July 31, 2005 – By Jim Hammond

This is the longest issue of Phlit that I've ever released. If you read the whole issue, I think you'll learn something about Shakespeare, something about the Sonnets, and something about Elizabethan history, and perhaps you'll be inspired to pursue these subjects further. The ideas in this issue are new and strange, but if you read carefully, and with an open mind, I think you'll find that the evidence is solid. I'm curious to know what you think, so I hope you'll send me feedback.

1. Oxford vs. Stratford

Our book group recently discussed an Oxfordian work, *The Man Who Was Shakespeare*. It's a short, inexpensive summary of the Oxford theory, written by a leading Oxfordian, Charlton Ogburn, Jr. It's an excellent introduction to the Oxford theory, packed with information.

Our discussion of the book was tense. One member of our group dismissed the Oxford theory as unsound history, unsound historical method. Another member of the group pointed out that David McCullough, a leading contemporary historian, said of Ogburn's work, "the scholarship is surpassing." The Stratfordian seemed to think that if you don't have a Ph.D. in history (as she does), then you can't understand Shakespeare. She thought that Freud's views don't matter because Freud didn't have a Ph.D. in history, and Whitman's views don't matter because Whitman didn't have a Ph.D. in history. (Whitman was nothing but a great poet and a genius. Why should his views on Shakespeare be taken into account?) I should have pointed out that the most famous historians — Thucydides, Tacitus, Gibbon, etc. — didn't have a Ph.D. in history. A Ph.D. in history isn't necessary for writing history, much less for understanding Shakespeare.

Ogburn's little book presents countless facts — at least ten times more than you need to assure yourself that Oxford wrote the works attributed to Shakespeare — but the Stratfordian didn't read Ogburn's book. She spent one weekend looking at some websites (mostly Stratfordian, doubtless), and then decided that the Oxford theory was nonsense. She decided that Ogburn was a Harvard-educated snob who thought that only a person with a degree could have written *Hamlet*. In short, she summarized for us all the typical Stratfordian bullshit. At any rate, it made for a lively discussion.

One member of the group said that he read some of Oxford's letters, and found them strikingly similar to Shakespeare in tone and style. The correspondences between Oxford's letters and Shakespeare's works are numerous, and much research has been done in this area; an Oxfordian named William Plumer Fowler wrote an 800-page book called *Shakespeare Revealed in Oxford's Letters*.

On the title page of *The Man Who Was Shakespeare*, there are two quotations, one from a letter written by Oxford, another from *Measure for Measure*. In his letter, Oxford says "for truth is truth though never so old, and time cannot make that false which was once true."1 And in *Measure for Measure*: "for truth is truth to the end of reckoning."2 As I was glancing at another of Oxford's letters, I was struck by the phrase, "the deep abyss and bottom of despair."3 This phrase has a very Shakespearean

ring to it. I searched *The Tempest*, and found "the dark backward and abysm of time."[4]

At the start of our discussion, I reminded people about the next meeting of the Socrates Café. That prompted someone to ask, "what's the connection between Socrates and Shakespeare?" I said there was no connection, but I should have said that, in philosophy, everything is connected, and Socrates and Shakespeare are connected because they're opposites. (One can often understand things in terms of their opposite.) Socrates is an example of the logical, rational way of thinking, while Shakespeare is an example of the irrational, occult, Hermetic way of thinking. The same opposition exists between Aristotle and Giordano Bruno; Bruno exemplifies Hermetic thinking, and he regarded Aristotle as the chief example of what I call "blockhead rationalism." (Our book group is going to read *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition*, but first we're going to read Schopenhauer's *Essays and Aphorisms*.)

While Socrates and Aristotle are good examples of logical, rational thinking, Newton is perhaps an even better example of that approach. Newton saw the universe as a big pool table, a chain of cause and effect where everything was visible, everything could be measured, everything could be expressed in numbers. Newton's work seemed to have all the answers, and it made many converts; it shattered the Hermetic worldview, the alchemical tradition. Eventually, however, Hermetism revived, and now the Hermetic worldview is flourishing, thanks to the work of Jung, and the work of modern physicists.

While young intellectuals are receptive to the occult and the irrational, many older intellectuals aren't. The older people who have participated in our book group have almost always dismissed the occult as nonsense, rubbish, superstition. One might say that there's a "generation gap" with respect to the occult.

Ogburn is an example of an older intellectual who is blind to the occult. Ogburn speaks of Shakespeare's "pervasive skepticism"[5] and he doesn't realize that Shakespeare was a Hermetist. Since Ogburn doesn't appreciate the mystical and the occult, he doesn't understand that Shakespeare's worldview was influenced by the mystical and the occult.

Ogburn isn't alone; many Oxfordians fail to grasp Shakespeare's worldview. The scholar who best understood Shakespeare's worldview was G. Wilson Knight, whom I discussed in an earlier issue of Phlit. I'm quite sure that Knight wasn't an Oxfordian; it would be interesting to know what Knight thought about the debate over Shakespeare's identity.

2. Boring?

The Oxford theory is exciting now, but will it always be exciting? After all, the theory of Copernicus was once exciting, but it isn't any longer. Once a theory is universally accepted, it isn't as exciting as it is when it's fighting for acceptance. The Oxford theory may become boring when its opponents have died out. Perhaps it will take 200 years for the Oxford theory to gain universal acceptance, just as it took 200 years for the Copernican theory to gain universal acceptance. The eventual triumph of the Oxford theory is inevitable; the Stratford theory is a pile of garbage.

Academia is loyal to the Stratford theory. This will be an eternal blemish on academia, a striking proof that academia is better at perpetuating error than discovering truth. If one respects the establishment, the endowed chairs, the Ivy League, etc., then one will probably cling to the Stratford theory. I myself respected the solitary individual, the iconoclast. Long before I became acquainted with the Oxford theory, I had no respect for academia, for the intellectual establishment, for institutions in general. So I had no difficulty embracing the Oxford theory; I was a perfect candidate for the Oxford theory.

Before you tell someone about the Oxford theory, you should ask them, "who do you respect? Do you respect the individual, the solitary genius — Freud, Whitman, Twain, etc.? Or do you respect institutions, endowed chairs, the Ivy League, etc.?" If they respect the establishment, you don't have much chance of converting them to the Oxford theory.

The contest between Stratford and Oxford won't be decided by evidence alone; like beauty, evidence is in the eye of the beholder. The contest between Stratford and Oxford will be decided partly by authority. On one side is the authority of institutions — of Harvard, Yale, etc. — and on the other side is the authority of solitary individuals — of Freud, Whitman, etc.

3. Conservatives, Liberals, and Shakespeare

Conservatives may be more receptive to the Oxford theory than liberals. Liberals dominate academia, just as Stratfordians dominate academia. According to a New York Times column, "Eleven academics gave to the Kerry campaign for every 1 who gave to Bush's."6 Conservatives, like Oxfordians, have little hope of attaining a position in academia. Academia preaches diversity but practices uniformity, as is evident in Shakespeare studies and in politics. Conservatives are apt to be scornful of academia; the views of academics don't count for much with conservatives. Hence conservatives won't be surprised to find that academics are entirely wrong with respect to Shakespeare.

