

The Three ‘Suns’ of Venus—but One ‘Kind’

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from *The Puzzling Life of Edward de Vere*

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The ‘Method’ employed by the Edward de Vere 1548 1604 to construct *Venus and Adonis* 1593 is relatively easy to describe, even if the work is time consuming to dissect. The author began with an important issue: the need to secure an heir to Elizabeth I reigned 1558-1603 and stabilize the Tudor Monarchy. That heir must be de Vere himself—the ‘illegitimate’ son of Princess Elizabeth Tudor and Sir Thomas Seymour—and he frequently exhorts the reader to remember his proper name: Edward Tudor Seymour.

The writer chose to allegorize the political courtship between the Queen and himself as the love courtship of Venus and Adonis described in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* (Arthur Golding Translation), 1567, Book X, 596-863 (minus digressions). This followed the practice of John Lyly whose ‘court plays’ had been revolutionary entertainments of the ‘1580s’. Other ‘characters’ playing roles in this ‘story’ have been given representative names, called metonyms; William Cecil, the Queen’s chief advisor, becomes the concept metonym ‘Time’; Robert Dudley is called ‘Love’.

Further, De Vere exercised his wit and knowledge of language to substitute the vernaculars of Law, Politics, and Trade, in ‘retelling’ Ovid. Where a student schooled in traditional readings of Shakespeare senses figurative language, I may posit the literal use of words. Discussion in legal terms generally means Law is the subject; in political terms: he speaks of Politics; of tender and exchange: Trade.

Wordplay, always a property of Shake-speare, takes on a much greater significance. We realize that every word has been considered with unparalleled care. The reader will need the lexicographer’s eye and a good dictionary if the ambiguities obtainable by polysemy, amphiboly, and other forms of indeterminacy are to be correctly understood. This may seem a lot of work, but consider: if *Venus and Adonis* had been less puzzling, de Vere’s might easily have suffered the fate of several other royal claimants to the crown.

Make no mistake! *Venus and Adonis* is a dissident publication. If fully fathomed it would have served as strong evidence against the writer on a charge of treason; yet, as it stands, the approach was too abstruse and subtle to communicate his rejection of the religious settlement forced by Elizabeth’s Protestant ‘Council’. The intended meaning passed directly under the noses of official censors, and since then, readers too have missed it’s significance. The work has been of no apparent political value. This ‘lost’ meaning, however, carries great implications for our understanding of the English Reformation.

Let’s follow the progress of three Suns. ‘Titan’ (Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, and his ‘Artist’ creatures: Wm. Shake-speare, John Lyly, etc.) is “The sun” attired in “midday heat”; his “burning eye” “hotly overlook[s]” ‘Venus’ and ‘Adonis’ (Elizabeth and Edward). Venus promises to “cool the heat of this descending sun”. Another sun (‘heavenly’ Edward VI via his ‘Devise’ of succession, and his creature Edward de Vere) “that shines from heaven, shines but warm” and “doth little harm”; this neutered ‘de Vere’ is not strong enough to claim the throne. There is yet another “eye”—an “earthly sun”—whose “eye darts forth the fire that burneth [Venus]”; that ‘sun’ is Edward Tudor Seymour (the ‘creature’ of Elizabeth Tudor).

Original

Gloss

By this the love-sick Queen began to sweat, 175

~ By this affliction the venereal Queen began to toil, ~

For where they lay the shadow had forsook them, 176

~ Because of either’s sexual conduct, protection [of God] had deserted them, ~

And Titan tiréd in the midday heat, 177

~ And ‘The Artist’ clothed amid ‘Dei’ passion, ~

With burning eye did hotly over-look them, 178

~ With consuming repression, did intensely monitor them, ~

Wishing Adonis had his team to guide, 179

~ Wishing Adonis had his [‘mule’](Cecil) team to guide— ~

So he were like him, and by Venus’ side. 180

~ Thus he a Prince, a ‘Vere’ man and Lord, and by Venus’ side. ~

And now Adonis with a lazy sprite, 181
~ *And by this time Vere, attended by a slow Spirit (Cecil), ~*
And with a heavy, dark, disliking eye, 182
~ *And with the gross, dark, hostile watchman (Dudley), ~*
His lowering brows ore-whelming his fair sight, 183
~ *His sheltering brow, blinding his 'fare' sight, ~*
Like misty vapors when they blot the sky, 184
~ *As it is when 'watery heirs' efface heaven, ~*
So wring his cheeks, cries, fie, no more of love, 185
~ *So obscured by checks, [he] cries, 'Enough, there will be no [Sey]Mour if Leicester! ~*
The sun doth burn my face I must remove. 186
~ *The 'Titan' (Dudley) doth consume my identity, I must be gone.' ~*

Ay, me, (quoth Venus) young, and so unkind, 187
~ *'My grief', declared Elizabeth, 'my child, and so unfamiliar?' ~*
What bare excuses mak'st thou to be gone ? 188
~ *What 'Dudley' excuses you make for Accession Lost!*
I'll sigh celestial breath, whose gentle wind, 189
~ *In lamentation, I'll express the divine 'Word'—who is the noble, current heir ~*
Shall cool the heat of this descending sun: 190
~ *[That] shall arrest the razing of this 'de'scendant Son: ~*
I'll make a shadow for thee of my heares, 191
~ *I'll give you protection among my heirs; ~*
If they burn too, I'll quench them with my tears. 192
~ *If they burn 'Tu', I'll extinguish them with my 'three'. ~*

The sun that shines from heaven, shines but warm, 193
~ *'Edward de Vere that emanates from heaven, is a radiance only mild, ~*
And lo I lie between that sun, and thee: 194
~ *And look, I lie, Queen, 'tween that son and you: ~*
The heat I have from thence doth little harm, 195
~ *The warmth I receive from 'that' son does 'Little' (Cecil) injury ~*
Thine eye darts forth the fire that burneth me, 196
~ *[But] your [Tudor Seymour] son-light casts forth the consuming blaze that injures me; ~*
And were I not immortal, life were done, 197
~ *And were I mortal, our 'Vere' family would end ~*
Between this heavenly, and earthly sun. 198
~ *[With myself] between that 'heavenly' and this 'heir-thly' son. ~*

Art thou obdurate, flinty, hard as steel ? 199
~ *Are you hardened (in your opposition), hard as flint, hard as steel, ~*
Nay more than flint, for stone at rain relenteth: 200
~ *No, rather 'Mour' than unyielding, for The Holy See at Reign dissolves? ~*
Art thou a woman's son and canst not feel 201
~ *Are you my son, and unable to feel ~*
What 'tis to love, how want of love tormenteth ? 202
~ *What is the consequence to Dudley? how the greed of Dudley does violence to the heir? ~*
O had thy mother borne so hard a mind, 203
~ *Oxford, had your mother possessed so firm a will, ~*
She had not brought forth thee, but died unkind. 204
~ *She would not have given you life, but died without child. ~*

This essay supposes the real intent of 'Shake-speare's' non-dramatic poetry is political allegory. It begins with the assumption *Venus and Adonis* is written by Edward de Vere. If you were hoping my efforts would give direct proof of that... wait! As in much of science, indirect proof is not a disappointment. What will soon be evident is that the process I describe is indeed close to the writers own process, and it will be treated as such.

De Vere's use of metonyms in the manner of John Lyly presupposes we can take de Vere at his word:

**And when from thence [Vere] struggles to be gone,
She locks her lily fingers one in one.** V&A 227-8

and,

Full gently now she takes [Vere] by the hand,

A lily prisoned in a jail of snow, V&A 361-2, see *The Rape of Lucrece (The Seizure of Riches) ll.71, 386, 478*

that is, Lyly's name is an enforced front for literary works by Vere. Therefore, when we speak of metonymy as the chief innovation of John Lyly, we really mean it is an early innovation of de Vere.

Rather than note prominent members of English Court by their proper names, the writer substitutes a metonym, usually from Greco-Roman Mythology. These may be historical—some are conceits of Elizabethan literature based on the Queen's penchant for using nicknames. R. Warwick Bond made a significant discovery when he noted:

“ [John] Lyly's third and by far his most frequent and important use of Allegory consists in his bold introduction to the stage of a new form, personal and political, by which real people in the Court-life around him are represented under some known mythological figure, or simply under the cloak of a classical name.” *The Complete Works of John Lyly, V2*, John Lyly and R. Warwick Bond, Clarendon Press 1902, 256.

'Venus' stands in for Elizabeth, 'Adonis' for Vere, 'Eyes' or 'Love' for Dudley, 'Spirit' or 'Time' for Wm. Cecil. Others derive from that historical foundation.

Next, the writer weaves coincident narratives. A tale of desire from antiquity is freely modified to accommodate a factual account of the English Monarchy circa 1548-93; the apparent love courtship of 'Venus' and 'Adonis' transposes to political negotiations between Elizabeth and her natural son over the right of Succession, the need for a supple approach to agnatic primogeniture, and the 'right' of the Reformation. This account is always autobiographical. It is often of significant historical importance—in some particulars, absolutely revolutionary.

Students of 'Shake-speare' know him as a wordsmith. He has a thorough education in the foundations of the English Language; he is fluent in Italian, French, and Latin, and has extensive understanding of Spanish, Greek, Hebrew, and Anglo-Saxon. These exotic roots supply the raw materials of surprising word meaning that can be learned by a few simple rhetorical 'tools'. As noted above, these tools of transposition are polysemy, amphiboly, and wordplay and they are used in much the same fashion as developed by Aristophanes and the archaic Greek comedic playwrights.

