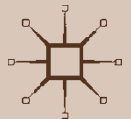


Michael Wainwright



THE RATIONAL SHAKESPEARE

Peter Ramus, Edward de Vere, and the
Question of Authorship



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Question of Authorship

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PREFACE

This book summarizes a project that emerged from an interest in the French philosopher Peter Ramus. Born in 1515, raised with a limited education, but determined on an academic life, Pierre de la Ramée settled in Paris in 1527. Poor but diligent, Ramée enrolled at the College of Navarre, where he assumed the name Petrus (Anglicized as Peter) Ramus. His search for a natural method of rational inquiry posited a readiness to court controversy in the pursuit of methodological truth. The manner of Ramus's return to first principles—he titled his master's thesis *Quaecumque ab Aristotele dicta sunt, commentitia sunt* (*All of Aristotle's Doctrines Are False*)—confirmed his refusal to compromise. Ramus's humanism was nothing less than radical.

“If the term ‘humanism’ in current discourse tends to connote an abstract resistance to the materiality of language,” explains David Norbrook, “then Renaissance humanism was a very different phenomenon” (249). Renaissance (or second or late) humanism was a reaction against its scholastic counterpart. As the dominant epistemological movement of the period, Renaissance scholasticism ostensibly forwarded the cause of rationalism in deferring to classical authority, but implicitly diverged from that objective in retaining much of the religious dogma of its medieval foundation. This divergence had already precipitated one irreparable schism. “An open conflict between rationalism and irrationalism broke out for the first time in the Middle Ages,” as Karl Popper chronicles, “as the opposition between scholasticism and mysticism” (434). Renaissance humanism, which emerged from this divided background, also forwarded the cause of

rationalism supposedly championed by late scholasticism, but did so unashamedly.

Ramus's principled attitude, his humanist vision, or Ramism, was at once a philosophy, a method of reasoning, and an approach to teaching. In returning to first principles, Ramus dismissed the preeminence of Aristotle, and this rejection had religious as well as philosophical implications. Of the three elements of Aristotelian dialectic—doctrine, nature, and exercise—Ramus dispensed with the first. Instead of doctrine, as advocated by the university, he prized the practical use (or exercise) of trained reason. Ramus's approach, as a condemnation of Aristotle, also censured the Catholic Church. The Parisian authorities formally addressed these contentions in 1544. The resulting edict at once suppressed Ramus's publications and restricted his duties as a university lecturer. Support and admiration for Ramus were never entirely lacking, however, and the authoritarian decree served to bolster his reputation. By 1547, the authorities felt duty bound to lift the edict, with Ramus emerging from these machinations as the most controversial philosopher and pedagogue of the age. He overshadowed the intellectual landscape of Europe.

Opposition from members of the University of Paris, as a center of late scholasticism, was to be expected. Yet, many academics from the University of Strasbourg and Heidelberg University, which were the bastions of late humanism, also balked at Ramus's uncompromising attitude. Nonetheless, some academics in Germany openly conferred with Ramus, as did their congeners in Switzerland. Ramus's reception in Italy also exhibited extremes. While Giordano Bruno labeled him an "archpedant," Leonardo Fioravanti and Simone Simoni defended Ramus, finding themselves ostracized as a result. During his time in Poland, Ramus received the offer of a well-endowed chair, a mark of academic respect that recurred in Hungary and Transylvania.

Ramus never visited Britain, but his impact there was profound, spawning successive generations of followers. The foremost of these Ramists came from Cambridge University. Thomas Smith (1513–77), an Essex farmer's son, headed the first generation. Ramus, as a commoner himself, dismissed the educational barrier of class; Ramism was a practical philosophy, and Smith accepted this basic practicality. At the university, Smith assembled a band of like-minded academics, which included John Cheke, Roger Ascham, and William Cecil (1520–98). These gifted and ambitious men followed Ramus's lead. They challenged the staid ideas of their elders in an attempt to extend the boundaries of knowledge. Ramism suited their

Protestant outlook, but following the execution of Cambridge University Chancellor Thomas Cromwell (d. 1540), Smith's coterie disbanded. Stephen Gardiner, the new chancellor, was hostile to the republican sentiments of second humanism.

Smith accepted a role in supervising religious reformation under King Edward VI. An important aspect of that reform was the Ramist promotion of a meritocratic state, a quasi-republic that would close (or even abolish) the tiers of social class. Having withdrawn from public life during the reign of Mary Tudor, Smith reentered government service under Queen Elizabeth, who sent him as ambassador to France. His first tour of duty lasted from September 1562 to May 1566. During this time, Smith counted Ramus among his *convictores* and their friendship influenced Smith's commonwealth vision, as published posthumously in *De republica Anglorum* (1581). Elizabeth valued Smith for his nerve on matters of foreign policy, but she found him personally irksome and his ideas on sovereignty too radical. William Cecil, Smith's junior and erstwhile pupil, became her trusted advisor. Ramism helped Cecil to order and manage the political and religious landscapes of Elizabeth's reign. He adopted but softened Smith's commonwealth vision, promoting a meritocracy that did not close (let alone abolish) the social hierarchy.

The long and unbroken friendship between Smith and Cecil owed much not only to their common grounding in Ramism but also to their shared charge, Edward de Vere (1550–1604). The Sixteenth Earl of Oxford, John de Vere, removed his son Edward from the family home to Thomas Smith's household during Edward's early childhood. The unexpected death of John de Vere on 3 August 1562 left Edward under the authority of the Master of the Court of Wards and Liveries. The queen had appointed Cecil to this position the previous year. Under Cecil's auspices, tutors followed the latest trends in humanism, and preeminent among these trends was Ramism. Of outstanding intellect, and making undoubted use of Cecil's magnificent libraries, Edward de Vere soon outstripped his teachers. He came to understand the weaknesses as well as the strengths of Ramism in practice as well as in theory.

This rounded appreciation separates Edward de Vere, Seventeenth Earl of Oxford, from William Shakspeare (1564–1616) of Stratford. Shakspeare boasted neither the educational nor the courtly provenance for such an understanding. In 1572, Shakspeare's father appeared in court on charges of illegal wool purchases; within four years, he was broke; there would be neither money nor time for his children's schooling. William Shakspeare

received a poor education. Nor did he have unlimited access to great libraries. These details, which confirm the gulf between the Ramist credentials of Oxford and Stratford, are crucial to the authorship debate that surrounds the name of William Shakespeare. For, “however deeply the poetic impulse stirs the mind to which it is granted,” as Giovanni Boccaccio asserts, “it very rarely accomplishes anything commendable if the instruments by which its concepts are to be wrought out are wanting” (40).

The present volume hereby supports the Oxfordian side of the authorship debate: Edward de Vere, Seventeenth Earl of Oxford, rather than William Shakspeare of Stratford, was the man behind the Shakespeare nom de plume. Indeed, the rationality that marshaled Oxford’s critical response to Ramism superintended not only his instrumental aim but also his ultimate goal. During his middle years, those that covered his majority (1571) to his second marriage (1591), Oxford was rarely self-denying. The conventional interpretation of this attitude damns him for squandering the inheritance of the oldest patrilineal dynasty in England. Such readings misconstrue Oxford’s instrumentality. Although born of noble ancestry, Oxford did not make that heritage his *raison d’être*. Oxford’s creative need was his ultimate priority. That need found satisfaction with a state annuity of £1,000, which Queen Elizabeth granted him in perpetuity in 1586.

When recast in ultimate and instrumental terms, therefore, Oxford’s largesse looks rather different: that supposed waste becomes a necessary investment. Oxford invested his inheritance in books, theatrical troupes, literary patronage, foreign travel, and other grist to his aesthetic mill. Put succinctly, his spending aimed toward his ultimate goal, and that goal was writing. Oxford’s state annuity sealed his compact with the Policy of Plays. That policy, as a promotion of the Protestant state under Queen Elizabeth, was (in part) a delayed reaction to the St. Bartholomew’s Day Massacre of 1572. That massacre, which immediately accounted for 10,000 Huguenots in Paris, and which finally accounted for over 100,000 Huguenots in France, had provoked anger, sorrow, and fear across England. One of the most prominent victims of the massacre had been Peter Ramus. Three of Elizabeth’s most outraged courtiers had been Thomas Smith, William Cecil (now Lord Burghley), and Edward de Vere.

As a pupil of two renowned Ramists, a member of Elizabeth’s court, and an annuitant associated with the Policy of Plays, Oxford would turn his critical appreciation of Ramism to excellent effect. Ramus accepted the inherence of natural reason: the dialectically capable mind understood its intersubjective environment as one composed of other dialectically capable

minds. Yet, Ramus eventually transformed the dialogue of negotiation into a one-way process of persuasion. When confronted with trenchant or well-founded opposition, he attempted to force an opponent into submission. If this approach failed, then an intersubjective impasse ensued. Coercion and deadlock were not the natural outlets for dialectic. When fully realized, Ramus's pedagogy encouraged this unfortunate transformation, creating singular minds incapable of discussion. The resultant barrenness matched that of second scholasticism. Ramus hereby failed Ramism. Oxford, who learned to treat intersubjectivity as a series of dramaturgical events, witnessed and experienced this practice firsthand, as a ward, as a courtier, and as Burghley's son-in-law. He also witnessed and experienced Burghley's efforts toward implementing Smith's commonwealth vision. Those efforts resonated to Ramus's demands for the recognition of personal merit.

The mature Oxford appreciated Ramus's committed but ultimately self-defeating Ramism, his dilemmas of intersubjectivity, his attempt to force opponents into submission, and his vision of a commonwealth built on assurance. Oxford intuitively valued these issues as matters of coordination. In these strategic situations, people must make choices in the knowledge that other people face the same options, that a coordination condition equivalent to silence pertains between the participants, and that the outcome for each person will result from everybody's decisions. Such a situation is particularly problematic when a logical approach to its solution establishes a circle of conjecture that demands an arbitrary choice from the solutions on offer.

While the works attributed to William Shakespeare reveal Oxford's intuitive appreciation of coordination problems, the theory of games of strategy (or game theory) formally models such situations. John von Neumann founded this mathematical discipline in 1928, but prescient authors have always appreciated coordinative dilemmas, however implicitly, and Shakespeare's insights remain among the most important. The present volume supports this claim by examining unrestrained Ramism in *Love's Labour's Lost*, pedantic reasoning in *Hamlet*, *Prince of Denmark*, and the most common coordination problems, the subset known as social dilemmas, with reference to *King John*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, and *King Henry V*. These primary texts ensure that this study covers the standard taxonomy of Shakespeare's dramas—comedy, tragedy, history, and problem play—in drawing on the basics of game theory, a theory mooted but ultimately denied by Ramus. Rather than review the multiple strands

of research that comprise the Oxfordian argument to date, the ongoing argument draws on the relevant material from this excellent back catalogue, with the social dilemmas of Oxford's life and times aligning him with the works of both Ramus and Shakespeare.

In total, then, the following book comprises two main sections. Section 1, "Ramus, Smith, Cecil, and Oxford," comprises five chapters. They present Peter Ramus's life and works in both historical and philosophical contexts, slowly introducing a detailed analysis of Ramism, on the one hand, and the exposure of Smith, Cecil, and Oxford to Ramism, on the other. Section 2, "The Rational Shakespeare," comprises an introduction, eight subsequent chapters, and a conclusion: the introduction summarizes the concepts and terms of game theory necessary to the dramaturgical analyses that follow; the book then closes with a concise summary of its findings.

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2018

Michael Wainwright

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SECTION I

Ramus, Smith, Cecil, and Oxford



CHAPTER 1

Peter Ramus and the Basis of Logic

*If I had to pass judgment upon my own works, I should desire
that the monument raised to my memory should commemorate
the reform of logic.*

—Peter Ramus, Preface, *Dialecticae libri duo* (qtd. in Frank
Pierpont Graves 104)

Three contemporary biographers chronicled the life and works of Peter Ramus: Nicolas de Nancel (or Nicolaus Nancelius) (1539–1610), Théophile de Banos (or Banosius) (c. 1540–95), and Johann Thomas Freige (or Joannus Freigius) (1543–83). Nancel, as Walter J. Ong explains in *Rhetoric, Romance, and Technology* (1971), was “first Ramus’ pupil and then for some twenty years his secretary, amanuensis, literary collaborator, and general understudy” (145); as a result, he earned the soubriquet “Little Ramus” (144); Nancel published *Petri Rami veromandui, eloquentiae et philosophiae apud Parisios profesaoris regii vita* in 1599. Banos “was matriculated at the University at Basel,” and as “an exiled French Protestant” (146) accompanied the similarly banished Ramus on his European travels of 1568–70; Banos published *Rami vita* (in *Commentaria de religione Christiana*) in 1576. Freige, who visited Ramus in Basel during Ramus’s exile, became thereafter “an ardent promoter of Ramus’ ideas” (150); Freige published *Petri Rami vita* in 1575. Of this trio of biographies, or *Three Lives*, Nancel’s study emerges as the most important. Despite the implications of his soubriquet, Nancel was a scrupulous

historian, while Banos and Freige, with their tendency toward hagiography, erred in their commitment to impartiality.