There's another connection between conservatives and Oxfordians. Many conservatives are disciples of Leo Strauss, and Strauss argued that great writers typically conceal their meaning, to avoid angering the powers that be. Strauss believed that the classics must not only be read, they must be decoded. Likewise, Oxfordians believe that Shakespeare couldn't speak his mind freely, that Shakespeare was "tongue-tied by authority" (as he says in Sonnet 66). I've never been a fan of Strauss or the Straussian approach, and I don't think this approach should be used with all writers, but I admit that it seems admirably suited to the study of Shakespeare.

Hermetics are as unpopular in academia as conservatives and Oxfordians. Academia is uncomfortable with the occult, the mystical, etc.; it prefers rational, logical thinking, it prefers Aristotle to Jung. So if you're a conservative Hermetic Oxfordian, then you've galled their kibe all the way around!

4. One Step Higher

I love to study the history of ideas — Lovejoy is a favorite of mine, and so is Kuhn. I

love to see how ideas develop from earlier ideas, how thinkers build on earlier thinkers, how thinkers 'see further by standing on the shoulders of giants' (in Newton's famous phrase). Being an "idea-person" myself, I take a personal interest in the history of ideas; I feel that the origin and the fate of earlier theories resembles the origin and the fate of my own theories.

The Oxford theory is an interesting case of idea-development. It began in the mid-19th century, when some isolated intellectuals began questioning the claims of the Stratford man. As the 19th century drew to a close, these isolated doubts swelled into a chorus; Nietzsche, Whittier, Bismarck, and many others rejected the Stratford theory. Twain and Whitman studied Shakespeare for decades, and insisted that, though they didn't know who Shakespeare *was*, they were certain that he *wasn't* the man from Stratford.

The man who discovered Oxford, J. T. Looney, built on the work of the anti-Stratfordians. Looney's work was the culmination of the anti-Stratfordian movement; Looney 'stood on the shoulders' of the anti-Stratfordians.

Those who came after Looney stood on his shoulders, and saw further than he did. Looney had noticed the striking connections between the life of Oxford and the life of the Earl of Southampton. Looney's successor, Percy Allen, carried Looney's work one step further, and published a book in the 1930s that argued Southampton was the son of Oxford and Queen Elizabeth. Thus, Allen became the father of what is now called the Prince Tudor theory. (I discussed this theory in an earlier issue of Phlit.) Will Emmerich's new movie about Oxford take account of the Prince Tudor theory, or ignore it? It will probably ignore the Prince Tudor theory, since it seems far-fetched; truth is stranger than fiction.

Allen's work was carried further in the 1950s by Dorothy and Charlton Ogburn, who published a massive work called *This Star of England*. This book was met with a storm of ridicule by the intellectual establishment, which laughed at the Prince Tudor theory, and rejected the Oxford theory.

The Ogburns' son (Charlton Ogburn, Jr.) wrote several books about the Oxford theory. Though he adhered to Prince Tudor, he said little about it, knowing that it was so far-fetched, it would bring upon him a storm of ridicule, and obstruct the progress of the Oxford theory.

Another Oxfordian, however, Elisabeth Sears, published a book that developed the Prince Tudor theory further. Her book was called *Shakespeare and the Tudor Rose*, and it drew on recent research, such as Akrigg's *Shakespeare and the Earl of Southampton* (Akrigg wasn't an Oxfordian, let alone a Tudorite, but his research strengthens the Prince Tudor theory in many ways).

Now a new writer, Hank Whittemore, has emerged, who takes the work of Sears and other Tudorites as his starting point, and goes one step further. Hank has discovered a numerical structure in Shakespeare's Sonnets; he has discovered what may be called The Rosetta Stone that makes it possible to understand the Sonnets. T. S. Eliot said of the Sonnets, "This autobiography is written by a foreign man in a foreign tongue, which can never be translated." Hank's work allows us to translate this "foreign

language," it allows us to understand the Sonnets for the first time.

The Sonnets have always been the foundation of the Prince Tudor theory, but Hank's interpretation of the Sonnets differs sharply from that of earlier Tudorites, such as Sears. Hank argues that the Sonnets deal almost entirely with Queen Elizabeth and Southampton. They deal with the poet's love for his son — not with a homosexual passion, as many have supposed, nor with a heterosexual passion, as earlier Tudorites believed. Hank argues that the famous Dark Lady of the Sonnets is Elizabeth. Of course, he knows that Elizabeth wasn't physically dark, but he thinks that she was dark in a metaphorical sense, and he calls our attention to a line in Sonnet 131: "In nothing art thou black save in thy deeds."

Hank argues that the Sonnets express the poet's anguish over his son's predicament (Southampton was imprisoned after participating in the Essex Rebellion, and his life was hanging by a thread). They also express the poet's anguish that his connection to Elizabeth will never be made public, that his son will never become King (even if he's fortunate enough to avoid execution), and that his own career as a writer will be buried in secrecy and silence.

Thus, Hank believes that the Sonnets were motivated primarily by what has always motivated great writers: their own suffering. As Proust said, "Works of art, like artesian wells, mount higher in proportion as the suffering has more deeply pierced the heart."[7] Kierkegaard wrote:

> What is a poet? An unhappy man who in his heart harbors a deep anguish, but whose lips are so fashioned that the moans and cries which pass over them are transformed into ravishing music.... And men crowd about the poet and say to him, "Sing for us soon again" — which is as much as to say, "May new sufferings torment your soul."[8]

In 1894, before the Oxford theory or the Prince Tudor theory were discovered, a scholar named Wendell Barrett said, "Whoever wrote the Sonnets must have known the depths of spiritual suffering; nor yet have known how to emerge from them." But what was the cause of this intense suffering? Barrett can't tell us that, but the Prince Tudor theory can.

I invited Hank to address our book group, and I'm helping him to arrange appearances at libraries in the Providence area. Hank recently published a massive tome called *The Monument: Shake-Speares Sonnets by Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford*. He calls this a "reference version," and he plans to publish a shorter work, a work for the general public, in the future. Meanwhile, I asked him to turn the 75-page introduction to his book into a pamphlet — an inexpensive pamphlet that would be suitable for our book group. He agreed to do that, and we hope to discuss that pamphlet in the fall, with Hank in attendance.

I regard the Prince Tudor theory as an outgrowth of the Oxford theory, a further development of the Oxford theory. I regard Hank's work as the latest chapter, the furthest development, of the Prince Tudor theory, and of the Oxford theory. The Chinese have a saying, "One step higher, a broader view." Though this refers to

mountain-climbing, it also applies to the development of our understanding of Shakespeare, and to intellectual history in general. Hank has taken "one step higher," and as a result, all of us can enjoy a deeper understanding of a supremely great writer, a writer whose life is as fascinating as his works.

But while Hank has taken one step higher, he probably hasn't taken the final step. Who will take the next step? Who will enrich our understanding of Shakespeare still further? Who will go beyond Hank, as Looney went beyond the anti-Stratfordians of the late 19th century, as Percy Allen went beyond Looney, as Hank himself went beyond Elisabeth Sears? Perhaps you will!

