

FRANCIS BACON AND HIS FIRST
UNACKNOWLEDGED SHAKESPEARE
PLAY *THE MISFORTUNES OF ARTHUR*
AND ITS EXTENSIVE LINKS TO A
WHOLE RANGE OF HIS OTHER
SHAKESPEARE PLAYS

By A Phoenix

**It is an immense ocean that surrounds the island of truth
Francis Bacon**

**If circumstances lead me I will find
Where truth is hid, though it were hid indeed
Within the centre
[*Hamlet: 2:2: 159-61*]**

***Tempore Patet Occulta Veritas*
(In Time the Hidden Truth will be Revealed)
Francis Bacon**

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[All Deciphered]

THE SILENCE OF THE BACON EDITORS AND BIOGRAPHERS

In normal circumstances any drama with any kind of proximity to the Shakespeare plays however remote or tenuous would ordinarily attract the attention of biographers, editors and commentators in their battalions. Who would individually and collectively scrutinize it for all traces, echoes, parallels, mutual links, and any and all connections to the hallowed Shakespeare canon. One might expect to find note of it in Professor Geoffrey Bullough's authoritative eight-volume *Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare* (1957-75) or Dr Stuart Gillespie's *Shakespeare's Books: A Dictionary of Shakespeare Sources* (2001). Yet in neither of these standard works have I come across any mention of *The Misfortunes of Arthur* which is all the more surprising (as we shall see) because this long overlooked and relatively unknown drama serves as a direct source for at least half-a-dozen Shakespeare plays and has important links to about a dozen more. One suspects the main reason why this play has been suppressed or passed over by the standard Shakespeare source works is because the name of Francis Bacon is linked to its authorship and production, an historically important play, which pre-dates and has demonstrable links to a large number of Shakespeare plays. The untold importance of Bacon's connection to *The Misfortunes of Arthur* makes it unique in the history of the authorship of the Shakespeare plays and it is the very reason why the play has languished in the forgotten hinterlands of orthodox scholarship for the last four centuries. Furthermore, where *The Misfortunes of Arthur* has attracted (outside of the orthodox Shakespeare canon) the kind of critical editorial attention its importance so obviously merits none of its editors or commentators have ever once questioned or discussed its true authorship, nor of course, its absolutely critical connection to the authorship of the Shakespeare works.

The silence and systematic suppression is all the more telling when we consider after 'William Shakespeare' Bacon is the most scrutinized writer in English history. Surely, there is no need to state to any literary student that the first appearance of the name of an author in print is a biographical and bibliographical milestone in the canon of any great historical figure or man of letters. Thus one may reasonably expect that Bacon's biographers and editors would have devoted an enormous amount of energy and space to the minute scrutiny of the first work to which his name is attached in print. Yet in the words of his recent biographer and editor Alan Stewart writing in 2012 'Bacon's first appearance in print has received surprisingly little attention from scholars of his work.'¹ Even the disingenuous and misleading phrase 'surprisingly little attention' is something of a colossal understatement. In the Bacon canon from the very beginning even notice of its existence has been consistently suppressed and the very title of the play studiously avoided, as part of a four hundred year silence surrounding it, never mind the complete absence of any serious analysis, discussion or commentary.

There is no mention of the play by his first editor and biographer Dr Rawley (who lived with Bacon for the last ten years of his recorded life from 1616 to 1626) in the first English biography of Bacon, nor in any of the editions, or collected editions, of Bacon's *Works*.² On the death of Dr Rawley many of Bacon's letters and manuscripts passed to his second editor Thomas Tenison (afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury), who published some but certainly not all in *Baconiana. Or Certain Genuine Remains Of Sir Francis Bacon, Baron of Verulam, and Viscount of St. Albans; in Arguments Civil and Moral, Natural, Medical, Theological, and Bibliographical; now the first*

time faithfully published in 1679.³ Like his predecessor Dr Rawley our second Bacon editor Tenison makes no reference to the work marking his first appearance in print.

A new one hundred and ninety-seven page biography of Bacon entitled *The Life Of Francis Bacon* by the Scottish poet and dramatist David Mallet appeared in 1740. At the end of this new *Life* its author Mallet provided a thirty page 'Catalogue Of All My Lord Bacon's Writings, As they are printed in the Edition of 1740'.⁴ By this he meant his own four volume edition of *The Works Of Francis Bacon...with Several Additional Pieces, Never Before printed in any Edition of his Works* also published in 1740.⁵ The four volume edition contains more than thirty of Bacon's major and minor works, as well as many of his occasional writings, letters and speeches, but its Bacon editor and biographer does not refer once to Bacon's first appearance in print in *The Misfortunes of Arthur*. His *Life of Bacon* furnished the later eighteenth century editions of Bacon's *Works* and informed other eighteenth century biographical accounts of Bacon, none of which mention is first appearance in print.

In contrast to the silence of his forbears in the fourteen-volume *The Letters and Life and Works of Francis Bacon* his great standard editor and biographer James Spedding adopted a method of delivery his subject would have greatly admired. Instead of the previous crude but effective method of silence and suppression by Bacon's earlier editors and biographers Spedding in that masterful way of his actually refers to the invisible play in passing without even mentioning its title (nor is there any trace of it in his detailed index) with such understatement and brevity that one can only stand back in quiet admiration and applaud:

Parliament was dissolved on the 23rd of March, 1586-7: and from this time we have no more news of Bacon (unless it be worth while to mention that he assisted in getting up the masque which was presented to the Queen by the gentlemen of Gray's Inn on the 28th of February following) till after the defeat of the Armada.⁶

The first twentieth-century single volume edition (a collection based on Spedding's seven volume edition) *The Philosophical Works of Francis Bacon* edited by J. M. Robertson published in 1905 also makes no mention of *The Misfortunes of Arthur*,⁷ nor so, in his bloated and tedious *The Baconian Heresy* a work marred by selective suppression and gross misrepresentation of the facts and the evidence.⁸

The first extensive one-volume anthology of Bacon's writings since Robertson by the modern Bacon authority Brian Vickers is of much more interest. Under the title *Francis Bacon: A Critical Edition of the Major Works* it was first issued by Oxford University Press in 1996. The edition includes several of Bacon's major works *The Advancement of Learning*, the *Essays*, and the utopian fable *New Atlantis*, and reprints sixteen other works which were not otherwise readily available. One of the important and valuable features of this inexpensive and accessible work is it reprints a series of dramatic devices and entertainments written by Bacon which Professor Vickers says 'are little known outside the pages of Spedding's seven-volume edition of *The Letters and Life of Francis Bacon*'.⁹ These dramatic devices were penned not long after *The Misfortunes of Arthur* beginning from the early 1590s: *Of Tribute; or, giving which is due* (c.1591-2), six speeches for *A Device for the Gray's Inn Revels* (1594-5), (which saw the first performance *The Comedy of Errors*), and *Of Love and Self-Love* (1595), all of which were originally part of Bacon's collection of manuscripts known as The Northumberland MSS which originally held copies of his Shakespeare plays *Richard II* and *Richard III*. In addition to printing these texts Vickers provides his scholarly readers with very extensive annotations explaining their background and context. One

would have thought considering the detailed attention Professor Vickers devotes to these Baconian dramatic devices and entertainments he might have assigned a similar proportionate amount of energy to the Baconian drama immediately preceding them, the one which witnessed Bacon's first appearance in print. However, all that he had to say about *The Misfortunes of Arthur* is inappropriately relegated to a footnote in his introduction, which I here quote in full:

Bacon's first appearance in print was as one of a group of Gray's Inn students who devised dumb-shows performed before each act of Thomas Hughes's *The Misfortunes of Arthur* (1588), a play which made a peculiar blend of Arthurian legend (Geoffrey Monmouth) and Senecan tragedy (*Thyestes*). From the title-page of its only edition it would seem that, apart from its role as an offering to the monarch, spectacle had been the main attraction: *Certaine Devises and shewes presented to her Majestie by the Gentlemen of Grayes-Inne at her Highnesse Courte in Greenewich, the twenty-eighth day of Februarie in the thirtieth yeare of her Majestie's most happy Reigne*. See Chambers, *Elizabethan Stage*, iii. 348-9, and the text as reprinted in John W. Cunliffe (ed.), *Early English Classical Tragedies* (Oxford, 1912), 217-96. A note at the end of the text records: 'The dumbe showes were partly devised by Maister Christopher Yelverton, Maister Frauncis Bacon, Maister [Frauncis] Flower' (p. 296). Whatever Bacon's contribution, scrutiny of these five extended stage-directions (pp. 225, 240, 255-6, 271, 283-4) discloses no individual hand, and I have not thought them worth reprinting.¹⁰

From the outset Dr Rawley provided the outline perimeters of the *Life* of Bacon and Spedding further established and reinforced its biographical pattern and detail. It is in this tradition and pattern that the most important recent modern biography of Bacon was approached by professors Alan Stewart and Lisa Jardine, a work described on its jacket as the 'first fully based on documents' which 'draws upon a mass of previously untapped sources to produce the definitive life of one of the great figures of English history.' This condensed single-volume biography sheds a good deal of new light and introduced some important information into the canon and will undoubtedly *inform* Bacon scholars and interested readers for many generations to come. In the index of this well-documented work its authors professors Jardine and Stewart list more than forty of Bacon's works and writings referred to and discussed in their detailed text.¹¹ One work however is conspicuous by its absence: the work to which Bacon's name first appears in print *The Misfortunes of Arthur*. Something similar can be said about the most recent-full length biography by Professor Robert P. Ellis *Francis Bacon The Double-Edged Life of the Philosopher and Statesman* published in 2015. He too refers to and discusses a whole range of Bacon's writings but can find no room for mention of *The Misfortunes of Arthur*.¹² The first printed work with the name of Francis Bacon attached to it is also passed over in complete silence by Markku Peltonen in his long and detailed entry for Bacon in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004-2020).¹³

Spread over some four centuries the circumstances surrounding *The Misfortunes of Arthur* has it seems come full circle. Just as his first editor and biographer Dr. Rawley had failed to mention the first work to which the name of his master is attached the milestone work does not even warrant a single entry in the indexes of the most recent biographies by Jardine and Stewart and Professor Ellis, or given even passing mention by Peltonen in what will most probably be the most widely read account of his life for many years to come.

The virtual silence surrounding *The Misfortunes of Arthur* at the hands of Bacon's biographers and editors for the last four hundred years was however finally broken in the first volume of *The Oxford Francis Bacon* as part of a planned sixteen-volume critical edition of all his works. In the first volume of the series co-edited by Alan Stewart with Harriet Knight entitled *Early Writings 1584-1596* (published by Oxford Clarendon Press, 2012) aimed squarely at an academic readership *The Misfortunes of Arthur* finally receives some of the commensurate attention its historical importance so clearly merits. In the volume its editors Stewart and Knight devote a fair amount of space to examining *The Misfortunes of Arthur*. It includes an eighteen page discussion of the play with helpful footnotes, and commentary, and a bibliographical description of three known surviving copies of the original edition, and they also print the text of its five dumb shows. Yet as welcome as this scholarly and informative work is, in the usual orthodox tradition, Bacon's editors present *The Misfortunes of Arthur* as a work of multiple-authorship; and in their very careful use and non-use of sources, Stewart and Knight very consciously do not once connect or link this Baconian drama to any of the Shakespeare poems and plays.¹⁴

For the first time then it is necessary that we examine its secret true authorship in some detail and its very telling links to a large number of Shakespeare plays: the very two reasons why this Baconian drama has been ignored or passed over by his editors and biographers for nearly half of a millennium.

2.

THE SO-CALLED CONTRIBUTORS OF *THE MISFORTUNES OF ARTHUR*

The original 1588 edition of *The Misfortunes of Arthur* names eight collaborators in connection with the play. The drama is presented as having been chiefly written by Thomas Hughes 'The misfortunes of Arthur (Vther Pendragons Sonne) *reduced into Tragicall notes by THOMAS HVGHES one of the societie of Grayes-Inne. And here set downe as it past from vnder his handes and as it was presented, excepting certaine wordes and lines, where some of the Actors either helped their memories by brief omission: or fitted their acting by some alteration. With a note in the ende, of such speaches as were penned by others in lue of some of these hereafter following.*'¹⁵ The text is preceded by a verse 'INTRODUCTION penned by Nicholas Trotte' which takes up five pages.¹⁶ In the original edition following the end of the play it is thereafter stated 'Heere after followe such *speaches as were penned by others, and pronounced in stead of some of the former speeches penned by Thomas Hughes.*'¹⁷ These two speeches are headed 'A Speach penned by William Fulbecke gentlemen, one of the societie of Grayes Inne, and pronounced in stead of *Gorlois* his first speache penned by Thomas Hughes, and set downe in the first Scene of the first Acte'; and secondly 'One other speache penned by *the same gentleman, and pronounced in steade of Gorlois* his last speache penned by Thomas Hughes, and set downe in the seconde Scene of the first and last Act.'¹⁸ The edition is brought to a close as follows 'Besides these speaches, there was also penned a Chorus for the first act, and an other for the second act, by Maister Frauncis Flower, which were pronounced accordingly. The dumbe shewes were partly deuised by Maister Christopher Yelverton, Maister Frauncis Bacon, Maister John Lancaster and others, partly by the saide Maister Flower, who with Maister Penroodocke and the said Maister Lancaster directed these proceedings at Court.'¹⁹ This multiple-authorship charade generated in 1588 has never

been questioned, examined or analysed to the present day, never mind deconstructed and dismantled to reveal its true sole author and the one actually responsible for it.

Of the eight collaborators Bacon is of course the most well known historical figure, and the other member of Gray's Inn Sir Christopher Yelverton, judge and Speaker of the House of Commons and lawyer and historian William Fulbecke have also made their mark on history. The biographical details of Yelverton are readily available and sufficiently well-known to need any recapitulation here and all that it is necessary to say is he is the only one of the so-called collaborators who has an apparent connection to the drama, based on the mistaken belief he was responsible for writing the epilogue to a wrongly dated edition of Gascoigne's (an early literary mask of Bacon's) *Jocasta*.

The few biographical details we now know about the life of William Fulbecke have been very slow in emerging into the light of day 'Except for a few biographical facts', states Professor Terrill writing in 1981 'Fulbeck's life is something of a mystery',²⁰ reiterated in the entry for him in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004-20) 'Very little is known about the details of Fulbecke's life, including the names of any spouse or children.'²¹ The younger son of Thomas Fulbecke, a Mayor of Lincoln, William Fulbecke (1559/60-1616) matriculated in 1577 at St Alban Hall, Oxford and in February 1579 he was admitted as a scholar to Christ Church. He graduated BA in 1581 and then moved to Gloucester Hall where he received his MA in 1584. He then entered Gray's Inn and while a student there he is credited with writing *A Booke of Christian Ethicks or Moral Philosophie* (1587) where he is described on its title page as a 'master of Artes, and student of the Lawes of England', dedicated in what appears to be Freemasonic language 'To the worshipfull and virtuous Gentleman, M. George Scintpolle Esquire'.²² This long forgotten and overlooked work remains unread and has never received any serious critical attention. It is listed by Wood and in the entry for Fulbecke in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, as well as by John P. Collier Harvery Carson Grumbine and Brian Jay Corrigan in their editions of *The Misfortunes of Arthur* and by the Bacon editors Alan Stewart and Harriet Knight in *Early Writings 1584-1596* (2012), where in all instances it is passed over in silence.²³ In his modern entry for Fulbecke in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004-20) D. R. Woolf remarks in passing 'This is written in a laborious, euphuistic style in which points are made repeatedly within the same sentence, something characteristic of all his writings.'²⁴ Written in the kind of Baconian prose Bacon was experimenting with in various other pseudonymous works in the 1580s, a style immediately evident in the dedication-replete with Baconian ciphers-addressed to M. George Scintpolle Esquire, which as far as I am aware, has never been reproduced since its original publication in 1587:

THE Graecians were wont to consecrate to their seuerall Gods, seuerall trees: as to Apollo the Laurell, because he was alwaies fresh in countenance: The Oake to Iupiter, as being alwaies fruitful ossom gallant inuentions: the Firre tree to Neptune, as President of ships, alwaies swimming, and neuer sinking: the tree called Aesculus to the three sonnes of Saturn, because the roote is in the bottome of the earth, the tru[n]ck in the water, & the top in the cloudes. It behoueth me likewise somewhat to the imitation of them, to yeelde a reason why I consecrate to your worship this Pamphlet, not as a mafly Tree, but as a slender fruit of a rooted good will, though a short trauaile: in it, I haue giuen pleasure an ouerthrowe, being not able for weaknesse to mannage in the fiede, and not willing for wantonnesse, to giue carefull care to the bloodye notes of the trumpet: and because it is vnpossible that you should beholde the face of one that flyeth from you, therefore I am constrained, but not much against my wil, to present to your worshippe, the view of pleasures back upo[n] which you may see ingrauen the picture of hell, howsoeuer her visage doe represent the face of the firname[n]t: but because

you haue expressed more in a godly life, then I haue shadowed in a fewe godly lines, & because your zealous conuersatio[n] is the image which my thoughtes haue in this discourse imagined: therefore, I iudged it most conuenient to submit this book to your fauourable construction, not as a monument of my victorie, but as a memoriall of your singular modestie: nor as a sufficient counterpain of your good behaiour, but as a short abridgement of your ample vertues: the friendlie countena[n]ce wherewith you haue alwaies cheared my drooping fancies, was the loadstarre that drew me on, to saile so far in this boysterous Sea: where, if the windes doe threaten me aboue, and the water belowe, yet as long as the starre shineth, the sterne shall not faile. Leander lost his ankerholde for lacke of light, and the Tunnies dare not swim but when the moone doeth shine: the light that I craue is you fauour, the extinguishing that I am afraide of, is mine own feare: wherefore, changing feare with hope I cha[r]ge wordes with silence: beseeching God that your virtue may be extended with you life counterpaized with your happinesse.²⁵

It has been suggested Fulbecke spent a period of time on the continent attending an unknown university ‘which would account for his similarity with the civil law’, says Woolf, but no record of it exists; and ‘there is no record of him obtaining a degree in civil law at Oxford or Cambridge’, thus Terrill points out there is some doubt whether he actually possessed the degree in civil law.²⁶ And it may well be added, some doubt, whether he possessed the knowledge to compile detailed learned works on the subject. After *A Booke of Christian Ethicks or Moral Philosophie*, point out Bacon’s editors Stewart and Knight, Fulbecke later wrote a series of legal and historical works ‘that covered some of the same area as Bacon’s, before dying early.’²⁷ Twelve or thirteen years of virtual biographical and bibliographical silence passed before the publication of *A Direction or Preparatiue to the study of the Lawe* in 1600,²⁸ the first of five books in three years, which Terrill states ‘marked him out as a prolific writer’.²⁹ It might well be observed that prolific writers do not normally have a gap of thirteen years between their first and second publication followed by a flurry of five works in the short space of scarcely three years. The publication mainly a method book for the study of law students ‘reveals a familiarity with the civil law and a strong preference for the clarity of codified, written law in contrast with the ambiguities of custom that characterised the common law.’³⁰ It adequately sits alongside Bacon’s first important legal work *A collection of Some Principal Rules and Maxims of the Common Laws* written between 1596 and 1597 (first printed posthumously in 1631) about the same time as Bacon finished his first acknowledged literary work, namely, the first edition of his *Essays* first published in 1597. *A Direction* was followed by the two-volume *A Parallele Or Conference Of The civill Law, the canon Law, and the common Law of this Realm of England* (1601) with a epistle dedicatory to John Whitgift, Archbishop of Canterbury, the former Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, with whom Bacon spent three years under his tutelage and personal safe-keeping, where amongst other works he purchased for Bacon’s study Livy’s *History of Rome*.³¹ *The Second Part of the Parallele* appeared in 1602. There is no evidence Fulbecke knew Whitgift or had ever met him, whereas Whitgift had had a twenty-five year relationship with Bacon whom he knew wrote works hidden behind the names of numerous others. In a letter to the archbishop in 1589 thanking him for his assistance concerning the drafting of a letter Bacon had written in the name of Sir Francis Walsingham, a subterfuge Whitgift was fully complicit in, Bacon describes himself as ‘Your Grace’s most dutiful Pupil and Servant’;³² and in 1593 Richard Field ‘Entred for his copie under thandes of the Archbisshop of Canterbury and master warden Stirrop, a booke intituled, Venus and Adonis’,³³ written by his former pupil Bacon who was writing poetry under his care at Cambridge some twenty years earlier:

TO THE MOST GRATI
ious and reuerend Father in God Iohn
by the prouidence of God Lord Archbishop
of Canterburie, Primate and Metropolitane
of all England, and one of the Lordes of her
Maiesties most honourable priuie Councell.

Right Reuerend, right Honorable, and my singular good Lord, as nothing is more comfortable to the Mariner, or Sea-man, then after a great tempest to possesse a pleasant calme, and gratefull serentie: so nothing is more plausible and acceptable, to them that haue employed, and exercised themselues in any parte of learning, then after their long and laborious trauaile, to enioy the warmth & bright reflection of an honourable countenance, this partly, and (if the great arrearage of dutie, and thankfulnes, which I owe to your Grace, doe not challenge prioritie) especially hath moued and forced me, to present to your honourable view and patronage these tripartite Dialogues, to whom her sacred Maiestie hath committed the executing and maintenance of the Ciuill and Canon Laws, in these Dialogues, by my slender pencil rather delineated, then described: and because the Common Lawe cannot be otherwise diuided from these twaine, then the flower from the roote and stalke, therefore this entire discourse I haue wholly committed to your Graces tuition and disposall: In which I sought rather to profite the vnderstanding then to please the sense with a plausible, copious, and polished stile, or with foreine concepts not belonging to the titles of the lawe, which I handle: assuring my selfe that as verball delights, and affected vanities are to your Lordship odious, irksome, and of no accompt: so they are in trueth to the gaping eares of this curious age, very snares and syrens. Wherefore humbly referring my selfe to your Graces excellent wisdom and clemency, for the imparting of a fauourable regard and countenance to these my unworthy labours, I beseech the almighty God with the most submisse deuotion of my heart, that the daies of your life (which the Lord of life multiplie) may be the degrees of your happines, to the great good of the Church, and Common weale, to the exceeding comfort, and contentment as such as be studious of virtue, law, and equitie, and to the immortal propagation of your fame and memory through all ages, and times, until the last time of all ages.³⁴

The curious work is presented in the form of dialogues between a canonist, a common lawyer, and a civil lawyer a similar method used by Bacon in *Advertisement Touching A Holy War* (written in 1622; published in 1629) which showed, Spedding observes, just ‘how skilfully he could handle that fine but difficult instrument’.³⁵ In the address to the ‘Covrteous Reader’ prefixed to *Parallele* its now presumably recognisable author (of course Bacon) writes:

CVrteous Reader it is obserued by *Seneca*, that in one and the same plotte of ground, the Hound seeketh for a Hare, the Oxe for good grasse, and the Storke for a snake or a Lizard, and my desire was, that in this booke of Dialogues, the seuerall students of the Canon lawe, the Ciuill law, and the Common lawe, of this Realme, might haue diuerse repast according to their disagreeing appetites, and matters suteable to their distinct contemplations, for it seemed straunge vnto me, that these three lawes, should haue their handes linked together, and their lookes directly fixed the one vpon the other, but like the two faces of *Ianus*, the one should be turned from the other, & should never looke toward, or vpon the other: and weighing with my selfe, that these lawes are the sinews of a state, the Sciences of government, & the artes of a co[m]mon weale, I haue seriously & often wished that some ioynt discourse might be made of these three excellent Lawes.³⁶

The Pandectes of the Law of Nations issued in 1602 ‘would use historical examples to compare the stability of commonwealths’.³⁷ And in a Baconian political approach

to the study of the state and government, the study of law necessitated the study of history, which meant Roman history, the subject to give its full title of *An Historicall Collection of the Continual Factions, Tumults, and Massacres of the Romans and Italians during the space of one hundred and twentie yeares next before the Peaceable Empire of Augustus Caesar. Selected and deriued out of the best writers and reporters of these accidents, and reduced into the form of one entire historie, handled in three books. Beginning where the Historie of T. Livius doth end, and ending where Cornelius Tacitus doth begin*. The work was printed by Richard Field, the printer of *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece*, the first to carry the Bacon pseudonym William Shakespeare on their respective dedication pages to the Earl of Southampton, with Field also printing for Bacon *His Apology in Certain Imputations concerning the late Earl of Essex* in 1604. The *Historical Collection* observes Woolf was the ‘first serious attempt by an Englishman to write a prose narrative of Roman history’.³⁸ The work was a narrative history of the last years of the Roman republic intended as said on its title page to bridge the gap between the end of Livy’s *History of Rome* and the beginning of Tacitus’s *Annales*. In the name of Fulbecke, he claimed to have written the work fourteen years earlier; if so, its date of publication, after the Essex insurrection, which if it had proved successful would have almost certainly plunged the kingdom into civil war, seems to be pertinent. In Bacon’s normal manner the preface to the reader framing the work, is didactic and instructive, warning the nation and people of the horrors of civil war, from which the country had just been mercifully spared:

The vse of this historie is threefold, first the reuealing of the mischiefes of discord and ciuill discention, in which the innocent are proscribed for their wealth, noblemen dishonoured, cities become waste by banishment and bloodshed: nay (which is more) virgins are deflowered, infants are taken out of their parents armes, and put to the sword, matrons do suffer villanie, temples and houses are spoyled, and euery place is full of armed men, or carcasses, of bloud, of teares. Secondly the opening of the cause hereof, which is nothing else but ambition, for out of this feed groweth a whole harvest of euils. Thirdly the declaring of the remedie, which is by humble estimation of our selues, by liuing well, not by lurking well: by conuersing in the light of the common weale with equals, not by complotting in darke conuenticles against superiors: by contenting our selues with our lot, and not contending to our losse: by hoping without aspiring, and by suffering without conspiring. Let Rome in this history be a witness, that a slipperie ascending was always accompanied with a headlong discent, and that peace is a greate deale better then triumph, which will be an occasion I trust to my countrymen of England to be thankfull to God for this sweete quiet and serentie of this flourishing estate, in which England now standeth...³⁹

It is dedicated to Bacon’s former mentor Sir Thomas Sackville, Baron Buckhurst, Lord Treasurer of England co-author with Thomas Norton of the tragedy *Gorboduc* written in blank verse first performed at the Inner Temple’s Christmas Revels under the auspices of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, a play drawing on Senecan drama as did *The Misfortunes of Arthur* to depict civil war. Bacon later drew on *Gorboduc* as a narrative and dramatic source for *King Lear* and Buckhurst would have taken a great deal of satisfaction in attending on 3 January 1595 the Christmas Gray’s Inn Revels, which saw the first performance of *The Comedy of Errors*, with the earls of Essex, Southampton and Northumberland to witness Bacon’s six speeches delivered in *The Honourable Order of Knights of the Helmet* a disguised dramatic entertainment based on ‘an actual ceremonial akin to the Rites of Freemasonry.’⁴⁰ Above the dedication to Thomas Sackville, Lord Buckhurst, appears a Baconian-Rosicrucian AA headpiece.⁴¹

The *Historical Collection* was reprinted in 1608 (without the epistle dedicatory) with a new title page *An Abridgement, Or rather, A Bridge of Roman Histories, to passe the nearest way from Titus Livius to Cornelius Tacitus*. Above the first page of its first chapter appears another Baconian-Rosicrucian AA headpiece different in design to the one in the original 1601 edition.⁴² The preface to the 1601 edition of the *Historical Collection* is dated ‘From my Chamber in Graies Inne 13. Octob. Anno Dom. 1600’⁴³, as was Bacon *Essays* ‘From my Chamber at Graies Inn this 30. of Ianaurie. 1597.’⁴⁴ Very little is known of Fulbecke’s life and career after 1602 aside from the fact he took holy orders and was appointed vicar of Waldershare in Kent where he was buried on 28 March 1616, a day after the date of his will, in which he left all his law books to Francis Raworth, a son of the town clerk of Dover.⁴⁵

The acute absence of basic biographical facts is a consistent feature of the lack of information we have of several others of the said contributors to *The Misfortunes of Arthur*. In his brief introduction, the first editor of the play J. P. Collier provided no biographical information regarding Francis Flower, the individual who supposedly wrote the choruses for the first two acts and apparently helped partly devise the dumb-shows; or John Lancaster, likewise credited with devising the dumb-shows, or John Penruddock, who is said to have directed its performance. Of Thomas Hughes and Nicholas Trotte he explicitly states ‘no information has survived.’⁴⁶ After the passage of seventy two years the next editor of *The Misfortunes of Arthur* Harvey Carson Grumbine in an edition issued at Berlin, besides Trotte, had nothing more than this to say of the others ‘respecting the remaining three-Penroodocke, Flower and Lancaster-the historic oracle seems long since to have grown mute.’⁴⁷ It should also be noted that there is no entry for Flower, Trotte, Lancaster, and Penruddock in the *Dictionary of National Biography* compiled in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, or in its modern counterpart, the *Oxford Dictionary of National* (2004-20).

Of these four named contributors about whom nothing was known to earlier editors of *The Misfortunes of Arthur* two pieces of information regarding one of them finally emerged in the early part of the twentieth century when in 1925 Evangelia H. Waller quoted two entries in the State Papers dated 1581 and 1584: ‘No biographical notes on Francis Flower are available’, she began, ‘but there are two entries in the State Papers which prove that the said gentlemen existed and that he followed the profession of law.’⁴⁸ We had to wait until 1967 for an article by Jacques Ramel published in *Notes and Queries*, with its misleading title ‘Biographical Notices On The Authors Of “The Misfortunes Of Arthur”’, which for the first time provided some (if still limited) biographical context and detail for Lancaster, Penruddock, Flower and Trotte together with some additional biographical information about Thomas Hughes.

In the curious absence of entries for four of them in the *ODNB* Ramel’s article still remains the primary source of information about these five said contributors to *The Misfortunes of Arthur*. Two further important biographical notices of Flower, a single column entry by P. W. Halser in *The House of Commons 1558-1603* (1981), and in particular, a three page article in *Notes and Queries* by W. J. Tighe, which shed some very important light on his alleged part authorship of the play. For the first time Tighe printed a letter written by Flower which placed in the context of his said authorship of the choruses of the first two acts in *Misfortunes of Arthur* (which Tighe fails to do) at a single stroke collapses this little charade regurgitated *ad nauseum* by the schoolmen, and by implication, gives lie to the four hundred year illusion of its multi-authorship.

It would appear that the important contributions by Hasler and Tighe were unknown to Corrigan, the modern editor of *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, neither of which appears in his notes or bibliography.

In an otherwise scholarly and informative 59 page introduction Corrigan devotes two pages to all ‘eight men involved in the production’ of the *Misfortunes*. This modern edition will continue to be the first port of call for scholars and students for decades to come. It will be the work first turned to by the professors and academics when writing their own derivative accounts of the drama, which they expect will provide the most important up-to-date information about its ‘contributors’ and any relevant information about its authorship if suspected or disputed (none of which is provided or mentioned here), and all other important source material relating to these matters. His discussion of Flower is the longest of any of the supposed authors which I here quote in full:

Francis Flower, who wrote two choruses for the play, sued Robinson [printer of *Misfortunes*] in 1585 for printing a work identified as “the *Accidence*,” for which Flower had a patent. The few facts we know of Flower include his having been granted the office of Queen’s printer in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew on 15 December 1573. This patent was granted despite the fact that Flower was not a member of the Company of Stationers. The probable date of his death is 1596 or 1597. He was a lawyer, but aside from these facts, very little is known of Flower, including his connection with Gray’s Inn. None of the Grayan records establish Flower’s membership.⁴⁹

In their twenty-three pages assigned to a discussion of *The Misfortunes of Arthur* (as with the modern editor of play B. J. Corrigan) the Bacon editors Stewart and Knight assign only two pages to its eight ‘contributors’. Unlike Corrigan, who is apparently unaware, and does not list the pieces by Hasler and Tighe, Stewart and Knight direct their scholarly readers to both articles in a footnote at the bottom of the page. But they do not-and this is important-draw attention to some of the content in the two articles, in particular, the letter by Francis Flower printed by Tighe. This is the more surprising because Stewart and Knight are alive to the complex authorship issues surrounding Bacon’s writings, which is a central theme of their introduction and commentaries:

These writings can be classified into four categories: first, texts that Bacon wrote but not for public consumption; second, texts Bacon wrote to be circulated with his name; third, texts Bacon intended to circulate anonymously; and fourth, texts that were intended to circulate under another’s name.⁵⁰

Or Stewart and Knight might have also added in the names of others like perhaps *The Misfortunes of Arthur*. As this expensive edition is most probably out of the reach of most researchers and students, and unavailable in most public and university libraries, I have decided to quote the passage given over to Flower by Stewart and Knight in its entirety:

The presence of Francis Flower (d.1597) in this company is the most problematic. Records suggest that Flower had no formal connection to Gray’s Inn (or any of the Inns of Court), although he clearly practised as a lawyer. He was also lucratively involved in the print industry, though never a member of the Stationers’ Company. On 15 December 1573, he was granted the privilege for life to print books in Latin Greek, and Hebrew, in addition to the monopoly to print ‘all and singular Grammer bookes Greeke or Latten althoughe entermixte in any manner with the Englishe tonge’ but five days later sold his rights on to six assigns, for a sum of £100 per annum. He defended this privilege in a series of legal battles. The one thing tying Flower to the Gray’s Inn performance is the figure of Sir Christopher Hatton. It was under Flower’s hand that Greene’s commemorative verses for Hatton were entered in the Stationers’ Register in 1591; and Flower himself wrote commemorative verses displayed ‘on a tablet affixed to a column near’ Hatton’s tomb in St Paul’s.⁵¹

The presence of Flower in this company also ‘puzzled’ Ramel and knowing nothing of his parentage, his date or place of birth, nor his early life, background or education, on the basis of the first public notice we have of Flower in 1573, he opines: ‘we can infer he was born before the middle of the century, but he may conceivably have been born as early as 1520 or 1530.’⁵² The date of his birth still remains unknown but his parentage was revealed by Hasler. The obscure and elusive Francis Flower was the eldest son of George Flower and his wife Margaret, daughter of John Salisbury.⁵³ His father was the son of Richard Flower of Whitehall, Rutland.⁵⁴ The family history is obscure, although one ancestor Roger Flower of Oakham served as the Speaker of the House of Commons from 1416 to 1422.⁵⁵ There were several Elizabethans named Francis Flower and one of those with this name contributed the commendatory poem found in the unique edition of Thomas Howell’s *Arbot of Amitie* published in 1568,⁵⁶ whose second collection of poems *Newe Sonets, and pretie Pamphlets* was printed in 1570, and probably again in 1575.⁵⁷ At one time it is believed Howell served in the household of George Talbot, sixth Earl of Shrewsbury whose father served with Lord Keeper Nicholas Bacon on the first Elizabethan Privy Council, and Howell dedicated his first collection of poems to his daughter-in-law Lady Anne (nee Herbert) Talbot. On the marriage of Katherine Talbot to Henry Herbert, the second Earl of Pembroke (whose father also served on the Council with Sir Nicholas) in 1563 Howell seems to have moved into the Herbert household at Wilton.⁵⁸ Katherine died in 1576 and in the next year Herbert married Mary, sister of Sir Philip Sidney, and mother of William and Philip Herbert, the future earls of Pembroke and Montgomery to whom Bacon dedicated the Shakespeare First Folio. ‘Howell’ mentions writing much of the final collection of poems at Wilton supported by his patron Mary, Countess of Pembroke to whom he dedicated *H. his Deuises, for his Owne exercise, and his Friends pleasure* issued in 1581 during the period when Bacon and her brother Sir Philip Sidney were meeting at Leicester House for discussions about philosophy, literature and poetry.⁵⁹ The *Deuises* includes a set of New Year’s poems addressed in acrostics to Katherine and to her two sisters Lady Mary, wife of Sir George Savile and Lady Grace, married to the heir of Sir George Cavendish.⁶⁰ The collection contains what is believed to be the first reference to ‘Sidney’s’ *Arcadia* probably circulating at Wilton in manuscript. In the poem ‘*Written to a most excellent Booke, full of rare Inuention*’ Howell praises the work for ‘such pithe in filed phrase’ and remarks that ‘all to long, thou hidste so perfite a worke’, urging that it be set forth into the world.⁶¹

In the body of the text Tighe states ‘The first recorded appearance of Francis Flower was as a contributor of a poem in commendation of the author to Thomas Howell’s *Arbot of Amitie* in 1568 by which time he may have already begun his connection with Christopher Hatton.’⁶² Perhaps, as an afterthought, he then adds in a footnote ‘The identification of the Francis Flower who contributed to Howell’s work with the Elizabethan courtier is not certain.’⁶³ In passing Raleigh conjectures that the poet who contributed the verse to *The Arbor of Amitie* ‘is perhaps the Francis Flower who was elected Demy of Magdalen College Oxford, in 1560, and Fellow in 1565.’⁶⁴ More recently without any reference or acknowledgement Professor Warkentin in a footnote is more firmer and expansive in her assertion: he ‘is more likely to be the Oxford Francis Flower, Demy of Magdalen College in 1560, elected Fellow in 1565, and later rector of Langar, Notts.’⁶⁵ Both Raleigh or Warkentin do not present a single piece of evidence or argument for their arbitrary and baseless suggestion. This Oxford Francis Flower is a very obscure figure. There is no entry for him in either the *DNB* or *ODNB*

and as far as my knowledge goes he is not credited with any other offerings to the Muses.

In July 1581 Flower was at Hatton's manor of Holdenby overseeing the finances of its expensive building and refurbishment and supervising the collection of recusancy fines from the Catholic Catesby family.⁶⁶ On 9 January 1584 he examined Thomas Fells, the footman of the Earl of Northumberland about the delivery of a letter from Lord Paget, a document signed by Robert Beale and Francis Flower.⁶⁷ In August 1585 Bacon wrote to Walsingham concerning his suit with Queen Elizabeth regarding which when the court was at Theobald's he had spoken with Vice-Chamberlain Hatton 'who promised me his funderance'. He urges Walsingham, who Bacon says has 'great interest' in Hatton 'to speak with him', after which he believed Hatton 'will be fast mine'.⁶⁸ It was probably as a result of the support and influence of Hatton that Flower served as the Member of Parliament for Huntingdon in 1584, 1586 and 1589 with Bacon sitting for Weymouth, Taunton and Liverpool. Coming between the two parliaments the *Misfortunes of Arthur* was performed before Elizabeth at Greenwich in February 1588 published shortly after as *Certaine Devises and Shewes Presented to her Majestie by the Gentlemen of Grayes-Inne*. In October 1588 the Vice-Chancellor of Oxford University accompanied by the Heads of Colleges arrived at Flower's rooms in Ely Place, Holborn (close to Bacon's apartments at Gray's Inn, Holborn) where Hatton was in conference with John Wolley, the Latin secretary to Elizabeth. With the ceremonies completed the Vice-Chancellor declared Oxford University had chosen Hatton as their Chancellor in succession to the deceased Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester.⁶⁹ On 31 December 1588 the controversial religious separatist Robert Browne, a distant relative of both Bacon and Lord Burghley, wrote a letter in reply to the written inquiries by his 'Louing Vnckle' Mr Flower. The identity of the recipient say Peel and Carlson writing in 1953 'remains a secret',⁷⁰ whom they identified as Francis Flower, and conjectured he may have been the uncle of Browne's wife Alice Allen.⁷¹ The letter written in Browne's clear hand (British Library Add. MS 29546 ff. 66-72) is endorsed by Richard Bancroft 'M^r Brownes aunswer to M^r Flowers letter: for his iudgement in diuerse particular pointes in this letter yo^u may not accompte of it: for he hath reformed them & hym selfe likewise.'⁷² In 1590 the publisher Proctor dedicated the anonymous tract (attributed to Christopher Shutte) *A Briefe resolution of a right Religion. Touching The Controuersies, that are nowe in England* to 'The Right Worshipful Mr. Francis Flowar, Esquire: Iustice of Peace & Quoram', a polemical treatise attacking Catholics in the name of the new religion.⁷³ Of a very different kind of order was the curious dedication to Flower by the publisher Thomas Newman prefixed to the surreptitious first edition of 'Sidney's' *Astrophel and Stella*. The edition printed some unpublished poems of 'Sidney' and 'Daniel'. It has been asked many times how did the publisher Newman obtain the two 'Sidney' and 'Daniel' manuscripts, a question which has given rise to a good deal of conjecture and opinion, yet the matter has never met with a satisfactory resolution. The possible role played in it by Flower has not received any attention. If Flower did have something to do with delivering the manuscripts to Newman it might explain the curious or even incongruous dedication to him of a literary work of this genre and nature. If he was delivering them on behalf of someone who wished to remain hidden, his identity would be revealed, if we knew the true authorship of the 'Sidney' poems, the same concealed poet for whom Flower let his name be used in *The Misfortunes of Arthur*:

To the worshipfull and his very
good Freende, Ma. *Fraunics Flower* Es-
quire, increase of all content.

IT was my fortune (right worshipfull) not manie daies since, to light vpon the famous deuice of *Astrophel* and *Stella*, which carrying the generall commendation of all men of iudgement, and being reported to be one of the rarest things that euer any Englishman set abroad, I haue thought good to publish it vnder your name, both for I know the excellencie of your worships conceipt, aboue all other to be such, as is onely fit to discerne of all matters of wit, as also for the credite and countenance your patronage may giue to such a worke. Accept of it I beseech you, as the first fruites of my affection, which desires to approoue it self in all dutie vnto you: and though the Argument perhaps may seeme too light for your graue view, yet considering the worthines of the Author, I hope you will entertaine it accordingly. For my part, I haue bene very carefull in the Printing of it, and where as being spread abroad in written Coppies, it had gathered much corruption by ill Writers: I haue vsed their helpe and aduice in correctinge & restoring it to his first dignitie, that I knowe were of skill and experience in those matters. And the rather was I moued to sette it forth, because I thought it pittie anie thing proceeding from so rare a man, should bee obscured, to that his fame should not still be nourisht in his works, whom the works with one vnited grieve bewailed. Thus crauing pardon for my bold attempt, & desiring the continuance of your worshippes fauour vnto mee, I ende.

Yours alwaies to be
commaunded.

*Tho: Newman.*⁷⁴

Two years earlier in June 1589 the Lord Chancellor's nephew Sir William Hatton married Elizabeth, daughter and heiress of Sir Francis Gawdy, Justice of the King's Bench. The presence of the Lord Chancellor at the marriage ceremony which took place at Holdenby was referred to in a contemporary letter by Captain Francis Allen to Anthony Bacon who was in France working on behalf of the English Secret Service. Captain Allen acted as a personal courier carrying and conveying information between Anthony Bacon in France and his uncle Lord Burghley, his mother Lady Bacon, and his brother Francis, with whom Allen visited and corresponded. In a letter dated 17 August 1589 to Anthony in France Allen says of one of the times he visited his brother 'I must confess your brother, Mr. Francis Bacon, is most tractable and most earnest ...he used me with great humanity, for which I humbly pray you give him thanks.'⁷⁵ In another letter he tells him that 'lord chancellor Hatton's heir, Sir William Hatton [had married] judge Gawdy's daughter and heiress; the lord Chancellor having danced the measures at the solemnity, and left his gown on the chair, saying, *Lie there, chancellor*.'⁷⁶ The marriage did not last long and in the early 1590s Sir William married Elizabeth Cecil, daughter of Bacon's friend and cousin Thomas Cecil, son of Burghley and his first wife Mary, sister of the great humanist and scholar Sir John Cheke.

The Lord Chancellor's faithful servant Francis Flower who for many years had rooms in his London residence at Ely Place in Holborn is cited in several entries in the State Papers carrying out the orders of his patron. In July 1591 presumably under Hatton's direction the Master of the Rolls, Sir Gilbert Gerard, Flower and John Barne informed Sir Thomas Sherley, Treasurer for the Wars in France and Low Countries, that Barne, the collector of loans in Middlesex, had distributed funds among the soldiers for coats and conduct money.⁷⁷ The same day Bacon's uncle Burghley asked Sir Thomas Sherley to provide Flower with monies for the soldiers of Captain Helmbridge's and Captain Power's band for conduct and wages.⁷⁸ Unbeknown to Flower his master now had only a few more months to live, but he continued to loyally serve him up to the very last.