All significant biographies of more recent date—Charles Waddington’s *Ramus (Pierre de la Ramée)* (1855), Frank Pierrepont Graves’s *Peter Ramus and the Educational Reformation of the Sixteenth Century* (1912), Ong’s *Ramus, Method, and the Decay of Dialogue* (1958), and Marie-Dominique Couziniet’s *Pierre Ramus et la critique du pédantisme* (2015)—draw extensively on *Three Lives*. Recognizing Nancel’s disinterest helps Graves, Ong, and Couziniet to secure Ramus’s place within late humanism, so recommending them to the present study as the major sources of a carefully nuanced biography. This contextualization throws Ramus and his works into a sociohistorical relief that at once rationalizes and unifies that newly faceted material.

Born in Picardy in 1515, raised with a limited education, but determined on an academic life, Pierre de la Ramée settled in the University Quarter (or Quartier Latin) of Paris in 1527. Here, recounts Graves, Ramée “obtained employment as a servant to a rich student at the College of Navarre, and thus secured the [...] opportunities he craved” (20). The twelve-year-old Ramée “undertook to attend his master by day and pursue his own studies at night.” Ingenuity complemented determination. “By attaching a stone to a lighted cord, he provided an automatic alarm for awakening after a few hours of sleep” (20). Poor but diligent, Ramée eventually enrolled full time at the university: attending the College of Navarre, for which he assumed the Latinized name Petrus (Anglicized as Peter) Ramus, before transferring to the College Royal.

The university colleges, as Aleksander Gieysztor chronicles, “began as *hospitia*, boarding-houses for groups of students or fellows called *socii*. A few, including the first college, the Collège des Dix-huit, founded for eighteen needy students in 1180, and the College of St Thomas du Louvre founded in 1186, received endowments; there were even monastic colleges for students of theology. About 1257 Robert of Sorbon founded the college known as La Sorbonne, so that there should be a sufficient number of non-monastic students of theology” (116). The colleges attended by Ramus were relatively progressive. Joan I of Navarre, wife of King Philip IV of France, founded the College of Navarre in 1304. N. M. Troche describes how this college provided “the broadest education of all the institutions of the University of Paris. From the start, it was provided with chairs in theology, philosophy, and the humanities” (193). King Francis I of France (r. 1515–47), urged by Guillaume Budé (or Budaeus) (1468–1540) to

soften the dogmatic attitude of the university, founded the College Royal in 1530. The king's agnomen of the Father and Restorer of Letters rang true.

Budé's complaint maintained the pressure on late scholasticism initially applied by humanists such as Lorenzo Valla (c. 1407–57) and Rudolph (or Rodolphus) Agricola (c. 1444–85). They had blamed the intellectual estrangement between logic and human reasoning for the scholastic caution toward rationalism. By the middle of the fifteenth century, logic “had become a discipline studied for its own sake,” as Robert Goulding relates in “Method and Mathematics” (2006), “using its own incomprehensible jargon, and was of no practical interest” (64). As a broad response, aver Brian P. Copenhaver and Charles B. Schmitt, “Valla wanted his propositions pruned of solecism and needless abstraction” (224). Although Valla revealed the full extent of his project in *Repastinatio dialecticae et philosophiae* (1439), “it was largely through the agency of Agricola,” as N. Scott Amos documents, “that Valla's thinking about rhetoric and dialectic came to exercise a wider influence in the sixteenth century” (179).

Finished in 1480, but not published until 1515, Agricola's books on invention, *De inventione dialectica libri tres*, championed a comprehensive method. This approach focused on the selection and classification of material, while minimizing the application of syllogistic logic.¹ Agricola's three works testify to what Brendan Bradshaw classes as “northern humanism's epic phase” (95). This period lasted from the 1480s until the late 1530s. During this phase, the Protestant humanism of Jean Sturm (or Johannes Sturm) (1507–89) became another medium for Valla's influence. “The Brethren of the Common Life at Liège,” as James Veazie Skalnik documents, had inculcated Sturm with a preference for “practical instruction at the expense of scholastic exercise” (31, n. 72). Sturm advocated this prioritization, which set the humanist-scholastic debate within the context of religious reformation, when he arrived in Paris (in 1529) to teach at the College Royal.

Notwithstanding these intellectual pressures, especially Sturm's influence, second scholasticism remained preeminent at the University of Paris. In consequence, as Goulding stresses, classes in logic did little more than “teach the kind of practical reasoning useful for composing a speech or letter” (64). Ramus's “own education at the College of Navarre,” adds Graves, “was of the traditional sort, with its word for word interpretation of Priscian, Donatus, and Alexander of Villedieu in grammar, and its abstractions, trivialities, and hair-splitting disputations, depending absolutely upon the

authority of the medieval Aristotle" (16). This education incited rather than quelled Ramus's noncompliance—a personal quality that received further stimulation under Sturm at the College Royal.

Ramus accepted Aristotle's double definition of the word "art." *Techne* meant both the technique that fashions artistic creations and the reasoning that understands the precepts of that technique. Ramus also approved of the observations and classifications in Aristotle's *Historia animalium*. Even so, Ramus's rational response to the academic approach of the university, as his master's thesis of 1536 testified, was to invalidate the uncritical appeal to authority that characterized the late-scholastic attitude toward Aristotle. The title of Ramus's submission, reports Matthew Guillen, "was '*Quaecumque ab Aristotele dicta sunt, commentitia sunt*' ('All of Aristotle's doctrines are false'), or *Quaecumque ab Aristotele dicta essent, commentitia esse* ('Whatever is affirmed from Aristotle is contrived')" (44).

Ramus's thesis branded its author a "controversialist" (James J. Murphy 17). The university examiners were reluctant to pass this candidate. Ramus identified himself with Socrates. "He saw Socrates confronting what he took to be a situation similar to his own," writes Craig Walton in "Ramus and Socrates" (1970), "viz. a predominance of special pleading, argument from authority and insensitivity to the problems of self-examination" (120–21). Nevertheless, his examiners could not invalidate Ramus's logic and were obliged, however reluctantly, to award his degree with honors. The jubilant postgraduate celebrated his success with Aristotle's words: "[T]he truth is more precious and dear to me than my father himself, and I shall hold myself guilty to let my regard for a single person stand in the way of all" (qtd. in Graves 27).

In 1537, Sturm left the university to teach in Strasbourg, where he established the Protestant Gymnasium. Ramus remained in Paris, teaching the liberal arts, first at the College of Mans, then at the College of Ave Maria. While at the former institute, Ramus befriended the young Charles of Lorraine (1524–74). While at the latter institute, Ramus befriended Omer Talon (or Audomar Talaeus) (c. 1510–62). This professor of rhetoric would hereafter remain a trusted colleague and an enthusiastic supporter of Ramus's reforms.

The fundamentals that Ramus developed into an alternative to late scholasticism concern what analytical philosophers now call *protologic*. Protologic "is not a logical *system* as such," explains Robert Hanna, "but rather a single set of *schematic logical structures*, in the form of a coherent repertoire of metalogical principles and logical concepts" (43; emphasis

original). Hanna argues that the human mind is endowed “with an innate constructive modular capacity for cognizing logic,” which makes its possessor “a competent cognizer of natural language, a real-world logical reasoner, a competent follower of logical rules, a knower of necessary logical truths by means of logical intuition, and a logical moralist” (xviii). This competent cognizer is both *procedurally* and *substantively* rational according to Derek Parfit’s definition of these terms. Individuals who imagine the overall effects of their possible actions, assess the probabilities of alternative outcomes, and follow other concomitant rules are “*procedurally* rational” (1:62; emphasis original), whereas *what* they choose rather than *how* they choose concerns their substantive rationality.

“Something protological,” avers Hanna, “is built innately into human rationality itself” (xviii). Ramus’s principled attitude, or *Ramism*, accommodated this precondition.² “Philosophy was not the arcane pseudoscience of the theologians, but something else altogether,” as George Huppert explains of Ramus’s intellectual ethos, “a method of reasoning—the only method—which was so natural, so simple, that it had always been practiced, even in pre-historic times” (23).

In 1543, Ramus promoted his academic principles in what Graves calls “two epoch-making books on logic” (30): *Dialecticae partitiones* and *Aristotelicae animadversiones*. *Dialecticae partitiones* outlines a set of basic precepts, with one of Ramus’s occasional acquiescence to Cicero’s findings in *Paradoxa Stoicorum* amounting to a particularly good summary of Ramus’s fundamental separation of (intellectual) humans from other (nonintellectual) animals. Cicero laments how his compatriots “hold fast to the conviction, which they champion with zealous devotion, that the chief good is pleasure.” This behavior is bovine rather than hominine. “On you,” counsels Cicero, “has been bestowed by God, or else by Nature, the universal mother as she may be called, *the gift of intellect*, the most excellent and the divinest thing that exists: will you make yourself so abject and so low an outcast as to deem that there is no difference between you and some four-footed animal?” (265; emphasis added).

The second edition of *Dialecticae partitiones*, which exhibits greater care in formal honing than the first, appeared in the same year as its forebear, but under the title *Dialecticae institutiones*. Of the three elements of Aristotelian dialectic—*doctrine*, *nature*, and *exercise*—Ramus dispenses with the first: doctrine, as sycophantically espoused at the University of Paris, bore little resemblance to natural dialectic. Ramus prized the practical use (or exercise) of reason as an inborn faculty. Moreover, Ramus wished

to present the proper, unified shape of dialectic, which he determined to set out in unbroken form. From this desire, observes Ong, “grows the most striking expression of his extensional or quantifying mental habits” (*Decay* 280), which Ramus calls “Solon’s Law,” and which he will later apply to other arts, including grammar and rhetoric. “While he makes no explicit mention of humanist doctrines in the *Dialecticae*, such as the intrinsic perfectibility of human nature, many of the examples that he employs,” as John Charles Adams states in “Ramus, Illustrations, and the Puritan Movement” (1987), “follow this theme, and none of the others contradict it” (199).³

In the second of his distinct volumes from 1543, the far more contentious *Aristotelicae animadversiones*, Ramus posited four major challenges to second scholasticism. First, he questioned the Aristotelian belief that logic formed a subset of rhetoric, with the two disciplines inseparably entwined. Nor was rationality, as Aristotle held, subservient to rhetorical expression; indeed, Ramus committed himself to making dialectic the pre-eminent discipline.

Second, and to ensure this elevation, Ramus subjected Aristotelian logic to a severe examination. This analysis showed how Aristotle’s elaborations had muddled Aristotle’s account of logic; simplicity, according to Ramus, enhanced usefulness; the two separate logics favored by Aristotle—one for dialectical invention, the other for indisputable (or apodictic) judgment—required, therefore, a singular reinterpretation. Furthermore, as Murphy contends, Aristotelians had “distorted his books over many centuries” (15), with Ramus’s examination in *Aristotelicae animadversiones* citing the “desperatione” (107) of Aristotle’s acolytes, whose blind adherence undercut their intellectual confidence in a self-mystifying manner. The intervention of Boethius (or Anicius Manlius Severinus Boëthius) (c. 480–c. 525) was typically problematic: in attempting to clarify Aristotelian dialectic, while retaining two distinct logics, Boethius compounded Aristotle’s confusions. Put succinctly, as summarized by Richard M. Waugaman in “Maniculed Psalms in the de Vere Bible” (2010), “Aristotle’s authority [had] distorted centuries of scholarship by ignoring new evidence because of the misguided use of deductive reasoning based on his sometimes false premises” (116).

Ramus failed to see any merit in Aristotelian dialectic. He even accused Aristotle of childish ineptitude. Being less severe with Ramus than Ramus was with Aristotle, however, Graves adjoins a caveat: “[W]e must recall the dogmatism of the times, the stupidity and fanaticism of the defenders of Aristotle,

and the intolerable yoke with which they were endeavoring to burden all intelligence and love of truth, science, and progress” (144). To Ramus, Aristotle’s notion of two separate logics forestalled the production of fruitful knowledge. “Taking account of what he considered to be man’s inability to secure an apodictic middle term,” as Walton notes in “Ramus and Bacon on Method” (1971), “Ramus intended to develop one dialectical logic to include both invention [*inventio*] and judgment [*disposito*]” (296).

Importantly, while the results of this intention lack enough detail to enable a point-for-point comparison with Aristotle’s separate logics, Ramus continued to navigate dialectic with the basics of two-valued Aristotelian logic. Ramus’s dialectic abides by categorical (or attributive) and hypothetical (or conditional) propositions, and understands any proposition as either true or false. A categorical proposition affirms or denies according to its predicate. A hypothetical proposition contains two subcategories: the conjunctive, with the form “if *A*, then *B*,” and the disjunctive, with the form “either *A* or not *A*.” In other words, two-valued Aristotelian logic, which is formal in the modern sense of the term, underpins Ramus’s understanding of rationality. This understanding distances Ramus from both Agricola and Sturm. While Agricola championed a comprehensiveness of method, he acknowledged the uncertainty that pervades the subjects studied by that method. Similarly, Sturm “divided logic into apodictic, which arrived at necessary conclusions from necessary proofs, and dialectic, which argued *probabiliter*.” In contrast, Ramus remained “hostile to the idea of logic as probabilism” (John Monfasani 200).