If you're new to the Prince Tudor theory, perhaps you're wondering, "is it possible? Is it possible that Shakespeare and Elizabeth had a secret child? Is it consistent with what we know about Elizabeth?" Yes, it is consistent with what we know about Elizabeth. In 1559, she had an affair with Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester. This affair lasted several years, and seems to have produced a son, Arthur Dudley.9

If Elizabeth had a child with Dudley (and the evidence suggests that she did), that strengthens the Prince Tudor theory, because it suggests that Elizabeth was prone

- to have lovers and,
- once pregnant, to give birth to a child (rather than miscarry or abort), and
- having given birth, to keep the child secret, and to maintain the fiction of The Virgin Queen.

So Tudorites can point to the Dudley child and say, "if it happened once, why couldn't it happen again? The Prince Tudor theory isn't as far-fetched as it might appear."

Now you might be wondering, "was Elizabeth close to Oxford? What was her relationship with Oxford?" In the period prior to Southampton's birth, an observer of the court wrote, "My Lord of Oxford is lately grown into great credit, for the Queen's Majesty delighteth more in his personage and his dancing and his valiantness than any other.... At all these love matters my Lord Treasurer [William Cecil, Lord Burghley] winketh, and will not meddle in any way."10 The Prince Tudor theory isn't far-fetched after all.

5. Knight on Prince Tudor

I mentioned above that G. Wilson Knight, whom I regard as the best Shakespeare critic, wasn't an Oxfordian. His remarks on the Sonnets, however, lend support to the Prince Tudor theory. I was delighted to learn that my old friend "smelled the truth" with respect to the Prince Tudor theory. (Did he also smell the truth with respect to the Oxford theory?)

According to the Prince Tudor theory, Southampton was the son of Shakespeare and Queen Elizabeth. As the son of the queen, Southampton was the heir to the throne, the prince, Prince Tudor, royal, a future king. The Sonnets, as many Stratfordians have perceived, are addressed to Southampton (at least, many of them are); they describe the poet's love for his son, his royal son. Although Knight may not have known who the

poet was, or what his relationship to Southampton was, or why Southampton was royal, he could tell what the Sonnets were about:

> The Sonnets regularly express love through metaphors from royalty and its derivatives [Knight wrote], using such phrases as *my sovereign*, *thy glory*, *lord of my love*, *embassy of love*.... The loved one is royal.... We have various clusters of king, gold, and sun.... These impressions are not just decoration.... That the poet of the Sonnets was deeply concerned with such themes is clear from the many comparisons of his love to kings and state-affairs.11

Another Stratfordian scholar, Leslie Hotson, went further than Knight. First, Hotson noticed that the metaphors in the Sonnets are consistently royal. Hotson "finds various usages in the Sonnets of *succession*, *heir*, and *issue*.... He also notes the poet's direct usage of *sovereign* and *king* to describe the Fair Youth. The powers possessed by the Fair Youth are those "peculiar to a king: power to *grant charters of privilege* and *letters patent*, power to *pardon* crimes," power to receive *oblations* and *embassies*. "The description of the Friend communicated is always one: *monarch*, *sovereign prince*, *king*.... The harping on the same string is so insistent as to make one ask why it has not arrested attention. No doubt everyone has regarded this *king* sense as formal hyperbole and nothing more. Any literal meaning looks quite incredible — a rank impossibility."12 Clearly, Hotson is puzzled by the Sonnets, by the theme of royalty. If only his eyes had been opened to the Prince Tudor theory!

6. Sonnet 105

Let's look at some sonnets, beginning with Sonnet 105:

...all alike my songs and praises be
To one, of one, still such, and ever so....
One thing expressing, leaves out difference.
'Fair, kind, and true,' is all my argument,
'Fair, kind, and true,' varying to other words;
And in this change is my invention spent,
Three themes in one, which wondrous scope affords.
Fair, kind, and true, have often liv'd alone,
Which three till now, never kept seat in one.

This sonnet may remind the reader of Sonnet 76, quoted above: "Why write I still all one, ever the same..." The poet tells us plainly that he's writing about the same theme over and over. This theme is what preoccupies Shakespeare: his beloved son, his son's royal nature, the possibility of his son ascending the throne that is rightfully his. "Fair, kind, and true" refers to his family, the 3-person family of himself, Elizabeth, and their son (Southampton). He often uses "true" to refer to himself; he was Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, his last name, "Vere", is Latin for "true," and the family's motto was "nothing truer than truth (*vero nihil verius*)." He also uses "fair" to refer to himself; the name "Vere" was apparently pronounced like "fair." As for the word "kind," it suggests "family" because it's related to kin, kindred, "my own kind," etc.

When he says, “Fair, kind, and true, have often liv’d alone,” he’s referring to the fact that his 3-person family has almost always lived separately, their relationship was secret. This thought is repeated in the final line: “Which three till now, never kept seat in one.”

Let’s look more closely at the second line quoted above: “To one, of one, still such, and ever so.” This line also deals with the 3-person family, the Sonnet Trinity. It recalls Southampton’s motto, “one for all, all for one.” In 1859, before the Oxford theory or the Prince Tudor theory were discovered, a scholar noted that Southampton’s motto appears often in the Sonnets, “adapted in different ways with considerable poetic and idiomatic license.”13 This anonymous scholar discussed the sonnet that we’re discussing: “In Sonnet 105 the spirit of the motto is taken as constancy, or one throughout:

Since *all alike* my songs and praises be
To one, of one, still such, and ever so.”

Elizabeth’s motto was *Semper Eadem*, “always the same.” Like Southampton’s motto, Elizabeth’s motto appears repeatedly in the Sonnets, in various forms, including in the line that we’re discussing: “To one, of one, *still such*, and ever so.” The poet often uses the word “ever” to refer to himself, since his name was E. Vere (Edward de Vere). Thus, the line that we’re discussing refers to Oxford, as well as Elizabeth and Southampton: “To one, of one, still such, and *ever* so.”

Without the Prince Tudor theory, we could never make sense of Sonnet 105, but with it, the meaning is clear. It would be amusing to see how scholars have struggled and strained to make sense of it.

7. Ever or Never

Early in his career, before he adopted the pen-name William Shakespeare, Oxford used the pen-name “Ever or Never.” He prefaced an edition of *Troilus and Cressida* with an epistle entitled “A Never Writer to An Ever Reader: News.” Other writers knew who was hiding behind “Ever or Never” and “William Shakespeare”; Richard Barnfield, for example, wrote

And Shakespeare thou, whose honey-flowing Vein
(Pleasing the World) thy praises doth obtain...
Live *ever* you, at least in Fame live *ever*:
Well may the Body die, but Fame dies *never*

And John Marston also used the word “ever” when writing about the hidden poet, and Marston gives us another hint: the poet’s name begins and ends with the same letter (E):

Far fly thy fame
Most, most of me beloved! Whose silent name
One letter bounds. Thy true judicial style
I *ever* honor; and, if my love beguile

Not much my hopes, then thy unvalued worth
Shall mount fair place, when apes are turned forth.14

The real poet is indeed ‘mounting fair place’ now, while the Stratford man is being exposed as a fraud.