Over the previous decade Flower had also served Hatton as his deputy in the Court of First Fruits and Tenths. The duties of Flower's post were described as 'the keeping of the books of entries & caviates of benefices'.⁷⁹ The position was responsible for the

collection of taxes from the clergy originally paid to the papacy until it was diverted by a 1534 statute in Henry VIII's reign into the coffers of the crown. The position informs Tighe 'offered real opportunity for determined exploitation. Flower was not slow to realize this, for the pursuit of profit was his third salient characteristic.'⁸⁰ In July 1582 Lord Burghley wrote to Walsingham to communicate his concerns about Flower:

I wish you to have some regard to y^t I here secretly, y^t Mr. Flower thynketh by his M^r favor, to be y^e mynt master, which if it shuld be I shuld thynk any thyng may pass unorderly, he hath all redy incroched uppon y^e custody of her Ma^{ty} tresor of y^e first fructes, kepyng the same in his own handes w^t out controllment. where allwise y^e somm hath bene payd wekly into y^e receit and now ar here very seldom of any in a yere, a secrett comodite y^t no officer ever hadd. I have bene loth to compleyn herein, but I thynk therby I do not my duty, this I wryte to yourself.⁸¹

Lord Chancellor Christopher Hatton died on 20 November 1591 and within a month Flower appealed to Burghley to be allowed to keep his post at the Courts of First Fruits and Tenth: it would he wrote 'give helpe to my life which outharwise will be drowned in some remote place from the societies that I have bin bred with.'⁸² Unsurprisingly, given what Burghley had long known of his practices, he lost the office, but for some reason he was granted a pension of £80 in March 1592.⁸³ Following the death of Lord Chancellor Hatton, Flower transferred his services to his nephew and heir Sir William Hatton. In May 1592 Sir William wrote to Burghley 'Thanks for many great and high favours, and prays a continuation of them, towards the repair of his poor and broken estate. Endorsed [*by Burghley*], "Sir Wm. Hatton, by Mr. Flower, at Greenwich."⁸⁴ Sir William secured for Flower his seat for Corfe Castle in the 1593 parliament alongside Bacon for Middlesex. The parliament was dominated by the subsidy issue with Bacon, who had an deep interest in this controversial issue sitting on all the committies, and it is now known, that Flower also sat on the subsidy committee (1 March).⁸⁵ On 8 March Bacon argued against the queen's demands for higher additional taxes which sapped the morale of the people whose loyalty and support she needed in these perilous times. It was only five years since the Spanish Armada had squared up in the English Channel prompted by the execution of the Catholic Mary, Queen of Scots, the subject of the play *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, and rumours were still rife of possible internal and external threats to the monarch and security of the country. Still Elizabeth was not best pleased and she made Bacon suffer for it.

She was now sixty years old and growing more infirm. Her private companion Dudley the man who had stood alongside her for all of her reign had passed away only eighteen months ago. Her new love interest Hatton had been ill for a long time and the queen frequently visited him reportedly staying with him for five days. He died at his London residence Ely House, having been visited by the queen, who according to some reports brought him broth. He was buried on 14 December 1591 in St Paul's where his well-attended funeral was held two days later. An elaborate monument was erected in the cathedral by his nephew and heir Sir William Hatton. On a tablet affixed to a column near his tomb is a learned eulogistic poem written in the name of Francis Flower which is preserved in Dugdale's *History of St Paul's*:

In tabula quadam columnae, juxta hujusmodi Monumentum, affixa.

*Stay and behold the mirrour of a Dead man's House,
Whose lively Person would have made thee stay and wonder:
Look and withall learn to know how to liue & dye renowned;*

*For never can clean life and famous Horses sunder.
 Hatton lies here, unto whose name Hugh Lupus gave
 (Lupus the sisters sonne of William conquerour)
 For Nigel his dear servant's sake worship and land:
 Lo there the spring; look here the Honour of his Ancestry.
 When nature molded him her thoughts were most on Mars,
 And all the Heavens to make him goodly were agreeing:
 Thence was he valiant, active, strong, and passing comely,
 And God did grace his mind and spirits with gifts excelling.
 Nature commends her workmanship to Fortunes charge,
 Fortune presents him to the Court and Queen,
 Queen Eliz. (O God's dear handmaid) his most miracle;
 Now hearken, reader, raritie not heard nor seen;
 This blessed Queen, mirror of all that Albion rul'd,
 Grave Favour to his faith, and precepts to his hopefull time;
 First trained him in the stately band of Pensioners,
 Behold how humble hearts make easie steps to clime:
 High carriage, honest life, Heart ever loyall,
 Diligence, delight in duty, God doth reward:
 So did this worthy Queen in her iust thought of him,
 And for her safety make him Captain of her Guard.
 Now doth she prune his Vine, and from her sacred breast,
 Lessons his Life, makes wise his heart for her great Councils,
 And so Vice-Chamberlein, where forrein Princes eye
 Might well admire her choice, wherein she most excells.
 So sweetly temper'd was his soul with vertues balme,
 Religious, just to God, and Caesar in each thing;
 That he aspired to the highest Subject's seat,
 Lord Chancellour (measure and conscience of a holy King)
 Rube, Coller, Garter, dead figures of great Honour,
 Alms-deeds with Faith, honest in word, Franke in dispenche,
 The Poor's friend, not popular; the Churches pillar,
 This Tombe shews th' one; the Heavens shrine the other.*

Franciscus Florus ad memoriam heri sui defuncti, luctusq; sui solatium, posuit.
 Anno Domini 1593.⁸⁶

The long eulogistic poem commemorating the life of Lord Chancellor Sir Christopher Hatton is written by an accomplished poet-one not written by Francis Flower. He was not a practised poet and if it was not written by Flower this clearly means that his name was being employed as a living mask or pseudonym to conceal the identity of its true author, who wished to remain hidden and anonymous. Previously, the only time a poem had appeared in the name of a Francis Flower was in *The Amitie of Arbor* twenty-five years earlier in a rare collection of verse printed in the name of Thomas Howell, which may have been written by a young Bacon.⁸⁷ The Hatton eulogy readily exhibits familiar Baconian ideas, themes, and language instantly recognisable to those *au fait* with his works and writings. Even some of the particular words and phrases have a familiar Baconian ring about them, 'Stay and behold', the 'mirror', 'Nature', 'Mars', 'Fortune', 'wise', 'vertuous; 'forrein Princes', and of course, 'counsells' the word included in the extended title of his *Essays Or Counsels, Civil And Moral*. He records Hatton aspired to

the highest subject's seat of Lord Chancellor 'the measure and conscience of a holy King'; his own father Sir Nicholas Bacon had served Elizabeth as Lord Keeper and *de facto* Lord Chancellor from the beginning of her reign until his death, he, Bacon would also occupy the office of Lord Keeper and Lord Chancellor. He had known his subject all of his life, and knew of Hatton's secret affair with Elizabeth, and Hatton, his secret royal birth. He may have wanted to write a commemorative poem out of admiration and respect for Hatton, or to please his mother Elizabeth, who knew he was a concealed poet, writer and dramatist. Francis Flower, the faithful servant of the Lord Chancellor, was the obvious person to use as a literary mask, but for those with eyes to see, Bacon signs it. For example, the first line of the commemorative verse has 39 letters F. Bacon in simple cipher. The poem comprising 36 lines is framed within 3 lines-one at the top and two at the bottom $36-3=33$ Bacon in simple cipher. These lines contain 21 words which added to the addition of the date $1+5+9+3=18$: $21+18=39$ F. Bacon in simple cipher. It perhaps should also be noted that when the 21 words containing 127 letters are added to the addition of the date $21+127+18=166$ it provides a triple simple cipher for 100/33/33 or Francis Bacon/Bacon/Bacon.

In 2012 Alan Stewart and Harriet Knight editors of *The Oxford Francis Bacon Early Writings 1584-1596* became the first Bacon editors to devote some serious attention to *The Misfortunes of Arthur*. As previously stated, in their *Early Writings 1584-1596* they devoted a well-researched and impressively documented twenty-three pages to the play. Of the twenty-three pages Stewart and Knight assigned two pages to a disappointingly brief discussion of the said contributors under the misleading heading 'The Authors'. In a single paragraph discussion of Francis Flower (cited above) among the five sources Stewart and Knight list is the article by Tighe printed in *Notes and Queries*.⁸⁸ They do not however include a much longer article published later the same year, even though in his article, Tighe made the following very clear statement:

My interest in Flower has been stimulated by several conversations with Professor Germaine Warkentin of Victoria College, Toronto who has furnished me with much interesting information on the suppressed 1591 edition of Sir Philip Sidney's *Astrophil and Stella* and who originally supplied me with a copy of Flower's mock epitaph. Professor Warkentin's study on the first edition of *Astrophil and Stella* will soon be forthcoming in *The Book Collector*.⁸⁹

The twenty-six page article by Warkentin includes a dedicated nine page discussion of Francis Flower (the longest and most important discussion on Flower ever printed) as part of a wider discussion of his connections to the 1591 edition of *Astrophil and Stella* dedicated to Flower by its publisher Thomas Newman. Clearly then Stewart and Knight were aware that Professor Warkentin was about to, and had long since, come their 2102 Bacon edition, published an article containing information about Francis Flower about whom prior to 1985 very little was known about a man, who it is stated, was one of the authors of the drama *The Misfortunes of Arthur*-the first printed work to which Bacon's name is attached. Yet for reasons best known to themselves they either did not consult the article, or if they did, for whatever reason they chose not to list it as a source in their brief discussion of the play's contributors. Furthermore, neither of the articles by Tighe and Warkentin are listed or mentioned by Corrigan in his most recent modern edition of *The Misfortunes of Arthur*. In his article Tighe produces an extract of a surviving letter dated 19 February 1591 written in his own hand by Francis Flower to Sir John Conway, which is much more tellingly reproduced in its entirety by Warkentin. Although it is not pointed out by either Tighe or Warkentin (who display no interest in *The Misfortunes of Arthur* even though of course they know of his connection to it) this letter is of great

historical importance in terms of its connection to the authorship of *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, or, should I more accurately say, the illusion of its multi-authorship. The letter to Sir John Conway (a client of the Earl of Leicester and correspondent of Walsingham and Burghley, who married Ellen, daughter of Sir Fulke Greville (*d.*1560), grandfather of Bacon's lifelong friend Sir Fulke Greville) is here given in full:

Sir, I acknowledge this hande of writinge of olde and yo^w nowe and evar my good frende. And so in gladnesse I rendar thanks for them, and wth all my harte I will kepe yo^w: if I have vertue to deserve yo^w. For the Swete one that would speake wth me: I am att home to morrowe att yo^r owne owar and place: for yo^r sake only: for I am wayned from dayly bewtie: and becu[m] a Lovar of men, more than of women. Alwayes my incomparable M^{rs} excepted: whom wth yo^w I leave to god xli^{ti} yeare hence. I am cauled awaye or else I coulde not parte wth my papar so sone. God sende yo^w health and yo^r harts desiar./Ely place this xixth of Febr 1590.⁹⁰

I assume that it is immediately obvious that the sender of this letter Francis Flower was not responsible for the long verse on the tablet affixed to a column near the tomb of his master Sir Christopher Hatton. To be frank I imagine that the very idea of it would even strike an intelligent child as frankly absurd and downright ridiculous. Self-evidently the letter reveals that Flower was bereft of the kind of literary ability required to write even a simple coherent letter, never mind the Hatton verse, clearly penned by a practised and accomplished poet. Francis Flower was not a poet nor did he possess the kind of ability required to compose choruses for a dramatic piece of literature, or a certain play written some three years earlier, which in light of the above letter, is now surely inconceivable:

CHORUS (Act I)

See here the drifts of Gorlois, Cornish Duke,
And deepe desire to shake his Soueraignes Throne:
How foule his fall, how bitter his rebuke,
Whiles wife, and weal, and life, and all be gone?
He now in Hell tormented wants that good:
Lo, lo the end of trayterous bones and blood.

Pendragon broylde with flames of filthy fires,
By Merlins mists enioyde Igerna's bed,
Next spoiled Gorlois, doubting his desires,
Then was himselfe through force of poyson sped.
Who sowes in sinne, in sinne shall reape his paine:
The Doome is sworne: Death guerdon's death againe.

Whiles Arthur warres abroad and reapes renowne,
Gueneuora preferres his sonnes desire.
And trayterous Mordred still usurpes the Crowne,
Affording fuell to her quenchlesse fire,
But Death's too good, and life too sweete for thease,
That wanting both, should taste of neithers ease.

In Rome the gaping gulfe would not decrease,
Till Curtius corse had closde her yearning iawes:
In Theb's the Rotte and Murreine would not cease,
Till Laius broode had paid for breach of lawes:
In Brytain warres and discord will not stent:

Till Vther's line and offspring quite be spent.⁹¹

CHORUS (Act 2)

Ye Princely Peeres, extold to seates of State,
Seeke not the faire, that soone will turne to fowle:
Oft is the fall of high and houering Fate,
And rare the roome which time doth controule.
The safest seate is not on highest hill,
Where windes, and stormes and thunders thumpe their ill.
Farre safer were to follow sound aduise,
Then for such pride to pay so deare a price.

The mounting minde that climes the hauty cliftes,
And soaring seekes the tip of lofty type,
Intoxicats the braine with giddy drifts,
Then rowles, and reeles, and falles at length plum ripe.
Loe: heauing hie is of so small forecast,
To totter first, and tumble downe at last.
Yet Pegasus still reares himselfe on hie,
And coltishly doth kicke the cloudes in skie.

Who sawe the grieffe engrauen in a Crowne,
Or knew the bad and bane whereto it's bound:
Would neuer sticke to throwe and fling it downe,
Nor once vouchsafe to heaue it from the ground.
Such is the sweete of this ambitious powre,
No sooner had, then turnde oftsoones to sowre,
Atchieu'd with enuie, exercisde with hate,
Guarded with feare, supported with debate.

O restlesse race of high-aspyring head,
O worthlesse rule both pittied and inuiet:
How many Millions to their losse you lead:
With love and lure of Kingdomes blisse untried?
So things untasted cause a quenchlesse thirst,
Which, were they knowne, would be refused first,
Yea, oft we see, yet seeing cannot shonne
The fact, we finde as fondly dar'd, as donne.⁹²

The final years of his life were comparatively unremarkable and the notices we have of him are mostly the dry records of a perfunctory living out his last days. In March 1592 he was granted a pension of £80 and by 1594 appointed a Justice of the Peace in Kent and Middlesex. In 1595 we find Flower aiding the notorious torturer Richard Topcliffe in examining religious dissidents in Bridewell,⁹³ and during that year he was appointed Gentleman Pensioner to the Queen. On 11 January 1596 his name appears in the list of the commissioners for Middlesex,⁹⁴ and as Justice of the Peace in Middlesex Flower was one of the justices that on 23 February 1596 received a letter concerning disorderly houses in the suburbs of London ordering them where necessary to close down houses and other buildings including a number of unlawful taverns, ale-houses and brothels.⁹⁵

In Sir John Harington's *Apologie in A New Discourse Of A Stale Subject, Called The Metamorphosis of Ajax* printed by Richard Field in 1596, the printer of the Shakespeare poems *Venus and Adonis* (1593, 94, 95, 96) and *The Rape of Lucrece* (1594) appears an obscure passage apparently relating to a libel about Flower: 'sure you lyed in all the rest good M. Libeller, for first he that you said was undone, lived to do more service for his country, then you will ever do, and many things are left undone by his death, that might perhaps have bin much better done; & he that you said fadeth, doth now flourish with a guilt axe in his hand, in a much more honourable service'.⁹⁶ To which Harington adds in a note '*Flower fadeth*'.⁹⁷ The date of Flower's death is still unknown. The lucrative privilege which had been conferred on Flower for life was granted on 6 April 1597 to John Battersby which writes Ramel 'implies that Francis Flower died earlier in the year 1597, or in 1596'.⁹⁸ On the other hand Hasler states Flower died in 1596,⁹⁹ and Tighe sometime between January and early February 1597.¹⁰⁰ In his will dated 1 January 1597 Flower asks to be buried at Eltham Church where Lord Chancellor Christopher Hatton was Keeper of the Royal Parks. He made charitable bequests to the poor of Eltham, and St Andrew's Holborn, where he had lodged in Ely Place, and the parish of Passenham in Northants and Stony Stratford, Buckinghamshire. He also bequeathed gifts to a number of named individuals including Sir William and Lady Hatton and other friends from the Hatton family circle. He also made a small gift to Anne, Countess of Warwick which suggests a hitherto unknown long term relationship with Bacon's much loved relative and close friend whom he had adored since his youth. She was the daughter of Francis Russell, second Earl of Bedford, Bacon's early political patron who secured for him his first seat in parliament for Bossiney, Cornwall. His aunt Elizabeth Cooke Hoby, sister of his mother Lady Anne Bacon, married John, Lord Russell the son and heir to Francis Russell, second Earl of Bedford, who after his premature death was thereafter known as Lady Russell. At the age of just sixteen his eldest daughter Anne had married Ambrose Dudley, Earl of Warwick, the brother of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester. Her husband Warwick died in 1590 and in the following years Bacon behind a number of different disguises dedicated to her and her sister a number of works and poems. On 12 March 1597 Sir William Hatton died leaving his beautiful nineteen year old widow Lady Hatton a very wealthy woman. In his will he bequeathed her valuable lands and properties including Corfe Castle, the Isle of Purbeck, and Hatton House in Holborn. Bacon had known Lady Hatton since her childhood and began seeking her hand in marriage. He asked Essex to write to her parents on his behalf which he subsequently did but it proved to no avail and to everyone's surprise Lady Hatton later married Sir Edward Coke, which she later came to deeply regret.¹⁰¹ The great Elizabethan historian William Camden, a close friend and collaborator of Bacon's, composed a Latin epitaph for 'Fr. Flower stipator nobilis',¹⁰² and an unnamed author penned the following mock epitaph found in a manuscript belonging to the poet Robert Herrick:

Heere lies Flos florum, justice of peace and Quorum
 He lov'd harum horum and now grieves full forum
 That he can have no morum.¹⁰³

On the final page of the 1588 edition of *The Misfortunes of Arthur* it is stated that the dumb shows were partly devised by Master John Lancaster and 'Master Penroodocke', both of whom it is said directed these proceedings at court.¹⁰⁴ For centuries absolutely nothing was known about John Lancaster and in the case of 'Penroodocke' no one even knew just who this referred to. In 1828 the first editor of *Misfortunes* John P. Collier wrote, regarding 'Lancaster and Penroodocke we have nothing to communicate.'¹⁰⁵ As

the world moved into the twentieth century the first modern editor of the drama Harvey C. Grumbine was as equally succinct when stating that respecting Lancaster and Penrودocke 'the historical oracle seems long since to have grown mute.'¹⁰⁶ Evangelia Waller was also none the wiser 'No records of John Lancaster and Master Penrودocke seem to be in existence.'¹⁰⁷ The most recent editor of the *Misfortunes* Brian J. Corrigan and the joint Bacon editors Stewart and Knight did nothing more than sum up in just a few lines the researches of Jacques Ramel.¹⁰⁸ Since Ramel published his article in the *Notes and Queries* (1967) in 1981 P. W. Hasler included a biographical entry for John Penrودock (identified by Ramel as 'Master Penrودocke') in his history of *The House of Commons 1558-1603* which made known for the first time some new biographical details together with some useful background information.

A native of Cumberland John Penrودock, the eldest son of Anthony Penrودock of Arkleby, was born sometime before 1542. Nothing has come down to us about his early background or early education. He attended Christ Church College, Cambridge in 1560 before entering Gray's Inn in 1562, during the same period when the two elder Bacon brothers Nicholas and Nathaniel entered Gray's Inn, both in 1562, followed by Edward Bacon in 1565, where all three became ancients in 1576, the year Lord Keeper Sir Nicholas Bacon entered Francis and Anthony. John Penrودock followed his uncles Robert and Sir George from their native Cumberland to Wiltshire and Hampshire. His uncle Sir George Penrودock was a steward in the grand household of William Herbert, first Earl of Pembroke (a member of Privy Council with Sir Nicholas Bacon), who was probably instrumental in John Penrودock's early advancement in both Wiltshire where he sat on the commission of the peace, before his call to the bar, and at Southampton, where he was appointed recorder from the early 1570s onwards. He thereafter divided his time between his local duties and his chambers at Gray's Inn. He was also regularly employed by the Privy Council about local matters and his name frequently appears in the Pension Book of Gray's Inn during the following two decades. He twice served as Member of Parliament firstly for Wilton alongside Bacon sitting for Weymouth and Melcombe Regis in 1584 and he was returned for Southampton with Bacon for Taunton in 1586. He was appointed Counsel to Salisbury from 1587, the year Bacon was elected Reader at Gray's Inn, with Penrودock, then already a Reader, and afterwards elected Double Reader in 1592. For the last years of his life Penrودock continued to serve his local government and the Privy Council before his death on 8 March 1601.¹⁰⁹ During the sixty odd years of his life no works or writings are known to have been published in his name, nor apart from the device in the *Misfortunes* in which it is said that he partly devised the dumb shows, is his name once associated with any other dramatic venture at Gray's Inn, where he was a member for four decades, or for that matter, any other dramatic piece of work private or public, or any other form of literature, whatsoever.

Nothing is known about the early life of John Lancaster other than he was a student of Queen's College, Oxford before he entered Gray's Inn in 1564, where with Penrودock he came into frequent contact with the sons of Lord Keeper Bacon, Nicholas, Nathaniel and Edward, and later their younger brothers Francis and Anthony. He served as Justice of the Peace in Somerset in 1584 and 1586. An entry in the Pension Book dated 26 May 1587 shows Bacon's close friend Sir Christopher Hatton used his influence to have him elected an ancient even though he had not been formally elected: 'At this pension at the request of the right Honourable Sir Christofer Hatton...on behalf of Mr. John Lancaster a fellow of this house...It is ordered that albeit he was left out of the election of the Auncients or att that tyme forgotten when he should have bene called yt is now ordered that he shall henceforth enioye the benefitt of his place and preferment according to his ancientie & continuance as though he had [been] formerly elected'.¹¹⁰ In the early part

of the following decade Lancaster appeared at a number of Pensions with Bacon and he was elected Treasurer of Gray's Inn in 1595 a position later occupied by Bacon himself. His last appearance at a Pension was on 11 February 1595,¹¹¹ from when nothing more is heard of him. Outside of the statement in *Misfortunes* that Lancaster partly devised the dumb shows he too, like Punruddock, is not known to have any connection with the drama, nor has he ever been credited with other dramatic writings, or learned literature.

Nicholas Trotte credited with the authorship of the introduction to *The Misfortunes of Arthur* was also for centuries absent from the printed pages of history-of whom Collier wrote in 1828 'no information has survived'.¹¹² The reason Trotte is now principally remembered is his close association with important members of a certain family 'what saved him from complete oblivion in the eyes of posterity was his relationship with the Bacon family',¹¹³ especially Francis and Anthony, to whom from 1588, the year which saw the publication of *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, he borrowed a series of loans which nigh on bankrupted him.

The eldest son of Edward Trotte of Yorkshire his date of birth still remains unknown, although it is conjectured to be around 1550, primarily on the basis he was admitted a pensioner at Peterhouse, Cambridge in 1567. He graduated BA in 1571 before entering Gray's Inn in 1573 from which time he would have become acquainted with members of the Bacon family, the elder brothers Nicholas, Nathaniel and Edward, and afterwards Anthony who lived at Gray's Inn from 1576 to 1579, and Francis who was admitted in 1579. Called to the bar in 1584 Trotte became part of the great society of Gray's Inn, whose leading light, and organiser of revels and masques at Gray's over the next three decades was his close friend Francis Bacon, whom he greatly esteemed and admired.

During the time before and after the composition, performance and publication of *The Misfortunes of Arthur* Collier first noted that 'Trotte (who is not known to have written anything but the introduction to this tragedy) was probably on intimate terms with the family of Lord Bacon. Lady Bacon, widow of Sir Nicholas Bacon, in 1594 had given him a horse, which Trotte for some cause sold; and in the *Harl. MSS.*, No. 871, is a letter from him to Lady Bacon, excusing himself for having done so, and giving the widow some account of her sons.'¹¹⁴ In 1588 Lady Anne Bacon conveyed the manor of Burstor to her son Anthony who immediately mortgaged his interest in it to Trotte, and after ending up in his debt, Anthony later granted him the reversion of the manor.¹¹⁵ He lent money to both Bacon brothers and Francis later employed Trotte to communicate with Alderman Spencer concerning another of Anthony's estates Barly regarding which Francis wrote to Trotte and Spencer.¹¹⁶ By 1593 Francis owed Trotte considerable sums of money describing him as 'one to whom besides a familiar acquaintance I am much beholden'.¹¹⁷ It seems Trotte was in thrall to Bacon, or perhaps in awe of him, grateful perhaps for favours past. Trotte was certainly in no hurry to demand repayment of some of the loans made to Bacon. In a letter to his mother Bacon wrote 'such is his kindness as he demandeth it not'.¹¹⁸ Evidently, the Bacon brothers were also trying their best to use their influence to place him in the employ of the nobility. Anthony wrote to an old friend of their father's the Earl of Huntington 'I venture to request...on behalf of a good friend of mine, Mr Nicholas Trotte, whose sufficiency in law be warranted by those who make it their profession, and whose honesty, integrity, and other extraordinary good parts I dare pawn to your Lordship my poor words and credit. What favour soever it shall please your Lordship to grace Mr Trott withal I shall esteeme it done to myself.'

¹¹⁹ What came of the request is unknown. In a letter to his mother Lady Anne Bacon in June 1594 Anthony wrote 'I have signified unto my brother your Ladyship's mind and resolution to effectuate whatsoever shall in reason be found requisite for Mr. Trott's full satisfaction and assurance: who truly, Madam, hath showed more real confidence

and kindness towards us both than I think all our brothers and uncles put together would have performed, if we had been constrained to have had recourse to them in the like case.'¹²⁰ By the end of 1594 Trotte was beginning to grow increasingly concerned about the security of his monies and Bacon considered parting with his reversion of the Clerkship of the Star Chamber to Trotte but for some reason he was not able to carry it through.¹²¹ In 1596 Bacon whose debts to Trotte now stood at £2650 had to mortgage Twickenham Park in order to satisfy his creditor. It seems Bacon was also elsewhere busy on his behalf. The application by Trotte in 1595 for the post of deputy secretary of the Council in the North and his 1597 parliamentary seat at Bamber in Sussex were sponsored by Essex 'presumably at the instigation of one of the Bacon brothers.'¹²² The agreements and conditions for the loans were rearranged and renegotiated over the next few years and eventually to avoid losing his beloved Twickenham Bacon requested Sir Michael Hicks negotiate a settlement of the outstanding debts owed to Trotte, and the matter was referred to the Lord Treasurer. A manuscript in the Lansdowne collection of the British Library headed 'The State of the account between Mr Trott and me, as far as I can collect it by such remembrances as I find; my trust in him being such as I did not carefully preserve papers; and my demands upon the same account' sets down Bacon's debts to Trotte in some detail as far as he is able to recall them. At the end of the ledger Bacon states 'Upon this account I demand the abatement of some part of the interest, considering he hath been beholding to me, and his estate good and without charge, and mine indebted.'¹²³ In August 1601 Bacon was again forced to borrow from Trotte £950 against the mortgage of Twickenham Park to be paid by the 19 December which Bacon was unable to meet however at Hikes's intervention Trotte agreed to a further delay of a month, and as no more is heard of it, the money was presumably paid by 22 January 1602, and Twickenham Park was finally redeemed.¹²⁴ Presumably, all's well that ends well, for in 1608, presumably at Bacon's instigation, Trotte was appointed Sheriff of Hertfordshire.¹²⁵

In June 1602 he married the daughter of Sir George Perient of Digswell, Hertfordshire described by the letter writer John Chamberlain as 'a lusty tall wench able to beat two of him.'¹²⁶ His father-in-law owned property at Clothall and in 1604, after Bottelea, one of the manors, had been surrendered to the Crown by Perient, it was granted to agents acting for Trotte, who sold it in 1617 to William Cecil, second Earl of Salisbury, eldest son of Bacon's cousin Sir Robert Cecil, first Earl of Salisbury.¹²⁷ Most probably due to the influence of Bacon, Trotte was made Master in Chancery by 1619-25.¹²⁸ He had lived much of his later life close to Bacon's Gorhambury estate and in 1623 Trotte conveyed half the manor of Ayot Montfichet in Hertfordshire to one William Hale indicating that he still had family, property and land connections in the vicinity.¹²⁹ In his article Ramel states the 'latest available reference to Nicholas Trotte is dated 1624' without adding any further comment or conjecture as to where and when he died.¹³⁰ Following Ramel this led Stewart and Knight to venture 'c.1624' as the year of his death.¹³¹ The researches of Hasler determined that Trotte made his will in October 1634 (proved by his widow and executrix on 3 February 1637) and that he died in November 1636 being buried on the 19th of that month at Eaton Bray. An epitaph by one Edmund Cook, a possible relative of Bacon's (Sir Anthony Cooke was father to his mother Lady Anne Bacon), is on the fly-leaf of an old precedent book said to have belonged to Trotte himself:

Hark what the honest lawyer saith: one see
Content with his own lot; no scraping fee.
When will one gownman that's now left alive
Refuse what he resigned in twenty-five?

Lo, here what once was laid: now seemeth not
The body of good old Sir Nicholas Trott,
On's own accord through honesty and grace
That did resign a Chancery's master's place.¹³²

A number of letters known to Spedding, and Jardine and Stewart, written by Trotte to Lady Bacon, Francis and Anthony Bacon, and Sir Michael Hicks from 1594 to 1601 survive in the Lambeth Palace Library, and Lansdowne collection of MSS held at the British Library.¹³³ Spedding does not once mention the said connection of Trotte to *The Misfortunes of Arthur*. One of these letters was printed by Thomas Birch in *Memoirs Of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth, From the Year 1581 till her Death. In Which The Secret Intrigues of her Court, And the Conduct of her Favourite, Robert Earl of Essex, both at Home and Abroad, Are Particularly Illustrated. From the Original Papers of his intimate Friend, Anthony Bacon, Esquire* printed in 1754.¹³⁴ The editors of *Misfortunes* Grumbine, Cunliffe and Corrigan nor any of the commentators and critics of the drama, knew or make any reference to the printed Trotte letter by Birch; and with the exception of Waller and Ramel quoting Collier ('in the Harl. MS., No 871, is a letter from him to Lady Bacon'), none of them directly refer to the surviving Trotte manuscript letters in the Lambeth Palace Library and British Library. Perhaps more remarkably Stewart who while discussing Nicholas Trotte in his jointly authored biography *Hostage to Fortune The Troubled Life of Francis Bacon* (in which he makes no mention of *The Misfortunes of Arthur*) in a footnote hidden at the back of the work cites the pages in the Birch book which prints the Trotte letter.¹³⁵ Yet when it came to his discussion of *The Misfortunes of Arthur* in *The Oxford Francis Bacon Early Writings 1584-1596* published by Oxford Clarendon Press in 2012 conspicuous by its absence is any reference whatsoever to this Trotte letter or the other manuscript letters to Lady Anne Bacon, Francis and Anthony Bacon, or Sir Michael Hicks, which Stewart and Jardine discuss and list in their earlier biography of Bacon.¹³⁶

The correspondence of Nicholas Trotte gives no indication or suggestion that he was a poet or an author of plays or other forms of dramatic writings. During the nine decades of his long life, the lawyer, money-lender, property and land speculator Nicholas Trotte (c.1550-1636), aside from being credited with the 133 line verse introduction to *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, is not known to have written anything else whatsoever-not one single literary line of verse or drama, and nor was he responsible for a single word of the introduction printed in his name in the *Misfortunes*.

The biographical information concerning Thomas Hughes the said principal author of *The Misfortunes of Arthur* (what little there is) has only very slowly emerged onto the pages of literary history. Writing nearly two hundred and fifty years after the original publication of the drama its first editor J. P. Collier stated that regarding Hughes 'no information has survived.'¹³⁷ The brief entry for Hughes in the *Dictionary of National Biography* (1891) provided the following few biographical facts which I here quote in full:

Hughes, Thomas (fl.1587) dramatist, a native of Cheshire, was matriculated at Queens' College, Cambridge, in November 1571, proceeded B.A. 1575-6, and on 8 Sept. 1576 was elected a fellow of his college under a royal mandate. On leaving Cambridge he became a member of Gray's Inn.¹³⁸

As Hughes matriculated at Queens' College in 1571 (Bacon studied at Cambridge from 1573-6) and entered Gray's Inn in 1579 (the same year Bacon was admitted to Gray's Inn) it will be noted that the biographical information in the *DNB* only covers a period of eight years. Remarkably this *DNB* entry formed the basis of the biographical notices of Hughes for the next three quarters of a century including those of Grumbine the first modern editor of the drama and Evangelia Waller who wrote an early interpretation of the play.¹³⁹ Grumbine began his brief notice by perhaps inadvertently saying more than he knew (or he just might have known exactly what he was enigmatically implying):

The obscurity which veils the life of Thomas Hughes, the principal author of "The Misfortunes of Arthur", may be said to be quite as dense as that which dims the biography of William Shakspeare.¹⁴⁰

After repeating the scarcity of biographical information contained in the *DNB* entry for Hughes whose biography Grumbine had curiously compared with William Shakspeare (literary mask for Bacon) Waller ends by saying 'Soon after leaving Cambridge Hughes was admitted to Gray's Inn, and there ends his recorded history.'¹⁴¹ Despite having availed himself of the researches of Ramel, the most recent editor of *The Misfortunes of Arthur* Brian Jay Corrigan (1992), only had this to say of the said author of the play in an edition running to 244 pages, which I think it is my duty to emphasize, I here again quote in full:

The main author of the play, Thomas Hughes, was admitted to Gray's Inn in 1579 or 1580, was knighted in 1619, and died in or around 1623.¹⁴²

This astonishing brevity if we can describe it as such in the most recent modern edition of *The Misfortunes of Arthur* regarding its supposed author Thomas Hughes is as thin as the transparent illusion it still perpetuates.

Virtually all that is known about Thomas Hughes was gathered up by Jacques Ramel and published in *Notes and Queries* in 1967.¹⁴³ The information was incorporated in the entry for Hughes in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004-20) here given in its entirety:

Hughes, Sir Thomas (*fl.* 1571-1623), lawyer and playwright, a native of Cheshire, matriculated at Queens' College, Cambridge, in November 1571, and proceeded BA (1575/6) and MA (1579). From 1576 until 1582 he was a fellow of Queens'. In 1579 he was admitted to Gray's Inn where he was an active lifetime member: he became a barrister in 1585, a reader in 1606, and dean of the chapel in 1618. His career was not without incident: he was accused of robbery by a fellow templar in 1590, and in the same year that he was knighted, 1619, he was briefly incarcerated in the Fleet prison for having given some erroneous legal advice. Hughes was married; there is a reference to a legitimate son in the Gray's Inn pension book but nothing more is known of his family. The last reference to Hughes appeared in the pension book in 1623.¹⁴⁴

It is believed that Hughes was probably born in the mid 1550s (if not earlier) and as nothing is heard of him after 1623 we can reasonably infer he lived for around seventy years. In those seven decades, apart from his name appearing in the 1588 edition of *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, wherein he is presented as its principal author, his name before and after 1588, was never once linked however remote and tenuously with another play or any other form of poetic or dramatic literature. Yet despite this glaring anomaly, up to this day, the schoolmen have merely repeated without question that Hughes was the

author of this remarkable drama. The reason or at least the critical explanation why the authorship of this important early play has not been raised or addressed is due to its association with Bacon, a drama which one way or another can be demonstrably linked to a substantial part of the Shakespeare canon, illuminating their common authorship.

3.

THE BACKGROUND OF *THE MISFORTUNES OF ARTHUR*

The play takes for its allegorical premise the complex historical events that completely dominated the political landscape of the first three decades of the Elizabethan reign, dominated by the two towering figures of Queen Elizabeth and Mary, Queen of Scots, that wholly consumed both the English and Scottish court and also dominated the first three decades of the life of Francis Bacon.

On the very first page of his standard seven-volume edition of *The Letters and Life of Francis Bacon* his great biographer James Spedding sets out the 'conditions' at the time of his birth pointing to the 'impressions' they would have in the high drama of his life by introducing the key actors on the stage: Queen Elizabeth, Mary, Queen of Scots, her Principal Secretary of State Sir William Cecil and his brother-in-law Lord Keeper and *de facto* Lord Chancellor of England Nicholas Bacon and his wife Lady Anne Cooke Bacon:

He had been born among great events, and brought up among the persons who had to deal with them. It was on the 22nd of January, 1560-1-while the young Queen of Scotland, a two-months' widow, was rejecting the terms of reconciliation with England which Elizabeth proffered, and a new Pope in the Vatican was preparing to offer the terms of reconciliation with Rome which Elizabeth rejected,-that he came crying into the world, the youngest son of Sir Nicholas Bacon, Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, and Ann, second daughter of Sir Anthony Cooke, an accomplished lady, sister-in-law to the then secretary of state, Sir William Cecil.¹⁴⁵

His foster-father Lord Keeper Sir Nicholas Bacon and Principal Secretary of State Sir William Cecil had been dealing with the problem of the Scottish queen from the time of Elizabeth's accession. Born Mary Stuart she was the granddaughter of Margaret Tudor eldest daughter of Henry VII and Elizabeth York, the sister of Henry VIII, who married James IV of Scotland. After the death of husband James IV she became regent for their son James V of Scotland, whose only surviving legitimate child was Mary, Queen of Scots. It was a royal pedigree which gave Mary a strong claim to the English throne and for many Catholics, Elizabeth was illegitimate, and Mary, rightful Queen of England, and while Elizabeth remained without a public or acknowledged heir, Mary stood next in line in the succession, something which Cecil and Bacon spent a lifetime preventing from happening.

Following the death of her husband Francis II of France on 5 December 1560 Mary returned to Scotland nine months later on 19 August 1561 possibly accompanied by her tutor George Buchanan who by the end of the year was in her service. His presence in Scotland is confirmed in a letter by the resident English diplomat at the Scottish court Thomas Randolph to Cecil dated at Edinburgh 30 January 1562 'There is with the Queen one called Mr. George Buchanan, a Scottish man, very well learned, that was the schoolmaster to M. de Brisac's son, very godly and honest, whom I have always judged fitter than any other I know.'¹⁴⁶ In 1562 Randolph suggested to Cecil that Buchanan should be recommended for the post of the permanent Scot representative at the English court as a channel of communication and secret intelligence between Queen Mary and

Queen Elizabeth.¹⁴⁷ For some reason this did not materialise and Buchanan continued to cement his close bond with Queen Mary as her companion and tutor. On 7 April 1562 Randolph reported to Cecil that Mary reads daily after her dinner under the instruction of Buchanan 'somewhat of Lyvie'.¹⁴⁸ On his return to Scotland Buchanan embraced the Protestant faith and his erstwhile protégé Randolph presented to James Stewart, first Earl of Moray, a copy of his old close friend Bishop Jewel's *Apologia pro ecclesia Anglicana* (1562) that he hoped would be accepted by the Scottish reformers, which was translated out of Latin as *An Apology in the Defence of the Church of England* by Lady Anne Cooke Bacon.

In the October of 1562 when Queen Elizabeth nearly died of a severe bout of smallpox where on what was thought to be her deathbed she designated Lord Robert Dudley as Protector of the Realm if she died. Alarmed by these events John Hales circulated a manuscript entitled *The Declaration of the Succession of the Crowne Imperiall of Inghland* believed by Queen Elizabeth and others to have been compiled by her Lord Keeper Sir Nicholas Bacon favouring the claim of Lady Katherine Grey to the throne thus opposing the claim of Mary, Queen of Scots.¹⁴⁹ A furious Elizabeth banned Sir Nicholas from the court and attending the Privy Council and the year and a half he spent in disgrace threatened to ruin his life and career and nearly broke his health. It was a hard lesson he and his young son Francis would never forget-in Elizabethan England even an association with a work deemed unacceptable to royal power could prove disastrous to any and all future prospects and in some instances cost you your freedom and even your life.

Aside from the business of secret intelligence and intrigue the resident English diplomat Randolph immersed himself in other activities at the Scottish court. In early 1563 Randolph excused his infrequent dispatches by remarking that 'I had nothing to write, for we had so little to think on, that we passed our time in feasts, banqueting, masking, and running at the ring, and such like.'¹⁵⁰ These court masques and devices were not only entertainment but were also used as instruments of diplomacy, domestic politics and international relations. Some of these carefully managed performances at the Scottish court in front of Randolph specifically addressed the thorny subject of the English succession stressing Queen Mary's commitment to amity with England and Elizabeth, which were duly reported back to Cecil and discussed with his brother-in-law Lord Keeper Nicholas Bacon. This was true of a sumptuous entertainment put on at the court during Shrovetide 1564 described by Randolph as an elaborate banquet celebrating the themes of Eros, Chastity, and Mutual Love. In his secret dispatch to Cecil the English diplomat speaks of 'marvellous sights and shows, singular devices' at the climatic banquet with its final song concluding with a message of harmony between Mary and Elizabeth written by Buchanan ('Though the last end of the universe confounds heaven with earth, the queen of Scots will love the English queen, the English queen the queen of Scots').¹⁵¹ He enclosed within his dispatch copies of some verses, a poem in Italian, possibly written by David Rizzio, on the power of Cupid, a Latin verse by Buchanan *In Castitatem*, lauding the virtue of chastity and Buchanan's *Mutuus Amor*, which ends with the lines cited above of everlasting love between Mary and Elizabeth.¹⁵² The political wind however began to change in the lead up to Queen Mary's ill-fated marriage to her cousin Henry Stewart, Lord Darnley who stood next to her in the line of the English succession resulting in friction and acrimony between the two queens. For the marriage which took place on 29 July 1565 George Buchanan wrote masque in Latin that was performed as part of the wedding celebrations.¹⁵³ The marriage caused a very serious sea change in diplomatic relations between Mary and Elizabeth in which Randolph inevitably became entangled and

following involvement in the Moray rebellion and the plot to kill Riccio he was forced to return to England.

The final masque of the Marian reign was presented in celebration of the baptism of her son James in December 1566 with its Latin text written by Buchanan.¹⁵⁴ At the ceremony and celebrations Queen Elizabeth was represented by Francis Russell, second Earl of Bedford a fellow privy councillor and a very close longstanding friend of Sir Nicholas Bacon, and godfather and future political patron of Francis Bacon, whose son and heir John, Lord Russell, married Lady Anne Cooke Bacon's younger sister, Lady Elizabeth Cooke Hoby Russell.¹⁵⁵

For such an important Scottish occasion Bedford, special representative of England and Elizabeth, was afforded an impressive escort across the border. On the first stage of his journey into Scotland he was met at Dunbar by a large Scottish reception party of around 500 or 600 men, and on the final leg between Linlithgow and Stirling, by at least five earls and 'all the gallants of the court with a train of followers'.¹⁵⁶ The three days of celebrations were all carefully planned and choreographed which included an entertainment on the night of the baptism in which forty gentlemen from Bedford's train took part. Followed the next day by a hunt and on the final day of celebrations a dinner replete with significant symbolism and what appeared to have been a series of coded political messages delivered through an Arthurian theme with Queen Mary as another Arthur, and harbinger of a golden age:

The dinner on the final day of celebrations, 19 December, had a set of complex and interwoven images. Bedford had come to Stirling with explicit instructions from London to gain ratification of the Treaty of Edinburgh of 1560 and the promise of non-interference in the matter of the English succession if Elizabeth had issue; there were also hopes that he might secure a withdrawal from Ireland of the Scots involved with the rebel Shane O' Neill. He could not have been pleased to have been seated 'at a round table like Arthur's'. The image of the reincarnation of Arthur legendary king of the Britons, would later in Elizabeth's reign be linked (as here) with the return of a golden age bringing peace and posterity. A similar table had, however, been used by James IV in 1509 for an explicitly political purpose, as an 'aggressive reminder' of the king's closeness to the English throne. Its re-appearance in Scotland in 1566 would have been a reminder, not only of Mary's better lineage but also of the new-found stability of her realm, which contrasted sharply with present English disputes over the succession, defeat in France in 1564 and severe difficulties in Ireland.

This time the serving of the table was made by an ingenious mechanical device of a moving stage, pulled into place by twelve satyrs. It was accompanied by musicians dressed 'lyk maidins, playing upon all sortis of instrumentis'. The first two courses were served by the satyrs and six nymphs; the third by a 'conduit'; and the fourth was preceded by the recitation of a verse by a child who, like an angel, was lowered in a globe from the ceiling. Further themes were cut short by mechanical breakdown; the stage collapsed! Perhaps it was as well, for the satyrs, led by Pagez, had goaded to the point of violence some of the English visitors, who did not understand the point of some of the allegory and thought themselves to be the object of the satire. This was the entertainment for which Buchanan's *Pompae Decorum Rusticorum* had also been written. In it, a complicated set of images intertwined. Mary was another Arthur, a bringer of the age of gold and fulfiller of the prophecy of Merlin; but she was also the goddess Astrea, who in the poetry of Ronsard was credited as the restorer of harmony to a world of chaos. The rustic virtues praised by Buchanan were a direct echo of the portrayal of Charles IX as a shepherd prince.¹⁵⁷

A detailed account of the baptism and the accompanying entertainments were of course forwarded to Elizabeth, Cecil and Bacon, and the rest of the Privy Council, with particular emphasis on the event held on the final day which took place on a

replica of King Arthur's Round Table, invoking the image of the legendary King of the Britons, with its implied political messages aimed at Elizabeth and the succession of the English throne.

