we have in exchange the possibility of an unknown prose work by the author of the Shakespeare plays and poems.

Endnotes

1. The first full bibliographic description of *Trauailes*, published in W. C. Hazlitt's *Handbook of the Popular, Poetical and Dramatic Literature of England* (II 646) in 1867, was flawed, placing the three editions in the reverse order, with Pavier's first and Wright's last, and improperly dating them all 1590. Arber perpetuated this mis-dating in his 1868 edition.

2. The definition of the noun "fable" has three meanings: (1) a usually short narrative making an edifying or cautionary point and employing animals as characters; (2) a story about legendary persons and exploits; and (3) a falsehood; a lie. The verb "fabling" has the additional meaning of (4) to recount as if true. Thus Purchas is not accusing Webbe of lying, but merely labeling his story as a fiction which, despite its outward form, does not properly belong with genuine travel narratives.

3. A third edition published in 1885 by Edmund Goldsmid essentially plagiarized Arber, notes and all.

4. Angell Day's *The English Secretorie* (1586) was also available, but would not yet have been as well known and recognizable as Fulwood's manual.

5. "…if they believe it not to be so, let them take the pains to go thither themselves and they shall find my words true." – Lucian *True History*, p. 67.

6. The Wright copy mentions two errors in the "first edition" which necessitated increasing 30K to 300K and 50K to 500K. The Barley and Pavier copies have the requite wrong figures to qualify for the first edition. However, both have a *third* wrong number of 40K *which in Wright is 400K*. Either Wright corrected the third error without mentioning it, or Barley and Pavier each "corrected" one too many errors in an effort to make it appear that his was the missing first edition.

7. A thorough scouring of EEBO for doublets of the acrostic's individual lines would be an interesting exercise.

8. Edward Arber published an edition of this work in 1895, in *English Reprints*, no. 26.

9. This is a peculiar use of the past tense. Even if one's father is deceased, the relationship still exists: "I *am* the son of Richard…who *was* master gunner." Taken literally, the phrase suggests that Edward Webbe has died (or ceased to exist?)—which is nonsensical given that he is speaking here-and-now.

10. The *Calendar of State Papers (Domestic)* for 1566 lists a master gunner of that name who was assigned an annuity or yearly pension. Francis Duncan's *History of the Royal Regiment of Artillery* lists Richard Webb "Among the oldest Master-Gunners of England whose names are recorded" (I, 40), and Stephen Ashton Walton in "The Art of Gunnery in Renaissance England" states that Webbe served as a master-gunner from 1566-71 (300).

11. Edward Arber deleted this phrase "ever since for the same" in his edition of *Trauailes*.

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—. *The rare and most wonderful things...* Edmund William Ashbee, 1868. facsimile.

—. *The rare and most wonderful things...* London: William Barley, 1592. facsimile.

J. Thomas Looney in The Bookman's Journal: Five Letters (1920-1921)

by James Warren

J. Thomas Looney commented on several occasions that the question of who wrote Shakespeare's works was not the most important problem facing mankind, and that after several years of intense work on the authorship issue he was turning his attention to those other, more important, subjects. Those statements, combined with the record showing just three other Oxfordian publications by Looney after March 4, 1920, the date *"Shakespeare" Identified* was released, and before he returned to the issue in the spring of 1935, appeared to justify the conclusion that he had indeed turned away from Oxfordian work after the publication of his groundbreaking book.[1]

Yet in the past year fifteen letters that Looney wrote in 1920 and 1921 to editors of publications that had published reviews critical of his book have come to light, showing that that conclusion was not correct.[2] These newly-discovered letters reveal him to have been intensely engaged in defending himself and his ideas from the attacks in those reviews and in further substantiating the validity of the Oxfordian claim. It is now apparent that mild-mannered John Thomas Looney was a fighter—mild mannered on the outside, perhaps, but with a spine of steel inside.
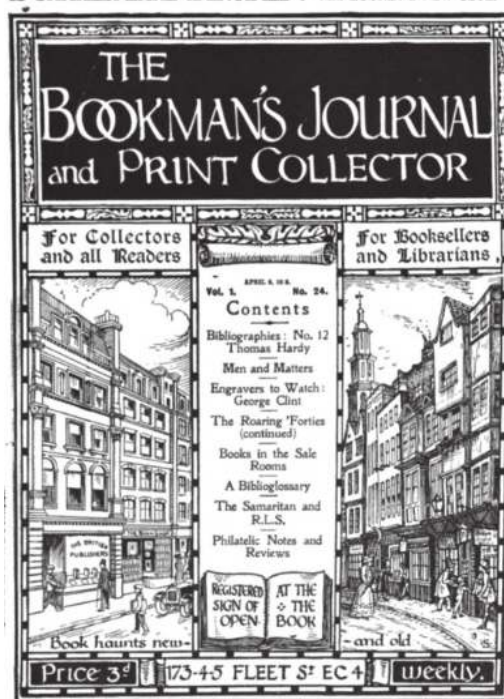
The cover of the April 9, 1920 issue with a special banner at the top highlighting Looney's letter in response to the March 19 review.

Among those fifteen letters were five to *The Bookman's Journal and Print Collector*. Published as a weekly from 1919 to 1925 by Wilfred Partington, *The Bookman's Journal* was one of a number of literary magazines launched in England after the end of World War I that flourished for a few years and then ceased publication. As it has not been indexed in any of the major databases, it is unlikely that many Oxfordians alive today are aware of *The Bookman's Journal* or the letters by Looney published in it.[3]

Those five letters—the most of his to appear in any one periodical—are uniquely important. They form a microcosm of all of Looney's letters, and together with the other Oxfordian pieces in *The Bookman's Journal* form a microcosm of the impact the Oxfordian idea had in the years immediately after it was first proposed. They foreshadow the subsequent debate between Oxfordians and Stratfordians down to the present day.

The first of Looney's letters appeared on April 9, 1920 in response to *The Bookman's Journal's* March 19 review of *"Shakespeare" Identified*; the last appeared on March 25, 1921 in response to the March 4 review of his edition of *The Poems of Edward de Vere*.[4] In between, *The Journal's* coverage of the idea of de Vere's authorship reflected the widespread interest in the theory in the Spring of 1920. It outdid all other publications, however, by running a special section on "Shakespeare's Identity" on May 21 which included, in addition to a long letter by Looney, letters critical of the Oxfordian idea by Sir Sidney Lee and the Rt. Hon. J. M. Robertson. *The Journal*

The advertisement in **The Times Literary Supplement** *for the special "Shakespeare's Identity" section of* **The Bookman's Journal's** *May 21, 1920 issue.*

not only highlighted the topic with banners on the covers of several issues, but also ran an advertisement for the special Oxfordian section in the May 20 issue of *The Times Literary Supplement*.[5]

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The Oxfordian coverage continued in the following issue with another letter by Looney, his fourth, in which he responded to Lee's and Robertson's critical comments. Coverage then dropped off until publication of Looney's *The Poems of Edward de Vere* a year later. Then, reflecting the general decline of interest in the authorship issue, *The Bookman's Journal* addressed the Oxfordian idea for the final time in the summer of 1921.

The Critics' Responses and Looney's Replies

Looney had no illusions about the severity of the test to which his ideas would be put. As he wrote, "I was well aware that, in propounding a new theory of Shakespearean authorship, I was exposing myself to as severe an ordeal as any writer has been called upon to face: that the work would be rigorously overhauled in none too indulgent a spirit by men who know the subject in all its minutiae; and that, if the argument contained any fatal flaw, this would be detected immediately and the theory overthrown" (March 25). Being a gentleman of the old school, Looney perhaps expected to engage in what has been called "the great conversation" that people of good will engage in as they seek to discover the truth of a subject. He had hoped, he stated, "that English literary journals . . . [would] throw open their columns to such a discussion as will let in the fullest light upon the question" (April 9). He further hoped that "the arguments will . . . be most carefully weighed before [readers] precipitate themselves into debate upon the question" (April 9).

Although Looney had anticipated the severe nature of the examination to which his ideas would be subjected, he must have been caught by surprise by the hostility exhibited by so many reviewers and readers. He must have been taken aback by attacks that weren't at all in line with "the spirit of impartiality and truth by which alone any problem can be solved" (April 9). The editor of *The Bookman's Journal* informs us that, "Mr. Looney's book was extensively reviewed…[and] provoked in nearly every case hostile criticism" (April 9). Looney himself observed that "certain sections of the 'orthodox' [in America] have assailed my work with a hostility quite equal to what it has aroused in England" (March 25).

He had, perhaps, expected that critics would read his book before critiquing it, and that they would state his findings accurately before taking issue with them. The personal nature of the attacks must also have been a surprise: Robertson's charge of "prepossession," for instance—the charge that Looney had the idea of authorship by the nobleman Edward de Vere in mind from the very beginning and then set out to find evidence to support it (May 21)—directly challenged the veracity of Looney's description in *"Shakespeare" Identified* of his actual method of investigation. Moreover, it would have been impossible for him to have anticipated the ludicrousness of Robertson's statement that, "It is precisely because the data for the Stratford

actor alone gives an intelligible biographical substratum for the plays that I hold to it" (May 21).

In the face of such hostility, Looney must have believed he had no choice but to respond. "However distasteful the matter," he wrote, "no [real] man can ignore a challenge of this nature, from whatever source it may come" (May 28). So his letters, although invariably measured in content and reasonable in tone, are something extraordinary for a man who throughout his life sought to avoid controversy and confrontation. We see him responding to Robertson: "As this is a complete misrepresentation of the view of the sonnets maintained throughout [my] book, . . . it was at once evident that Mr. Robertson had merely dipped here and there into the work, in so hurried and perturbed a manner as to have missed not only the whole of important arguments, but even the sense of the sentence from which he was actually quoting" (May 28). Further, it is "impossible for even a superficial reading of the book to result in so complete a misunderstanding. It will be noticed that he even takes me to task . . . for saying something contrary to what I had repeated with almost wearisome reiterations" (May 28).

At the same time, Looney must have felt a degree of satisfaction from seeing that his ideas had withstood such fierce attacks. A year after publication of *"Shakespeare" Identified* he was able to write that, "The ordeal has been passed through; I have watched anxiously every criticism and suggestion that has been made, and what is the result? . . . not a single really formidable or destructive objection to the theory has yet put in an appearance" (March 25).

The very nature of those attacks enabled Looney, drawing on his historical knowledge and intellectual adroitness, to turn the tables on many of his critics. As one example, in response to those who stated that similarities between events in the works and events in Oxford's life are an illegitimate form of evidence of authorship, he wrote that "critics who are standing out staunchly against my solution of the Shakespeare problem, are already admitting that Shakespeare must have been well acquainted with the Earl of Oxford, and very probably made him his model for 'Hamlet' " (April 9).

In another instance, after acknowledging the "remarkable" secrecy that hiding Oxford's authorship must have entailed, Looney pointed out that "whoever the author may have been, the maintaining of secrecy has been phenomenal. If the Stratford man were the author, the silence of contemporary documents in reference to all his literary and dramatic dealings with other people is as pronounced as if he had been in hiding. Under any hypothesis, then, we are bound to admit a most extraordinary avoidance of leakage" (April 9). In other words, the same argument made against de Vere could be made against the man from Stratford: no documents during his lifetime connect him directly to the plays and poems.

In a final example, Looney shows how Oxford's death in 1604, presented by his critics as evidence disqualifying him from authorship, actually works to make him uniquely qualified to have been the author. The Stratfordians' own evidence, he writes, shows that "toward the end of [Shakespeare's] career his work is once more found mixed with the work of other men . . . altering his completed plays, or completing his unfinished work by additions of their own." He then asks, "Is such a state of things more consistent with an author who had passed away leaving his unfinished writings in other hands, or with one who was still alive, intellectually vigorous, at the summit of his profession as a playwright, and but forty-three years of age?" (May 21). Answering his own question, Looney concluded that the later plays, "instead of presenting a difficulty, add their own peculiar quota of evidence in support of the theory that Edward de Vere was the author" (May 21). He similarly noted that "The "flood of publications which started in 1597 . . . continued up to the publication of 'Hamlet' in 1604 (the year of Oxford's death). . . . There was then a complete stoppage…. This year of 1604 was for long held to be the identical year of William Shakespeare's retirement to Stratford."[6] "Surely," he concluded, "it is not too much to claim that the date of Oxford's death, instead of being a weakness, is one of the strongest links in the chain of evidence" (May 21).

Due to these and other instances, some critics and reviewers "who have made themselves most intimate with the many-sidedness of the evidence, have confessed themselves most impressed and 'almost persuaded,' sometimes apparently against their evident wish" (March 25).

A Few Final Observations

One point of special importance is the effectiveness of Looney's response to one critic's inane statement that, "I cannot see that the question of whether Shakespeare's works were written by Shakespeare, or Bacon, or the Earl of Oxford, or by any other man of the period, is of the least importance." Looney sets things straight by noting that, "Doubtless 'The play's the thing'; but these, I am convinced, will never be fully understood apart from the personality of the man who has left a permanent record and monument of himself in the great 'Shakespeare' dramas" (April 23).

Another point of great importance for the present is that although Looney identified Edward de Vere as the man behind the Shakespeare name, he refrained from investigating why de Vere concealed his authorship. After noting "the disrepute into which his name had fallen," he commented that "however insufficient the motive may appear to us, it was evidently sufficient for him, and before we could fittingly discuss it we should have to see the matter from his point of view" (April 9). Looney purposely did not probe

more deeply into the causes of that disrepute or the feelings of shame that de Vere expressed in the *Sonnets*. He backed away from asking what events could have been so momentous as to push Oxford to hide his authorship and force others in the know to go along with the deception. Oxfordians today are left with the task of filling in the blanks, of writing "the rest of the story." It is this question of *why*, which arose in the earliest days of the Oxfordian movement, that is still bedeviling the Oxfordian community today.

Looking back over the year since *"Shakespeare" Identified* had been published, Looney was not optimistic about the future of British intellectual life. The attacks on the Oxfordian idea did not, he felt, reflect well on "the intellectual credit of England" (March 25). "The present-day handling by the 'intellectual classes' of all problems requiring *thought* rather than erudition and literary style," gave him "an uneasy feeling that the initiative which England held in the latter half of the nineteenth century is passing into other hands" (March 25).

The five letters from *The Bookman's Journal* reprinted here show that throughout that difficult year Looney responded to criticism and hostility with courage, steadfastness, perseverance and grace—all qualities that are required of Oxfordians today as they face an intellectual climate not dissimilar to that faced by the man who started it all, John Thomas Looney.