Polysemy ('n. *Linguistics* the coexistence of many possible meanings for a word or phrase) allows that a 'kiss' may signify a bond of love or, quite the opposite, an act of betrayal. Similarly, a 'touch' may express feelings of affection, or play on the exchange of gold 'half-crown' coins called 'toshes'.

Amphiboly ('n. a phrase or sentence that is grammatically ambiguous,' such as "I cannot recommend this student highly enough' as *Dr. David Zarefsky jokes*) often works hand in hand with polysemy to suggest alternate meaning:

And were I not immortal, life were done

Between this heavenly and earthly sun. V&A 197-8

In the context of Classical Mythology there are immortals, but allegory calls for a worldly political landscape where the term needs more definition: in what manner does 'Venus' mean "**life were done**"?

Wordplay is the 'game' of polysemy or homonymy:

Art thou obdurate, flinty, hard as steel?

Nay, more than flint, **for stone at rain relenteth.** V&A 199-200

The italicized words mean: ~ *The Rock [of Christianity] at the reign [of Monarchy] gives way.* ~

De Vere proclaims that he, the 'Son', will be more steadfast than the present Monarch; this is the "hidden treasure" he intends us to find:

Foul cankering rust the hidden treasure frets, Note *fret*: 'to corrode, to eat or wear away'.

But gold that's put to use more gold begets.” V&A 767-8

Surely the ‘two golds’ *l.768*, or Tu-d’or, is wordplay treasure worth noting. It is an example of ‘Word Sympatry’: pairs or small groups of words found in close association that name the subject in the ‘premises’ of informal syllogisms. These terms are usually constructed of surname or proper name fragments, or wordplay on the same; they will be seen to ‘Authorize’ de Vere’s work. A syllable of Seymour, for example, either seem or see, will ‘search’ within a reasonable proposition for its compliment, ore or more. Two or too will ‘search’ for a double ore, gold, or mine. Strange game, donchathink? If you suppose such associations are coincidence, as Jonathon Bate has remarked, choose one-hundred common surnames in Britain and run a word search through *Venus and Adonis*, or *The Rape of Lucrece* for results as coherent as ever (*E. Vere*), never (*not E. Vere*), too (*Tu*), ore (*d’or*), see (*Sey*), more (*mour*), beauty (*Beau*), Strange (*strong, fort*), rich (*Rich*), earth (*monde, world*), etc. De Vere’s wordplay at first obscures his meaning, yet finally enlightens the careful reader.

You’ll find a more complete reasoning of de Vere’s process in the introduction to my essay *The Puzzling Life of Edward de Vere* see devereshakespeare@wordpress.com. I have supplied spreadsheets and word searches for these and other relevant word-syllables as appendices to that larger essay.

Here is a closer look at the intended meaning of specific words to justify the transposition presented above. Those definitions marked with an asterisk are from Schmidt’s *Shakespeare Lexicon 1902*, which I believe is a most useful tool for understanding ‘Shakespeare’.

175 *By this the love-sick queen began to sweat,*

[**By** ([expressing] ‘the idea of instrumentality’*, ‘of a means or instrument’*) **this the love-sick** (‘languishing with amorous desire’*, *quibble* suffering guilt or remorse on account of sexual misconduct; alt.: love: *metonym* Leicester + sick: ‘corrupted’*, infected) **queen** (Elizabeth, indeed) **began** (be: the Royal/ True self - nearly synonymous with essential or veracious existence, + gin: *pun* ‘a snare for trapping game’, ‘a snare, a springe’*) **to sweat** (‘considered as the chief specific in venereal disease’*, i.e. the disease of Venus/love; alt.: ‘considered as a cure of the venereal disease’*, venereal disease is a likely metaphor for Elizabeth’s transgression; alt.: ‘to toil, to labour’*; alt.: ‘to be or remain in a state of extreme anxiety’, to fret, to agonize),]

~ *By this the Leicester-infected queen began to toil,* ~

alt.: ~ *Because of this the guilt-ridden Elizabeth, ‘entrapped’, began to agonize,* ~

There are two pressing questions on the minds of Elizabeth and de Vere—life itself and crown succession see *ll.168-74*—both intimately linked to sexual indiscretion. This fact is confirmed by the terms ‘love-sick’, ‘to sweat’, and ‘for where they lay’ *l.176*.

As we attempt to distinguish three ‘Suns’ in this section, note Venus beginning to sweat; this is the ‘hot’ heat of the ‘eye’ of Titan.

176 *For where they lay the shadow had forsook them,*

[**For** (‘with a desire of, in order to come by’*) **where** (= man-heir: see glossary were Anglo-Saxon were: man (see glossary for clever wordplay on werewolf = man-wulf: *Wulfhall being the family seat of Seymour family*) + here: heir) **they** (Venus/Elizabeth and Adonis/Vere) **lay** (‘have sexual intercourse’, *ambiguous* either together or in separate acts with different partners; alt.: ‘to beat down, to prostrate’*, alt.: ‘to prevent from rising’*, [said] ‘of spirits’ [meaning] to exorcise’*) **the shadow** (‘shelter, protection’**, a Biblical metaphor for ‘God’s protection’; alt.: ‘anything unsubstantial or unreal, though having the deceptious appearance of reality’*, ‘Applied to persons by way of expressing that they have a life scarcely worth the name’*; alt.: Dudley/ Cecil: ‘an inseparable attendant’; alt.: ‘ominous oppressiveness’ specifically in the case of Dudley/Cecil but not always; alt. ‘the reflected image...’*, ‘any image or portrait’*) **had forsook** (forsake: ‘abandon’, ‘renounce’, ‘refuse’) **them,**]

~ *Because of their sexual conduct, protection [of God] had deserted them,* ~

Lines 176-78 present the metaphor of God’s ‘shadow’, or protection, having deserted Venus and Adonis “for where they lay”—meaning Elizabeth with Thomas Seymour, and de Vere’s resulting bastardy.

Elizabeth and Edward were both guilty, if guilt is the proper term, of illicit sexual liaisons—Elizabeth less so because of her youth, though more so if conspiracy to usurp Edward VI’s throne was the motive. Today, we would not hold her culpable for having been raped by her ‘step-father’, Sir Thomas Seymour.

De Vere's case is more uncertain. If he thought Ann Cecil was simply not the stuff of which royalty is made, he might find a suitable 'Plantagenet' elsewhere; but perhaps unfaithfulness to her was a 'necessity'. Perhaps she was the only pawn available to avert political catastrophe. Ann and Edward's marriage was likely a desperate arrangement, quid pro quo, for the life of Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk. Under the dire assault from Protestant usurpers, de Vere defended himself and family with Ann as 'human shield'. Ironically, young Oxford may have been the chief architect of this ill-fated plan that would lose for him the 'safe passage' to the crown... O, a kingdom for some Cecil guile!

177 *And Titan, tiréd in the midday heat,*

[**And Titan** (= Robert Dudley: 'any of the older gods who preceded the Olympians; they were the children of Uranus/Heaven and Gaia/Earth; Helios, the sun god, is referred to here; Dudley was the surviving son of a former generation of 'gods'—the Lord Protector and Lord President of Edward VI; alt.: 'Titian' 1488?-1576, Venetian painter of 'Venus and Adonis' copy no. 5, 1553-54, which was hanging in the artists home studio in Venice during de Vere's stay in that city, and until he died of the Plague in August 1576), **tiréd** ('a shortening of attire': 'to dress'*; alt.: 'in need of rest', OE 'fail, come to an end', 'physically exhausted'; alt.: 'no longer fresh or in good condition') **in the midday** (*wordplay/Surname fragment* midday = amid 'de' = mid: amid, 'in the midst of'* + Latin de: 'down from, away from', descent from, rightful inheritor; this descent is closely tied with ascent and Accession; alt.: mid: 'middle'* + day: *surname fragment* Summer's Day *Summer's Day* is a metonym for de Vere throughout the canon = de Seymour = from Seymour, as de Vere = from Vere; alt.: middle day, 'the time of day when the sun is highest'*; alt.: between Aurora and Dian *see l.154*, exposed between the covering darkness of dawn and dusk) **heat** ('fire of passion, ardor*', 'fiery temper*', 'haste, pressure, urgency*', 'thirst'*; alt.: *figurative* 'lustful, lecherous'*; alt.: 'vehement, furious'*; alt.: 'mettle' = strength: specialized spelling of Metal *mid-16th century*),]

~ And 'The Artist' clothed in the mid-'de' passion, ~

alt.: ~ And 'The Artist' disguised amid descending turmoil, ~

alt.: ~ And Leicester, failed amid Accession Lust, ~

alt.: ~ And Leicester, clothed in the lust for his [own] ascendancy, ~

We know de Vere is a complex man; if we follow his process carefully, it will become clear that he himself embodies all 'three suns' of this syllogism *ll. 175-204*. He is also the object of the 'three suns' portent misidentified and misunderstood by Richard *Duke of York*, and Edward *Earl of March* in *Henry the Sixth (3)* *ll. 1 20-40*, *see p 17 this essay*. In both cases, *three* 'suns' are resolved into *one*.

I identify the three 'suns' as the 'sons' of Queen Elizabeth Tudor: 'The Artist' (Arthur Golding, John Lyly, William Shake-speare, etc.), Edward de Vere, and Edward Tudor Seymour. They are, of course, but one man. It appears 'Titan' of line 177 is 'The Artist', here Wm. Shake-speare, the writer and observer. He is *Helios Panoptes*—the 'all seeing eye'. I hope I haven't stepped too far beyond de Vere's intentions in presenting a Frankenstein-like interpretation of 'The Artist' as a creature of Cecil and Dudley.