None of the pointed Arthurian symbolism and allusions with its additional links and associations with the thrones of Scotland and England was lost on the learned Earl of Bedford, with the matters of national security considerations attendant upon it. On his return to England in October 1567 Bedford would no doubt have privately conversed further on the subject with Cecil and Bacon who as we have seen took a very forensic interest in everything to do with Queen Mary, the Scottish court, relations between Scotland and England, and her claim to the English throne. Bedford would also over the following years discuss the dramatic entertainment and drama of the final day celebrations with his godson Francis Bacon, who loved and adored him, and viewed him as some kind of father figure.

It is no coincidence that knowledge of these events and the powerful symbolism and imagery of the legendary King Arthur linked with Queen Mary and the Scottish court, her relationship with Elizabeth and the complicated matter of the succession, made an indelible impression on Bacon's mind and partly informed the themes and subtext of the first ever play written about Mary, one very deliberately titled *The Misfortunes of Arthur*. This play can partly be seen as some kind of response to the events witnessed by Bedford on the final day of the baptismal celebrations at King Arthur's Round Table replete with its Arthurian imagery and symbolism positioning and allying Mary and Scotland with this key central national myth. This thinly veiled allegory reflected historical and contemporary affairs in Scotland and its relations with England with its key contemporary figures shadowed and diffused in its dramatic characters (Queen Elizabeth, Mary, Queen of Scots, James VI of Scotland, Lord Darnley, and the Earl of Bothwell) and reflected relations and events at the Scottish court keenly watched by the important members of her Privy Council (Cecil, Nicholas Bacon and Bedford). A play in which Bacon weaved his inside knowledge into the very fabric of its narrative. Yet in *The Misfortunes of Arthur* instead of Queen Mary being represented as King Arthur, Queen Elizabeth is Arthur, representing the very embodiment of the highest Arthurian ideals, as the true bringer of a Golden Age of peace and harmony.

As we have seen in December 1566 Buchanan had composed the Latin text to the court masque for the celebrations marking the baptism of the infant James and at that time he still appeared to be on friendly terms with Queen Mary. This all changed with the events of the next few months with the assassination of Darnley on 27 February 1567 at the hands of his alleged murderer James Hepburn, Earl of Bothwell, with many believed, the complicity of Mary; her untimely marriage to Bothwell just three months later followed by her forced abdication and imprisonment at Lochleven. These extraordinary developments completely transformed the landscape of Anglo-Scottish politics and from this time forward Buchanan who may have had other secret motives attached himself to the anti-Mary faction and as their principal propagandist his enormously controversial polemical writings about Mary still continue to reverberate down the centuries to the present day.

In May 1568 Mary crossed the border to England where she hoped that with the support of Elizabeth she would be restored to the Scottish throne. On the orders of Elizabeth and her Privy Council Mary was removed to Carlisle where she was closely guarded to prevent her escape and having any contact with Catholic factions in the north. As the wheels of the English government were set in motion Mary requested a personal meeting with Elizabeth. This was blankly refused until she cleared herself of accusations of her involvement in the Darnley murder for which Elizabeth directed by

her principal advisers Cecil and Bacon organised a conference at York to resolve the matter and the hard difficulties between Mary and Moray, as well as the constitutional shape of the future governance of Scotland.

In September 1568 as secretary to the appointed commissioners for Scotland George Buchanan headed to England arriving in York at the beginning of October. When the existence of the incriminating 'casket letters' passed to Moray by the Earl of Morton were made known at the York meeting, which Buchanan declared genuine, this led Elizabeth and her principal adviser Cecil to move the conference to Westminster. With these developments Buchanan and the Scottish commission travelled to London for the Westminster Conference where Moray and his colleagues produced the Book of Articles (believed to have been written or partly written by Buchanan) containing the charges against Mary and further revelations from the casket letters which recent scholars tend to believe are forgeries, in part or in full, with some pro-Marian writers insisting Buchanan was one of their principal forgers.¹⁵⁸ The responsibility for the Westminster Conference proceedings were assigned by Elizabeth to her Lord Keeper Sir Nicholas Bacon, meaning in effect that he was installed as the chief judge, in what had now assumed the trappings of a state trial:¹⁵⁹

The Westminster Conference met every few days from November 23rd until it petered out unceremoniously by mid-December. Bacon moderated at the presentation of both Scottish parties-the Earl of Moray for the protestant lords, and Bishop of Ross for the Marians-and also served as Elizabeth's spokesman, thus effectively performing a dual role. In contrast to an earlier disputation which he had conducted at Westminster, Bacon now moderated with a mask of impartiality that was admirably maintained, and which perfectly fulfilled the government's design.

To the surprise of virtually no one, the results of the Westminster Conference were utterly inconclusive. Mary had skilfully been made to appear unco-operative, so that in the end it was her own refusal to continue which effectively terminated the talks. It remained for Elizabeth only to express surprise and disappointment that her cousin had failed to render a better account of her activities...Elizabeth...determined that Mary was to remain in England, and the co-operative Earl of Moray would return as Regent of Scotland. Clarifying the government's position a week later, Cecil adopted the idea stressed by Bacon's counsel to Throckmorton: that it was crucial that an English upbringing should be secured for young James Stuart, and that Mary should be retained in England for as long as possible.¹⁶⁰

The stay of Buchanan in London for those few months in 1568 are to the present day still deliberately shrouded in secrecy and mystery. Details of his presence in London have not hitherto migrated over to the scholarly literature on Sir Nicholas and Lady Anne Bacon, or the expansive canon on Francis Bacon, one of the most written about and heavily scrutinized figures in the history of English literature. This all the more remarkable when one considers that some information regarding Buchanan's stay in London which relates to the Cooke-Bacon-Cecil family has been available in print for more than three hundred years. There are a number of reasons why this information has not found its way into the literature on the Bacons: the controversial subject of Buchanan himself and his writings, especially relating to Mary, Queen of Scots; the involvement of the Bacon family in the history and downfall of Queen Mary; the six or seven of Bacon's (mostly concealed or obscured) writings on or relating to Queen Mary, among them two dramas; and his hidden authorship of the Shakespeare plays which conceal and reveal a surpassing knowledge and understanding of the life and history of Mary, a figure who it is finally beginning to emerge, that literally haunts the Shakespeare canon.

He was doubtless invited into the great houses of the conjoined of the Bacon-Cecil family including York House on the Strand official residence of the Lord Keeper, and on the north side of the Strand, Cecil House, the London residence of Sir William and Lady Mildred Cooke Cecil, and the Bacon family estate at Gorhambury and Cecil's stately home Theobalds House, both located in the Hertfordshire countryside. It seems inevitable that while Buchanan was in England he came into contact with the young literary genius of the family, Francis Bacon. Here was the greatest Scottish literary figure of the sixteenth century: historian, propagandist, poet and dramatist, author of numerous dramatic devices, masques and plays: a facsimile template for what Bacon, the greatest English figure of the sixteenth and seventeenth century became: historian, propagandist, poet and dramatist, composer of devices, masques, entertainments and plays, including the Shakespeare plays, which reveal serious unmistakable knowledge of Buchanan's writings. Francis must have been in complete awe of Buchanan and he astonished by Bacon's precocious poetic and literary genius, who was then already deeply interested in all matters of poetry and drama, and Buchanan may well have gifted Bacon copies of his earlier poetry and published plays. It is likely that during his time in London not only did Buchanan frequently visit the Bacon and Cecil family houses but resided with them for periods as their honoured guest, and as we shall see, after probably travelling back to Scotland with Moray in January 1569 (he was back at St Andrews in the April) he secretly kept in contact with the Cooke-Bacon-Cecils in the years ahead.

The two eyes of the kingdom Cecil and Bacon continued to carefully monitor religious and political matters north of the border in Scotland through various secret and diplomatic channels, and most likely through correspondence and intermediaries, with Buchanan. With Mary under house arrest in England the political situation in Scotland was volatile and uncertain with Catholic and Protestant factions vying for power and plotting against one another. Following the suppression of the Northern Uprising of 1569-70 Sir William Drury was appointed as special ambassador to negotiate with James Stewart, first Earl of Moray (the illegitimate son of James V, Queen Mary's half-brother, Regent of Scotland on behalf of the infant King James VI) for the surrender of Thomas Percy, the seventh Earl of Northumberland, who had been betrayed to the Scots and imprisoned in Lochleven Castle.

While proceeding to keep an arranged meeting with Drury in Linlithgow the regent Moray was assassinated on 23 January 1570 planned by the powerful Hamilton family carried out by James Hamilton of Bothwellhaugh, a supporter of the Marian cause. The murder of his beloved friend and patron spurred Buchanan into action and a few months later he penned *Ane Admonition Direct to the Trew Lordis mantenaris of the Kingis Graces Authoritie* an invective directed against the House of Hamilton. The work appeared sometime in 1571, in two issues from the press of Robert Lekprevik, a book which as McFarlane succinctly puts it 'the Cecil entourage was undoubtedly interested in'.¹⁶¹ Its modern editor Gatherer points out that an MS among the State Papers is 'probably a first draft of the work which Buchanan sent to Cecil as soon as he had composed it' which contains 'marginal notes in Cecil's hand'.¹⁶² The Cecil entourage, in particular he and his brother-in-law Lord Keeper Sir Nicholas Bacon, then secretly arranged for its publication in England by the Protestant printer John Day (the Bacon-Cecil family printer), reprinted as stated in its imprint 'accordyng to the Scottish copie Printed at Striulyng by Robert Lekpreuik'.¹⁶³ Around the same time in 1570 Buchanan also wrote another prose work entitled *The Chamaeleon* directed against William Maitland of Lethington (one of the conspirers in the murder of David Rizzio), the notorious Machiavellian Scottish statesman and politician renowned for

‘changing his colours to serve the time, cunningly bent on his own advancement, adept at flattery, devoid of gratitude and ruthless in vengeance’,¹⁶⁴ whom Buchanan believed was privy to the assassination of Moray.¹⁶⁵ It appears news of its impending publication reached Maitland and the house of the printer Lekprevik was searched on his orders. Having prior warning of the intended visit Lekprevik made his escape with ‘such things as he feared should have hurt him.’¹⁶⁶ The publication of *The Chamaeleon* which survived in manuscript (a copy or copies of which were likely in the possession of Cecil and Bacon) was thus prevented and it was not printed till 1710. In her full-length study *Hamlet, History Hidden in Plain Sight* (2019) Eliza Langland insists that Shakespeare must have had knowledge of it when writing *Hamlet*:

In a cryptic exchange between Claudius, Polonius and Hamlet, Hamlet is asked by the king how he ‘fares.’ He replies as if he has been asked how he dines: ‘Excellent, i’faith, of the chameleon’s dish: I eat the air promise-crammed...’...the line is more than a puzzle, more than a nonsensical response by Hamlet. It has a deeper meaning that cannot be explained without Buchanan and knowledge of his writing, this time in prose.

Regarded as a satire, *The Chamaeleon* is in fact an unambiguous accusation of murder against ‘ane flatterare’ who changed his ‘colour’ to suit his purposes: William Maitland of Lethington. With this reference we are returned again to Edinburgh in 1567 and the court of Mary Queen of Scots in incipient collapse. Buchanan, in *The Chamaeleon*, charges Lethington for the king’s murder, ‘devysit be him, executit be the Erll Bothuile’ (devised by him-Lethington-and executed by the Earl of Bothwell. Heavily influenced as it was by the figure the piece sought to defend-Buchanan’s patron, Mary’s half-brother, the Earl of Moray...¹⁶⁷

Shortly after the assassination of his erstwhile patron Moray, in keeping with Cecil and Bacon’s wishes, Buchanan was appointed tutor to the four year old King James ensuring the future king of England was raised in the Protestant faith.

Following Cecil and Bacon’s discovery of the Ridolfi plot Elizabeth allowed the printing of a number of publications directed against the character of Queen Mary. The first in this series of Marian libels was the *Detectio*, the genesis of which in one form or another began to emerge around the time of Mary’s first trials at York and Westminster presided over by Bacon. Its complicated relationship to Buchanan’s *Indictment* and *Book of Articles* and other related documents is explored by Mahon who noted that both the *Book of Articles* and the Lennox paper were withheld until the Westminster Trial: the reason being ‘A censor, whether Nicholas Bacon or another, was from the first supervising the legal aspects of the case and passing the various exhibits in review.’¹⁶⁸ Mahon further adds that prior to the publication of the *Detectio* ‘All the evidence, and there is a great deal of it, goes to show that up to this time the *Indictment* and the Letters had been kept secret’, and that Mary’s correspondence, rigorously scrutinised and deciphered, ‘added to Cecil’s secret record’.¹⁶⁹ The Marian libel which first appeared without any indication of its authorship or place and date of publication on its title page was almost certainly printed by John Day in an edition entitled *De Maria Scotorum Regina*.¹⁷⁰ In the edition the *Detectio* is followed by a second Marian libel *Actio Contra Mariam Scotorum Reginam*, together with three of the Casket Letters in Latin, and two Latin poems appended to the volume, by the still unidentified ‘G. M.’ and ‘P. R. Scotus’. In his standard literary biography *Buchanan* Professor McFarlane asks ‘Who are the authors of the Latin poems that graced the Latin edition?’,¹⁷¹ but he does not proceed to answer his own question. In light of the information we now have that the publication of *De Maria Scotorum Regina* in London was permitted and directed by Cecil and Bacon and almost certainly printed

by John Day whose secret and hidden relationship with the Cooke-Bacon-Cecils went back decades and that Buchanan wrote and exchanged poems with the Cooke sisters, several candidates clearly suggest themselves. All four Cooke sisters Lady Mildred Cooke Cecil, Lady Anne Cooke Bacon, Lady Elizabeth Cooke Hoby and Lady Katherine Cooke Killigrew were poets and collectively composed poetry in Greek, Latin and English. It is certainly conceivable that one or more of the Cooke sisters were responsible for the Latin poems appended to the *De Maria Scotorum Regina*. It is also worth noting the first and longer of the two poems including the title itself and the line for its signature and catchword comprises 33 printed lines and outside of its text it contains 33 letters or characters ‘q *In Mariam Reginam Scoticam*, Q. iii., Sed, *G. M.*’ The number 33 is Bacon in simple cipher. The total number of printed lines of the poem if the last printed line containing the initials ‘*G. M.*’ is included amounts to 34 which when added to the 33 characters outside of the text 34+33=67 Francis in simple cipher: yielding Francis Bacon in simple cipher.¹⁷²

Two issues of an ‘English’ edition of *De Maria Scotorum Regina* entitled *Ane Detectiovn of the duinges of Marie Quene of Scottes, touchand the murder of hir husband, and hir conspiracie, adultrie, and pretensed mariage with the Erle Bothwell* appeared within a month of the Latin edition, without any place or date of publication on its title page, again printed almost certainly at London by Day.¹⁷³ This fuller edition rendered in ‘handsome Scottish’ by Wilson contained all eight Casket Letters, ‘certain French sonnettes’, and a verse at the end of the volume, aimed at least in part at English Catholics some of whom wished to see Mary replace Elizabeth on the English throne:

Now iudge Englischmen if
it be gud to change Quenis.
O vnityng confounding.

Quhen [when] rude Scotla[n]d hes
vomited vp ane poisoun, must
fine England lick it vp for a
restoratiue?
O vile indignitie.

Quhile [while] your Quenis enemy
liueth, hir dangir co[n]tinueth.
Desperate necesitie wyll
dare the vttermost.
O cruell mercie.

O ambitioun fed with prosperitie,
stre[n]gthned with indulgence,
irritated with aduersitie, not to be
neglected, trusted, nor pardouned.¹⁷⁴

A genuine Scottish version with a very similar title page was printed by Leprevik in 1572 which omitted the verse printed at the end of the London edition.¹⁷⁵ Cecil and Bacon also arranged for a French translation that appeared with a fictitious Edinburgh imprint ‘A Edimbovrg, Par Thomas Waltem’, which was actually printed at La

Rochelle in France,¹⁷⁶ with two editions apparently printed and circulated in Germany.
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On the orders of Cecil and Bacon their brother-in-law Henry Killigrew (husband of Lady Anne Bacon's sister Lady Katherine Cooke Killigrew) who was then serving as the English diplomat in France distributed copies of Buchanan's work around the French court, including among others to the Ambassador of Venice 'The Ambassador brought over Buchanan's book in Latin and in English, which were much desired in the court, and the English for that which wanteth in the Latin' and Thomas Smith also with Killigrew at Ambiose informed Cecil 'Touching the Scottish matters and the treasons, they have distributed certain books of Buchanan in Latin which have done no hurt, but made the matter so plain that they be ashamed to defend her that fain would.'¹⁷⁸ As part of their sophisticated strategy Cecil and Bacon by making it appear Buchanan's works, including the pseudo-Scottish edition (secretly printed in London) and French language version (with its false Edinburgh imprint secretly printed at Rochelle), that they had all originated from Scotland. This allowed Elizabeth to deny all responsibility and jurisdiction over the matter. When the French king Charles IX, through his ambassador in London M. de Fenelon expressed his 'Regret that she should have permitted such a villainous writing to be published', he informed Mary that Elizabeth 'pretendeth that the book had been printed in Scotland, not in England' which was beyond her control.¹⁷⁹ Her two grand architects Cecil and Bacon (with the knowledge of Buchanan with whom they were secretly conspiring) had succeeded in arranging for the publication and distribution of these anti-Marian books in Scotland, England, and throughout Europe as part of propaganda programme to blacken and destroy the reputation of Mary, Queen of Scots, who they saw as a continuing threat to national security, and to the life of their royal mistress.

In the meantime Sir Nicholas Bacon had turned his attention to the proposed match between Elizabeth and the Duke of Anjou that 'would undermine the likelihood and desirability of a match between Mary and the Duke of Norfolk', which he stood firmly against.¹⁸⁰ In Cecil's words in a letter to the French Ambassador Sir Francis Walsingham 'My Lord Keeper hath dealt earnestly in it' in the matter of the proposed match of her Majesty and the Duke of Anjou.¹⁸¹ It was on this subject that he wrote a brief tract *A Discourse of the Queen's Marriage with the Duke of Anjou* weighing up the advantages and disadvantages of the match in which it is clear the presence of the Scottish queen and the danger she represented to Elizabeth and the throne of England was playing heavily on his mind.

He a Lord Keeper of the Realm and keeper of royal secrets knew better than anyone the private and public complexities surround the question of the succession. If, he begins, the queen should continue without marrying and producing an heir (he privately knew Elizabeth had secretly married Dudley with whom she produced two children, one of them being his adopted son, Francis) she continually exposes herself to the danger of assassination. Furthermore she risks losing the love of her loyal subjects concerned with their own preservation and the lives of their families on consideration of who might succeed her 'to whom the subjectes shall firste secretlie, and in the proces of tyme more boldlie, directe their inwarde devotions' and so have less regard for the queen which could prove dangerous.¹⁸² He is also mindful of the 'greate number' of her subjects 'beinge alreadye secreatlie and deeplie infected with several factions' who would be all too 'readye to assist any invasion of the State by practize, rebellion, or by foren invasion.'¹⁸³ A marriage and hoped for heir(s) would profit and unite the realm 'and so thereby the curious and dangerous questions of the righte of succession (which is now the grounde of all mischiefe,) shall, in the mindes

of quiet subjectes, bee, as it weare, buried, a happie funeral to all England'.¹⁸⁴ This would result in countering the ambition of powerful forces and some of her Catholic subjects for the Scottish queen and undermine the pursuit of any revival of the proposed marriage between Mary and Norfolk. The divine blessing of issue by Elizabeth would bring untold joy to her good subjects and she then need not 'feare eny matches of mariage of the Q. of Scottes, as nowe shee hathe great cause to dooe; nor eny practise of trowble within the realme by rebelles or discontented persons'.¹⁸⁵ The question Bacon then proceeds to ask is whom should she marry. He quickly passes over a marriage to one of her subjects even though he acknowledges Elizabeth would 'therebye avoyde the mislikinge that comonlie this nation hath of a struanger.'

¹⁸⁶ He then firstly considers the disadvantages of a marriage with the Duke of Anjou of which he presents six: 1] He is younger than Queen Elizabeth and the state and constitution of his body is unknown, and more importantly, his religion is contrary to that of Elizabeth and her realm. 2] He is a stranger and heir to the French crown and will thus be disliked by the common people. 3] If the union produced no issue he might with the assistance of his powerful brother the King of France try to usurp the crown. 4] If the union produced male issue and his brother Charles IX should die without issue, their male offspring could inherit both the French and English throne, something which would be rued by the whole nation of England. 5] If a union with Queen Elizabeth failed to produce children and Mary, Queen of Scots should remain unmarried then Anjou might conspire to murder Elizabeth and marry Mary, as a means of continuing his possession of the English crown, and combine the kingdoms of England, Scotland and Ireland under his personal rule. 6] The marriage could see England drawn into a war between France and Spain, as Mary previously was with Philip against France, when Calais was lost.¹⁸⁷ Consistent with his legally forensic and politically astute mind he subsequently addresses these objections. 1] Concerned with reservations that Anjou might have with Queen Elizabeth, he insists that she looks younger than she is and 'in personage, beautye and all giftes of nature the best and goodliest princes in Christendom', and is monarch of a realm which is the equal of any in the rest of the known world. 2] For the second objection Bacon raises the example of King Philip. 3] Being a foreign prince and not a monarch it will be required that Anjou secure the goodwill of the queen and her subjects. 4] The marriage contract should include a clause that prevents Anjou from participating in the government of the realm until the union produces an heir. 5] It is likely that his newly married brother Charles IX will have children and it is thus necessary that laws should be passed in both kingdoms precluding the possibility of joint inheritance. 6] He believed that given her age that Mary, Queen of Scots would soon be married which would remove the possibility of Anjou wanting to do away with Elizabeth and ruling over three kingdoms.¹⁸⁸ With these objections addressed Bacon then turns to the advantages which might be expected to ensue from the alliance. A marriage with Anjou being son and brother to a king of France would be honourable and any issue produced by the union princely. It would also bring about amity with France with whom England has endured many cruel and hurtful wars. By this match Bacon concludes Queen Elizabeth 'shalbe delyvered of the continuall feare of the practizes withe the Queene of Scottes, on whome dependeth almoste the onylie prosperitie of the Q. hole liffe and raygne'.¹⁸⁹ The tract was never intended for publication and an unknown number of manuscript copies of it were privately circulated by Bacon (a practice regularly afterwards employed by his son Francis) among trusted colleagues and friends, some of whom, may or may not have known of its actual provenance or authorship:

Most likely, the 'Discourse' was neither intended for Elizabeth's eyes nor seen by her, for the terms used to discuss the Norfolk/Mary match seem overly candid, and might well have angered the Queen. Having had his fingers badly burned in the Hales episode only a half-dozen years before, it is mostly likely that Bacon tempered the earnestness of his message with discretion in its distribution. It seems rather to have been circulated among those at court who could be expected to receive it with sympathy. One of the extant copies is endorsed in the hand of Sir Walter Mildmay, who seems not to have been converted to the project in the end, but who would at least not betray Bacon's part.¹⁹⁰

The complex political, religious, and military strategic issues relating to Anglo-Scottish relations, the dominant European powers of Spain and France, the forces of Catholicism and Protestantism, and the fight for the very soul and future direction of Europe, in the second half of the sixteen-century all converged in the figure of Mary, Queen of Scots. During this time England was caught up in the vortex of volatile, changing and extremely dangerous events. Surrounded by enemies England acted as the Protestant bulwark in a Catholic dominated Europe, and for most of this time it was continually under threat, in what was nothing short of crucial fight for its very survival with its outcome anything but certain. The life of its monarch Elizabeth was permanently lived under the threat of assassination through conspiracies inspired by, relating to, or involving her royal cousin Mary, Queen of Scots. The close family clan (to use the term of Professor Wigfall Green) behind the English crown were the Cooke-Bacon-Cecil. A family headed by Sir Anthony Cooke and his two son-in-laws Secretary of State Sir William Cecil and Lord Keeper Sir Nicholas Bacon, the two grand architects of the Elizabethan reformation, themselves married to the two Cooke sisters Lady Mildred Cooke Cecil and Lady Anne Cooke Bacon, who with the other two Cookes sisters Lady Elizabeth Cooke Hoby Russell and Lady Katherine Cooke Killigrew were part of a enormous and secretive pan European Protestant network. It was to this family clan, the power behind the English crown, that Bacon was born-adopted-into in those days when Mary, Queen of Scots not only loomed large on the national (dominated by his father and uncle) and international stage but also in the Bacon household headed by his formidable mother Lady Anne Bacon, known for her strong anti-Catholic views, who through her translation of *Apology in Defence of the Church of England* was the voice of the Protestant establishment.

It is very highly likely that a young Francis Bacon earmarked for a career in law and statecraft had a close first hand view of the conference held at York House the official residence of his father Sir Nicholas Bacon, Lord Keeper of the Realm, where he spent the majority of his early years situated as it was next door to the Elizabethan royal court at York Place. Similarly he most probably personally witnessed his father in his official capacity of Lord Keeper of the Realm and de facto Lord Chancellor of England (positions that Bacon held in later life) preside at the opening of parliament in 1572 in the wake of the Ridolfi plot that aimed to assassinate Elizabeth and replace her on the English throne with Queen Mary. Throughout this decade his father and uncle Cecil were responsible for closely monitoring the threat represented by Mary to the life of Elizabeth and the security of the realm, which regularly demanded the attention of the Privy Council underpinned by a spy and intelligence network at home and abroad.

It was against this backdrop and in these circumstances that Bacon took his place in the parliament of 1584 probably armed with more knowledge (secret, private and public) through his father Sir Nicholas Bacon and uncle Sir William Cecil about Mary, Queen of Scots, a figure Francis had lived with figuratively speaking from

virtually the day he was born. A fact all the more curious when we consider that up to the present day in the numerous biographies of Mary, Queen of Scots from the likes of the celebrated historian and biographer Antonia Fraser, the influential Scottish historian Dr Jenny Wormald, the renowned Tudor historian Professor John Guy, and Professor Retha M. Warnicke ‘widely regarded as the leading historian on Tudor queenship’, *the illustrious name of Francis Bacon does not interrupt their narratives or even appear once in their indexes*).¹⁹¹ His great biographer James Spedding sets the scene:

In November, 1584, a new Parliament was called, under circumstances of a highly agitating character. The Bull of Excommunication which had been issued against Elizabeth in 1569 having failed to frighten England out of its Protestantism, and the experience of the next twelve years having shown that, so long as she lived, there was little chance of overthrowing the reformed religion by open methods, the hopes of the Catholic world turned thenceforward towards her death; in the event of which (no provision having been made for the succession) Mary of Scotland would have claimed the crown; her claim would have been supported by the Pope, by Spain, by a considerable party in Scotland, and (what was perhaps of still more importance) by the natural right of inheritance; and thereupon would probably have ensued either the re-establishment of the Catholic religion in England, or a civil war, or both....During the twelve months immediately preceding, three several plots for the assassination of Elizabeth had been detected...On the 23rd of November, in the midst of the general fervour and alarm, the Houses met; and Francis Bacon, now in his twenty-fifth year took his seat for Melcombe, in Dorsetshire...Of the debates which followed we have not record; but they ended in the sanction of the “association” by Parliament, in the creation of a new tribunal for the trial of conspirators against the Queen’s life, and the enactment of new laws, more severe than ever, against priests and Jesuits. With such antecedents therefore, such an entrance, and such a conclusion, we may presume that they were warm, and that the first breath of Bacon’s public life was drawn in a very contagious atmosphere of loyalty and anti-popery.¹⁹²

The parliament convened on 23 November 1584 and in the winter of 1584-5 Bacon wrote *A Letter of Advice to the Queen* a political intelligence tract which surveyed the dangers faced by England from Spain and the pope, hostile Catholic factions within the kingdom, and the need to protect her against Jesuits and seminary priests. He appealed to ‘all reason of state’ to counter strong ‘factious subjects and your foreign enemies’ and points to the example ‘of the most wise, most politic, and best governed estates’ who used all means at their disposal ‘to take away all power of enmity.’¹⁹³ He suggests that the Oath of Supremacy should be altered ‘that whosoever would not bear arms against all foreign princes, and namely, that should any way invade you Majesty’s dominions, he should be a traitor.’¹⁹⁴ To strongly strengthen Protestantism the number of Catholics within her realm should be reduced by appointing preachers in every parish and good schoolmasters around the country reminding her all ‘your force and strength and power’ consisted in her Protestant subjects.¹⁹⁵ Regarding her foreign enemies he emphasizes they ‘are able and willing to hurt you, I account Scotland for his pretence and neighbourhood, and Spain for his religion and power’, both of which have to be carefully watched and monitored, whereas France ‘I see not why it should not rather be made a friend than an enemy’, for while it does agree in matters of conscience and religion, it fears the greatness of Spain.¹⁹⁶ To strengthen and extend her foreign policy he raises the possibility of some kind of international league and ‘joining in good confederacy, or at least intelligence, with those that would willingly embrace the same’, not only with the Dutch and the northern princes, but also with Catholic states such as ‘Florence, Ferrara, and especially Venice’, who ‘fear and abhor the King of Spain’s greatness.’¹⁹⁷ To weaken

the King of Spain Bacon advises attacks on specific Spanish possessions in the West Indies and the Low Countries 'which would give themselves unto you'.¹⁹⁸ Moreover each and all options that further limit and weaken the power of Philip II should be a matter for consideration among them,

to seek either the winning of the Prince of Parma from the King of Spain, or at least to have it handled so as a jealousy thereof might arise between them; as Pope Clement did by the notable Marquis of Pescara: for he practised with him with offering the kingdom of Naples, not so much with hope to win him, as to make his master suspect him.

For when I consider that he is a Roman of blood, a Prince born, placed in his place he hath by Don John, and maintained in it by the malcontents, whereunto the King hath rather yielded of necessity than was an author: lastly when I remember the citadel of Piacenza kept by the Spaniards, and the apparent title of his son Ranuccio to the Crown of Portugal (things hardly to be digested by an Italian stomach), I cannot see how such a mind in such a fortune can sell itself to foreign servitude.

The manner of dealing should be by some man of spirit with the Venetian ambassador in Paris, and afterwards with his own father in Italy, both which are in their hearts mortal enemies of the greatness of Spain.¹⁹⁹

A concealed royal son of Elizabeth and raised by a Lord Keeper, Bacon had grown up with the problem of Mary, Queen of Scots, otherwise known as the 'Great Cause'. Not only had he an important personal and private interest in the matter, touching as it did on the succession of the English crown, he was also close to and surrounded by all the key persons in the drama: Elizabeth, Walsingham, Burghley, Sir Amias Paulet and the brilliant decipherer and code-breaker Thomas Phelippes, the latter two both custodians of Mary, Queen of Scots. In the 1586 parliament on 3 November Bacon gave a speech in favour of the execution of Mary Stuart, then at the time in the custody of his two close friends Sir Amias Paulet and Thomas Phelippes, and the next day Bacon was appointed to a committee tasked to draw up a petition for her execution.²⁰⁰ Within a few days a document conveyed by the Speaker of the House entitled '*Reasons against Mary Queen of Scots delivered to Elizabeth, 12 November 1586*' stipulated that the execution of Mary was necessary to ensure the safety of Queen Elizabeth's person, maintain the Protestant religion, and protect the security of the nation. If Mary was not executed it would imperil all these considerations and only encourage further Catholic conspirators and bring discomfort and despair to her loyal subjects.²⁰¹ Simultaneously a '*Petition of Lords and Commons for the execution of Mary Queen of Scots, presented on 12 November 1586*' was also delivered to Elizabeth 'May yt please your moost excellent Maiestie, our moost gracyous soveraigne. We your humble lovinge and faythfull subiectes, the Lordes and Commens in this present parliament assembled, having of longe tyme, to our intolerable grieffe, seene by howe manyfoulde moost daungerous and execrable practyses Marye...hath compassed the destruccion of your Majestie's sacred and moost royall person...and therby not onely to bereave us of the syncere and true religion of allmyghtie God, bringing us and this noble crown back agayne into the thraldome of the Romishe tyrране, but also utterlie to ruynate and overthrowe the happye state and commen weale of this mooste noble realme; ...and are fullie satisfied that the same sentence and judgement is in all thinges moost honourable, iust, and lauffull'.²⁰² With parliament in full agreement with the guilty verdict and death sentence handed down by the commissioners at her trial Elizabeth now faced a complex dilemma which gave rise to a whole range of competing complications involving the potential threat of the pope and Catholic Spain, as well as France and Scotland, the internal security of the realm, and the more personal consideration, that the execution of Queen

Mary, an anointed monarch, would set a very dangerous historical precedent that might come back to haunt her. Understandably, in these circumstances Elizabeth did what she always did: she delayed and procrastinated, tried to deflect responsibility away from herself, resorted to all kinds of pretences and deceit, said one thing in public and another in private, continually changed her mind and then changed it back again, all to the absolute exasperation of those around her. For the time being the only concession Cecil and the two Houses of Parliament could secure from Elizabeth was the public proclamation on 4 December 1586 announcing the sentence of death but the final outcome in the tragedy was far from certain and was still some way off. Mary, Queen of Scots was finally sentenced to death and executed on 8 February 1587 and probably not long afterwards Bacon commenced planning, writing, preparing and organising the performance of *The Misfortunes of Arthur* a drama about Queen Elizabeth and Queen Mary, performed before Elizabeth, to the very month a year later in February 1588.

4.

THE POLITICAL ALLEGORY OF *THE MISFORTUNES OF ARTHUR*

Several scholars have highlighted the political allegory hidden beneath the surface of *The Misfortune of Arthur*. That the play is based upon recent great historical events is indicated by the carefully positioned declaration at the end of its introduction: 'How sutes a Tragedie for such a time?'/Thus, For that since your sacred Maiestie/In gracious hands the regall Scepter held/All Tragedies are fled from State, to stadge.²⁰³ More than a decade later Bacon would recall this phrase when referring to the Essex uprising and the role played by his servant Sir Gilly Merrick in commissioning his Shakespeare play *Richard II* with its explosive deposition scene which the Essex supporters hoped would serve a rallying call to arms for what followed the next day:

That afternoon before the rebellion, Merricke, with a great company of others that afterwards were all in the action, had procured to be played before them the play deposing King Richard II.

Neither was it casual, but a play bespoken by Merrick.

And not so only, but when it was told him by one of the players, that the play was old, and they should have loss in playing it because few would come to it: there were forty shillings extraordinary given to play it, and so thereupon played it was.

So earnest he was to satisfy his eyes with the sight of that tragedy, which he thought soon after his Lord should bring from the *stage to the state* [my italics], but that God turned it upon their own heads.²⁰⁴

The first scholar to highlight the thinly hidden political allegory in *The Misfortunes of Arthur* and its analogies with contemporary affairs and individuals was Evangelica H. Waller in her 1925 article 'A Possible Interpretation Of *The Misfortunes Of Arthur*' printed in *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*. In it she suggested that the drama alluded to contemporary affairs in Scotland and England. The year before had seen Mary, Queen of Scots executed at the command of Elizabeth to the enormous relief of some of her councillors and in February 1588 it was well-rumoured that the Spanish were preparing an invasion to revenge the act, assassinate Elizabeth, and restore England to the Catholic faith. Bound up in this toxic mix was the continuing burning question of the succession of the English crown with the main theme of the play the fear of another civil war and the completion destruction of the kingdom. With

scarcely any knowledge of the above Waller was still able to readily grasp (which she hints at here-as much as she felt able) the more significant role played by Bacon in the writing and producing of *The Misfortunes of Arthur*:

An interesting point that presents itself at this point in our investigation is the connection of Francis Bacon with *The Misfortunes of Arthur*. He is given credit for “partly devising the dumbe shewes.” This would imply a knowledge of the entire play as the dumb shows presented before each act set forth the exposition of the plot...Bacon...helped in several dramatic performances and “in the Sports and Revels at Gray’s Inn, he was always head and front.” Another reason for supposing that Bacon was greatly interested in *The Misfortunes of Arthur* is the fact that the play was presented at Court. From the death of Bacon’s father in 1579 he became “the most importunate and most untiring of suitors...”...Bacon accordingly sought to gain royal favour and to influence royal opinion by any means whatsoever.”...The way was now open then. He could stir up opinion by public writing or public speaking...”...

Another interesting and important fact that I should like to call to mind in discussing Bacon’s connection with the play is that he possessed the means of being kept in close touch with the situation in Scotland. In 1576 Bacon went abroad with Elizabeth’s ambassador, Sir Amias Paulet, “to be bred a statesman, according to the wishes of his father, whose favourite son he was.” From that time on he was in close touch with Sir Amias and Mr. Thomas Phelippes, the well-known decipherer of Mary’s correspondence. Probably these two men knew more about the Scottish situation from 1585 to 1588 than any other person in Scotland or England.²⁰⁵

In the interpretation presented by Waller, Guinevere, who deserts Arthur to take the traitor Mordred for her lover stands for Mary, Queen of Scots, who likely conspired in the murder of her second husband Darnley to marry her third Bothwell. The ghost of Gorlios is identified as Darnley, Arthur with James VI of Scotland, Mordred with the arch-traitor of Scotland, the younger Bothwell, and as for Elizabeth, although she is not assigned any specific role in the play, she can be found in the characters of Fronia and Angharat, and advice offered by Arthur’s counsellors reflected Elizabeth’s advice in her correspondence to the young King James.

Twenty years later in her article ‘Political Import of *The Misfortunes of Arthur*’ its author Gertrude Reese also read the drama in light of the circumstances surrounding events in Scotland and England and the execution of Mary, Queen of Scots, in which she sees Arthur as Queen Elizabeth and Mordred representing Mary:

The emphasis placed on the Mordred-Arthur plot, the close parallels between the play and actual events, the specific references to Mary Stuart’s life in England, the divergence from the sources, the interest of the authors in political affairs-all point toward the use of legendary material of Arthur and Mordred for the purpose of reflecting the situation involved in Mary Stuart’s execution. The authors stressed the fact that Elizabeth sought to keep Mary alive but that her statesmen forced her to see the political necessity of the execution. The time was opportune for reviewing the situation. England’s trouble with Spain was a continuation of the hostile spirit that found in Mary Stuart’s claim a rallying point. When the same course of difficulties was coming to a climax, a play that justified Elizabeth’s actions and paid tribute to the Queen was seasonable.

Francis Bacon is the only one of the authors who is still well-known. His political position indicates that he shared the general attitude toward Mary, the one seemingly expressed in this play. He entered parliament in 1584 and sat for Taunton in the Parliament that met on 29 October 1586, to help Elizabeth make the decision against Mary. In this same year he became a bencher of Gray’s Inn. He was always a strong advocate for pressure against Catholics and was in close contact with Burghley and Walsingham, two men who strongly urged Mary’s execution.²⁰⁶

In *The English History Play in the age of Shakespeare* Ribner agrees with Waller and Reese in seeing *The Misfortune of Arthur* as a justification for the execution of Mary Queen of Scots:

...political moralizing runs throughout the play, with constant emphasis upon the need for the ruler to govern with justice and to avoid wanton oppression of his subjects. The play opens and closes with praise of Elizabeth for her embodiment of these ideals and for her assurance to England of the golden age promised by King Arthur. But the full force of the play's political significance becomes evident when we remember that it was performed just one year after the execution of Mary Stuart, at a time when Elizabeth's right to the throne had been challenged by Papal interdiction, and when all England was preparing to meet the threat of Spanish invasion which was to be dispelled some months later with the defeat of the Spanish Armada. There were powerful forces in England whom many feared would join with Spain and fight against their countrymen in order to supplant Elizabeth with a Catholic monarch.

...But there is more in the play than a justification for Mary's death, and Mordred stands for more than a single figure of the Queen of Scotland. *The Misfortune of Arthur* was written not only with an eye to past events, but also with one to future dangers. Mary was dead, but a Spanish invasion was still in the offing. Mordred is a general symbol of all Catholic Englishmen who might be tempted to join in the attempt against Elizabeth. The play is a warning against the civil war and the annihilation of England which would inevitably follow the joining of Englishmen with foreign powers against their queen, just as Mordred had allied himself with foreign powers against his king.²⁰⁷

He was familiar with the two earlier accounts by Waller and Reese who found in the play a clear political intent in what was a thinly veiled historical allegory. Ribner says that although he did not believe it necessary to look for specific identification of the characters in the play with contemporary historical figures he believed that Reese was most probably closer to the truth in her interpretation of the play which sees Arthur as Queen Elizabeth and Mordred as Mary, Queen of Scots.²⁰⁸ He also notes:

Miss Waller finds in the play an attempt to flatter Elizabeth by praising the general wisdom of her handling of Scottish affairs, and she attributes a larger share than usual to Francis Bacon, who was in an excellent position to know of these affairs.²⁰⁹

The recent modern editor of *The Misfortunes of Arthur* Brian J. Corrigan supports the simpler view of Reese and Ribner and sees the character of Gorlois as a representation of the Catholic Church:

She [Mary, Queen of Scots] was seen as a functionary of a Pope who guided her actions *sub silentio*. Just as the Catholic church was presumed to be in control of Mary, so Gorlois is the secret motivating force behind the rebellious Mordred. England had been taken from the church by Elizabeth's father, Henry VII, just as Igema-and consequently Cornwall-had been taken from Gorlois by Arthur's father, Uther Pendragon. It is therefore reasonable to read into the character of Gorlois a representation of the Roman Catholic church, which Protestant England considered to be the motivating force behind Mary's claim to the throne. If Gorlois is a characterisation of the Roman church, the characterisation is a bitter one; he has, after all, travelled through a pagan Hell in order to exact an unchristian revenge.²¹⁰

He also states:

Francis Bacon appears to have been instrumental to the inception of the play. His known involvement in theatrical presentations, especially masques, and his association with *The Misfortunes of Arthur* make it likely that he was privy to, if not responsible for, the earliest proposals for an Arthur masque to be presented before the Queen.²¹¹

In his article 'British Empire on the Eve of the Armada: Revisiting "*The Misfortunes of Arthur*"' Curtis Perry opines 'I think the play was written to support the political agenda of William Cecil, Lord Burghley, who was both a member of Gray's Inn and an active patron within the institution during the 1580s. For one thing, Burghley was Bacon's maternal uncle and the focus, circa, 1588, of his hopes for patronage... Given Burghley's active role in Gray's Inn and support of its theatrical performances, it is entirely possible that he had a hand in the arrangements for the performance of *The Misfortunes of Arthur*.'²¹² Before proceeding to title a nine page section of his article 'BURGHLEY'S MISFORTUNES OF ARTHUR'.²¹³

As with many of the commentators of *The Misfortune of Arthur* Gile Gamble also sees Arthur as Elizabeth and Mordred as Mary 'and the good counsellors on both sides as representing the Gray's Inn lawyers.'²¹⁴

In fact the major characters in the play are all provided with counsel. Cador, Duke of Cornwall and Howell, King of Little Britain, act as counsellors to King Arthur. Angharad and Fronia provide counsel to Guinevere. But by far the most prominent and important counsellor in the drama is Conan, the good and faithful counsellor to Mordred. And of course the play itself was written and performed for the purpose of providing Queen Elizabeth with grave counsel and advice. In the (almost amusing) words of Stewart and Knight in *The Oxford Francis Bacon Early Writings 1584-1596* '*The Misfortunes of Advice* might therefore best be understood within Bacon's oeuvre as one of the several pieces of counsel for the queen included in this volume.'²¹⁵ The first of these reprinted in their volume listed just prior to *The Misfortunes of Arthur* in their contents page is simply titled *Letter of Advice to the Queen* written in c.1584-5, three years before *Misfortunes*, a tract which shares very similar themes and concerns. It was written, observe Stewart and Knight, at the time of Elizabeth's fifth parliament which commenced on 23 November 1584 'This parliament was dominated by talk of the dangers facing England from Spain and the pope, and of the need to protect the queen against Jesuits and seminary priests'²¹⁶ directed to the ears of Elizabeth against the backdrop of the threat posed through and by Mary, Queen of Scots. Here then in this important political document we have Bacon offering advice to Elizabeth and in a drama addressed and presented to Elizabeth we have an adviser Conan described as a 'faithfull counsellor' about whom with the exception of Gamble is scarcely mentioned or ignored by its editors and commentators. This is all the more curious when in a modern edition of the *Misfortunes* the prominent counsellor makes an appearance on something approaching twenty pages representing some where in the region of a fifth of the play itself (see Act 1 Scene 4; Act 2 Scene 2; Act 2 Scene 4; Act 4 Scene I; Act 4 Scene 2 and Act 4 Scene 3).