THE BOOKMAN'S JOURNAL'S OXFORDIAN CONTENTS

1920, March 19

Vol. 1/21: 408
"A New Mask for Shakespeare" [Review of *"Shakespeare" Identified*]

1920, April 9
J. Thomas Looney
Vol. 1/24: 452-53
"Is 'Shakespeare Identified'?" [Response to the March 19 review] [Preceded by editor's introduction and followed by excerpts from reviews in *The Spectator* (March 27), *The Saturday Westminster* (????), *The Times Literary Supplement* (March 4), and *The Sunday Times* (April 4)] [Banner at the top of the cover reads "IS SHAKESPEARE IDENTIFIED? Mr. Looney's New Clue"]

1920, April 16

Vol. 1/25: 468
[Reviewer's reply to Looney's April 9 response to his March 19 review of *"Shakespeare" Identified*]

1920, April 23

Vol. 1/26: 483 and 484
"Henry James on Shakespeare Theories"

J. Thomas Looney
"The Shakespeare Controversy: Mr. Thomas Looney and 'Oxford's Boys'" [Letter: additional response to the April 9 review]

1920, May 21
Lee, Sir Sidney,
J. M. Robertson,
J. Thomas Looney
Vol. 2/30: 58-59
"The Identity of Shakespeare' [Three letters preceded by editor's introduction.] [An advertisement for "The Shakespeare Controversy" section of the May 21 issue of *The Bookman's Journal* appeared in the May 20 issue of *The Times Literary Supplement* stating that "this week's contents include 'Shakespeare's Identity' with articles by Sir Sidney Lee, Rt. Hon. J. M. Robertson, and Mr. J. T. Looney"]

1920, May 28
J. Thomas Looney
Vol. 2/31: 68 and 70
"The Identity of Shakespeare" [Letter: Response to J. M. Robertson's May 21 letter]

"The Play's the Thing"

1920, June 4
Atkinson, R.
Vol. 2/32: 84
The Identity of Shakespeare" [Followed by editor's note]

1921, January 21

Vol. 3/65: 234
"This Week's Books" [*The Poems of Edward de Vere* edited by J. Thomas Looney is on the list]

1921, March 4
S.
Vol. 3/71: 335
Stratford and Stony Stratford" [Review of *The Poems of Edward de Vere* edited by J. Thomas Looney]

1921, March 25
J. Thomas Looney
Vol. 3/74: 388
"Stratford and Stony Stratford" [Letter: Response to the March 4 review of *The Poems of Edward de Vere*]

Clarke, Francis
"Stratford and Stony Stratford" [Letter: Response to the March 4 review]

S.
"Stratford and Stony Stratford" [Letter: Reply to Looney and Clarke]

1921, April 22

Vol. 3/78: 463
"Men and Manners"

1921, July 29
Vol. 4/92: 225
"A Dark Shakespeare"

APPENDIX:
J. THOMAS LOONEY'S KNOWN OXFORDIAN PUBLICATIONS AS OF JUNE 2018

1920, March 4
"Shakespeare" Identified in Edward de Vere, the Seventeenth Earl of Oxford. London: Cecil Palmer. New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company.

1920, March 11
"Shakespeare Identified" [Letter: Response to the March 4 and 6 reviews of *"Shakespeare" Identified*], *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*, p. 4.

1920, March 20
"Shakespeare Identified" [Letter: Response to the March 4 review of *"Shakespeare" Identified*], *The Scotsman*, p. 11.

1920, March 25
"Shakespeare Identified" [Letter: Response to Alfred W. Pollard's March 4 review of *"Shakespeare" Identified*], *Times Literary Supplement*, Issue 949: 201.

1920, April 1
"Shakespeare Identified:" [Letter] A Reply to Critics and Some New Facts, *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*, p. 8.

1920, April 9
"Is 'Shakespeare Identified'?" [Letter: Response to the March 19 review; see also the reviewer's April 16 reply], *The Bookman's Journal*, Vol. 1/24: 452-53.

1920, April 10
"Edward de Vere and Shakespeare" [Letter: Response to the March 27 review of *"Shakespeare" Identified*], *The Spectator*, p. 487.

1920, April 17
"Edward de Vere and Shakespeare" [Letter: Response to the March 27 review of *"Shakespeare" Identified*], *Saturday Review of Politics, Literature, Science and Art*, Vol. 129: 370.

1920, April 23
"The Shakespeare Controversy" [Letter: Response to the March 19 review and to reviews repr. in the April 9 issue], *The Bookman's Journal*, Vol. 1/26: 484.

1920, April 30
"Edward de Vere and Shakespeare" [Letter: Response to M.'s April 16 review of *"Shakespeare" Identified*], *The Athenaeum*, p. 585.

1920, May 8
"Edward de Vere's Mother" [Query], *Notes and Queries*, Vol. 208: 190.
"Henry de Vere's Sponsors," *Notes and Queries*, Vol. 208: 190.

1920, May 21
"The Identity of Shakespeare" [Letter: In the same issue are responses to "Shakespeare" Identified by Sir Sidney Lee and Rt. Hon. J. M. Robertson], *The Bookman's Journal*, Vol. 2/30: 58-59.

1920, May 28
"The Identity of Shakespeare" [Letter: Response to Robertson's May 21 letter], *The Bookman's Journal*, Vol. 2/31: 68.

1920, December 23
"Readers and Writers" [Letter: Response to R. H. C.'s December 2 review, and reply by reviewer on same page as Looney's response.] *The New Age*, p. 91-92.

1921, January
The Poems of Edward de Vere, Seventeenth Earl of Oxford. London: Cecil Palmer.

1921, March 25
"Stratford and Stony Stratford" [Letter: Response to the March 4 review of *The Poems of Edward de Vere* edited by J. Thomas Looney], *The Bookman's Journal*, Vol. 3/74: 388.

1922, February
"Shakespeare—Lord Oxford or Lord Derby?," *National Review*, p. 801-809.

1922, October
"The Earl of Oxford as Shakespeare: New Evidence," *The Golden Hind*, Vol. 1/1, p. 23-30.

1923, Dates unknown
"Letter #1," *The Freethinker.*
"Letter #2," *The Freethinker.*
"Letter #3," *The Freethinker.*
[Looney wrote these three letters in response to George Underwood's article "A Defense of the Stratfordian Case." A report in the English *Shakespeare Fellowship Newsletter* (Sept. 1952, p. 2-3), includes lengthy excerpts from the three letters, as well as an excerpt from a letter Looney wrote to a Mr. Hadden on August 29, 1927.]

1929, February
"The Death of George Greenwood" [Letter], *Shakespeare Pictorial*, No. 86: 16.

1935, April
"Jonson v. Jonson (Part I)," *Shakespeare Pictorial*, No. 86: 64.

1935, May
"Jonson v. Jonson (Part II)," *Shakespeare Pictorial*, No. 87: 80.

1935, August
"A More Important Christopher Sly," *Shakespeare Pictorial*, No. 90: 120.

1935, November
"Lord Oxford and the *Shrew* Plays, Part 1," *Shakespeare Pictorial*, No. 93: 176.

1935, December
"Lord Oxford and the *Shrew* Plays, Part 2," *Shakespeare Pictorial*, No. 94: 190-91.

1940, December
"The Author of *"Shakespeare" Identified* Comments on Professor Campbell's July 1940 *Harper's* article "Shakespeare Himself," *Shakespeare Fellowship Newsletter* (American), Vol. 2/1: 1-3.

1941, February
"Shakespeare: A Missing Author, Part 1," *Shakespeare Fellowship Newsletter* (American), Vol. 2/2: 13-17.

1941, April
"Shakespeare: A Missing Author, Part 2," *Shakespeare Fellowship Newsletter* (American), Vol. 2/3: 26-30.

End Notes

1. Looney's three known publications during that fifteen-year period were one book that he edited in 1921—*The Poems of Edward de Vere*—and two articles he wrote in 1922—" 'Shakespeare:' Lord Oxford or Lord Derby?" *The National Review*, Vol. 78: 801-809 (February 1922), and "The Earl of Oxford as 'Shakespeare:' New Evidence," *The Golden Hind*, Vol. 1/1: 23-30 (October 1922).

2. The Appendix to this article has a complete list of Looney's Oxfordian publications as they are known of in June, 2018.

3. The British Library has copies of the publication but its contents have not been indexed.

4. See the text box for a complete listing of all *The Bookman's Journal's* Oxfordian coverage.

5. If not for that ad, I would have had no knowledge of the existence of *The Bookman's Journal* or Looney's five letters in it. My search for the Journal led me to the Hathi Trust Digital Library, the only online source of information on the contents of *The Bookman's Journal*, and the source of the images shown here.

6. For a fuller discussion of this point, see "*Shakespeare" Identified*, page 424.

J. Thomas Looney's Five Letters to the Editor[1]

April 9, 1920, Vol. 1/24, p. 452-453

MR. LOONEY'S LETTER: A NEW CLUE.
To the Editor of "The Bookman's Journal."

Sir,—The review of my work, "Shakespeare Identified," which appeared in the columns of "The Bookman's Journal" on March 19, contains the following sentence: "Mr. Looney has awakened in us a curiosity as to the real author of the plays, and a conviction that the matter cannot now be allowed to stand where it is."

This, it seems to me, is the correct attitude of all who really care for our great national classics. We are faced with a world problem in literature, which touches the honour of England most profoundly, and therefore it is of first importance that English literary journals should throw open their columns to such a discussion as will let in the fullest light upon the question. I can quite believe that there are readers who have realised that the arguments will require to be most carefully weighed before they precipitate themselves into debate upon the question, and that when they have had time to assimilate the thesis as a whole they will make themselves heard. My immediate wish is merely to offer a few comments upon the recent review.

The bearing of Mr. Frank Harris's work[2] upon mine, as the reviewer indicates, is important specially from this point of view. Mr. Harris has selected several of the outstanding characters in Shakespeare's dramas as self-revealing expositions of the dramatist; and some of these form quite surprising dramatic analogues of the Earl of Oxford. For example, critics who are standing out staunchly against my solution of the Shakespeare problem, are already admitting that Shakespeare must have been well acquainted with the Earl of Oxford, and very probably made him his model for "Hamlet"—an admission which, if at all general, would, I believe, carry us forward very rapidly towards the acceptance of my theory. It is, of course, very difficult for a writer to judge the effect of his own arguments; but my feeling is that my argument that "Hamlet" is a work of special self-delineation is equally as strong as the argument that Oxford was the prototype for "Hamlet." Mr. Harris affirms, then, that "in 'Hamlet' Shakespeare has revealed too much of himself."

I wish, further, to draw attention to the reviewer's judgment that the poems of Oxford "are good poems," and that "Shakespeare (whoever he was) might

have written them." This pronouncement, supported as it is by the high praise of men of standing, like Sir Sidney Lee,[3] Professor Courthorpe,[4] and Dr. Grosart[5], comes as a rebuke to the hasty ill-informed denunciations of Mr. J. M. Robertson, who professes to see in these poems nothing but doggrel and conventional verses. Mr. Robertson had, however, hurled intolerant denunciations at my work without having read it—a fact I proved in a brief note to the Press—and I therefore suspect that his pronouncements upon Oxford's poetry were based upon the same kind of "knowledge."[6] Such tributes to Oxford's lyrical capacity as the reviewer and others have made since my theory was launched are, therefore, welcome indications of that spirit of impartiality and truth by which alone any problem can be solved.

The question of motives for concealment is raised, and the view expressed that "the truth or untruth of my hypothesis apparently hinges upon the all-important question of the Earl's motive." From this view I am compelled to dissent; in such cases everything must hinge upon the weight of evidence for or against the hypothesis itself. The evidence that a given person had acted in a particular way might be absolutely incontrovertible, although his motives might be quite impenetrable.

"Shakespeare" has not, however, left us in the dark on this point, and I must confess at once my inability to appreciate the reviewer's point of view respecting "Shakespeare's" or Oxford's reasons for self-effacement. If the sonnets had not been written we might have been placed under the necessity of surmising what his motives were. Then it would have been open for anyone to question the sufficiency of the reasons advanced. With the several passages in Shakespeare's own personal poems dealing with this theme before us, I cannot see what else we can do but to take him at his word. Had the motives assigned in the sonnets been inapplicable to Oxford this would have furnished grounds for dispute. The disrepute into which his name had fallen is, unfortunately, one thing about which no difference of opinion is ever likely to arise. However insufficient the motive may appear to us, it was evidently sufficient for him, and before we could fittingly discuss it we should have to see the matter from his point of view.

Oxford's poems unmistakably show an intense super-sensitiveness which is fully borne out by the Duke of Portland's portrait of him[7]. Let the reader then peruse the Bedingfield letter[8] and the sonnet "Love thy choice"[9] in order first of all to realise the large place which the winning of honour and good name occupied in his outlook upon life, then turn to his poem on the loss of his good name.[10] There is unmistakable evidence here of his having passed through a violent mental crisis in respect to these matters when but twenty-six years old; after which, although his life was immersed in literary and dramatic interests, it is questionable whether anything new was published under his name, notwithstanding the fact that he made a reputation in the writing of superior comedies, all of which are supposed to have perished.

Unsupported by any other evidence these things would have furnished a strong presumption in favour of the authorship theory I have propounded.

I am quite prepared to admit that the success of the secrecy both during Oxford's lifetime and after his death is very remarkable. What must be specially emphasised is that, whoever the author may have been, the maintaining of secrecy has been phenomenal. If the Stratford man were the author, the silence of contemporary documents in reference to all his literary and dramatic dealings with other people is as pronounced as if he had been in hiding. Under any hypothesis, then, we are bound to admit a most extraordinary avoidance of leakage. And, of course, such a state of things is much more compatible with a planned secrecy than with a secrecy without aim or intention. It may be, however, that we exaggerate the number of people who must have known who the real author was. One reliable and capable agent acting as intermediary would considerably diminish the necessity for others being in the secret. With Wriothesley, for example, acting as intermediary, there was no absolute necessity for even William Shakespeare knowing the name of the author of the plays. The social and political disturbances of the period immediately following Oxford's death would, moreover, assist in the preservation of the secret; and the political submergence of his own particular class would further facilitate matters. Nevertheless, it is not improbable that, once the new theory is well started, important papers may yet put in their appearance.

I may, at any rate, point out here, what I had missed in writing the book, that, although no relative or representative of the Stratford man's family appears in connection with the publication of the First Folio "Shakespeare," that work is dedicated to the husband of one of Oxford's daughters, Philip Herbert, and to one who had been engaged to another daughter, William Herbert.

  J. Thomas Looney

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April 23, 1920, Vol. 1/26, p. 484

CORRESPONDENCE.
THE SHAKESPEARE CONTROVERSY.
TO THE EDITOR OF "THE BOOKMAN'S JOURNAL."

SIR,—The very courteous and eminently fair way in which your reviewer, in his notice in the issue for March 19, and in his reply last week to my letter, has discussed the problem raised in my book on "Shakespeare" and Edward de Vere, only adds to my regret that he has not the time or the inclination to discuss the question more fully. Doubtless "The play's the thing"; but these,

I am convinced, will never be fully understood apart from the personality of the man who has left a permanent record and monument of himself in the great "Shakespeare" dramas.

Several other literary journals have commented adversely upon my references to "Oxford's Boys," asserting that I was apparently unaware that there were child-actors in Shakespeare's days; that Oxford was a patron of one of these; and that an intelligent reading of "Hamlet" would have kept me right.