We may also associate a mythological 'neatherd' (Oxherd, herd of the 'golden calf') with Robert Dudley. In the context of *ll. 175-80*, he is *Argos Panoptes*, another 'all seeing eye', who corresponds to Dudley's position as Master of the Horse in Elizabeth's Privy Chamber. Dudley was the chief spy within Court, duplicitous in playing the roles of 'would be lover' to a coy queen, and of the *guard* in her 'house arrest'. That containment included de Vere. Dudley kept a watchful eye on his 'Treasure' and helped orchestrate the Queen's public image. Giving Robert the status of servant to gods may serve a twofold purpose: it recalls that he is the 'sun' of John Dudley, who seized the power of the English throne from the Somerset Protectorate in 1549, and secondly, warns that Dudley usurpers continue with the rising influence of Robert Devereux, his 'godson' and possibly his illegitimate son.

Titian—called 'The Sun Amidst Small Stars' by his contemporaries—likewise, is privy to the secret moments of seduction and humiliation wherein the Queen of Love is spurned by an upstart bastard. This symbolism is uniquely appropriate to the relationship of Elizabeth and Edward dissected in *Venus and Adonis*.

Tiziano (Titian) Vecellio, born about 1488, was lucid and active until his death at perhaps 94 years; this may 'well' be an appealing vignette of an encounter between two great artists. De Vere almost certainly

drew his poetic sketch (V&A) from details specific to copy no. 5 *see above* ; afterwards this painting was purchased by fellow Venetian painter 'Tintoreto'.

fn: Titian's Barberini Painting by Dr Noemi Magri, Great Oxford, Parapress Ltd., Tunbridge Wells.

178 *With burning eye did hotly overlook them,*

[**With** ('denoting that which accompanies and modifies') **burning** (burn: 'to consume with fire'*; alt.: 'to be inflamed with passions and affections'*; alt.: 'to be spoiled, or consumed by fire'*; alt.: 'intense', 'deeply or keenly felt'; alt.: burning: 'urgent interest or importance'; alt.: destroy) **eye** ('the organ of sight'*; used 'to look on, to observe'*; 'closely watch', spy) **did hotly** (hot: 'in an angered or excited way'; alt.: 'uncomfortable') **overlook** (= look o'er Vere) **them**,]

~ *Bearing consuming grief, did angrily monitor them, ~ (context Helios = Dudley)*

alt.: ~ With an intense vicariousness, looked excitedly over them, ~ (context Titan = Titian)

179 *Wishing Adonis had his team to guide,*

[**Wishing** (wish: 'to desire'*) **Adonis had his team** ('horses, or things serving in their stead'*; 'two or more animals, esp. horses, harnessed together', perhaps denoting Elizabeth's 'pack-horses', William and Robert Cecil, or likewise, the 'team' of dragons *Welsh Cecils* ; alt.: Puritans; Dudley was the political leader of the Puritans and the 'War Party' among Elizabeth's advisors; Cecil's 'Anglicans' and 'Peace Party' opposed them) **to guide** ('to direct in a way or course'*; 'to lead, to rule'*; 'to govern, to manage'*),]

~ *Wishing de Vere had his [mule/dragon/Cecil] team to guide, ~*

alt.: ~ Wishing de Vere had the Puritans to guide,

Lines 179-80 suggest the idea: that Robert Dudley loved Elizabeth in earnest, that he found the company of Court more congenial than that of the Privy Council *though he was regular in attendance* , or that Court allowed him to 'keep watch' on his social and financial advantage—or perhaps all may be true.

180 *So he were like him, and by Venus' side.*

[**So** ('in the same degree, as'*, alt.: it follows, it proceeds; refers to royal progeny: metonym for Southampton) **he** (Dudley) **were** (*wordplay Vere Latin 'V' pronounced as 'W'*), eg. "so great fear of my name 'mongst them were spread" *Henry VI, I, iv, 50*; second person singular past of BE. alt. were *Anglo-Saxon* man, from Ovid's *Metamorphosis, bk. 1, l. 260* , *wordplay suggesting lycanthrope = Anglo-Saxon were: man + wulf*: family seat of Seymour family, Wulfhall, birthplace of Jane Seymour and perhaps Thomas Seymour word play on Vere *Latin 'W' pronounced as 'V'*) **like him** (= Vere, i.e. of royal birth), **and by Venus'** (Elizabeth's) **side**.]

~ *A Prince he, a 'Vere' man like Adonis, and by Elizabeth's side. ~*

alt.: ~ A 'More-child' like Adonis, and by Elizabeth's side. ~

alt.: ~ So he himself, Dudley, were True like Vere, and by Elizabeth's side. ~

We will never know for certain who did, and who did not know of Edward de Vere's family tie with Elizabeth; yet only those who knew the full scope of that secret could possibly assess how this caged Queen felt about her keeper, Robert Dudley.

William and Robert Cecil, Robert Dudley, Robert Devereux, Edward de Vere himself, Katherine Brandon and her son Peregrine Bertie, Mary Vere (Edwards half sister), Thomas Parry, Kat Ashley, Thomas Smith, and Arthur Golding undoubtedly had complete knowledge that Princess Elizabeth and the 'changeling' were mother and child. Others who were also very close to young de Vere—Thomas Howard (Norfolk), Thomas Radcliffe (Sussex), John and Margery de Vere (16th Earl and Countess of Oxford), Katherine Vere (Edward's *supposed* elder half sister), Edward Seymour (Hertford) and his wife Lady Catherine Grey, possibly Philip Sidney, likely had suspicions but may not have been entrusted with the secret; the fewer who knew, the safer and more precious that knowledge would be. An intriguing question is whether Queen Mary Tudor, and investigators in her employ, like Sir Robert Tyrwhitt, were able to ascertain the truth of persistent rumors that her sister Elizabeth had a child by Sir Thomas Seymour. My opinion is that many in Court knew; de Vere alludes to this in the *Fidessa Sonnet XXXIII 13-14 1581* :

How can I hide that is already known

I have been seen and have no face but One. *Fidessa, More Chaste Than Kinde, B.Griffin/E.Vere.*

Of those who undoubtedly knew, we have only Edward de Vere's thoughts (*deciphered from his poetry and plays*) to affirm or falsify the guesses of historians concerning her affairs with 'Sweet Robin'. Line 180 is important evidence that Dudley was thought to love the Queen, perhaps genuinely, but that she kept him at a distance. Further, he envied the special bond of trust between Elizabeth and her son.

In addition there are several references to de Vere's pseudonymous plays and poetry by other writers and members of Court, that suggest more widespread knowledge (?). Vere himself comments on the obvious relation in the *Fidessa* sonnets. Sydney appears to make use of de Vere's metonymic glossary to lampoon him in *An Apology for Poetry probably written 1579-81*.

Gabriel Harvey, on the other hand, appears to have been a close friend of de Vere's circa 1576, yet wrote poetic diatribe against him after obtaining financial support from the Dudley/Sidney faction in 1580. Harvey should hardly have dared to do so had he known all the details—unless de Vere was politically weakened by his association with Henry Howard and Charles Arundell *circa 1580*. Harvey was, of course, put up to the attacks by Dudley and was censored for them*.

A Midsummer Nights Dream ('Amid Seymour Nights Dream') may refer to the historic entente between the (formerly adverse) parties concerned with the marriage of the Vere girls, Elizabeth, Bridget, and Susan. With careful study, one might discover that the Titania stands in for the Queen (grandma), Oberon for Titan/Leicester, Puck and the 'changeling' child for Edward de Vere (why should he not play multiple roles?), Egeus for Wm. Cecil, the tradesmen for the 'less-deserving' meddlers of the Cecil/Dudley alliance with special recognition for Bottom as Robert Dudley again?... I'm sure there's a place for everyone.

* *Shake-speare had the last word by characterizing Dudley as Claudius in Hamlet, and Sidney as Cloten in Cymbeline.*

181 *And now Adonis, with a lazy spright,*

[**And now** ('at this time'*; alt.: 'things being so'*) **Adonis, with a lazy** (*possible wordplay* reference to l.176, "for where they lay"—i.e. lay-z[y] suffix forming adjective : the 'spirit' of transgression; alt.: 'languid, idle', 'indolent, sluggish'*; '**slow***: dull, slow-witted) **spright** (= 'spirit'*; alt.: 'mood, occasional state of the mind'*; alt.: 'mind, soul'*; alt.: 'an elf or fairy', rare variant of 'sprit/spirit'; the spirit/essence of 'Fairy', 'any supernatural being'*),

~ *And by this time, Vere, attended by a slow Spirit (Cecil), ~*

alt.: ~ And now Vere, having an idle, 'Fairy' spirit, ~

The author intends 'spirit', but substitutes 'spright'; this may be for metrical reasons, but more likely because he might avoid suspicion of having alluded to Cecil. Perhaps "lazy spright" refers to the unearned or usurped office held by Cecil. Alternately, since the metonym 'Spirit' was 'taken' by Cecil, de Vere may indicate his own mood or spirit with the variant 'spright'.