The deliberate selecting or adopting of the name Conan is suggestive, and it might be argued, said out loud suggests the name Bacon. To be sure the two names sound like each other. Furthermore, it is worth pointing out that the first five letters 'Cona' can be construed as an anagram, or near anagram of Bacon; clearly, all that is missing is the letter B. In the original 1588 edition throughout the play the counsellor is identified by use of the abbreviation 'CONA'. The very first a passage spoken by the counsellor Conan contains the following 34 words which minus 1 for the name Conan 34-1=33 Bacon in simple cipher:

CONA. Since that your highnes knowes for certaine truth
What power your sire prepares to claime his right:
It neerly now concernes you to resolue
In humbliest sort to reconcile youre selfe
Gainst his returne.²¹⁷

[Act 1 Scene 4: Lines 68-71]

The faithful counsellor Conan/Bacon, a Briton faithful to Arthur (Elizabeth) throughout the play counsels his son Mordred against civil war urging him to seek reconciliation to avoid the country being torn apart. Mordred resists and dismisses his wise counsel and in no uncertain terms states his sight is firmly fixed on the crown whatever the cost:

MORD. Let him
Usurpe no Crowne, that likes a guiltles life:
Aspiring power and Justice sield agree.
He alwaies feares, that shames to offer wrong.

CONA. What sonne would use such wrong against his sire?

MORD. Come, sonne, come sire, I first preferre my selfe.
And since a wrong must be, then it excels,
When t'is to gaine a Crown. I hate a peere,
I loath, I yirk, I doe detest a head.
B't Nature, be it Reason, be it Pride,
I loue to rule: my minde, nor with, nor by,
Nor after any claimes, but chiefe and first.²¹⁸

[Act 1 Scene 4: Lines 105-16]

This passage and others reminds us of the first tetralogy of the three plays of *Henry VI* beset by civil war and *Richard III* in his ruthless pursuit of the crown written around the same time or shortly after; and it was not long before Bacon was giving similar counsel to that given by Conan to Mordred to Essex whose course threatened the security of the realm and threatened to plunge the kingdom into civil war. In Act 4 Scene 2 Nuntius reports the death of both Mordred and Arthur and in the next scene Conan and Gildas discuss the unfortunate state of the nation. Gildas laments that the destructive civil war between father and son has left the kingdom open to external threats and dangers from the Scots, Saxons, Danes which will cause the death of the kingdom 'These blades haue giuen this Isle a greater wounde,/Then tyme can heale. The fruite of ciuill warres:/A Kingdom's hand hath goard a Kingdom's heart' (Act 4 Scene 3: 23-5): Conan responds with a eulogy to the fame and memory of King Arthur/Queen Elizabeth in Baconian-Shakespearean language which anticipates themes and passages later developed in the several English Shakespeare history plays forming the two tetralogies, as well as *Henry VIII*, the Roman tragedy *Julius Caesar*, and perhaps even *The Tempest*:

CONA. When Fame shall blaze these acts in latter yeares,
And time to come, so many ages hence,
Shall ests report our toyles and Brytish paynes:
Or when perhaps our Childrens Children reade,

Our woefull warres displaid with skilfull penne:
 They'l thinke they heere some sounds of future facts,
 And not the ruines olde of pompe long past.
 Twill mooue their mindes to ruth, and frame a fresh
 New hopes, and feares, and vowes, and many a wish,
 And Arthurs cause shall still be fauour'd most.

He was the ioy, and hope, and hap of all,
 The Realmes defence, the sole delay of Fates,
 He was our wall and fort, twice thirteene yeares
 His shoulders did the Brytaine state support.

Whiles yet he raignd, no forren foes preuailde,
 Nor once could hope to binde the Brytaine boundes:
 But still both farre and nere were forc'd to flie,
 They thrall to vs, we to our selues were free.²¹⁹

[Act 4 Scene 3: Lines 26-43]

Of the principal characters in the play, and some of the more minor ones too, namely King Arthur, Mordred, Queen Guenevera, Angharad, sister to the Queen, Fronia, a Lady of her train, Gorlois, the Duke of Cornwall's Ghost, a very significant number of historical figures have been suggested as represented by them: Queen Elizabeth, Mary, Queen of Scots, James 1, Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley, second husband and consort of Mary, his suspected murderer James Hepburn, fourth Earl of Bothwell, third and final husband of Mary, and indirectly the Pope, as an individual or through the institution of the Catholic Church, and Gray's Inn lawyers representing the good counsellors on both sides. Whereas not one single editor of *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, or any commentator on or about the play, has ever once even remotely suggested, not even hinted directly or indirectly, who the character of Conan, the faithful councillor or adviser, a major figure who plays a large and important role in the play actually represents, something all the more astounding, when the answer is so blindingly obvious. The faithful counsellor and adviser Conan clearly represents Bacon, the most famous councillor and adviser, of the Elizabethan and Jacobean reigns. For four decades he was councillor and adviser to the monarchs who reigned during his lifetime Queen Elizabeth and King James, as well as councillor and adviser to the two favourites of both reigns Robert Devereux, second Earl of Essex and George Villiers, first Duke of Buckingham. He also wrote long letters of 'Advice to the Earl of Rutland on his Travels', (in this case three), 'Advice to Fulke Greville on his studies', 'A Letter and Discourse to Sir Henry Savile touching helps for intellectual powers'; and a number of masques and entertainments *Of Tribute; or giving what is due; Of Love and Self-Love* and *A Device for the Gray's Inn Revels* comprising six speeches (*The First Counsellor, advising the Exercise; The Second Counsellor, advising the Study of Philosophy; The Third Counsellor, advising Eternizement and Fame by Buildings and Foundations; The Fourth Counsellor, advising Absoluteness of State and Treasure; The Fifth Counsellor, advising Virtue and a gracious Government; and The Sixth Counsellor, persuading Pastimes and Sports*), used as dramatic vehicles to offer counsel and advice. As was the case with *The Misfortunes of Arthur* wherein one of its major characters Conan, faithful counsellor loyal to Arthur (Queen Elizabeth) advises Mordred (Mary, Queen of Scots), a play in which its two leading protagonists are surrounded by other counsellors and advisers.²²⁰ Why then when it is so blindingly and irrefutably obvious that Conan represents Bacon has not one of the editors of *The Misfortunes of Arthur* nor any of its commentators ever pointed to it, or even as much as raised the possibility, or even remotely hinted at it? The reason is very, very, simple-

because if Conan represents Bacon (as he so obviously does) it strongly points to Bacon being the true author of *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, as he most certainly is. A fact that has been secretly known to some of Bacon's editors and biographers who for more than four hundred years have suppressed and passed over it in virtual silence-for the very, very, simple reason-they were fully cognizant of its implications germane to his secret authorship of the Shakespeare works.

5.

FRANCIS BACON SOLE AUTHOR OF *THE MISFORTUNES OF ARTHUR*

Ordinarily it would surely have defied common sense to uncritically accept or believe that this important play with its remarkable Shakespearean associations was or could have been written by Thomas Hughes someone not known to have been associated with any other dramatic literature during his lifetime, but as stated above, some have known the truth but suppressed it; although not everyone outside of the knowledge circle was so easily deceived.

The true authorship of *The Misfortunes of Arthur* was inadvertently pointed towards by the Shakespeare scholar J. P. Collier in the early part of the nineteenth century:

The mere rarity of this unique drama would not have recommended it to our notice; but it is not likely that such a man as Bacon would have lent his aid to the production of a piece which was not intrinsically good, and unless we much mistake, there is a richer and nobler vein of poetry running through it than is to be found in any previous work of the kind. The blank verse is generally free and following, although now and then deformed by alliteration,...which Marlowe may be said to have introduced, and which Shakespeare scarcely exceeded...It forms a sort of connecting link between such pieces of unimpassioned formality as "Ferrex and Porrex," and the rule-rejecting historical plays, as Shakespeare found and left them.²²¹

The first writer to directly and overtly indicate something was not as it seemed was the American Baconian Ignatius Donnelly in *The Great cryptogram: Francis Bacon's Cipher in The So-Called Shakespeare Plays*. In volume one of this large work Donnelly stated 'I will discuss this play [*The Misfortunes of Arthur*] and its merits at more length hereafter, and will make but one or two observation upon it at this time.'²²² He then proceeds to suggest that the play which Hughes is stated to be its author was actually written by Bacon one which it has been said 'reveals poetry of a higher order than anything that had preceded it', whose poetry, continues Donnelly, 'is most strikingly Shakespearean.'²²³ For whatever reason the intended discussion did not materialise possibly because he became so consumed in his decipherments he forgot to return to it.

Other Baconians afterwards entered the fray. A contributor to the private subscription journal *Baconiana* designated by the initials 'J. R. (of Gray's Inn)', praised the skill of its author, 'effort seems to have been carefully made to blend the alliteration used in Saxon poetry with more exact and harmonious blank verse than any previously written in English.'²²⁴ Our anonymous contributor invites the reader to carefully observe 'the antithetical style, the statements *pro* and *con*, the original ideas' which are clearly reminiscent 'of the writing of 'Bacon' and 'Shakespeare'.²²⁵ In another article printed in the *Baconiana* A. Chambers Bunten was justified in her observation 'With a view to studying Francis Bacon's early dramatic style, we cannot do better than glance at the first tragedy with which is name is connected' whom 'it is more than probable did most of the writing.'²²⁶ The first dumb show in the play and its female characters 'reminds us strangely of the opening scene of *Macbeth*, produced long afterwards',²²⁷ one of a large

number of parallels between *Misfortunes of Arthur* and a whole range of Shakespeare plays. Most importantly, Chambers Bunten had discovered in a collection of letters and papers belonging to Anthony Bacon in the British Library a poem referring to *The Misfortunes of Arthur* which she reproduced for the first time in an 1908 edition of *Baconiana* which at as stroke collapses the carefully constructed charade or illusion of its multi-authorship:

O Second Arthur bred in British brayne
Well hath myne host himself a prop^{het} proved
For sure when first he sang thou camst again
Cassandra like his threatening few men moved
The effect expounds that oracle so dark
Forshewed this Brittish Bard's surpassing wark.

Strange was thy birth indede, and Giant like
Much payns thy mother bidd with patience myld.
One noosed thee, another made thy cheeke,
And yet no doubt thou art but one man's child,
But who so washed thy face with printer's inke
Speck on the rest, I know well what I thinke!

Resigne thy buskens Sophocles the Great,
Tread Morter now with thy disarmed shanks,
For this man's braynes hath had a happier sweat,
Whereof the world commends him ample thanks.
Blush Seneca to see thy feathers loose,
Plucked from a Swan, and sticked on a goose.

And ye swet gentlemen of Grayan name,
Well was a solace to her Highness meant.
And all that passed from you deserves good fame,
Your amendments good, your acting excellent.
But when your spyks of Poesie be ripe,
Dance 'harvest home' after a better pipe.²²⁸

This important and intriguing poem discovered by Chambers Bunten printed in the 1908 edition of *Baconiana* did not disturb the pages of orthodox scholarship for nearly three quarters of a century until in 1983 Janet Cowen and Joanna Udall scholars from King's College, London published the poem which they believed to be for the first time in *Notes and Queries*.²²⁹ I am not in a position to determine whether the article in the *Baconiana* was actually known to Cowen and Udall, or whether it was known to the modern editor of *The Misfortunes of Arthur* Brian Jay Corrigan, who says in reference to the poem, that it was discovered 'as recently as 1983', thus in both cases it seems conveniently not.²³⁰ Certainly, if they knew of it, neither Cowen and Udall nor Corrigan, acknowledge or mention the article containing this critically important poem in the 1908 edition of the *Baconiana*.

Pointedly, Chambers Bunten wryly comments that the short poem pokes fun at the numerous parents *The Misfortunes of Arthur* possessed, and wonders which of them "so washed thy face in printer's ink," which is a very happy expression.²³¹ This striking phrase also caught the attention of Cowen and Udall whom thought it probably referred

‘to the person who saw it through the press, and someone obviously did, as the British Library copy (C.34.b.3) contains a number of cancel slips, three of which show substantive alterations of the kind likely to be made by the author.’²³² The anonymous author of the poem, as Corrigan points out, is intimately acquainted with the strange like birth of the play, its printing history, and witnessed its performance, and was on familiar terms with Anthony Bacon to whom it was presumably sent.²³³ The first line of the poem appears to describe the author of *The Misfortunes of Arthur* as a ‘second Arthur, bred in British brayne’ referred to in the next line as ‘myne host’, who ‘himself a prophet proved’. If by ‘myne host’, as Corrigan suggests, ‘Anthony’s brother Francis is meant’,²³⁴ then ‘when he first sang’ suggests it was Bacon who conceived the drama. Thus from the beginning it seems clear that the anonymous author of the poem places Bacon at the centre of the creation and production of *The Misfortunes of Arthur* which is described as ‘this British Bard’s surpassing wark’. The second verse continues this theme of revelation. ‘Strange’ was the birth of the play, and indeed ‘giant like’, which probably refers to the eight collaborators named in the 1588 edition, where three people were said to have been involved in its composition ‘One noosed’ and ‘another made thy cheeke’ before the killer line:

AND YET NO DOUBT THOU ART BUT ONE MAN’S CHILD

Astonishingly, both Janet Cowen and Joanna Udall of King’s College, London in ‘The Critical Misfortunes Of Arthur?’ and Brian Jay Corrigan, editor of the most recent of *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, pass over this line in absolute silence.²³⁵

The Misfortunes of Arthur was examined by Constance Pott in her work *The Promus of Formularies And Elegances (Being Private Notes, circ. 1594), hitherto unpublished* By Francis Bacon Illustrated And Elucidated By Passages From Shakespeare. In one of the appendices to this painstaking labour Pott compared passages from *The Misfortunes of Arthur* with entries in Bacon’s *Promus* (private note-book) with other examples of his acknowledged writings and Shakespeare plays. The results were remarkable and revealing. Addressing *The Misfortunes of Arthur* Act by Act and Scene by Scene she revealed that words, phrases and sentences can be traced and paralleled in Bacon’s private note-book and in a large number of his Shakespeare works from the very first plays written in the late 1580s and early 1590s through to the later plays written twenty years later. As one might expect, many of these similarities and parallels were located in some of the earlier plays written before 1594, in particular those Shakespeare plays which make up the first tetralogy of *1 Henry VI*, *2 Henry VI*, *3 Henry VI* and *Richard III*, as well as *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *Othello*, *Cymbeline* and several others.²³⁶ Its first editor Collier pointed to similarities between lines in *Misfortunes* and *Henry V* and *Macbeth*; its second editor Grumbyne points to *3 Henry VI*, *Richard III*, *2 Henry IV*, *Othello* and *Cymbeline*;²³⁷ its third editor J. W. Cunliffe to *King John*, *Julius Caesar*, *Hamlet* and *Macbeth*;²³⁸ and its modern recent editor Corrigan to *2 Henry IV*, *Midsummer Night’s Dream*, *Henry V*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*, *Macbeth* and *Othello*.²³⁹ With Emrys Jones in *The Origins Of Shakespear* noting that our poet was familiar with *The Misfortunes of Arthur* and specifically made use of some of its language.²⁴⁰

The first editor of *The Misfortunes of Arthur* J. P. Collier noted that the 1588 edition ‘seems to have been printed with unusual care under the superintendence’ of its author.²⁴¹ One of the reasons it was printed under the careful scrutiny of its true author was for the purposes of ensuring the necessary accuracy required for the large number of Baconian ciphers woven into the original edition. And given this important historical drama is the very first work to which the name of Francis Bacon is attached, as well as

its important links with his Shakespeare plays, not yet composed or printed, I have thought it necessary to provide several examples. I have also thought it best to provide the reader with Bacon's passage on ciphers from *The Advancement of Learning* and a number of pertinent examples:

For CYPHARS; they are commonly in Letters and Alphabets, but may bee in Wordes. The kindes of CYPHARS, (besides the SIMPLE CYPHARS with Changes, and intermixtures of NVLLES, and NONSIGNIFICANTS) are many, according to the Nature or Rule of the infoulding; WHEELLE-CYPHARS, KAY-CYPHARS, DOVBLES, &c. But the vertues of them, whereby they are to be preferred, are three; that they be not laborious to write and reade; that they bee impossible to discypher; and in some cases, that they bee without suspition. The highest Degree whereof, is to write OMNIA PER OMNIA; which is vndoubtedly possible, with a proportion Quintuple at most, of the writing infoulding, to the writing infoulded, and no other restraite whatsoever. This Arte of *Cypheringe*, hath for Relatiue, an Art of *Discypheringe*; by supposition vnprofitable; but, as thinges are, of great vse. For suppose that *Cyphars* were well managed, there bee Multitudes of them which exclude the *Discypherer*. But in regarde of the rawnesse and vnskilfulnesse of the handes, through which they passe, the greatest Matter, are many times carried in the weakest *Cyphars*.²⁴²

The Simple Cipher referred to by Bacon is a substitution cipher based upon the twenty four letter Elizabethan alphabet (in which I and J and U and V are interchangeable) in which the letter is given a numerical value:

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	W	X	Y	Z
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24

Examples:	F R A N C I S	B A C O N
	6 17 1 13 3 9 18=67	2 1 3 14 13=33
	W I L L I A M	S H A K E S P E A R E
	21 9 11 11 9 1 12=74	18 8 1 10 5 18 15 5 1 17 5=103
	F R A R O S I C R O S S E	
	6 17 1 17 14 18 9 3 17 14 18 18 5=157	

The Kay Cipher works on a similar principle:

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	W	X	Y	Z
27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24

Example: B A C O N
28 27 29 14 13=111

On the title page of the 1588 edition of *The Misfortunes of Arthur* there are a number of Baconian-Rosicrucian ciphers. Below the printer's device there are 8 block capitals letters ('AT LONDON') and 4 words printed in ordinary Roman type ('Printed by Robert Robison'). The addition of the numbers in the date 1+5+8+7=21: 8+4+21=33 Bacon in simple cipher. The whole title page contains 211 letters, a split simple/kay cipher: 100 equals Francis Bacon in simple cipher and 111 Bacon in kay cipher. The 211 letters, the addition of the date, and the single printer's device 211+21+1=233 yields a triple cipher 100/100/33 Francis Bacon/Francis Bacon/Bacon in simple cipher.

The whole title page has a total of 42 words. The word and total letter count plus the four numbers in the date $42+211+4=257$: 100/157 Francis Bacon/Fra Rosicrosse in simple cipher [Fig. 1].

In the original 1588 edition of *The Misfortunes of Arthur* the introduction to the play ‘penned by Nicholas Trotte’ is printed over five pages. The first of these pages contains 33 full printed lines: 33 Bacon in simple cipher. Above the verse the top section has 177 Roman letters: 177 William Shakespeare in simple cipher. The text itself comprises 172 words with 5 of these words printed in brackets. The five words in brackets contain 22 letters and two printed italic words in the text ‘*Muses*’ and ‘*Astrea*’ contain 11 letters $22+11=33$ Bacon in simple cipher. The 172 words minus the 22 letters in brackets gives a total of 150 which added to the 7 letters in the tail-word (‘Grounds’) $150+7=157$ Fra Rosicrosse in simple cipher [Fig. 2].

The five pages incorporating the introduction has 139 printed lines of text 100/39 Francis Bacon/F. Bacon in simple cipher. On the last page the 9 lines of text contains 69 words (‘sincein’ is printed as one word) which minus the 2 words in the signature of one of Bacon’s masks ‘Nicholas Trotte’ $69-2=67$ Francis. The 69 words contain 314 letters which minus the 14 letters in the name ‘NICHOLAS TROTTE’: $314-14=300$ a triple simple cipher 100/100/100 for Francis Bacon/Francis Bacon/Francis Bacon [Fig. 3].

The last page of the introductory material has also been carefully arranged and printed. The reader will immediately note that the first line of the text begins to the left of the other nine lines allowing it to accommodate a very large Roman capital letter V which is deliberately printed in different type to the rest of the letters in the name ‘Vther’. The rest of the first line in ordinary Roman type comprises 22 letters (‘The Misfortunes of Arthur’) and the name of Bacon’s other mask ‘THOMAS HVGHES’ printed in Roman block letters on the third line contains 12 letters. These 34 letters in the title of the play and the name of its supposed author minus the 1 large capital letter V: $34-1=33$ Bacon in simple cipher. It will further be noticed that in the fourth line ‘Grayes-Inne’ printed in ordinary Roman type contains 10 letters. The 10 letters added to the 22 letters in ordinary Roman in the first line plus the very large Roman letter V: $10+22+1=33$ again Bacon in simple cipher. The whole page contains 83 words with the three words in the brackets comprising 20 letters: $83+20=103$ Shakespeare in simple cipher. This total minus the 3 words in the brackets $103-3=100$ Francis Bacon in simple cipher [Fig. 4].

The final page of the play where the name Francis Bacon appears with the other so-called collaborators comprises 33 printed lines of text: 33 Bacon in simple cipher. The inverse pyramid separated out from the rest of the page contains 66 words: 33/33 Bacon/Bacon in simple cipher. Underneath the inverse pyramid appear three printed dots and three devices: 3 and 3 together gives 33 Bacon in simple cipher. The whole of the inverse pyramid has a sum total of 357 letters 100/100/157 Francis Bacon/Francis Bacon/Fra Rosicrosse in simple cipher [Fig. 5].

Fig. 1

Words

Letters

2	CERTAIN DE	10
4	ures and shewes presented to	25
6	her MAJESTIE by the Gentlemen of	27
7	Graves-here at her Highnesse Court in	31
6	Greenewich, the twenty eighth day of	30
7	February in the thirtieth year of her	33
3	MAJESTIES most happy	18
1	Reigne,	6
		
2	AT LONDON	8
4	Printed by Robert Robinson.	23
42	1587.	211

Date addition $1+5+8+7 = 21$

Fig. 2

Words	Letters
AN INTRODVCTI on penned by Nicholas Trotte <i>Gentleman one of the Society of Grayes-Inne; which was pronounced in manner following. viz. Three Mules came vpon the Stage appaied accordingly beeing five Gentlemen Students which then attired in their full garments, whoon one of the Mules proce- ed to say M A I S T E R in Capriues through which hee followed by great applause.</i>	12RL 24RL 10RL 35RL 5RL 44RL 39RL 8RL
OF Conquest (gracions Queene) the signs & fruits, Atchiu'd gainst such, as wrongfully withheld The service by choice wits to Master due; In humblest wife, these Captiues we present, And leaſt your highnes might ſuſpect the gift As ſpoile of Warre, that Iuſtice might impeach; Heare and diſcerne how iuſt our quarrell was Auoied (as you ſee) by good ſucceſſe. A Dame there is, whom men Admire terme, Shee that pronounceth Oracles of Lawes, Who to prepare her ſervants for her traine As by Commiſſion takes vp flowing wits, Whom ſirſt ſhe ſchooleth to forget and ſeene The noble ſkil of language and of Arts, The wiſedome, which diſcourſe of ſtoies teach, The ornaments which various knowledge yeelds; But Poetic ſhe hath in moſt diſdaine, And Marſhalls it next Follyes ſcorned place. Then, when ſhe hath theſe worthy Prints deſac'd Out of the mindes that can endure her hand, What doeth ſhe then ſupplie in ſteede of theſe? Forſooth ſome olde reports of altered lawes, Clamors of Courts, and caſils vpon words,	177RL (14RL) (5IL) (8RL) (6IL) 33
Grounds	7

Fig. 3

words		letters
9	Now since in steade of art we bring but zeale,	36
8	In steade of prayse we humbly pardon craue,	35
7	The matter which we purpose to present,	32
7	Since streights of time our liberty controule,	40
8	In tragike noote the plagues of vice recount,	37
8	How fates a Tragedie for such a time?	29
7	Thus, For that since your sacred Maiestie	34
7	In gracious hands the regall Scepter held	35
8	All Tragedies are fled from State, to stage.	36
69		314
2	Nicholas Trotte.	14

$$\begin{array}{r} 5 \\ 6 \text{ (3)} \\ 8 \\ 11 \\ 9 \\ 10 \\ 10 \\ 11 \\ 11 \\ 2 \\ \hline 83 \end{array}$$

1
22RL
(20)
12RL
10RL

Fig. 5

33 lines

Words

9
13
6
8
4
6
7
4
4
3
2

66



Letters

45
48
38
42
39
34
32
25
23
19
12

357

THE MISFORTUNES OF ARTHUR AND THE SHAKESPEARE PLAYS

A year to the month that Mary, Queen of Scots was executed on the orders of Queen Elizabeth *The Misfortunes of Arthur* was performed by Gray's Inn at Greenwich on 28 February 1588,²⁴³ with its text printed only a few weeks later (before 25 March) under the title *Certaine Deuises and shewes presented to her Maiestie by the Gentlemen of Grayes-Inne at her Highnesse Court in Greenwich, the twenty eighth day of Februarie in the thirtieth yeare of her Maiesties most happy Raigne* printed by Robert Robinson in 1587 (old style, i.e., 1588). It is not known how many copies of it were printed but the edition remained virtually unknown for three centuries before it was reprinted by the Shakespeare scholar J. P. Collier in *Five Old Plays* in 1828.²⁴⁴ Further editions of this rare drama appeared under the editorship of Harvey Carson Grumbine in 1900 and John W. Cunliffe in 1912. Pre-dating this by a year John S. Farmer reproduced a facsimile edition of the British Library copy in 1911 and Brian Jay Corrigan has recently edited an old-spelling edition in 1992.

There are only three copies of the original 1588 edition known to exist. The only copy now held in the United Kingdom is in the British Library with the other two copies now in the Henry E. Huntington Library and the Houghton Library, Harvard University in the United States of America. Collier, Grumbine and Cunliffe were only aware of the Garrick copy housed in the British Library and the Kemble-Devonshire copy held at Huntington Library. The former copy was owned by the famous Shakespeare actor and Freemason David Garrick the close friend of Freemason and Shakespeare editor Dr Samuel Johnson, organiser of the Stratford Jubilee in 1769, which put the Stratfordian myth on the national and international map. All the pages of the Garrick copy are intact and it contains the only record of the title page, introduction, and the false statement it was written by Thomas Hughes. This copy provides substantial confirmatory evidence it was corrected during the printing process. In addition to two pen and ink deletions on B1^r and B3^r, there are five cancel slips on B4^r, line 11 and lines 13-16, C2^v, line 18, C3^v, in the heading for 'THE FIRST ACT, 'Fyrste', replacing 'second', and D1^r, line 51.²⁴⁵ All this evidence states Corrigan indicates the British Library exemplar 'is the latest copy' of the original edition to have survived: 'Apparently the copies held at the Huntington and at Harvard had already been run when the faulty printing was noticed. Corrections were made before the *BL* copy was run. For this reason, it seems self evident that *BL* is the most accurate utterance of the play.'²⁴⁶

Both Huntington and Harvard copies are seriously defective. The original binding of the Huntington no longer remains. The first four leaves which comprised the title page, the introduction, and the statement it was written by Thomas Hughes (whose name does not appear on the title page) are by accident/design missing. The missing pages have been supplied by a handwritten transcription taken from the *BL* copy. The original leaves have been mounted on larger sheets, one of which bears the watermark 'C. Wilmott 1804', and rebound.²⁴⁷ On B3^v, line 8, there is a pen-and-ink deletion of the word 'dye'; the word is present in both the British Library and Harvard University copy, which seems to support Corrigan's assertion that this is 'almost certainly not a printing house correction.'²⁴⁸ The Harvard copy is also lacking its original binding. All of the introductory material (including the title page and introduction), preceding the signature A, and all of the text following F1^v, including all of Act 5, the epilogue, and appendix including its final paragraph the only place in the original edition mentioning 'Maister Fraunics Bacon' has been lost or destroyed.²⁴⁹ The 'most striking feature' of

this copy says Corrigan ‘is its [pen-and-ink] marginalia’, which he states ‘look suspiciously like an authorial hand’.²⁵⁰ The copious marginalia is found on B4^v, C3^v, C4^r, D1^r, D2^r, D4^r, E2^r, E4^v, and F1^v.²⁵¹ According to Corrigan the ‘hand is Italian, with distinct traces of secretary script and spelling of the latter sixteenth century’.²⁵² He demonstrates that these marginalia ‘are primarily textual corrections’. These Corrigan explains provide readings that not only ‘maintain the meter, but insists upon a more alliterative reading’, which is indicative of the author’s preferred style revealing a ‘preference for alliteration while demonstrating a sensitivity for meter’. Leading him to conclude ‘In each case the hand, spelling, and aesthetic concerns demonstrated in the marginalia indicate to me that the changes may be authorial.’²⁵³ This is entirely consistent with Bacon’s habit of annotating books in the margins whether it be books in his library he had read or for the purpose of authorial emendations for the revision and correction of his texts.

Let us now turn to the play itself:

THE MISFORTUNES OF ARTHUR

The Dramatis Personae and Names of the Speakers

GORLOIS, <i>Duke of Cornwall’s Ghost</i>	GILLA, <i>a British Earl</i>
ARTHUR, <i>King of Great Britain</i>	CHELDRIK, <i>Duke of Saxony</i>
GUENEVERA, <i>the Queen</i>	<i>The Lord of the Picts</i>
FRONIA, <i>A Lady of her train</i>	CADOR, <i>Duke of Cornwall</i>
ANGHARAD, <i>sister to the Queen,</i>	HOEL, <i>King of Little Britain</i>
MORDRED, <i>the usurper</i>	<i>The Herald from Mordred</i>
CONAN, <i>a faithful Counsellor</i>	ASCHILLUS, <i>King of Denmark</i>
<i>Nuntius of Arthur’s landing</i>	<i>The King of Norway</i>
<i>The Herald from Arthur</i>	<i>A number of Soldiers</i>
GAWAIN, <i>King of Albany</i>	<i>Nuntius of the last battle</i>
GILLAMOR, <i>King of Ireland</i>	GILDAS, <i>a nobleman of Britain</i>

CHORUS

The argument of the *Tragedie*.

At a banquet made by *Vther Pendragon* for the solemnising of his conquest against the *Saxons*, he fell inamoured with *Igern*, wife to *Gorlois* Duke of *Cornwell*. Who perceiuing the Kings passion, departed with his wife and prepared warres at *Cornwell*, where also in a strong holde beyond him hee placed her. Then the King leuied an armye to suppress him, but waxing impatient of his desire to *Igern*, transformed himselfe by *Merlin* his cunning, into the likeness of *Gorlois*, And after his acceptance with *Igern* he returned to his siedege, where he slew *Gorlois*. *Igern* was deliuered of *Arthur* and *Anne* twins of the same birth. *Vther Pendragon* 15. yeres after pursuing the *Saxons* was by them poysoned. *Arthur* delighted in his sister *Anne*, who made him father of *Mordred*. Seunteene yeres after *Lucius Tiberius* of *Rome* demanded a tribute due by the conquest of *Caesar*. *Arthur* gathered the powers of 13. Kinges besides his owne, and leauing his Queene *Gueneuora* in the tution of *Mordred*, to whome he likewise committed the kingdome in his absence, arriued at *Fraunce*, where after 9. yeares warres, he sent the slaine bodie of *Tiberius* vnto *Rome* for the tribute. During this absence *Mordred* grew ambitious, for th’effecting whereof he made loue to *Gueneuora*, who gaue ear vnto him. Then by th’assistance of *Gilla* a *British* Lord hee vsurped, and for maintenance entertayned with large promises, the *Saxons*, *Irish*, *Picts*, & *Normans*. *Gueneuora* hearing that *Arthur* was already embarked for returne, through despaire purposing diuersly, sometimes to kill her husband, sometimes to kill her selfe, at last resolved to enter into religion. *Arthur* at his landing

was resisted on the stronds of *Douer*, where he put *Mordred* to flight. The last field was at *Cornwell*, where after the death of one hundred and twentie thousand sauing on either side 20; *Mordred* receiued his death, and *Arthur* his deadly wound.

*The Argument and manner of the
first dumbe shewe.*

Sounding the musicke, there rose three furies under the stage apparelled accordingly with snakes and flames about their blacke haire and garments. The first with a Snake in the right hande and a cup of wine with a Snake athwart the cup in the left hand. The second with a firebrand in the right hande, and a Cupid in the left: The thirde with a whippe in the right hande and a Pegasus in the left. Whiles they went masking about the stage, there came from another place three Nuns, which walked by them selues. Then after a full sight giuen to beholders, they all parted, the furies to Mordreds house, the Nuns to the Cloister. By the first furie with the Snake and Cup was signified the banquet of Vther Pendragon, and afterward his death which insued by the poysoned cup. The second furie with firebrand & Cupid represented Vthers unlawfull heate and loue conceyued at the banquet, which neuer ceased in his posterite. By the third with her whip and Paegasus was prefigured the crueltie and ambicion which thence insued and continued to th'affecting of this tragidie. By the Nuns was signified the remorse and despaire of Gueneuora, that wanting other hope took a Nunnrie for her refuge. After their departure, the four which represented the Chorus took their places.

The argument of the first Act.

1. IN the first scene the spirit of Gorlois Duke of Cornwell, the man first & most wronged in this historie being dispoild both of Wife, Dukedome and life craueth reuenge for these iniuries, denouncing the whole misfortune insuing.
2. In the second scene, Gueneuora hearing that Arthur was on Seas returning, desperately manaceth his death, from which intent she is diswaded by Fronia, a Lady of her Court & priuie to her secretes.
3. In the third scene Gueneuora perplexedly mindeth her owne death, whence being diswaded by her sister she resolueth to enter into Religion.
4. In the fourth scene Mordred goeth about to perswade Guenevora to persist in her loue, but misseth thereof: And then is exhorted by Conan (a noble ma[n] of Brytain) to reconcile himselfe to his Father at his coming, but refuseth so to doe and resolueth to keepe him from landing by battaile.²⁵⁴

Intertwined with its preoccupation with civil war is the insidious theme of incest which poisons the family line and the body politic. From the argument we discover that the lawless liaison between Uther Pendragon and Igera produced an illegitimate son, Arthur, with the duplicitous cunning of Merlin who transformed Uther into the likeness of her husband Gorlios, the Duke of Cornwall, whom he afterwards killed in battle. Her pregnancy produced a twin sister Anne, and many years later when Uther was killed by Saxon poison, Arthur entered into an incestuous relationship with his twin sister Anne, a lawless union which produced Mordred. Seventeen years after the mythical Roman Procurator Lucius Tiberius demanded a tribute, one due since the time of Julius Caesar, which Arthur refused to pay. Gathering the forces of thirteen kings Arthur crossed the English Channel to do battle leaving behind the kingdom and his wife Guinevere in the care of Mordred. Having landing his army in France after nine years of war Arthur sent the slain body of Tiberius to Rome for the tribute. During his absence Mordred with the assistance of Cilla, a British earl usurped the throne and entered into outlawed sexual tryst with his now lover Guinevere. Learning of Arthur's imminent return and enraged by his nine years of neglect and her unbridled passion and sexual lust for Mordred she

oscillates between killing her husband or herself before finding religion and retiring to a nunnery. Or as Sandra Billington puts it ‘Like a Protestant monarch, Arthur returns to England after triumphant battles against Rome only to find disorder at home. Guinevere had abandoned him in his absence for an incestuous marriage with his son Mordred, and, Lady Macbeth-like, plots with Mordred Arthur’s death.’²⁵⁵ In the second scene while contemplating killing Arthur in the same vein as Lady Macbeth she calls on all evil spirits to come to her aid:

Come spitefull fiends, come heapes of furies fell,
Not one, by one, but all at once: my breast
Raues not inough: it likes me to be filde
With greater monsters yet.²⁵⁶
[Act 1 Scene 2: lines 39-42]

Later in the play Arthur,

muses on the vice which begot Mordred, an incestuous relationship with his sister....Like Gloucester, in Shakespeare’s *Lear*, he realizes his sin has rebounded on himself and, like Lear, he has caused not only his personal but also his kingdom’s ruin....The mortal combat between him and Arthur enacts in microcosm the fears of civil war in which fathers and sons kill each other. In this case, the combatants are also rival leaders of the realm: private and public tragedies combine to create what is twice called a ‘topsy turvie’ kingdom....Yet one wonders whether the lurid history behind his fault was a necessary incorporation from the legends surrounding King Arthur, to avoid too close a similarity with Elizabeth’s own disputed right. And considering that Elizabeth was in the audience, and that the play’s purpose was largely to attack any potential Mordred impulse in her courtiers, it would seem unnecessarily dangerous to be so explicit about Arthur’s own failure, unless it was a scripted play tradition to incorporate from popular play the concept that kings in plays were customarily travesties. Such a reading continues throughout Shakespeare’s history cycles....²⁵⁷

Mordred ignoring the advice of the faithful counsellor Conan to throw himself to the mercy of his father, he and his army was put to flight by Arthur and his forces at Dover. He rejects his father’s offer of peace and gathers a force of Irish, Saxon and Picts ready for a last battle. Out of love for his son and a reluctance to submit his realm to the dangers and horrors of civil war Arthur once more sues for peace, but is eventually forced to fully commit to war. In a final battle at Cornwall where around one hundred and twenty soldiers met their death Mordred fatally wounded, thrusts himself forward onto his father’s spear, and in turn gives Arthur his fatal wound. While suffering his death wound at the end of the play Arthur declares that heaven and hell have conspired ‘To make our endes a mirror to the worlde,/Both of incestious life, and wicked birth’.²⁵⁸

McCabe very succinctly notices that the *Misfortunes* is ‘haunted by the dual spectre of incest and civil war’ and the ‘double incest theme carefully sustained throughout the drama, with deft echoes of *Oedipus*, *Phoenissae* and *Hippolytus*, functions perfectly as an analogy for the perversion of nationhood.’²⁵⁹ Boehrer saw in the figure of Mordred ‘a caricature of the various conjunctions supposedly afflicting the house of Tudor. As the product of a brother-sister union, for instance, Mordred parallels Scottish claims that Elizabeth was the bastard child of Anne Boleyn by her brother George, and as the male principal in an illicit union with his stepmother, Mordred serves as a reverse image of Henry VIII’s supposed incest with his illegitimate daughter Anne.’²⁶⁰ This powerful and subtle theme of incest combined with internecine civil war is carried over into the Shakespeare plays written shortly after *Misfortunes of Arthur* ‘Shakespeare’s Henry VI

watches in dismay as civil war ‘begets’ monsters, much as incest was popularly supposed to do.’²⁶¹ In *Richard III* all of Richard’s ‘personal relationships are shown to be unnatural’, writes McCabe, ‘in his person the victorious House of York conduct a civil war within a civil war’:²⁶²

Having destroyed his brother and his nephews, Richard plans to wed his niece in violation of centuries of Christian tradition....His brother’s wife is being asked to become his ‘mother’-his natural mother having cursed him at birth-by pandering to his incestuous relationship with her daughter: ‘What were I best to say?, she asks, ‘her father’s brother/Would be her lord? Or shall I say her uncle?’ (IV.4.337-8). The implications for English history are profound. When Richard asserts ‘I will beget/Mine issue of your blood upon your daughter’ (IV.4.297-8), no less is threatened than the perpetual pollution of the royal line. Henceforth all English monarchs will be the offspring of incest, all that is ‘unnatural’ will be institutionalised within the monarchy and Richard will take a lasting revenge upon ‘dissembling Nature’.²⁶³

The conflated metaphor of sexual corruption and decayed politics representing the diseased kingdom in *Misfortunes of Arthur* ‘portraying Britain as sterile and worn from the ravages of civil strife functions as the culminating artistic effect of this association between sexual license and the body politic’, a metaphor similarly employed observes Crosbie, in *Troilus and Cressida*.²⁶⁴ The incest themes in both *Hamlet* and *Pericles* has attracted good deal of critical attention. Under the heading “Ten Times Our Mother”: Incest and Feminine Authority in *Hamlet*, Boehrer points out ‘Gertrude’s incestuous remarriage has gained a sort of ancillary prominence in *Hamlet* criticism.’²⁶⁵ He further observes that John D. Wilson and A. C. Bradley have both ‘emphasized the depth of Hamlet’s disgust with his mother’s incest’ and ‘Ernest Jones and other psychoanalytical scholars have come closest to according incest a kind of structural centrality in *Hamlet*’ with Jones arguing that the play balances incest and patricide.²⁶⁶ Not of course, unlike the balancing of very similar themes, in *The Misfortunes*. Unsurprisingly, considering the republican *Pharsalia* is one of its primary sources *The Misfortunes of Arthur* acts as an unmistakable warning against the horrors and consequences of civil war and sexual corruption and its preoccupation with incest are inextricably linked to internal strife. Mordred’s crimes remarks Professor Fuwa in his discussion of the incest theme in *The Misfortunes of Arthur* ‘are consistently judged by other characters as strange, unnatural, monstrous, foul, impious, uncouth, unlawful-exactly the sort of labels conventionally applied to incest itself. Shakespeare’s works bear witness to similar expressions in similar contexts: in *Pericles*, Antiochus asks his daughter’s suitors a riddle in order to maintain his incestuous relationship with her; Prince Pericles finds out the answer and remarks “foul incest to abuse your soul” (1:1:127); in the Epilogue John Gower recites the end of their relationship: “In Antiochus and his daughter you have heard/Of monstrous lust the due and just reward”(1-2).²⁶⁷ Mordred’s ‘tainted birth is closely associated with confusion’ and moreover a ‘similar association of incest with confusion may be found in *Hamlet*’ where Claudius is accused ‘of his unnatural murdering of his kin and incestuous marriage with Gertrude’. The sorrow and devastation wreaked on the kingdom of Denmark originates ‘from Claudius’s disorder of blood relationships-unnatural murder and incest.’²⁶⁸ Fuwa also draws attention to the fact that the ‘image of the serpent applied to the usurping Claudius appears in the last dumb show of *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, where in a somewhat similar situation to Hamlet’s dumb show, a king lies sleeping, a snake is drawing near to sting him, and a “Leazard” stops it to save the king. In this dumb show, the snake signifies Mordred.’²⁶⁹ In his full-length study of incest and drama McCabe at length details the ‘incestuous overtones’ in *King Lear*,²⁷⁰ and some of the other later Shakespeare plays do not escape his attention, including *The*

Winter's Tale of which he pointedly comments 'the taint of incest hangs over the drama from the outset',²⁷¹ before concluding with remarks that could also be approximated to Bacon's distinctive use of the incest motif in *The Misfortunes of Arthur* (which he later evidently put to similar use in several of his Shakespeare plays):

The distinctive quality of Shakespeare's use of the incest motif is its restraint and subtlety, its perception of private sexual undertones in the public rhetoric of family and state, its detection of the inevitable compromises exogamy makes with incest and, on a wider scale, 'natural' order with all sorts of forbidden desire.²⁷²

The Arthurian material for *The Misfortunes of Arthur* was almost entirely taken from Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae* and Malory's *Morte d'Arthur* with Corrigan suggesting the late fourteenth century *Alliterative Morte Arthure* as another possible source.²⁷³ It is now universally agreed that the *Historia Regum Britanniae* was the principal source for the *Misfortunes*. According to Grumbine 'The argument of *The Misfortunes of Arthur* might almost serve as an index to the VIII, IX, X and XI books of Geoffrey of Monmouth's 'Historia Britonum',²⁷⁴ and Corrigan provides a list where the plot of the play generally follows his account.²⁷⁵ Written c.1136 the *Historia Regum Britanniae* (*History of the Kings of Britain*) circulated in manuscript in England and in continental Europe. Around 190 Latin manuscript versions of it still survive, including 48 complete texts, a number of which date from the twelfth century.²⁷⁶ The first English version entitled *The British History, translated into English from the Latin of Jeffrey of Monmouth* appeared in 1718.²⁷⁷ The work relates the purported history of Britain from its imaginary founder Brutus, a descendent of the Trojan hero Aeneas, the invasion of Britain by Julius Caesar, accounts of the mythical British kings Lear (this is first known version of the Lear story) and Cymbeline, and Uther Pendragon and King Arthur. Aside from being the major source for *The Misfortunes of Arthur* the *History of the Kings of Britain* served as a source for the Shakespeare plays *Cymbeline*,²⁷⁸ and *King Lear*.²⁷⁹ As for Malory's *Morte d'Arthur* Lascelles finds traces of it in *I Henry IV*, *2 Henry IV*, and *Henry V*,²⁸⁰ examples of which in many other Shakespeare plays were greatly expanded by P. J. C. Field in a relatively little known anthology of essays published by University College of North Wales in 1986.²⁸¹

The anonymous *Alliterative Morte Arthure* is a 4346 Middle English alliterative poem retelling the latter part of the legend of King Arthur written c.1430-50.²⁸² The poem is preserved in a single manuscript copy written in the fifteenth century, now known as the Lincoln Thornton Manuscript. It is believed that the copyist was Robert Thornton, who copied it from the older text now lost. Either towards the end of the sixteenth or early seventeenth century the manuscript seems to have passed from the last members of the Yorkshire Thornton family to the cathedral library at Lincoln where it remained largely unknown and unnoticed until the first half of the nineteenth century.²⁸³ After its rediscovery, in 1847 the Shakespeare scholar James Halliwell published an edition of the *Alliterative Morte Arthure* limited to 75 copies for private circulation only. In the dedication to Albert Denison Conyngham he enthuses 'The merits of the noble poem for the first time presented to the student in the following pages are so unquestionable, and its philological curiosity and value so obvious, that an argumentative panegyric is altogether unnecessary.'²⁸⁴ The unique manuscript poem was very likely a source and influence for *The Misfortunes of Arthur*:

Like both Geoffrey and the play, the poem covers the Arthurian fable from the wars against Tiberius to the battle at Cornwall. The poem is closer to the play than is Geoffrey's account in its battle descriptions, which are particularized, vivid, and detailed, giving a graphic portrayal

of war. The poem is explicit in its description of the final battle. Arthur is struck in the head by Mordred as he delivers Mordred's death blow. As in the play, and again contrary to Geoffrey's account, the alliterative *Morte Arthure* depicts the death of Arthur.²⁸⁵

A similar view was expressed by Fuwa who believed the poem's alliterative form appears to be close to the author's style in *The Misfortunes of Arthur* 'He apparently prefers alliteration in his play as such lines indicate: "A common want, which woorkes ech worldlings woe," (II. iii. 83) or "The mounting minde that climes the hauty cliftes,/And soaring seekes the tip of lofty type" (II. iv. 9-10)...*The Alliterative Morte Arthure* and *The Misfortunes of Arthur* share several other similarities in depicting Mordred as both Guinevere's lover and Arthur's beloved and strong knight, but none of these may provide the decisive clue as a definite source.'²⁸⁶ Yet despite the Arthurian works of Geoffrey of Monmouth and Sir Thomas Malory sources for *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, being traced in the Shakespeare works (and as we shall shortly see) other previously known references to the Arthur story identifiable in other Shakespeare plays, writing in 1986 Field rightly observes 'Shakespeare's response to the Arthurian legend has hardly been explored.'²⁸⁷ The same observation might well be applied to the fact that Shakespeare's response to the *Misfortunes* has hardly been explored by conventional scholarship but I assume part of the reason for this is by now only all too well understood. Perhaps best illustrated by Stewart and Knight who in the *Oxford Francis Bacon Early Writings (1584-1596)* issued by Oxford Clarendon Press in 2012, in a detailed twenty-five page discussion of the *Misfortunes* never once utter the name Shakespeare, or should we say, Bacon's pseudonym Shakespeare. Nor does *The Misfortunes of Arthur* figure in the two source books by Professor Muir, the standard eight volume *Narrative And Dramatic Sources Of Shakespeare* by Professor Bullough, or in Dr Gillespie's *Shakespeare's Books: A Dictionary of Shakespeare Sources* (2004), and a whole host of other source works and critical editions.