As on p. 513 I quote the passage in "Hamlet" which refers to these child-actors, and as the interpretation I put upon Hamlet's question, "Do the boys carry it away?" shows that I had, at any rate, considered the matter, the first of these criticisms was evidently due to the inattention of the critics. They have, nevertheless, raised the important question of the relationship of Oxford's Boys to Hamlet's players; and this needs to be cleared up.

The impression evidently is that "Oxford's Boys" were child-actors, like those referred to in "Hamlet." Now, the one thing which Rosencrantz makes clear to Hamlet, is, that these "children" were engaged for pantomimic performances, in which there was crying out, singing, dumb-shows and noise; and that the performers were too young for dramatic dialogue, or, as he called it, "argument." "Oxford's Boys," whatever their ages may have been, were certainly not children in this sense. The plays written by Lyly, which this company is reported to have performed, are not only dramatic dialogue, but dialogue of a most involved and elaborate character. And the lost dramas by Oxford are represented as being high-class literary productions. The play of Agamemnon and Ulysses, which his Boys performed before the Queen in 1584, would most certainly be of this nature. The material of this play may possibly be found actually deposited in Shakespeare's play of "Troilus and Cressida."

"Oxford's Boys" were, moreover, a company which toured the country, visiting Stratford in 1584; and from this fact alone we should judge them to have been not only older than the "children" mentioned in "Hamlet," but also older than the "choir boy" companies (which included their "gentlemen") that performed in London. In the absence, therefore, of more precise knowledge of the actual ages of "Oxford's Boys," their tours, the kind of dramas they performed, the fact that they are not spoken of as "children" like some of the other companies of boys, but are spoken of as Oxford's servants, and as a "company of players who had called themselves after their patron," all justify an assumption that, even in the early years of the company's existence, they were at least youths, if not young men.

Now, with regard to the company patronised by Hamlet, it is evident that they, too, at the time when Hamlet had been in close association with them, were "boys" in this sense. When the company and their patron meet again

at the period of the drama, Hamlet, in his greetings, refers to some of them having grown much taller, and having put on their first growth of beard since he last saw them. Evidently. then, Hamlet's company had not been all fully developed men in the earlier period. From every indication, Hamlet's players had been just what we judge "Oxford's Boys" to have been. And if we suppose this play to have been written at any time after 1590, Hamlet's greetings to his players are precisely what we might imagine Oxford then extending to his "Boys" of 1580-1587. A correspondence of this kind is certainly of more importance than the extent of my information upon obscure matters about which my critics have been much too confident.

I turn now to my interpretation of Hamlet's question: "Do the boys carry it away?" which differs from that of some of the commentators. The assumption has been that this passage refers to the child-actors. My interpretation has been that it refers to the company of actors which Hamlet had previously patronised. The question is not vital, and I have no great desire to press the matter. My object is merely to explain the interpretation, which I still think quite reasonable. This, then, is the situation.

Rosencrantz has informed Hamlet that the company he formerly patronised had had to leave the city and go on tour, partly because of their being ousted by these companies of children, who were incapable evidently of dramatic dialogue, and who were being specially catered for by the writers. There was no money being bid for "argument" unless the players and the poets came to blows upon the subject. Guilderstern remarks that there had been "much throwing about of brains," and Hamlet interposes the question:

> "Do the boys carry it away?"
> Rosencrantz answers:
> "Ay, my lord, that they do, Hercules and his load too."

Rosencrantz seems, then, to have understood Hamlet's expression literally. His reference to Hercules and his load, suggestive of the physical act of carrying away, shows that he understood "the boys" to mean the players, who had had to come away from the city carrying their all with them.

"Shakespeare," however, elsewhere uses the expression "carries it away" in an idiomatic sense, in reference to fighting ("Romeo and Juliet," Act 3, Scene 1). As, then, Rosencrantz at the moment was referring to the fighting between the players and the poets, it is natural to suppose that Hamlet's question has reference to one of these, which, of course, would be the players and not the writers. Under either the literal or the idiomatic sense of the expression

"carry it away," "the boys," then, has reference to what I call Hamlet's company; an interpretation which is borne out by Hamlet's subsequent greetings to the players. Even should this rational interpretation have to be abandoned, the matter is not serious; and this interpretation of the passage is apparently the most serious defect that a none too generous antagonism has been able to discover in my pages.

Opponents of my authorship theory are, however, admitting the probability of Oxford's being "Shakespeare's" model for Hamlet. And, if this be granted, it is natural to suppose that "Shakespeare," whoever he was, would represent Hamlet's players somewhat in the light of Oxford's Boys.

As, then, in my last letter, I concluded with an important element of evidence not included in the book, let me now point out that, according to the "Variorum Hamlet," as far back as 1876, French[11] identified, not only Polonius with Burleigh, but even Ophelia with Lady Oxford.[12] How he missed identifying Hamlet with Oxford himself is one of these examples of the perversity of Fate which seems to have dogged the steps of Shakespearean research.

I notice, too, that the "Variorum Hamlet" contains quite a lengthy and recondite disquisition on one of Hamlet's whimsicalities. Hamlet, in making a mocking verse upon his step-father, breaks the rhyme at the end, and instead of calling him an "ass," calls him a "pajock": a contemptuous expression for a peacock. Thus he puzzled the commentators, and none too satisfactory explanations have been proffered. When, however, it is remembered that Oxford's step-father was a member of the Essex family of Tyrrel, and that the peacock's tail is the distinctive feature of the family crest, the enigmatical allusion is explained. What are the chances that another dramatist, representing Oxford as Hamlet, would have introduced a connection like this?

I shall be greatly obliged, then, if any of your Essex readers can discover for me the precise date of Oxford's mother's marriage to Sir Charles (or Christopher) Tyrrel.[13]

Perhaps, too, some local antiquarian in the neighbourhood of Stoke Newington can find out whether Henry Wriothesley was god-father to Oxford's heir, Henry de Vere, baptised at Stoke Newington in 1592; the year before "Shakespeare" dedicated the "first heir of (his) invention," to that nobleman, of whom he speaks as "god-father" to the poem.

Yours faithfully,
J. Thomas Looney

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May 21, 1920, Vol. 2/30, p. 58-59.

CORRESPONDENCE.
THE IDENTITY OF SHAKESPEARE.
To the Editor of "The Bookman's Journal."

Sir—As the best literary scholarship of England has for many years been focussed on Shakespeare, I was well aware that, in propounding a new theory of Shakespearean authorship, I was exposing myself to as severe an ordeal as any writer has been called upon to face: that the work would be rigorously overhauled in none too indulgent a spirit by men who know the subject in all its minutiae; and that, if the argument contained any fatal flaw, this would be detected immediately and the theory overthrown. The ordeal has been passed through; I have watched anxiously every criticism and suggestion that has been made, and what is the result? Slips of memory or of attention on a couple of words; annoying, no doubt, to an author, but quite irrelevant to the argument; a questionable interpretation of an obscure passage; suggested defects of presentation, some real, others merely capricious; but not a single really formidable or destructive objection to the theory has yet put in an appearance. On the other hand, those critics and reviewers who have made themselves most intimate with the many-sidedness of the evidence, have confessed themselves most impressed and "almost persuaded," sometimes apparently against their evident wish.

The only objection which demands serious attention, is, that Edward de Vere died in 1604. and that I have asserted that all the plays written after this date were not from the same pen as the other Shakespeare dramas. One critic states that I put forward the theory that these plays were finished by strange pens.

Were the readers and writers fully acquainted with what I have already written on this point, it would be unnecessary to deal with it here. Most Shakespeare students know that much of the dating of the plays is modern guesswork or inference, based upon the assumption that the Stratford actor was their author; and that even then the majority of them were published all together seven years after his death. In other words, "Shakespeare's" dramas are mainly a posthumous publication of writings accumulated and worked at during many years. and allowed to lie for years after their author's death. before being given to the world. What. then, are our chances of discovering the precise dates of their composition?

Take, for example, one of these so-called later plays, "The Winter's Tale," a work of which I have not treated in my book. If the reader will turn to the Variorum Edition he will find a list of authorities giving dates of composition for this one play ranging from 1590 to 1611[14]; that is to say, from fourteen years before Oxford's death until seven years after. "Lear" and "Macbeth," which have been usually assigned to the years immediately following Oxford's death, are there treated as uncertain, and assigned to a period which brings them within Oxford's lifetime.

Even if we accept roughly these inferential dates. what are the actual facts respecting the later plays? Now it is not I, but the best modern orthodox authorities who state that these later plays were written, finished off, or interpolated by other pens. After "Lear" and "Macbeth" comes "Timon of Athens," and Sir Sidney Lee takes this as marking a period at which the author reverted to an "earlier habit of collaboration, and with another's aid" produced his dramas; whilst Sir Walter Raleigh, the author of the "English Men of Letters" volume on Shakespeare, has a most striking sentence on the point:

> At the beginning of his career Shakespeare made very free use of the work of other men. Towards the end of his career his work is once more found mixed with the work of other men, but this time there is generally reason to suspect that it is these others that have laid him under contribution, altering his completed plays, or completing his unfinished work by additions of their own.[15]

Is such a state of things more consistent with an author who had passed away leaving his unfinished writings in other hands, or with one who was still alive, intellectually vigorous, at the summit of his profession as a playwright, and but forty-three years of age? Briefly, these later plays, instead of presenting a difficulty, add their own peculiar quota of evidence in support of the theory that Edward de Vere was the author, and this, not through any theories which I have devised, but by the explicit statements of orthodox Shakespeareans. It is, of course, impossible to elaborate the matter within the space of a brief letter. The reader will, however, find quite sufficient, if not to satisfy him, at any rate to suggest a satisfactory standpoint, in the chapters in which I deal with certain posthumous considerations and with "The Tempest."

In dealing with the actual publication of the plays we are on surer ground. We find then that a flood of publication which started in 1597 was continued up to the publication of "Hamlet" in 1604 (the year of Oxford's death). There was then a complete stoppage, and with the exception of three plays published four years later, under unusual conditions. Nothing fresh was published until 1623 (seven years after William Shakespeare's death). One of the most striking facts is that the time of Oxford's death marks a radical change in Shakespeare's style of versification. None of the plays published between 1597 and 1604 are marked by "weak-endings." The later plays show an extraordinary development in this direction. The time of Oxford's death also marks the closing of the series of sonnets which the poet had been writing for the past twelve or thirteen years; and this year of 1604 was for long held to be the identical year of William Shakespeare's retirement to Stratford.[16]

Surely it is not too much to claim that the date of Oxford's death, instead of being a weakness, is one of the strongest links in the chain of evidence.

    J. Thomas Looney

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May 28, 1920, Vol. 2/31, p. 68.

C O R R E S P O N D E N C E .
THE IDENTITY OF SHAKESPEARE.
To the Editor of "The Bookman's Journal."

Sir—Let me first correct a date given in my last letter. Referring to the uncertainty of the writing of "The Winter's Tale," I gave 1590 as the earliest supposed date; this should have been 1594. The correction in no way affects the argument.

The Rt. Hon. J. M. Robertson, in his letter, has the following statement: "Mr. Looney, I see, alleges that I attacked 'him' with intolerant denunciation. This is an 'unmitigated untruth.' I have passed 'no denunciation whatever.' " (My quotations.)

However distasteful the matter, no man can ignore a challenge of this nature, from whatever source it may come. It is of importance first of all, therefore, to make the statement more precise. My statement was that "Mr. Robertson hurled intolerant denunciations 'at my work' without having read it." ("Bookman's Journal," April 9.) The reference is to a review of the book which appeared in the "Yorkshire Post" on March 5[17], and immediately elicited protests from correspondents who were neither "antis" nor known personally to myself. A few passages from this article will enable your readers to judge where the truth lies:

> "Some authorities who unwittingly encouraged Mr. Looney to the top of his bent by too liberally over-praising the Earl's modest inspiration, may now begin to see that they have something to answer for."

> "Mr. Looney satisfies himself of the 'identity of esthetic chalk and cheese.'"
> "Thus are the remains of the master cut to fit the bed of Procrustes."

> "Had he studied the versification question he could not have penned his 'unspeakable comments' on the greatest blank verse in our literature."

> "Mr. Looney explains that his method is not literary. It certainly is not. ...But if he supposes his method is scientific...he deceives himself."

> "His way of finding Oxford in the plays 'defies burlesque.' "

> "To confute his re-statement of the anti-Stratfordian case would be a waste of time. The motley band of "antis" avow that their conclusions are foregone; and their constructive theories, pointing to all parts of the aristocratic compass, tell the value of their critical method. Anyone who will read Mr. Looney, page 477, may realise the 'kind of mentality that is at work' through the whole of the anti literature." (My quotations throughout.)

And now Mr. Robertson avers that he "passed no denunciation whatever." He may, if he cares to, claim that every remark was justifiable; but few people will be able to "realise the mentality that is at work," when he describes my remark as an "unmitigated untruth."

What gives special character to his attack is the kind of examination to which he had subjected my work. This was revealed in one other sentence: "In 1590, when, as he (Mr. Looney) 'hardily' alleges 'all' the Shakespeare sonnets were written, Rutland was only 'fourteen years old.' " As this is a complete misrepresentation of the view of the sonnets maintained throughout the book (the period 1590 to 1604 being assigned), it was at once evident that Mr. Robertson had merely dipped here and there into the work, in so hurried and perturbed a manner as to have missed not only the whole of important arguments, but even the sense of the sentence from which he was actually quoting. For I there state explicitly that the series was "brought to a close" before Rutland had "reached the 'age of twenty-seven' " (p. 443). One of my arguments is that sonnet 125 probably refers to Queen Elizabeth's funeral (1603), and another is that the series was brought abruptly to a close at the time of Oxford's death (1604). The following list of references, any of which would have kept him right, will give some idea of the enormity of his blunder:

Page 212-13.   The sonnets refer to poems published under a mask in 1593 and 1594.

Page 229.   Sonnet 125 refers to the funeral of Queen Elizabeth or the coronation of James I (1603).

Page 230.   Repeats the above.

Page 391.   The sonnets make reference to the dedications (1593 and 1594).

Page 395.   Sonnet 125 seems to be pointing to Queen Elizabeth's funeral (1603).

Page 396.   Repeats the above.

Page 429.   Southampton's liberation (1603) referred to in the Sonnets.

Page 430.   Sonnets refer to events which took place in 1603.

Page 432.   Death of Oxford (1604) close the series of Sonnets.

Page 437.   Repeats this.

Page 439.   Sonnets 81 and 82 refer to the dedications (1593 and 1594).

Page 440.   Repeats this.

Page 442.   Repeats this.

Page 443.   The sentence, half of which Mr. Robertson quoted. (see above).

Page 447.   Sonnets written in 1593-4.

Page 490.   1590 mentioned as date of "first Sonnets."

Page 491.   1603 mentioned as date of "last Sonnets."