In addition to Barnfield and Marston, a third writer, Thomas Powell, also plays with “ever” and “never”. Powell addresses Southampton, referring to him by his name, Henry Wriothesley, as well as by his title, Earl of Southampton:

A Prelude upon the name of Henry Wriothesley Earl of
Southampton
Ever
Whoso beholds this leaf, therein shall read
A faithful subject’s name, he shall indeed....
Never15

Powell’s use of “ever” and “never” can only be explained as a reference to E. Vere; it makes no sense otherwise, it has no connection with the surrounding text. But why would he refer to Oxford in a “prelude” on Southampton? What’s the connection between Oxford and Southampton? The best explanation is that Powell knew that Southampton was Oxford’s son.

The poet himself plays with “ever” and “never” in Sonnet 116:

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove:
O, no! it is an ever-fixèd mark,
That looks on tempests and is never shaken....
  If this be error and upon me proved,
  I *never* writ, nor no man *ever* loved.

The final couplet is silly and pointless, unless it’s viewed as a play on “ever” and “never”.

8. Sonnet 76

....Why write I still all one, ever the same....
That every word doth almost tell my name,
Showing their birth, and where they did proceed?
O! know sweet love I always write of you,
And you and love are still my argument;
So all my best is dressing old words new,
Spending again what is already spent:
  For as the sun is daily new and old,
  So is my love still telling what is told.

Again, the poet makes it clear that he's writing about the same theme over and over. This is natural, and not at all surprising: anyone who had a secret liaison with the queen, and fathered the heir to the Tudor dynasty, would be preoccupied with his 3-person family, and writers write about what preoccupies them. The first line ("Why write I still all one, ever the same") refers to all three members of the Sonnet Trinity: "all one" refers to Southampton (Southampton's motto), "ever the same" is a translation of Elizabeth's motto, and "ever" refers to the poet himself, E. Vere.

While it's natural for the poet to be preoccupied with his 3-person family, it's also natural for those in power to suppress these sonnets, because they deal with the most explosive question in a kingdom: Who is the rightful king? If it became known that Southampton was the rightful king, that would threaten the current king (James I). So when the Sonnets were published, in 1609, they were quickly suppressed; only 13 copies survived, perhaps because Shakespeare's friends and relatives stowed them away in private libraries.

When the Sonnets were published, the public paid no attention to them, while other Shakespeare writings had been popular. In 1922, a scholar named Frank Mathew said, "The neglect of the Sonnets of 1609 can only be explained by concluding that they were quickly suppressed." Many other scholars agree with this view — scholars who aren't Oxfordian or Tudorite. Why would the Sonnets be suppressed? If they're just love poems, it would be difficult to explain their suppression, but if they deal with the succession to the throne, it's easy to explain their suppression.

Now let's return to Sonnet 76, and look at the next line in our excerpt: "That every word doth almost tell my name." This is the line that Oxfordians love most. As Ogburn said, this line only makes sense if the sonnets weren't published under the author's real name, if the author was using a pseudonym. Elisabeth Sears said, "'every word' is almost an anagram for Edward Vere, as he tells us succinctly in the second half of the line, 'almost tells my name.'"

Now let's look at the first three lines in our excerpt together:

....Why write I still all one, ever the same....
That every word doth almost tell my name,
Showing their birth, and where they did proceed?

The last line makes no sense without the Prince Tudor theory. But if you view the Sonnets as poems about the author's 3-person family, as poems that drop hints about a secret liaison, and a secret child, then it makes sense to say "almost tell... their birth, and where they did proceed." In the Sonnets, Shakespeare tells us repeatedly and obliquely something that he couldn't say directly, something that preoccupied him, something that he thought about every day: "my son is the heir to the Tudor dynasty."

9. Truth and Beauty

The first 17 sonnets urge Southampton to marry and have children. The most natural explanation of these sonnets is that the poet was Southampton's father. As C. S. Lewis wrote of these sonnets, "what man in the whole world, except a father or a potential

father-in-law, cares whether any other man gets married?"[16]

In these first 17 sonnets, Shakespeare tells Southampton that if he has children, he will live on, and his parents will live on, but if he doesn't have children, both he and his parents will see their family die out. In other words, if the prince doesn't have children, the dynasty will perish.

We mentioned before that the poet sometimes refers to himself as "truth." One of Elizabeth's nicknames was beauty, and the poet sometimes refers to her as such. If we assume that Shakespeare and Elizabeth are "truth and beauty," Sonnet 14 becomes clear:

...truth and beauty shall together thrive,
If from thyself, to store thou wouldst convert;
  Or else of thee this I prognosticate:
  "Thy end is Truth's and Beauty's doom and date."

(The only obscure line here is the second line, "If from thyself, to store thou wouldst convert". This is another way of saying, "Have children. Don't keep yourself to yourself.")

Like Sonnet 14, Sonnet 1 urges Southampton to procreate in order to continue the Tudor dynasty:

From fairest creatures we desire increase,
That thereby beauty's Rose might never die

Again, "beauty" refers to Elizabeth. "Beauty's Rose" refers to Elizabeth's Tudor dynasty. (The Tudor rose combined the red rose of the House of Lancaster, with the white rose of the House of York.) Another poet, John Davies, referred to Elizabeth as "beauty's rose" in a poem written in 1599.[17]

While Sonnet 1 refers to Elizabeth as the rose, it refers to Southampton as the bud:

Thou that art now the world's fresh ornament,
And only herald to the gaudy spring,
Within thine own bud buriest thy content

Another poet, Thomas Nashe, addressed Southampton thus:

  sweet flower of matchless poetry
And fairest bud that red rose ever bore[18]

Isn't that an apt description for Shakespeare's child — "sweet flower of matchless poetry"? If we see Shakespeare as "matchless poetry," Elizabeth as the "red rose," and Southampton as the bud, Nashe is saying that Southampton was the son of Elizabeth and Shakespeare. "The red rose," Ogburn wrote, "was the symbol of the House of Lancaster, and it is inconceivable that Nashe did not know that what he wrote would be taken to identify Southampton as a scion of the Tudors."[19] (The Tudors were loyal to

the House of Lancaster, and later married into the House of York, thus uniting Lancaster and York.)

In his last years, Shakespeare realized that Southampton wouldn't succeed to the throne, and the dynasty would die out. In "The Phoenix and the Turtle," he wrote,

Truth may seem, but cannot be:
Beauty brag, but 'tis not she;
Truth and Beauty buried be.

10. Sonnet 39

Now I'm going to ask you to read the first four lines of Sonnet 39, and as you read, ask yourself if this sounds like heterosexual love, homosexual love, or parental love:

O! how thy worth with manners may I sing,
When thou art all the better part of me?
What can mine own praise to mine own self bring?
And what is't but mine own when I praise thee?

Doesn't this sound like parental love? These lines suggest that Shakespeare faced a problem in writing the Sonnets: how can he praise his beloved son with modesty ("with manners")? How can he praise his beloved son without seeming immodest, without seeming to praise himself? "How thy worth with manners may I sing?" If the poet's love weren't parental love, if it were heterosexual or homosexual love, he could praise his beloved without violating "manners".

11. Sonnet 71

No longer mourn for me when I am dead
Than you shall hear the surly sullen bell
Give warning to the world that I am fled
From this vile world with vilest worms to dwell:
Nay, if you read this line, remember not
The hand that writ it, for I love you so,
That I in your sweet thoughts would be forgot,
If thinking on me then should make you woe.
O! if, I say you look upon this verse,
When I perhaps compounded am with clay,
Do not so much as my poor name rehearse;
But let your love even with my life decay;
  Lest the wise world should look into your moan,
  And mock you with me after I am gone.