182 *And with a heavy, dark, disliking eye,*

[**And with a heavy** ('of great weight'; alt.: 'feeling weighed down by weariness'), **dark** ('void of light'*; 'opposed to fair'*(Vere), 'gloomy, dismal, obscure'*; alt.: 'hidden from knowledge', 'concealed'; alt.: dark-skinned), **disliking** ('finding disagreeable') **eye** (= Dudley, 'Titan' *see l.177*),

~ *And attended by the gross, dark-complected, disagreeable watchman (Dudley), ~*

alt.: ~ And with a great, concealed dislike of Dudley, ~

alt.: ~ And attended by a ... , light opposing, unequal Leicester,

183 *His louring brows o'erwhelming his fair sight,*

His lowring browes ore-whelming his faire sight,

[**His** (*possible amphiboly* Vere's or Leicester's?) **louring** (**lour**: 'to sink, to grow less'*; 'lower'*) **brows** ('person's forehead', 'bridge'; alt.: **lowering brows** = low brow: 'not highly intellectual or cultured'; alt.: pun **browze**: 'to nibble'*; possible reference to a casual survey of ladies not his wife) **o'erwhelming** (*from 1593 ore*: 'gold or yellow, as a heraldic tincture', *wordplay ore*: 'a vein of gold' + **whelm**: 'engulf, submerge, or bury something': alt.: **over**: 'to an unwanted degree', 'completely, utterly' + **whelm**: 'engulf, submerge, or bury something') **his** (*possible amphiboly, see above*) **fair** (= Rightful Heir, *specifically* = Vere: 'true', 'beautiful/attractive'; alt.: *wordplay fare*: 'perform in a specified way in a particular situation or over a particular

period', 'a journey for which a price is paid'; this term is played adverbially or adjectively; it is used precisely in the manner of Tender Heir *see below* = Material Heir; alt.: of words or speech, 'false, despite being initially attractive, specious') **sight** (the faculty of seeing; alt. : 'a thing seen', 'appearance'),]

~ *His sheltering brow, blinding his far sight, ~*

alt.: ~ *His low-crowned brow, Ore-[over]whelming his fare view, ~*

alt.: ~ *His oppressing [brows] burying that 'True Thing' seen, ~*

alt.: ~ *Leicester's' lowering brows obscuring his pecuniary view, ~*

alt.: ~ *His low-straying, darkening his True vision, ~*

alt.: ~ *His angered thoughts utterly clouding the appearance of the Rightful Heir, ~*

alt.: ~ *His lowered brow blinding clear understanding of the truth, ~*

"His lowring browes" probably refers back to Adonis, l.181; the crown-ring is set low on his brow, with gold obscuring his 'fare' view.

'Fair' (*wordplay* 'Fare') is ambivalent as a metonym for Vere (recall Vere is to be pronounce Vair), and of Elizabeth. It may indicate 'the Rightful Heir', or the 'tender/pecuniary heir'. Though it may mean 'beautiful', it alludes primarily to the French and Latin derived *Ver* = Truth. Consider the following: 'the life of purity, the supreme fair' *Rape of Lucr.* 780, 'slanders mark was ever yet the fair' *Sonnet 70.2*; a triple whammy, 3 Vere metonyms in one line; 'guileful fair words' *1 Henry VI* l i 77 *Incidentally, a great passage: l.74-77, take it in!* And on and on! De Vere has a very high regard for the Truth; he is an energetic and consistent proponent of Absolute Truth. By omniscience he allows the reader enough information to form judgements of men's actions, their truth or falsehood, and often the purity of motives. His method is classical and deductive—he supplies himself with numerous authoritative examples by which to classify fresh events. If he can be said to have advanced the means by which to discover truth, it is by a deeper and more rigorous self-examination than any that precedes him. He then applies his conclusions to the generality. The great jesters and fools *and* the wise men of the plays, are imbued with mystical powers of understanding. We are never in doubt that the wellspring of this wisdom is the author's mind—"the Well-Spring Mind".

As far as we know, de Vere did not develop a method by which men could share the 'benign obligation'—the glory—of systematizing and integrating knowledge; but I wonder if he might have been an important influence on his wife's first cousin, Francis Bacon, and the early empiricist movement. *It has been recorded* that de Vere attended Mary Sidney's literary evenings, the fine-wine-dine gatherings called the Wilton Circle at Pembroke House in the 1580-90's. Included were Francis and Anthony Bacon, the Wriothesleys, Devereauxs—a good mix of Cecil, Dudley, and de Vere blood—and a fine selection of poets.

I believe Francis Bacon won the early primaries of the authorship election because his concerns so directly mirror those in the works of Shake-speare; but the surviving examples of Bacon's poetry are, to my ear, entirely devoid of the unrestrained playfulness that pervades *all* of de Vere's work.

It is hard to imagine the writer of *Love's Labour's Lost*, also writing one of the 'great', plodding, abstruse philosophical tomes, but he is on the 'right' side of the essential philosophical dialectic—the Nature of Truth. In that, he presages the rise of empiricism from Francis Bacon, John Locke, David Hume, John Mill—with a holiday excursion in Charles Pierce and the American Pragmatists (or Pragmaticists)—to what we call Science. On this point he is emphatic—"the truth is the truth". It may be hidden. It may be complex. It may be unwelcome. Yet, as 'the supreme fair', 'the truth will out'. The purity of skeptical inquiry by scrupulous adherence to the Scientific Method is of paramount importance in *our* political world. There is a host of modern Opportunists who manufacture 'truth' in the fashion of Edward Seymour, John and Robert Dudley, William and Robert Cecil.

184 *Like misty vapours when they blot the sky,*

Likd mistie vapors when they blot the skie, 1593

[**Like** ('to be pleased with') **misty** (= watery: 'consisting of water*', 'moist; of the moon*', 'accompanied by mist', 'eyesight covered by a haze or film') **vapours** (*wordplay* water suspended in 'heir'; 'substance diffused or suspended in air'; alt.: 'a sudden feeling of faintness or nervousness, or a state of depression') **when they blot** ('to stain, disgrace*', 'a shameful act that tarnishes an otherwise good reputation'; alt.: 'to efface, to erase, to destroy*', 'obscure') **the sky** ('heaven, heavenly power', 'used in the sense of heaven*'),]

~ As it is when watery 'heirs' efface heaven, ~

alt.: ~ Like inconstant heirs when they obscure heaven, ~

alt.: ~ Like suspended 'heirs', when they obscure the heavens, ~

alt.: ~ Pleased with hazy 'heirs' if they should obscure the heavens, ~ 1593

A key that I'm only now beginning to appreciate is the importance of Latin definitions for homonyms. To explain, let me refer to Sonnet 33.12 so we may better understand ll.181-84; the term 'region cloud' plays on 'Regency' (**regent**: 'a person appointed to administer a country because the monarch is a minor or is absent or incapacitated'). 'Cloud' ('*figurative* 'make or become darkened or overshadowed') works well as a metaphor, but de Vere shies from metaphor; so what is the solution? I turn to *Cassell's Latin* and note the verb *claudio/claudēre* ('to shut, to close'; 'to close up a passage or place, to make inaccessible'; 'to conclude, bring to an end'; 'to shut in, shut up'), and *claudēo* ('to limp, halt, be lame'). The Regency of Cecil-Dudley executes all these 'services' for Elizabeth's monarchy.

Now the meaning becomes clear. The 'lazy **spirit**' (Cecil) *l.181* and the 'heavy, dark, disliking **eye**' (Dudley) *l.182* are understood *to be* the 'misty vapours' or clouds (*Latin derived* 'clouds'), that 'blot the sky' ('heavens') *l. 184*.

185 *Souring his cheeks cries 'Fie, no more of love!*

So wring his cheekes, cries, fie, no more of love, 1593

[**So** ('in the same degree, princely, **as***, alt.: it follows, it proceeds; refers to royal progeny)

wring ('to press on, to ply hard*', alt.: 'to take with violence, to extort, to force from*', wrest; alt. *modern edit*

Souring **sour**: 'to embitter*', alt.: 'expressing resentment, disappointment, or anger') **his cheeks** (*wordplay*

check: arrest, restrain, control, limit, circumscribe, constrain, betray; alt.: **cheek**: unfaithful to principle,

unprincipled adherents; Cheek is an antonym to More, i.e. 'faithful to principle; alt.: adherents,

confederates, allegiants) **cries 'Fie** ('expressing disgust or outrage'; alt.: 'expressing impatience rather

than contempt or disdain*'), **no more** (*metonym* = Sir Thomas More: signifying piety, virtue, faith) **of love**

(= Dudley; here intentionally confusing: the ambiguity of "this heavenly, and earthly sunne" *l. 198* is obscurant - a "mistie vapor" *l.184*!)]

~ In this manner are pressed his checks, [he] cries, Enough, there will be no [Sey]mour if Leicester! ~

alt.: ~ What follows wrests his checks, cries, Enough, [there is] no Faithful Majesty in Leicester! ~ 1593

alt.: ~ Embittering him and his will to comply, cries Enough, [there is] no Faith in Leicester!

alt.: ~ Resentment stirs dissent in Vere, he cries 'Fie, there is none of More in Dudley! ~

This is the moment captured in 'Titians' painting—Venus clumsily grasping for Adonis as he flees.

Dudley earned multiple contemporary sobriquets in Court: Eyes, Love, and Titan/'the sun'; with such proximity to the Queen, why didn't he secure a more lasting estate? The probable answer is that he was not trusted nor as highly regarded as many historians would like to believe. .