The third challenge to late-scholastic thinking forwarded by Ramus in *Aristotelicae animadversiones* criticized the outdated traditions of teaching. In taking Sturm’s influence in a new direction, Ramus’s dialectic reorganized pedagogy to ensure the teaching of that dialectic. Ramus hereby “assaulted both scholastic and humanist Aristotelianism,” as Couzinet elucidates, “exposing himself to the reactions of all Aristotelians” (324). His uncompromising policy incited opposition to Ramism not only at the University of Paris, where an outcry was to be expected, but also at the University of Strasbourg and Heidelberg University, the main strongholds of late humanism. In Paris, Ramus’s *Dialecticae* and *Aristotelicae animadversiones* provoked the university hardcore, who were “masters of arts” (Ong, *Decay* 23) with a strong theological bent. Joachim de Périon and António de Gouveia, two of these academics, and both devout Catholics, immediately published their respective defenses of Aristotle: *Pro Aristotele in Petrum Ramum orationes* (1543) and *Pro Aristotele responsio adversus*

Petri Rami calumnias (1543); each denied the existence of a single or pure dialectical logic; and each charged Ramus with attempting to sabotage the curriculum. The unease shared by humanists at Strasbourg and Heidelberg supported these sentiments. The resultant reactionism would help to fuel the *critique of pedantry*—what Couzinet defines as “the philosophical analysis of the pedantic degeneration of humanist education” (29)—that would soon characterize a major oppositional stream to Ramist thought.

Ramus’s fourth significant challenge to second scholasticism dismissed Aristotle’s *Metaphysics*. The theological implications of this rejection were significant: the bible rather than exegesis offered intimate access to God. To discourse well required the biblical word. “Thou shalt get a singular dexterity and volubility of holy language, being able to utter thy minde in pure Scripture,” as John Trapp (1601–69) would contend: “*Loquamur verba Scripturae*, saith that incomparable Peter Ramus, *utamur sermone Spiritus Sancti*” (264–65). More immediately, and despite the (admittedly reluctant) findings of his examination board eight years earlier, Ramus’s most ardent adversaries at the University of Paris refused to relinquish their (uncritical) reliance on Aristotle. Instead, they simply condemned Ramus’s publications. Eventually, Guillaume de Montuella, principal of the College of Beauvais, presented *Dialecticae* and *Aristotelicae animadversiones* before the faculty of theology for censure. “The medieval Aristotle,” as Graves explains, “was still protected by the church, and the two were so thoroughly identified as to be almost indistinguishable” (72). An attack on Aristotelian authority was an attack on the authority of God.

The affair came before parliament; that body failed to arbitrate, so Ramus’s detractors brought their complaint before the king. Under advice from Pierre Duchâtel, the Bishop of Mâcon, King Francis entrusted the matter to a five-man commission. Each party chose two of these commissioners; the king chose the fifth. “Ramus succeeded in getting two talented personal friends to act for him,” as Graves documents, “but, although their arguments completely vanquished the other three judges, who were zealous Aristotelians, they were overborne and withdrew from the farcical trial in disgust” (34). Hereafter, as Walton records in “Ramus and Socrates,” Ramus’s opponents “persuaded Francis I to direct a verdict of guilty” (121), with the commission deeming Ramus’s “deviation from the university curriculum,” as Couzinet chronicles, a danger to “public order” (306). Under the sentence imposed on 26 March 1544, both the contentious *Aristotelicae animadversiones* and the less controversial *Dialecticae* were “suppressed by all available methods” (Waddington 47). The king’s agnomen now rang rather hollow.

The additional stipulation that Ramus must teach neither logic nor philosophy confined his lectures at the College of Ave Maria to the classics and mathematics. As Goulding emphasizes, Ramus held mathematics, “in particular esteem.” He spent his “mornings being coached [...] by a team of experts” (“Method” 63); he spent his afternoons lecturing on mathematics; and he was soon bringing his revisionism to bear, as his first publication in the field, a Latin version of *Euclid’s Elements* (1545), attested. This volume charges Euclid with disciplinary misrepresentation. Just as Aristotle had confused the art of logic, so Euclid had distorted the art of mathematics. In the same year as this publication, the principal of the College of Presles, Nicolas Lesage, invited Ramus to take charge of the school. Lesage wished to retire; he deemed Ramus the best possible successor; Ramus accepted. This effective promotion brought the rigidity of Ramus’s professional ethos to the fore: discipline at the college, as Ong remarks, “was strict at Ramus’ own insistence” (*Rhetoric* 149).

With King Francis I’s death in the spring of 1547, Henry II (1519–59) succeeded to the throne, and the courtly influence of the new monarch’s former preceptor John (b. 1498), Cardinal of Lorraine (r. 1518–50), notably increased. The cardinal and his brother Claude (b. 1496), Duke of Guise (r. 1528–50), “represented the extreme Catholic party,” as Graves details, “and Ramus, while endeavoring to dethrone Aristotle, had remained a member of the church in good standing” (71). Support and admiration for Ramus were never entirely lacking; the authoritarian decree served to bolster his reputation, so the cardinal almost immediately “procure[d] from the king an abrogation of the edict” (41) against Ramus. Free to develop his thoughts openly, Ramus proceeded to reassess rhetoric, the art he considered intimate with, but separate and subservient to, dialectic. The first result of this deliberation, which Ramus dedicated to the Cardinal of Lorraine, was *Rhetoricae distinctiones in Quintilianum* (1549).

This volume opens with Ramus’s post-edict summation of his previous findings on Aristotelian dialectic, which “both lacked many virtues and abounded in faults” (79). Aristotle, maintains Ramus,

left out many definitions and partitions of arguments; instead of one art of invention embracing the ten general topics—causes, effects, subjects, adjuncts, opposites, comparisons, names, divisions, definitions, witnesses—he created unfathomable darkness in his two books of *Posterior Analytics* and eight books of *Topics* with their confused account of predicables, predicaments, enunciations, abundance of propositions, and the invention of

the middle term; in his treatment of simple syllogisms he did not collect the rarer ones; he gave no instruction on connections; he was completely silent about method; in a loud sophistic debate over quite useless rules he handed down to us nothing about the use of the art as a universal, but only as a particular. (79–80)

In response, asserts Ramus, “we have added to the art the virtues it lacked; we have uncovered these various faults and, I hope, have abolished them; we have revealed its true use and have shown it to be common to all things” (80). In fine, according to Ramus’s syllogism, “[i]n every art one should teach as many parts as exist in its proper, natural subject matter, and no more./To the subject matter of the art of dialectic, that is to the natural use of reason, belongs the skill of inventing, arranging, and memorizing./Therefore it should deal with the same number of parts” (105).

The main targets of Ramus’s latest publication, however, were Cicero and Quintilian. For Ramus, as Talon reports, rhetoric was “the art of effective speaking” (1–2); “two parts, style and delivery,” as Ramus emphasized, were “the only true parts of the art of rhetoric” (90); and Ramus’s overarching objection to orthodox opinion on that twofold art again concerned the uncritical appeal to authority. Whereas dialectical deference bowed before Aristotle and mathematical deference bowed before Euclid, rhetorical deference bowed before Cicero and Quintilian. This respect was misplaced. Cicero “transferred to rhetoric almost all Aristotle’s obscurity concerning invention and arrangement, and indeed also style, confusedly making one art from the two” (80).

Despite drawing on Cicero’s *Paradoxa Stoicorum* for his *Dialecticae*, Ramus’s application of Solon’s Law exposed “Cicero’s and Quintilian’s failure to keep dialectic and rhetoric distinct from one another” (Ong, *Decay* 280). As Erasmus (or Desiderius Erasmus Roterodamus) (1466–1536), Justus Lipsius (1547–1606), and Ramus himself acknowledged, the supposedly Attic style of Cicero, therefore, manifested two extremes: the selfless, restrained, and virtuous practice of *De officiis*; and the selfish, unrestrained, and vituperative practice of *Pro Milone* and *In Catilinam*. The resultant mixture of these extremes was a cloying, verbose, and undisciplined style that earned the epithet “Asiatic.”

“Greeks had, naturally enough, characterized Persians and others to the East of Athens as ‘Asiatic,’” expounds Rosalie Littell Colie, “meaning sensuous, sybaritic, self-indulgent, rich, materialist, decorated, soft. According to the paradigm, Asiatics lived a life of ease, delicacy, even of sloth, surrounded

by ornate works of art and elaborate amusements for body and spirit.” Slowly, as Colie maintains, “the moral disapproval leveled at their eastern neighbors came to be applied to a style of oratory conceived as ‘like’ Persian life, a style formally complex, ornate, decorated and elaborate” (171). For John Wilders, “the most distinctive feature of this style [was] its hyperbole” (51). The result, explains Kyle DiRoberto, was “a verbal ‘copia’ of voluptuous description and linguistic play. This effeminate style was also associated with youthful prodigality, youth being conceived as a period in one’s life of gender ambiguity” (759). Hence, in his *Ciceronianus* (1528), as Patricia A. Parker notes, Erasmus “speaks of seeking in vain in Ciceronian eloquence for something ‘masculine’ and of his own desire for a ‘more masculine style.’” Similarly, the mature Lipsius “claims no longer to like the Ciceronian or Asiatic Style: ‘I have become a man and my tastes have changed. Asiatic feasts have ceased to please me: I prefer the Attic’” (14).

For Ramus, as for Erasmus and Lipsius, the rhetorical corruption and enervation induced by Cicero required correction. In *Brutinae quaestiones* (1547), as DiRoberto details, Ramus “blames Cicero for making rhetoric the whore of wisdom rather than its ‘handmaid’; he adds that the softness of Cicero’s style is ‘scarcely adequate for a noble man,’ and that he ‘spurn[s] and condemn[s] it as worthy of an unassuming woman’” (759). Just as the acolytes of Aristotle had further muddled logic and the followers of Euclid had further misrepresented mathematics, so the stylistic descendants of Cicero had further damaged rhetoric. The interdisciplinary extent of this corruption was such that each art now lacked organizational structure; and “Ramus, with strong support in the royal entourage,” as J. H. M. Salmon avers, “made new converts in the parlement and the university” (36). Nonetheless, “even the humanists, although they were free from the scholastic verbosity and the digressions that appear in most of the textbooks of the times,” as Graves adds, “taught rhetoric according to Cicero and Quintilian” (134). Thus, while most sixteenth-century humanists “borrowed extensively from rhetorical works of Cicero and Quintilian to develop a highly rhetoricized logic” (Goulding, “Method” 64), Quintilian suffered as Cicero did under Ramus’s inspection.

In *Rhetoricae distinctiones in Quintilianum*, Ramus classes Quintilian’s definition of an orator—“I teach,” [Quintilian] says, “that the orator cannot be perfect unless he is a good man. Consequently I demand from him not only outstanding skill in speaking but all the virtuous qualities of character”—as “useless and stupid.” Ramus employs dialectic to prove this damning conclusion: “[L]et us lay down this first proposition

of a syllogism:/The definition of an artist which covers more than is included within the limits of the art is faulty./Then let us add to the first proposition we have put down:/But the definition of the artist of oratory handed down to us by Quintilian covers more than is included within the limits of the art" (84). Ramus "conclude[s] therefore:/Quintilian's definition of the orator is as a result defective" (85). This assessment exemplifies the fact that Quintilian "lacked one instrument but an absolutely essential one for the teaching of his art—the syllogism, I repeat, the syllogism" (146). What is worse, Quintilian's "lack of judgment" conflated this deficiency, causing "his vanity to overflow" (104).

Ramus's reformulation of the intimate association between dialectic and rhetoric further distanced him from late humanism as well as from late scholasticism. "To a great extent, in the ancient cultures," expounds Ong, "rhetoric was related to dialectic as sound was to sight. This is not to say that rhetoric was not concerned with the clear and distinct, nor that dialectic, as the art of discourse, was not concerned with sound at all." The two arts were not identical, but neither were they mutually exclusive. The academics of Ramus's time generally held the same opinion. In contrast, Ramus at once separated rhetoric from dialectic and understood the two arts to be "correlative" (*Rhetoric* 147). The difference was obvious: "[R]hetoric was concerned with what was resonant and closer to the auditory pole; dialectic with what was relatively silent, abstract, and diagrammatic" (*Decay* 280). Ramism conceived of dialectic and rhetoric analogically—both in their entirety and in their parts—with "extended, and hence quantified surfaces"; and because "two extended objects cannot occupy the same space, at least in the ordinary experience of men," dialectic and rhetoric remain quantitatively distinct (*Decay* 280). Rhetoric and dialectic were both further apart and more aligned than convention admitted.

Overall, then, as Kees Meerhoff asserts, Ramus's "concern was to modernise logic, the *ars artium*, and its companions grammar and rhetoric" (141). The order in which one learned these arts, as *Rhetoricae distinctiones in Quintilianum* makes plain, was crucial to this enterprise. "The first is grammar, since it can be understood and practiced without the others; the second is rhetoric, which can be understood and practiced without all the others except for grammar" (90), which teaches the pupil "how he should divide a speech with punctuation and how he should mark off the clauses" (150). Learning the arts in the wrong order would perpetuate the confusions of the past.

Concerning rhetoric, explains Graves, Ramus first divides his subject into *elocutio* (or expression) and *pronuntiatio* (or action). He defines *elocutio* “as the elegant adornment of speech, and he divides it into ‘tropes’ and ‘figures,’” which he alternatively names “turnings” and “shapes,” respectively. Tropes, which encapsulate the nonliteral use of single words, comprise metonymy, irony, metaphor, and synecdoche. Figures, which encapsulate both figures of diction and figures of thought, concern “a change of dress in a combination of words.” Figures of diction manifest “a change in the outer form, indicated by a turn in the rhythm or meter” (136). These figures come under prosody. Figures of thought indicate “some movement of the mind expressed in speech, and include apostrophe, personification (*prosopopoeia*), rhetorical question, and other means of enlivening a speech and captivating an audience” (137). These figures come under grammar.