These, along with a reference to the closing of the series in the Contents Table (p. 10) and in the Index (p. 548) made it impossible for even a superficial reading of the book to result in so complete a misunderstanding. It will be noticed that he even takes me to task (Mr. Looney "hardly alleges") for saying something contrary to what I had repeated with an almost wearisome reiteration. It was with such a "knowledge" of the actual contents of my book as this single sentence betrayed that he wrote in the strain of the passages I have quoted from his article. Evidently he had run amok at the work, and when I characterise such treatment as "intolerant denunciation" he has the hardihood to speak of my "unmitigated untruth."

> J. Thomas Looney

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March 25, 1921, Vol. 3/74, p. 388

CORRESPONDENCE.
STRATFORD AND STONY STRATFORD.
To the Editor of "The Bookman's Journal."

Sir—Your contributor who reviewed my recent book, *The Poems of Edward de Vere*, is, I judge, the same writer that reviewed *Shakespeare Identified* last year; and I must again thank him for the courteous spirit of his present review. All the same, I think he is less just to the quality of Oxford's early poetry than he was in his former article. Oxford's lyrics, however, resemble the true "Shakespeare" work in that they grow upon one with frequent reading; and, therefore, it would not surprise me if, in time, your reviewer should come to extend rather than to modify his first appreciation.

What I am unable to understand is his view that the importance of "Shakespeare's" identity requires to be proved. If historic research has any value, if it is important that we should know the truth and form a just appreciation of any man whose labours have gone to shape the life and thought of his fellows, surely it is of importance to Englishmen that the truth should be known and justice should be done to the memory of the one Englishman who, more than any other, has established himself permanently in the intellectual life of mankind. "S." thinks that "the intellectual credit of England will take care of itself." I wish I could feel so sure about it myself. I am not now thinking wholly of the special problem with which I have become publicly associated (and which your reviewer seems to think—quite erroneously—is my chief intellectual interest), but rather of the present-day handling by the "intellectual classes" of all problems requiring *thought* rather

than erudition and literary style; and I must say that I have an uneasy feeling that the initiative which England held in the latter half of the nineteenth century is passing into other hands.

In this connection my immediate problem has furnished me with significant data. In America, for example, where certain sections of the "orthodox" have assailed my work with a hostility quite equal to what it has aroused in England, there have been people of standing, like Gelett Burgess[18], Oliver Hereford[19], Eric Schuler[20], Edwin Björtsman[21], Frederick Taber Cooper[22], and Caroline Wells[23], who have risen to the requirements of the problem. In England, so far, not a single writer of equal standing has been big enough to do the same.

Having said this, I owe it to one man, whose name is not yet so well known as it may become—the Rev. W. A. L. Elmslie[24], M.A., a literary and oriental scholar and author, formerly a lecturer at Cambridge and a Fellow of Christ's College—to say that he has, by public lecture rather than by his pen, shown a courage and independence of judgment in respect to my theories quite equal to that of the better-known American writers. He, however, writes me: "I do not know what our literature experts are dreaming about that your book has not been the talk of the year." Which, of course, is but confirmation of my fears respecting "the intellectual credit of England."

I must apologise for allowing this letter to become unduly long.

> —Yours sincerely,
> J. Thomas Looney.
> Gateshead-on-Tyne,
> March 14, 1921.

Endnotes

1. In editing the letters I have retained Looney's British spellings of words such as "theatre," "apologise," "labours," and "realise." Regarding punctuation, the only changes I have made are eliminating the blank space before semicolons and colons, eliminating the blank space separating quote marks from the word just after or before them, and reducing to one the number of spaces between sentences. All other punctuation is as published in *The Bookman's Journal.*

2. Frank Harris, *The Man Shakespeare and His Tragic Life-story*. 1909: New York: Mitchell Kennerley. 2nd Edition, 1921: Girard, KS: Halderman-Julius Co. 3rd Ed. 1969: New York: Horizon Press.

3. Under the entry for "Edward de Vere," in volume 58 of the *Dictionary of Dictionary of National Biography* (1898), Sir Sidney Lee wrote that Oxford, "despite his violent and perverse temper, his eccentric taste in dress, and his reckless waste of substance, evinced a genuine taste in music and wrote verses of much lyric beauty. . . . A sufficient number of his poems is extant to corroborate Webbe's comment that he was the best of the courtier poets in the early days of Queen Elizabeth." In *"Shakespeare" Identified*, p. 111-112, Looney describes Lee's *A Life of William Shakespeare* as "invaluable," and says that Lee "has furnished more material in support of my constructive argument than any other single modern writer."

4. W. J. Courthope, Professor of Poetry at the University of Oxford, described Oxford's verses as "distinguished for their wit . . . and terse ingenuity. . . . His studied concinnity of style is remarkable . . . He was not only witty himself but the cause of wit in others." For more information see Looney's *"Shakespeare" Identified*, p. 121-125.

5. Dr. Grosart gathered together all of Oxford's extant recognized poems and published them in the "Fuller Worthies Library" in 1872. Oxford's poems, he wrote, "are not without touches of the true Singer and there is an atmosphere of graciousness and culture about them that is grateful." Of Oxford himself, he commented that "An unlifted shadow lies across his memory." For more information see Looney's description of Courthope's work in *"Shakespeare" Identified*, p. 121-125.

6. The Rt. Hon. J. M. Robertson and J. Thomas Looney had had an earlier exchange of letters in *The Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*, with Robertson's March 5, 1920 review being answered by Looney on March 11 and April 1. They clash again in *The Bookman's Journal*, with Looney responding on May 28 to Robertson's May 21 letter.

7. Today this portrait is more commonly referred to as the Welbeck portrait. It hangs in the Duke of Portland's place at Welbeck Abbey, near Worksop, Nottingham.

8. The Bedingfield Letter is the letter that Edward de Vere wrote to Thomas Bedingfield about his, Oxford's, decision to publish Bedingfield's translation in order to "erect you such a monument that in your lifetime you shall see how noble a shadow of your virtuous life shall remain when you are dead and gone." See *"Shakespeare" Identified*, p. 132-133 for more information.

9. "Love Thy Choice." See page 4 in *The Poems of Edward de Vere* edited by J. Thomas Looney (1921).

10. "Loss of Good Name." See page 22 in *The Poems of Edward de Vere* edited by J. Thomas Looney (1921).

11. George Russell French, *Shakspeareana Genealogica*. London: MacMillan and Co. 1869.

12. Looney could be referring to the original 1877 Variorum edition of *Hamlet* edited by Horace Howard Furness or to the New Variorum Edition published in 1918. Both contain commentaries on the play by Johnson, Coleridge, Goethe and others.

13. Looney made the same request in *Notes and Queries*, May 8, 1920, Vol. 208: 190.

14. See note 12.

15. Walter Raleigh, *Shakespeare*. New York and London: The Macmillan Company 1907.

16. Looney discusses this point at greater length on page 424 of *"Shakespeare" Identified*.

17. See note 6.

18. Gelett Burgess (1866-1951). A San Francisco area based artist, art critic and writer. In 1947-1949 Burgess would publish a number of important letters and articles supportive of Oxford's authorship in *The New York Herald Tribune*, *The Washington Post* and *The Saturday Review*. He and Looney also exchanged letters in 1920 and 1927.

19. Oliver Herford (1860-1935). British-born, but American, writer, illustrator and poet.

20. Eric Schuler (1889-1937). Worked in the copyright office in the Library of Congress. Served as secretary and treasurer of the Author's League of America.

21. Edwin Björkman (1866-1951). In the August 1920 issue of *The Bookman* (Vol. 51/9: 677-682) (not to be confused with *The Bookman's Journal*) he wrote one of the longest and most favorable reviews of *"Shakespeare" Identified.*

22. Frederick Taber Cooper (1864-1937). Writer, professor at Columbia University, and editor of *The Forum*. Excerpt from his review of *"Shakespeare" Identified* in *The Forum*, spring 1920: "Here at last is a sane, dignified, arresting contribution to the much abused and sadly discredited Shakespeare controversy. It is one of the most ingenious pieces of minute, circumstantial evidence extant in literary criticism. . . . Every right-minded scholar who seriously cares for the welfare of letters in the bigger sense should face the problem that this book presents and argue it to a finish."

23. Carolyn Wells (1862-1942). A prolific writer noted for humor, poetry, and children's books. A letter from Looney to her is reprinted in the *Shakespeare Fellowship Quarterly*, Vol. V/2: 17-23. See also her letter to *The Saturday Review* (June 5, 1937), in which she states that *"Shakespeare" Identified* is not only a fascinating book, it is clear and convincing argument that cannot be ignored or disbelieved by a thinking reader . . . anyone who has read Mr. Looney's book with an open mind has an open mind no longer; he is a disciple of Mr. Looney."

24. Rev. Walter Angus L. Elmslie (1856-1935). A Scottish Missionary.

Geoffrey Fenton

A Note by Warren Hope

Both J. Thomas Looney and Alan Nelson in their very different treatments of the 17th Earl of Oxford draw attention to Geoffrey Fenton as a translator who dedicated a book to Anne Cecil de Vere, the Countess of Oxford. The book is entitled *Golden Epistles* and consists of translations of letters by Antonio de Guervara and others—letters that are in fact short essays on moral and philosophical subjects. The translator signed the dedication as from his chamber in the Black Friars in February 1575. Looney describes Fenton as one of Burghley's spies and a linguist. Nelson states that the dedication praises not only the Countess of Oxford's high moral character and her love of the kind of literature that encourages moral behavior, but also praises her parents and particularly her father. Oxford is in a way conspicuous by his absence from the dedication, perhaps because of his love of the kind of literature Fenton would find frivolous if not worse. But there are other reasons for Oxfordians to take an interest in Fenton.

First, Fenton originally appeared as a translator by producing a book entitled *Certain Tragical Discourses written out of French and Latin*, printed in London in 1567. The book is basically a rendering in English of Belleforest's French versions of stories by Matteo Bandello that are seen by traditional scholars as the sources for a number of Shakespeare's plays. Whether Shakespeare read Bandello in the original, in the French of Belleforest, or in Fenton's English version is of less importance perhaps than that someone in the service of William Cecil was translating these stories when Oxford was seventeen years old and a member of Cecil's household as his ward.

Second, Fenton translated the *Monophylo* of Estienne Pasquier in 1572 and dedicated it to Lady Hoby, the wife of Thomas Hoby, translator of Castiglione's *The Courtier*, and a sister-in-law of William Cecil. She later became an opponent of the reconstruction of the Blackfriars Theater because of opposition as a Puritan to plays and players. Fenton appears to have previously dedicated religious works to Lady Hoby and argues in his dedication that *Monophylo*'s philosophical discussion on love is valuable because of its moral outlook, even if it is not overtly religious.

Third, Fenton is also the translator of Francesco Guicciardini's *History of Italy*, one of the books referred to by traditional Shakespearean scholars when they wish to argue Shakespeare did not travel in Italy but rather learned about it through reading. Fenton's translation appeared in 1579 and he dedicated it to Queen Elizabeth. Soon after that publication, in 1580, Burghley made him a secretary to Lord Grey de Wilton, the new Lord Deputy of Ireland. Fenton as a result worked with Edmund Spenser in Ireland. Fenton seems to have discontinued his literary work after achieving this post. He was eventually knighted and spent the rest of his life in Ireland where he died in 1608. His correspondence kept William and Robert Cecil informed on the political situation in Ireland.

Finally, Geoffrey Fenton was also the brother of Edward Fenton, sometimes described as "the navigator," the master of ships that took part in two of Martin Frobisher's voyages in search of a Northwest Passage to China. Thus the brother of the translator played a prominent role in a venture through which Oxford seems to have lost 3000 pounds. It could well be this Fenton, with the same first name as Oxford's, rather than the translator, that gave Shakespeare the name for his alter ego in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, the Master Fenton who woos and wins Anne Page as opposed to Slender, the character Looney recognized as based on Sir Philip Sidney, once a competitor with Oxford for the hand of Anne Cecil.

Warren Hope *is an adjunct professor of English at Holy Family University in Philadelphia, and is co-author with Kim Holston of The Shakespeare Controversy (McFarland, 1992 and 2009).*

The Tragedie of Hamlet Prince of Denmarke

by Gary Goldstein

This 1930 edition of *Hamlet*, published by the Cranach Press of Weimar, Germany, is often regarded as the most ambitious example of 20th-century book art: Stephen Orgel actually described it as "the most monumental book of the 20th century." It uses hand-made paper and decorated binding, evocative images and elegant typefaces to enhance the dramatic effect of Shakespeare's play.

At the center of each page is the text of *Hamlet* from the second quarto edition (1604–05), interspersed with 80 woodcuts designed and carved by Edward Gordon Craig.

In the margins of each page are extracts from two of Shakespeare's probable sources:

- The Hamlet story in Latin by Saxo Grammaticus
- An English translation of the Latin by Oliver Elton, 1894
- The Hamlet story in French by Belleforest, 1582
- An anonymous English version of Belleforest's tale, *The Hystorie of Hamblet*, 1608

Finally, there is a stand-alone pamphlet of explanatory notes by John Dover Wilson, for which a separate pocket is bound into the book, "for the convenience of readers who may desire to lay them open beside the text of the play."

The meticulous design process was overseen by Count Harry Kessler (1868–1937), director of the famous Cranach-Presse in Weimar Germany. As well as Gordon Craig's woodcuts, Kessler commissioned a new typeface by Edward Johnston based on a font used for the *Mainz Psalter* of 1457, and

a title page cut by Eric Gill. The black-and-white color scheme is accompanied by a single accent color—orange for the book's running heads, plus one striking use of blue for the illustration of Ophelia's impending death.

The book was first printed in German in 1929, then in English in 1930. There was a run of only 300 for each, printed with hand-presses on specially-made paper. There are copies in just 22 libraries worldwide, with 10 available in US libraries (see worldcat.org for locations).

The outline of the Hamlet tale first appears in the Norse folk-tale of Amleth. This Scandinavian legend was recorded in Latin around 1200 by the Danish historian Saxo Grammaticus and first printed in Paris in 1514. It is part of the collection of tales known as *Gesta Danorum*—a partially mythical history of the Danes.

It is likely that Shakespeare encountered the Amleth legend via an expanded French version, written by François de Belleforest (1530–1583) in his popular *Histoires Tragiques* (series 3, part 5). This is double the length of Saxo's version, placing the pagan Danish legend within a Christian framework.

Who was Edward Gordon Craig (1872–1966)?

Hamlet's exquisite achievement is the result of all aspects of its design working in tandem to create something aesthetically pleasing and functionally readable. In order to achieve this, Kessler knew that the play's illustrations needed to work with the text to supplement it. He asked Edward Gordon Craig to design and carve the woodblock illustrations since Craig had extensive experience working on *Hamlet* as an actor, set designer and artist.