The disparity between the patrimonies of two great social climbers, Dudley and Cecil, could hardly be more marked. Dudley, despite Herculean efforts to amass material wealth and power, died debt ridden (£25,000). His son Robert, Lord Denbigh 1581-84, died at age three. His other son Robert 1574-1649 ('illegitimate' by Lady Douglass Sheffield) was never able to gain access to Court and removed himself to Italy. Philip Sidney had a hope (from 1584-86) of succeeding Leicester after the death of young Lord Denbigh but he too would die before the senior Dudley. This left Robert Devereux, the assumed son of Walter Devereux, 1st Earl of Essex, and Lettice Knollys, as 'heir' to Leicester. There is good reason to suspect, *as was suspected*, that the young Devereux was the illegitimate son of Dudley and Knollys; they married two years after the death of her first husband. With Essex's execution died the last 'Leicester' heir to the secret power behind the throne.

The Cecil family grasp of its acquisitions was not so tenuous. To this day, Wm. Cecil's direct descendants maintain the titles of their Elizabethan forebears. Queen Elinore's words to King John surely apply here—"Your strong possession much more than your right" *King John l i 40* —to de Vere's dispossessed state, and the enduring obstacle to rightful claim.

All parties directly involved, de Vere, Dudley, and Cecil, were deeply concerned with family lineage and heritage. It is fitting that they should have assaulted one another by impeachment of their reputations in life, and done their level best to insure those perceptions continued into the future. I doubt 'Great Oxford' would have conceived it possible that lovers of literature would, for generations to come, be complicit...

may, *willfully* complicit, in Cecil's theft of his artistic legacy.

186 *The sun doth burn my face; I must remove.'*

[**The sun** (Titan/Helios Panoptes, an ever watchful, intrusive, offensive presence = R. Dudley, his *treasonous* father's son; alt.: = R. Cecil?) **doth burn** ('consume by fire') **my face** ('identity'); **I must remove** ('take away', 'separate').]

~ *The 'Titan' doth consume my identity, I must be gone.'* ~

Take note: *the 'sun'* at midday is a hot 'burning eye'. The ambiguity of "sun" will resolve itself when we discover there is another 'sun' in heaven, and yet another that is a "heavenly, and earthly sun".

As it turned out, the succession documents of Henry VIII and Edward VI were manipulated successively by the rascally 'Titans' Somerset and Northumberland, and then by later rascals Leicester and Burghley. They became the enforcers and beneficiaries of the will[s] of the deceased monarchs whose wishes might easily be superseded in a new document of succession by Elizabeth R.

Why didn't this happen? Probably because the unstable alliances and religion of Europe constantly threatened the Privy councilors. They had no legal claim to the extraordinary power they held. They relied on Elizabeth's monarchy to insinuate themselves and assert power; their leverage applied to an object with a limited life expectancy. If the host — Her Majesty — died, the parasites would die also. When she was gone, they would have to rely on their 'just deserts'. We clearly see that James Stuart's gratitude to Robert Cecil (for having passed the throne) was short-lived, and Cecil's influence and prosperity was declining sharply in the years preceding his death in 1612.

187 *'Ay me,' quoth Venus, 'young, and so unkind?'*

[**'Ay** (= ai: expression of grief, from *Metamorphoses*, Ovid, bk. 10, l.229; alt.: *archaic or Scottish* 'for ever'*; 'ever, still, always', *yet another invention on E. Vere*) **me** (= Elizabeth, alt.: dative of me, meaning 'for me'; Ay me: E.Ver me), **'quoth** ('repeat, copy'; *ME* 'say, declare') **Venus**, **'young** ('offspring', 'youth'), **and so** ('in the same degree, princely, as'*, alt.: it follows, it proceeds; refers to royal progeny) **unkind** (kind: *German* child; alt.: family, familial, 'race'*; 'species'*; *therefore* unkind: 'not familial', not acting as kin should; alt.: *ME* 'not well born or well bred')?]

~ *'My grief, declared Elizabeth, 'my child, and so unfamiliar?'* ~

alt.: ~ *For E. Vere me, declared Elizabeth, 'my child, and yet unfilial?'* ~

Elizabeth's motto, 'Ever the same' (see note on Sonnet 76) is invoked in the words "young" and "so" to state the 'equality' of parent and child. In coupling E. Ver and Elizabeth the author identifies the subject of the ambiguous unkind.

188 *What bare excuses mak'st thou to be gone!*

That bare excuses mak'st thou to be gon? 1593

[**What bare** (*wordplay* = bear: 'the bear and ragged staff' symbol of the Dudley family *from the Earls of Warwick*; alt.: 'unfurnished with what is necessary'*; alt.: 'naked', 'unconcealed', revealing; alt.: shallow, 'without addition', 'mere'*; 'surprisingly small in number') **excuses** ('attempt to defend or justify', *fr. Latin* 'without accusation', *fr. French* 'to free from blame') **mak'st thou to be** (to be: the Royal/True self, BE is conjugated am, are, is; nearly synonymous with essential or veracious existence - to be: is to be that which he truly is; the Monarch, an 'Oxford being') **gone!**]

~ *What 'Leicester' excuses you make, for Accession Lost!*

alt.: ~ *That 'Shallow' arguments you make to remove yourself!* ~

alt.: ~ *What little justification you make to absent yourself!* ~

Robert Dudley adopted the 'Bear and Ragged Staff' symbol for his Dudley family. His brother Ambrose, Earl of Warwick, was the rightful holder of that traditional symbol.

"To be gone" may refer to de Vere's flight to Flanders 1574 ("without the Queen's Licenss" *Burghley, 8 July, 1574*) with his cousin Lord Edward Seymour 1548-1574, 3rd child by the Duke of Somerset of that name, not E, Seymour, 1st Earl of Hertford 1539-1621. It should be carefully noted that Oxford's presence on the Continent caused much rumor of "one of the next heirs apparent" *Ed. Woodshaw, letter, 3 Sept. 1574* and speculation of religious persecution being his motive. It is even more noteworthy that both Leicester and Christopher Hatton

received him at Dover and apparently detained him, refusing Oxford's condition that he be sworn a member of the Privy Council. Even Mary, Queen of Scots, commented on the event.

De Vere increasingly absented himself from Elizabeth's Court: *following* his unsuccessful part in the Thomas Howard affair in 1572, *from* the resulting marriage difficulties and subsequent European travels 1572-6, *from* the Anne Vavasour/Lylyan/Fisher's Folly period 1579-88, *and more or less permanently* in 'the Grand Shake-speare period' after the death of Ann Cecil. The author facetiously terms these 'bare excuses', i.e. 'Bear excuses', but they were treacherous political intrigues involving Dudley/Cecil.

189 *I'll sigh celestial breath, whose gentle wind*

[*I'll sigh* ('a deep single respiration indicative of grief*', 'to lament, to mourn*', 'audible breath expressing sadness, relief') **celestial** ('heavenly*', 'relating to the sky or heavens', *probable ref.* divine right) **breath** ('The Word' *see Bible, John 1*; 'signal, profound communication' probably indicating a link between the divine Word and the corresponding utterance of the Monarch, 'words, language*', **celestial breath** suggests the annunciation (*Christian Theology*); alt.: 'a thing without substance, a trifle*'), **whose** (*possible pun* who is, who as) **gentle** ('well born, well descended, noble*') **wind** ('a current of air', *word play* wind = current heir)]

~ *In lamentation, I'll express the divine 'Word', who is the noble, currant heir ~*

alt.: ~ *I'll express your heavenly right, whose noble current heir ~*

alt.: ~ *I'll lament your 'annunciation', who is the ranking current heir ~*

190 *Shall cool the heat of this descending sun:*

[**Shall** ('denoting an obligation or compulsion*', 'will inevitably' *Shake. gloss.*) **cool** ('calm', 'cause to become less excited') **the heat** ('the intensity of feeling', eg. love, anger, resentment, etc.) **of this** (i.e. the "gentle wind" + 'noble heir' l.189; **this**: the proximate reference—'pronoun used to point to something that is present or near in place or time, or to something that is just mentioned or about to be mentioned*', 'to designate things or persons as sufficiently known in their qualities; sometimes in a good, oftener in a bad sense*', suggests that the 'suns' concerning the author are various; 'this sun' = R. Dudley, son of Northumberland, and 'that son' = Edward (VI) Tudor, son of Henry VIII and Jane Seymour, and Edward Tudor-Seymour;) **descending** ('move downward', *fr. Latin de*: 'down' + *scendere*: 'to climb', reference to l. 187, i.e. her 'unkind' child; *Latin wordplay (di) scindere* 'to pull apart' *Cassell's*, *see 'tears' l.192*; alt.: *possible allusion* the Descension of Christ and parallels with his own descent) **sun** (= Edward VI, probably referring to the exclamation by 'Adonis'/Oxford at l.186):

~ *[That] shall arrest the fire of this descendant Son: ~*

alt.: ~ *Will inevitably reduce the passion of my child: ~*

alt.: ~ *That will reduce the strength of this declining son: ~*

191 *I'll make a shadow for thee of my hairs;*

[*I'll make a shadow* (*metaphor* '= shelter*'; alt.: 'referring to a position of relative inferiority or obscurity', *probable ref.* contrive an alternate strategy: the elevation and legal succession of the Lord Great Chamberlain, i.e. the Earl of Oxford, to the throne; **shadow**: *fr. Greek skotos*: 'darkness') **for thee** (i.e. de Vere) **of** ('from*') **my** (i.e. Elizabeth's) **hairs** ('heirs', the heirs of Elizabeth were of lines descending from Henry VII; until 1587, Mary Stuart was an obvious successor);]

~ *I'll give you protection among my heirs; ~*

alt.: ~ *I'll contrive a refuge for you of [less direct] claim; ~*

alt.: ~ *I'll contrive to elevate a position of inferiority to the crown among my [more distal] heirs; ~*

Who were the heirs to the throne of England? The will of Henry VIII allowed the Privy Council to accept or deny the claims of his daughters Mary and Elizabeth by means of a Letters Patent; furthermore Edward VI signed 3 documents concerning the bequeathal of his office that differ substantially, because —*it is suspected*—they were being manipulated by John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland, and William Cecil. Therefore, any outline is tentative (and moot, from an historical standpoint). A conflation of the

Third Act of Succession (35, Henry VIII c.1) and Edward VI's 'Devise' (for the succession) designate the following **lines of succession** in this order:

Tudor - Edward Tudor (d. 7/1553), son of Henry VIII = Jane (Seymour), no issue.