While furthering his divergence from late humanism as well as from late scholasticism, Ramus’s reformulations of mathematics and rhetoric did not reproduce the outcry provoked by his revision of dialectic, and the Cardinal of Lorraine managed to persuade King Henry II to appoint Ramus to a new chair of eloquence and philosophy at the College Royal. The year was 1551. Ramus’s promotion incensed the “Aristotelian partisan” (Waddington 43) Jacques Charpentier (or Jacobus Carpentarius) (1524–74). From “a rich and well-known family with many powerful patrons, especially among the clergy,” as Graves relates, Charpentier had by “the age of twenty-five manipulated himself into the rectorship of the university” (45). Yet, while the rector despised his baseborn colleague as a parvenu, the general hostility toward Ramus continued to cool. He was relatively free to promote and develop his philosophical and pedagogical reforms. “The utterances of Ramus were no longer confined to the students of a single college,” observes Graves, “but resounded throughout Paris, and an innumerable body of students not only from all parts of France, but from many other countries of Europe, flocked to hear him” (55).

Ramus’s demotion of invention and arrangement seemed antithetical to the promotion of artistic creativity. Yet, beyond its uncritical tendency toward Aristotle, what struck Ramus most forcibly about late scholasticism was its practical uselessness in both the arts and life. Ramus had summed up this frustrations in *Scholae dialecticae* (1548): “[N]ever amidst the clamors of the college where I passed so many days, months, years, did I ever hear a single word about the applications of logic” (4:151). For him, the experiences and observations of reasoning in daily life demonstrated the natural aim of dialectic: the rules of thought ought to facilitate commonsense.

Within a year of Ramus's appointment to the chair of eloquence and philosophy, as Chunglin Kwa reports, "Estienne Pasquier, a historian and member of the Bordeaux regional parliament, referred to Paracelsus, Copernicus, and Ramus as the three men who were turning tradition upside down" (100). Nevertheless, while Ramus's post-edict publications reasserted many of his basic tenets—"antediluvian men, who already understood mathematics," as Ramus reiterates in *Dialectique* (or *Institutions of Dialectic* [1555]), "were practiced in logic" (11)—they also tempered his earlier judgments. In particular, *Scholae dialecticae* moderated the excesses of *Aristotelicae animadversiones*. Hence, in praising the universal nature of poetry (its ability to express the common behavior of humankind), while regretting the specific nature of history (its restriction to particular events), Ramus acknowledged that Aristotle's wisdom had unknowingly alighted on the a priori framework of logic. To the detriment of philosophy, however, the Peripatetics "moved away from a genuine love of wisdom and devoted themselves slavishly to the love of Aristotle" (13); as a result, they failed to examine, review, and exercise the precepts they had inherited. In Ramus's mature judgment, as evinced in *Scholae dialecticae*, and confirmed in *Dialecticae libri duo* (1556), which was his final original publication dedicated to dialectic, the last creditable dialectician of the Aristotelian school was Galen (Aelius [or Claudius] Galenus) (c. 130–c. 210). Hereafter, the Peripatetics effectively shut and barred the door to the consistent practice of logical principles.

In 1557, Ramus also mitigated his criticisms of Cicero and Quintilian, with the publication of his own *Ciceronianus*. Classed as "useless and stupid" (84) in *Rhetoricae distinctiones in Quintilianum*, Quintilian's definition of an orator is distinctly reappraised eight years later. Ramus now appreciates the decisive factor for Quintilian. "Virtue has the first place," concedes Ramus, "not only because without virtue skill in speaking is something unhealthy but also because virtue by itself is eloquent and skillful and full of faith, which is the head of eloquence" (qtd. in Judith Rice Henderson 46–47). Oratorical assessment should "draw forth the stages of life, prudence of teachers, types of disciplines, labors of studies, and everything of continence, fortitude, wisdom, justice, of the whole life, as if presenting a story, so that it may appear how the good man skilled in speaking well, that is, the orator, is produced" (qtd. in Henderson 46). In this way, Ramus "proceeds to contrast unethical orators of the classical period with virtuous ones" (47), as Henderson notes, with Cicero becoming "the principal model for schoolboys precisely because he is a good man skilled in

speaking" (46). Teachers and students should "embrace M. Tullius Cicero, not for some fault or toy," asserts Ramus, "but for the whole body, or rather spirit, and for the whole life" (qtd. in Henderson 46).

Two years after his *Ciceronianus*, Ramus published *Grammaticae libri quatuor*, which concerns etymology, accident, and syntax. In addition to confirming his assignment of elocution to the field of rhetoric, this foray into grammar consolidated Ramus's overall approach to the standard trivium of grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic. Then, in *Scholae in liberales artes* (1569), Ramus reaffirmed his fundamental approach to logic. In this work, he muses over methodology, stating how "someone recently wrote that Ramus teaches the method of Plato, and condemns that of Aristotle" (2). This commentator "is educated and caring," but he cannot have studied "the logic of Ramus," which follows "only one method, which was that of Plato and Aristotle as well as Hippocrates and Galenus." This singular approach is also "found in Virgil and Cicero, Homer, and Demosthenes; it presides over mathematics, philosophy, and the judgments and conduct of all men" (2–3). Logic, the *ars artium*, undoubtedly develops from a single authority, "but is neither the invention of Aristotle nor Ramus" (3), because that authority is reason itself. Autotelic by definition, as Ramus asserts in *Dialectique*, rationality founds and regulates rational authority: "Almighty God alone is the perfect logician" (84).

NOTES

1. Syllogistic logic draws on two *propositions* (or premises) that are either given or assumed, with a deductive conclusion stemming from a term common to these propositions.
2. Critical rationalism is, therefore, both the guiding attitude and the focus of the present study. The alternative to critical rationalism is either its complement in uncritical (or comprehensive) rationalism or its alternative in irrationalism.
3. *Dialecticae* hereon refers to both *Dialecticae partitiones* and *Dialecticae institutiones*.



CHAPTER 2

Thomas Smith, Edward de Vere, and William Cecil

He was admitted in Queen's college in the aforesaid University; a college then reckoned in the rank of those houses that favoured Erasmus and Luther, and harboured such as consorted privately together to confer about religion, purged from the abuses of the schools and the superstitions of Popery.

—John Strype, *The Life of the Learned Sir Thomas Smith* (8)

“Ramus’ and Talon’s works,” as Walter J. Ong reports in *Rhetoric, Romance, and Technology*, “enjoyed an astounding circulation in the academic world” (144). That dominion included England. As the epic phase of northern humanism opened, Cambridge University consisted of fourteen colleges, with Peterhouse, founded within thirty years of the Sorbonne, the oldest of them. The dominant figure at the university during this period was John Fisher (c. 1469–1535). Although a fierce opponent of Martin Luther (1483–1546), the Catholic Fisher was a reforming humanist who admitted the need to update Church practices. Richard Foxe (c. 1448–1528), another Catholic patron of English humanism, supported Fisher’s mission. The two men lessened the Aristotelian domination of the university. Specifically, they repealed the statute concerning lectures on Aristotle, substituting legislation that introduced “three ordinary lectures in humanities, logic, and philosophy” (Paul Lawrence Rose 48).

Lady Margaret’s Professor of Divinity from 1502 to 1504 and President of Queen’s College from 1505 to 1508, Fisher never lost his reformist zeal,

founding the humanist college of St. John's in 1511. By 1535, as Martin A. S. Hume chronicles, this college had become "the centre of a new intellectual movement." According to the Cambridge statutes of that year, Rudolph Agricola's works were now required reading, as were the digests of Philip Melanchthon (1497–1560)—and although Luther's "works were openly forbidden, they were secretly read by a little company of students who met for the purpose at a tavern in Cambridge called the White Horse" (9). Queen's College, St. John's College, and King's College supplied the majority of that company.

Fisher's legacy prompted Erasmus, as another Catholic humanist, to study and teach at Queen's College (1510–15). In turn, and as Sturm would do in Paris, Erasmus left strong memories of his teaching, with his university followers noted for their confidence in rationality. One of these intellectual descendents, a Queen's College academic named Thomas Smith (1513–77)—who became a fellow in 1530 and an MA in 1533—"assembled under him a band of scholars, such as have rarely been united at one time" (Hume 9). This group included Anthony Cooke (c. 1504–76), Matthew Parker (1504–75), Nicholas Bacon (1510–79), John Cheke (1514–57), Roger Ascham (c. 1515–68), Walter Haddon (c. 1515–72), and Richard Eden (c. 1520–76). Like Peter Ramus in Paris, these gifted and ambitious academics, who challenged their elders with fresh ideas, aimed to extend the boundaries of knowledge.

Among this group's youngest members was William Cecil (1520–98). Jane Cecil (née Heckington), William's mother, was nobly born. Lord Richard Cecil, William's father, was a member of Henry VIII's court. In line with the king's religion, William received a Catholic baptism, went to the Grantham chantry school, and then attended a small school in Stamford, where the Catholic Priest Libeus Byard became his tutor. The Cecils, as members of a new aristocratic breed, then sent their son to Cambridge University. He entered St. John's College in May 1535, boarded with Cheke, and would remain at the university, and within Smith's academic orbit, until 1541. "Throughout his life Cecil believed in institutions, in their discipline, routine and order," as Stephen Alford observes. "All of these things he would have found at St. John's, set out by Bishop Fisher" (14). Yet, in the year Cecil went up to university, Fisher was executed as a traitor. While Fisher became a martyr, Thomas Cromwell, who had helped to orchestrate the king's break from Rome, became chancellor. Aside from its official syllabus, therefore, Cambridge University educated Cecil in the political implications of religion.

All of Smith's scholars drew away from scholasticism, but that movement had deep roots, and the tension between the humanist and the scholastic versions of Aristotle persisted. Cambridge University became the hotspot for that irresolution: Trinity College housed the reactionary side of the debate; Queen's, St. John's, and King's Colleges housed its progressive counterpart. Smith's coterie effectively anticipated the advent of Ramism, and in the aftermath of the French edict first placed on, and then lifted from, *Dialecticae* and *Aristotelicae animadversiones*, Ramus's principled attitude took hold of these English academics.

Despite his youthful zeal in dismissing the uncritical appeal to authority, Ramus remained loyal to Catholicism during the 1540s and 1550s, and Ramism in England avoided Catholic censure. Thus, while Cambridge University became a reactionary and despotic government institution under Queen Mary (r. 1553–58), Platonism and Ramism remained established disciplines, and their influence spread beyond formal education. Ramus's approach to dialectic and rhetoric, which Anglican Platonism tacitly supported, fitted the coevolution of social and cultural spheres, attracting followers among the merchants and artisans of East Anglia. Ramus navigated dialectic with the basics of two-valued Aristotelian logic; this course made dialectic akin to logic, and this equivalence made the art accessible and useful to the emerging bourgeoisie.

In particular, Ramus's "stress upon a practical approach to logic and the importance of knowledge from experience," as Garry J. Moes explains, "appealed to the English Puritans" (142). Those Puritans, whom Cedric B. Cowing identifies with the "godly merchants" (16) of East Anglia, appreciated that Ramus "defined logic as a tool of demonstration," as Moes observes, "rather than an abstract idea" (142). "All the more intellectually sophisticated Puritans were Ramists," agrees Harold Fisch, "and this not only because Ramus provided them with simple logical tools for the interpretation of Scripture, but because he provided them with a specific mode of argument which matched their spiritual outlook and temper" (83–84). As Mordechai Feingold expounds, this provision did not signal, express, or lead to a "progressivist unity of purpose between Puritans and Ramists." Puritans were not "motivated by any desire to promote novel philosophical or literary programs." They simply "embraced a Ramist cast of mind." On the one hand, this ethos suited the Puritan approach to discipline. On the other hand, this ethos assured Puritan merchants and artisans "that a lengthy and arduous application to profane studies was unnecessary" (136). The diffusion of Ramism beyond the confines of East

Anglia hereby fell to the Puritans of that region. That the Reformed faith of John Calvin (1509–64) had already taken hold in Essex, with the settlement of Flemish refugees in Halsted and Colchester, provided these pathfinders with their initial course.

Beyond the uptake of Ramism by Puritans, Calvinists, and some Anglicans in the nobility, many Anglicans, most Lutherans, and the majority of Catholics rejected Ramus's principled attitude. Hence, a considered approach to the issue of Ramism in England during the second half of the sixteenth century must undercut Wilbur S. Howell's opinion that Ramism was "the prevailing logical system in England" (16). For, "within the overwhelmingly humanistic literary program," as Feingold avers, "no single text was allowed to dominate the teaching of logic" (134). Ramus's contentiousness, however, is not an exaggeration. No other philosopher, writes Frank Pierrepont Graves, "was so extreme in his opposition to medieval and scholastic thought, or carried his principles into such radical execution" (205). Thanks to this resistance, Ramus's principled attitude would remain prominent on the intellectual landscape of Britain into the second half of the next century. Ramism would inform not only the poetic practice of John Donne (1572–1631), but also the alternative poetics of John Milton (1608–74).¹

Ramism did attract the attention of scholars at Oxford University, but Feingold's note of caution against "zealous generalizations" (131) concerning "the ubiquitous presence of Ramus" (130) at this institution must be emphasized. Academics at Oxford studied classical literature in the Florentine manner. "Where logic had held the main place," notes Stefan Daniel Keller, "rhetoric and grammar now shared it with logic, as these disciplines became more important in the humanist curriculum." Keller cites Foxe's foundation of "Corpus Christi College, Oxford, in 1517," to illustrate his point. College statutes "specified that lectures should be given on Cicero's *Orator*, his *Parts of Rhetoric*, Quintilian's *Institutiones*, and the *Declamationes* attributed to Quintilian" (15). This classical revival at once lessened the Aristotelian domination of the arts and targeted what Graves terms "a new and more exalted meaning from the Scriptures" (5). Thomas Wolsey and Sir Thomas More supported this aim. Oxford University matched its Cambridge counterpart concerning the political implications of religion. As Foxe's specifications concerning Cicero and Quintilian suggest, however, when considered in the light of Ramus's *Rhetoricae distinctiones in Quintilianum*, the vogue for Ramism during the 1540s and 1550s did not spread to Oxford.