From a Tudorite perspective, the most significant line in this sonnet is line 8: "If thinking on me then should make you woe." It would indeed bring trouble to Southampton to tell people who his parents were, and to tell people that he was the rightful king. James I and Robert Cecil would send Southampton to The Tower immediately if he talked about his true parents. Usually a lover wants his beloved to

remember him, but in this case, the lover knows the danger that the beloved faces, so he warns him, “Do not so much as my poor name rehearse.”

In 1601, Southampton participated in The Essex Rebellion, which was led by his old friend and commander, the Earl of Essex. The goal of this rebellion was to destroy the Queen’s chief minister, Robert Cecil, a wily and ruthless hunchback who was at odds with Essex and Southampton. Despite the popularity of Essex, the rebellion failed to gain public support, and Essex and Southampton were arrested and confined in The Tower. Essex was soon beheaded, and some of his supporters were also executed, but Southampton was spared, perhaps because the Queen was unwilling to have her son and heir executed. Southampton spent two years and two months in The Tower. This was an agonizing time for his father, but it fueled his creative fires, and many of the Sonnets were written during this time. The Sonnets deal with what was weighing on the

mind of the author — his son’s arrest, imprisonment, threatened execution, liberation, and last but not least, his son’s loss of his kingdom.

Tudorites believe that while Southampton was in The Tower, Oxford negotiated with Robert Cecil to spare Southampton’s life, in return for Southampton abandoning his claim to the throne; apparently, Oxford’s policy was moderation, and submission to the powers that be. When Oxford died, however, James I feared that Southampton, who was hot-headed and willful, would pursue a bolder policy, and stake a claim to the throne. Although he had become a favorite with James I, Southampton was thrown in The Tower on the very day that Oxford died (June 24, 1604). But it soon became clear that Southampton wasn’t a threat to the king; the king’s panic subsided, and Southampton was released after just one night in The Tower.

Incidentally, Wikipedia makes no mention of the Prince Tudor theory; its article on Southampton never mentions that some people believe he was the son of Elizabeth and Shakespeare. On the other hand, Wikipedia does an excellent job of presenting both sides of the argument about Shakespeare’s identity; it has good articles on Shakespeare, the Authorship Debate, and the Oxford theory. The same is true of the Frontline documentary: it discusses the Oxford theory, but makes no mention of Prince Tudor. Clearly, the Oxford theory has gained far more adherents, and far more respectability, than the Prince Tudor theory. If it will take two centuries for the Oxford theory to gain wide acceptance, it will take three centuries for Prince Tudor.

12. The Trial

There are many dramatic episodes in the Shakespeare-Southampton story, and Hollywood will someday have a field day with it. Perhaps the most dramatic episode of all is the trial of Essex and Southampton.

There were 25 judges, chosen from the nobility. At the head of these judges was Shakespeare himself, the highest-ranking nobleman in the kingdom. Shakespeare had to sit in judgment on his own son, and had no choice but to sentence him to be hanged, drawn, and quartered (the sentence was later lightened to imprisonment). Among the accused, the leader was the Earl of Essex, one of the most colorful figures in English history; Essex had won glory in battle, and he had won the heart of the queen and the

people. Also among the accused was Southampton, the son of Shakespeare and Elizabeth, Prince Tudor incognito. One of the lawyers arguing against the Essex faction was Francis Bacon, one of the foremost philosophers that the English-speaking world ever produced, a man so eloquent that Ben Jonson said, "The fear of every man that heard him was, lest he should make an end."20 And then there was Lord Grey, sitting among the judges; Grey was a member of the Cecil faction, and a foe of Essex and Southampton. A month before the trial, Grey and his henchmen had attacked Southampton, and tried to kill him; Southampton's servant lost his hand in the fray.

During the trial, the wily Robert Cecil had been hiding behind a curtain (just as Polonius hides behind an "arras" in *Hamlet*). But when Essex accused Cecil of conspiring with the Spanish, Cecil came out from behind the curtain, and defended himself in a long speech.

Essex was a high-minded man, a noble nobleman. Earlier he had accused Cecil and his cohorts of conspiring against "all noble, virtuous, and heroical spirits."21 At his trial, Essex made a lofty speech, saying that "Man is governed by three laws: Nature, Reason, and God, and that his own action had been according to the law of Nature, Self-preservation, since he had known that his enemies were out to destroy him."22

The result of the trial was a foregone conclusion: the accused were condemned to death for treason. Although the trial was dramatic, and had an illustrious cast of characters, it didn't bring out the best in human nature. Bacon, like most of the other participants, was motivated by fear and self-interest, and Shakespeare was "tongue-tied by authority."

I might mention in passing that Shakespeare left no indication that he understood Bacon's importance as a thinker, nor does Bacon (if I remember correctly) indicate that he appreciated Shakespeare. While we study and admire the classics of past centuries, we may fail to appreciate the classics being written in our own time, "under our nose."

The execution of Essex is part of a larger trend in English history: the decline of the nobility, and the rise of the middle class, the "new rich." If Essex symbolizes the decline of the nobility, Robert Cecil (and his father, William Cecil) symbolize the rise of the middle class. The Earl of Oxford may be said to have participated in the decline of the nobility. His wealth declined, and many of his estates were sold. He had little political power, and lived most of his adult life in quiet retirement. His son didn't ascend the throne, and he couldn't even acknowledge his son as his own. His writings, though numerous, popular, and respected, had to be ascribed to a pseudonym, a front man. His feeling of defeat is expressed in Sonnet 66:

Tired with all these, for restful death I cry....
And strength by limping sway disabled
And art made tongue-tied by authority,
  Tired with all these, from these would I be gone,
  Save that, to die, I leave my love alone.

The second line in this excerpt ("And strength by limping sway disabled") refers to Robert Cecil, the limping hunchback. Since Oxford felt that he and his son had been defeated by Robert Cecil, he speaks of "strength by limping sway disabled." The next

line (“And art made tongue-tied by authority”) is of special interest to Oxfordians since it expresses the poet’s position in relation to the Cecils. The Cecils are “authority”; they have forced the author to conceal his identity: “art made tongue-tied by authority.” The last line (“Save that, to die, I leave my love alone”) expresses a parent’s concern about his child’s future. Again, it would be amusing to see how Stratfordians struggle to make sense of this sonnet.

In the Frontline documentary,23 Ogburn speaks of the poet’s despair, and he quotes Macbeth:

Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day
To the last syllable of recorded time;
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!
Life’s but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
And then is heard no more. It is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.

Ogburn is moved to tears when he thinks of the poet dying defeated and despairing. I don’t deny this despair, but I think it’s only part of the truth, only one side of the coin. Although defeated in a worldly sense, Shakespeare was victorious in a spiritual sense; he found solace in religion, in a Hermetic-mystical worldview that is especially evident in his last plays. (Frances Yates, a leading authority on the Hermetic Tradition and the Elizabethan occult, devoted a volume to Shakespeare’s last plays.) Shakespeare had a lifelong interest in Hermetism and the occult. Alan Nelson, a prominent Stratfordian who wrote a biography of Oxford, told me in an e-mail that Oxford was “deeply involved in the occult... around 1570” [when he was 20 years old], and that, in 1590, Oxford was in contact with John Dee, a prominent Hermetist.