Mary Tudor (d. 11/1558), daughter of Henry VIII = Katherine of Aragon, no issue.

Elizabeth Tudor (d. 3/1603), daughter of Henry VIII = Ann (Boleyn), no *legitimate* issue.

Suffolk - sons of Frances Grey (d. 9/1559), daughter of Charles Brandon = Mary (Tudor) (d.), none.

Jane (Grey) Dudley (d. 2/1554), daughter of Sir Henry Grey = Frances (Grey), no issue.

sons of Jane (Grey) Dudley (d. 2/1554), as above, none.

sons of Katherine (Grey) Seymour (d. 1/1568) daughter of Sir Henry Grey = Frances (Brandon), no *legitimate* issue (children politically bastardized by Parliament; silly, huh?).

sons of Mary (Grey) Keyes (d. 4/1578) daughter of Sir Henry Grey = Frances (Grey), no issue.

Clifford - Margaret (Clifford) Stanley (d. 9/1596), daughter of Henry Clifford = Eleanor (Brandon).

Ferdinando Stanley (d. 4/1594), son of Henry Stanley = Margaret (Clifford).

Anne Stanley (d. 10/1647), daughter of Ferdinando Stanley = Alice (Spencer).

Stuart - ??? no mention?

Within the likely time of *Venus and Adonis*, let's say 1585-93, the lone legitimate claimant to the throne was Lady Margaret (Clifford) Stanley, heiress presumptive from 1578-96. However, the Stanley family were 'Strange' (unknown, indefinite, or foreign) Catholics, known to support dissident groups, and a locus for recusant aspirations Shadowplay, *Clare Asquith, pg. 106 PublicAffairs Pub.*. Lady Margaret's husband, Henry Stanley, the 4th Earl of Derby, died in Sept. of 1593, and his title passed to his elder son Ferdinando. This 5th Earl died suddenly of what his doctor suspected was mushroom poisoning only 7 months later. He had been aggressively pursuing the throne in late 1593 at the instigation of a family friend, Richard Hesketh. Both were interrogated, Jesuit Counter-Reformation plotters were blamed for the intrigues, and Hesketh was executed; but if you ask me, the Cecil 'machiavels' should be suspected - 'the Hesketh Affair' is just the sort of thing they would engineer.

Ferdinando's brother William then became the 6th Earl of Derby, and in early 1595 was invited to marry the eldest daughter of Edward de Vere and Ann (Cecil), Elizabeth de Vere, thus driving a Cecil wedge into the most direct surviving line of succession. This action, of course, ignored the queen's illegitimate son, Edward de Vere who had earned the *ever*-lasting enmity of William and Robert Cecil, for impeaching the chastity of Ann, and treating her as the political pawn that she was. With the death of Ann (Cecil) de Vere in 1588, all notions of accessing Edward, by means of the proximity of the [Lord Great Chamberlain] Earldom of Oxford, ceased. Robert Cecil would pass over the Stanley claim and name James Stuart of Scotland to succeed upon Elizabeth's death in March, 1603.

The *apparent* omission of the Stuart = Tudor claim is really not. In marrying into the Scottish royal family, Margaret Tudor forfeited her right to the English throne; and further, Henry VIII did not like his elder sister.

192 *If they burn too, I'll quench them with my tears.*

[**If they** (i.e. the 'lesser' heirs from the Suffolk and Clifford descendants of Tudor) **burn** ('to consume with fire*', 'consume, destroy', alt.: 'metaphorically, to be inflamed with passions and affections*', 'desire to possess') **too** (*pun* = two, Two-Tudor = because a female, the second ranking Tudor, Queen Elizabeth; alt.: 'likewise, also, at the same time*'), **I'll quench** ('extinguish', 'to suppress, to stifle, to check*', 'to lose zeal, to become cool*') **them** (i.e. heirs) **with my tears** (*Latin wordplay* *tēr*: 'three', *tertius*: 'third' *Cassell's*; alt.: *Latin wordplay* (*di*)*scindēre*: 'to cut, rend, tear asunder, split' *Cassell's*, see *V&A I.190* 'descending'); alt.: tear: transgression, destruction; tears: *noun & verb* 'a brief spell of erratic behaviour', faults, severances, injuries, blood; alt.: 'being doomed to perdition*', likely refers to the 'tearers' Cecil/Dudley parasites who remain as the permanent scars of Elizabeth's 'sin'; alt.: 'pulling apart by force', 'to draw by violence, to pull*', 'to rend*', 'to hurt or destroy in a savage manner*' alt.: 'verbal attacks', to criticize someone).]

~ *If they efface 'Tu', I'll extinguish them with my 'three'. ~*

alt.: ~ *If the pretenders inflame 'ourselves', I'll satisfy them with my [Cecil/Dudley] injuries. ~*

alt.: ~ *If the Cecils also consume [that inferior means of accession], I'll subdue them with force. ~*

193 *'The sun that shines from heaven shines but warm,*

[**'The sun** (= Edward VI) **that** (= that sun, the sun *probable metonym* Edward VI) **shines** ('to give light by emitting rays*', 'bright with the expression of a particular emotion') **from heaven** (*likely* signifying he has died; but consider that he is buried - is he 'heavenly interred' and therefore below both remaining Tudors) **shines** (*shine*: 'to be conspicuous*', alt.: 'to illuminate') **but** ('otherwise than', alt.: 'only*') **warm** (*of a scent or trail in hunting*: 'fresh or strong', 'recently passed'; alt.: *archaic* 'characterized by lively or heated disagreement*'),]

~ *'Edward Tudor, conspicuous even from heaven, is a radiance only mild, ~*

alt.: ~ The son (Edward VI) that now lights heaven, lights with an indifferent heat, ~

'The sun that' refers to the deceased Edward VI, Elizabeth's half brother. This passage may indicate diminished respect for Edward's 'Devise' of succession—the sense that the document is out of date since it might be superseded by the sovereign wishes of Mary I or Elizabeth I, as the next line concludes.

There may be a religious subtext in this stanza. The 'sun', of course, could be the (Christian) Son of God, who 'shines but warm', signifying only a close, approximate, or inauthentic understanding of the deity being represented by [Puritan ?] Protestant theology. This suggestion is reinforced by the following line that may also mean the Queen lies as an intermediary between 'that Son' and her earthly son.

194 *And, lo, I lie between that sun and thee:*

[**And, lo** ('look, behold; a word used to excite attention*'; alt. low: 'a great way down*', or at least below the exalted 'natural' position of de Vere; note: the 1593 text does not indicate the commas before or after "lo") **I lie** ('be', 'remain in a specified state'; alt.: 'make intentionally false statements', *possible reference* the queens bastardy is recalled to diminish her claim) **between** (*be*: Virgin Queen = Bee + *tween*: 'between') **that** (*refers to l.190:*) **sun** (*see l.1 that sun, not the sun*) **and thee** (de Vere):]

~ *And degraded I lie, Queen 'tween that son and you: ~*

alt.: ~ And, behold, I [an 'illegitimate' heiress] am between Edward VI's 'devise' and you: ~

alt.: ~ And below am I positioned, Queen between my deceased brother and you: ~

The adjective use of 'the', 'this' and 'that' is a source of confusion. Specific suns/sons are like specified 'love'/my love/love are, etc.; de Vere employs grammatical ambiguity to good effect when pronoun modifiers consistently indicate different subjects. Such indeterminacy might foil censors, but I don't doubt de Vere's meaning was clear to his Queen. It is likely that both Edward VI and Robert Dudley are to be brought to mind in this passage, because both bear equally on the succession issue—the first by 'letters patent' (*Latin litterae patentes*: 'an open document issued by a monarch or government conferring a patent or other right', in this case his will or 'devise'), the second by usurpation.

['That sun' may be, though I think it less likely, a reminder that Robert Dudley is not the only son of John, Duke of Northumberland, to trouble the Tudor's line of succession. In 1553, Guildford Dudley, Robert's youngest brother was hastily married to Lady Jane Grey, and she and her consort were titular monarchs of England for 9 days following the death of Edward Tudor. William Cecil was, as principle advisor and secretary to the Duke, a nominal supporter of Lady Jane. This was a significant and useful demerit to recall in censuring William.

Grammatical ambiguity enriches the texture of writing, and may create a sense of depth or mystery to language. The degree to which we desire to be understood varies; it is not surprising how often meaning is misconstrued. The reader is apt to be sent on imaginative flights of unintended associations. Good writing initiates the consideration of related ideas; great writing leaves us breathless at our own powers (with due facetiousness) of associative genius.