The first generation of academic Ramists came, therefore, almost exclusively from Cambridge University, where the most popular handbooks in dialectic were Agricola's *De inventione dialectica libri tres*, Melancthon's *Dialectices libri quattuor* (1527), and Ramus's *Dialecticae*. "While Ramist textbooks in logic and rhetoric were quite common in Cambridge," as Feingold states, "they were used in conjunction with other texts" (133), which somewhat tempered their influence. Nevertheless, Ramus remains a major figure in the history of English thought, as Peter A. Duhamel asserts, both "for his revisions of the arts of logic and rhetoric" (163) and for his reeducation of educational practitioners. The Ramist return to God-given order meant that teachers could reshape dialectic and rhetoric as school disciplines. Notwithstanding its castigation as too draconian by its many critics, this reinstatement of natural principles, which resonated with Ramus's personal history, expressed his egalitarian attitude toward learning.

In England, where curricula had been developing under what Keller calls the "far-reaching changes" (15) instituted by humanists since the beginning of the century, Ramus's reform of dialectic and rhetoric had filtered down to grammar schools by the 1550s. From the mid-1570s, the spread of Ramism across this lower educational tier was maintained thanks to its vernacular translation by authors including Roland M'Kilwein, Gabriel Harvey (c. 1552–1630), and Dudley Fenner (c. 1558–87). "The first English translation of the *Dialectic* to appear in England," as John Charles Adams documents in "Gabriel Harvey's *Ciceronianus*" (1990), "was authored by the Scottish scholar" (560) M'Kilwein under the title *The Logike of the Moste Excellent Philosopher P. Ramus Martyr* (1574).² Significantly, adds Adams in "Ramus, Illustrations, and the Puritan Movement," "M'Kilwein replaced some of Ramus' illustrations with illustrations drawn from the Bible" (199). M'Kilwein's publication made the theological implications of Ramism explicit. This turn toward the Scriptures would remain a characteristic of British Ramism for the rest of the century.

"More than anything Harvey was an outsider who, like Ramus," as Adams traces in "Gabriel Harvey's *Ciceronianus*," "sought a position of influence from the bottom up." Harvey entered Christ's College Cambridge in 1566; he became a fellow of Pembroke Hall four years later, and the university appointed him Praelector in Rhetoric in 1574. "In fact," as Adams observes, "Harvey's problem-ridden career and the vituperative criticisms directed toward him by some of his peers parallel Ramus' experiences in a number of interesting ways. For example, both

Harvey and Ramus were ridiculed because of their family backgrounds” (553). Nonetheless, like Smith a generation earlier, Harvey assembled a band of like-minded academics. This “new Cambridge intelligentsia” (9), as Zenón Luis-Martínez calls them, embraced Ramism. They became the academic hardcore of second-generation Ramists.

“Harvey’s *Ciceronianus* [1574] was written and delivered at the height of his involvement in academe,” as Adams reports, “and proposes the same general educational aims as Ramus’ own text of the same title. Though it focuses primarily on describing the nature of eloquence,” as Adams elucidates, “Harvey’s *Ciceronianus* proposes an orientation toward education that is wide enough to encompass a rationale for training in the discourse arts in general—that includes Ramist dialectic as well as rhetoric” (554–55). Harvey, then, “is representative of a view of education widely held by English Ramists of how study of the discourse arts, and art in general, may prepare one morally *and* technically for an active role in civic life” (555; emphasis original).

Fenner, who had been “expelled from Cambridge for Puritanism,” as Christopher Hill documents, published *The Artes of Logike and Rhetorike*, his “1584 translation of Ramus’s *Dialecticae Libri Duo*,” in Middelburg. In his preface to this volume, Fenner “defend[s] himself against those who oppose the popularization of academic subjects, and warn[s] them against keeping learning rare and dear” (30). Like Ramus, therefore, Fenner promoted an egalitarian attitude toward learning.

Whether William Shakspeare (1564–1616), whose father’s civic offices entitled his sons to free attendance at the Edward VI Grammar School in Stratford-upon-Avon, benefitted from the dissemination of learning supported by Ramism is doubtful. His study of Ramism itself is unlikely too. “The roll of the Stratford-upon-Avon grammar school,” regrets Jonathan Bate, “is lost” (li). Christopher Dams echoes Bate’s lament: “[T]he records of attendance at Stratford Grammar School for the years when he could have been expected to attend are missing” (31). Decent secondary education under the humanistic auspices that Keller notes might have acquainted Shakspeare with the rudiments of dialectic and rhetoric. Tutelage beyond the basics, however, is another question. “Shakespeare was lucky to have the King’s New School at Stratford-upon-Avon,” opines Samuel Schoenbaum in *William Shakespeare* (1975). “It was an excellent institution of its kind, better than most rural grammar schools” (65). Philip Johnson disagrees. “Because we have no direct evidence of any kind,” he asserts, “we cannot know, objectively, whether [...] it was a sink

school or a beacon school.” Unfortunately, Stratfordian encomiums for the Edward VI Grammar School “are based on the kind of rich curriculum the boy would need to experience and learn if he was the author ‘Shakespeare’” (35).

In scrutinizing the attendance issue, Alan Robinson effectively takes Bate’s lament further, confirming that Shakspeare is unlikely to have received a grammar-school education. During Shakspeare’s “early childhood his father was well-to-do, becoming High Bailiff (Town Mayor) in 1568 and High Alderman (Deputy Major) in 1571,” but John Shakspeare’s affairs then “started to go very wrong.” In 1572, he appeared in court on charges of illegal wool purchases; within four years, he was broke; and by 1579, the Shaksperes were selling their possessions to raise capital. John Shakspeare’s sons, insists Robinson, “must have worked all hours” (238). There would have been neither money nor time for formal schooling. “There is no mention of [William Shakspeare] at school in Stratford in any contemporary diaries, letters or personal papers,” as Dams remarks, and “there is no mention of him having received tuition at home” (31).

Without doubt, Edward de Vere did not attend grammar school, but just as certainly, his education far outstripped such tutelage. Edward’s lineage demanded this certainty. The de Veres had arrived in England with William the Conqueror. Aubrey (or Albericus) de Vere (bc. 1040) was one of William’s tenants-in-chief, and “by the reign of Elizabeth I,” as Roger A. Stritmatter chronicles in *The Marginalia of Edward de Vere’s Geneva Bible* (2001), the de Veres embodied “the oldest intact patrilineal dynasty within the English nobility” (22). John de Vere (b. 1516), Sixteenth Earl of Oxford, married Marjorie Towe Golding (bc. 1526), his second wife, on 1 August 1548. Marjorie, the sister of Arthur Golding (c. 1536–c. 1605), the Calvinist theologian, gave birth to a son on 12 April 1550. “Edward,” recounts Daphne Pearson, “was named for the boy king, who acknowledged this with a christening gift,” and the child “was immediately styled by the superior of the subsidiary titles, Viscount Bulbeck” (13).

Edward’s father, as a strategically and spiritually governed courtier, aimed at his own survival and that of his lineage. Bird speculates that John de Vere “may have been involved in Wyatt’s rebellion” (14) of 1554. A Protestant at heart and in mind, the Sixteenth Earl of Oxford hid his anti-papist sentiments, and was appointed “a justice of the peace,” as Jane Greatorex chronicles, “serving on a Commission with ‘Rich, Wentworth, Capell and Tyrell,’ at the forefront of administering law and order in the shires” (53). Notwithstanding this service, as Bird relates, John de Vere

“headed the list of persons who were suspected of having conspired with Henry Dudley against the Queen and the Spaniards at her court” (14); as a result, the Sixteenth Earl of Oxford never earned the queen’s unmitigated trust. Attempts to gain her confidence undermined his health: “[H]e and his fellow peers spent long hours in the saddle riding about their duties; they lived in constant uncertainty and fear” (56). The Compotus Roll of William Cardynall, Receiver-General of John, Sixteenth Earl of Oxford, for Michaelmas 1554–55, reveals the effects on the earl’s health: “*Charges: 30d. paid by the receiver to Master Powell for medicines prepared for pain and distress. And in healing the ailments suffered by the lord, 53s. 4d. And to the same for various medicines bought by him, 7s. 8d. in total as appears in the account of the Receiver: 61s. 0 d.*” (qtd. in Greatorex 56).

At some stage during Edward’s early childhood, John de Vere removed his son from the family home at Castle Hedingham, Essex, to Sir Thomas Smith’s household at Ankerwycke, Buckinghamshire. Greatorex contends that Edward de Vere was Smith’s pupil “from a very young age, possibly four” (64). Earl John obviously respected Smith, who had continued to advance at Cambridge University, becoming public orator in 1538, King’s Professor of Civil Law in 1542, and vice-chancellor in 1544. Following Thomas Cromwell’s execution on 28 July 1540, however, Stephen Gardiner (c. 1483–1555) became university chancellor, and Smith’s coterie gradually disbanded. Gardiner was hostile to the republican sentiments of second humanism, and government service had become a means of political and social progression.

Among the first of Smith’s band to target that serviceable end was William Cecil. He entered Gray’s Inn, High Holborn, in May 1541. The intellectual atmosphere here contrasted strongly with that at St. John’s College. “The world of the Tudor lawyer was an arcane one,” writes Alford. “The English common law,” conducted in French, “probably seemed pretty dull” (29). Cecil’s marriage to John Cheke’s sister, Mary, in September 1541, may have relieved his ennui. By 1545, Cecil had joined the household of his uncle Edward Seymour, First Duke of Somerset, and boredom never troubled him again. Seymour was “the most powerful member of the council of regency established by Henry VIII to supervise Edward VI’s minority,” as Anne McLaren reports, “and [was] soon to be the most commanding figure in English politics as Lord Protector” (914). Smith, with Edward de Vere still in his care, entered Seymour’s service in 1547. Cooke, Cheke, and Ascham soon followed as the young king’s tutors. The effect of their supervision “was significant,” as Ann B. Clark

documents, “for Edward became a convinced Protestant” (29–30). The religious effect of Smith’s tutelage of Edward de Vere, however, would prove less certain.

Smith, who also became secretary of state in 1547, “passed the reign of King Edward in great reputation and prosperity,” as John Strype traces in *The Life of the Learned Sir Thomas Smith* (1698). “But upon the access of Queen Mary to the crown, as [with] many of the deceased King’s ministers of state, especially such as favoured religion,” Smith “los[t] all his places” (46). Under monarchical suspicion, he retreated to Ankerwycke, and Smith “acted his part so dexterously in these difficult times,” as Strype remarks, “that even his enemy the Pope sheltered him under his bull for many transgressions of his own laws” (47). In consequence, Smith survived Queen Mary’s reign, but his strategic games seeded Edward de Vere with religious uncertainty; Ramus’s own hesitations over religion would compound this insecurity, and Edward’s vacillations between Protestantism and Catholicism would last for many years.

Notwithstanding religious uncertainties, as Charles Bird maintains, Edward de Vere received a “good education” (14). For, despite his self-confessed “rough tongue and rude manners” (115), as documented by Mary Dewar, Smith was a man of renowned erudition, as the subtitle of Dewar’s biography, *A Tudor Intellectual in Office*, suggests. Smith’s superintendency would be critical to Oxford’s intellectual formation. By 1555, Smith was refurbishing his future residence, Hill Hall, Theydon Mount, which he had secured (the year before) on marrying Philippa Wilford (who thereby became his second wife). The family remained at Ankerwycke, however, until the completion of the refurbishment in 1558, and in the meantime, as Mark Anderson notes, Smith “made Lord Edward his ‘scholar’” (6). Edward’s studies were of a “rigorous classical and Renaissance” (6) kind, and this curriculum suited de Vere, who “was,” as Severne Majendie reports, “distinguished by his wit” (42).

What a university student encounters today was appropriate for the young viscount. Thomas Elyot supports this assertion in *The Boke Named the Governour* (1531). “Olde autours,” he writes, “holde oppinion that, before the age of seuen yeres, a chylde shulde nat be instructed in letters” (1:31). They are wrong. For, the “infelicitie of our tyme and countray compelleth us to encroche some what upon the yeres of children, and specially of noble men, that they may sooner attayne to wisdom and grauitie than priuate persones, considering, as I haue saide, their charge and example, whiche, aboue all thynges, is most to be esteemed” (1:32).

Smith, as an Essex farmer's son, was a Ramist in waiting. Ramus, as a commoner himself, dismissed the educational barrier of class. Ramism was a practical philosophy. Smith accepted this basic practicality, but as his brilliance at Cambridge suggests, he readily mastered the recondite aspects of Ramism too. Smith, whom Bird describes as "a virtuoso, with a reputation as a pre-eminent Greek scholar" (14), was aware of the popularity of Ramism at Cambridge University; he and Ramus were contemporaries, and Edward de Vere's curriculum is likely to have included Ramus's strict reformulation of dialectic and rhetoric.