He was born into a creative family—the son of the renowned Shakespearean actor Ellen Terry and the architect Edward William Godwin. From childhood Craig worked as an actor, playing Hamlet in 1894. He then branched into directing and theatre design, producing a powerful, minimalist set for the Moscow Art Theatre's *Hamlet* in 1911–12.

During the course of his dramatic career, Craig tended toward minimalism, believing that theater could be stripped down to form, light, movement, and music. More specifically, he wanted to address the lack of stage directions in Shakespeare's original text by providing illustrations of scene designs, costumes, lighting, and actor movements. This perspective shaped his intentions for the Cranach Press edition of *Hamlet*.

Gary Goldstein *is editor of The Oxfordian.*

While beautiful in their own right, Craig's illustrations also pair with the text to guide readers through the play: illustrations cluster around entrances and exits, cluing readers in on changes to a scene's characters. Decorated initials are reserved for peripheral characters: Bernardo and Francisco in the opening scene, and the gravediggers of Act Five, Scene One.

Beyond providing context clues, Kessler and Craig also used book layout to engage readers emotionally. One way they accomplished this is through repeated motifs. *Hamlet*'s famous "To be or not to be" soliloquy is framed by an image of Hamlet confronting the turbulent waters of sleep and death. This imagery is repeated in the aftermath of Polonius' killing to convey parallel themes of mortality and moral action. In the first illustration, Hamlet's figure leans back, hands raised, hesitant and contemplative; by the second he is leaning forward, resigned to the consequences of his actions.

For *Hamlet*'s play-within-a-play, Kessler was faced with a typographical challenge: how to organize the main text, the play-within-a-play's text, and the historical commentary in a clean, understandable way. He met this challenge by placing the play's text in the center of the page, surrounded by the commentary. The beginning of the play-within-a-play is indicated by orange type and two large illustrations of the players. What's more, these illustrations convey mounting tension as Hamlet waits to witness his uncle's guilty response to the play-within-a-play's plot. When this occurs, the page design shifts—initially your eye was drawn inward, suddenly text and supporting

characters expand outward from the central player and fleeing Claudius. Kessler and Craig wanted readers not only to follow the play's plot, but to experience the emotions of the characters.

It is not only bibliophiles who treasure the Cranach *Hamlet* but academicians as well. In *Shakespeare's Ghost Writers*, Marjorie Garber writes:

> Stephen Orgel provides a sumptuous description of the Cranach *Hamlet*, its design, typeface and images, observing that the deployment of Craig's woodcuts "resembles more the format of the *Nuremberg Chronicle* than any illustrated scholarly edition of drama: the images are not contained by the typography, but are in full partnership with it, and sometimes even seem in control." Orgel sees the Cranach Press *Hamlet* as a project that successfully rethinks the relation among text and image: "it reconceives the book of the play as a performance and completes the play as a book."

Another scholar, Adela Spindler Roatcap, describes her experience of the Cranach *Hamlet*, in the January 1988 issue of *Fine Print*:

> In this book the text of the play is framed by its own history—marginal texts presenting early versions of the story allow you to make a choice: to read the play alone without its precursors, or to steep yourself in the anthropology of Hamlet in the original languages. Have you questions about the meaning of Elizabethan words, or obscure passages? Additional scholarly information is readily available…as you turn the pages, if you are reading one of the 300 copies on handmade Monval paper, you experience its rich, dense but soft texture…

> …as your eyes follow the story, the illustrations take the place of the actors on the stage, and if you do not wish to read, you may follow the action in Craig's woodcuts page by page. As the drama builds in the architecture of Shakespeare's words and scenes, so in the page layout you experience the tension and balance between type and illustration, between reading and pictorial imagination.

The publisher Benjamin Blom came out with a deluxe reprint of the German edition in 1972 that is now available from rare book dealers for more than $500 a copy. Several years later, Ayer Company Publishers issued a reprint of the English version that is now out of print. The moment is ripe for publication of an affordable facsimile of the 1930 Cranach *Hamlet* so that the community of college students, theater professionals and Shakespeare *aficianados* may be inspired once again by its unique achievement.

Centenary Anniversary Edition

"Shakespeare" Identified

Edited by James A. Warren and published by Forever Press, this new edition of the most revolutionary book on Shakespeare ever published lays out the full text of J. Thomas Looney's classic book in the first new typesetting since the 1920 U.S. edition.
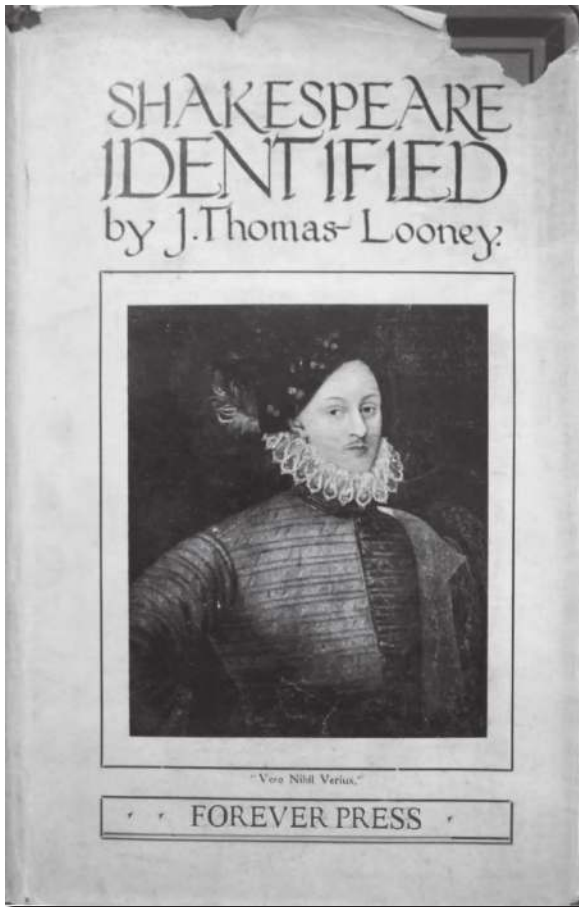
Both the cover depicting the dust jacket of the original 1920 Cecil Palmer English edition and the modern setting inside are designed to enhance readers' enjoyment as they make their way through Looney's fascinating account of how one man, shining light from a new perspective on facts already known to Shakespeare scholars of his day, uncovered the real story of who "Shakespeare" really was and how he came to write his works.

Perhaps most importantly for scholars, this edition identifies the sources of more than 230 passages that Looney quoted from other works, providing readers for the first time with accurate information on the books and papers he consulted in his research.

So even if you've read the book before, get set to enjoy, again, in a clean, modern format, the book that novelist John Galsworthy called "the best detective story I have ever read."

Available at amazon.com

# Book Reviews

Is This Shakespeare's Dramatic Juvenilia?

Reviewed by Felicia Hardison Londré

Shakespeare's Apprenticeship: Identifying the Real Playwright's Earliest Plays. *By Ramon Jiménez. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, September 2018, 275 pages, (paperback $39.95).*

Ramon Jiménez has made a valuable contribution to scholarship with his exhaustive culling of examples of plot, character, vocabulary, ideas and images shared by plays in the Shakespeare canon and earlier anonymous plays on the same subjects. Drawing on findings from a wealth of studies and archival materials to which he added his own insights, Jiménez convincingly demonstrates relationships that are best explained as works by the same author, with the earlier plays serving as apprenticeship pieces for the mature works. The corollary case that the author was Edward de Vere, Seventeenth Earl of Oxford, is treated almost as a foregone conclusion, a logical assumption given the fact that the apprenticeship plays would have been written during William of Stratford's childhood years. Jiménez marshals multiple strands of both internal and external evidence to arrive at his dating of the apprenticeship plays, all between 1563 and 1570.
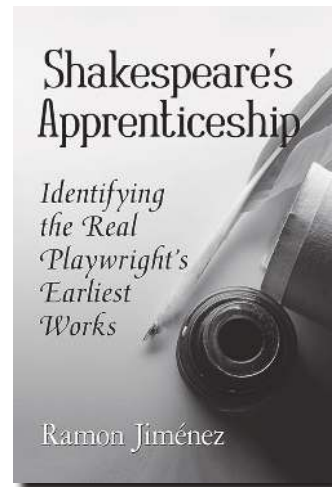
After a Preface, an Introduction, and a brief survey of the case for Edward de Vere as author of the Shakespeare canon, Jiménez devotes one chapter to each of the five apprenticeship plays, with reference to its mature version:

- *The Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth* and the Prince Hal plays,
- *The True Tragedy of Richard the Third* and *The Tragedy of Richard III,*
- *The Troublesome Reign of John, King of England* and *King John,*
- *The Taming of a Shrew* and *The Taming of the Shrew,* and
- *The True Chronicle History of King Leir* and *The Tragedy of King Lear.*

In each chapter, Jiménez examines the sources, the performance and publication history, the context (including relationships to other canonical plays),

the evidence for dating the plays, and the counter-arguments. Since each of the five apprenticeship plays presents its own mysteries and its own tortured history of scholarly investigation, Jiménez allows some flexibility in the chapters' sub-categories. For example, most chapters conclude with a refreshingly objective presentation of contrary evidence, but *The Troublesome Reign of John* gets instead fifteen pages devoted to the claim that it was written by George Peele.

Traditional arguments for designating the apprenticeship plays as pirated versions of the canonical plays or as work by later authors who borrowed from Shakespeare are handily refuted, especially by means of dispassionate examination of the external evidence. Still, there is much here that even die-hard orthodox Shakespeareans should appreciate. First, there is the readiness to acknowledge scholarly groundwork by those who accepted Shakspere as author (as opposed to today's orthodox practice of distorting or refusing to consider evidence that might call one's prior beliefs into question). Secondly, it is always instructive to have access to a major author's juvenilia as a way of understanding an artistic learning curve. The most obvious examples of maturing skills, unsurprisingly, are more coherent plotting and enriched characterizations in the canonical versions; those variations are concisely reported.

More crucial to this work is Jiménez's juxtaposition of turns of phrase and expressions of thought from the apprentice plays with the remarkably close (sometimes even identical) wording in their revised versions—as well as in other Shakespeare plays. Perhaps most compelling of all for the claim that the early and late plays on these five subjects flowed from the same pen are the fictional or invented elements that appear in both versions: elements not found in sources nor in treatments of the subject by other authors. For example, a subplot involving the invented character Philip Falconbridge in *The Troublesome Reign* not only is retained in *King John*, but also offers parallels with a wrenching episode in the life of the Earl of Oxford.

Chapter I, the book's longest chapter, covers *The Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth* and ties it to *Henry IV, Parts 1 and 2*, and *Henry V*. Jiménez notes that "the ten different Quartos of these four plays present a messy and uneven publication history that includes six different owners and seven different printers," and he wades into the morass to make sense of it. From the twenty

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scenes of *Famous Victories* (expanded into a total of fifty-seven scenes in the three Prince Hal plays), Jiménez extracts sixteen specific plot points, dozens of action and character details (including comic characters), and numerous examples of specific phrases that are carried over from the apprenticeship play. He examines the amalgamation and transformation of Oldcastle and Derick from *Famous Victories* into Falstaff. The presence of a relatively obscure Earl of Oxford in *Famous Victories* is analyzed with reference to other de Veres who figure elsewhere in the canon. Thorough attention to topical references and other internal as well as external evidence leads Jiménez to date the apprenticeship play to 1563 or 1564, when Oxford was in his early teens, and to give "a secure date for the composition of *Henry V* in 1583." Another interesting feature of this chapter is the close study of the personal and literary relationship between Edward de Vere and Sir Philip Sidney.

Chapter II focuses on *The True Tragedy of Richard the Third*, which Jiménez also ascribes to the early 1560s following *The Famous Victories*. Throughout this chapter it is satisfying to note how many traditional scholars have pointed out the close similarities between *The True Tragedy* and *Richard III*, although none took those observations to the logical next step of attributing them to the same author. Among many interesting details, I was struck by the point that both of these plays erroneously identify Thomas, Lord Grey, as little Prince Edward's uncle, although historically, he was a half-brother. "None of the sources contains this error."

The Troublesome Reign of John, King of England, which Ramon Jiménez sees as the third surviving play of de Vere's teenage ventures into writing and much improved over the earlier two, is the focus of the third chapter. This apprenticeship work "has been ascribed to as many as eight different playwrights, including William Shakespeare." The Stratfordian attribution to George Peele is thoughtfully reviewed by comparison of parallel passages as well as stylistic mannerisms. Jiménez further examines differences as well as similarities between the Bastard Falconbridge in *The Troublesome Reign* and the title character of *Richard III*. He dates *The Troublesome Reign* no later than 1567 on the basis that Oxford's law studies thenceforth infused the plays with legal language and points of law.

Chapter IV, the shortest, takes up the familiar compare-and-contrast approach to *The Taming of a Shrew* and the popular canonical comedy of *the Shrew*. Folkloric, Latin, and Italian sources as well as Gascoigne's *Supposes* are investigated. The Christopher Sly frame story in the apprenticeship play, condensed down to the Induction of *The Taming of the Shrew*, gets its due attention. Subplots, character names, Italian geography, and vocabulary (including legal language) offer clues to support the claim that both plays are by the same author, and further, that they fit with known dates and activities in Edward de Vere's life.

In the final chapter, Jiménez asserts that "the anonymous *King Leir* and the canonical *King Lear* are perhaps the clearest example of Shakespeare's transformation of a simple and thinly-drawn apprenticeship play into one of the masterpieces of the canon." The analysis parallels that of the other chapters, but ventures more extensively into echoes of *King Leir* throughout the rest of the Shakespeare canon.

In his summing up section, Jiménez acknowledges the traditional resistance to the obvious conclusion that the five apprenticeship plays were written by Shakespeare, since acceptance of this evidence would necessarily disqualify William of Stratford as the author. On the other hand, Jiménez offers the exciting prospect of adding "more than ten thousand new lines" to the canon, while revealing "Shakespeare's thought processes, especially his second thoughts, and his increasing skill as a dramatist, as he built new plays on the plot structures of his earliest efforts."

While many anecdotal passages—such as the Gad's Hill robbery—will be familiar to Oxfordians, the writing is lively and engaging enough to hold interest. Some repetitions are unavoidable, as certain themes or word clusters prove applicable to plays covered in different chapters. The book includes both end-of-chapter notes and an excellent bibliography of more than twenty pages.

# Rediscovering Ancient Greece in Shakespeare's Plays

Reviewed by Earl Showerman

Shakespeare and Greece. *Eds. Alison Findlay and Vassiliki Markidou. Bloomsbury, The Arden Shakespeare, 2017, 288 pages (hardcover $114, Kindle, $37.95).*

For the past fifteen years I have been engaged in studying the century of scholarship focused on Shakespeare's debt to classical Greek literature, so it was with great anticipation that I began reading *Shakespeare and Greece*, whose editors boldly claimed that it would correct traditional literary criticism's "stock blindness to Shakespeare's Hellenism." Findlay and Markidou's essay collection sets out to invert Ben Jonson's assertion that Shakespeare had "lesse Greek," to "prove that there is more Greek and less Latin in a significant group of Shakespeare's texts."