195 *The heat I have from thence doth little harm,*

[**The heat** ('pressure, urgency*', compulsion; alt.: 'intensity of feeling') **I have from thence** ('from that place*', 'a place or source', specifically 'that sun' = Robert Dudley) **doth little** (= 'Pygmy', later, 'Elf', Elizabeth's pet names for 'Little' Robert Cecil; alt.: = Protestant Churches, referring to the Apostle Simon who Jesus chastises *Matthew 14:31* for 'little faith' *see l.200*; alt.: 'but little' *Shakespeare Glossary*) **harm** ('injury, hurt, mischief*'),]

~ *The warmth I receive from 'that' son does Peters Church injury* ~

alt.: ~ The passion I have from Dudley's 'love' does 'Pygmy' harm, ~ ?

Protestant compulsion, by the Elizabethan Religious Settlement 1559, explicitly violates Jesus command of assignment; the Church of Jesus is to be the Church of Peter. The religious authority of that church was countermanded by the Act of Supremacy and the Act of Uniformity both 1559.

Alternately, this may link Pygmy/Little Time with one of "Little Faith". The power of the Monarchy, held between Cecil (Middle Path) and Dudley (Puritan), may also be suggested. The political authority of Elizabeth—what remained from the depredations of usurpers—was in managing their respective factions.

196 *Thine eye darts forth the fire that burneth me;*

[**Thine** (addressing Vere) **eye** (wordplay sun/son = *Helios Panoptes*, 'the All-Seeing Sun', see l.177 'fig. attributed to heavenly bodies, "eyes of light" = 'stars' GS; alt.: spy, observer; alt.: 'someones opinion or attitude toward something', related pun aye: yes, approval) **darts** ('shoots', 'throws') **forth** ('from a starting point and into view') **the fire** (metonym fair ire: just anger

see glossary 'Consuming Fair/Fare', the destruction of the Tudor Monarchy; alt.: 'strong criticism or antagonism') **that burneth** (burn: 'consumes'; alt.: 'to injure by fire or heat') **me;**]

~ *Your sun-light casts forth the consuming blaze that injures me;* ~

alt.: ~ Your opinion, clear and unconcealed, is the strong criticism that consumes me; ~

The writer clarifies the Promethean role of 'Adonis'/de Vere. He harbors within himself and his Art the 'fire' that consumes the Queen.

197 *And were I not immortal, life were done*

[**And were** (man-Vere, were: anglo-saxon = man, from Ovid's *Metamorphosis*, bk.1, l.260; alt.: wordplay Vere Latin 'V' pronounced as 'W'?; alt.: were: anglo-saxon Man, recalls Ovid's *Metamorphosis*, bk.1, l.260; reference lycanthropy (?) Anglo-Saxon were: man + wulf: family seat of Seymour family, Wulfhall, birthplace of Jane Seymour and perhaps Thomas Seymour) **I not immortal** (indirect pun 'living forever'), **life** (the particular line of descent from parent to child) **were** (past subjunctive of BE, expressing 'what is imagined or wished or possible'; alt.: word play on Vere see glossary) **done** ('carried out', 'completed')]

~ *And were I mortal, our 'Vere' family would end* ~

alt.: ~ And were I not living for E. Ver, our title would end ~

The repetition of were calls attention to itself...

alt.: ~ And Man [am] I, not immortal; [our] life Were ended,

198 *Between this heavenly and earthly sun.*

[**Between** (be: Virgin Queen = Bee + 'tween: 'between'; alt.: 'in the interval separating two things') **this heavenly** () **and earthly** (according to Renaissance supposition of The Classical Elements, 'earth' is cold and dry; alt.: E.Vere) **sun** (= de Vere, the son who gives Light) .]

~ *[With myself] between that 'heavenly' and this 'heir-thly' son.* ~

alt.: ~ 'Bee' 'tween this heavenly (Edward) and the heir-ly (Edward) sun. ~

alt.: ~ In the span of this 'heavenly and earthly' son. ~

Lines 196-98 may indicate a third sun/son using the same terms as the "earthly" son l.177 and the "heavenly" l.193, referencing eye and observation, burning heat and benign warmth, shine and shadow, etc. If these are not really suns, *but sons*, I can make sense of it; in this star system we have but one sun.

It is necessary to identify the homonymous sun/son by respective pronouns, this and that.

Perhaps this line refers to the 'celestial breath' of l.189, i.e. the annunciation and incarnation by 'virgin birth' of a heavenly and earthly son. I hope I'm not just imagining this—the author *is* noting parallels between himself and Christ. De Vere is, after all, the fellow who twice used the phrase 'I am that I am', that by conceit is God's alone.

Also note Iago: 'I am not that I am'.

199 *'Art thou obdurate, flinty, hard as steel,*

[**Art** ('the expression or application of human creative skill and imagination...'; alt.: variant of 'R' = Regina; alt.: see conjugation of *BE*) **thou obdurate** (hardened in opposition, 'stubbornly refusing to change one's opinion or course of action', 'inflexible'*; alt.: 'hardened in sin, impenitent'), **flinty** ('very hard and unyielding'), **hard as steel**,]

~ *Are you hardened in your opposition, hard as flint, hard as steel, ~*

alt.: ~ *You are Art, enduring, unyielding, hard as steel, ~*

There may be a subtext on the significance of Art in this passage, particularly as an enduring expression of grief and suffering; compare with Sonnet 55, and *Much Ado v 2 81*.

200 *Nay, more than flint, for stone at rain relenteth?*

[**Nay** ('no'*; 'used not simply to deny or refuse, but to reprove, to correct, to amplify;'), **more** (Edward de Vere, the 'More' that follows from the motto of Henry V, "Une sans plus" = 'One without more', which contains two prominent metonyms; 'One' = the Monarch, more = 'greater', 'something additional', 'to a greater degree' embodied in de Vere and Th. More; alt.: faithful to principle = 'by More's example'. Sir Thomas More, Saint Thomas More, Lord Chancellor to Henry VIII: beheaded for opposing the Act of Supremacy. It may also combine the two allusions - to Thomas More and Henry V - in a composite such as 'Faithful Majesty'; More: it appears that in referencing a name, de Vere often intends that you repeat the word, eg. never = 'never E. Ver', or 'never an E. Vere'; here I sense he intends 'More-more', i.e. [Thomas] More, more than flint) **than** ('introducing the second element in a comparison') **flint, for stone** (= 'Rock', *Greek Petra*: Peter, symbolic name given to Simon of Bethsaida by Jesus *Matthew 16:13-20*, 'symbol of hardness and of insensibility'*; alt.: 'nonmetallic mineral matter of which rock is made') **at rain** (= rein or reign) **relenteth** ('to soften, in a physical sense'*; alt.: 'to give way, to comply', 'abandon or mitigate a harsh intention or cruel treatment; *from ME* 'dissolve, melt')?]

~ *No, rather 'More' than unyielding, for The Holy See at Reign dissolves? ~*

alt.: ~ *No, like Sir Thomas More, more than flint, for The Church at rein dissolves? ~*

Again, the name and the proper name fragment of More/Mour is invoked—both as Sir Thomas and as 'One [Vere] with More'/Une avec plus' see *glossary More* when in need of a shining example of integrity. Thomas More's resolute adherence to his principles, and defiance of an unjust, tyrannical authority is juxtaposed with the yielding 'Cheek', i.e. dissembling amorality of the Cecil's. More was a man who would not 'relent at rein'. He embodies the ideas of greatness and courage. Another Catholic martyr, John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, will also be raised *1.526* as an heroic example by which to contrast and revile Protestant political usurpers.

201 *Art thou a woman's son, and canst not feel*

[**Art** () **thou a woman's son** (a sly and wry query - she addresses her *son* just as we have resolved the issue of 'Three *Suns*' *ll. 175-98*), **and canst not feel** ('to be touched and affected by, to suffer'*)]

~ *Are you my son, and unable to feel ~*

Elizabeth asks if any son, meaning her own, could be unaware of the significance—the suffering—of Dudley's control in *their* lives (*1.200-01*). There may be an intended juxtaposition of the needy yearnings of Leicester and the 'Word of God'.

202 *What 'tis to love? how want of love tormenteth?*

[**What 'tis** (it is: i.e. this signifies, this means) **to love** (*metonym* = Dudley; alt.: 'that which is cherished', expressing a fervent attachment to traditional English faith) ? **how want** ('desire to possess', 'greed', 'rapacity'; alt.: 'absence of a necessary thing or quality') **of love** (= Dudley; alt.: *phrase want of love*: absence of that which is cherished) **tormenteth** (torment: 'severe physical or mental suffering', a cause of such suffering, *from Latin? tormentum*: 'instrument of torture', see *Italian tormento*, see *Spanish tormenta*: wind storm, violent winds see *glossary wind*) ?]

~ *What is the consequence to Dudley? how the greed of Dudley does violence to the heir? ~*

alt.: ~ *What this means to Dudley? how the avariciousness of Dudley is an instrument of torture?*

alt.: ~ *What it means to love [one's faith]? how dispossession of such faith causes suffering? ~*

203 *O, had thy mother borne so hard a mind,*

[**O** (as with word play on Elizabeths signature '**R**': Regina, she refers to de Vere as '**O**': Oxford), **had thy mother** (= Elizabeth) **borne** (bear: 'to be pregnant with*', 'to deliver*', 'carried', 'to be possessed of') **so** (*metonym* 'in the same degree, **as***', alt.: it follows, it proceeds; refers to royal progeny) **hard** (by the example of Th. More 'not easily pierced, not yielding to pressure*', firm, constant; of R. Dudley 'causing suffering', 'not showing sympathy or affection', 'harsh, rough, evil, disagreeable*') **a mind** ('will, desire, intention, purpose*', 'the soul, the mental power; opposed to the body*'),]

~ Oxford, had your mother possessed so firm a will, ~ that of Sir Thomas More

alt.: ~ Oxford, had your mother given birth to a Tudor-firm soul, ~ of de Vere

alt.: ~ Oxford, had your mother possessed so evil a purpose, ~ of R. Dudley

I don't suppose any will argue Venus (Elizabeth) doesn't know *de Vere's mother's mind*; but there remains the question: to whose 'hard mind' she refers—her son's or Dudley's (negative connotation), or Thomas More's (positive)? I nominate all. By the negative reference, Elizabeth would not have brought forth [a child] (l.204) of unsympathetic disposition; or, alternately, suffered ill-treatment—a gibe at Dudley—who was of "so hard a mind" and *did* die without heir (l.204). By the positive reference, Elizabeth would not have been impregnated had she possessed the soul 'not easily pierced', and 'not yielding to pressure' as that of Th. More.