Robin Fox proposes that Edward de Vere's formal tuition would have initially "followed the grammar-school curriculum to the letter, only more so" (94). In making this proposal, Fox draws on, but goes beyond, T. W. Baldwin's contention in *William Shakspeare's Small Latine and Lesse Greeke* (1944). Baldwin argues, as Jessica Wolfe summarizes, "that Shakspeare's grammar-school education suffices to account for his evident familiarity with the language and literature of ancient Rome, his grasp of the rudiments of classical rhetoric, and his satirical handling of Elizabethan schoolmasters and their methods" (519). Fox, therefore, supports Anderson's argument that "the myth that Shake-speare 'had small Latin and less Greek'—stemming from a misreading of a poem by Ben Jonson [1572–1637]—has inhibited the natural conclusion," as implied by numerous studies of Shakespeare's erudition, that "Shake-speare was one of the most learned and broadly educated authors in history" (xxix). The present study asserts not only that Edward de Vere's upbringing implanted such erudition, but also that that erudition included Ramism.

Like Ramus, Smith "held strong views on the techniques of adequate teaching and thorough study" (Dewar 15), but while Smith was "outstanding" as a tutor (Bird 14), Ramus's intolerance sometimes blighted his teaching. When confronted with trenchant or well-founded opposition, Ramus's application of logic either coerced his opponent or created an intersubjective impasse. *Scholae dialecticae* sets out each approach. "Were I disputant," states Ramus of what amounts to coercion, "all my care and efforts tended not to enlighten my opponent, but to beat him by some argument, good or bad." Alternatively, "if I were defending in class a thesis according to the categories," states Ramus of what amounts to deadlock, "I believed it my duty never to yield to my opponent, were he one hundred times right, but to seek some very subtle distinction, in order to obscure the whole issue" (4:151). Coercion and deadlock were not the natural outlets for dialectic; they matched the barrenness of second scho-

lasticism. When such situations arose, therefore, Ramus deserved strong criticism.

Sir Thomas Smith's library at Hill Hall supplied many of the books for Edward de Vere's education. When Smith catalogued his repository in 1566, he numbered over 350 items, which included "books on all subjects including mathematics, architecture, theology, poetry and (one of his favourite pastimes) astronomy" (Bird 14). Stephanie Hopkins Hughes's recent reexamination of Smith's manifest reveals an entry for Ramus's "Oratio" (30). This record, as Hughes conjectures, probably refers to *Rhetoricae distinctiones in Quintilianum*. By the time of Smith's death, his library contained 406 books. These items, which Strype catalogued for his biography of Smith, included "Politica Aristot." (277), "Aristot. de Arte Rhetorica" (278), "Le Cinquiesme de Polit. d'Aristot." (279), the works of "Euclides et Archimedes" (279), and "Petr. Ramus de Morib. Veter. Gallorum" (281).

Ramus's *Liber de moribus veterum Gallorum* (1559) reveals that his egalitarian attitude toward learning did not extend to the promotion of democratic government.³ Moritz Guggenheim (49) insists on Ramus's democratic principles, first in the church, later in politics, but James Veazie Skalnik's analysis of Ramus's study of the ancient Gauls suggests the rashness of Guggenheim's focal broadening. Picking a little known term from the political theories of Plato and Aristotle, Ramus describes Gallic Hedvois as a *timocratic republic*, molding the concept to serve his own beliefs. "The term was a perfect one for Ramus to employ in describing his own vision of the best society for France," explains Skalnik. "It had an unimpeachable classical pedigree, but was neither widely used nor well understood, which allowed him to adapt it to his own ends" (151).

For Plato, who coins the term in *The Republic*, timocracy (or timarchy) is a degenerate form of aristocracy, which breeds contentious men who covet honor. In *The Open Society and Its Enemies* (1945), Karl Popper explains how Plato assumed the golden mean to be "a kingship of the wisest and most godlike of men." Despite best efforts, and in a process that encompasses a number of stages, this state slowly disintegrates. "After the perfect state comes 'timarchy' or 'timocracy,' the rule of the noble who seek honour and fame; secondly, oligarchy, the rule of the rich families; 'next in order, democracy is born,' the rule of liberty which means lawlessness; and last comes 'tyranny ... the fourth and final sickness of the city'" (39). For Aristotle, who borrows and adapts the concept from Plato, timocracy is a form of titled meritocracy, the worst of the three legitimate

forms of government, which monarchy heads and aristocracy follows. Hence, in describing “the authentic basis of the republics of the ancient Gauls” with this term, “Ramus was not endorsing democratic rule” (Skalnik 150).

Ramus’s timocratic vision of France as a nation of free Protestants resonated with Sir Thomas Smith’s vision of England. From farming stock and having gained practical experience of the land, Smith empathized with the civil grievances of 1549 that culminated in protests across the South, the East, the Midlands, and Yorkshire. This discontent emerged from the changing social relations of agrarian production. The failure of landowners to cooperate with one another—their self- rather than communal interest—had led to the imposition of efficiency measures. These procedures included enclosure and engrossment alongside crop rotation, irrigation, and the application of manure. The personal reasons behind these practices disturbed Smith. He blamed nonconsensual enforcement for what Neal Wood calls “the dispossession of many small farmers, rural unemployment and depopulation, deserted villages, growing impoverishment and homelessness” (29).

Smith’s intellectual response to these events was immediate. Governance required a revolutionary approach that would establish a republican state. *A Discourse of the Common Weal of This Realm of England* (1581), which Smith wrote in 1549, and which circulated in manuscript form during his lifetime, details that approach. “An empire or a kyngdome is not so much wonne or kept by the manhooe or force of men as it is by wisdom and pollicie, which is gotten chiefly by learning” (22). That learning must include the logic and rhetoric that govern the art of wise counsel. “To passe over the sciences of logique and Retorique” is a grave mistake. The first of these disciplines concerns “the description of the true reason from the false.” The second of these disciplines concerns “the perswasion of that that is to be set furthe to the people, as a thinge to them profitable and expedient.” A “goode and a perfecte counsellour might wante none of bothe well” (27). Smith was particularly indebted to Ramus for this radical but rational response to self-interest, with *A Discourse of the Common Weal of This Realm of England* setting out Smith’s counterintuitive approach in the dialogic form that Ramus favored.

In casting self-interest in a destructive social light, Niccolò Machiavelli (1469–1527) had maintained a moral tradition that dated back to Plato: avarice forces reason into subjection. Events in Smith’s England appeared to confirm the enduring quality of this warning, but while moral tradition con-

demned greed, Smith championed the cooperative channeling of self-interest. Confederation was the “pollicie or goode government of a common weale” (11). This doctrine fitted Smith’s Augustinian conception of human nature. On the one hand, fallen man was self-interested, vain, and power oriented. On the other hand, as Francesco Viola summarizes of St. Augustine’s interpretation of the golden rule: “one must do unto others that which is good”; and this obligation “is implicit in the reference to will, which is the faculty of that which is good, while greed, not will, is proper to evil actions” (106). Material gain that did no harm to others was legitimate, where “harm,” as Margo Todd explains, “was defined very stringently: profit is implicitly harmful if retained by the individual” (129). Common wealth must benefit from individual profit. Meritocratic governance would ensure that necessary investment. Not only Ramus’s approach to logic but also his timocratic attitude to republicanism suggested this conclusion. Smith, as a baseborn noble, inflected these aspects of Ramism with a distinctly English tone, in which aristocrats of long standing, such as the de Veres, needed to buttress their hereditary status with meritocratic acts.

That Smith read revolutionary works that complemented those of Ramus comes as little surprise in the light of his radical *Discourse*. Smith’s removal from the stage of courtly action during Queen Mary’s reign helped to facilitate this hidden boldness. “Smith did not shy away from heretical writings,” observes Anderson, “carrying both Copernicus’s revolutionary tract on cosmology *De Revolutionibus* and the complete works of Niccolò Machiavelli in his library” (8). The intellectually and “so sensitively constituted” (191) Edward de Vere, as J. Thomas Looney describes him, would have been responsive to the breadth and depth of Smith’s repository.

The strategic religious games played by Smith found a parallel in his appointment of the reformist Thomas Fowle as Edward de Vere’s full-time tutor in 1558. A fellow of St. John’s College, Fowle had lost his position under Mary. Ostensibly bowed, Fowle had served secretly as a Protestant minister, and now reemerged as a quick-tempered tutor and clergyman. Fowle’s academic gifts did not equal, let alone surpass, those of his employer—Smith had few intellectual equals—but his dedication to Edward de Vere’s education matched Smith’s commitment.

There is no direct proof that the young de Vere read Ramus, but the circumstantial evidence that he did outweighs the support offered by scholars for the young Francis Bacon’s (1561–1626) familiarity with Ramism. Although “I have not found evidence that Bacon ‘read’ Ramus,

or that he ever looked at Ramus' original works," writes Craig Walton, "Bacon grew up in an atmosphere of Ramist interpretation and critique" ("Ramus and Bacon on Method" 294). To repeat, Nicholas Bacon, Francis's father, had been a member of Smith's band of scholars at Cambridge University. Edward de Vere directly embodied the next generation of Smith's influence. If Francis Bacon matured in a Ramist atmosphere, then so did Viscount Bulbeck.

The educative investment in John de Vere's son by Sir Thomas Smith and Thomas Fowle soon paid dividends: in October 1558, their charge followed Smith's example, enrolling at Queen's College Cambridge. Of William Shakspeare by contrast, as Dams stresses, "there is no mention of him at either Oxford or Cambridge," two institutes "whose records do exist" (31). Three months after entering Queen's College, Edward de Vere enrolled at William Cecil's alma mater, St. John's College. A month later, the "puritan" (4, n. 25) Cecil, as Jack Cunningham calls him, became university chancellor.⁴ Edward de Vere might have been in residence when Cecil acceded to the post, but the boy's time at the university was relatively short: aristocrats seldom took undergraduate degrees, because these awards bestowed no prestige. Nevertheless, at Cambridge University, Edward de Vere would have not only augmented any Ramism he had learned under Smith and Fowle, but also witnessed a practical response to this principled attitude: the percipient bourgeoisie valued degrees as commendations, and Ramus's egalitarian attitude toward the dissemination of learning supported this evaluation.

Alan H. Nelson reports that Edward de Vere's name "disappears from college records after March 1559, nor did he receive a BA with his classmates in Lent 1562" (25). During this period, Edward's education seems to have reverted to the auspices of the orderly Smith, who (according to a letter to Walter Haddon dated 29 December 1562) was "read[ing] Ramus on a daily basis" (qtd. in Markku Peltonen 21). At this time, John de Vere was also concerned with the implementation of order, forwarding a strategy concerning the remainder of his son's life: a scheme aimed at the ultimate in societal advancement. On 1 July 1562, Earl John and Sir Henry Hastings, Third Earl of Huntingdon, formulated a prenuptial contract. John's son would marry Henry's daughter. Hastings, as a descendant of the House of Plantagenet, was likely to accede to the throne should Queen Elizabeth die without issue. John de Vere's strategy aimed at nothing less than monarchical glory for his son's descendants. The two fathers expected to reaffirm their scheme officially in April 1564, but, on 3 August 1562, John de Vere unexpectedly died.

NOTES

1. Milton, as the author of *Artis logicae plenior institutio, ad Petri Rami methodum concinnata, adjecta est praxis annalytica et Petri Rami vita* (1672), would credit Ramus as “the best writer on the art” (11:3).
2. Adams writes of the *Dialectic* when referencing Ramus’s *Dialecticae libri duo*.
3. A French version of *Liber de moribus veterum Gallorum* was published in the same year as the Latin original.
4. Cecil would hold this position until his death in 1598.



CHAPTER 3

Peter Ramus, Edward de Vere, and the Basis of Logic

*What warrant can the French make now? Seals and words of princes
being traps to catch innocents, and bring them to the butchery.*
—Sir Thomas Smith (qtd. in John Strype, *The Life of the Learned
Sir Thomas Smith* [121])

Beyond vetoing his son's marriage contract, the unforeseen death of the Sixteenth Earl of Oxford consigned Edward de Vere (and his younger sister Mary [b. 1562]) to the auspices of the Master of the Court of Wards and Liveries. Queen Elizabeth had appointed Sir William Cecil to this position in 1561.¹ That Cecil had been, and remained, academically and ideologically close to Sir Thomas Smith ensured the continuity of Edward's education. Like his mentor, Cecil shared a passion for learning, and like Peter Ramus, the young undergraduate had forsaken sleep for study. Although neither Cecil's self-discipline nor his ingenuity quite matched that of Ramus—Cecil, as Edward Nares documents, "*hire[d] the college bell-ringer* to 'call him up at four of the clock every morning'" (2:406; emphasis original)—the results were comparable. Cecil "became remarkable" not only "for his extraordinary general aptitude and application," but also "for his wide knowledge of Greek" (Martin A. S. Hume 9).

Most outstanding, however, was Cecil's Ramism. This mentality, allied to a position in the household of his uncle Edward Seymour, First Duke of Somerset, ensured an auspicious start to Cecil's political career. That occupation took on significantly more responsibility with the death of

Henry VIII. Kingship under Henry had corresponded with a godly empire, and while the medieval concept of the “common” (or “public”) weal persisted, Somerset’s household struggled to maintain this correspondence when faced with what Anne McLaren calls the “perceived monarchical incapacities” (912) of “The Boy King” Edward VI. As Edward de Vere would discover, the exposure of university men such as Thomas Smith, William Cecil, Anthony Cooke, John Cheke, and Roger Ascham to Ramism became a significant factor in their logical responses to this constitutional concern.