I don’t agree with Ogburn that Shakespeare’s worldview is “pervasive skepticism.” Shakespeare was the victor as well as the vanquished. Perhaps this is true of many people; at the end of his long life, Jung was asked to sum it up: “I am astonished, disappointed, pleased with myself. I am distressed, depressed, rapturous. I am all these things at once, and cannot add up the sum.”24 To describe Shakespeare’s state of mind in his last years, one can quote Macbeth’s despairing speech, but one can also quote Miranda’s speech in *The Tempest*:

O, wonder!
How many goodly creatures are there here!
How beauteous mankind is! O brave new world
That has such people in’t!

T. S. Eliot said, “Dante made great poetry out of a great philosophy of life... Shakespeare made equally great poetry out of an inferior and muddled philosophy of life.” Like Ogburn and many others, Eliot failed to grasp Shakespeare’s worldview, Shakespeare’s Hermetic-mystical worldview. But the Hermetic Shakespeare is beginning to be discovered, thanks to Yates, Knight, and others. Someday it will be

said that Shakespeare made great poetry out of a great philosophy of life.

13. Sonnet 27

This sonnet is the linchpin of Hank's theory. Hank was the first to see that this sonnet was written on the night of the Essex Rebellion. Southampton has been imprisoned in The Tower, and his life is hanging by a thread. The next 80 sonnets, according to Hank, are written under the impact of Southampton's imprisonment, until finally, in Sonnet 107, Southampton is set free. Earlier critics have been baffled by Sonnet 27; in 1866, Gerald Massey wrote, "Suddenly we are all adrift, because the spirit of the verses so obviously changes."25

Sonnet 27 reflects the poet's anguish at the imprisonment of his son — his beloved son, whom he hoped would ascend the throne. All the poet's hopes have been dashed. His intense anguish is shown by his inability to sleep:

Weary with toil, I haste me to my bed,
The dear repose for limbs with travel tired;
But then begins a journey in my head
To work my mind, when body's work's expired:
For then my thoughts (from far where I abide)
Intend a zealous pilgrimage to thee,
And keep my drooping eye-lids open wide,
Looking on darkness which the blind do see.
Save that my soul's imaginary sight
Presents thy shadow to my sightless view,
Which, like a jewel (hung in ghastly night)
Makes black night beauteous, and her old face new.
  Lo! thus, by day my limbs, by night my mind,
  For thee, and for myself, no quiet find.

14. Sonnet 30

This sonnet is also one of the "sonnets of anguish." According to Hank, it was written three days after Southampton's imprisonment. The initial shock is subsiding, but a deep sorrow remains:

When to the sessions of sweet silent thought
I summon up remembrance of things past,
I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,
And with old woes new wail my dear time's waste:
Then can I drown an eye, unused to flow,
For precious friends hid in death's dateless night,
And weep afresh love's long since cancelled woe,
And moan th' expense of many a vanished sight:
Then can I grieve at grievances foregone,
And heavily from woe to woe tell o'er
The sad account of fore-bemoanèd moan,
Which I new pay as if not paid before.
  But if the while I think on thee, dear friend,

All losses are restored and sorrows end.

The first two lines are especially well-known, partly because Proust's translator chose to call Proust's multi-volume work *Remembrance of Things Past*. These two lines have a special significance for Hank's theory because they refer to the impending trial of Southampton; they contain two legal terms, "sessions" and "summon." At the time of writing, Oxford was being summoned to a session of court, to sit in judgment on Essex and Southampton.

When to the *sessions* of sweet silent thought
I *summon* up remembrance of things past

In one of his plays, Oxford uses these two legal terms in a legal context:

Summon a session, that we may arraign
Our most disloyal lady; for, as she hath
Been publicly accused, so shall she have
A just and open trial.26

15. The Dark Lady

Sonnets 127 to 152 are addressed to the Dark Lady, whom Hank identifies as Elizabeth. The poet is angry with the Dark Lady:

I have sworn thee fair, and thought thee bright,
Who art as black as hell, as dark as night.(Sonnet 147)

I see no reason why Shakespeare would have a deep, lasting anger for a mistress, but it's clear why he would have such anger toward Elizabeth: she refused to acknowledge her connection with him, she refused to acknowledge their son, she kept their son in prison, she allowed James to succeed to the throne instead of putting forward their son, etc. We feel anger toward people who have power over us; Elizabeth had power over Shakespeare, but no mistress did.

Furthermore, if the Dark Lady is Elizabeth, then the Sonnets have unity, they're all about Southampton and Elizabeth, they're all about the poet's 3-person family. (The poet himself tells us that he's ringing changes on the same theme: "Why write I still all one, ever the same," "One thing expressing, leaves out difference," etc.) But if the Dark Lady is a mistress — Anne Vavasour, or Emilia Lanier, or someone else — then the Sonnets aren't unified, they're a mixture of different themes.

In Sonnet 144, the poet writes,

Two loves I have of comfort and despair,
Which like two spirits do suggest me still:
The better angel is a man right fair,
The worser spirit a woman coloured ill.

Throughout the Sonnets, Shakespeare has been writing about his 3-person family —

Southampton, Elizabeth, and himself. Why would he suddenly switch, and bring in another woman, a mystery mistress?

The Dark Lady isn't necessarily dark in a literal sense, a physical sense. As the poet says in Sonnet 131, "In nothing art thou black save in thy deeds." Shakespeare uses language symbolically, and he often conceals his meaning; the Dark Lady may not be literally dark. If the poet wanted to vent his anger toward Elizabeth, and call her "black as hell," he couldn't do so openly, he would have to conceal his meaning. In a monarchy, one can't publicly describe the monarch as "black as hell." Shakespeare may have described the Dark Lady as physically dark in order to protect himself, and throw people off the scent.

One of Proust's most colorful acquaintances (Montesquiou) became one of his most colorful fictional characters (Charlus). While Montesquiou was thin ("a greyhound in a greatcoat"), Charlus was a big, burly man. When Montesquiou visited Proust, and complained about being maligned in Proust's novel, Proust said, 'Charlus isn't based on you, Charlus is a big, burly man.' Shakespeare could have used a similar defense, he could have said, 'that woman isn't Elizabeth, that woman is dark.'

16. The Monument

In what way does Hank's work differ from that of earlier Tudorites? According to earlier Tudorites, the Sonnets aren't a careful arrangement, but rather a jumble: "The 'Shakespeare' sonnets that deal with Elizabeth, Oxford, and their son are scattered throughout the entire sequence.... spread at random."27 Hank argues, on the other hand, that the Sonnets have a carefully-crafted structure, a numerical structure, and this structure creates a monument for his son.

The Old Prince Tudor regards certain sonnets as relevant to the Prince Tudor theory, and it focuses on these sonnets. Hank's view, on the other hand, is that all the sonnets are relevant to the Prince Tudor theory, and that Shakespeare is using different words to discuss the same theme over and over. (As he says in sonnet 76, "Why write I still all one, ever the same...")