This is an example of a particular power of amphiboly. An indeterminate subject or object calls possibilities to mind rather than a specific one. Multiple themes may be alluded to without being obvious, indiscrete, or losing poetic obliquity. Here, the author's mind, gnawed as it is by regret, is hypersensitive to the intended meaning of words. The paths of contingency are well worn—'if only this', or 'I might have done that'—and have ranged freely in his thoughts. An allusion to the cause of remorse presents a field already crowded with associations. Today, of course, with the phenomenon of 'Shakespeare' before us, the weakness of young Elizabeth amounts only to good fortune.

204 *She had not brought forth thee, but died unkind.*

[**She** (=Elizabeth) **had not brought forth** ('from confinement or indistinction into open view*'; see *Biblical use in Genesis, Tyndale or King James version* ?) **thee** (= de Vere), **but died unkind** (i.e. without child, 'unnatural*', [not] 'as a thing or person ought to be*').]

~ *She would not have given you life, but died childless.* ~

The use of unkind in l.204 confirms the supposed meaning in l.187; both refer to childlessness, or behavior not exemplifying the unique bond of mother to child. A rumor of the 1550's concerning young Elizabeth stated she had given birth to the child of Sir Thomas Seymour, but that the child had been destroyed straightaway. Lines 203-4 may refer to that rumor and remind de Vere of what might have been.

I suggest this line does not speak *generally*, i.e. that a woman—to be called 'mother'—must bear children; rather, it is specific to Elizabeth. She, the Queen, is childless except for her one illegitimate son, Edward Tudor Seymour/de Vere. This refutes the notion that Elizabeth was licentious and had several children, including Mary Sidney and Robert Devereaux.

* * * *

The differences between the 'sons' are subtle and purposely ambiguous. The writer has exploited the notorious obscurity of poetry to give us 'candied words'; or, has he labored to give us something 'More'? We should be encouraged by the consistency with which de Vere eschews metaphor. I think he 's giving us the straight facts if we will only take time to listen... are you listening? "Dost thou hear?" *Tempest* l.2 106 .

To support the above reading, I'll conclude this essay referring to a similar passage from *Henry the Sixth (3)* ll.1 21-40 ; here Edward *Earl of March* and Richard *Plantagenet* marvel at a portentous rising of the Sun, or rather, 'Sonnes':

Richard. ...
See how the Morning opes her golden Gates, 21
 And takes her farewell of the glorious sun.
 How well resembles it the prime of Youth, 23
 Trimm'd like a Younker, prancing to his Love?
 Ed. Dazzle mine eyes, or do I see three Sunnes ? 25
 Rich. Three glorious Sunnes, each one a perfect Sunne,
 Not separated with the racking Clouds, 27
 But sever'd in a pale clear shining Skye.
See, see, they join, embrace, and seem to kiss, 29
As if they vow'd some League inviolable,
 Now are they but one Lamp, one Light, one Sunne: 31
 In this, the heaven figures some event.
 Edward. 'Tis wondrous strange, 33
 The like yet never heard of.
 I think it cites us (Brother) to the field,
 That we, the Sonnes of brave Plantagenet, 35
Each one already blazing by our meeds,
 Should notwithstanding join our Lights together 37
 And over-shine the Earth, as this the World.
 What e're it bodes, hence-forward will I bear 39
 Upon my Target three fair shining Sunnes.
 Richard. Nay, bear three Daughters: 41
 By your leave, I speak it,
 You love the Breeder better than the Male.

This augury deserves it's own small essay; but suffice to say: it falls in the in the category of prophecies akin to that which concludes *Cymbeline* V.5. *see my essay: On Cymbeline, Wm. Garmon, and Revelations 12* devereshakespeare@wordpress.com .

This portion of Act II scene 1 is remarkable for the framing of Richard Plantagenet's shield. De Vere allows the misinterpretation of prophetic 'signs' by Richard and Edward to create an 'historical' pretext for a foretelling of Edward Tudor Seymour's (de Vere's) coming.

Take note of the underlined metonyms , including proper name fragments, and italicized *emergent words*—and for goodness' sake, pay special heed to the syllogism that progresses from See to seem to some *ll.29-32* , Each One *l.36* searching for it's companion 'Our'... "our meeds" *l.36* , "our lights" *l.37* ... Seym + our. This is the 'hart' of Shake-speare! Perhaps I'm reading 'Tu' *much* into this... well, how about line 21? Let's not make the same mistake the York 'Boys' (Bois) make. The See really belongs with the Mor[ning], and golden Gates is at least Tu-d'or. *Such*, seemingly, is the nature of 'our' writers mind.

fn.: Review political opposition of Barons to Richard II; relate to 'Barren Land' of dedication to *Venus and Adonis*.

* * * *

Man labors long and hard at the mis-measure of his Titans. The ancient demigods who still shape our culture hundreds or thousands of years after death were never their own masters. We are their masters—that is, each succeeding generation takes on the onerous task of maintaining dubious iconolatries. In building myths around these 'Titans' we use and abuse History and Truth. Shake-speare suffers by the abuse of history just as Jesus of Nazareth; but perhaps we may also credit, at least to some extent, each demigod's own contrivance or obliquity. Let me reflect on the two for a moment.

Jesus left *so few* words—if, in fact, any can truly be ascribed to him—that there remains to us little but Enigma. Shake-speare left *so many* that his fate should be the opposite. If familiarity breeds contempt, we should have lost any fascination for him by now. Look what has happened to that stalwart superman Aristotle—how commonplace *he* is! So my question is: are we truly familiar with Shake-speare? Just as

the phrasing and parables of the New Testament keep the laity in need of ‘professional’ intercession, the ‘Strange’ character of Shake-speare leaves readers in need of exhaustive scholarship to gain some understanding of him. What’s going on?

I posit that much of the enigmatic style of Shake-speare is intentional—that he contrived ‘revelatory mysteries’ knowing such is the way of the ‘Titans’. He fashions himself *to be* ‘a modern Prometheus’. These ‘mysteries’ are then restructured with a solid classicism, ever searching language for concealed logic that will be returned to us as instinctive recollections of Verity... in this respect following the inspired aphorisms, epigrams, and proverbs of world literature that contrast markedly to the exclusive and mutually repellent theologies. Shake-speare ‘steals’ Truth from the gods—Truth that he appears to feel has gone missing from man—as the ancient Prometheus stole fire.

Though this may seem an extravagant attribution to his lordship, nonetheless, there is strong support for it in *Venus and Adonis*. I doubt such an acute mind would be inclined to believe his own ‘invention’; but perhaps this extraordinary writer ‘knew’ this extraordinary thing: though he is the fire that consumes a Crown, yet in his person lay the spark that might animate a people to throw off the yoke of forced faith. As the bastard Son of a ‘Virgin Queen’, he promotes the myth of a ‘More’ generous Divine Right—and bastardy be damned.

* * * *

What, no Authorship Question? Not a year goes by without several important essays being printed on the authenticity of Shakespeare’s works. The idea of collaboration is evergreen; any line that doesn’t rise to a certain threshold of polish or enigmatic obscurity is suspected to be the work of someone else. Poems with no confirmed author, but ‘Shakespearian’ in style, are knocked about the academic community. The ‘Shakespeare Apocrypha’—plays similar to those of ‘established’ attribution—are promoted and demoted; the case for *Edward III*, for example, is looking strong just now. It is disingenuous to state there is no Authorship Question. Rather, there are multiple Authorship Questions.

The First Folio is substantial Authority; when we speak of ‘attribution’ it is because the Folio exists. Without it we’d have a devil of a time choosing ‘real’ Shake-speare among the ‘anonymous’ plays of the ‘1590s’; and who would think *Cymbeline* could be the work of the author of... O... say, *Macbeth*. Again, without the First Folio, we would be without a number of great plays that were not known before the 1623 publication.

Whoever brought together the original manuscripts or copies—likely the author himself—collected works that have certain *well* disguised elements in common. The most distinctive of these is reiterative wordplay that ‘hammers home’ important issues of Court and National Politics. Succession, and by extension, the Protestant Reformation, were the writer’s obvious concerns; yet these were the concerns most carefully controlled by state censors. In the time of Elizabeth, it was not permissible to publicly discuss such issues. Just who was this ‘Shake-speare’ who flouted the censors?

That is the unavoidable issue if one does ‘hard time’ in the canon. The central conceit of the ‘Stratfordian’ academics, however, is incurious certainty that there is no such Enigma. I wonder if this may be an artifact of finding themselves immersed in critical works on ‘Shake-speare’ rather than the art itself. Such scholars may be lost in a mire of circular reasoning and incestuous consensus. I repeat: there are many Authorship Questions within the Orthodox community, and of course Authorship defines the Unorthodox Shake-speare Community.