Neal Wood classifies Smith as a rationalist; McLaren classifies Smith as a Protestant humanist. The two classifications are not mutually exclusive, and Smith’s rational Protestantism secured his appointment to the Privy Council in 1548. That September witnessed his promotion to Second Secretary to the King. These advancements were, as Paul Lawrence Rose remarks, “typical of the developing connection between universities and government administration” (55). Smith, Cheke, and Cecil, as committed ideologues rather than timeserving bureaucrats, believed in evangelical reform. They seeded Edward with a determination to root out all vestiges of the Roman Church. “Anti-Catholicism,” states Dennis Flynn, “definitely set the religious tone of [the king’s] educational pursuits” (28), and Ramism underscored this tenor.

Smith’s first foreign commission, which he assumed in the summer of 1548, took him to Antwerp. Here, as Anne B. Clark outlines, Smith “investigate[d] merchants’ grievances and report[ed] on a possible war between France and the Low Countries” (30, n. 6). Smith excelled, and the king subsequently knighted him, but by the following summer, Sir Thomas had lost favor with the Duke of Somerset. He had yet to learn the importance of strategic forethought. Smith’s bluntness classified him as a self-confessed “extreme man” (qtd. in John Gough Nichols 112); Somerset tended to ignore his advice, and Smith found himself effectively exiled, serving Eton College as its provost.

Turning to the written word made matters worse. His promotion in *A Discourse of the Common Weal of This Realm* of self-interest in a constructive social light was often misconstrued. Smith’s detractors now maligned him for covetousness as well as for arrogance. “It had been said that he was a great purchaser,” reports Nichols. “So far, he declares, was this from the truth, that all the land he possessed in the world, besides one little house in Canon-row and another in Philpot-lane, consisted of the manor of Yarlinton, in Somersetshire, worth 30*l.* a year, and the college of

Derby, worth 33*l* a year (112). In turn, Smith became jealous of his protégé Cecil, whom he rated as “a great mote to be cast against me.” Cecil was supposedly poor, but according to Smith, “is none such.” Let Cecil “change his book of purchase he had this year with mine, and I will give him one thousand pounds to boot, and yet win almost five hundred pounds by the bargain” (113).

Although politically ostracized by Somerset, Smith still attempted to counsel the duke. Cecil, who remained in Somerset’s service, acted as an intermediary. The strategically astute Cecil overlooked Smith’s petty jealousies. He appreciated Smith’s mind, and that mind could serve Cecil’s own purposes. By 1551, Smith had regained some of his former influence, successfully negotiating the Treaty of Angers, but no further commissions distinguished his Edwardian career. His brief political resurgence had effectively stalled. Cecil’s profile, however, continued to rise. The king knighted him that October. Cecil possessed, as Stephen Alford notes, “an easy ability to do well in political life” (35). Cecil, the urban gentleman, who mitigated the extremes of Ramism, was careful to observe the status quo; Smith, the country farmer, who embraced the extremes of Ramism, was not.

Although distinguishable from late humanism as well as from late scholasticism, Ramism always remained close to the humanist agenda and far removed from its scholastic alternative. “The emergence of humanism in place of scholasticism, and the institutionalization of the humanities,” states Kendrick W. Prewitt, “served largely to train the elite for powerful positions” (37, n. 7). Proficient in Ramus’s theory and its practice, Cecil honed his rationality, and became a master strategist and tactician. Even so, he did not assume an unambiguous position of authority until the end of 1548, when Somerset confirmed Cecil as his Master of Requests. Two years later, King Edward VI appointed him Secretary of State.

Despite their different political fortunes, Smith and Cecil remained close, which ensured their combined influence as Edward’s Privy Councilors. “What impact did the reforms proposed by Smith, the scholar, have on the later policies of Cecil, the administrator?” (iii) asks Clark. That influence was significant. The government introduced financial reforms in 1551 and 1552; these changes included a centralized committee for the collection of all crown debts, and while Cecil “assumed responsibility for these measures,” Smith provided the necessary “advice” (27).

Like Thomas Smith, Thomas Fowle, and John Cheke, however, William Cecil suffered demotion and ostracism under Queen Mary. For, when the queen’s “ministry was formed, Cecil was no longer Secretary”

(Hume 46). Smith retreated to Ankerwycke, Fowle lost his position at St. John's College, Cheke recanted before the royal court, and Cecil kissed Mary's hand. "Cheke had been broken," writes Alford, "Cecil had adapted" (76). What Conyers Read calls "the cautious attitudes of Smith and Cecil" (43) ensured their survival. Yet, by the summer of 1553, as Jane Greatorex details, Cecil was "(allegedly) 'ill near to death'" (48 n). As with Edward de Vere's father, that combination of secret religious beliefs, their necessary betrayal, and overwork caused Cecil's indisposition.

Two summers later, as Greatorex documents, the "Earl of Oxford, Lord Rich, Sir John Wentworth and others received a letter from the Privy Council thanking them for assisting the Sheriff of Essex in the execution of Protestant Heretics" (58). Nevertheless, as Smith, Fowle, and John de Vere did, "Cecil lived in fear of his life." He seriously considered "fleeing the realm under Mary and joining his [...] father-in-law and other scholars, in Germany" (56). Counterbalancing his work for the Sheriff of Essex, Cecil remained "in constant touch with his father-in-law in Frankfurt," as Greatorex traces, "organising the groups of English fugitives" (58 n).² Cecil needed and practiced both political and strategic care. In the first instance, he surpassed Smith. In the second instance, he surpassed John de Vere. "During Mary's reign," as Mark Anderson observes, Cecil "helped to orchestrate Princess Elizabeth's survival." He "maintained a secret correspondence with the princess, providing her with insider knowledge from the court and valuable counsel" (14).

This value had grown into dependency by the time Elizabeth acceded to the throne. She required trustworthy advisors. Smith proposed to harness self-interest for communal ends; Cecil endorsed Smith's aim; and the queen's immediate need of widespread support overwrote any qualms about the extent of Cecil's personal ambition. During the first months of her reign, Elizabeth appointed Cecil not only Secretary of State, but also Master of the Court of Wards and Liveries. This court, explains Alford, "looked after the orphans of men who owed obligations of service to the crown." Its master was "a powerful figure in a society where marriage and property determined social standing. He was also close to the Queen, who relied on him for advice on some very sensitive cases." Cecil's promotion to wardmaster was a "mark of royal favour and trust" (112). The position offered its holder the chance to manipulate large estates. Cecil did not superintend all of Edward de Vere's inheritance, with many of his estates in Essex coming under the care of Oxford's uncle, Arthur Golding.

Nonetheless, Smith's absence from England during the first five years of Oxford's wardship facilitated Cecil's almost exclusive management of the young earl's affairs.

Elizabeth had settled Smith in Paris as ambassador to the French court. The queen had revived his political career. She needed someone who would hold his nerve on matters pertaining to the English crown and English sovereignty. Smith's brusque manner recommended him. His first tour of duty lasted from September 1562 to May 1566. Smith's duties afforded him the opportunity to befriend men of learning and renown. "Here," as John Strype details in *The Life of the Learned Sir Thomas Smith*, "he met with Peter Ramus the philosopher, and Ludovicus Regius an historian, and other professors of science, who were the King's readers. To Ramus's acquaintance [Walter] Haddon had particularly recommended him; but the wars proclaimed between princes, and the times were such," as Strype observes, "that Smith could not so frequently converse and hold that familiarity with them that he wished; though with these in Paris his converse was so much, that he called them his *convictores*" (89). Ramus's influence on Smith's *De republica Anglorum*, which would appear posthumously in 1581, is undoubted: *De republica Anglorum* was the result of Smith's reengagement with *A Discourse of the Common Weal* during his 1562–66 tour of duty.

Meanwhile, Cecil maintained his acquaintanceship with Ramism, being three years into his chancellorship of the Ramist stronghold of Cambridge University when Edward de Vere entered his household. Ramus at the College of Presles in Paris and Cecil at Cecil House in London enforced comparably stringent discipline. Cecil instituted a regime characterized by a Ramist commitment to intellectual graft. "The routine of studies for Earl Edward," as Severne Majendie details, "was exact; he was to get up in time for his dancing lesson from 7 to 7.30, and was to take breakfast from 7.30 to 8 o'clock. The next two hours were devoted half to French and half to Latin, and then there was half-an-hour for drawing. From half-past ten to one there was play and dinner. Lessons began again at one, with cosmography for half-an-hour; then two hours were given to French and Latin, and half-an-hour for writing. This made six hours of lessons altogether. At five o'clock there were prayers and supper" (42).

De Vere's education at Cecil House not only refined, but also broadened the knowledge implanted under Smith (and Fowle). Cecil, emphasizes Bronson Feldman, "kept the young man at his books" (24). George P. V. Akrigg describes Cecil House as "the best school for boys to be

found in Elizabethan England” (25). “As a meeting place for the learned,” concurs Jan van Dorsten, “it had no parallel in early Elizabethan England” (198). “There can be no doubt,” agrees Joel Hurstfield, “that, at Cecil House in the Strand, there existed the best school for statesmen in Elizabethan England, perhaps in all Europe” (255).

Under Cecil’s auspices, tutors followed “the latest trends in Renaissance pedagogy” (Anderson 22)—and preeminent among these trends was Ramism. De Vere “had learned tutors,” as J. M. Anderson chronicles, “who showed some interest in promoting the *studia humanitatis*.” This advocacy included “Cicero’s *Orations*, Isocrates in Greek, Ramus on logic, and Sturm on elocution” (149). Ramism was of particular help to Cecil, as Master of the Court of Wards, in presiding over what Alford calls “the proper ordering of landed society” (298). The works of Niccolò Machiavelli—and the Cecil House manifest, as Eddi Jolly notes in “‘Shakespeare’ and Burghley’s Library” (2000), includes entries in Italian and English under Machiavelli (12)—would surely have supplemented this tuition: because Cecil’s students, as Mark Anderson remarks, “would soon be representing England as generals, ambassadors, and functionaries of state” (28).

“Cecil House,” concludes Dorsten, “was England’s nearest equivalent to a humanist *salon* in the days after More” (195). De Vere seems to have been in his intellectual element: Arthur Golding, one of the attendant academics, praising his nephew for “a certain pregnancy of wit and ripeness of understanding” (qtd. in Katherine Chiljan 4). This innate ability required further consolidation, and just as Smith had appointed Thomas Fowle as de Vere’s full-time tutor, so Cecil hired Laurence Nowell. The intellectually maturing Edward, however, soon outstripped his latest teacher. A graduate of Oxford University, Nowell could barely keep up with his student, and admitted in a letter to Cecil (in June 1563) that his “work for the earl of Oxford cannot be much longer required” (qtd. Alan H. Nelson 39).

As Edward de Vere would have immediately appreciated, Cecil’s impressive libraries, which held almost 2000 items, humbled Smith’s repositories at Ankerwycke and Hill Hall. “The variety of books kept within Cecil House,” as Anderson notes, “was truly astonishing for those fortunate few who enjoyed access. If the librar[ies] of Sir Thomas Smith offered a broad-ranging introduction to the great works of Western culture, Cecil’s librar[ies] provided the encyclopedic resources for de Vere’s graduate studies” (21). The close relationship between Smith and Cecil

extended to the ambassador in Paris collecting items for his friend's repositories, and the purchases in France of Sir William Pickering and Sir John Mason supplemented Smith's acquisitions.³ Thus, although "the straight-laced Cecil paid little mind to contemporary plays and poetry, Cecil House's stock of classics and tomes from the Continent was something to behold" (Anderson 21), with French publications foremost among them. Significantly, the sale catalogue of his library contents, *Bibliotheca illustris: sive catalogus variorum librorum* (1687), reveals that these continental holdings included not only an impress of Ramus's *Dialecticae institutiones* from 1549, but also a first edition of Joachim de Périon's *Pro Aristotele in Petrum Ramum*. Notwithstanding the partiality of Smith and Cecil toward Ramism, but in line with their epistemological receptivity, the young Earl of Oxford could study Ramus's principled attitude from contesting perspectives.

In comparison, emphasizes Christopher Dams, "there is no record" of William Shakspeare "having spent any time in the household of any great house, or in the family of any gentleman, where he would have had an opportunity to further his education" (31). The best literary source Andrew Gurr can cite for Shakspeare is the printer and "fellow-Stratfordian Richard Field" (25). In contrast to Smith's holdings at Ankerwycke and Hill Hall and Cecil's resources at Cecil House, Field's stock did not amount to a library—and Gurr admits as much:

There is room for doubt and even scepticism over many of the sources that Shakespeare is thought to have consulted for his plays, largely because so many of them were either rare or costly. Without libraries of any kind, let alone public libraries, Shakespeare must have been entirely dependent on his own purse and loans from his friends for his books. Unless he found ready access, as Jonson did, to the great collectors such as Camden or Stow, the limited number of books available in print must have restricted his resources severely, and access to manuscripts was almost inconceivable. (25)

Whereas other notable authors of the Elizabethan and Jacobean eras left behind significant book collections, Shakspeare bequeathed none. While Jonson (with at least 113 books), Sir Walter Raleigh (with over 490 books), John Dee (with nearly 400 books), and Gabriel Harvey (with at least 180 books) owned significant personal libraries, Shakspeare's ownership of books goes unrecorded.⁴ "Sources for this sort of information," explain Jolly and Patrick O'Brien, "include wills, inventories, and books with anno-

tations" (22), and libraries, as valuable commodities, usually merited their own testamentary clause. No such record exists for Shakspeare. Sears Jayne's authoritative *Library Catalogues of the Early Renaissance* (1956) makes the same point: "[F]or any Elizabethan not mentioned in my survey (except Shakespeare) the chances of finding an inventory on decease are good, and the chances of finding a book list are only a little poorer" (9).