The Old Prince Tudor connects certain sonnets to contemporary events, but Hank goes further, and argues that the sonnets are so closely linked to contemporary events that many of them provide a day-to-day record of Shakespeare's feelings about his son's imprisonment, trial, threatened execution, liberation, etc. According to Hank's theory, the sonnets are more than an autobiography, they're a diary (or at least, many of them are).

Hank draws upon the work of Alastair Fowler, the eminent Oxford University critic. Fowler isn't an Oxfordian, let alone a Tudorite, so he can't be accused of having a partisan bias. (The whole Oxford theory, and the Prince Tudor theory, can be proven from the works of Stratfordians. It would be an interesting exercise, for a young Oxfordian, to write Oxfordian and Tudorite essays that draw exclusively on Stratfordian writings.) Fowler argues that most literature, until the Romantic period, had a structure, an architecture — the very sort of structure that Hank finds in the sonnets. Fowler speaks of "numerological analysis" — the very sort of analysis that Hank engages in. Fowler discusses the sonnets, and concludes that "the spatial

arrangement of Shakespeare's sequence leaves little room for permutations" — a conclusion that agrees with Hank's theory. Hank argues that the numerical structure of the sonnets is similar to the numerical structure of two works that are probably by Shakespeare: *A Hundredth Sundrie Flowres* and *The Passionate Century of Love* (also known as *The Hekatomipathia*), both of which contain exactly 100 verses.

Not only pre-Romantic literature, but also pre-Romantic visual art, routinely had a numerical structure. Erwin Panofsky, the famous art historian, wrote an essay about this structure, but he realized that many readers would be uncomfortable with his argument (just as many readers are doubtless uncomfortable with Hank's argument). We think of art-works as inspired and capricious — not structured, let alone numerically structured. Panofsky speaks of "the modern, subjective viewpoint that a work of art is something utterly irrational. A modern spectator, still under the influence of this Romantic interpretation of art, finds it uninteresting, if not distressing, when the historian tells him that a rational system of proportions, or even a definite geometrical scheme, underlies this or that representation."28

Panofsky goes on to describe how Egyptian, Greek and medieval artists constructed human figures according to a numerical pattern (the face might be one-tenth of the whole body, the foot one-sixth, etc.). This approach to visual art didn't die out after medieval times; "the Italian Renaissance... looked upon the theory of proportions with unbounded reverence." The theory of proportions was the "favorite discipline" of Leonardo and Durer. The theory of proportions was more than a technique, it was a worldview, a belief that the universe had a rational structure, a numerical structure. The pre-Romantic artist, believing that the universe had such a structure, was apt to give his artistic creation a similar structure, whether it was a statue or a literary work. Perhaps he didn't do this consciously, but rather because it was his habitual frame of mind. The belief in a structured universe influenced not only artists, but scientists, too. Kepler thought that the number of planets, the intervals between them, etc. must conform to a rational plan.29

Today we don't think of the universe as having a rational plan, a numerical structure, and we don't think of art as having such a structure. We're apt to find it odd when Panofsky says that visual art, for thousands of years, had a numerical structure, and we're apt to find it odd when Fowler says that literature, for thousands of years, had a numerical structure, and we're apt to find it odd when Hank says that the sonnets have a numerical structure. But if we can bring ourselves back to the pre-modern worldview, and the pre-modern approach to literature, it isn't odd that the sonnets have such a structure. In fact, it would be odd if they didn't have such a structure. Hank's work is consistent with Fowler's, as Fowler's is consistent with Panofsky's. Hank's work will not only interest students of Shakespeare, it will interest students of intellectual history, because it illustrates the chief difference between the modern mind and the pre-modern mind — namely, the pre-modern tendency toward rational structure, numerical structure.30

17. Ridicule

At first glance, the Oxford theory seems wild, far-fetched, and the Prince Tudor theory even more so. But before one dismisses these theories, one should reflect that many theories must have seemed wild and far-fetched when they were first propounded.

Darwin's theory, for example, must have seemed far-fetched when it was first propounded. Mill said, "Every great movement must experience three stages: ridicule, discussion, adoption."

Just as Darwin's theory was once ridiculed, so too the Oxford theory invites ridicule, and the Prince Tudor theory even more so. Every thinker must be willing to bear some ridicule, because original ideas are apt to be ridiculed. As Cioran said, "A man who fears ridicule will never go far, for good or ill: he remains on this side of his talents, and even if he has genius, he is doomed to mediocrity."

But no one can be receptive to all original ideas, one must close one's mind at some point. If, for example, someone tells you that a wonderful new book proves that the moon is made of cheese, that you must read this wonderful book, that you must be open-minded, you'll doubtless refuse to read the book. Or if someone tells you that Robert Kennedy was behind the assassination of John F. Kennedy, you won't want to hear the evidence supporting this theory, you'll dismiss it out of hand. Open-mindedness has its limits.

My open-mindedness is sorely tested by some Oxfordian theories. The success of the Oxford theory and the Prince Tudor theory has prompted some Oxfordians to look for more secrets, more far-fetched theories. One Oxfordian argues that Oxford himself was the son of Elizabeth; another Oxfordian insists that Oxford met Cervantes in Sicily, and that *Don Quixote* alludes to Oxford. I find many of these theories distasteful, and I don't want to investigate them further, I prefer to ignore them.

Many Oxfordians reject not only these new theories, but also the Prince Tudor theory, which has a long history. The Prince Tudor theory is controversial among Oxfordians; some Oxfordians think that Prince Tudor is so wild that it's a discredit to the Oxford theory, and it should be passed over in silence. In short, many Oxfordians have the same attitude toward Prince Tudor that I have toward the newer, wilder theories. One might say that Oxfordians are divided over the question, "how open-minded should one be? Should one be open-minded toward a theory that one finds distasteful? At what point should one draw the line and say, 'this is a theory that I'm going to ignore'?"

18. Shakespeare and Goethe

Someone should write a "parallel life" of Shakespeare and Goethe. There are many parallels between them — aside from the obvious one that they were both great poets. Both were "Renaissance men" with a wide range of interests: Goethe was a painter, actor and scientist, while Shakespeare was an expert in music, plants, sports, etc. Both were involved in politics, and lived in close proximity to the levers of power (Goethe, however, wasn't involved in military affairs as Shakespeare was). Both were Northern Europeans who had a passion for Italy; they flourished in Italy, they found themselves in Italy. Goethe called Rome, "the land where I was absolutely happy for the first time in my life."31 Shakespeare's passion for Italy is evident in his plays, many of which are set in Italy. Both Goethe and Shakespeare were Hermetic thinkers; Goethe had a keen interest in the occult, and Jung said that Goethe's *Faust* was an alchemical work from top to bottom.32

I argued earlier that Shakespeare is both/and — both optimistic and pessimistic. The same is true of Goethe. One of Goethe's characters, Werther, "knew that the realities of existence are rarely to be grasped by Either-Or. And the reality of Goethe himself certainly eludes any such attempt.... He looked deep into the abyss, but he deliberately emphasized life and light."33 Goethe's view of life was both positive and negative, as Shakespeare's was.34

Goethe regarded Shakespeare as a father-figure, a second father. Just as a young child emulates his father, so a young adult emulates his second father. Doubtless the young Goethe emulated Shakespeare. Goethe would have had a keen interest in the identity of Shakespeare, just as he would have had a keen interest in the identity of his own father. Goethe would not have understood the common view that "it doesn't matter who Shakespeare was. We have the wonderful poetry, isn't that enough?" Shakespeare represents a high point of human achievement. If it doesn't matter who Shakespeare was, what does matter?