With a blend of the same sources: Lucan's epic republican poem *Pharsalia*, Senecan tragedies, Geoffrey of Monmouth, Thomas Malory and the *Alliterative Morte Arthure* as well as *The Misfortunes of Arthur* Bacon began composing the first tetralogy, the three Shakespeare English history plays of *Henry VI* and *Richard III*, and several other early Shakespeare plays such as *Love's Labour's Lost* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The final composition of *The Misfortunes of Arthur* was completed by February 1588 and *I Henry VI* was written soon after, possibly in the late 1580s, concurrent with or just after the *Misfortunes*, certainly in close proximity to it, a play in which we find the first Shakespearean Arthurian allusion. In *I Henry VI* Bedford who has been brought in sick in a chair sits before the walls of Rouen comparing himself to King Arthur's father Uther Pendragon:

for once I read
That stout Pendragon, in his litter sick,
Came to the field and vanquished his foes.
Methinks I should revive the soldiers' hearts
Because I ever found them as myself.
[*I Henry VI*: 3:5:53-7]

This as presented in the play corresponds and is explained by passages in Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britannie* and Thomas Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*.²⁸⁸ The play begins with the funeral of Henry V attended on by the Duke of Bedford, Regent of France, the Duke of Gloucester Lord Protector, the dukes of Somerset and Exeter, the

Earl of Warwick and Bishop of Winchester. The Duke of Bedford laments the death of such a famous king of so much worth 'Hung be the heavens with black! Yield, day, to night!/Comets, importing change of times and states' (1:1:1-2). In turn Gloucester too laments his loss vividly describing him in the following terms:

His arms spread wider than a dragon's wings.
His sparkling eyes, replete with wrathful fire,
More dazzled and drove back his enemies
Than midday sun, fierce bent against their faces.
What should I say? His deeds exceed all speech.
He ne'er lift up his hand but conquered.
[*I Henry VI*: 1:1:11-16]

This striking image of Henry V, dragon-king as conqueror is, Field points out, found in Malory. England's warrior king had died while conquering France and Malory also sent King Arthur off to conquer France who while sailing across the English Channel had a dream:

Hym semed that a dredeful dragon dyd drowne moche of his peple, and he cam fleyng oute of the West, and...an hydous flamme of fyre flewe oute of his mouthe, lyke as the londe and water had flammed all of fyre...Thenne the dredeful dragon avaunced hym, and cam in the wynde lyke a fawcon gyvyng grete strokes...

And therwith the kynge awoke anone and was sore abasshed of this dreame, and sente anone for a wyse philosopher, commaundyng to telle him the sygnyfycacion of his dreame. Syre, said the philosopher, the dragon that thou dremedest of betokeneth thyn owne persone....Wherefore of this dreadful dreame doubte the nothyng, but as a conquerour come forth thyself (124.26).²⁸⁹

Malory's work also appears to have inspired the eulogy spoken by the Talbot over the now dead Bedford 'in which two lines echo the formulas of the most famous passage in the *Morte Darthur*, Sir Ector's threnody over his dead brother Lancelot' and afterwards when 'Shakespeare was writing a eulogy for the Duke of York in *Richard II* to speak about his dead brother the Black prince, the same passage seems to have come again to his mind with the same effect.'²⁹⁰ A play forming part of the second tetralogy with *I Henry IV*, *2 Henry IV* and *Henry V* which also contain traces of the *Morte d'Arthur*.

Field suggests there are other associations between *Morte d'Arthur* and the two early Shakespeare poems 'A passage in 'The Rape of Lucrece' recalls the oath that Malory's King Arthur required annually of his Knights of the Round Table, and one in 'Venus and Adonis' the chapter in the *Morte Darthur* in which love is likened unto summer.'²⁹¹ He also advances that the chivalrous Eglamour in *Two Gentlemen of Verona* probably written in the late 1580s may have been suggested by an obscure character in the *Morte d'Arthur*, Sir Egglame.²⁹² In another early play *Love's Labour's Lost* Boyet in response to Rosaline dates an old saying by reference to Arthur's wife Guinevere, who as we have seen, was involved in an unnatural relationship with Arthur's son Mordred in *The Misfortunes of Arthur*:

So I may answer thee with one as old that was a
woman when queen Guinevere of Britain was a little
wench, as touching the hit it.
[*Love's Labour's Lost*: 4:1:121-3]

In *A Midsummer Night's Dream* when Bottom (as *Pyramus*) invites Francis Flute (as *Thisbe*) 'she' accepts by saying:

Tide life, tide death, I come without delay.
[*A Midsummer Night's Dream*: 5:1:202]

This echoes reveals Field the speech Malory gives King Arthur 'as he prepares to attack his incestuously begotten son Mordred among the corpses of almost the whole of both armies.' In Malory Arthur says:

Now tyde me deth, betide me lyff...he shall never escape
Myn handes. (589.36)

And then Arthur says directly to Mordred:

Now is thy deth day *come*.²⁹³

The standard depiction of the legendary seer and prophet Merlin appears in Geoffrey's *Historia regum Britanniae* one based upon previous historical and legendary figures. Aside from the *Historia* he authored two other works *Prophetaie Merlini* (*Prophecies of Merlin*) in Latin prose and *Vita Merlini* (*Life of Merlin*) written in Latin verse. The *Prophetiae* circulated as an independent text and was also subsumed into the *Historia*. His authorship of the *Vita Merlini* has been doubted. The Latin poem describes an old Merlin of the Woods or Scottish Merlin distinct from the young Merlin of Geoffrey's earlier work. The *Vita* did not circulate widely and its attribution to Geoffrey appears in the only complete manuscript dating from the late thirteenth century (BL, Cotton MS Vespasian E.iv) and most modern authorities accept his authorship as genuine. Both the *Prophetiae* and the *Historiae* established King Arthur and Merlin as two key figures in Arthurian literature and the medieval and Elizabethan imagination and he appears twice in the Shakespeare canon.²⁹⁴ He is met with for the first time in *I Henry IV*:

I cannot choose. Sometime he angers me
With telling me of the moldwarp and the ant,
Of the dreamer Merlin and his prophecies.
[*I Henry IV*: 3:1:144-6]

And again in *King Lear*:

This prophecy Merlin shall make; for I live before his time.
[*King Lear*: 3:2:95]

In her chapter entitled 'Sir Dagonet In Arthur's Show' Lascelles traces Mallory's entry into literary criticism in the eighteenth century which included observations from such notables as the Shakespeare editors Dr Samuel Johnson and Edmond Malone regarding King Arthur's fool Sir Dagonet whose humorous misadventures run throughout Books IX and IX of the *Morte d'Arthur*.²⁹⁵ Arthur's show was an archery display referred to by Justice Shallow in *2 Henry IV*:

I remember at MileEnd Green, when I lay at
Clement's Inn-I was then Sir Dagonet in Arthur's show.

Beyond this single allusion Lascelles believed the influence of *Morte d'Arthur* can be found in *1 Henry IV*, *2 Henry IV* and *Henry V* three of the four plays from the second cycle of Shakespeare English history plays. Lascelles also draws resemblances between a character from Malory's story of Tristram called Sir Dynadan and Falstaff before proceeding to suggest 'that, as the relationship between Falstaff and the other persons of these three plays develops, a pattern becomes apparent, the pattern of situation which Shakespeare may perhaps have observed in that happy strain in the *Morte d'Arthur*.'²⁹⁶ In *Henry V* Mistress Quickly tells its motley crew of Falstaff's death to which Bardolph responds by saying wherever he is, either in heaven or hell, he wished he was with him. Mistress Quickly tells him that after his death Falstaff went to Arthur's bosom:

Nay, sure he's not in hell. He's in Arthur's
bosom, if ever a man went to Arthur's bosom.
[*Henry V*: 2:3:9-10]

Her remarks were likely meant to amuse the learned as Arthur should be Abraham but beyond this Lascelles discerns a hidden wider implication:

To determine what she means is as much to the purpose as deciding what Shallow remembered. It seems more pertinent to ask, why Shakespeare gave her these words. If there is an answer, it is to be formulated in terms rather of impulse than of intention: of the rhythm of the *Morte d'Arthur* prevailing upon his inner ear. Such as rhythm haunting the imagination with the sense of something at once comparable and incongruous, might be accountable for the mingled tones of humour and pathos in this valedictory passage.²⁹⁷

There is also another very curious allusion to the Arthurian romance in *2 Henry IV*. In the second Act Falstaff enters the stage singing from a ballad entitled 'The Noble Acts of *Arthur* of the Round Table, and of Lancelot Du Lake' from *The Garland of Good Will* credited to one described as the great ballad writer of his day, Thomas Deloney. Its said composer Thomas Deloney is a very curious and elusive figure about whom very little is known. In the 1888 entry for him in the *Dictionary of National Biography* J. W. Ebsworth says he was probably born in 1543 whereas Paul Salzman in the revised and updated entry for Deloney in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* says he was born 'any time between about 1540 and 1560' with neither providing any details about his parentage, or place and date of birth. It would appear the first fact we have of him is in October 1586 Thomas Deloney was living in London where the baptism of his son Richard took place at St. Giles Cripplegate.²⁹⁸ With no known education and no record of him having attended university Salzman declared he 'evidently received a grammar school education, given that he published translations from Latin' (this sounds familiar) and Mann says 'there is some probability that he knew French, for in *Jack of Newberie* he apparently refers to a passage in Montaigne's *Essays*, which were not Englished by Florio until 1603.'²⁹⁹ And of the ballads credited to Deloney, these were described by Salzman as 'powerful' and many of them of 'considerable interest' and his prose fiction as a 'remarkable achievement given the paucity of models for what was virtually a new genre.'³⁰⁰ A silk weaver by trade it is thought he was born in Norwich. His surname indicates he was of French origin and French Protestant refugees had previously settled in Norfolk, his first ballad was issued there entitled *A Proper newe sonnet declaring the Lamentation of Beckles* printed for Nicholas Coleman of Norwich (1586), and in 1596 Nashe in *Haue with You to Saffron-Walden* describes Deloney as 'the Balletting Silke-

Weauer, of Norwich'.³⁰¹ In the second half of the sixteenth century the political and social life of the counties of Norfolk and Suffolk were dominated by the Bacon family, and Francis Bacon who had close ties to many of the leading East Anglican families sat as MP for Ipswich before the end of the century. *The Garland of Good Will* was entered into the Stationers' Register on 5 March 1593, but no early editions have survived. The opening lines from 'The Noble Acts of Arthur of the Round Table' read,

When *Arthur* first to court began,
And was aprooued King.³⁰²

which provides the lines for Falstaff's burst into song in *2 Henry IV*,

'When Arthur first in court'
... 'And was a worthy king'.
[*2 Henry IV*: 2:4:33-4].³⁰³

The two tetralogies of the eight Shakespeare English history plays comprising *Richard II*, *1 Henry IV*, *2 Henry IV*, *Henry V*, *1 Henry VI*, *2 Henry VI*, *3 Henry VI*, and *Richard III* covering the consecutive reigns of the house of York and Lancaster culminate in the battle of Bosworth where Henry Tudor, Earl of Richmond slays Richard III becoming Henry VII, the first monarch of the Tudor dynasty. In more ways than one his Tudor heritage was more than familiar to Bacon. He was the son of Edmund Tudor, first Earl of Richmond, eldest son of Owen Tudor and Katherine of Valois, widow of Henry V, making him half-brother to Henry VI, and Lady Margaret Beaufort, daughter of John Beaufort, Duke of Somerset, and great-great-granddaughter of Edward III. Richmond descended through his maternal grandfather from John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster (an important character in *Richard II*) the original head of the Lancaster family and the last surviving Lancastrian male. His other grandfather Owen Tudor appears in *Henry V* and his mother Margaret Beaufort, Countess of Richmond is mentioned in *Richard III* (1:3:20-9). When in 1470 Henry VI was restored to the throne Richmond's uncle Jasper Tudor presented him to the monarch who in *3 Henry VI* predicts the young boy will one day possess the crown and become the salvation of England 'This pretty lad will prove our country's bliss./His looks are full of peaceful majesty,/His head by nature framed to wear a crown,/His hand to wield a sceptre, and himself/likely in time to bless a regal throne.' (4:7:71-4). He becomes head of the house of Lancaster following the deaths of Henry VI and his son Edward. When Richard, Duke of Gloucester usurped the throne in 1483 Richmond in order to unite the houses of York and Lancaster agreed to marry Elizabeth of York, on his accession. In *Richard III* he lands with his Lancastrian troops to do the battle with the Yorkist king. At the battle of Bosworth Richmond kills Richard and pronounces the end of the War of the Roses. He is hailed as King Henry VII and declares 'We will unite the white rose and the red' (5:8:19), announces his intention to marry Elizabeth of York, daughter of Edward VI, and closes the play declaring a new era of peace and prosperity for England. Henry was officially crowned on 30 October and early next year on 18 January 1486 married Elizabeth of York finally bringing an end the War of the Roses. In his two Shakespeare tetralogies Bacon traced the kings of the houses of both the red and white roses now merged into the famous Tudor Rose of King Henry VII and the Tudor dynasty. Rather than exploring the reign of Henry VII in a continuation of his Shakespeare plays he gave a full account of it in *The Historie of the Raigne Of King Henry the Seuenth* written in Baconian-Shakespearean prose. When

on 19 September 1486 Elizabeth of York gave birth to their first son her husband King Henry VII named him Arthur, after the mythical King Arthur, as explained by Bacon:

In *September* following, the *Queene* was deliuered of her first sonne, whom the King (in honour of the *British-Race*, of which himselfe was) named ARTHVR, according to the Name of that ancient worthy King of the *Britaines*; in whose Acts there is truth enough to make him Famous, besides which is Fabulous.³⁰⁴

Linking and reinforcing the myth of the chivalrous King of Arthur with the newly born Arthur, Prince of Wales, first born out of the union of the houses of York and Lancaster son and heir to a Tudor dynasty Bacon again returned to it when describing his wedding to Katherine of Aragon, after she arrived at Plymouth in 1501, before their marriage in the November:

In the beginning of the next year being the .17.th of the King the Lady Katherine fourth daughter of Ferdinando and Isabella King and Queen of Spaine, arriued in England at Plimouth the second of October, and was married to Prince Arthur in Paules the 14.th of Nouember following. The Prince then being about 15 yeares of age and the Lady about .18. The manner of receiuing, the manner of her Entrie into London, and the Celebrity of the Mariage, were performed with great and true magnificence, in regard of Coste, showe, and Order....

....In all the Deuses and Conceptes of the Triumphes of this Mariage, there was a great deale of Astronomie. The Lady being resembled to Hesperus, and the Prince to Arcturus: & the olde king Alphonsus, (that was the greatest astronomer of Kings, and was Ancestor to the Lady) was brought in to be the Fortune-teller of the Matche. And whoseuer had those toyes in compileing, they were not altogether Pendanticall. But you may be sure, that King Arthur the Britton, and the discent of the Lady Katherine from the House of Lancaster was in no-wise forgotten.³⁰⁵

Unfortunately, the marriage turned out to be brief and after just completing his fifteen year Arthur died on 2 April 1502. In the interest of international politics his widow married his younger brother, the future Henry VIII, who later sought an annulment on the grounds the marriage was invalid in his pursuit of Anne Boleyn, the soon to be mother of Queen Elizabeth, a matter which partly turned on whether her first marriage with Arthur was ever consummated. The Shakespeare cycle of English kings and prose history of Henry VII was completed by the late Shakespeare play *Henry VIII* in which Elizabeth appears as an infant where she is eulogised by Cramner as a maiden-phoenix, whose ashes 'new create another heir', whom all those years before had been cast by Bacon, as King Arthur in *The Misfortunes of Arthur*.

During the time he was composing the Shakespeare English history plays Bacon wrote *The Comical History of the Merchant of Venice* based around its character Shylock, the moneylender, whose real life counterparts Bacon had several dealings, one of whom a moneylender named Giles Sympson dwelling in Lombard Street, had him arrested and jailed for debt.³⁰⁶ In the play its heroine Portia the lover of Bassanio and defender of his friend Antonio (known by Baconians to be modelled on Anthony Bacon) when about to disguise herself turns to her maid Nerissa, telling her that when they are both dressed up as young men she will brag and tell lies about numerous conquests with the opposite sex (3:4:69-74). The passage writes Field 'is a mocking summary of the story of Elaine, the Fair Maid of Astolat, from Sir Lancelot's point of view, put into the plural for extra satiric effect' found in Malory's *Morte d'Arthur* (529.4).³⁰⁷

From 1603 Bacon was busy preparing and all through 1604 writing *The Advancement of Learning* wherein as in his history of Henry VII he passes comments on some of the fabulous aspects of the legend of Arthur 'It is as far differing in truth of Nature, from

such a knowledge as we require, as the storie of King *Arthur* of *Brittaine*, or *Hughe* of *Burdeaux*, differs from *Caesars* commentaries in truth of storie. For it is manifest that *Caesar* did greater things *de vero*, then those *Imaginarie Heroes* were fained to doe.³⁰⁸ Its modern editor Kiernan notes 'King *Arthur*...available in Malory's *Morte Darthur* (1485)'.³⁰⁹ At the same time Bacon was planning and writing the *Advancement* the first quarto of *Hamlet* appeared in 1603 followed by a much enlarged quarto edition in 1604. Early in the play the dead ghost of Hamlet's father complains of having been 'Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin,/Unhouseled, dis-appointed, unaneled,/No reck'ning made, but sent to my account/With all my imperfections on my head (1:5:76-80). Noticed in the variorum edition of *Hamlet* the dead king is echoing Malory's Lancelot 'So...he was howselyd and enelyd, and had al that a Christian man ought' (598.5) 'by echoing Malory, Shakespeare has evoked an Arthurian pattern', writes Field, 'he has made the Malory episode a gloss on the ghost's speech, showing us more fully what Hamlet's father had needed, the good death that would have 'made his reckoning.'³¹⁰

In *King Lear* (probably written shortly after the publication of the *Advancement* in 1605) when the Earl of Kent is arguing with Goneril's steward Oswald he says 'Goose, if I had you upon Sarum Plain/I'd send you cackling home to Camelot' (2:2:80-1), the castle associated with King Arthur located somewhere in Great Britain. Some editors of *King Lear* observe that Camelot must be identified with Winchester, identified as such by Malory, which boasted the Winchester Round Table, fabled table of Arthurian legend thus our poet 'was in effect saying that Winchester, which was called Camelot under King Arthur, was also called Camelot under King Lear.'³¹¹ In *The Misfortunes of Arthur* King Arthur's wife Queen Guinevere has an incestuous adulterous relationship with Arthur's son Mordred, himself begotten by an incestuous relationship between Arthur and his sister Anne. In *The Winter's Tale* there are comments Field 'a number of tantalising resemblances between the situation of the innocent Queen Hermione and Malory's much less innocent Queen Guinevere'. In Malory's version when Lancelot restores Guinevere to King Arthur similarities of situation 'may have brought Malory's words to Shakespeare's mind: the accused queen, the challenger, the sympathetic listening court, the obsessed central figure refusing to listen-in Malory, King Arthur ruled by Gawain; in Shakespeare, King Leontes alone.'³¹²

The epilogue to *The Misfortunes of Arthur* which appeared before all the Shakespeare plays written in Baconian-Shakespearean verse unmistakably condenses and anticipates with its blend of Lucan, Arthurian and Senecan themes some of the language, ideas and themes in located in the Shakespeare English history plays, the tragedies of *Hamlet*, *Macbeth* and *Lear*, and a whole host of other Shakespeare plays:

SEe heere by this the tickle trust of tyme:
The false affiance of each mortall force,
The wauering waight of *Fates*: the fickell trace,
What *Fortune* trips: the many mockes of life:
The cheerlesse change: the easelesse brunts and broyles,
That man abides: the restlesse race he runnes.
But most of all, see heere the peerelesse paines:
The lasting panges: the stintlesse greefes, the teares:
The sighes: the grones: the feares: the hopes: the hates:
The thoughts and cares, that Kingly pompe impartes.
What follies then bewitch thambitious mindes,
That thirst for Scepters pompe the well of woes:
Whereof (alas) should wretched man be proude,

Whose first conception is but Sinne, whose birth
But paine, whose life but toyle, and needes must dye?

See heere the store of great Pendragons broode,
The to'ne quite dead, the to'ther hastening on,
As men, the Sonne but greene, the Sire but ripe:
Yet both forestalde ere halfe their race were run.
As Kinges, the mightiest Monarches in this age,
Yet both supprest and vanquisht by themselues.

Such is the brittle breath of mortall man,
Whiles humane *Nature* workes her dayly wrackes:
Such be the crazed crests of glorious Crownes,
Whiles wordly powers like sudden puffes do passe.
And yet for one that goes, another comes,
Some borne, some dead: So still the store endures.
So that both *Fates* and common care prouide
That men must needes be born, and some must rule.

Wherefore ye Peeres, and Lordings lift aloft,
And whosoe'r in Thrones that iudge your thralls:
Let not your Soueraingty heaue you to hye,
Nor their subiection press them downe too lowe.
It is not pride, that can augment your power,
Nor lowlie lookes, that long can keepe them safe:

The *Fates* haue found a way whereby, ere long,
The proude must leaue their hope, the meek their feare.
Who ere receaued such fauor from aboue,
That could assure one day vnto himselfe:
Him, whom the Morning found both stout and strong,
The Evening left all groueling on the ground

This breath and heate, wherewith mans life is fedde
Is but a flash, or flame, that shines a while,
And once extinct, is as it ne'er had bene.
Corruption houely frets the bodies frame,
Youth tends to age, and age to death by kinde.
Short is the race, prefixed is the end,
Swift is the tyme, wherein mans life doth run.
But by his deedes t'extend renowne and fame,
That onely vertue workes, which neuer fades.³¹³

[Lines 1-50]

The Misfortunes of Arthur is indisputably the most Senecan-influenced play in all of Elizabethan and Jacobean drama. Its editor Cunliffe identified more than three hundred lines translated and adapted taken from all ten Senecan tragedies published in the 1581 edition, namely *Theystes*, *Agamemnon*, *Medea*, *Phaedra*, *Hercules Furens*, *Hercules Oetaeus*, *Troades*, *Octavia*, *Oedipus* and *Phoenissae*.

The persons and influences that shape our lives and minds begins early and Bacon was raised and surrounded by poets, writers and translators from his early childhood right through into adulthood and beyond. His love and extensive knowledge of the Roman philosopher, writer and playwright Lucius Annaeus Seneca was inevitable as Seneca was Sir Nicholas Bacon's favourite author. In a poem written for his wife Lady Anne

Bacon in 1558 in a time of his ‘*great sickenes*’ he reveals how he took great comfort in Anne reading to him from her ‘Tullye’ (Cicero) and ‘my Senecke’:

Thinkeinge alsoe with howe good will
The idle tymes which yrkesome be
You have made shorte throwe your good skill
In readeinge pleasante thinges to me,
Whereof profite we bothe did se,
As wittenes can if they coulde speake
Bothe your Tullye and my Senecke.³¹⁴

As a new man Nicholas Bacon without the advantages and privileges of nobility, status and wealth who had ‘few resources upon which to fall back upon in times of adversity’ writes his biographer ‘he was bound to follow the Stoic maxims of his ‘Senecke’,³¹⁵ as if the man and his writings, and what he stood for and represented, not only reflected his political and philosophical outlook, but ran through his veins:

In fact,, so great was his admiration for the ideas and style of Seneca that his chosen motto, *Mediocria Firma*, is almost certainly taken from one of the choruses of that philosophers *Oedipus*, and, as Dr Elizabeth McCutcheon has recently pointed out and discussed in some detail, the Latin *sententiae* which Bacon chose to adorn his gallery walls at Gorhambury were largely Senecan in composition and substance.³¹⁶

Sir Nicholas Bacon purchased the manor of Gorhambury, near St Albans, in January 1557 where he built a new house on the site between 1563 and 1568. It seems work was still continuing on the long gallery in 1574 and was likely completed shortly thereafter. The Latin verses or *sententiae* (gathered up from fifty-nine different sources) chiefly from Seneca and Cicero depicted above the wainscoting and portals are grouped together under twenty-two subjects or headings to prompt meditation ‘used to teach and guide, acting as a mnemonic system of precepts’,³¹⁷ which his son Francis contemplated and looked upon throughout his formative years and the following decades.

This Latin collection of *sententiae* was very fortunately preserved in the form of an illuminated manuscript probably prepared in 1575 or 1576 and presented to Jane, Lady Lumley ‘At Her Desire’ sometime before her death in 1576/7 held at the British Library (Manuscript Royal 17 A XXIII). Its Latin text together with its first English translation was published by Dr Elizabeth McCutcheon in 1977.³¹⁸ Its editor and translator Dr McCutcheon states that the manuscript provides ‘the autograph of Sir Nicholas’s mind’, and it comments ‘particularly, upon the impact of Seneca on Sir Nicholas himself’, and it ‘helps also to clarify the relationship between Nicholas Bacon and his youngest son Francis.’³¹⁹ The impact of his father Sir Nicholas and his love of Seneca on Francis and his shared love and admiration of Seneca was one and the same: for both father and son the profound impact of Seneca, the man and his writings, lasted a lifetime.

In 1579 the year Sir Nicholas died the impact of the writings of Seneca had long since begun to solidify in the mind of his son Francis whom he read and again re-read over the next forty years, something which is reflected in his various acknowledged writings, and his Senecan influenced anonymous and pseudonymous dramas. He largely had his father to thank for his deep interest in Seneca and his writings: the Roman statesman, philosopher and dramatist whose influence upon his father was again turned to by his modern biographer Tittler in the epilogue to his *Life* of Sir Nicholas, the greatest Stoic Senecan statesman of the Elizabethan Age:

Drawing upon his experiences and observations of those formative years, and recalling the writings of the later Stoics, whose work he so admired-particularly 'my Senecke', as Bacon called him-he grasped two maxims of political thought which aptly fitted his own situation: the imperative of obtaining royal favour, and the value of moderation in its pursuit. Seneca's classic plea for the favour and clemency of the Emperor Nero had a profound relevance for Bacon throughout his career, for neither he nor his Roman counterpart had any resources to fall back upon in the failure of such continuous bounty. That imperative sustained Bacon the bureaucrat in his continued service under Mary Tudor. It led Bacon the jurist to understand that the law must be administered as an agency of clemency as well as with the force of righteousness. Finally, it spurred his deep awareness that the preservation of a society ruled by law, and of his own place in such a society, depended upon the preservation of legitimate monarchy.³²⁰

In his preparatory comments to *The Misfortunes of Arthur* its editor J. W. Cunliffe states that it 'seems impossible to carry the borrowing of Senecan material further' and 'such wholesome [sic] borrowing carried its own punishment in the defeat of its purpose-unless that purpose-were merely to impress a courtly audience with the author's familiarity with Seneca'.³²¹ Rossitor lamented it carried 'Seneca-pillaging to its final excess'.³²² For Lucas it is 'the most slavishly Senecan of all English plays'.³²³ But this was no mere slavish imitation as the German critic Wolfgang Clemen pointed out '*The Misfortunes of Arthur* shows to a unique degree how far a playwright could carry the process of taking phrases straight out of Seneca and fitting them together like a mosaic...The object of scraping together exaggerated utterances of this kind from different plays by Seneca, and piling them on top of one another in a single speech, seems to be to produce an impression of frenzy and conflicting passions, and if possible to outdo Seneca himself in the accumulation of purple passages'.³²⁴ The 'interweaving of theme, diction, structure, and image' observes its most recent editor B. J. Corrigan 'is complex',³²⁵ and one of the reasons for the complexity of this Senecan play is its author's remarkable knowledge and familiarity with Senecan literature. The incredible extent of the borrowing and use of Seneca in *The Misfortunes of Arthur* is undeniably demonstrable. In one speech alone of twenty-eight lines, Cunliffe showed only one line is the work of its author.³²⁶ In fact Cunliffe identified no fewer than 309 lines in *The Misfortunes of Arthur* as being translations of Seneca. In his brief prefatory comments to his appendix 'Imitations of Seneca In *The Misfortunes of Arthur*' he states 'In some cases half or more than half a page is borrowed. Besides the passages given, there are many which seem to have been suggested by Seneca; but I have only thought those worthy of record in which the imitation is obvious'.³²⁷ He presented the imitations and parallels from the Seneca tragedies found in *The Misfortunes of Arthur* over the space of twenty-five pages.³²⁸ In the most recent edition of the drama its editor Corrigan prints the original Latin passages alongside the relevant passages in *The Misfortunes of Arthur* in order of occurrence from the most instances taken from each Seneca tragedy to the least showing: *Theyestes* was used at least 25 times, *Agamemnon* (16), *Phaedra* (16), *Hercules furens* (12), *Phoenissae* (11), *Troades* (11), *Hercules Oetaeus* (9), *Medea* (8), *Octavia* (8), and *Oedipus* (7),³²⁹ that points directly to numerous Shakespeare plays.³³⁰

The *Misfortunes* was published in 1588 around the same time as the early Shakespeare play *Titus Andronicus* and the three parts of *Henry VI* and *Richard III* were also written in the late 1580s. The umbilical Senecan connection linking the most Senecan drama in the Elizabethan canon and the early Senecan Shakespeare plays ushering in the golden Shakespearean age has been strangely neglected by Seneca and Shakespeare scholars. Just as Bacon had re-wrote Seneca in *The Misfortunes of Arthur* rewriting situations, scenes and speeches, the modern editor of Seneca A. J. Boyle states that 'Shakespeare

...plays re-write Senecan scenes and speeches constantly.'³³¹ Modern twentieth century critics have attempted to define the nature and extent of Seneca's influence on the Shakespeare canon with often varying and conflicting outcomes summarized by Miola in the introduction to his recent *Shakespeare and Classical Tragedy The Influence of Seneca*.³³² Yet as Miola points out the study of Seneca's contribution to Shakespeare 'resides largely in isolated studies of individual plays; there exists no integrated assessment' and to partly 'remedy the deficiency this study examines Seneca's place in Shakespeare's tragedies and tragicomedies.'³³³ While Miola's important and incisive study offers fresh observations and insights and greatly increases our knowledge and understanding of Seneca's influence on Shakespeare it mainly focuses upon seven plays *Titus Andronicus*, *Richard III*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *Othello*, and *King Lear* with a further chapter headed 'Tragicomedy' briefly discussing the Senecan influence on *Pericles*, *Cymbeline*, *A Winter's Tale* and *The Tempest*. As extensive as this first full-length study particularly focussed on Seneca and Shakespeare is, extending to about a third of the Shakespeare canon, the influence of Seneca extends to an even greater number of Shakespeare plays. Irrespective of the total number of Shakespeare plays influenced by Seneca Miola correctly observes that 'throughout his career Shakespeare weaves Senecan materials-often combined with other fabrics, especially medieval-into complicated and surprising designs.'³³⁴ And just as Seneca provided Bacon with numerous rhetorical and thematic ideas in *Misfortunes of Arthur* Miola points out 'Seneca continually provides Shakespeare with clusters of rhetorical and thematic ideas that shape his articulation of the tragic experience.'³³⁵ Just as in other ways Seneca influenced the known writings of Bacon throughout the career of his acknowledged writings, 'throughout Shakespeare's career, we shall see', says Miola, that: 'Seneca provides an important paradigm of tragic style, character and action. His influence surpasses the narrow limitations of genre and inspires moments in comedy as well as tragedy, notably in *A Midsummer's Night's Dream*. This early use looks ahead to much later practice, as Seneca becomes finally for Shakespeare, as for Renaissance Europe, an important source of that new and fascinating hybrid-tragi-comedy.'³³⁶

Several critics have pointed out that Shakespeare must have read and re-read Seneca throughout his lifetime.³³⁷ As we have seen from a young boy Bacon breathed in Seneca at the feet of his learned parents Sir Nicholas and Lady Anne Bacon, and read and re-read Seneca throughout his entire life; and in the words of Jardine and Stewart, at the very end of his life Bacon 'took as his models the authors who had shaped his outlook in those early years, Cicero and Demosthenes, along with the stoic philosophical writer Seneca.'³³⁸ Even though this is demonstrably the case and the writings of Seneca had a profound effect upon the writings of Bacon (which was of course known to Jardine and Stewart) there is no entry for Seneca in the index to their recent biography of Bacon published in 1998. It perhaps also might surprise (or maybe not) the reader that there has as far as I am aware never been a study simultaneously comparing Seneca with both the Bacon and Shakespeare canons, perchance then some five centuries later, I might be forgiven (inevitably in a condensed form) for collating, synthesizing and presenting the first.

The Misfortunes of Arthur the most Senecan play in the history of Elizabethan and Jacobean drama was performed and published in early 1588 the same year some critics date the composition of *Titus Andronicus* with others dating it the following year which has been described as the most Senecan of all Shakespeare plays.³³⁹ The *Misfortunes of Arthur* is saturated with the influence of the Senecan tragedies and speaking of these dramas the renowned Shakespeare scholar Churton Collins writes 'it would not be too much to say that *Titus Andronicus* and the three parts of Henry VI. are saturated with

the influence of these tragedies.’³⁴⁰ The editor of *The Misfortunes of Arthur* Cunliffe in *The Influence of Seneca On Elizabethan Tragedy* says of *Titus Andronicus* ‘The subject and style of the tragedy are thoroughly Senecan...No detail of physical horror is spared; from beginning to end the stage reeks with blood, and the characters vie with one another in barbarity. Even the gentle Lavinia helps to prepare the Thyestean banquet; and Titus and his sons are no less eager for revenge, and no less cruel in its execution, than Tamora and Aaron.’³⁴¹ Miola writes ‘Seneca’s depictions of forbidden passion and unspeakable crime (*scelus*), his revelation of the hell deep within the human soul, clearly excited the author of *Titus Andronicus*. Titus here self-consciously strives to surpass his classical models, to outdo Senecan figures of revenge...To accomplish such overreaching, Shakespeare focuses on a classical motif variously repeated—the slaying of children...and in that extraordinary Senecan pastiche, *The Misfortunes of Arthur* (1588), Arthur must slay his rebellious son Mordred. The Titus who kills Mutius and Lavinia fits well into this company.’³⁴² In *The Misfortunes of Arthur* Bacon combined and blended numerous Senecan plays into his narrative and likewise he drew on several Senecan plays for *Titus Andronicus*. Cunliffe suggests the hunting scene in Act 2 Scene 2 was prompted by the opening of *Hippolytus*; the description of the ‘barren detested vale’, the scene of the murder of Bassianus and rape of Lavinia is reminiscent of the place where Atreus sacrificed his nephews in *Thyestes* (650-5), with touches also from *Hercules Furens* (690-2); and the passage in *Titus Andronicus* beginning ‘In peace and honour rest you here my sons’ (1:1:150-6) is modelled on the chorus in *Troades* (151-6, 166-8).³⁴³ For Miola *Troades* ‘informs the symbolic design of *Titus Andronicus* as well as its dramatic configuration’ while the ‘haunting presence’ of *Thyestes* ‘lies behind the action of *Titus Andronicus*, a deep source of its energy and its aesthetic of violence.’³⁴⁴ Furthermore, it has long been noted that slightly altered lines from the *Phaedra* appear in Act 2 and 4 of *Titus* (a well-known habit of Bacon’s), and Seneca’s drama, writes Miola, ‘also contributes to Shakespeare’s sense of locality’ in the play.³⁴⁵ In an early example of his known dramatic pieces, his private note-book (*Promus*), his essays and the *Advancement of Learning* Bacon constantly draws on Seneca’s prose work *Epistulae Morales*, traces and echoes of which also add some colour to *Titus Andronicus*:

Two Senecan themes exercise a deep influence on the play, as they did on Renaissance high culture more generally: that death is a release which is not to be feared and that the wise man has an inner stability which makes him immune to the blows of fortune. The Elizabethans did not doubt that the stoic philosopher Seneca who put forward these views in works such as his *Epistles* was the same man as the dramatist whose *Tenne Tragedies* were collected in English translation in 1581. When Titus discovers that his daughter has been raped, he follows Kyd’s Hieronimo in speaking Latin at a moment of extreme emotional stress: ‘*Magni dominator poli,/Tam lentus audis scelera, tam lentus vides?*’ (4.1.81-2). This means ‘Ruler of the great heavens, are you so slow to hear crimes, so slow to see?’ It indicates that Titus is turning himself into Senecan man, for it is from a moment of discovery of appalling sexual knowledge in the *Hyppolytus* (671-2). But there the passage begins ‘*Magne regnator deum*’-Titus’ ‘*dominator poli*’ is incorporated from a well-known passage of verse contained in one of Seneca’s prose epistles on accepting death and enduring whatever nature throws at you: ‘*Duc, O parens celsique dominator poli,/Quocumque placuit*’ (‘Lead me, O master of the high heavens, whithersoever thou shalt wish’-*Epistulae Morales*, 107). Philosophical Seneca’s idea of submission to the will of the universe is thus skilfully combined with tragical Seneca’s scene of *anagnorisis*, of terrible recognition.³⁴⁶

The trilogy of the Henry VI plays together with *Richard III* which constitute the first Shakespeare tetralogy were composed in close proximity to *The Misfortunes of Arthur*

and *Titus Andronicus* around the same time or just shortly after. Cunliffe, Theobald and Simpson all point out that the lines from *3 Henry VI* 'But for a kingdom any oath may be broken/I would break a thousand oaths to reign one year' (1:2:16-7) clearly echoes *Phoenissae* (664).³⁴⁷ In addition Simpson also compares 'What fates impose, that men must needs abide./ It boots not to resist both wind and tide' (4:4:31-2) with *Agamemnon* (138-44).³⁴⁸ The *Henry VI* plays, especially *3 Henry VI*, writes Cunliffe, have much in common with Seneca 'They are pervaded by the ruthless spirit of violence and bloodshed, and abound in the crude horrors of physical repulsiveness, such as the bringing of Suffolk's mutilated body on to the stage (*2 Henry VI*: 4:1), and the subsequent introduction of Queen Margaret with the head in her hands (4:4). Iden brings on the stage Cade's head (*2 Henry VI*: 5:1) and Richard that of Somerset (3:1:1). All through *The Third Part of Henry VI*, and *Richard III*, the slaughter is continuous, and accompanied by circumstances of great inhumanity, as witness the mock crowning of York before his death, and the murders of Rutland and the young Prince of Wales.'³⁴⁹ Cunliffe also sees the influence of *Agamemnon* (139-41) with which he compares 'As doth a sail filled with a fretting gust/Command an argosy to stem the waves' (*3 Henry VI*: 2:6:35-6) with *Hippolytus* (186-9) and *Thyestes* (438-9).³⁵⁰ Some of Seneca's leading ideas Cunliffe adds are repeatedly reproduced in these plays and all the more important characters imbued with Seneca's stoical fatalism. Moreover 'the cares and risks of high places and the benefits of obscurity are urged as frequently in these plays as in the tragedies of Seneca, and in much the same strain.'³⁵¹ When resigning the crown Henry VI says 'that I may conquer fortune's spite/By living low, where fortune cannot hurt me' (*3 Henry VI*: 4:7:19-20) which Cunliffe compares to *Hercules Furens* (201-4) and *Hercules Oetaeus* (701-3). And for the much longer passage in *3 Henry VI* (2:5:1-54) describing the advantages of a shepherd's life over a king's, Cunliffe further points to *Hippolytus* (516-533), *Thyestes* (450-3) and *Hercules Oetaeus* (647-661).³⁵² More recently Inga-Stina Ewbank drew attention to the reference to the story of how Medea slew and dismembered her brother Absyrtus in *2 Henry VI* (5:3:57-60) 'Meet I an infant of the house of York,/Into as many gobbets will I cut it/As wild Medea young Absyrtus did./In cruelty I will seek out my fame' taken from Seneca's *Medea* for which she cited the relevant passage from the Studley translation.³⁵³

The proximity of the first Shakespeare tetralogy to *The Misfortunes of Arthur* as we have seen traces back to 1581 edition of *Seneca, His Tenne Tragedies* comprising the English translations of the Senecan tragedies from the Latin published in the names of Heywood Nevile, Studley, Nuce and Newton in the middle to late 1560s. In 2000 the American scholar M. L. Stapleton published his groundbreaking *Fated Sky The Femina Furens in Shakespeare* (Newark: University of Delaware Press and London: Associated University Presses) which addresses the intertextuality of *Seneca, His Tenne Tragedies* containing the English translation of the Senecan tragedies with the Shakespeare canon. The work (later than Boyle and Miola) is the most recent full-length study on Seneca and Shakespeare, and is arguably in some respects, the most important ever published on the subject yet it remains almost entirely unknown to Seneca and Shakespeare critics and commentators. There is no mention of this work by Stuart Gillespie in his section on Seneca in *Shakespeare's Books: A Dictionary of Shakespeare Sources* (2004) nor is it found in the extensive bibliography listing nearly thirty works provided at the end of the entry.³⁵⁴ In his *Shakespeare and Classical Antiquity* (Oxford University Press, 2013) Colin Burrow presents a thirty-nine page chapter on Seneca (and Shakespeare) with an extensive accompanying notes section (forty-four notes) and a useful Further Reading section on Seneca and Shakespeare furnishing a list and brief commentary of important works on the subject. Neither, the chapter, notes section, or Further Reading makes any

reference to *Fated Sky The Femina Furens in Shakespeare*.³⁵⁵ In a pointed instructive introduction Stapleton explains how what he describes as the *femina furens* (the angry woman) features in all ten of Seneca's plays, which provide models found throughout the Shakespeare plays and points towards the unmistakable intertextual nexus between *Seneca, His Tenne Tragedies* and the Shakespeare plays with a focussed clarity which has curiously eluded all previous critics and commentators:

I demonstrate Shakespeare's particular use of the topos throughout his canon with exemplary figures, and explain his reliance on the English translations *Seneca, His Tenne Tragedies, Translated into Englysh* (1581), as an intermediary for the Latin Seneca. I focus on intertextual connections that strike me as direct and unmistakable, broad analogues of rhetoric and character as well as direct verbal echoes and allusions...My first chapter analyses the critical history of the Senecan controversy and argues for Shakespeare's use of the *Tenne Tragedies* as his intertext, an idea that I extend through the next five chapters. Chapter 2 explains the centrality of John Studley's *Medea* to Shakespeare's conception of Joan la Pucelle (*I H6*), Margaret of Anjou (*2H6*, *3H6*, *R3*), and *Tamora (TA)*, with particular attention to the transmigration of conventions such as stichomythia, and self-definition. Chapter 3 is devoted to the further transformations of the Senecan femina furens in Shakespeare's comic and angry Katherine (*Shr*) and Portia (*MV*). The next two chapters attempt to decode the strange parallels between Helena (*AWW*) and John Studley's Phaedra (*HIP*), and between Cleopatra (*ANT*) and Jasper Heywood's Juno (*HF*). Chapter 6 argues that Imogen and Cymbeline's Queen (*CYM*) represent an exorcism of *femina furens*. To limit the discussion to these dozen Shakespearean and Senecan plays seemed most judicious to me. Although much more could have been said....³⁵⁶

The controversial depiction of Joan of Arc in *I Henry VI* has long excited and vexed Shakespeare critics. The critics also uniformly presume that Holinshed's *Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Wales* (1587) produced the outline, writes Stapleton, which was fleshed out by Shakespeare. Though he undoubtedly read Holinshed this explanation 'does not account sufficiently for his amplification of Joan's "negative" qualities nor her vibrancy and vitality as theatre' for which he points to another location 'Studley's 1566 translation of Seneca's *Medea* (later republished in the 1581 *Tenne Tragedies*), which Shakespeare echoes, parodies, and imitates' adding 'specifically, Joan la Pucelle represents a "transportation" or "reanimation" of the Senecan and Studleyan *Medea*.'³⁵⁷ Shakespeare 'achieves this reanimation by poetic compression of Studley's Seneca', his Joan 'possesses "Studleyan qualities", her necromancy 'shows her most obvious debt to Studley's *Medea*', 'Shakespeare borrows heavily from Studley and Seneca to fashion Joan's presence and rhetoric', Joan 'displays Studley's colloquial Medean verbal power when she waxes grandiloquent over the corpse of Talbot-to demolish Lucy's very magnification of him', and 'Shakespeare fuels Joan with maxims' Senecan diamonds in 'the entrails of Studley's fourteeners'.³⁵⁸

In his essay 'Shakespeare and the History Play' Hardin Craig states that our dramatist 'made his way into the history play through the door of Senecan tragedy, with its abundant use of rhetoric and oratory'.³⁵⁹ In this incisive essay Hardin Craig highlights the Senecan-inspired rhetorical and oratorical elements in the Yorkist cycle of plays, and their declamations and Senecan prologues:

The duties of the prologue are, however, apt to be distributed over later acts of these plays. In *2 Henry VI* it is York's speeches (1:1: 213-59 and 3:1:331-83) that correspond to the Senecan prologue; in *3 Henry VI* this feature is seen more clearly in Richard of Gloucester's speech (3: 2: 124-95)....