Shakespeare and Greece focuses on seven Shakespeare plays: *The Comedy of Errors, Love's Labour's Lost, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Pericles, Troilus and Cressida, Timon of Athens,* and *King Lear,* which the editors identify as "a group whose generic hybridity (tragic-comical-historical-romance) exemplifies the hybridity of Greece in the early modern imagination." In their introductory chapter, editors Findlay and Markidou maintain that Greece represented a paradoxical enigma to early modern England, serving as both the "origin and idealized pinnacle of Western philosophy, tragedy, and democracy," but also a decadent, fallen state "currently under Ottoman control, and therefore an exotic, dangerous 'other' in the most disturbing sense of the word." From the start the reader is forewarned that this volume features New Historicist jargon rather than an exploration of the playwright's debt to classical Greek literature, especially to Greek drama.
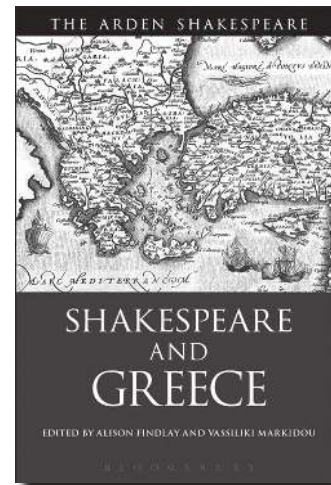
Indeed, classical Greece constituted the paragon of and model for European power, civility and scripture, while early modern Greece,

> infected with political, moral and religious corruption, was a warn-
> ing…. Shakespeare's plays, set in Athens, Thebes, Mytilene, Ephesus,
> Antioch, Tarsus and Tyre, engage directly in these tensions, while his
> other texts draw more obliquely but no less resonantly on the shifting
> sands of Greek philosophy and the geographic and linguistic land-
> scape of Greek romance as a means of simultaneously authorizing
> and dislocating the early modern English nation. (1-2)

The notion that Shakespeare conceived of Greece as the "landscape of ancient romance and the source of philosophic wisdom" is hardly a new revelation. The editors state that the primary aim of *Shakespeare and Greece* is to "illuminate the complex ambiguities of ancient and early modern Greek settings," but in so doing, they miss the opportunity to consider the philological evidence that Shakespeare was directly influenced by the Attic playwrights in a number of his dramas.

In *Shakespeare & Classical Antiquity* (2013), Colin Burrow wrote that Shakespeare "almost certainly never read Sophocles or Euripides (let alone the much more difficult Aeschylus) in Greek," and that he learned about Greek drama indirectly through North's translation of Plutarch's *Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans*. Jonathan Bate asserted that Shakespeare's concepts of Greek drama and culture primarily derive from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. A.D. Nuttall went a bit further by suggesting that a description of the gates of Troy in *Troilus and Cressida* is so close to Homer's text in *The Iliad* that "perhaps, after all, with Chapman sitting at his elbow, Shakespeare did back his way through some of Homer's Greek."

However, Findlay and Markidou go well beyond these imagined solutions in asserting that Shakespeare's "domed forehead," as portrayed in the Droeshout engraving of the First Folio, "held a considerable reservoir of knowledge about Greek literature, history and politics, gathered throughout his life from translations, quotations by other authors and possibly even from learning of Greek at school." They cite as their proof, "Greek Literacy in

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Sixteenth-Century England" (2015), wherein Micha Lazarus argued that students reaching the highest level at a grammar school like Westminster would have had extensive exposure to Greek literature, "both more and better Greek than a just matriculated Classics undergraduate does today." Although there is literary evidence for Greek editions having been donated to Westminster and Eton, there is no evidence that the curriculum at the King's Grammar School of Stratford-upon-Avon included Greek texts.

Shakespeare and Greece does not include an essay relating Shakespearean drama to Greek romance, but the editors' introduction emphasizes the great importance of Thomas Underdown's English translation of Heliodorus' *Aethiopica*, which was dedicated to the 17th Earl of Oxford and published in 1569. Underdown introduced Heliodorus's Greek romance as both "profitable" and "pleasaunt," and claimed that it holds a distinctively Greek authority in his dedicatory letter to Edward de Vere:

> The Greeks in all manner of knowledge and learning did far surmount the Romans, but the Romans in administering their state in warlike facts, and in common sense, were much their superiors, for the Greeks are wedded to their learning alone, the Romans content with a mediocrity applied themselves to greater things…. Now of all knowledge fit for a noble gentleman, I supposed the knowledge of histories is most seeming. For furthering whereof, I have englished a passing fine and witty history, written in Greek by Heliodorus, and for right good cause consecrated the same to your Lordship. For such virtues be in your honor, so haughty courage joined with great skill, such sufficiency in learning, so good nature and common sense, that in your honor is, I think, expressed the right pattern of a noble gentleman,…. (spellings modernized)

Shakespeare and Greece editors state that Underdown's translation proved to be "the inspiration for the work of Nashe, Greene, Sidney and Lodge, as well as Shakespeare." Eighteen years later, after two more editions had been published, anti-theatre critic Stephen Gosson commented that Underdown's Heliodorus had been "thoroughly ransacked to furnish the playhouses in London." Greek romance challenged the "conventional hierarchy which prioritized reason and utility above emotion and fancy extended to the elevation of Greece above Rome…. The value of ancient Greek culture lay in the purity or 'blue-skies' thinking, its ability to transcend the mediocrity of everyday life and engage in enduring human questions about the self, society and the cosmos, emotionally as well as intellectually (25)." This is music to my ears.

In the concluding paragraph of the introduction, Findlay and Markidou quote John Lyly's *Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit* for evidence that "Greece was never without some wily Ulisses," and that Shakespeare's dramas tend to

both reinforce and challenge this type—the representation through dramatic characters as different as Ulysses and Autolycus. "Greece surfaces as a fluid, multifaceted mosaic that constitutes a formative *stratum* of, and crucible for, the purposes of this specific collection, Shakespearean drama."

The most relevant chapter in *Shakespeare and Greece* to the Oxfordian theory may be Efterpi Mitsi's, "Greeks 'digested in a play': Consuming Greek Heroism in *The School of Abuse* and *Troilus and Cressida*." Mitsi is not alone in asserting that Shakespeare deliberately digested the epic narrative, inverting relationships in translating Trojan War heroes to the early modern stage. Arden editor David Bevington has noted that, "Achilles' reputation is severely deglamorized…. Ajax is much more of a buffoon…. Ulysses is more wily than in Homer…. Nestor is more senile, Agamemnon more pompous and ineffectual. Homer's pro-Greek perspective gives way to a matter-of-fact view of war in which the few heroes like Hector are victimized by an all-engulfing conflict." Mitzi argues that Shakespeare's Homeric heroes are not only belittled, they literally "seem to embody the anti-theatricalists' fears about the stage by realizing the most negative versions of their characters instead of becoming moral examples." *Troilus and Cressida* thus directly ridicules the moralizing of the ancient epics as represented in Stephen Gosson's *School of Abuse* (1579). Gosson wrote:

> The right use of ancient Poetry was to have the notable exploits of the worthy captains, the wholesome counsels of good fathers, and virtuous lives of predecessors set down in numbers, and sung to the Instrument at solemn feasts, that the sound of the one might draw the hearers from kissing the cup too often, and chalk out the way to do the like. (93)

In fact, the use of figures from antiquity as models of action "was a familiar Renaissance notion related to the doctrine of imitation." Gosson praised Homer's *Iliad* for its representations of martial excellence, contrasting it with "the emasculating effect contemporary theatre has on its audience," that modern drama which turns poetry into a commodity. In contrast, Shakespeare's Prologue in *Troilus* claims the play "leaps o'er the vaunts and firstlings of those broils" to "what may be digested in a play."

> The sacrosanct doctrine of imitation through exemplars, the moralistic view of ancient poetry, and the myth of Troy are all targeted in Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida* from the very beginning of the play. …Responding to Gosson's charge that the function of the epic poem in ancient culture directly opposes the modern commodification of poetry, *Troilus and Cressida* uses theatricality as well as imagery of cooking, eating and disease, also found in the *School of Abuse*, to reflect on the consumption, digestion, and indigestion of the ancient poetic material. (95)

Mitzi argues that Shakespeare's denigrating depiction of the Trojan and Greek heroes in his satiric tragedy was a direct challenge to Gosson's elevation of the Homeric epic in the *School of Abuse*. Although *Troilus and Cressida* was not registered until 1603 and never published until 1609, a long thirty years after Gosson's anti-theatrical polemic was first published, there was a continuum of "fierce debates taking place on the pulpit, in the playhouse and in print" over the years in efforts to regulate the playhouses, performances and publication of dramatic literature. "Shakespeare's 'merry Greeks,' " Mitzi claims, "brazenly foreground the alien quality of their Homeric origins in the 'very markets of bawdry,' partaking in the ideological war of the theatres." Thus, Gosson's call for attention to the notable exploits of ancient warriors becomes for Shakespeare "roleplaying, ridiculing the misreading and moralizing of the ancient epic."

The Oxfordian dating of *Troilus and Cressida* does much to confirm Mitzi's detailed arguments supporting the conclusion that *Troilus and Cressida* was a direct response to the *School of Abuse*. *The History of Agamemnon and Ulysses*, a lost drama performed at Greenwich on December 27, 1584 by the Earl of Oxford's Boys, is likely an early version of the tragedy. In *English Dramatic Companies, 1558-1642* (1910), J. T. Murray surmised 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." Further, in the *School of Abuse* Gosson attacks "poets, pipers, players, jugglers, jesters and dancers" as "fuller of fools than wise men." Oxford would have taken this attack personally for, in the early 1580's, he was supporting two acting companies and touring companies of musicians and jugglers, and was himself a highly regarded dancer, musician, and playwright.

One other chapter of value in *Shakespeare and Greece* is "Hospitality and Friendship and Republicanism in *Timon of Athens*" by John Drakakis, who argues that friendship in *Timon of Athens* is "an aristocratic form of friendship which is open to abuse through failure to acknowledge obligation." Drakakis enters into a political discourse that includes references to Plutarch's *Lives*, Lucian's satire, *Timon*, *The Misanthrope*, Aristotle's *Politiques* and Sir Thomas Smith's *De Republica Anglorum* (1572), which laid out in detail the preferred English form of benevolent monarchy. However, the richest commentaries Drakakis cites about *Timon* include statements any Oxfordian would understand immediately: "Timon is first and foremost about money," and that "Timon is a feudal lord in a capitalist economy…, an aristocratic 'lord' and exponent of conspicuous consumption…who stuck to the old country ways under new conditions; men who continued to keep open house to all comers, to dispense lavish charity, to keep hordes of domestic servants and retainers, to live, in short, as a great medieval prince." (146-7) This scenario exactly reflects Oxford's position in 1584, when the

first literary allusion to "the Athenian misanthrope biting on the stage" appeared in William Warner's *Syrinx*.

Finally, the editors of *Shakespeare and Greece* cannot resist recruiting Alexander the Great to the cause of expanding Shakespeare's spheres of Greek influence on the canon.

> Ancient Greece, remote in time as well as space, constituted a fantasy of imperial greatness and a nightmare of fragmentation for early modern English culture. The "resplendent glory" of Alexander the Great (356 – 23 BC) …held great currency for an English nation with strong colonialist and commercial aspirations. Plutarch's "Life of Alexander" presents him as a formidable model of imperialist politics, whose "ambition & desire" of honour and "greatnes of minde and noble corage" beyond his years led him to "think of the conquest of Asia, yea of the empire of the whole world." Lauded for his magnanimity, wisdom and learning, beauty and sexual sobriety, Alexander personified the virtue and glory of geographic, linguistic and commercial expansion. (16-17)

Certainly, Shakespeare was fascinated by Alexander, who is alluded to in *The Winter's Tale*, in *Henry V*, in *Coriolanus*, and four times by Hamlet in Act V. Alexander is impersonated by Nathaniel, the Curate, in the lamentable Masque of the Nine Worthies in *Love's Labour's Lost*. Is it surprising that Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, was compared to Alexander in a number of literary dedications?

Shakespeare and Greece may not fulfill my standards about broadening our understanding of Shakespeare's fascination with and knowledge of Greek literature and drama. However, Findlay and Markidou are to be congratulated for opening up new vistas for those wishing to peer into the distant past to find new, valuable arguments about Shakespeare's employment of Greek culture in the canon.

Six Shakespeares in Search of an Author

Reviewed by Michael Dudley

My Shakespeare: The Authorship Controversy: Experts Examine the Arguments for Bacon, Neville, Oxford, Marlowe, Mary Sidney, Shakspere, and Shakespeare. *Edited by William D. Leahy. Brighton, UK, Edward Everett Root, 2017. (hardback $79.95 US, Kindle $15.99)*


A common objection levelled against authorship doubters is that the number of candidates claimed for the authorship of the Shakespeare canon makes it highly unlikely any of them could have been the true author. In *My Shakespeare* readers are given the opportunity to decide the matter for themselves by considering five alternative candidates, as well as traditional and novel interpretations of William from Stratford.

This approach has several significant precedents, including *Shakespeare and His Rivals* by George McMichael and Edgar M. Glenn, and *The Shakespeare Claimants* by H.N. Gibson (both published in 1962), as well as *The Shakespeare Controversy* by Warren Hope and Kim Holston (1992/2009). Allowing partisans for each candidate to make their case rather than having it presented and assessed by a singular authorial voice sets *My Shakespeare* apart from these predecessors.

In his introduction, editor William Leahy (who also edited 2010's *Shakespeare and His Authors*) states that each of the candidates in the book are "presented as equal" (ix) in the spirit of determining not that "we are right, but to find out if we are" (xi). Accordingly, open-minded readers will find much of interest here, even if one concedes that certain evidence, assumptions or conventions may have been long ago rejected by Oxfordian researchers.

In the first chapter, Alan Nelson sets the stage by arguing for the Shakespeare of tradition. Author of the modern biography of the Earl of Oxford titled, *Monstrous Adversary* (2003), Nelson presents familiar traditional arguments, taking name spellings and title pages at face value and conflating contemporary
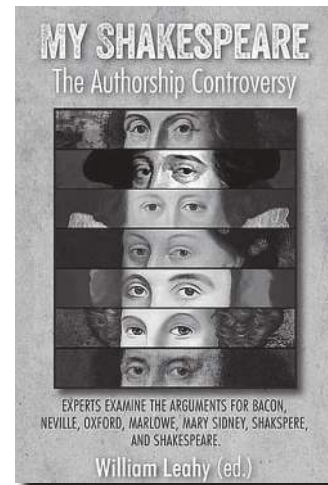
references to Shakespeare with the businessman from Stratford-on-Avon. As is often the case, he includes as evidence the scene in *The Return from Parnassus* in which the characters of Burbage and Kempe refer to Shakespeare as their "fellowe," despite it being apparent that, in also referring to the "writer Metamorphoses," they shouldn't be accepted as reliable witnesses.