While looking back at my notes on Goethe, I found this: "Of what use are all the arts of a talent, if we do not find in a theatrical piece an amiable or great personality of the author? This alone influences the cultivation of the people."35 Goethe is saying that the personality of the author not only matters, it matters more than the work itself! Goethe thinks the personality of the author (his "amiable or great personality") is important because it provides people with a model or ideal, it can guide people toward culture, toward personal growth. Goethe himself was such a model or ideal, and often appeared in the dreams of Germans as a father-figure, an ideal.

If a Stratfordian reads this, he'll say, "Oxford had many faults, he was neither 'amiable' nor 'great'." I don't deny that Oxford had faults. Goethe and Shakespeare both had a dark side, a shadow side; as Jung said, "the brighter the light, the darker the shadow." Goethe could depict Faust and Mephistopheles because he was acquainted with both, he had both within himself, he had the light and the shadow. After Schiller met Goethe, he said, "it is a most peculiar mixture of love and hatred that he has inspired in me."36 Goethe said that he knew a man "who, without saying a word, could suddenly silence a party engaged in cheerful conversation, by the mere power of his mind. Nay, he could also introduce a tone which would make everybody feel uncomfortable."37 (Doubtless this un-named man is Goethe himself.) Goethe was acquainted with the occult power of the shadow.

In an earlier issue, I discussed Hamlet's "shadow power." Hamlet's negative thoughts have a negative effect on the people around him, many of whom die. As Knight put it, "The consciousness of death, and consequent bitterness, cruelty, and inaction, in Hamlet not only grows in his own mind disintegrating it as we watch, but also spreads its effects outward among the other persons like a blighting disease." Doubtless Shakespeare himself, who resembles Hamlet in so many ways, was both a genius and a 'negative thinker'.

But while Goethe and Shakespeare both had dark sides, they were, on the whole, great men, and impressed some of their contemporaries as such. Percival Golding said of Shakespeare, "I will only speak what all men's voices confirm: He was a man in mind and body absolutely accomplished with honorable endowments." George Chapman

called Shakespeare,

...the most goodly fashion'd man
I ever saw: from head to foot in form
Rare and most absolute...
He was beside of spirit passing great
Valiant and learn'd, and liberal as the sun,
Spoke and writ sweetly, or of learned subjects,
Or of the discipline of public weals.

Napoleon was more concise; after meeting Goethe, Napoleon said, "there is a man (*voilà un homme*)."

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Footnotes

1. letter to Robert Cecil, May 7, 1603 back
2. V, i, 52 back
3. letter to Robert Cecil, July, 1600 back
4. I, ii, 59 back
5. *The Man Who Was Shakespeare*, "Against A Sea Of Troubles," p. 54 back
6. "Ruling Class War," by David Brooks, September 11, 2004 back
7. *The Past Recaptured*, ch. 3. Proust also said, "Happiness is beneficial for the body but it is grief that develops the powers of the mind."(ibid) back
8. *Either/Or*, "Diapsalmata" back
9. See Hank Whittemore, *The Monument*, p. 2 back
10. ibid, p. 18 back
11. Quoted in Hank Whittemore, *The Monument*, p. 806. Hank is probably quoting from Knight's *Mutual Flame*. back
12. ibid, p. 807. Hotson was writing in 1962, several years after Knight. Hotson may have been influenced by Knight; Knight may deserve credit for being the first to see the theme of royalty in the Sonnets. back
13. Hank Whittemore, *The Monument*, p. 804 back
14. see Whittemore, p. 799 for the quotations from Barnfield and Marston back
15. Quoted in *Shakespeare and the Tudor Rose*, ch. 7, p. 56 back
16. Whittemore, p. xli back
17. ibid, p. 58 back
18. *Shakespeare and the Tudor Rose*, ch. 7, p. 56 back
19. Whittemore, p. 151 back
20. *Francis Bacon: The Temper of a Man*, by C. D. Bowen, ch. 5 back
21. *Shakespeare and the Tudor Rose*, ch. 8 back

22. ibid back
23. "The Shakespeare Mystery," originally broadcast April 18, 1989 back
24. *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, "Retrospect" back
25. Whittemore, p. 203 back
26. *The Winter's Tale*, II, iii back
27. *Shakespeare and the Tudor Rose* ((c) 1990, printed 1991), ch. 1 back
28. *Meaning in the Visual Arts*, ch. 2 back
29. See Lovejoy's *Great Chain of Being*, ch. 4 back
30. Hank's approach to the Sonnets reminds me of Jung's approach to the old alchemical texts. When Jung first began studying the old alchemical texts, he couldn't make sense of them. So he began making a list of key words — *sol*, *lapis*, *rex*, etc. For each of these key words, he jotted down all the passages in which they were found, and by studying these passages, he gradually grasped the meaning of these key words. You may think that *sol*=sun, *lapis*=stone, and *rex*=king, but in the alchemical texts, those words have a broader meaning, a symbolic meaning.

    Hank used a similar method with the Sonnets — listing key words, collecting the passages in which they occur, gradually grasping their meaning (lists of these words can be found on pages lix and 810 of Hank's *Monument*). In the Sonnets, words like beauty, truth, and rose have a broad, symbolic meaning, and this meaning must be understood before the Sonnets themselves can be understood. back
31. *Goethe: The History of a Man*, by Emil Ludwig, ch. 7 back
32. When I discussed Goethe on an Oxfordian forum, I was asked, "What's the best biography of Goethe?" I responded, "I'm not sure, I haven't found a good one. Georg Brandes wrote a full-length biography of Goethe (he also wrote a well-known biography of Shakespeare, the fake Shakespeare). Ludwig Lewisohn edited a long study of Goethe that consists of quotes from Goethe and his contemporaries. John G. Robertson wrote a Goethe biography that seems to be respected. Though I haven't read any of these books myself, they seem like good places to start, if you're seriously interested in Goethe. If you want a short biography of Goethe, I can't recommend anything, I don't know of any good ones. Goethe's autobiography (*Poetry and Truth*) is good, but long. Goethe's *Conversations with Eckermann* is full of deep thoughts, but is also long; Nietzsche called it, "the best German book."

    I don't know of any books that compare Shakespeare and Goethe. After all, Shakespeare was discovered quite recently, and most people still don't know who he is. And Goethe is no longer a household name — at least, not outside Germany. But Goethe is one of the few imaginative writers who can be compared to Shakespeare (along with Homer, Dante, Tolstoy, etc.). And Goethe has more in common with Shakespeare than anyone who has ever lived (as far as I know). back
33. Britannica back
34. Click here and here for more on thinkers who contradicted themselves, and the contradictory nature of truth. back
35. *Conversations with Eckermann*, March 8, 1827 back
36. *Goethe: The History of a Man*, by Emil Ludwig, ch. 9 back
37. *Conversations with Eckermann*, 10/7/27 back