...Almost all varieties of the Senecan declamation are to be found in the Yorkist plays. For example, Duke Humphrey's outburst of indignation over the surrender to the French of the

duchies of Maine and Anjou (1:1:75-103) is a declamation expressive of grief and surprise; Margaret's denunciations of Duke Humphrey and his duchess (1:3:45-66, 78-90; 3:1:4-41) express hatred and envy; the Duchess of Gloucester's speech (2:4:27-69) is a lamentation; Duke Humphrey's analysis of the situation (3:1:142-71), one of the best declamations in the play is deliberative; King Henry's abandonment of Duke Humphrey (3:1:198-222), very Senecan in its mood, is expressive of surrender and defenceless suffering; the Queen's great effort to win Henry over to her side (3:2:73-121), incidentally a failure, is a *suasoria* and highly rhetorical; Suffolk's last speech (4:1:121-38), and indeed the whole scene of Suffolk's capture and death, is an example of conscious amplification and much overdone; and note, finally, Young Clifford's lamentation over his father's body (5:1:31-65).

...One other Senecan feature usually of some length which seems to appear consciously in the Yorkist plays, particularly in *2 Henry VI*, is the description of objects, physical or spiritual, in rhetorical terms. Shakespeare's object seems to be, as in *Titus Andronicus*, the accumulation of revolting and circumstantial horror, with exclamations, enumerations, and epithets.³⁶⁰

Kenneth Muir declared 'there can be little doubt that *Richard III* is the most Senecan of Shakespeare's plays.'³⁶¹ Harold F. Brooks demonstrates the pervasive influence of *Troades*, *Medea*, and *Phaedra* in *Richard III* and the play exhibits the kind of Senecan rhetorical features and recurring declamations highlighted above by Hardin Craig in the Henry VI trilogy.³⁶² Richard III is the archetypal Senecan tyrant who knows no bounds in his pursuit of power 'but I am in/So far in blood that sin will pluck on sin (*Richard III*: 4:2:65-6) sums up his attitude to evil cruel murder and continual slaughter. The tragedy '*Troades* contributes heavily to the characterisation, structure, and language of *Richard III*'³⁶³ and Brooks tells of the debt owed to *Troades* for its unhistorical amplifications showing that each of the four women in *Richard III* has her corresponding counterpart in the Senecan tragedy.³⁶⁴ The Shakespeare tragedy *Richard III* 'is Senecan in its royal houses under curse, and the chain that binds them, one generation after another. It is Senecan as a tragedy of blood...Senecan, again, are the ghosts demanding revenge, and the prominence of the revenge motive. As a criminal hero, Richard resembles Atreus the Senecan tyrant, Theystes the murderous hypocrite, and, in his intellectual force and absence of moral feeling, the protagonist of *Medea*. In the play's form and expression, Senecan features are the prologue-like opening monologue; the choric function performed by Margaret; the forensic oratory; the gnomic sayings and the stichomythia.'³⁶⁵

There are 'visions or hallucinations of avenging ghosts in other Senecan plays: in the *Phoenissae* the ghost of Laius, and accompanied or associated with Furies in *Oedipus* (Laius), *Medea* (Absyrtus), *Agamemnon* (Thyestes), and *Thyestes* (Tantalus); with Agrippina in *Octavia*, Thyestes and Tantalus are actual speakers in the play like those which appear to Richard before Bosworth.'³⁶⁶ After the ghosts 'Richard awakens to face his conscience; the Senecan tyrant finds himself in a morality play. Other Renaissance playwrights, likewise mixing Senecan morality traditions, stage similar moments of tyrannical soul searching' just as 'Mordred fights off an inner revolt before his end' in '*Misfortunes of Arthur*'.³⁶⁷ The controversial wooing scene between Richard and Anne derives from Lycus's wooing of Megera in *Hercules Furens* and other Senecan plays most notably *Hippolytus*.³⁶⁸ The scene observes Colin Burrow 'takes as its starting point a Senecan situation, a structure of relationships other than a set of Senecan words' the 'allusion in itself suggests the imaginative depth of Shakespeare's engagement with Seneca'.³⁶⁹ In Seneca and *Octavia* Brooks noted twenty-five descriptions of Hades or significant allusions to it, nine/ten in *Hercules Furens*, and several more in *Hippolytus*, *Medea*, *Hercules Oetaeus*, *Agamemnon*, and *Thyestes* 'For large general resemblances one may compare with Clarence's dream-descent into Hell the guilty dream of Poppaea

in *Octavia*, where she is driven by Agrippina's ghost down through a chasm that opens in the earth. After Clarence's nightmare, the Keeper to whom it will be narrated asks him why he looks so heavily; in the same way Poppaea's nurse asks her why she trembles, why her face is troubled and wet with weeping: 'O I have passed a miserable night,/.full of fearful dreams' (*Richard III*:1:4:2-3) is Clarence's answer, corresponding to Poppaea's: 'Confusa tristi proximae noctis metu/visque...mente turbata feror' (721f).³⁷⁰ W. Theobald in his section on Seneca in *The Classical Element in the Shakespeare Plays* notes that in *Richard III* Gloucester uses the phrase 'I cannot tell' (1:3:70), which he informs 'is a favourites phrase of Bacon, and would seem to represent the hesitancy conveyed by the Latin, "Nesico quid," as used by Seneca' in *Thyestes*.³⁷¹ He points his readers to *Shakespeare Studies in Baconian Light* by his kinsman R. M. Theobald who devotes a whole chapter entitled '*I cannot Tell*'. R. M. Theobald immediately highlights that Bacon employs the phrase in his essay *Of Truth*.³⁷² In addition to *Richard III* Bacon uses the phrase in several other Shakespeare plays including *Henry V* (2:1:19), *Much Ado About Nothing* (2:3:22), *Merchant of Venice* (1:3:95), *Othello* (4:2:114), *Macbeth* (1:2:41). Bacon likewise put it to good use in his letters and speeches, in *Observations upon a Libel*, in the *Apology*, in his work on *Touching Duells*, and in his dedications to *The Wisdom of the Ancients* and *Novum Organum*.³⁷³ And as we are about to see below Bacon was undoubtedly in the habit of jotting down and using phrases from Seneca's plays in his acknowledged works and writings.

During the year Bacon put on the performance of *The Misfortunes of Arthur* the raging conflict between the Puritans and church establishment known as the Martin Marprelate controversy was in full flow and in direct response to it Bacon penned a treatise entitled *An Advertisement Touching the Controversies of the Church of England* (c.1589). In an impartial assessment Bacon steered a middle course calling for a cessation in hostilities, though noting among other things '*Iniuriae potentiorum sunt* Iniuries come from them that haue the vpper hand', which Stewart and Knight compare to a line from Seneca's essay *De Ira* '*Potentiorum iniuriae hilari vultu, non patientor tantum ferendae sunt*'.³⁷⁴ In 1592 Bacon also responded to Robert Parsons's anti-government tract *Responsio ad edictum reginae Angliae* with *Observations upon a Libel* wherein he writes 'If then it be that *Nemo est aut miser aut foelix nisi comparatus*' adapted from Seneca's *Troades* (1023) '*est miser nemo nisi comparatus*',³⁷⁵ which he drew heavily on for *Misfortunes of Arthur*, *Titus Andronicus* and *Richard III*, written according to most Shakespeare scholars in the same year as the *Observations*. The year Bacon penned the *Observations* and his Senecan-inspired Shakespeare tragedy *Richard III* he also composed a dramatic device *Of Tribute, or, giving that which is due*. Speaking of Julius Canor sentenced to death by the infamous Roman Emperor Caligula he says 'Soe the Romane Senatour that had delighted soe much in the inquisition of the truth, when he went to his death by Commandment of *Caius Caligula* tooke Certaine Philosophers that he was wonte to reason and dispute with all gently by the hand & said, *sirs you shall dispute of death & the imortalitie of the soul, but I shall know by & by how it standeth*' taken from Seneca's essay *De Tranquillitate Animi* (*On Tranquillity of Mind*, xiv. 8-9).³⁷⁶ In one of the Latin quotations in *Titus Andronicus* Bacon mixed two passages from *Phaedra* and Seneca's *Epistle* 107 and again drew upon another of Seneca's *Epistles* (95; line 46) for the following observation in *Of Tribute* 'absolute idlenes & Leisure, when the minde is altogeather withoute obiecte, is but languishing & wearines'.³⁷⁷ The same collection of epistles written to Lucilius Junior also served for Bacon's observation in his legal work *Argument In Chudleigh's Case* (1594) 'coment home sapient ne dit, ineptius lege cum prologo, iubeat non disputet' ('a law with a prologue is foolish. It should command, not discuss.') The 'home sapient' ('wise man') point out Stewart and Knight 'is Seneca, in

his *Epistulae morales ad Lucilium*, xciv.38: 'Velut emissa divinitus vox sit, iubeat, non disputet. Nihil videtur nihil frigidius, nihil ineptius quam lex cum prologo.'³⁷⁸ His habit of reading and re-reading Seneca's tragedies and prose works is evidence in his private manuscript note-book *Promus of Formularies and Elegances* (1594-5) which produces a great many parallels with his Shakespeare plays. In the *Promus* observe Stewart and Knight Bacon 'draws in descending order of frequency) on Virgil, Ovid, Seneca',³⁷⁹ but what they fail to mention is the works of these classical poets arguably exercised more influence over the Shakespeare plays than any other classical poets. And moreover that the first attempt at a full translation of Virgil's *Aeneid* was dedicated to its patron Lord Keeper Sir Nicholas Bacon (later completed by Francis), that Ovid's *Metamorphoses* was translated by Arthur Golding while he was living at Cecil House home to William and Mildred Cecil, elder sister of Lady Anne Bacon, to which can be added Seneca, favourite poet of Sir Nicholas Bacon was translated and edited by Bacon. In the *Promus* Bacon jotted down words and phrases from Seneca's prose writings *Epistulae Morales*, *De Beneficiis* and *Ludus de morte Claudii*,³⁸⁰ and the Senecan plays *Hercules Furens*, *Hercules Oetaeus*, *Troades* and *Oedipus*,³⁸¹ all of which were heavily drawn upon by Bacon in *Misfortunes of Arthur* and (as we will see) throughout his Shakespeare works.

The anonymously published Shakespeare history play *The Troublesome Reign of King John* was written during the same period as *Titus Andronicus* and the first tetralogy (the three parts of *Henry VI* and *Richard III*) possibly as early as the late 1580s around the time or shortly after the *Misfortunes of Arthur*. It first appeared in quarto in two parts in 1591 and was possibly revised sometime between 1594 and 1596. Whatever its date of composition and revision the history play shares similar Senecan characteristics with the first tetralogy 'Senecan rhetoric occurs, e.g., when Faulconbridge is moved to regain his fathers's lionskin (I.556-79) and when he abuses the fleeing Limoges (I.656-59)',³⁸² and in 'the *Raigne* Faulconbridge utters lengthy Senecan threats when he sees his father's captor wearing the lionskin, and Blanche hints that she will favour him if he wins the trophy.'³⁸³ Cunliffe and Simpson compare a passage in *King John* (3:4:135-8) with a passage in *Hercules Furens* (345-9).³⁸⁴ Schanzer suggests the death-scene at the end of *King John* is indebted to the speech of Hercules in *Hercules Oetaeus* (1359-73) and also points out there is a greater similarity between the translation by Studley than the Latin original.³⁸⁵ In *The Origins of Shakespeare* Emrys Jones states that *King John* 'was probably felt to be more Senecan than we think of it being' specifically noting the 'preponderance in it of 'body images'-especially 'blood', 'hand', 'eye'' as examples of Senecan influence:

King John shows Senecan influence in other ways. The tragic figure of Constance is a case in point. In most ways Constance recalls Andromache, a widow with a beloved son at the mercy of unscrupulous politicians; and in each case the boy (Arthur, Astyanax) leaps to his death from a high tower. For all this the relevant play is Seneca's *Troades*. But at one point Constance recalls a very different heroine of Seneca's. When she hears of her betrayal by the French king and the marriage between Lewis and Blanch, she is overwhelmed with rage and shock. Shakespeare provides her with a full tragic tirade, one of the play's great set pieces:

Gone to be married to swear a peace!
False blood to false blood join'd! Gone to be friends!....

The occasion for this speech recalls one near the beginning of *Medea*. Betrayed by her husband Jason, who is now to marry Creon's daughter, Medea hears the sounds of the marriage celebrations:

Occidimus, aures pepulit hymenaeus meas.
vix ipsa tantum, vix adhuc credo malum. (116-17)

(‘We are undone! Upon my ears has sounded the marriage hymn. So great a calamity scarce I myself, scarce even yet can comprehend’, tr. F. J. Miller). And she too launches into a tirade, comparable in length to Constance’s.³⁸⁶

In 1594 or 1595 Bacon turned his attention to comedy or the unseen magical world of the imagination and the unseen and invisible world around us in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, interweaving into his drama literature, legend and folklore, as well as tragedy; Senecan tragedy. In his Arden edition of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* Harold Brooks identified a number of specific allusions to Seneca’s *Hippolytus*, *Medea*, and *Oedipus*. Seneca, he declares, a major source for the *Dream*, had hitherto been overlooked even though Shakespeare’s debt to the Roman dramatist in tragedy and tragical history has previously been recognised ‘a dramatist who remembers him in such plays does not lose his familiarity with him because he is writing comedy.’³⁸⁷ In the play the ‘principal debts are to Medea’s invocation of Hecate (*Medea*), and extensively to *Hippolytus*; both works, judging from his use of them elsewhere as well as here were favourites with Shakespeare. The most striking parallel is between Seneca’s seascape with Cupid all armed (*Hippolytus*) and Shakespeare’s vision which Oberon relates to Puck. More than local, however, is the resemblance to Phaedra’s of Helena’s self-abasement in love, and her desperate resolves. Fullest of suggestion, perhaps, is the prayer of Phaedra’s nurse that three-formed Hecate, bright orb of heaven, glory of the night, great goddess of the woods and groves, will ensnare the mind of Hippolytus so that he may turn back into the fealty of love.’³⁸⁸ Further noting that ‘the *Hippolytus* opens with a hunting scene which evidently contributed to Shakespeare’s; as Medea’s invocation did to the picture of cosmic disorder, and (probably the plague in *Oedipus* to that of the afflictions in the countryside.’³⁸⁹ Beginning with Rolfe several scholars have noticed that Shakespeare recalled two separate passages from Studley’s translation of *Hercules Oetaeus* first printed in the 1581 edition for Bottoms lines:

The raging rocks
And shivering shocks
Shall break the locks
Of prison gates,
And Phibus’ car
Shall shine from far
And make and mar
The foolish Fates.

[*A Midsummer Night’s Dream*: 1:2:27-34]

O Lord of ghosts, whose fiery flash
That forth thy hand doth shake
Doth cause the trembling lodges twain
Of Phoebus

The roaring rocks have quaking stirred,
And none thereat have pushed;
Hell gloomy gates I have bras tope
Where grisly ghosts all hushed

By far the most extensive and incisive account of Senecan influence in the *Dream* was presented by Larry Langford in an almost unknown article appearing in *Cahiers Elisabethains: A Journal of English Renaissance Studies* in 1984.³⁹¹ In the article he noted that Brooks had identified a number of allusions to Seneca's *Medea*, *Hippolytus* and *Oedipus* with *A Midsummer Night's Dream* which together with other Senecan tragedies (for example *Hercules Furens* and *Thyestes*) he wished to examine beyond verbal resemblances to highlight the thematic resemblances between them. One of the principal themes in the *Dream* is the world of sexual transgression in its many forms. It will be recalled that one of the major threads of *Misfortunes of Arthur* is the theme of sexual illegitimacy and incest. Arthur is the illegitimate son of Uther Pendragon and Igera, the wife Gorlois, Duke of Cornwall. The incestuous relationship between Arthur and his twin sister Anne produced the bastard Mordred, and he Mordred himself commits incest with Arthur's wife Guinevere during his father's nine years of absence.³⁹² The controversial theme of incest 'remains a disturbing undercurrent in *Dream*' writes Langford and 'besides *Oedipus*, allusions to *Hippolytus* also remind us of this theme because of the question of incest that taints Phaedra's lust for her stepson, Hippolytus,'³⁹³ similar to the sexual lust shared by Guinevere for her stepson Mordred in *Misfortunes of Arthur* which Langford may not have known and certainly does not mention.

The controversial comedy *A Taming of the Shrew* is often regarded as Shakespeare's first play written at the time of the early history plays in the late 1580's around the time or shortly after Bacon wrote his Senecan *Misfortunes of Arthur*. In his *Fated Sky: The Femina Furens in Shakespeare* Stapleton argues Shakespeare 'inherited his fascination with women's psychology from English Seneca', and in particular, 'Studley's *Medea* influences the conception of Katherine in *The Taming of the Shrew*' which he details at some length.³⁹⁴ In *The Taming of the Shrew* Shakespeare 'designs abused and furious Katherine as a comic version of *femina furens*' and it could be said 'stows her more safely in grimly farcical Mantua than he does with tragical-historical *femina furens* in the Roman world of *Titus* and in diverse locations in the first tetralogy' of *I Henry VI*, *2 Henry VI*, *3 Henry VI* and *Richard III*.³⁹⁵ Her Senecan language and rhetoric recalls Studley's *Medea* in both character and speech, and declares Stapleton, 'quasi-Senecan Katherine serves as a paradigm for the comic "learned heroines" as Lisa Jardine defines them, especially Portia in *The Merchant of Venice*'.³⁹⁶ And in 'true Senecan fashion', 'Shakespeare loads Portia's verbal arsenal 'another version of ['Studley's'] *Medea*, like Katherine and Joan', with Senecan-like 'sententiae' in the play.³⁹⁷ Sonnenschein long since pointed out that Seneca's prose piece *De Clementia* (written to Nero on the need for clemency a virtue in an emperor) was undoubtedly the source for Portia's famous speech to Shylock beginning 'The quality of mercy is not strained' (4:1:181-97).³⁹⁸ The treatise on mercy was not available in English at the time *The Merchant of Venice* was written. Thomas Lodge's translation of it in *The Workes both Morall and Naturall of Lucius Annaeus Seneca* (1614) was not published until a decade later.

In many of his Shakespeare plays Bacon blended words and phrases directly from the Latin edition of Seneca's tragedies and the 1581 edition *Seneca his Tenne Tragedies*. We often see, writes Daalder, Shakespeare 'in the process of paraphrasing Seneca, and amalgamating ideas and expressions typically Senecan, but culled from various places in Seneca's work', which he suggests, happens in the case of Shylock's famous speech 'Hath not a Jew eyes?' speech (3:1:54-68).³⁹⁹ The last line in the speech 'The villainy you teach me I will execute, and it shall go hard but I will better the instruction' is

observes Daalder a ‘typically Senecan notion that the teacher of evil must expect his example to be imitated by his pupil, to the extent that, as Macbeth says (1:7:8-10) ‘...we but teach/Bloody instructions which, being taught, return/To plague th’inventor’. One important *locus* for this thought in Seneca is *Thyestes*, 1i.136-8’.⁴⁰⁰ Our enlightened poet understands that ‘Shylock’s position in Venetian society resembles that of slaves in Seneca’s Rome, and we need not doubt that Shakespeare found support for his own enlightened attitude, in Seneca’s, who writes for example in Epistle XLVII of *Ad Lucilium Epistulae Morales* [then also not available in English]:...: ‘Kindly remember that he whom you call a slave sprang from the same stock, is smiled upon by the same skies, and on equal terms with yourself breathes, lives, and dies. It is just as possible for you to see him a free-born man as for him to see you a slave.’ It is not difficult, writes Daalder ‘to see that much of Shakespeare’s speech is a brilliant amplification of this passage.’⁴⁰¹ The comparison it appears is drawn by Shylock in the passage commencing ‘You have among you many a purchased slave/Which, like you asses and your dogs and mules,/You use in abject and slavish parts’ (4:1:89-94). It is clear from his *Essays* and *Advancement of Learning* that Bacon was very familiar with Seneca’s then untranslated essays and letters, especially *Epistulae morales* (a collection of 124 letters) which as we have seen there are traces in several Shakespeare plays. In *Measure for Measure* the Duke-Friar says ‘Yet in this life/Lie hid more thousand deaths; yet death we fear/That makes these odds all even’ (3:1:39-41). The ‘implied reference’, declares Hankins to odd and even numbers ‘is probably derived directly or indirectly from the moral writings of Seneca’: citing ‘impares nascimur, pares morimur’ (*Epistulae Morales*, xci.16)’ and ‘Venit ecce mors quae vos pares faciat’ (*De Ira*, III. xliii.1).’ In Latin Hankin explains ‘the words *pares* and *impares* signify even and odd numbers, as well as other forms of equality and inequality. Shakespeare has transferred this double usage to English. In life we may be “odds,” i.e., of unequal fortunes; but at death we become “evens” i.e., equal in fortune.’⁴⁰² Neither is *The Merchant of Venice* the only comedy where the unlikely presence of Senecan tragedy is felt. In *Much Ado about Nothing* appears the following exchange:

BENEDICK Come, bid me do anything for thee.

BEATRICE Kill Claudio.

[*Much Ado about Nothing*: 4:1:289-90]

Emrys Jones was the first to point out that the exchange echoes the following from the *Medea*:

Jason: What can I do? Tell me.

Medea: For me? A crime...

[*Medea*: 2:514-5].⁴⁰³

Shifting genres from comedy to English and Roman history in fairly quick succession Bacon penned *Henry V* and *Julius Caesar*. For Theobald when Charles V of France remarks ‘Rush on his host, as doth the melted snow/Upon the valleys’ (3:5:50-1) it also recalls *Medea* (3:567).⁴⁰⁴ Simpson compares the famous passage from *Julius Caesar* ‘How many ages hence/Shall this our lofty scene be acted over,/In states unborn and accents yet unknown’ (3:1:112-4) with *Troades* (292-4),⁴⁰⁵ and Robert Ornstein finds a remarkable parallel between Seneca’s attitude toward Brutus in his essay *De Beneficiis* (*On Benefits*) and Shakespeare’s attitude to him.⁴⁰⁶ From which Bacon directly quotes in his *Advancement of Learning*. Speaking of ‘*Alexander*, or a *Caesar*’ for their support

of the glory of learning Bacon invites the reader to observe the former's speech he used of Diogenes:

and see if it tend not to the true state of one of the greatest questions of morall Philosophie; whether the enioying of outward things, or the contemning of them be the greatest happinesse; for when he saw *Diogenes* so perfectly contented with so little: he sayd to those that mocked at his condition: *Were I not Alexander, I would be Diogenes*. But *Seneca* inuerteth it, and sayth; *Plus erat, quod hic nollet accipere, quam quod ille posset dare. There were more things which Diogenes would have refused, than those were which Alexander could haue giuen or enioyed.*
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The design of writing the *Advancement of Learning* was conceived by Bacon probably by July 1603 with the shorter first book completed in that year with the second book written and completed through 1604 and 1605 the year of its publication.⁴⁰⁸ As noted above Hankins presented the twin Seneca sources of *De Ira* and *Epistulae Morales* for a passage in *Measure for Measure* written in 1604. In the *Advancement* Bacon directly alludes to Seneca's *De Ira* (*On Anger*) 'I find some particular writings of an elegant nature touching some of the affections, as of *Anger*',⁴⁰⁹ and a number of references and allusions to *Epistulae Morales*. The first comes early in the first book written in 1603 the date of the publication of the first quarto edition of *Hamlet* 'if any man be laborious in reading and study, and yet idle in busines & action, it groweth from some weakenes of body, or softnes of spirit; such as *Seneca* speaketh of: *Quidam tam sunt vmbratiles, vt putent in turbido esse, quicquid in luce est*' (a paraphrase of *Epist.*iii.6) 'Certain men are so in the shade that they think themselves in trouble whenever they are in the light.'

⁴¹⁰ A few pages on Bacon writes 'for it is the speech for a Louer, & and not for a wise man: *Satis magnum alter alteri Theatrum sumus*' (*Epist.* vii. 11) 'We are a sufficiently large theatre for one another.'⁴¹¹ Discussing knowledge of ourselves Bacon writes 'And generally let this be a Rule, that all partitions of knowledges, be accepted rather for *lines & veines*, then for *sections and separations*: and that the continuance and entirenes of knowledge be preserued (cf. *Epist.* lxxxix.1.2).⁴¹² Again Bacon writes 'For although in the more grosse sortes of Fallacies it happeneth (as *Seneca* maketh the comparison well) as in iugling feates, which though wee knowe not howe they are done; yet wee knowe well it is not, as it seemeth to bee: yet the more subtile of them doth not onely put a man besides his answere, but doth many times abuse his Iudgment' (*Epist.* xlv.8.)

⁴¹³ Speaking of a favourite theme stating style should be subordinate to matter Bacon says '*Seneca*, giueth an excellent check to eloquence *Nocet illis eloquentia, quibus non rerum cupiditatem facit sed sui*' (*Epist.* Liii.14.) 'Eloquence is harmful to those who love not the subject matter but style itself.'⁴¹⁴ Touching '*priuete or particular good*' which 'falleth into the diuision of *Good Actiue & Passiue*' Bacon paraphrases Seneca from another of his epistles '*Cogitata quamdiu eadem feceris: Cibus, Somnus. Ludus per hunc Circulum curritur, mori velle non tantum fortis aut miser aut prudens sed etiam fastidiosus potest*' (Reflect how long you have been doing the same thing: food, sleep, play, it runs through this circuit; not only the brave or unhappy or prudent man, but even the surfeited may wish to die' (*Epist.* lxxvii.6).⁴¹⁵ Turning to the husbandry of life he says 'And although the neglect of our tymes wherein few men doe houlde any Consultations touching the reformation of their life (as *Seneca* excellently saith, *De partibus vitae quisque deliberat, de summa nemo*) a (paraphrase of *Epist.* lxxi.2) 'Every man deliberates about the parts of his life, no man about its whole'.⁴¹⁶ As Bacon does in numerous Shakespeare plays combining more than one of Seneca's writings, just above his citation from one of Seneca's epistles he also draws upon *Naturales queastiones* (ii. 59.7) '*Magni aestimamus Mori tardius*' ('We think it a great matter to die a little later').

⁴¹⁷ Finally he lifts the line ‘*Prosperum et Foelix scelus virtus vocatur*’ (‘Prosperous and successful crime is called virtue’) from Seneca’s tragedy *Hercules furens* (I. 251),⁴¹⁸ the play as Miola and Boyle emphasized influenced *Richard III* and *A Midsummer’s Nights Dream*, and the great Shakespeare tragedies, *Othello*, *King Lear* and *Hamlet*.⁴¹⁹

During the period Bacon was planning, preparing and composing the *Advancement of Learning* he was simultaneously writing, revising and enlarging for publication *Hamlet*. The Shakespeare play as we know it was entered on the Stationers’ Register on 26 July 1602 as ‘A booke called the Revenge of Hamlet Prince Denmarke as yt was latelie Acted by the Lord Chamberleyne his servantes’⁴²⁰ In 1603 there appeared in quarto *The Tragicall Historie of Hamlet Prince of Denmarke* of approximately 2,200 lines.⁴²¹ In the following year a second quarto edition ‘Newly imprinted and enlarged to almost as much againe, as it was, according to the true and perfect Coppie’ was published with around 3,800 lines.⁴²² For many reasons *The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark* is seen as the greatest landmark play in the history of English drama and as the ultimate complex revenge drama, a genre derived mainly from Seneca. The revenge tragedy is characterised by horrible and bloody excesses, murders and mutilations, the appearance of ghosts demanding revenge, the madness of the revenger, insanity or feigned insanity, evident in Seneca’s tragedies *Theystes*, *Medea*, and *Agamemnon*. Some of these devices were adopted by Bacon in his Senecan *Misfortunes of Arthur*. In nearly all discussions about revenge tragedy the *Misfortunes* is either not mentioned or quickly glossed over.

The antecedents of the revenge genre in the history of the pre-Shakespearean era is usually traced back to *The Spanish Tragedy* (whose authorship is uncertain but usually lazily attributed to Thomas Kyd, although some Baconians know better) usually stated to have been written around 1587, despite speculation for its composition, ranging from 1583 to 1591. The date of the performance and publication of the *Misfortunes* in 1588 is certain and it is this Senecan drama we can confidently trace the revenge theme with links to the ultimate exemplar of a revenge play in the Elizabethan and Jacobean canon *The Revenge of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*. In her full-length study entitled *Hamlet and Revenge* Eleanor Prosser, in a notable exception to the rule, describes the revenge theme in the *Misfortunes* in some (impressive) detail:

revenge is forced into the play solely to intensify the atmosphere of misery and doom. Gorlois, a prologue ghost, calls for revenge, but the specific revenge he invokes is irrelevant to the play. He merely establishes the atmosphere of wild hatred and the general theme. Throughout the play, revenge, the work of “cursed imps,” is seen as the cause of all calamities. Typical is the treatment of Guenevora. Hearing of Arthur’s return, she rages for revenge, calling on the fiends as does Lady Macbeth. Fronia urges her to calm her passion and banish such unnatural thoughts, for “A Ladies best revenge is to forgive” (I.ii.57). At this, Guenevora turns her wrath inward and decides to kill herself. Her choice is presented in outlandishly contradictory terms. She is presented as a despairing Christian who commits “suicide,” but chooses, as the means of death, to take “revenge” on herself by retiring to a cloister....The state of her soul will not bear close scrutiny. All that matters is the emotional impact. Throughout the play, motives of despair and revenge are capriciously attributed to all of the major characters, whether relevantly or not, merely to emphasize their misery.

Even Arthur’s decision to defend his kingdom against Mordred is attributed to a desire for private revenge. As King, Arthur obviously has not only the right but the duty to crush rebellion, but the playwrights carefully avoid the political justification. Once the irrelevance of revenge motive is granted, the treatment of Arthur’s dilemma, unlike that of Guenevora, is surprisingly consistent. In two extended debates, he effectively counters the argument that he should take just “revenge” on his rebel son. He rejects every appeal to justice, fame, and honor by citing the conventional precepts and determines to “leave the Heavens revengers of my wrong (III.i.34). But when Mordred sends a challenge that taunts him with cowardice, Arthur at

last decides to fight. The result is disastrous for both principals and the country. Even though Arthur is the legal ruler defending himself against rebellion, his choice is judged as wrong. When dying, he takes all the blame on himself. He should have endured and lived abroad or even have accepted death at Mordred's hands. Anything, argue the playwrights, is better than civil war. They emphasize their point by treating all misfortunes as the inevitable harvest of private revenge.⁴²³

The whole question (aside from its metaphysical dimensions) of the moral dilemma of private revenge in *Hamlet* is encapsulated in the 'To be, not to be: that is the question' soliloquy, likely the most famous passage in the history of English dramatic literature. The whole passage is discussed and analysed at some length by Prosser:

Is it truly nobler, Hamlet asks, to endure evil passively, as all the voices of Church and State and society have insisted, or does the true nobility of that which is man demand that he actively fight and conquer the evils that beset him? Can it really be "virtue" to sit back and leave it to Heaven? On one level, we are debating the morality of private revenge, but on another we are thrown headlong into the metaphysical dilemma of the Renaissance....

...Milton was to later brand "a fugitive and cloistered virtue" as "a blank," a view that aligns him, somewhat curiously with the pragmatic Bacon, who pronounced "that in this theatre of man's life it is reserved only for God and Angels to be lookers on." The logical extension of this position is found in Hamlet's dilemma. If it is nobler to act than to contemplate, if it is nobler to use natural reason than passively to await divine revelation, can it really be nobler to assent to divine injunction when every instinct of man cries "No"?⁴²⁴

Bacon followed up the *Misfortunes* with two Shakespeare revenge tragedies in *Titus Andronicus* and *Richard III*, and the revenge motif plays an important part in other Shakespeare plays, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Julius Caesar*, *Othello*, *Coriolanus*, *Macbeth* and *The Tempest*. In *Hamlet* he developed an even more complex attitude to the theme of revenge and retribution by focussing on the protagonist's delay and procrastination in avenging his father's death, exploring the morally ambiguous and inherently tragic psychology of revenge and its implications for the state and its governance of the realm, both in the public and private sphere, and its effect on the public, represented by the court, and the microcosm of the individual. In the period when *Hamlet* was written Elizabethans and Jacobean were confronted with a dichotomy between the official and popular opinions of revenge. In a groundbreaking work Linda Anderson summarized that 'Some critics believe that the condemnation of revenge by the Elizabethan legal and clerical establishments was so overwhelming that however much an audience might sympathize with a revenger, it could not approve of him. The *locus classicus* for this viewpoint (at least in discussions about Elizabethan views of revenge) is the essay from which the title of this book [*A kind of Wild Justice Revenge in Shakespeare's Comedies*] is taken, Francis Bacon's "Of Revenge".⁴²⁵ The essay begins:

Revenge is a kinde of Wild Justice; which the more Mans Nature runs to, the more ought Law to weed it out. For as for the first Wrong, it doth but offend the Law; but the *Revenge* of that wrong, putteth the Law out of Office. Certainly, in taking *Revenge*, A Man is but even with his Enemy; But in passing it over, he is Superiour: For it is a Princes part to Pardon. And *Salomon*, I am sure, saith, *It is the glory of a Man to passe by an offence*. That which is past, is gone, and Irrevocable; And wise Men have Enough to doe, with things present, and to come: Therefore, they doe but trifle with themselves, that labour in past matters.⁴²⁶

As befits a lawyer, writes Anderson, his first argument against revenge is a legal one: the law punishes wrongdoers, and revenge against a wrongdoer is illegal, and shows

contempt for the law but nowhere in the essay does Bacon express a total condemnation of vengeance. In fact while all revenge may be equal before the law Bacon recognises a number of distinctions:⁴²⁷

The most Tolerable Sort of *Revenge*, is for those wrongs which there are no Law to remedy: But then, let a man take heed, the *Revenge* be such, as there is no law to punish: Else, a Mans Enemy, is still before hand, And it is two for one. Some, when they take *Revenge*, are Desirous the party should know, whence it cometh: This is the more Generous. For the Delight, seemeth to be, not so much in doing the Hurt, as in Making the Party repent: But Base and Crafty Cowards, are like the Arrow, that flyeth in the Darke....Publique *Revenge*s, are, for the most part, Fortunate; As that for the Death of *Caesar*; For the Death of *Pertinax*: for the Death of *Henry* the Third of France; And many more. But in private *Revenge*s it is not so. Nay rather, Vindictive Persons live the life of Witches; who as they are Mischievous, So end they Infortunate.⁴²⁸

Bacon's complex and paradoxical attitudes and responses to revenge in all its different guises played out in various times and circumstances. Its causes and consequences are explored through the civil wars of *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, his Shakespeare history plays, the tragedies, and perhaps more surprisingly, in his Shakespeare comedies also. The complex dilemma of vengeance addressed in his essay *Of Revenge* is most fully explored in all its psychological and philosophical complexity in *Hamlet* the play, and especially Hamlet, the man:

Whether or not some tragedies were accepted as representing justifiable revenge, it is interesting that the most justified dramatic revenges, such as Hieronimo and Hamlet, seem to have been the most popular. Hamlet and Hieronimo represent the revenger who is unable to obtain justice in any other way. It can, of course, be argued that both of these heroes should, in strict morality, have awaited the just vengeance of God on the sinners they punish, and many critics have so argued; but we, as Shakespeare's audience undoubtedly did, must nevertheless feel them more justified than most other literary revengers and agree with Bacon that "the most tolerable sort of revenge is for those wrongs which there is no law to remedy".⁴²⁹

Both Sinfield and Perry point to a parallel passage in 'Seneca's great treatise on anger and revenge', *De Ira*, addressing the moral questions and deliberative habit of mind that our poet has Hamlet contemplate throughout the play:

Is the good man not angry if he sees his father slain and his mother ravished? No, he will not be angry. He will punish and protect. Why should not filial devotion, even without anger, be enough of a stimulus?....The good man will do his duty, undismayed and undaunted; and he will do what is worthy of a good man without doing anything unworthy of a man. "My father is about to be killed-I will defend him; he has been killed-I will avenge him; not because I am pained, but because I should." (Sen. *De Ira* 1.12.1-2 trans. Cooper and Procope).⁴³⁰

'is't not perfect conscience', Hamlet likewise asks, to kill a man who has 'killed my king and whored my mother,/Popped in between th'election and my hopes,/Thrown out his angle for my proper life' (*Hamlet*: 5:2: 63-7). 'Questions about the ethics of revenge are raised implicitly in all other modern revenge plays', observes Curtis Perry, 'but no prior revenge play in English treat this kind of ethical deliberation about revenge as part of the burden of the avenger.'⁴³¹ As in *Hamlet* in his essay *Of Anger* Bacon meditates upon the subject of anger and how it troubles a man's life, quoting directly from *De Ira* (i.1), which could well be read as a gloss on the major contemplative theme of *Hamlet* itself:

To seeke to extinguish *Anger* utterly, is but a Bravery of the *Stoickes*. We have better Oracles: *Be Angry, but Sinne not. Let not the Sunne goe downe upon your Anger*. *Anger* must be limited, and confined, both in Race, and in Time. We will first speake, How the Naturall Inclination, and Habit, *To be Angry*, may be attempered, and calmed. Secondly, How the Particular Motions of *Anger*, may be repressed, or at least refrained from doing Mischiefe. Thirdly, How to raise *Anger*, or appease *Anger*, in Another.

For the first; There is no other Way, but to Meditate and Ruminare well, upon the Effects of *Anger*, how it troubles Mans Life. And the best Time, to doe this, is, to looke backe upon *Anger*, when the Fitt is throughly over. *Seneca* saith well; *That Anger is like Ruine, which breakes it Selfe, upon that it falls*. The Scripture exhorteth us; *To possesse our Soules in Patience*. Whosoever is out of *Patience*, is out of Possession of his *Soule*.⁴³²

The theme of revenge in the Shakespeare histories and tragedies has long been known and understood, however, as Anderson substantiates in her full-length treatment of the subject no other dramatist seems ‘to have seized on revenge as Shakespeare did, as both a theme and a method of constructing an elaborate but well-integrated plot’ in comedy:⁴³³ Numerous themes, plots and devices surrounding Bacon’s observation for ‘wrongs which there are no Law to remedy’:

The purpose of this book is in fact to demonstrate that underlying Shakespeare’s comedies is a conception of justifiable, public revenge for “wrongs which there is no law to remedy”, as well as occasional commentary on unjustifiable revenge. The idea of revenge pervades Shakespeare’s comedies in two forms: first, as serious, often mortal, intentions of revenge that, in accordance with the conventions of comedy, must miscarry; and second, as intrinsically comic revenges intended publicly to embarrass an erring character, either to expose hypocrisy or to enforce a change in behaviour, or both....

....Although it is not my desire to impose a pattern on the development of Shakespeare’s comedies, it seems to me that one is discernible. The early comedies deal mainly with attempts to take rather trivial revenges on family, friends, and lovers; the perceived injuries that provoke these revenges generally result from mistaken identities and other confusions, and all his forgiven once those confusions are cleared up. In the romantic comedies, an outsider to the spirit of the play’s world tries to do serious harm to one of the characters (sometimes this attempt is itself a revenge); the comic revenge thwarts this outsider, who may be forgiven and welcomed into the play’s society, although this is seldom a major concern of the revenger or of other characters. In the problem comedies, the relationship between family, friends and lovers are again the subject, but one or more characters threatens serious harm to other characters and society in general; the revengers seem less concerned punishing the offender than with reforming him.⁴³⁴

As we have had many occasions to previously notice the preparing and writing of the *Advancement of Learning* and the publication of the first and second quarto editions of *Hamlet* were concurrent. In the *Advancement* Bacon drew upon Seneca’s epistles (as he did in some of his essays composed around this period) at least seven times and he also drew upon Seneca’s epistles in *Hamlet*. In his Arden edition Harold Jenkins in a Longer Note on 5:2:218-20 (‘Since no man, of aught he leaves, knows aught, what is’t to leave betimes?’) draws attention to one of Seneca’s epistles ‘This exhortation against the fear of an early death belongs to the tradition of stoic consolation. Cf. Seneca, *Epistles* 69, ‘Nihil perdis ex tuo tempore, nam quod relinguis alieneum est’ (‘You are throwing away none of your own time; for what you leave behind does not belong to you’).⁴³⁵ Following on from Jenkins, Manfred Draudt points to ‘a much more significant Senecan reminiscence in Hamlet’s lines preceding the sentence “Since no man....” that has until now escaped notice. Seneca’s *Epistle* 24, “On Despising Death,” is in form

and meaning strikingly similar to Hamlet's 'If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come' (V.ii. 216-8 as quoted from the Arden edition....)....Shakespeare does not merely echo a single phrase; in fact, he dramatizes Seneca's advice in Hamlet's resigned acceptance of his destiny, which marks the decisive change in the hero's development.⁴³⁶ In *Advancement* in addition to the *Epistles* Bacon, as was his way in the *Misfortunes* and earlier Shakespeare plays, drew on some other Seneca writings *De Beneficiis* (echoed in *Julius Caesar*), *Naturales quaestiones* and the Senecan tragedy *Hercules Furens*, one of the Senecan sources for *Hamlet*:

Less often observed are *Hamlet*'s debts to *Thyestes* especially in the use and inversion of the fatal banquet motif ('*Hamlet* is *Thyestes* inverted'), or the transfusion of Atreus' entrance monologue (*Thyestes*, 176ff.) into Hamlet's 'dull and muddy-mettle rascal' soliloquy at 2.2. 550ff. *Agamemnon* too makes its way into Hamlet in the remodelling of the Clytemnestra-Electra exchange at *Agamemnon* 953ff. into that between Hamlet and his mother at 3.4.7ff.; so too *Hercules Furens* (see 970-3) in Laertes' outburst at 5.1.244-7.⁴³⁷

The influence of *Hercules furens* was previously noted by Cunliffe and Simpson both of whom suggested the influence of *Hercules Oetaeus*, with the latter also advancing *Troas* for the famous 'To be, or not to be' soliloquy, and *Agamemnon*, as did Kenneth Muir, excerpts of which were reprinted by Bullough.⁴³⁸ Departing from 'Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light. For the law of writ and the liberty, these are the only men' (*Hamlet*: 2:2: 402-4) writing in 2004 Erica Sheen for the first time placed the 'relation between Seneca and Shakespeare in *Hamlet* in the context of sixteenth-century legal, political, and economic debates about monopoly and the Senecan discourse of benefits,'⁴³⁹ i.e., *De Beneficiis*, quoted by Bacon in the *Advancement*, who as a leading lawyer, both solicitor and attorney-general, Lord Keeper and Lord Chancellor devoted a great deal of time to the legal, political and economic debates about monopoly. Also for the first time Taylor pointed out that Hamlet's condemnation of himself, as a 'peasant slave' (2:2:552) is directly indebted to the lines in Studley's translation of *Hercules Oetaeus* 'dost dastard thow forslow,/For feare to this wicked deede? O coward, *peasant slave*' (i.115-6), as there is he informs us 'nothing corresponding to the phrase 'peasant slave' in the original Latin.⁴⁴⁰ In 'Metaphors of Confusion: Incest and Illegitimacy in Thomas Hughes's *The Misfortunes of Arthur*' Professor Fuwa drew attention to how Mordred's tainted birth is closely associated with confusion which he traced back to Sophocles *Oedipus Tyrannus* and Seneca's *Oedipus* paralleling the association of incest and confusion in the *Misfortunes* and in *Hamlet*. He points to the incestuous marriage between Claudius and Gertrude and the image of the serpent applied to the usurping Claudius which appears in the last dumb show of the *Misfortunes* with its similarities to Hamlet's dumb show.⁴⁴¹ In maybe an even less well-known American article the theme of Seneca's *Oedipus* and *Hamlet*, or to be more exact, Nevile's translation of Seneca's *Oedipus* and *Hamlet*, had previously attracted the attention of Wolfgang E. H. Rudat. In a long and detailed article Rudat commenced by quoting the closing lines of Nevile's rendition of Seneca's play:

O cursed head: O wicked wight, whom all men deadly hate.
O Beast, what meanst thou still to live in this unhappy state?
The Skies doe blush and are ashamed, as these thy mischiefes great:
The Earth laments, the Heavens weepe, the Seas for rage doe freat,
And blustering rise, and stormes doe stir, and all thou wretch for thee
By whose incest, and bloody deedes all things disturbed bee.