Next, independent scholar Diana Price (author of the groundbreaking *Shakespeare's Unorthodox Biography* [2001]) presents what she openly calls her "Conjectural Narrative," building on her theory that, while not a writer, Shakspere did have an active role in the printing and production of the Shakespeare texts in his role as a play-broker. She ably demonstrates the curious distance between the texts and their author—whomever that was—and suggests the intervention of a third party, whom she conjectures was Shakspere. While she does not present positive evidence for this play-broker role *per se*, she cites claims for "Hand D"—thoroughly debunked by Price elsewhere (2016)—as well as the "two texts" scenario for *King Lear* as dubious and vulnerable to being disproved. While fascinating, it should be pointed out that her chapter is an outlier in this collection as it does not actually make a claim for an authorial candidate.

Starting off the claims for alternative Shakespeares is Alexander Waugh, who previously co-edited with Mark Anderson the book, *Contested Year: Errors, Omissions and Unsupported Statements in James Shapiro's "The Year of Lear: Shakespeare in 1606."* His chapter—much like Anderson's *Shakespeare by Another Name* (2005)—is a Shakespearean reading of Edward de Vere's life, referring extensively to textual, contemporary or scholarly evidence supporting the theory that the 17th Earl of Oxford was Shakespeare. His eloquent and richly-documented chapter (Waugh cites 137 sources to Nelson's seven) demonstrates how seamlessly Oxford's life corresponds to the character, chronology, content and contexts of the Shakespeare canon, and plausibly explains why he wrote in secret: that he was a leading figure in what Thomas Nashe described as the government's "secret policy of plays," for which he was paid £1000 for the last eighteen years of his life.

In Chapter 4, the case for Christopher Marlowe is laid out by Ros Barber, author of the acclaimed and award-winning novel *The Marlowe Papers* (2012). She begins by arguing compellingly that Marlowe's supposed murder in 1593 was a dubiously-executed cover-up related to his work as an intelligence agent, which she says gave him the motive, means and opportunity to fake his own death and take up writing under another name. The timing alone— *Venus and Adonis* appearing less than two weeks following Marlowe's alleged

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death—is noteworthy. So too is the fact that Marlowe has a corpus of extant plays to which the works of Shakespeare may be compared—the latter offering a great deal of resonance with Marlowe's writing style, as many scholars have also noted. Her case is bolstered by the editors of *The New Oxford Shakespeare* recently naming him as co-author of all three of the *Henry VI* plays (see the review in *The Oxfordian* 19). More conjectural are her efforts to demonstrate that contemporaries conflated the two authors, that the *Sonnets* should be read as a narrative of exile and that themes of banishment in the plays reflect Marlowe's supposed post-"death" biography.

Henry Neville is proposed as Shakespeare by independent scholars John Casson and David Ewald, as well as University of Wales professor William D. Rubinstein, co-author of the Nevillian *The Truth Will Out: Unmasking the Real Shakespeare* [2006]). In their view, Neville's lifespan (1562-1615), being so similar to that of William of Stratford's, makes him an ideal candidate, as do Neville's foreign travels, imprisonment with Southampton, legal experience as both a Justice of the Peace and a Member of Parliament, and the numerous extant annotations in his hand on themes found in the canon. Regrettably, it also relies on Stratfordian dating conventions and shibboleths (e.g., Southampton was Shakespeare's patron), and too often consists of a literary game in which Neville is shown to be somehow related to figures associated with the Shakespeare works, at a sometimes dizzying number of removes.

The superlative literary pedigree of Mary Sidney Herbert, the Countess of Pembroke, makes her a strong candidate, according to Robin Williams, co-founder of the International Shakespeare Centre. Aristocrat, accomplished, highly educated and for twenty years the patroness of the influential Wilton Circle (which included Edmund Spenser and Michael Drayton), Mary Sidney saw to the posthumous publication of the writings of her brother Philip, which many critics believe influenced Shakespeare. Alongside Shakespeare and Oxford, she was also named by Francis Meres in *Palladis Tamia* as among the greatest writers of the age, an extraordinary recognition for a woman in that era. Of particular significance is that the First Folio was dedicated to Sidney's sons Philip and William, Earls of Montgomery and Pembroke, and possibly orchestrated by them—in Williams' scenario on behalf of their mother. Disappointingly, Williams only tells the reader about Mary Sidney's writing but does not provide any examples to demonstrate to what degree her style matches Shakespeare's.

The classic alternative candidate Francis Bacon is left for last, his claim supported by Barry Clarke, summarizing his doctoral work at Brunel University (supported by the Francis Bacon Society). Rather than repeating the familiar

overall claims for Bacon's authorship that were so popular in the 19th Century, Clarke takes a more limited and empirical focus on Bacon's contributions to only three plays, based on phrase searches in the Early English Books Online (EEBO) database. Lending support to a long-standing Baconian theory, he concludes that *The Comedy of Errors* and *Love's Labour's Lost* contain phrases that bear close similarities to those found in the *Gesta Grayorum*, the account of performances at Gray's Inn during the Christmas revels of 1594-5, and which, while anonymous, is supposed to have been written by Bacon. Similarly, he believes that *The Tempest* recalls passages in pamphlets relating to the Strachey report of the 1609 Virginia Company shipwreck which, again, he claims Bacon had a hand in writing because he was a leading member of the Company. In other words, his case for Bacon rests for the most part on comparisons with texts which *may or may not be composed by his candidate*—in essence, authorship claims supported speciously by other authorship claims.

Finally, Leahy argues for an "amalgamated" Shakespeare comprising many contemporary authors working with or on behalf of the play-broker Shakespeare (his spelling), reasoning that the author is "largely unknown," "contingent," and "ungraspable" (209-210). He relies with confidence on the stylometric analysis behind *The New Oxford Shakespeare* in declaring the works of Shakespeare to be a group effort, when more skepticism was probably called for (see TOX review by Dudley, Goldstein & Maycock, 2017). His conclusion that the debate "is irrelevant" because the "author [as an individual] does not exist" (210) is an unfortunate one, not only because he fallaciously conflates biographical fictionality with ontological negation, but that, in the process, he undercuts the contributors to this volume, who have been arguing precisely the opposite. Ultimately, the rhetorical space between such a sentiment and the popular refrain "what does it matter who wrote the plays?" is, for all practical purposes, negligible.

The individual contributions to *My Shakespeare* offer a fine introduction to the debates involving the authorship, yet the Oxfordian reader will recognize much of the evidence on offer as untenable: for example, Clarke, Williams and Casson *et al.* each accept without question that the Strachey account was a source for *The Tempest*, when this has been repeatedly debunked, most recently and definitively by Stritmatter and Kositsky (2013). Claims of other authors' influence on Shakespeare resulting from orthodox dating are similarly dubious and ignore the dozens of "too early" contemporary allusions documented by Katherine Chiljan (2011).

The main problem with the book is that Leahy should have done much more in his role as editor than simply provide the venue. No historiographic context of any kind is offered for the candidates, leaving the uninitiated reader to wonder how, why and when they came to the attention of researchers

and how these theories have since been received. Part of what makes the case for Edward de Vere so compelling is knowing the carefully-conceived methods by which J.T. Looney discovered him; there is no such information to be had here.

Instead, Leahy devotes much more attention to his own twelve-year involvement with the controversy (as he puts it, his "interventions"), as if this was somehow significant to the debate itself, referring to this personal frame of reference no fewer than three times, when an overall introduction to the topic and its background was needed. His chapter is similarly replete with references to "my ideas" "my thoughts" and "my arguments," as well as his own articles and participation in a 2011 authorship debate, to make observations that are, frankly, common currency among authorship doubters. The result is less My Shakespeare and more "Me and Shakespeare."

While the contributors to My Shakespeare are to be commended for their willingness to participate in good faith on such a controversial project, ultimately their efforts—and the reader—would have been better served had their editor directed more attention to the historiography of the debate and less to his role within it.

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100 Years of Shakespeare Films

Reviewed by William Boyle

Shakespeare Films: A Re-evaluation of 100 Years of Adaptations.
By Peter E. S. Babiak. Jefferson, North Carolina, McFarland and Company,
2016, 1st Edition, 212 pages (paperback $35.00 US, Kindle $18.99).

Peter Babiak's *Shakespeare Films* is not just another book about filmed adaptations of Shakespeare plays to film. It claims to be a new, fresh look that breaks with the past scholarship on the subject, and sets up new standards in considering how Shakespeare is adapted to the screen and how the public should view such adaptations.

On the back cover it states:

> This study reexamines the recognized "canon" of films based on Shakespeare's plays and argues that is should be broadened by breaking with two unnecessary standards: the characterization of the director as "auteur" of a play's screen adaptation, and the convention of excluding films with contemporary language or modern or alternative settings or which use the plays as a subtext. The emphasis is shifted from the director's contribution to the film's social, cultural and historical contexts.
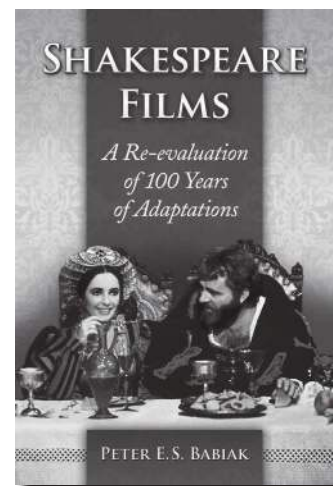
In his introduction Babiak lays out the basics of considering film adaptations by drawing on past discussions among scholars. He cites Jack Jorgens's *Shakespeare on Film* (1977) in laying out the basic choices an adapter faces, which can be reduced to two: 1) how to present the play to the audience (theatrical, realistic, or filmic), and 2) how to deal with the text itself: presentation (i.e., verbatim use of the text), interpretation, adaptation, or deconstruction. In citing Sarah Cardwell's *Adaptation Revisited* (2002) he notes the problems with adaptations as a "cultural process" vs. a resulting "cultural artifact," the problem for any adapters being (now citing from *Political Shakespeare* [1994]) that they then have to cope with Shakespeare as a "contested social icon."

This in turn results in adapters having to "infuse their position with Shakespeare's cultural authority," etc. This latter point appears to open the door to a consideration of the entire authorship problem in understanding what a Shakespeare play is about, and therefore how to "adapt" it, but the authorship problem is nowhere to be found in this book. Yet determining the "social, cultural and historical contexts" surrounding the author who wrote these works 400 years ago is a key factor when considering how the plays have been adapted in films, as well as a factor whereby Babiak's study falls short.

Finally, Babiak turns to Linda Hutcheon's 2006 *A Theory of Adaptation*, whose parameters are presented as the foundation for his own "new basis for study." Hutcheon's views on adaptation go far beyond just reciting the source text; they go into much broader considerations about the time and place (Where/When?) of the adaptation (i.e., which decade/century, which country), the skills and motives of the adapters (Who/Why?), and the medium used to present the adaptation (What?).

Over the final twelve pages of his Introduction Babiak fills in much detail on how all this works, concluding with a section, "Rationale and Chronology of Films," which lists all the films discussed and places them in one of four categories: "Canonical" (which is most of them), "Non-Canonical" (*Forbidden Planet* is one), "Un-Canonical" (mostly pre-WWII, and mostly silent, but with two 1960s films by Kurosawa and Ralph Richardson included), and "Subtextual Representation" (*The Godfather* is the prime example).

It does get complicated. As if to acknowledge just how complicated, Babiak concludes the Introduction with a brief outline of each chapter, covering what will be discussed and how that fits in with his broader thesis. The outline is useful and lays the groundwork for considering each of the chapters, which are laid out in chronological order, beginning with the silent film era and ending with a variety of 21st century adaptations. Some of the observations here seem self-evident, but many of us probably hadn't considered some of them before.

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The silent era is, of course, marked by the necessity to use familiar visual images focusing on just one clear element of a play. The pre-Hollywood era is naturally marked by the use of play adaptations as "star vehicles," with each film featuring famous personalities. Babiak provides several examples, Dieterle and Reinhardt's *Midsummer Night's Dream* (1935) being the prime example, along with George Cukor's *Romeo and Juliet* and its way-too-old cast, including British star Leslie Howard as Romeo, and Paul Czinner's *As You Like It*, with his wife Elizabeth Bergner as an unconvincing Rosalind/Ganymede (a girl playing a girl in a tunic…where's the boy?).

The post-World War II films take on some of the darkness of the postwar era, especially Olivier and Welles, discussed in more detail below. The 1950s to 1960s range all over the world: Japan (Kurosawa), Russia (Kozintsev), Italy via Hollywood (Zeffirelli), England and Poland (Kott, Brook, Richardson, Polanski), etc. Chapter 6 (Zeffirelli) is particularly interesting as Babiak notes that while Zeffirelli can be compared to Olivier and Welles as an "auteur" (each did three Shakespeare films), Welles and Olivier can also be viewed as purists who also starred in their films (like actor/managers). Yet to Babiak, Zeffirelli is a mere "populizer" who was more focused on entertainment.

All this leads into the 1970s-1980s, where Chapter 8 begins:

> The period from the release of Polanski's *MacBeth* to Branagh's *Henry V* has been described as "the 18 year gap"—during this period no significant films of Shakespeare plays were produced in mainstream cinema and "it looked as if television had displaced cinema as the photographic medium for bringing Shakespeare to the modern audience" (quoting Anthony Davies, xi).

Babiak then goes on to argue that this period was marked by its most iconic Hollywood film, *The Godfather*, which he says is also a prime example of the "Subtextual" Shakespeare adaptations that are part of his new thesis of adaptations. He notes that previous commentary had only loosely made this association (e.g., three sons instead of three daughters, family succession of power, etc.), and then adds his arguments for allusions to *Richard II* and *MacBeth*. It's the most provocative part of his larger thesis. He also discusses here Goddard's aborted *King Lear* project, in which Lear was to be a mob boss, and brings in *Forbidden Planet* and its more obvious—and agreed upon—connections to a Shakespeare play, *The Tempest*.

Chapter 9 is titled "Branagh," the first in a new era of auteurs, beginning with Kenneth Branagh's *Henry V* in 1989. Interestingly, Babiak informs us that he was so taken with Branagh's film that the experience of viewing it is what led him, 25 years later, to write this book. He finishes his evaluations in

Chapter 10 ("Millennial Shakespeare") with films featuring much freer adaptations, focusing on Julie Taymor's *Titus* and *The Tempest*, Baz Luhrmann's *Romeo + Juliet*, and Ethan Hawke's *Hamlet*, among others.

All this is interesting, but we can start to see problems and contradictions if we return to Babiak's main point about directors as auteurs and considerations of time and place in film adaptations. This is nowhere more apparent than in Chapter 3 ("Olivier and Welles"), where the issue is not just the mechanics and logistics of adapting a play, but the much more elusive concept of which adaptations work.