Quight out of course, displaced quight, O cursed fatall day,
O mischiefes great, O dreadfull times, O wretch, away, away.⁴⁴²

‘Does not this self-pitying and self-accusatory passage remind us’, Rudat’s asks, ‘in its general content as well as particular phrasing of Hamlet’s lines after he has made his friends swear secrecy concerning the Ghost’.⁴⁴³

So, gentlemen,
With all my love I do commend me to you,
And what so poor a man as Hamlet is
May do t’express his love and friending to you,
God willing, shall not lack. Let us go in together,
And still your fingers on your lips, I pray.
The time is out of joint. O cursed spite
That ever I was born to set it right!
[*Hamlet*: 1:5:183-90]

Rudat highlights that the soliloquy ‘To be, or not to be’ contains a number of allusions to Oedipus’s monologue citing Hamlet’s conjecture ‘the dread of something after death ...makes us rather bear those ills we have than fly to others that we know not of’ (3:1: 80-4) which recalls Oedipus’s observation ‘that one need not fear death because it frees us all the troubles we experience in life’⁴⁴⁴ Moving to the theme of incest which had permeated the *Misfortunes* Rudat writes that our poet ‘further tightens the interrelation between the incest aspects in *Hamlet* and *Oedipus* by establishing a correspondence between Laius’ speech about his son’s activities and the likewise graphic words which the Ghost addresses to his son:’⁴⁴⁵

So lust, though to a radiant angel linked,
Will sate itself in a celestial bed,
And prey on garbage...

If thou hast nature in thee, bear it not.
Let not the royal bed of Denmark be
A couch for luxury and damned incest.
[*Hamlet*: 1:5: 55-7; 81-3]

My attempt to reconstruct the genesis of the oedipal theme in *Hamlet* deals both with conscious and unconscious impulses. I have attempted to demonstrate that we have in *Hamlet* what Ehrenpreis calls “literary” meanings in that Shakespeare underscores-or, as other readers might want to interpret, imports-the theme by deliberately alluding to Nevile’s *Oedipus*. The unconscious psychological expression of *Oedipus* struck such a strong chord in Shakespeare’s own unconscious that he wrote a play dealing with the pre-transformations of that myth, a play in which the hero metaphorically grabs the Ghost by the lapels. In other words, while the *Historia Danica* is the source for the plot of *Hamlet*, the Oedipus myth is the source for that play’s oedipal theme, and Nevile’s translation a source providing literary material for making that theme more explicit and more graphic.⁴⁴⁶

The ‘whole tone of the play is Senecan’ writes Arkins,⁴⁴⁷ and as for Doran ‘*Hamlet* without Seneca is inconceivable’.⁴⁴⁸ With the former adding that ‘Thematically, what Seneca gives to *Hamlet* is the general theme of revenge for a great wrong done; and the extreme passion that characterizes Hamlet himself. Stylistically, what Seneca gives to

Hamlet is the meditative soliloquy and stichomythia. There is therefore a general Senecan atmosphere in the play'.⁴⁴⁹ An atmosphere cemented from the outset by the ghost of Hamlet's father in Senecan manner seeking revenge 'The ghosts of Senecan drama-Atreus, Hercules, Pyrrhus, Clytemnestra Aegisthus, Orestes, Electra-and of neo Senecan drama-Hieronimo, Titus, Lucianus-hover in the background of *Hamlet*, providing perspective on character and action. Most, often this grim chorus illuminates Hamlet himself; at its best it represents an idea of passionate action and at its worst, villainous revenge.'⁴⁵⁰

Writing in 2015 in his lengthy article 'Seneca and the Modernity of *Hamlet*' Curtis Perry argues 'Hamlet's engagement with the resources of Senecan tragedy is deeper and more productive than has typically been acknowledged within Shakespeare studies' urging that 'it is best understood as part of a larger cultural conversation about agency and action in revenge tragedy'.⁴⁵¹ It might be more accurate to say that it is best understood, and can only ever be fully understood, in the context of Bacon's authorship of the Shakespeare plays which were immediately preceded by his Senecan revenge drama *Misfortunes of Arthur* written in the same period as *Ur-Hamlet* an earlier version of *Hamlet*, which shares many of the same characteristics including a ghost:

Seneca's real presence in *Hamlet* appears in transformed conventions-such as the ghost-rather than in specifically imitated passages. Emphasis on verbal parallels as a criterion of influence has obscured this presence. Claudius' lines, for example, 'Diseases desperate grown/By desperate appliance are reliev'd,/Or not at all (iv, iii. 9-11), have been traced to the following exchange:

CL. Et ferrum et ignis saepe medicinae loco est.
NVT. Extrema primo nemo tempauit loco.
CL. Rapienda rebus in malis praeceps uia est. (*Ag.* 152-4)

Englished the passage appears in Thomas Hughes's *The Misfortunes of Arthur* (1588), that Senecan chrestomathy presented by the Society of Gray's Inn to Queen Elizabeth:

MORDRED. So sword and fire will often sear the sore.
CONAN. Extremest cures must not be used first.
MORDRED. In desperate times the headlong way is best.⁴⁵²

During the time Bacon was writing and publishing his *Advancement of Learning* he also composed three other Shakespeare plays which date from 1603 to 1605: *All's Well That Ends Well*, *Timon of Athens*, and *Othello*. In the *Advancement*, *Julius Caesar* and *Hamlet* Bacon drew on Seneca's *De Beneficiis* a treatise which Wallace argues served as an immediate and substantive source for *Timon of Athens* 'More than any other play of Shakespeare's, *Timon* is indebted for its ideas to... *De beneficiis*'.⁴⁵³ For Wallace there was no mistaking its provenance '*Timon* is unique in the Shakespearean oeuvre in making no attempt to disguise its indebtedness to a philosopher and in calling attention from the start to the subject it proposes to engage'.⁴⁵⁴ He sets out at length and in some detail how our poet dramatized and critiqued Seneca's treatise in *Timon of Athens* with the protagonist Timon 'the agent here of Shakespeare's examination of *De Beneficiis*'.⁴⁵⁵ A long time since Theobald presented an overlooked parallel between a passage in Seneca's tragedy *Hippolytus* (II. 608) and one in *All's Well That Ends Well* (1:3:132-36) 'The whole of this passage where Helen is interrogated as to her feelings is a masterly reproduction of the bearing of Phaedra under a similar overmastering passion for her stepson Hippolytus'.⁴⁵⁶ A century later in his *Fated Sky The Femina Furens in*

Shakespeare Stapleton devoted an entire chapter in his 'attempt to decode the strange parallels between Helena (*AWW*) and John Studley's Phaedra (*Hip*)'.⁴⁵⁷ He begins it by stating 'Shakespeare does not moderate love's ecstasy in *All's Well That Ends Well*. Helena embraces it, embodies it. Parolles's question, ostensibly in his own defense, answers the perfidy of the Senecan-Studleyan Nutrix as she schemes to protect Phaedra from Hippolytus's outrage after his stepmother discloses her inordinate lust for him.'⁴⁵⁸ Stapleton explains that 'Seneca's Nutrix assumes her royal mistress's sexual desire for her stepson arises from a perverse ardor to blend (i.e., "miscere") his manly arrow with Theseus's and to conceive an incestuous, and therefore monstrous, son, an idea that Studley happily encapsulates in his "defylde"/"Childe" rhyme',⁴⁵⁹ which reminds us of the incestuous themes running through the *Misfortunes of Arthur*.

Seneca's portraits in *Hercules furens* and *Hercules Oetaeus* shades the portrait of the tragic figure of Othello 'Just as Shakespeare employed some version of the Hercules myth in drawing the figures of Orlando, Macbeth, and Antony, so he used Seneca's highly charged and influential portrait in the shaping of Othello'.⁴⁶⁰ In his incisive analysis of the Senecan influences on *Othello* Miola states that 'in addition to providing strategies for structure and characterization, Seneca's *Hercules Furens*...supplies Shakespeare with a paradigm of tragic furor',⁴⁶¹ and the death of Hercules 'given influential expression in *Hercules Oetaeus*, may have contributed further to *Othello*' specifically to the incident of the handkerchief.⁴⁶² The Hercules myth continuously figured large in Bacon's imagination and writings. He refers to Hercules in his dramatic device *Of Tribute; or, giving that which is due* (1591-2),⁴⁶³ and jots down references to Hercules in his private note-book the *Promus of Formularies and Elegances* (1595-6),⁴⁶⁴ used by Bacon as an aid to memory, from which hundreds of parallels have been traced in his Shakespeare plays. There are also a number of references and allusions to Hercules in the *Advancement of Learning*,⁴⁶⁵ in his essays *Of Death*, *Of Adversity* and *Of Prophecies*,⁴⁶⁶ and the fable 'Prometheus; or The State of Man' found in *The Wisdom of the Ancients* (1609).⁴⁶⁷ The Pillars of Hercules frame the engraved title page of his *Novum Organum* (1620),⁴⁶⁸ that represented the limits of the known world and for some guarded the entrance to the mythical lost island of Atlantis, the inspiration for his Rosicrucian utopia *New Atlantis*; with references to Hercules in *An Advertisement touching an Holy War* (1622),⁴⁶⁹ and *Apophthegms* (1625),⁴⁷⁰ spanning a period of three decades. The myth or figure of Hercules is also referred or alluded to on thirty plus occasions in his Shakespeare plays over a similar period in *Taming of the Shrew*, *I Henry VI*, *3 Henry VI*, *Love's Labour's Lost*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Merchant of Venice*, *Much Ado about Nothing*, *I Henry IV*, *Hamlet*, *Merry Wives of Windsor*, *As You Like It*, *All's Well That Ends Well*, *Coriolanus*, *Antony and Cleopatra* and *Cymbeline*; and as Miola points out, some version of the Hercules myth contributes to the figure of Macbeth.

It 'seems no exaggeration to say' writes Mendell, that '*Macbeth* without Seneca would have been impossible';⁴⁷¹ if this be too strong for some, many would agree with Henry N. Paul, who describes *Macbeth* as 'the most Senecan of all of Shakespeare's plays'.⁴⁷² Collectively, a number of scholars and critics have pointed to echoes and resemblances in *Macbeth* to Seneca's tragedies, in the original Latin, and the translations in the *Tenne Tragedies* including the two Hercules plays, *Hercules furens* and the *Hercules Oetaeus*, translated by Studley and the three other Studley translated Seneca tragedies *Medea*, *Agamemnon* and *Hippolytus* 'scattered through nearly all Shakespeare's scenes'.⁴⁷³ It is clear that Bacon read and re-read Seneca when composing many of his acknowledged writings, as he did for a number of his pseudonymous dramas, including of course his Shakespeare plays; and perhaps unsurprisingly Muir and some other critics believe in

preparation for writing *Macbeth* Shakespeare may have ‘re-read Seneca’s plays’.⁴⁷⁴ As with many other Shakespeare plays the shadow of the Studley translations hangs over *Macbeth* like a kind of special intimate affinity ingrained in the mental universe of our poet. In ‘Two Shakespeare Parallels In Studley’s Translation Of Seneca’s *Agamemnon*’ Cornell M. Dowlin made known that that two lines in ‘W. R.’s’ prefatory verses to the Studley translation of Seneca’s *Agamemnon* ‘Fore woordes auayleth not a rushe,/And good wine needs no tauerne bushe’,⁴⁷⁵ recalls the proverb ‘Good wine need no bush’ in the epilogue to *As You Like It*. In his opinion the use of the proverb cannot be attributed to borrowing from ‘W. R.’ as it was common throughout Europe ‘and no printed source is necessary to explain its presence in *As You Like It*, especially one so obscure as the octavo *Agamemnon* of 1566’, as the verse only appeared in this rare edition and was not reprinted in the 1581 collected edition of *The Tenne Tragedies*.⁴⁷⁶ It might well be that the proverb was common throughout Europe, but one thing is certain, it was common to the translator of the *Agamemnon* and *As You Like It* and Bacon also entered the proverb in his private note-book before using in *As You Like It* as noted by Pott in *The Promus Of Formularies And Elegances (Being Private Notes, cicrc. 1594, hitherto unpublished) By Francis Bacon Illustrated And Elucidated By Passages From Shakespeare*.⁴⁷⁷ This was not the only Shakespeare parallel noted by Dowlin. He identified a second parallel in the chorus at the end of the first act of the *Agamemnon*: ‘One clod of croked care another bryngeth in,/One hurlye, buryle done, another doth begin’,⁴⁷⁸ which suggests of course, writes Dowlin, ‘When the hurlyburly’s done’ in *Macbeth* (1:1:3). The ‘distinct parallelism...both verbal and in the situation that calls them forth’ is significant. The line appears in the chorus of *Agamemnon* and the weird sisters in *Macbeth* act as a kind of chorus,⁴⁷⁹ a passage which, writes Muir, appears to have influenced several speeches in the play including the ‘Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow’ (5:1:19-27) speech.⁴⁸⁰ Appearing in the opening lines of the *Macbeth* the ‘chorus’ immediately provides it with a Senecan atmosphere and tone which permeates the whole of the play.

In her influential article ‘The fiend-Like Queen: A Note On ‘Macbeth’ And Seneca’s ‘Medea’’, Professor Inga-Stina Ewbank focussed her attention on the contribution of another Studley translated Seneca tragedy the *Medea* and its contribution ‘towards the creation of *Macbeth*’.⁴⁸¹ Verbal parallels and echoes between the *Medea* and *Macbeth* had been noted before including the witch-brew scene (4:1) and Lady Macbeth’s appeal to the spirits of murder to unsex her (1:5:39-53) however beyond these and other verbal parallels it provided ‘some Senecan dramatic moments a help towards crystallizing and articulating a main motif’ for the Scottish tragedy and here ‘Shakespeare saw Seneca’s plays not as storehouses of plot and character material, but as ways of analysing and defining emotional situations.’⁴⁸² Some of which depended more on Studley’s version than the Latin original. In citing the famous Lady Macbeth passages beginning ‘Come, you Spirits/That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here’ (1:5:39-53) and ‘I have given suck, and know/How tender ’tis to love the babe that milks me’ (1:7:54-8). Ewbank proceeds to highlight the opening scene in the *Medea* where Medea invokes Hecate, the goddess of the night, to help her revenge herself on Jason by killing the king and all the royal line. ‘Studley then makes her also envisage the slaying of her own children’ whereupon, Ewbank continues, she goes on to ask ‘in an invocation to her own soul, to be unsexed’ in a passage which also contains the phrase ‘hurly burly’. On examination ‘when we penetrate the blanket of Studley’s rhetoric here, we find, in close proximity and linked in a similar train of associations, the main ideas and images of the Lady Macbeth passages’ and furthermore ‘We also find ideas and images which, in *Macbeth*, link Lady Macbeth’s speeches with the rest of the play.’⁴⁸³ This lead Professor Ewbank to observe in a footnote ‘Apart from the fact that Studley considerably elaborates upon

the manifestation of Medea's wrath....he also adds lines or phrases which suggest that it is the translation, rather than the original, which may lie behind *Macbeth*.⁴⁸⁴ Just prior to the 'unsex me' passage (1:5:39-53) at Macbeth's castle in Inverness Lady Macbeth reads a letter from her husband concerning his meeting with the witches and also learns that King Duncan will be paying a royal visit to Inverness, and makes up her mind to carry out the murder of the king in order to hasten the witch's prophecy (1:5:1-29). This monologue, observes E. Koeppel, in a little known and overlooked German publication was derived from *The Misfortunes of Arthur*.⁴⁸⁵ The *Medea* such a significant influence on *The Misfortunes of Arthur* and in turn the early Shakespeare plays which followed it *Titus Andronicus*, *Richard III*, *The Merchant of Venice*, and the later tragedies *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *Macbeth* and *King Lear*, as well as *Anthony and Cleopatra* and *The Tempest*,⁴⁸⁶ translated when Bacon was a youth haunted his consciousness, and ran through the very veins of his bloody tragedy *Macbeth*. He drew again on this Senecan tragedy when composing his essay *Of Prophecies* first published in his final edition of the *Essays*:

Seneca the Tragedian hath these verses.

-*Venient Annis*
Secula seris, quibus Oceanus
Vincula Rerum laxet, et ingens
Pateat Tellus, Typhisque novos
Detegat Orbis; nec sit Terris
Ultima Thule:

*A Prophecie of the Discovery of America.*⁴⁸⁷

His modern editor Michael Kiernan reproduces the passage translated by Studley, as it appears in the 1581 edition *Seneca, His Tenne Tragedies*:

time shall in fine out breake
 When Ocean wave shall open every Realm.
 The wandring World at will shall open lye.
 And *TYPHIS* will some new founde Land survey
 Some travelers shall the Countreys farre escrye,
 Beyond small Thule, knowen furthest at this day.⁴⁸⁸

Shortly after the Studley translation of the *Medea* was completed Latin *sententiae* from Seneca's writings, favourite author of his father Lord Keeper Sir Nicholas Bacon, began appearing in the gallery above the wainscoting at Gorhambury, the Bacon family country mansion, where Sir Nicholas and Lady Anne Bacon read and discussed Seneca with him. Scholars and critics have long discerned the presence of Senecan *sententiae* in *Macbeth*. So adroit was our poet at enmeshing these Senecan features into *Macbeth* shows 'how capable he was of making Seneca sound completely Shakespearian', writes Burrows, or to put it another way 'Senecan *sententiae* are so completely incorporated into the body of the play that they become hard to identify as pieces of Seneca.'⁴⁸⁹ He also noted that Cunliffe had suggested that Macbeth's 'Things bad begun make strong themselves by ill' (3:2:56) is a version of Senecan *sententiae* 'per scelera semper sceleribus tutum est iter' ('the only safe path from bad deeds is through bad deeds'; *Agamemnon*, 115), which he deemed likely.⁴⁹⁰ The 'transmutation' of this Senecan *sententiae* was also noticed by Johnson 'Studley, in 1566, thus translates line 115: 'The safest path to mischief is by mischief open still' and in the 'thoroughly Senecan play'

the *Misfortunes of Arthur* ‘the line appears’, observes Johnson, as ‘The safest passages is from bad to worse’ (I, iv, 77).⁴⁹¹

The two Hercules plays *Hercules furens* and *Hercules Oetaeus* which in total Bacon drew on more than twenty times in *The Misfortunes of Arthur* whose myth frequents his known writings were also significant sources for *Macbeth*. Bacon’s irresistible interest in the hero Hercules is as we have seen reflected in the Shakespeare plays. In her article ‘Macbeth and Hercules: The Hero Bewitched’, Professor Truax drew attention to the way our poet continued to revisit Hercules ‘Shakespeare’s fascination with the mythic hero Hercules is evident again and again in the plays, often in comparison with human characters whose emulations of the demi-god are in some respects wanting. It is no coincidence that the entrance of the Globe playhouse boasted a decoration of Hercules carrying the globe, with the motto *Totus mundus agit histrionem*, a testament to the eternal verity, as Jacques points out in his commentary on the Ages of Man in *As You Like It* (II.vii.139-66), that all the world’s a stage upon which we play our parts.’⁴⁹² Nor is it no coincidence that Bacon’s *Novum Organum* depicts a ship travelling between the Pillars of Hercules representing the end of the known world. The parallels between the *Hercules furens* and *Macbeth*, says Truax and ‘to a lesser degree, *Hercules Oetaeus* and *Medea*-are remarkable. Not only does *Macbeth* agree with *Hercules Furens* in mood, temper, and rhetoric, but also there are numerous correspondences in language, plot, and characterization as well.’⁴⁹³ Arkins maintained that ‘the Senecan play that most influences *Macbeth* is *Hercules furens*’,⁴⁹⁴ and cites like many before him, an example in point: the reaction of Macbeth’s following the death of Duncan to his blood stained hands ‘Will all great Neptune’s ocean wash this blood/Clean from my hand?’ (2:2:58-9), a conflation of the two passages from *Hippolytus* (lines 715-8) and *Hercules furens* (1323-9).⁴⁹⁵ Further examples of the influence of *Hercules Furens* are presented and noted by Craig, Thomson, Charles and Michelle Martindale, Miola, Arkins, Burrow, and the latest editors of *Macbeth*, Clark and Mason.⁴⁹⁶ *Hercules Oetaeus* (translated by Studley) E. B. Lyle points out suggests the passage when Macbeth expresses his horror at Banquo’s ghost. In his speech Hercules (1377-95) describes the savage beasts and animals he would rather meet which are transmuted into the following passage:⁴⁹⁷

Approach thou like the rugged Russian bear,
The armed rhinoceros, or th’Hyrcan tiger;
Take any shape but that, and my firm nerves
Shall never tremble. Or be alive again,
And dare me to the desert with thy sword.
If trembling I inhabit then, protest me
The baby of a girl.
[*Macbeth*: 3:4:99-105]

Lyle also highlights a second parallel between *Hercules Oetaeus* and *Macbeth* in the angry and tortured speeches of Hercules’s wife Deianira (292-5) and Macbeth:⁴⁹⁸

If ‘t be so,
For Banquo’s issue have I filed my mind,
For them the gracious Duncan have I murdered,
Put rancours in the vessel of my peace
Only for them...
[*Macbeth*: 3:1:65-9]

These lines 292-5 in *Hercules Oetaeus* which provided the above parallel for *Macbeth* was part of a sequence in this Senecan tragedy which engaged and had a residual effect on Bacon's mind for he used some of its preceding and subsequent lines (282-7, 304-6, & 307-11) in *The Misfortunes of Arthur*.⁴⁹⁹

The other great Shakespeare tragedy *King Lear*, 'is a tragedy of furor', declares Miola, 'which *Hercules Furens* serves as a model'.⁵⁰⁰ Yet in the manner of the *Misfortunes* as we have often seen with earlier Shakespeare plays Bacon also amalgamated a number of other Senecan tragedies into the Senecan confluence running through *King Lear*. The Oxford Professor Emrys Jones points out 'When in *Lear* Goneril and Albany exchange a few terse words about Goneril's future course of action, they echo what was once a well-known exchange in *Octavia*' (*King Lear*: 1:4:308-10) before adding 'for a moment the mild Albany speaks like a latter-day Seneca'.⁵⁰¹ In passing Muir observed that 'For Gloucester's attempted suicide he may have remembered, too, Seneca's *Thebais*, which opens with a long scene in which the blinded Oedipus asks Antigone to let him fall over a precipice'.⁵⁰² However the influence of *Thebais* on *King Lear* was much greater than he realized as Stapleton informed in some detail. The translation of *Thebais*, he writes, is an important text for the construction of the relationship between Cordelia and Lear. Shakespeare 'seems to have esteemed Thomas Newton's translation of the *Thebais*', a contention he substantiates with a number of comparative examples. Although he was reluctant to label the translation a source 'this play is analogous to *Lear*, the imperfect fragment from antiquity informing the Renaissance masterpiece, a transmigration, metamorphosis, metempsychosis. Oedipus is anatomized and reconstituted in Lear and Gloucester, Antigone in Cordelia and Edgar'.⁵⁰³ In addition to the influence of Senecan drama on *King Lear* Burrow recently made known his philosophical writings were also a significant contributory factor 'The play and its king both brood on ingratitude, on the kind of return which children owe their parents, and on the limits to that debt. These are the central themes in Seneca's philosophical works, and of the *De Beneficiis* in particular'.⁵⁰⁴ It is evident Burrow continues that 'Shakespeare's greatest play comes from deep and continued thinking about Seneca, and about the way that ingratitude in particular could bridge the gap between Senecan ethics, Stoic cosmology, and Senecan drama. The wider concern of *De Beneficiis* with problems of gratitude...finally roars through *King Lear*, which seems partly to be made from a Senecan thought experience.'⁵⁰⁵ Both Theobald and Simpson independently point to the parallel between a passage in *Thyestes* and the same passage in *King Lear*.⁵⁰⁶ The parallel was noticed by Burrow who gave the Latin lines from *Thyestes* (267-70) with an English translation alongside the lines from *King Lear* (2:2:452-6), commenting that 'Lear's outburst here without doubt does not just derive from Seneca but is meant to sound 'Senecan'.⁵⁰⁷ In his essay *Of Great Place* Bacon quotes the Latin line '*Illi Mors gravis incubat, qui notus nimis omnibus, ignotus moritur sibi*'.⁵⁰⁸ For those unfamiliar with the Latin tongue and Senecan tragedies his modern editor Kiernan usefully provides the following note:

Seneca, *Thyestes*, ii. 401-3 (Chorus) as verse:
'*Illi...incubat, qui...omnibus, ignotus...sibi*')

But greivous is to him the death, that when
So farre abroad the bruite of him is blowne,
That knowne hee is to much to other men:
Departeth yet unto him selfe unknowne.

(trans. Jasper Heywood, *Seneca his Tenne Tragedies* [1581], E3).⁵⁰⁹

The Senecan and Herculean fused Shakespeare plays *Othello*, *King Lear*, *Macbeth*, as well as the Roman tragedies *Coriolanus* and *Antony and Cleopatra* were all written in the wake of *The Advancement of Learning* which often refers and alludes to Seneca's prose and dramatic works and the complex and ambivalent myth of Hercules. Critical inquiries along these lines concerning *Coriolanus* has been long in coming and limited. The starting point for the application of the Herculean myth to the play was made by E. M. Waith in *The Herculean Hero in Marlowe, Chapman, Shakespeare and Dryden* in 1962. All the more surprising as Waith immediately points out: as *Coriolanus* marches on Rome at the head of the Volscian army the Roman general Cominius describes him to the tribunes as a god 'Made by some other deity than nature' (4:6:95) who will 'shake Rome about your ears' (4:6:103) to which the other Roman general Menenius adds 'As Hercules did shake down mellow fruit' (4:6:104), directly comparing *Coriolanus* to the great mythical hero, in a play Shakespeare 'dealt more fully with a Hercules'.⁵¹⁰ This foundational inquiry by Waith of Hercules in *Coriolanus* did not satisfy Takashi Nishi. In *The Representations of Hercules and Hydra in Shakespeare's Coriolanus* (2014) the first full-length work on the subject aware that the myths of Hercules and Hydra and its engagement with *Coriolanus* had been under represented in terms of critical attention 'especially by Shakespearean critics' dismissed the 'shallowness of Waith's discussion' and noted since its publication no 'detailed and meticulous research on Shakespeare's usage of Hercules and Hydra' had been carried out since.⁵¹¹ Exploring far beyond the distinguishing Herculean characteristics of pride and anger and strength as presented by Waith over a series of chapters its author explored the way some English and European monarchs compared themselves (or were compared to) Hercules, as well as Herculean 'eloquence' and 'virtue', in relation to the complex multi-dimensional representations of the figure and the myth found in classical and Renaissance literature. He pointed out that 'Hercules had been frequently associated with a virtuous and eloquent king in humanistic books like Baldassare Castiglione's *The Book of the Courtier*',⁵¹² although he failed to mention it was first translated into English by Bacon's uncle Sir Thomas Hoby, quite possibly with the help of his wife Elizabeth Russell, the sister of his mother Lady Bacon. In the chapter 'Herculean Monarchs in the European Renaissance' placed in the context of the religious conflict between Catholicism and Protestantism Nishi contrasts the simple 'mono-layered' example of the French kings such as Charles IX, Henri III and Henry IV with Elizabeth I 'because the Reformation made the English Herculean monarch an intricately layered figure, or a composite of 'images of Hercules, St. George, and King Arthur, who killed Hydra with a club, a dragon with his sword, Askelon, and a red dragon with Excalibur, respectively.'⁵¹³ These compound images of Hercules and Hydra in England were not limited to Shakespeare's works 'among his contemporaries, Edmund Spenser provides the best samples of multi-layered images of Hercules, St. George, King Arthur, Hydra, and dragons, including the Dragon of the Apocalypse.'⁵¹⁴ In the appended letter to Raleigh in *The Fairie Queene* written in the 1580's, which was entered on the Stationers' Register on 1 December 1589, only a year after of the publication of *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, 'Spenser' (Bacon) writes 'for this book of mine' being 'coloured with historicall fiction' I 'chose the hystorye of King Arthure, as the most fitte for the excellency of his person, being made famous by many mens former workes' and thus 'I labour to pourtraict in Arthure, before he was king, the image of a brave knight, perfected in the twelue priuate morall virtues, as Aristotle hath deuised, the which is the purpose of these first twelue bookes.'⁵¹⁵ The first of the books contain the story of the Knight of the Redcrosse an early allegorical account of a Red or Rosy Cross Brother later traced in the Rosicrucian manifesto *Chemical Wedding*. The

letter, writes Nishi, ‘declares that the theme of killing the dragon is at the centre of *The Fairie Queene*, for King Arthur, the knight of the Redcrosse, or St. George, and Hercules are all dragon slayers’ and ‘indeed the allegorical descriptions of the dragon slayers, especially in Book 1, embrace aspects of the various interpretations of Hercules-Hydra representations religiously and politically in Tudor England.’⁵¹⁶ He further adds that ‘Elizabeth was presented as a multi-layered image of Hercules, King Arthur, St George, and God as a dragon slayer; and, correspondingly, the many-headed dragon or Hydra was also a multi-layered image of the multitude, Roman Catholics, and Spain as the objects to be defeated.’⁵¹⁷ He concluded that the profound meaning or implications of the Hercules-Hydra theme in *Coriolanus* based on European Renaissance humanistic thought represented Shakespeare’s final comments on the relationship of Herculean rulers and the many-headed multitude, before he turned to the so-called later romances *Pericles*, *Cymbeline*, *The Winter’s Tale* and *The Tempest*.⁵¹⁸ Yet his complex lifelong relationship with Seneca was far from concluded.

In *Antony and Cleopatra* its principal Roman protagonist is explicitly compared to Hercules and Antony clearly conceives himself to be an Herculean man ‘Shakespeare’s Antony resembles Hercules not only in his martial bearing, complete with full beard and prominent sword, but also in his values and behaviour.’⁵¹⁹ Furthermore, his lover understands the complexity of his Herculean emotional and psychological mind-set ‘Repeatedly, Cleopatra urges Antony to understand the seeming contradictions of his Herculean nature and to embrace them as indivisible truth of character, rather than a series of hypocritical roles.’⁵²⁰ And in certain respects they compliment or mirror each other in their Herculean conceptions of themselves ‘Cleopatra represents Shakespeare’s most detailed and triumphant reanimation of *femina furens*. Jasper Heywood’s Juno and Megaera (*Hercules furens*) and John Studley’s Deianira (*Hercules Oetaeus*) and Medea inform his conception of this notorious pagan queen. Her witchery, anger, maxims, stichomythic exchanges, self-definition, rhetorical excesses, and unexpected Stoicism provide the neoclassical superstructure for her infinite variety.’⁵²¹ In addition to the influence of the two Senecan Hercules plays *Hercules furens* and *Hercules Oetaeus* on the Roman tragedy Stapleton points out that the character Seneca’s speech on the nature of love in the *Octavia* supposedly translated by Nuce ‘can be read as a precedent for the ambiguity of *amor* in *Antony and Cleopatra*’ a passage, he insisted, that had ‘a special resonance for Shakespeare’s Senecan *Antony and Cleopatra*. The ambiguity of the first two lines is a mimetic of the play itself’ he writes and ‘“Seneca” also utters phrases that echo in Shakespeare’s tragedy’, of which, he presents a series of examples.⁵²² He is too aware of the general passing over of the importance of the original translations of the Seneca tragedies, and the collected edition *Seneca, His Tenne Tragedies*, as analogues and sources for Shakespeare’s histories, comedies and tragedies ‘Shakespeare’s reading of the Heywood-Studley translations of the Hercules plays (and *Medea*) also forms his Cleopatra. Much has been written on Antony as Hercules, but comparativists inevitably ignore the Egyptian queen’s similarities to Megaera, Deianira, and Juno. And, of course, no one mentions the *Tenne Tragedies* as analogue or source.’⁵²³ Towards the end of the play the second soldier says ‘The god Hercules, whom Antony loved, Now leaves him’ (4:3:14) on the eve of one of his battle and Waith points out ‘some of the most striking identifications with Hercules are made shortly before Antony’s death.’⁵²⁴ As the act progressed Shakespeare was again to recall the *Hercules Oetaeus* ‘when he made Antony, with true Senecan extravagance’ say ‘Let me lodge Lichas on the horns o’th’ moon’ (4:12:45) ‘a palpable echo of Seneca’s “in astra missus fertur” (1. 817), as Warburton was the first to point out.’⁵²⁵ Following his death Cleopatra still recognises his Herculean personality ‘She can draw Antony out beyond the tragic paradox of his

own nature, infusing his death with the full transcendent thrust of the *Hercules Oetaeus*, and turning from love tragedy to love triumph. She exhorts her Herculean hero to something beyond even self-consciousness. Understanding his own heroic nature should bring self-transcendence.⁵²⁶ Her most overtly Stoic statement, write Charles and Michelle Martindale, is made at the beginning of the long final scene:

My desolation does begin to make
A better life. 'Tis paltry to be Caesar.
Not being Fortune, he's but Fortune's knave,
A minister of her will. And it is great
To do that thing that ends all other deeds,
Which shackles accidents and bolts up change.
[*Antony and Cleopatra*: 5:2:1-6]

'In finding the ability to come to terms in this way with desolation Cleopatra ensures her victory. This kind of triumph is expressed more tersely, but with a similar flavour, by Seneca (*Letters* 26.10) *Qui mori didicit, servire dedidicit* ('He who has learned to die has unlearned slavery').⁵²⁷ When the tragic hero and heroine meet their destiny the Herculean fulfilment on this mortal coil is at an end 'When Antony and Cleopatra leave behind heroic, and heroically flawed, humanity for the pantheon, they make the same transition that Hercules himself once made.'⁵²⁸ It is not known if they found each other again in a better place.

It is clear from his acknowledged writings and his Shakespeare plays that Bacon was fascinated by the figure and myth of Hercules and he evidently saw himself as a kind of Herculean philosopher and scientist whose immense efforts would benefit mankind and the future direction of the world and it appears others saw him in the same image. In his long and detailed article 'Beyond Hercules: Bacon and the Scientist as Hero', Steadman observes 'Bacon's heroic ideal, his conception of the scientist as a benefactor, laboring through power of knowledge and charity for the greater good of man and the greater glory of God provided him with a standard of measurement whereby he might judge and revalue the older, more conventional conceptions of heroism'. A way of exploring this heroic *topoi* was through the 'images of the voyager and the magician', the voyages of Odysseus, the Argonauts, and Columbus. The magico-scientist-philosopher Prospero in Shakespeare's play (or Rosicrucian manifesto) *The Tempest* 'represents an idealized type of the magician-hero (and he is also, incidentally, a voyager) and like 'Bacon's *magus*, Prospero is a benefactor. He too realizes that knowledge is power, and he uses his power well.' Bacon's Great Instauration was heroic and 'the motto *Plus ultra* not only evoked the image of Hercules, a proverbial symbol of *Virtus Heroica*, but pointed the way toward a nobler mode of conquest.' The scientist 'as Bacon conceived him was active and contemplative hero':

That near-contemporaries, spokesmen for the "new philosophy" during the last three quarters of the century, should hail Bacon himself in heroic terms was no more than poetic justice. For Rawley, he was a man of "divine understanding". For the contributors to the *Manes Verulamiani* he was "Verulamius Heros"-"noster Heros [qui] traderet scientias Aeternitati"; the Columbus who has conquered a New World with new arts....Comenius linked him with Campanella as a "Hercules, who has debelled monsters and purged the Augean stables" through his attacks on Aristotelian philosophy. Gassendi lauded his "heroic daring"...To the University of Oxford he seemed "a literary Hercules, who has further advanced the pillars of learning, deemed by others immovable." For Cowley he resembled Moses, who had led "our wandering

Praedecessors” through the wilderness to the border of the “blest promis’d Land”. For Leibniz he was “divini ingenii vir.”⁵²⁹

In the decade before Bacon had published his first edition of his *Essays* a manuscript copy of which with his Shakespeare plays *Richard II* and *Richard III* originally formed part of the Northumberland Manuscript. The edition contained ten essays and from just after 1606 or early 1607 when *Antony and Cleopatra* is believed to have been written, which was first entered on the Stationers’ Register on 20 May 1608, Bacon commenced writing more essays copies of which are contained in the British Library (Harleian MSS No. 5106) dating from between 1607 and 1612 the year of the publication of the second edition containing thirty-eight essays. In his recent edition of Bacon’s *Essays* Pitcher on observing the style of the essays ‘Ciceronic, Senecan mixed’, says the ‘number of times Bacon quotes from...Seneca...in the *Essays* calls for some explanation’;⁵³⁰ perhaps he could also have asked why in more than four hundred years no Bacon or Shakespeare editor, scholar or critic, had ever attempted to explain why the two canons (supposedly written by two different writers) are so heavily influenced by Seneca. Bacon originally intended to dedicate the second edition of *Essays* (mostly essays written from between 1607 and 1612) to Prince Henry, a dedicatory epistle he had already written before the death of the prince on 6 November, which has been preserved in manuscript now held at the British Library. In the dedication to the prince Bacon reveals that he had taken for his model Seneca’s epistles ‘For Seneca’s epistles to Lucilius, if one mark them well, are but *Essays*, that is, dispersed meditations, though conveyed in the form of epistles.’⁵³¹ These epistles or the *Epistulae morales ad Lucilium* are a collection of 124 letters written by Seneca to Lucilius Junior including the letter numbered 26 ‘On Old Age and Death’ referred to in connection with *Antony and Cleopatra*. In his own essay *Of Death* Bacon adapts another of Seneca’s epistles (lxxvii.6). Death he says is no terrible enemy ‘Nay Seneca addes *Nicenesse* and *Saciety*; *Cogita quam diu eadem feceris*; *Mori velle, non tantum Fortis, aut Miser, sed etiam Fastidiosus potest*. A man would die, though he were neither valiant, nor miserable, onely upon a wearinesse to doe the same thing, so oft over and over.’⁵³² Bacon cites Seneca (*Epist.* vii.11) in his essay *Of Love* and as we have seen he quotes from Seneca’s tragedy *Thyestes* in his essay *Of Great Place*,⁵³³ whose influence is felt in a number of his Shakespeare plays. Certain words or language in Bacon’s essays *Of Suspicion* and *Of Riches* can be compared with Seneca’s *Epistles* (cxxxiii.16; lxxxvii.11), and as we know his essay *Of Prophecies* quotes a verse from the Seneca tragedy *Medea*,⁵³⁴ an influence for *Titus Andronicus*, *Richard III*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *Macbeth*, *King Lear*, and *Antony and Cleopatra*,⁵³⁵ as well as *The Misfortunes of Arthur*.

It was during this period from 1607 to 1612 that Bacon also turned his attention to his later Shakespeare plays, or as others prefer to describe them Shakespeare romances, the name given to *Pericles*, *Cymbeline*, *The Winter’s Tale* and *The Tempest*. These are also known as tragicomedies in which elements of tragedy find their resolution through comedy. We know from his *Advancement of Learning* published in 1605 and numerous essays written during this period that Bacon was reading and re-reading Seneca’s prose and dramatic works and inevitably Seneca the philosopher and dramatist formed part of his consciousness. The Shakespeare tragicomedies ‘deploy Senecan subtexts’ and draw ‘upon his own tragedies, deeply inscribed with Senecan images of revenge, tyranny, and *furor*. *Hercules Furens* continues to be an important text, but Shakespeare’s debt to Senecan drama, in the end as in the beginning, is principally a matter of style, a matter of rhetorical pose and gesture, replete with a cluster of familiar images and motifs’; and these tragicomedies ‘often feature a character who works through Senecan passion to

spiritual anagnorisis, to a change of heart that ultimately gives witness to a beneficent providence. The pattern is incipient in *Pericles*, clear in *Cymbeline* and *The Winter's Tale*, transformed in *The Tempest*.⁵³⁶ It is believed the first of these tragicomedies was *Pericles* 'Beneath the thickly intertextual corpus', observes Miola, 'we can occasionally sense the Senecan pulse, though here Shakespeare's use of it is subtle and mediated. Seneca appears to shape not the protagonists, but such secondary figures as the tyrant Antiochus and the wicked Dionyza.' And 'moreover Seneca appears here as an encoded tragic presence, powerfully present in the Shakespearean scenes-largely from *Macbeth* and *King Lear*-which *Pericles* recapitulates and transforms. This use of Seneca reveals by contrast *Pericles*' character.'⁵³⁷ Emrys Jones points out that in *The Winter's Tale* once Leontes yields to his jealousy he takes on the characteristics of a tyrant especially in the scene with Paulina (2:3:122-30) which Jones and Miola concur takes its leave from Seneca's tragedy *Agamemnon* (1003-4).⁵³⁸ Most important, comments Miola, the tyrant is a child-killer 'Hovering in the background are the savage shades of Richard III, Macbeth, Lady Macbeth, Hercules, Atreus, and Medea.'⁵³⁹ A century earlier Theobald presented a parallel between *Cymbeline* (4:2:315-6) and *Troades* (1,000),⁵⁴⁰ and later modern scholars have discerned wider and deeper Senecan influences 'For the apparent political orthodoxy of this play is haunted by an unruly subliminal presence: *Hercules furens*, one of Seneca's most ironic exposures of the imperial attitude.'⁵⁴¹ In *Cymbeline* writes Miola 'Shakespeare deploys Senecan energies in a plot of amatory intrigue' and for the depiction of Posthumous's repentance in Act 4 Scene 1 he 'again draws upon *Hercules Furens*', and like 'Hercules, Posthumous discovers that he has murdered his innocent lady and then suffers remorse for his *furor*'.⁵⁴² Stapleton correctly emphasizes the *Tenne Tragedies* make their presence felt in later plays and demand interpretation. Originally titled *The Tragedy of Cymbeline* it 'contains strange Senecan resonances', he remarks, and 'also possesses some of the features associated with Tudor-Senecanism', namely, 'ghosts, *furor*, stichomythia, rhetorical excesses, neo-Stoicism, the discussion of suicide, descriptive set-speeches, and the possibility of disgusting evils such as rape and murder.'⁵⁴³ Stapleton points to echoes from *Troades*, *Agamemnon* and *Thyestes*, and proposes that the most notorious soliloquy in *Cymbeline* (2:5:19-28) 'has its genesis in Studley's *Hippolytus* (559-66).⁵⁴⁴ *The Tempest* a great transformative work of art with its magician-philosophical-scientist Prospero (Bacon) orchestrating events which has been called a 'revenge comedy'; sets up observes Boyle 'the possibility for revenge and then substitutes forgiveness':

Though with their high wrongs I am struck to th'quick,
 Yet with noble reason 'gainst my fury
 Do I take part. The rarer action is
 In virtue than in vengeance.
 [*The Tempest*: 5:1:25-8]

At the end of Seneca's *Medea* the Colchian's magic implements the most savage vengeance and she herself departs the world in apotheotic flight. In *The Tempest*'s concluding display of its protagonist's 'tender affections', Prospero, the magician inverts Seneca's ending: abjuring his magic, he replaces, vengeance with virtue and compassion, and returns to the social world from which he had been expelled. In emphasising his forgiveness of the brother who had wronged him ('I do forgive thee/Unnatural though thou art', *Tempest* 5.1.78f.: 'I do forgive /Thy rankest fault', 5.1.131f.), Prospero inverts the ending of *Thyestes* too.⁵⁴⁵

The year after *The Tempest* was composed and performed Bacon saw through the press the second edition of his *Essays* which went through a number of issues printed by and

for William and John Jaggard.⁵⁴⁶ It is no coincidence that *The Tempest* described by Dr Yates as a Rosicrucian manifesto was placed first in the First Folio of the Shakespeare plays printed and published by father and son William and John Jaggard in November 1623, followed shortly after, by a reprint of Bacon's essays by William's wife Elizabeth Jaggard. The same year the Senecan inspired Shakespeare plays were first published to the world (eighteen of the Shakespeare play were printed here for the first time) another work, a little less known to posterity and the world, was also printed at London, which if known to Seneca, Bacon and Shakespeare scholars, has been overlooked and ignored. This work (apparently) written by the lawyer, poet and author Thomas Powell entitled *The Attourneys Academy* is dedicated to the king, and several others, including Francis Bacon. The reason this revealing dedication to Bacon is not reproduced by his editors, biographers and commentators, is it very obviously alludes to Bacon's secret authorship of the Shakespeare poems and plays with its theatrical metaphor momentarily pulling the curtain back before closing it again:

TO
TRVE NOBILITIE
AND TRYDE LEARNING,
BEHOLDEN
*To no Mountaine for Eminence,
Nor Supportment for his Height,
FRANCIS, Lord Verulam, and
Viscount S^t. Albanes.*

O Giue me leaue to pull the Curtaine by,
That clouds thy Worth in such obscuritie,
Good *Seneca*, stay but a while thy bleeding,
T'accept what I receiued at thy reading:
Heere I present it in a solemne straine,
And thus I pluckt the Curtaine backe againe.⁵⁴⁷

A Senecan scholar from virtually the day he was born into a household of a Senecan statesman, with Senecan *sententiae* adorning the Gorhambury home he was raised in, versed in all the Latin and English Senecan plays from his youth, the concealed author of the most Senecan play in all Elizabethan drama *The Misfortunes of Arthur* and his other Senecan-inspired Shakespeare plays.

For four hundred years *The Misfortunes of Arthur* has been surrounded by silence and suppression. This relatively unknown historically important drama marks the first appearance of the name of the great poet-philosopher and dramatist Francis Bacon in print and is by definition unique in the canon of his acknowledged writings and marks a unique biographical and bibliographical milestone in the literary career of this great historical figure and man of letters. The important landmark drama written, performed and published in 1587-8 immediately pre-dates the Shakespearean era and is of untold importance in the history of his authorship of the Shakespeare plays. *The Misfortunes of Arthur* serves as a source for at least half-a-dozen of his Shakespeare plays and has moreover important and extensive links to more than half the Shakespeare canon. It is permeated with his Baconian-Shakespearean DNA whose salient themes repeatedly anticipates and finds echo throughout the whole Shakespeare canon from the first to the last. *The Misfortunes of Arthur* is his first unacknowledged Shakespeare play.

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70. Albert Peel and Leland H. Carlson, eds., *The Writings Of Robert Harrison And Robert Browne* (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1953), p. 516.
71. *Ibid.*, p. 516n3.
72. *Ibid.*, p. 517. The letter is printed by Peel and Carlson on pp. 517-29.
73. Christopher Shutte?, *A Briefe resolution of a right Religion. Touching The Controuersies, that are nowe in England. Written by C. S.* (London: printed by Roger Ward for John Proctor, 1590), epistle dedicatory.
74. Philip Sidney, *Syr P. S. His Astrophel and Stella. Wherein the excellencie of sweete Poesie is concluded. To the end of which are added, sundry other rare Sonnets of diuers Noblemen and Gentlemen* (London: printed for Thomas Newman, 1591), A2^{r-v}.
75. Spedding, *Letters and Life*, I, pp. 110-1, and for correspondence between Bacon and Allen see pp. 264-6; Lisa Jardine and Alan Stewart, *Hostage to Fortune The Troubled Life of Francis Bacon* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1998), pp. 112-5, 128, and Daphne Du Marier, *Golden Lads A Study of Anthony Bacon, Francis and their Friends* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1975), pp. 71, 74-5, 114.
76. Thomas Birch, *Memoirs Of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth, From the Year 1581 till her Death. In Which The Secret Intrigues of her Court, And the Conduct of her Favourite, Robert Earl of Essex, both at Home and Abroad, Are Particularly*

- Illustrated. From the Original Papers of his intimate Friend, Anthony Bacon, Esquire, And other Manuscripts never before published* (London: printed for A. Millar, 1754), I, p. 56; Eric St. John Brooks, *Sir Christopher Queen Elizabeth's Favourite* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1946), p. 346.
77. *Calendar Of State Papers, Domestic Series, Of The Reign Of Elizabeth, 1591-1594, Preserved In Her Majesty's Public Record Office*, ed., Mary Anne Everett Green (London: Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dyer, 1867), p. 76.
 78. *Ibid.*, p. 76.
 79. British Library, MS 69, item 79, fol. 195 cited by W. J. Tighe, 'The Career Of Francis Flower', *Notes And Queries*, 130 (1985), p. 461 & Germaine Warkentin, 'Patrons And Profiteers Thomas Newman and the 'Violent enlargement' of *Astrophil and Stella*', *The Book Collector*, 34 (1985), p. 477.
 80. W. J. Tighe, 'The Career Of Francis Flower', *Notes And Queries*, 130 (1985), p. 461.
 81. The letter was discovered by W. J. Tighe, see 'The Career Of Francis Flower', *Notes And Queries*, 130 (1985), p. 461. I have followed Germaine Warkentin, 'Patrons And Profiteers Thomas Newman and the 'Violent enlargement' of *Astrophil and Stella*', *The Book Collector*, 34 (1985), p. 476.
 82. British Library, Lansdowne MS 68, 105 cited in W. J. Tighe, 'The Career Of Francis Flower', *Notes And Queries*, 130 (1985), p. 461 and P. W. Hasler, ed., *The Houses Of commons 1558-1603* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1981), II, p. 142.
 83. P. R. O., C.66/1394, m. 58 cited by W. J. Tighe, 'The Career Of Francis Flower', *Notes And Queries*, 130 (1985), p. 462; see also Germaine Warkentin, 'Patrons And Profiteers Thomas Newman and the 'Violent enlargement' of *Astrophil and Stella*', *The Book Collector*, 34 (1985), p. 478.
 84. *Calendar Of State Papers, Domestic Series, Of The Reign Of Elizabeth, 1591-1594, Preserved In Her Majesty's Public Record Office*, ed., Mary Anne Everett Green (London: Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dyer, 1867), p. 219.
 85. Spedding, *Letters and Life*, I, pp. 212-9; Lisa Jardine and Alan Stewart, *Hostage to Fortune The Troubled Life of Francis Bacon* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1998), pp. 141-5; P. W. Hasler, ed., *The Houses Of commons 1558-1603* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1981), II, p.141.
 86. William Dugdale, *The History Of S^t Pauls Cathedral In London* (London: printed by Thomas Warren, 1658), p. 83; William Dugdale, *The History Of S^t Pauls Cathedral In London...The Second Edition corrected and enlarged by the Author's own Hand* (London: printed by George James for Jonah Bowyer, 1716), p. 83. It is reprinted by Harris Nicholas, *Memoirs Of the Life And Times Of Sir Christopher Hatton, K.G., Vice-chamberlain And Lord Chancellor To Queen Elizabeth* (London: Richard Bentley, 1847), appendix, pp. Ixiv-Ixv. It was under Flower's hand Robert Greene's commemorative verse for Sir Christopher Hatton was entered in the Stationers' Register in 1591; see W. W. Greg, *Some Aspects And Problems Of London Publishing Between 1550 And 1650* (Oxford Clarendon Press, 1956), p. 59. The pamphlet entitled *A Maidens Dreame. Vpon The Death Of The right Honorable Sir Christopher Hatton Knight, late Lord Chancelor of England* (London: printed by Thomas Scarlet for Thomas Nelson, 591) is dedicated to Bacon's kinswoman Elizabeth Cecil Hatton, the wife of the 'right Worshipfull' Sir William Hatton, to whom, after the death of her husband Bacon later proposed his hand in marriage. A number of Baconians have rightly claimed that Robert Greene was a front for Bacon and many of the works printed in his

- name are cited as sources by numerous scholars for a significant number of Shakespeare plays. For a discussion (and a list of other sources) of the ‘Greene’ writings and the Shakespeare plays see Stuart Gillespie, *Shakespeare’s Books A Dictionary of Shakespeare Sources* (London: Continuum, 2004), pp. 208-15.
87. Thomas Howell, *The Arbor of Amitie wherin is comprised pleasant and pretie poems, set foorth by Thomas Howell* (London: printed by Thomas Purfoote, 1568), pp. 44-5 ‘Fraunces Flower in the commendation of the Author’ signed ‘F. Flowar’.
 88. Alan Stewart with Harriet Knight, *Early Writings 1584-1596* (Oxford Clarendon Press, 2012), p. 66n15.
 89. W. J. Tighe, ‘The Career Of Francis Flower’, *Notes And Queries*, 130 (1985), p. 460n1.
 90. PRO: SPD 12/238/fol. 69^r cited by Germaine Warkentin, ‘Patrons And Profiteers Thomas Newman and the ‘Violent enlargement’ of *Astrophil and Stella*’, *The Book Collector*, 34 (1985), p. 479 and partly cited by W. J. Tighe, ‘The Career Of Francis Flower’, *Notes And Queries*, 130 (1985), p. 462. For a summary of the letter see *Calendar Of State Papers, Domestic Series, Of The Reign Of Elizabeth, 1591-1594, Preserved In Her Majesty’s Public Record Office*, ed., Mary Anne Everett Green (London: Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dyer, 1867), p. 11. A letter dated 20 June 1591 from Flower to Burghley’s secretary Michael Hicks (BM Lansdowne 68, item 91, fol. 205) is cited by Warkentin on p. 481. For Hicks long and the close relationship with Bacon see Spedding, *Letters and Life*, I, p. 256; II, 27, 28, 204-6; III, pp. 14, 41, 57, 258, 291, 302; IV, pp. 40, 52, 131, 217, 246; Lisa Jardine and Alan Stewart, *Hostage to Fortune The Troubled Life of Francis Bacon* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1998), pp. 146, 157, 206, 252, 261, 321. On p. 465 Tighe quotes from a letter written by Flower in June 1592 in Reply to one from his ‘cousin’ who was seeking some support for his studies (BL Harleian MS 677, f. 108b) ‘yf any fayre fortune appeare againe’ he would be all too happy to help before ending on this interesting final piece of advice ‘learne by me not to leave of from studyes and chouse the courte, wher shyninge miserye dwelleth to the unlearned & unhappy’.
 91. Thomas Hughes, *Certaine Deuises and shewes presented to her Maiestie by the Gentlemen of Grayes-Inne at her Highnesse Court in Greenwich, the twenty eighth day of Februarie in the thirtieth yeare of her Maiesties most happy Raigne* (London: printed by Robert Robinson, 1587), B2^r.
 92. Ibid., C3^v.
 93. PRO C 66/1435 m. 14d; SP 46/20, f. 51 cited by W. J. Tighe, ‘The Career Of Francis Flower’, *Notes And Queries*, 130 (1985), p. 462.
 94. John Roche Dasent, ed., *Acts Of The Privy Council Of England. New Series. Vol. XXV. A. D. 1595-6* (London: printed for His Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1901), p. 156.
 95. Ibid., pp. 230-1.
 96. Elizabeth Story Donno, ed., *Sir John Harington’s A New Discourse Of A Stale Subject, Called The Metamorphosis Of Ajax* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962), pp. 247-8.
 97. Ibid., p. 248n246.
 98. Jacques Ramel, ‘Biographical Notices On The Authors Of “The Misfortunes Of Arthur” (1588)’, *Notes and Queries*, 212 (1967), p. 466.
 99. P. W. Hasler, ed., *The Houses Of Commons 1558-1603* (London: Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1981), II, p. 142.

100. W. J. Tighe, 'The Career Of Francis Flower', *Notes And Queries*, 130 (1985), p. 462.
101. Thomas Birch, *Memoirs Of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth, From the Year 1581 till her Death. In Which The Secret Intrigues of her Court, And the Conduct of her Favourite, Robert Earl of Essex, both at Home and Abroad, Are Particularly Illustrated. From the Original Papers of his intimate Friend, Anthony Bacon, Esquire, And other Manuscripts never before published* (London: printed for A. Millar, 1754), II, pp. 346-8; Spedding, *Letters and Life*, II, pp. 53-4; Daphne Du Maurier, *Golden Lads A Study of Anthony Bacon, Francis and their friends* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1975), pp. 116, 185-8, 199 206, 208-9; Lisa Jardine and Alan Stewart, *Hostage to Fortune The Troubled Life of Francis Bacon* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1998), p. 190.
102. BM Add. MS 36294, fol. 29; W. J. Tighe, 'The Career Of Francis Flower', *Notes And Queries*, 130 (1985), p. 462; Germaine Warkentin, 'Patrons And Profiteers Thomas Newman and the 'Violent enlargement' of *Astrophil and Stella*', *The Book Collector*, 34 (1985), pp. 478-9.
103. Norman K. Farmer, 'Poems from a Seventeenth-Century Manuscript with the Hand of Robert Herrick', *Texas Quarterly*, 16 (1973), pp. 28-9.
104. Thomas Hughes, *Certaine Deuises and shewes presented to her Maiestie by the Gentlemen of Grayes-Inne at her Highnesse Court in Greenwich, the twenty eighth day of Februarie in the thirtieth yeare of her Maiesties most happy Raigne* (London: printed by Robert Robinson, 1587), G2r.
105. John Payne Collier, ed., *Five Old Plays* (London: Septimus Prowett, 1828), p. 3.
106. Harvey Carson Grumbine, ed., *The Misfortunes of Arthur by Thomas Hughes and Others* (Berlin: Verlag Von Emil Felber, 1900), p. 59.
107. Evangelia H. Waller, 'A Possible Interpretation Of *The Misfortunes Of Arthur*', *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 24 (1925), p. 223.
108. Brian Jay Corrigan, *The Misfortunes of Arthur: A Critical, Old-Spelling Edition* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1992), p. 3; Alan Stewart with Harriet Knight, *Early Writings 1584-1596* (Oxford Clarendon Press, 2012), p. 65.
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118. Ibid., *Letters and Life*, I, p. 300; see page 312 for a letter by Lady Anne Bacon referring to Trotte.
119. Daphne du Maurier, *Golden Lads: A Study of Anthony Bacon, Francis and their Friends* (London: Victor Gollancz Ltd, 1975), p. 132.
120. Spedding, *Letters and Life*, I, p 323n1.
121. Ibid., *Letters and Life*, I, p 323; Lisa Jardine and Alan Stewart, *Hostage to Fortune The Troubled Life of Francis Bacon* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1998), p. 205.
122. Lisa Jardine and Alan Stewart, *Hostage to Fortune The Troubled Life of Francis Bacon* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1998), p. 206; see also P. W. Hasler, ed., *The Houses Of Commons 1558-1603* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1981), III, p. 531, from whose entry on Trotte, together with the earlier article by Ramel, I have drawn upon for other biographical details.
123. Spedding, *Letters and Life*, III, pp. 41-2; Lisa Jardine and Alan Stewart, *Hostage to Fortune The Troubled Life of Francis Bacon* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1998), pp. 207-8.
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135. Lisa Jardine and Alan Stewart, *Hostage to Fortune The Troubled Life of Francis Bacon* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1998), p. 555n90.
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 148. I. D. McFarlane, *Buchanan* (London: Gerald Duckworth and Co., Ltd, 1981), p. 208.
 149. Robert Tittler, *Nicholas Bacon The Making of a Tudor Statesman* (Ohio University Press, 1976), pp. 117.
 150. Sarah Carpenter, 'Performing Diplomacies: The 1560s Court Entertainments of Mary Queen of Scots', *The Scottish Historical Review*, 214 (2003), pp. 194-225, at p. 196.
 151. Robert Keith, *History Of The Affairs Of Church And State In Scotland, From The Beginning Of The Reformation To The Year 1568* (Edinburgh: printed for the Spottiswoode Society, 1844-50), II, pp. 219-20; Sarah Carpenter, 'Performing Diplomacies: The 1560s Court Entertainments of Mary Queen of Scots', *The Scottish Historical Review*, 214 (2003), pp. 212-3.
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154. Thomas Ruddiman and P. Burmann eds., *Opera Omnia* (Lugduni Batavorum, Apud Johannem Arnoldum Langerak, 1725), II, pp. 404-5; for a translation see Peter Davison, 'The entry of Mary Stewart into Edinburgh, 1561, and other ambiguities', *Renaissance Studies*, 4 (1995), pp. 416-429, at pp. 426-9. For a discussion of the masque see Michael Lynch, 'Queen Mary's Triumph: the Baptismal Celebrations at Stirling Castle in December 1566', *The Scottish Historical Review*, 187 (1990), pp. 1-21; Sarah Carpenter, 'Performing Diplomacies: The 1560s Court Entertainments of Mary Queen of Scots', *The Scottish Historical Review*, 214 (2003), pp. 218-22; I. D. McFarlane, *Buchanan* (London: Gerald Duckworth and Co., Ltd., 1981), p. 234.
155. Michael Lynch, 'Queen Mary's Triumph: the Baptismal Celebrations at Stirling Castle in December 1566', *The Scottish Historical Review*, 187 (1990), pp. 10-13; Robert Tittler, *Nicholas Bacon The Making of a Tudor Statesman* (Ohio University Press, 1976), pp. 84-5, 116, 136, 221; Julian Martin, *Francis Bacon, the State, and the Reform of Natural Philosophy* (Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 29, 31, 33; Lisa Jardine and Alan Stewart, *Hostage to Fortune The Troubled Life of Francis Bacon* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1998), pp. 26, 81, 95, 101, 104. The Earl of Bedford had an established professional relationship with Mary, Queen of Scots stretching back a number of years. In December 1560 Francois II died and was succeeded by his brother Charles IX and with the backing of Cecil and Bacon the earl was appointed by Elizabeth as her special envoy to France. Bedford arrived in France in January 1561 to offer diplomatic condolences to his mother Catherine de Medici and to formally congratulate Charles IX. While in France Bedford was charged with trying to secure the signature of Queen Mary to the Treaty of Edinburgh and to discover her future marriage plans. In February 1564 Bedford was appointed Governor of Berwick the troubled region between the two kingdoms and in November 1564 he was named the English agent in Scotland with Randolph tasked with monitoring Queen Mary's activities and her relationship and plans to marry Darnley. His diplomatic duties kept him in close contact with Cecil and Bacon and other members of the Privy Council which included sending a detailed account of Rizzio's murder dated 27 March 1566, signed by himself and Randolph.
156. Michael Lynch, 'Queen Mary's Triumph: the Baptismal Celebrations at Stirling Castle in December 1566', *The Scottish Historical Review*, 187 (1990), p. 10.
157. Ibid., pp. 11-12. For other accounts of the baptismal celebrations see Antonia Fraser, *Mary Queen of Scots* (London: Panther History, 1970), pp. 336-8; James Mackay, *In The End Is My Beginning: A Life Of Mary Queen of Scots* (Edinburgh and London, 1999), p. 181; Retha M. Warnicke, *Mary Queen Of Scots* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), pp. 132-4; Susan Doran, *Mary Queen of Scots An Illustrated Life* (London: The British Library, 2007), pp. 100-1, 103; Roderick Graham, *An Accidental Tragedy The Life Of Mary, Queen of Scots* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2008), pp. 230-32.
158. Walter Goodhall, *An Examination Of The Letters, said to be written by Mary Queen of Scots, to James Earl of Bothwell: Shewing By intrinsick and extrinsick Evidence, that they are Forgeries* (Edinburgh: printed by T. and W. Ruddimans,

- 1754); John Whitaker, *Mary Queen of Scots Vindicated* (London: printed by J. Murray, 1788); W. A. Gatherer, ed., *The Tyrannous Reign of Mary Stewart* (Edinburgh University Press, 1958), p. 17.
159. Robert Tittler, *Nicholas Bacon The Making of a Tudor Statesman* (Ohio University Press, 1976), p. 131.
 160. Ibid., pp. 131-2. For a detailed account of the Westminster Conference see Gordon Donaldson, *The First Trial of Mary, Queen of Scots* (London: New English Library, 1969), pp. 95-109.
 161. George Buchanan, *Ane Admonition Direct To The Trew Lordis mantenaris of the Kingis Graces Authoritie. M. G. B.* (Stirling: printed by Robert Lekprevik, 1571); I. D. McFarlane, *Buchanan* (London: Gerald Duckworth and Co., Ltd., 1981), p. 339.
 162. W. A. Gatherer, ed., *The Tyrannous Reign of Mary Stewart* (Edinburgh University Press, 1958), p. 182. The modernised text based on Leprevik's second edition collated with Cecil MS is reproduced on pages 183-99.
 163. George Buchanan, *Ane Admonition Direct To The Trew Lordis mantenaris of the Kingis Graces Authoritie. M. G. B.* (London: printed by John Day, according to the Scottish copy printed at Stirling by Robert Leprevik, 1571).
 164. W. A. Gatherer, ed., *The Tyrannous Reign of Mary Stewart* (Edinburgh University Press, 1958), pp. 39-40, at p. 39.
 165. P. Hume Brown, *George Buchanan, Humanist And Reformer A Biography* (Edinburgh: David Douglas, 1890), pp. 219-22, at p. 220.
 166. Ibid., pp. 220-1.
 167. Eliza Langland, *Elsinore: Hamlet, History Hidden in Plain Sight* (Edinburgh: Adelene House, 2019), p. 202.
 168. R. H. Mahon, *The Indictment Of Mary Queen Of Scots As Derived From A Manuscript In the University Library At Cambridge, Hitherto Unpublished With Comments On The Authorship Of The Manuscript And On Its Connected Documents* (Cambridge University Press, 1923), pp. 22-3.
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 170. George Buchanan, *De Maria Scotorum Regina, totaque eius contra Regem coniuratione, foedo cum Bothuelio adultrio, nefaria in maritum crudelitate & rabie, horrendo insuper & deterrimo eiusdem parricidio: plena, & tragica plane Historia* (London: printed by John Day [?], 1571).
 171. I. D. McFarlane, *Buchanan* (London: Gerald Duckworth and Co., Ltd., 1981), p. 344. See also James Emerson Phillips, *Images Of A Queen Mary Stuart in Sixteenth-Century Literature* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1964), p. 253n31.
 172. George Buchanan, *De Maria Scotorum Regina, totaque eius contra Regem coniuratione, foedo cum Bothuelio adultrio, nefaria in maritum crudelitate & rabie, horrendo insuper & deterrimo eiusdem parricidio: plena, & tragica plane Historia* (London: printed by John Day [?], 1571), Q3^{r-v}.
 173. George Buchanan, *Ane Detectiovn of the duinges of Marie Quene of Scottes, touchand the murder of hir husband, and hir conspiracie, adultrie, and pretended mariage with the Erle Bothwell. And ane defence of the trew Lordis, maintaineris of the Kingis graces actioun and authoritie. Translated out of the Latine quhilke was written by G. B.* (London: John Day [?] 1571).
 174. Ibid., last page.
 175. George Buchanan, *Ane Detectiovn of the Doingis of Marie Quene of Scottis, tuiching the Murther of hir husband, and hir Conspiracie, Adultrie, and*

- pretensis Mariage with the Erle Bothwell. And ane Defence of the trew Lordis, Mainteneris of the Kingis Grace Actioun and authoritie. Translated out of the Latine quhilke was written by G. B.* (St Andrews: printed by Robert Leprevik, [1572?]). For a modern English translation of 'A Detection Of Mary Queen Of Scots' see W. A. Gatherer, ed., *The Tyrannous Reign of Mary Stewart* (Edinburgh University Press, 1958), pp. 163-80. For an informative and illuminating discussion of the volume see Tricia A. McElroy, 'Performance, Print and Politics in George Buchanan's *Ane Detectioun of the duinges of Marie Queen of Scottes*' in *George Buchanan Political Thought in Early Modern Britain and Europe*, eds., Caroline Erskine and Roger A. Mason (Surrey: Ashgate, 2012), pp. 49-70.
176. George Buchanan, *Histoire De Marie Royen D'Escosse, Tovchant La conjuration faicte contre le Roy, & l'adultere commis avec le Comte de Bothwel, histoire vraiment tragique, traduite de Latin en Francois* (A Edimbovrg, Par Thomas Waltem, 1572). For a summary of its publication history, translation and contents see I. D. McFarlane, *Buchanan* (London: Gerald Duckworth and Co., Ltd., 1981), pp. 349-51.
177. James Emerson Phillips, *Images Of A Queen Mary Stuart in Sixteenth-Century Literature* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1964), pp. 63/253; cf. I. D. McFarlane, *Buchanan* (London: Gerald Duckworth and Co., Ltd., 1981), p. 348.
178. *Calendar of State Papers Foreign 1572-74* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1876), x, pp. 11, 14; R. H. Mahon, *The Indictment Of Mary Queen Of Scots As Derived From A Manuscript In the University Library At Cambridge, Hitherto Unpublished With Comments On The Authorship Of The Manuscript And On Its Connected Documents* (Cambridge University Press, 1923), pp. 24-5; James Emerson Phillips, *Images Of A Queen Mary Stuart in Sixteenth-Century Literature* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1964), pp. 67-8/254n45; I. D. McFarlane, *Buchanan* (London: Gerald Duckworth and Co., Ltd., 1981), pp. 339-40, 344, 347-8, 350.
179. R. H. Mahon, *The Indictment Of Mary Queen Of Scots As Derived From A Manuscript In the University Library At Cambridge, Hitherto Unpublished With Comments On The Authorship Of The Manuscript And On Its Connected Documents* (Cambridge University Press, 1923), p. 25; James Emerson Phillips, *Images Of A Queen Mary Stuart in Sixteenth-Century Literature* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1964), p. 63; I. D. McFarlane, *Buchanan* (London: Gerald Duckworth and Co., Ltd., 1981), pp. 347-8.
180. Robert Tittler, *Nicholas Bacon The Making of a Tudor Statesman* (Ohio University Press, 1976), pp. 142
181. Dudley Digges, *The Compleat Ambassador: Or Two Treatises Of The Intended Marriage Of Qu. Elizabeth Of Glorious Memory; Comprised in Letters Of Negotiation Of Sir Francis Walsingham, her Resident in France* (London: printed by Thomas Newcombe for Gabriel Bedell and Thomas Collins, 1655, p. 115.
182. John Payne Collier, ed., *The Egerton Papers. A Collection Of Public And Private Documents, Chiefly Illustrative Of The Times Of Elizabeth And James I* (London: printed for the Camden Society, 1840), pp. 50-59, at pp. 51-2.
183. *Ibid.*, p. 52.
184. *Ibid.*, p. 52.
185. *Ibid.*, p. 53.

186. Ibid., p. 54.
187. Ibid., pp. 55-6.
188. Ibid., pp. 56-8
189. Ibid., p. 58. I benefited from the discussions of the tract by Virgil Jack Barnard in 'The Political Career Of Nicholas Bacon', MA Thesis, University of Chicago, 1957, pp. 116-9 and Robert Tittler in *Nicholas Bacon The Making of a Tudor Statesman* (Ohio University Press, 1976), pp. 142-3, 324n17.
190. Robert Tittler in *Nicholas Bacon The Making of a Tudor Statesman* (Ohio University Press, 1976), pp. 142-3.
191. See for example Antonio Fraser, *Mary Queen of Scots* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson Limited, 1969; reprinted by Panther History, 1970); Gordon Donaldson, *Mary Queen of Scots* (English Universities Press, 1974); James Mackay, *In The End Is My Beginning A Life Of Mary Queen of Scots* (Edinburgh and London: Mainstream Publishing, 2000); Retha M. Warnicke, *Mary Queen Of Scots* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006); Susan Doran, *Mary Queen of Scots An Illustrated Life* (London: The British Library, 2007); Kristen Post Walton, *Catholic Queen, Protestant Patriarchy: Mary, Queen of Scots, and the Politics of Gender and Religion* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); Roderick Graham, *An Accidental Tragedy The Life Of Mary, Queen Of Scots* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2008); Susan Watkins, *Mary Queen of Scots* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2009); Rosalind K. Marshall, *Mary, Queen of Scots: Truth or Lies* (Edinburgh: Saint Andrew Press, 2010); Jenny Wormald, *Mary Queen Of Scots A Study in Failure* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 2017); John Guy, *Mary Queen Of Scots* (London: 4th Estate, 2018); Julian Goodare, *Mary Stewart (1542-87), Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004-20). There is also no place for Sir Nicholas Bacon in the above works save a single mention of his name by Warnicke (p. 182) and Graham (p. 322).
192. Spedding, *Letters and Life*, I, pp. 36-7. It was subsequently discovered that Bacon first sat for Bossiney, Cornwall in 1581, but this does not alter the substance of his point.
193. Spedding, *Letters and Life*, I, pp. 47-8 and Alan Stewart with Harriet Knight, eds., *Early Writings 1584-1596* (Oxford Clarendon Press, 2012), pp. 22-3.
194. Spedding, *Letters and Life*, I, p. 48 and Alan Stewart with Harriet Knight, eds., *Early Writings 1584-1596* (Oxford Clarendon Press, 2012), p. 24.
195. Spedding, *Letters and Life*, I, pp. 49-50 and Alan Stewart with Harriet Knight, eds., *Early Writings 1584-1596* (Oxford Clarendon Press, 2012), pp. 25-6.
196. Spedding, *Letters and Life*, I, pp. 52-3 and Alan Stewart with Harriet Knight, eds., *Early Writings 1584-1596* (Oxford Clarendon Press, 2012), pp. 30-1.
197. Spedding, *Letters and Life*, I, p. 55 and Alan Stewart with Harriet Knight, eds., *Early Writings 1584-1596* (Oxford Clarendon Press, 2012), p. 34.
198. Spedding, *Letters and Life*, I, p. 55 and Alan Stewart with Harriet Knight, eds., *Early Writings 1584-1596* (Oxford Clarendon Press, 2012), p. 35.
199. Spedding, *Letters and Life*, I, p. 56 and Alan Stewart with Harriet Knight, eds., *Early Writings 1584-1596* (Oxford Clarendon Press, 2012), pp. 35-6, 753-4.
200. Lisa Jardine and Alan Stewart, *Hostage to Fortune The Troubled Life of Francis Bacon* (London: Victor Gallancz, 1998), p. 115; see also Spedding, *Letters and Life*, I, pp. 36-7, 61-4.
201. T. E. Hartley, ed., *Proceedings in the Parliaments of Elizabeth I 1584-1589* (London and New York: Leicester University Press, 1995), II, pp. 239-43.
202. Ibid., II, pp. 243-47.

203. Thomas Hughes, *Certaine Deuises and shewes presented to her Maiestie by the Gentlemen of Grayes-Inne at her Highnesse Court in Greenwich, the twenty eighth day of Februarie in the thirtieth yeare of her Maiesties most happy Raigne* (London: printed by Robert Robinson, 1587), The last four lines on the final page of 'AN INTRODUCTION penned by Nicholas Trotte.'
204. Spedding, *Letters and Life*, II, pp. 289-90.
205. Evangelia H. Waller, 'A Possible Interpretation Of *The Misfortunes Of Arthur*', *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 24 (1925), pp. 234-44, at pp. 232-4, see also, p. 244.
206. Gertrude Reese, 'Political Import of *The Misfortunes of Arthur*', *Review of English Studies*, 82 (1945), pp. 81-91, at pp. 91 and 89. David Bevington, *Tudor Drama And Politics A Critical Approach To Topical Meaning* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 1968), p. 155 makes the same point 'Francis Bacon, one of the contributing authors of *Misfortunes*, supported the program of Burghley and Walsingham for tough action against the Catholic danger.' See also Brian Jay Corrigan, ed., *The Misfortunes of Arthur: A Critical, Old-Spelling Edition* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1992), pp. 42-3.
207. Irving Ribner, *The English History Play in the age of Shakespeare* (London: Methuen & Co Ltd, 1957), pp. 232-4.
208. Ibid., pp. 232-3. For other scholars who resist a one to one analogy see David Bevington, *Tudor Drama And Politics A Critical Approach To Topical Meaning* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 1968), pp. 153-5; Marie Axton, *The Queen's Two Bodies Drama and the Elizabethan Succession* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1977), pp. 76n2; John D. Staines, *The Tragic Histories of Mary Queen of Scots, 1560-1690* (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2009), p.105n2. Cf. Brian Jay Corrigan, ed., *The Misfortunes of Arthur: A Critical, Old-Spelling Edition* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1992), p. 42.
209. Irving Ribner, *The English History Play in the age of Shakespeare* (London: Methuen & Co Ltd, 1957), p. 232.
210. Brian Jay Corrigan, ed., *The Misfortunes of Arthur: A Critical, Old-Spelling Edition* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1992), p. 47.
211. Ibid., pp. 202-3.
211. Curtis Perry, 'British Empire on the Eve of the Armada: Revisiting "*The Misfortunes of Arthur*"', *Studies in Philology*, 108 (2011), pp. 512-3.
213. Ibid., pp. 515-23.
214. Giles Y. Gamble 'Power Play: Elizabeth I And *The Misfortunes Of Arthur*', *Quondum et Futurus*, 2 (1991), pp. 60-1.
215. Alan Stewart with Harriet Knight, *Early Writings 1584-1596* (Oxford Clarendon Press, 2012), p. 70.
216. Ibid., p. 4.
217. Thomas Hughes, *Certaine Deuises and shewes presented to her Maiestie by the Gentlemen of Grayes-Inne at her Highnesse Court in Greenwich, the twenty eighth day of Februarie in the thirtieth yeare of her Maiesties most happy Raigne* (London: printed by Robert Robinson, 1587), B1^r.
218. Ibid., B1^v.
219. Ibid., E4^{r-v}.
220. For these see Brian Vickers, ed., *Francis Bacon: A Critical Edition Of The Major Works* (Oxford University Press, 1996) and Alan Stewart and Harriet

- Knight, eds., *The Oxford Francis Bacon: Early Writings 1584-1596* (Oxford Clarendon Press, 2012).
221. John Payne Collier, ed., *Five Old Plays* (London: Septimus Prowett, 1828), p. 4.
 222. Ignatius Donnelly, *The Great Cryptogram: Francis Bacon's Cipher in The So-Called Shakespeare Plays* (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle & Rivington, Ltd, 1888), I, p. 249.
 223. *Ibid.*, I, p. 249.
 224. J. R., "'The Misfortunes Of Arthur'", *Baconiana*, Vol. X., New Series, 1902 (London: Robert Banks & Son), pp. 117-22, at p. 118.
 225. *Ibid.*, p. 119.
 226. A. Chambers Bunten, "'The Misfortunes Of Arthur'", *Baconiana*, vol. VI. Third Series (London: Gay & Bird, 1908), pp. 121-5, p. 121-2.
 227. *Ibid.*, p. 123.
 228. *Ibid.*, p. 125; British Library MS. Add. 4152, f. 394. In the second verse I have in the first line changed the word 'brant' as read by Chambers Bunten for 'Giant' as read by Cowen and Udall, and Corrigan.
 229. Janet Cowen and Joanna Udall, 'The Critical Misfortunes Of Arthur?', *Notes and Queries*, 228 (1983), pp. 402-5.
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 231. A. Chambers Bunten, "'The Misfortunes Of Arthur'", *Baconiana*, Vol. VI. Third Series (London: Gay & Bird, 1908), p. 124.
 232. Janet Cowen and Joanna Udall, 'The Critical Misfortunes Of Arthur?', *Notes and Queries*, 228 (1983), p. 404.
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 234. *Ibid.*, p. 202.
 235. Janet Cowen and Joanna Udall, 'The Critical Misfortunes Of Arthur?', *Notes and Queries*, 228 (1983), pp. 402-5, especially, p. 402 and Brian Jay Corrigan, ed., *The Misfortunes of Arthur: A Critical, Old-Spelling Edition* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1992), pp. 201-4.
 236. C.M. Pott, *The Promus of Formularies And Elegances (Being Private Notes, circ. 1594), hitherto unpublished* By Francis Bacon Illustrated And Elucidated By Passages from Shakespeare (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1883), pp. 571-8.
 237. Harvey Carson Grumbine, ed., *The Misfortunes of Arthur by Thomas Hughes and Others* (Berlin: Verlag Von Emil Felber, 1900), pp. 224, 237, 247, 250, 254,
 238. John w. Cunliffe, ed., *Early English Classical Tragedies* (Oxford Clarendon Press, 1912), pp. 330-33.
 239. Brian Jay Corrigan, ed., *The Misfortunes of Arthur: A Critical, Old-Spelling Edition* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1992), pp. 26-8.
 240. Emrys Jones, *The Origins Of Shakespeare* (Oxford Clarendon Press, 1977), p. 124.
 241. John Payne Collier in W. Carew Hazlitt, *A Select Collection of Old English Plays* (London: Reeves and Turner, 1874), pp. 251-2.
 242. Francis Bacon, *The Advancement of Learning*, ed., Michael Kiernan (Oxford Clarendon Press, 2000), pp. 121-2.
 243. Although the date, 28 February 1587/8 (i.e., old style), is in accordance with its printed title page; in 1588 however this fell a full week after Shrovetide, whereas the Revels Office indicates it was performed between Christmas and Shrove

- Tuesday (Albert Feuillerat, *Documents Relating to the Office of the Revels in the Time of Queen Elizabeth* (London: David Nutt, 1908), p. 378). Even though its most recent editor correctly states the title page performance date is ‘generally accepted beyond a quibble’ (Brian Jay Corrigan, *The Misfortunes of Arthur: A Critical, Old-Spelling Edition* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1992), p. 13) John Payne Collier changed the date to 8 February 1587/8 which coincided with the first anniversary of Mary, Queen of Scots’ execution (John Payne Collier, ed., *Five Old Plays* (London: Septimus Prowett, 1828; and 2nd edition, London: William Pickering), p. 3). John D. Staines took the view the date ‘may be slightly erroneous’, see *The Tragic Histories of Mary Queen of Scots, 1560- 1690 Rhetoric, Passions, and Political Literature* (Ashgate Publishing Company, 2009), p. 106n56; Leslie Hotson maintains that the date 28 February on the title page is a ‘certainly’ an error for the twentieth since it would mean there was a performance during Lent which in 1588 began on 21 February ‘To imagine that the Queen would countenance a play followed by dancing in her house during the first week of Lent is absurd.’, see *Mr W. H.* (London: Rubert Hart Davies, 1964), p. 228n2; Marie Axton agrees with Hotson that the most probable emendation would be ‘twentieth day’, see *The Queen’s Two Bodies Drama and the Elizabethan Succession* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1977), p. 76n1; Bacon’s recent editors suggested 18 February the day before Shrove Tuesday as another possible date ‘with the printer making the common misreading of ‘18’ for ‘28’’, see Alan Stewart with Harriet Knight, *Early Writings 1584-1596* (Oxford Clarendon Press, 2012), p. 64.
244. A text of *The Misfortunes of Arthur* based upon Collier was reproduced by W. Carew Hazlitt, *A Select Collection of Old English Plays* (London: Reeves and Turner, 1874).
245. Thomas Hughes, *Certaine Deuises and shewes presented to her Maiestie by the Gentlemen of Grayes-Inne at her Highnesse Court in Greenwich, the twenty eighth day of Februarie in the thirtieth yeare of her Maiesties most happy Raigne* (London: printed by Robert Robinson, 1587), B1^r, B3^r, B4^r, C2^v, C3^v, D1^r (British Library copy); John S. Farmer, ed., *The Misfortunes Of Arthur by Thomas Hughes And Others 1587* (Tudor Facsimile Texts, 1911); Brian Jay Corrigan, *The Misfortunes of Arthur: A Critical, Old Spelling Edition* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1992), pp. 54, 56; Alan Stewart with Harriet Knight, *Early Writings 1584-1596* (Oxford Clarendon Press, 2012), p. 77.
246. Brian Jay Corrigan, *The Misfortunes of Arthur: A Critical, Old-Spelling Edition* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1992), p. 56.
247. Thomas Hughes, *Certaine Deuises and shewes presented to her Maiestie by the Gentlemen of Grayes-Inne at her Highnesse Court in Greenwich, the twenty eighth day of Februarie in the thirtieth yeare of her Maiesties most happy Raigne* (London: printed by Robert Robinson, 1587) (Huntington Library Copy); Harvey Carson Grumbine, ed., *The Misfortunes of Arthur by Thomas Hughes and Others* (Berlin: Verlag Von Emil Felber, 1900), pp. 98-9; Brian Jay Corrigan, *The Misfortunes of Arthur: A Critical, Old-Spelling Edition* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1992), p. 54; Alan Stewart with Harriet Knight, *Early Writings 1584-1596* (Oxford Clarendon Press, 2012), p. 79.
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- Press, 2012), p. 79.
249. Thomas Hughes, *Certaine Deuises and shewes presented to her Maiestie by the Gentlemen of Grayes-Inne at her Highnesse Court in Greenwich, the twenty eighth day of Februarie in the thirtieth yeare of her Maiesties most happy Raigne* (London: printed by Robert Robinson, 1587) (Houghton Library, Harvard University copy); Brian Jay Corrigan, *The Misfortunes of Arthur: A Critical, Old-Spelling Edition* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1992), p. 55; Alan Stewart with Harriet Knight, *Early Writings 1584-1596* (Oxford Clarendon Press, 2012), p. 78.
 250. Brian Jay Corrigan, *The Misfortunes of Arthur: A Critical, Old-Spelling Edition* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1992), pp. 55, 56.
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 254. Thomas Hughes, *Certaine Deuises and shewes presented to her Maiestie by the Gentlemen of Grayes-Inne at her Highnesse Court in Greenwich, the twenty eighth day of Februarie in the thirtieth yeare of her Maiesties most happy Raigne* (London: printed by Robert Robinson, 1587), A1^{r-v}.
 255. Sandra Billington, *Mock Kings In Medieval Society And Renaissance Drama* (Oxford Clarendon Press, 1991), p. 135.
 256. Thomas Hughes, *Certaine Deuises and shewes presented to her Maiestie by the Gentlemen of Grayes-Inne at her Highnesse Court in Greenwich, the twenty eighth day of Februarie in the thirtieth yeare of her Maiesties most happy Raigne* (London: printed by Robert Robinson, 1587), p.5/A3^r.
 257. Sandra Billington, *Mock Kings In Medieval Society And Renaissance Drama* (Oxford Clarendon Press, 1991), p. 136-8.
 258. Thomas Hughes, *Certaine Deuises and shewes presented to her Maiestie by the Gentlemen of Grayes-Inne at her Highnesse Court in Greenwich, the twenty eighth day of Februarie in the thirtieth yeare of her Maiesties most happy Raigne* (London: printed by Robert Robinson, 1587), F2^v. For discussions of the play's use of sexual corruption and incest linked to the incestuous act of civil war see; Elizabeth Archibald, 'The Price of Guilt': The Incest Theme in Thomas Hughes's *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, *Poetica*, 49 (1998), pp. 63-75; Yuri Fuwa, 'Metaphors of Confusion: Incest and Illegitimacy in Thomas Hughes's *The Misfortunes of Arthur* (1588), *Poetica*, 49 (1998), pp. 77-95; Christopher J. Crosbie, 'Sexuality, Corruption, and the Body Politic: The Paradoxical Tribute of *The Misfortunes of Arthur* to Elizabeth I', *Arthuriana*, 9 (1999), pp. 68-80; Bruce Thomas Boehrer, *Monarchy and Incest in Renaissance England: Literature, Culture, Kinship, and Kingship* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992), pp. 51, 54-7; Richard A. McCabe, *Incest, Drama and Nature's Law, 1550-1700* (Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 123-6; Curtis

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 261. Richard A. McCabe, *Incest, Drama and Nature's Law, 1550-1700* (Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 156.
 262. *Ibid.*, p. 157.
 263. *Ibid.*, pp. 157-8.
 264. Christopher J. Crosbie, 'Sexuality, Corruption, and the Body Politic: The Paradoxical Tribute of *The Misfortunes of Arthur* to Elizabeth I', *Arthuriana*, 9 (1999), p. 76.
 265. Bruce Thomas Boehrer, *Monarchy and Incest in Renaissance England: Literature, Culture, Kinship, and Kingship* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992), p. 62.
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 270. Richard A. McCabe, *Incest, Drama and Nature's Law, 1550–1700* (Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 171-9.
 271. *Ibid.*, p. 187.
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