In Chapter 3 Babiak writes that one previous critic (Stephen Buhler) had failed to appreciate "that the approaches taken to Shakespeare's plays by Olivier and Welles bear striking similarities." He notes that Olivier in his *Richard III* (1955), by depicting whether Richard himself seems to be in control of the camera (his rise) or not (his fall), "demonstrates the influence of 'film noir' in its foreshadowing of Richard's eventual doom." In discussing Welles he notes the uses of elaborate, stark set designs (*MacBeth*), impenetrable mazes (*Othello*), and narrative disparity (*Chimes at Midnight*)—all elements that are uniquely Wellesian.

He also observes that Olivier's adaptations of Shakespeare to the cinema are well financed, while Welles operates on shoestring budgets. Moreover, that Olivier's films look back to the theater while Welles's looks forward to the cinema. This becomes apparent in the former's *Henry V*, where the camera is placed mostly higher up and very far away, as if the actors were delivering their lines to the last row of a very big theater. In short, Olivier was classical in the worst sense of the word, while Welles was a "maverick" and his films *MacBeth*, *Othello* and *Chimes at Midnight* are all intensely physical as you watch them, rather than being remote and theatrical.

In his Conclusion, Babiak returns to Olivier and Welles and sums up the similarities discussed in Chapter 3 by noting that both directors "rejected mainstream cinema's emphasis on realism/illusion," and both used special film techniques, such as zoom lenses to compress an image (Olivier) or lighting (Welles) to cast shadows. In addition, both directors "reflect a theme of entrapment that characterized post-Second World War European cinema." Babiak then returns at this point to another film noir reference, although without using that term. He compares the motifs used by *both* Welles and Olivier as ones evoking Carol Reed's *The Third Man* or Roberto Rossellini's *Stromboli*.

For this reviewer, this is where Babiak's thesis (i.e., going beyond the director as auteur, and instead considering context) goes off the rails a bit because anyone viewing all these Olivier and Welles films (as I recently did) would immediately be reminded of *The Third Man* any number of times in the

Welles films—that is, *MacBeth*, and *Othello*, and *Chimes at Midnight*. But do Olivier's *Henry V*, *Hamlet*, or *Richard III* cause a viewer to come even close to thinking of film noir? For *Henry* and *Richard*, clearly not. The black-and-white *Hamlet* has been viewed as "noir-ish" by some but, in comparison to Welles, it too is not that close. The director as auteur makes all the difference, and Welles is clearly the superior film director, all technical similarities aside. Babiak's analysis overlooks such distinctions. In his iconic book *The American Cinema* (1968) Andrew Sarris assessed Welles to be among the "Pantheon Directors", while Olivier was not even mentioned, even among the "Miscellaneous." One director is listed as a genius, the other is not even mentioned, and thereby hangs a tale.

There is an important point that needs to be raised here, vis-à-vis the entire issue of adapting Shakespeare to film, auteurs, and historical context, and that is the Shakespeare authorship question. This is, after all, an Oxfordian review of a mainstream Shakespeare book, written for publication in an Oxfordian journal. Does the authorship debate matter in all these considerations? Well, yes. The Oxfordian view is simply that the author is deeply invested in each of his plays (i.e., his particular point of view and agenda is always a factor) and further, that he is almost always represented by a character in the play (Hamlet being the definitive example), while other characters are modeled on people whom he knows.

So, for example, in all the discussion above of Olivier and Welles there is one other additional point to consider. Welles once clearly stated to theatre critic Kenneth Tynan that, "I think Oxford wrote Shakespeare. If you don't agree, there are some awfully funny coincidences to explain away…." (see Tynan's 1954 book, *Persona Grata*). Even though there is now some debate, it is most likely that he was an Oxfordian, even if he had to be *sub rosa* about it (he did, after all, have battles throughout his life over financing, and it is easy to understand that he knew he had to keep silent about certain things).

Several other major people who figure prominently in Shakespeare-to-film adaptations were also most likely Oxfordians. I am thinking here of both Leslie Howard and Kenneth Branagh. In a May 3, 2009 *Sunday Express* (UK) news article, Branagh was quoted as being sympathetic to the authorship question and the case for Edward de Vere, but the piece was taken down by the publisher within days, accompanied by a statement that Branagh had never meant to say any such thing, and that he was firmly a Stratfordian. This event capped years of rumors that Branagh himself might be an authorship skeptic. His friend and mentor Sir Derek Jacobi and Keanu Reeves (one of the stars in *Much Ado*) are both openly Oxfordian, dating back to the 1990s. So it strikes me as no surprise that *Much Ado* turned out to be one of the most enjoyable adaptations of Shakespeare ever put on film, or that his *Henry V* four years earlier launched a new era of more vivid Shakespeare adaptations.

In 1941 Leslie Howard produced, directed and starred in a film called *Pimpernel Smith*, where the main character baldly states that "Shakespeare really wasn't Shakespeare at all…He was the Earl of Oxford." The same character continued to laud Oxford in another scene: "The Earl of Oxford was a very bright Elizabethan light, but this book will tell you he was a good deal more than that." His next film was, as Charles Boyle has argued, going to be a reimagining of *Hamlet* during the Second World War, but, regrettably, he died in a mysterious plane crash while returning from Spain in 1943.

This view that both Welles and Branagh might have been closet Oxfordians leads me to believe that they would, then, *not* have been coping with the problem Babiak spoke of in his Introduction as a key problem for adapters—"the problem for any adapters being that they have to cope with Shakespeare as a 'contested social icon'…[which] in turn results in these adapters having to 'infuse their position with Shakespeare's cultural authority.' " Welles's and Branagh's lively, more visceral adaptations were, in my view, free of any concerns over Shakespeare's "cultural authority" and were instead in touch with a view of Shakespeare as a real flesh-and-blood person, not an icon. This in turn brought a degree of reality into their adaptations that an Olivier could not conceive of.

There is an interesting passage in Babiak's chapter on Zeffirelli which captures the problem of not being willing or able to discuss the authorship question at all. In analyzing *The Taming of the Shrew*, we encounter this passage citing Harvard professor Marjorie Garber:

> Marjorie Garber has identified the Christopher Sly induction scene as crucial to understanding Shakespeare's play, as it "introduces and mirrors all the major issues that will preoccupy the actors in the main drama to come." Among the issues that Garber identifies are the impersonation of nobles and commoners: Sly is "a tinker wrongly convinced that he is a nobleman," and the lord is "an actor playing the part of a nobleman," and Bartholomew the page masquerades as a "lady" whom Sly wishes to have sex with. Although Zeffirelli omits 70% of Shakespeare's play … the crucial theme of invention is amply demonstrated by Zeffirelli using visual means. (108)

Such a passage can, and does, give an Oxfordian reviewer of a mainstream Shakespeare book pause: to laugh, to cry, or just to sit back a moment and marvel at the irony of it all.

In the final analysis, measured against the claim on the back cover (i.e., "the emphasis is shifted from the director's contribution to the film's social, cultural and historical contexts"), this book is a mixed bag. While it is valuable

in its thorough survey of past studies on the topic, in its detailed and often interesting discussions of some iconic films and directors, and in its bibliography and filmography, it nonetheless suffers from a slow moving, at times too dense academic handling of the subject matter, weighted down further by much repetition.

Despite Babiak's claim of shifting emphasis from the director, much of his discussion does, in the end, consider the director as auteur, resulting in a book that suffers from his own limited imagination in considering just what makes some adaptations work and others fail. He had informed us in his Preface that viewing Branagh's *Henry V* in 1989 had led to his fascination with the subject of adapting Shakespeare to film, and, eventually, to this book. But, in this book, he never does tell us just what exactly that film did that the others did not.

The Quest for the Historical Shakspere

Reviewed by Warren Hope

The Fictional Lives of Shakespeare. *By Kevin Gilvary. New York and London: Routledge, 2018 260 pages, (hardcover $149.95, Kindle $142.45)*

Readers should be warned not to turn to this book with the expectation that they will find in it a contribution to the Shakespeare authorship question. On the contrary, the author at the very outset, in a page headed "Acknowledgements," provides a note that reads: "Throughout this study, I have accepted the traditional attribution of the plays and works to William Shakespeare of Stratford-upon-Avon, endeavoring to show that no biography of his life is possible. The question of authorship is entirely separate and any reader who wishes to pursue this interest might usefully begin with *Shakespeare Beyond Doubt*, Eds. Stanley Wells & Paul Edmondsen (2013) and *Shakespeare Beyond Doubt?* Eds. John Shahan & Alexander Waugh (2013)."

This raising and setting aside of the authorship question gives the book an odd feel from the very beginning. The book constitutes an attack on the fakery of the academic world with regard to the writing of Shakespearean biography while wanting to be a part of that dreadful trade, to use Shakespeare's phrase from *King Lear*. While the attack is thorough, it is also overly respectful and tactful. What might have been an effective polemic or a hilarious send up by an anti-Stratfordian has become another volume of Shakespearean studies to fall from the press and land on the shelves of university and college libraries.

As a result, the book takes an approach that might best be described as academic. It starts with a consideration of the Western tradition of biographical writing in general and then becomes more and more specific. It considers William of Stratford's biographical records, the myths that have
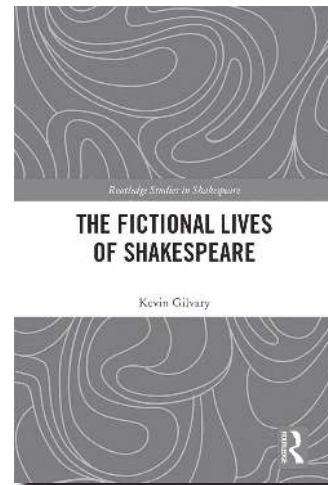
grown up associated with him, the gaps in the life, a survey of the writing of Shakespearean lives, establishing Samuel Schoenbaum as a turning point in the academic approach to Shakespearean biography, and a consideration of two inventions—Southampton as patron and Ben Jonson as rival. The book concludes with a brief summary of findings and recommendations—the most important and far-reaching of which is the recommendation that those who wish to write a life of the Stratford man as the author of the plays and poems should use historical fiction. The book's main thesis is that ALL the traditional biographies of Shakespeare are in fact fiction. The author even makes the point that academics choose not to describe their work as historical fiction because biography has more "prestige." What this suggests is that dishonesty is the path to prestige among what passes in our time for Shakespeare scholars.

There can be no question in the mind of anyone who reads this book that the author makes his case in a definitive way. He shows that no one for the longest time took any interest in Shakespeare and once they did found anecdotes that could not be verified. He shows that the best of the earliest Shakespeare scholars—Edmund Malone—recognized that it was virtually impossible to determine the order and dates of composition of the plays and, in the end, gave up his desire to write a biography of Shakespeare. He shows that the first real attempt to write a life of Shakespeare did not come until 1843—more than two hundred years after the death of the Stratford man.

What Kevin Gilvary does not point out because of his stance on the authorship question is that between this life by Charles Knight and the next by Sir Sidney Lee, Delia Bacon's work appeared, announcing that there were in fact two Shakespeares in the literature—the one in the biographical record and the other the author of the plays and poems as described by literary critics. It is the attempt to pretend that these two Shakespeares are in fact one and the same person that has bedeviled Shakespearean biography ever since. All the faults Gilvary pursues like a terrier cry out for explanation, but he offers none and I suspect that is because he wishes or needs to avoid the authorship question.

J. Thomas Looney argued that his identification of the Earl of Oxford as "William Shakespeare" meant that there needs to be a re-evaluation of the lives and reputations of two men—Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford, and

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William Shakspere of Stratford-upon-Avon. My guess is that Looney could not have imagined that almost a century after he published his book a university press would publish a life of the Earl of Oxford (titled *Monstrous Adversary*) by a university professor that took for its inspiration and title an attack on Oxford by a traitor to the Crown and a paid agent of Spain--or that more lives of the Stratford man as the author of Shakespeare's plays and poems would continue to appear despite the fact that nothing new has been learned about him.

Worse, Looney could not have guessed that this veritable pollution of the academic environment would be caused in part by his theory and the growing number of adherents it has attracted. Alan Nelson at least openly stated that his biographical attack on Oxford was an attempt to undermine the case for Oxford as Shakespeare. The professors who palm off their works of historical fiction as biographies do not admit they do so to prop up the weak case for William of Stratford, but that is no doubt at least part of their motivation. Gilvary comes close to suggesting as much in his oblique way by quoting Sir Edmund Chambers at the very end of his book—"after all the careful scrutiny of clues and all the patient balancing of possibilities [regarding Shakespeare], the last word of self-respecting scholarship must be that of nescience."

But we must settle for "nescience" only if we insist on accepting the traditional attribution of the plays and poems to William Shakspere. It should be possible to write a biography of the Stratford citizen based on the documents that would show the life of someone who was born in a rural village in the age of Elizabeth, married, produced offspring, tried to make his way in the world, and died in his hometown. There would of course be gaps in this story, but we need not elevate them to "the lost years" as if we were discussing the life of Jesus as depicted in the gospels. Lives have gaps in them and the lives of people of little interest who died four hundred years ago will no doubt remain something of a puzzle to us. What makes the so-called Shakespeare Industry so monstrous is its attempt to thrust the reputation of Shakespeare on Will Shakspere's unwilling head.

It must be said that if, from my point of view, the biggest fault with this book is its position on the authorship question, it has numerous other faults. Let me give some examples.

Too often, typographical errors occur when Gilvary wishes to make a point. For instance, in his criticism of Samuel Schoenbaum on page 117, he objects to the fictional tone Schoenbaum takes when he writes of Shakespeare, "He died in rainy April." Gilvary's comment reads, "Finally, the mention of rain seems may be a literary reference to Chaucer or T.S. Eliot, but is not

only irrelevant to a historical review." The author or an editor or a proof-reader certainly should have decided between "seems to be" and "may be" and deleted the "not" to make the irrelevance of the weather clear. Twice while writing about John Aubrey, Gilvary inserts the name "Fuller," another early collector of Shakespearean anecdotes, for that of Aubrey. On page 56 he writes, "Fuller states that 'His father was a Butcher….' " On page 58 he writes, "Altick dismisses Fuller's claims as 'porous assertions' comparing them to other dubious claims that Francis Bacon died after contracting a cold while deep-freezing a fowl, and that Ben Jonson killed Marlowe on Bunhill 'comeing from the Green-curtain play-house.' Schoenbaum makes some use of Aubrey's anecdotes even though he states that they 'belong not to the biographical record proper but to the mythos.' " Finally, Gilvary quotes the Welsh psychoanalyst Ernest Jones in his text on page 111, but refers to him as Emrys Jones—surely a Freudian slip—in the footnote on page 114. Jones regains his proper first name in the bibliography, but disappears completely from the index.

Errors of this kind notwithstanding, Kevin Gilvary no doubt states the truth in the first sentence of his Acknowledgements, "This book is the outcome of many years of study, which resulted in my doctorate being awarded at Brunel University London in 2015." I only wish he would have acknowledged the importance of the authorship question to his subject and taken more care with the preparation of his text.

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