In conclusion, as Jolly and O'Brien insist, "it is easier to connect Edward de Vere with Shakespearean sources than to connect Shakespeare of Stratford with them" (24). The links between *Coriolanus* and Aesop's *Fables* find a possible origin in Smith's copy of Aesop's *Vitae et fabellae*. The connections between *Timon of Athens* and *Antony and Cleopatra*, on the one hand, and Plutarch's *Vitae*, on the other, have a possible source in Smith's copy of Plutarch's text. The link between *Troilus and Cressida* and Geoffrey Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* find a possible origin in the *Works of Chaucer*, a volume that Smith would bequeath to Queen's College Library, Oxford. "Ovid is generally agreed to have been the most influential poet upon Shakespeare," comments Jolly in "Shakespeare's Sources Continued" (2004), and Cecil owned "Ovidij (Pub.) *Metamorphosis cum Commentariis Antiquorum*. Paris 1527" (28). What is more, the libraries at Cecil House contained other Shakespearean sources, as Jolly remarks, including "some 23 books" by Aristotle as well as works by Giovanni Boccaccio in Italian, Saxo Grammaticus in Latin, and Belleforest in French (29).

In August 1564, two years after entering Cecil House, and its treasure trove of erudition, Edward de Vere received an honorary Master of Arts degree from Cambridge University. The Earl of Rutland, Oxford's cousin the Duke of Norfolk, and Sir William Cecil received the same award.⁵ Unlike an undergraduate qualification, a master's degree held prestige even for aristocrats, as Queen Elizabeth's presence at the ceremony suggests. The queen's visit included "all manner of scholastical exercises," as Edmund Grindal, the Bishop of London, reported, "with Sermons, both in English and Latin: Disputations in all Kinds of Faculties: and playing of Comedies and Tragedies" (qtd. in Connie McQuillen 12). Elizabeth commended their "multiplicity of learning, exhorting them to bend their whole minde and cogitations to the study of good Letters" (qtd. in William Camden 58).

Two years later, in September 1566, de Vere and Cecil received Master of Arts degrees from Oxford University. "As with the Cambridge diploma," notes Anderson, "de Vere's Oxford M.A. was probably honorary." Even so, "this degree did carry more academic weight" than its Oxbridge counterpart,

“since Oxford had recently tightened its rules to ensure that a recipient’s learning equaled or surpassed the requirements of the degree being conferred” (32). What is more, Cecil received as much attention at Oxford as he had at Cambridge. “Both universities seem almost equally to have been submitted to his care and the decision of his judgment, in all emergencies” (Nares 2:405–06). They had become, in effect, two more of Cecil’s wards.

In terms of Shakespearean authorship, as Stefan Daniel Keller asserts, secondary education would have honed William Shakspeare’s “abilities in rhetoric” (15), but Keller’s focus on the rhetorical fails to appreciate Edward de Vere’s intellectual environing. Even if one accepts the possibility of Shakspeare’s grammar school attendance, de Vere benefitted, as J. Thomas Looney asserts, from “the advantages of the best private tuition” (202). The curriculum at the Edward VI Grammar School would not have shaped Stratford’s application of dialectic and rhetoric to the extent afforded by Oxford’s formal education. Unlike Shakspeare, de Vere would have discovered the complex relationship between logic, cognition, and rhetoric that Ramism suggests: logic relies on a preexisting structure; thinking does not consciously rely on this abstract framework, but on the perceptions of active minds; and rhetoric articulates the linguistic expression of these perceptions in various forms of systematic and individual practice.

One of those systematic practices was the law, and de Vere, echoing Cecil’s admittance to the same honorable society in May 1541, entered Gray’s Inn on 1 February 1567. That less than a mile separated Cecil House from High Holborn facilitated de Vere’s regular attendance. He had learned civil (and probably some ecclesiastical) law under Smith, and “it was no unusual thing, in those days, for young men of family or talents, who had any prospects of becoming members of the legislature, to go through a course of law at some one of our Inns of Court” (Nares 1:58). For more than two centuries, attendance had been a common route by which advantaged young men could complete their education.

At the Inns of Court of Oxford’s time, experienced lawyers still lectured, as when Cecil had attended, but the educational emphasis was shifting from an academic to a more practical training; Ramus would have approved, and de Vere’s education in the law would soon dovetail with personal experience. “Edward de Vere, the Earl of Oxford, not only studied the law from an early age,” observes Thomas Regnier in “The Law in *Hamlet*” (2011), “he had a personal brush with homicide law at the age of 17. In 1567, he was practicing his fencing moves with Edward Baynam,

a tailor, when a third person, Thomas Brincknell, a cook, joined them.” Details are sketchy, “except that de Vere’s sword somehow pierced the cook’s femoral artery.” Brincknell died within minutes. “If de Vere had not already studied the law of homicide,” argues Regnier, “he had reason to do so now.” The coroner’s ruling was far from logical. He “found that the cook, who was drunk, ‘not having God before his eyes, but moved and deceived by diabolic instigation ... ran and fell upon the point of [the Earl of Oxford’s] foil ... [and] gave himself ... one fatal stroke” (115). The coroner, hereby blaming the cook for his own demise, absolved the earl.

An attendee alongside Edward de Vere at Gray’s Inn was Philip Sidney (1554–86), and the turn from an academic toward a more practical training at the Inns of Court would prompt Abraham Fraunce (c. 1559–c. 1592), as one of Sidney’s erstwhile acquaintances, to publish *The Lawiers Logike* (1588). Fraunce’s volume, as Wilbur S. Howell states, was “the first systematic attempt in English to adapt logical theory to legal learning and to interpret Ramism to lawyers” (223). Dedicated to “the Learned Lawyers of England, especially the Gentlemen of Grays Inn,” the preface to this work describes how coming into the “presence of that right noble and most renowned knight, Sir Philip Sydney,” fostered Fraunce’s interest in Ramism. The first results of this exposure were two short treatises on logic, texts completed around 1581, which Fraunce almost immediately followed with *The Sheapheardes Logike*. None of these works appeared in print, but they drew both Sidney “to a greater liking of, and myselfe to a further trauayling in, the easie explication of Ramus his Logike” (1). In addition, as Howell summarizes, the preface to *The Lawiers Logike* “tells us that the present work has been redone six times in the past seven years, thrice while Fraunce was still at [that Ramist stronghold of] St. John’s, and thrice during his residence at Gray’s Inn” (223).

De Vere, whose thirst for erudition never dimmed, would surely have acquainted himself with such a popular work. That Oxford remained a bookworm is clear. In 1570, for example, he “purchased two unspecified ‘Italian books’ as well as ‘a Geneva Bible gilt, a Chaucer, Plutarch’s works in French, with other books and papers”” (Anderson 41). Beyond the libraries at Cecil House, as Sears Jayne and Francis R. Johnson chronicle, Oxford also had access to “the largest private library of the Elizabethan period” (1). This collection, which included *Petri Rami pro philosophica disciplina Parisiensis academiae, oratio* (1557) and *Petri Rami dialectica et Audomari Talaei praelectiones in Ramum* (1560), belonged to Oxford’s cousin John Lumley (c. 1533–1609).

Cecil had remained studious too (both academically and politically). This determination had soon reaped further personal rewards. On 25 February 1571, as if recognizing her future reliance on his strategic acumen, Queen Elizabeth raised Cecil to the peerage, as Lord Burghley. Then, on 19 December 1571, at Westminster Abbey, Burghley realized a dynastic ambition: he gave his daughter Anne in marriage to Edward de Vere. The following year, “the 14th [*sic*] year of the reign of Queen Elizabeth,” as Paul Hemenway Altrocchi and Hank Whittemore remark, “was about the time when Edward de Vere [...] ‘shone’ at her court” (254). “His lordship,” writes Majendie, “was one of the wits of the period” (45). Oxford “was a man in mind and body,” according to Arthur Golding’s son (and Edward de Vere’s cousin) Percival, “absolutely accomplished with honourable endowments” (qtd. in Nelson 2).

Other matters soon overwrote Burghley’s sense of satisfaction, however, with the event that martyred Peter Ramus. That act, which was of many years’ gestation, and which would ultimately alight on Ramus’s conversion to Calvinism, emerged from his rationale of basing theology on scriptural (rather than on exegetical) deference. To repeat John Trapp’s observation: “*Loquamur verba Scripturae*, saith that incomparable Peter Ramus, *utamur sermone Spiritus Sancti*” (264–65). The faculty of theology at the University of Paris had condemned the propositions of Martin Luther some fifty years earlier. Partly in reaction to this condemnation, reformist tendencies developed underground, with the slow coalescence of secret congregations. Ferriere Maligni formed the first Protestant Church in Paris in 1555. Reformed believers, reports Charles Waddington, “would gather at night in the Pré-aux-Clercs to the number of eight thousand.” Worshipers included King Henry II of Navarre, “Antoine de Bourbon and his heroic wife Jeanne d’Albret, the Prince de Condé, Coligny, Dandelot, and a crowd of noblemen” (131). Hereafter, a clandestine Protestantism was a functioning reality in Paris.

Although the year of Ramus’s conversion remains contested—while Frank Pierrepont Graves cites 1561, James D. Williams prefers 1562—the stepwise but significant alteration of his denominational orientation remains uncontested. That Ramism would meet Catholicism in a logical stalemate was rationally presupposed. “Until 1561,” as Graves documents, Ramus “maintained in his own life all the observances of a zealous Catholic” (70), but “as an avowed humanist and opponent of Aristotle from the beginning, he was [...] forced by the logic of the situation to declare publicly and at awful sacrifice his adhesion to Protestantism.” For

Ramus, the bible spelled out God's ordinances, not the "crudities of scholasticism," crudities that "depend[ed] absolutely upon the authority of the medieval Aristotle" (16). While Ramus "rejects every evidence of universal salvation that appears in the Bible," explains Graves, "he apparently does so to be consistent with his Calvinistic confession and does not show at all the conviction, zeal, and almost grewsome [*sic*] satisfaction that Calvin found in this resultant of his logic" (192). Ramus advocated a less autocratic governance of the Church than Calvin did.⁶ This advocacy echoed Ramus's egalitarian attitude toward the dissemination of learning rather than his timocratic approach to politics.

In 1562, with the expulsion of Calvinists from Paris, King Charles IX (r. 1560–74) granted Ramus safe passage to the Palace of Fontainebleau. During this sojourn, Ramus had access to the palace library, was able to procure copies of literary treasures from Venice and the Vatican through Italian ambassadors, and purchased works from foreign scholars, including volumes by Joachim Camerarius, Georg Joachim de Porris (Rheticus), and Roger Ascham. There was, therefore, a dynamic intellectual exchange between Ramus, the revolutionary Parisian scholar, and Ascham, the influential Cambridge scholar of Sir Thomas Smith's long-term acquaintance. Smith, as ambassador to the French court, could have testified both to the Calvinists' forced exodus and to Ramus's related isolation. That exile lasted until the spring of 1563. The immediate concern of Smith's *convictore* on returning to Paris was further ecclesiastical interference. Smith's diary testifies to his own experience of this intrusion. For 28 August 1563, he writes, "I was detained as a prisoner: the next day sent to the castle of Melun, and released on the 17th of the next month" (qtd. in Nichols 111).

Beyond Smith, Ramus's religious convictions drew support from Protestants in England as well as from Huguenots on the continent. As Oxford was fully aware, Smith and Cecil were committed to the project of reformation they had started under King Edward VI, and Queen Elizabeth approved of their resolve. Indeed, the Disputation in Divinity during her 1564 visit to Cambridge University echoed the queen's sentiments. "Mr. Hutton, Public Reader in Divinity," as Bromley Smith records, proposed two motions. First, "major est autoritas scripturae quem ecclesiae" (scripture is the leading authority of the church). Second, "civilis magistratus habet autoritatem in rebus ecclesiasticis" (the authority of the civil magistrate administrates ecclesiastical affairs) (499).

That Aristotelian partisan Jacques Charpentier, who was "Ramus's most relentless enemy" (J. H. M. Salmon 36) and "lifelong nemesis"

(Donald R. Kelley 204), feared his antagonist's similar resolve. Charpentier, however, now boasted the support of Ramus's erstwhile friend Charles of Lorraine, who had succeeded to the post of cardinal on his uncle's death. In 1566, with the decidedly anti-Protestant cardinal's explicit approval, Charpentier acceded to the chair of mathematics at the College Royal. Ramus vehemently opposed the appointment, as Timothy J. Reiss relates in *Knowledge, Discovery and Imagination in Early Modern Europe* (1997), "telling the conseil privé that not only did Charpentier have neither mathematics nor Greek (hence no direct access to Euclid anyway), but that he boasted of intending to divert the chair towards (Aristotelian) philosophy and wholly away from mathematics" (96).

The resultant impasse was acrimonious and led to Ramus's appearance before the Privy Council in 1567. At this hearing, Ramus recalled his earlier self-identification with Socrates during his master's examination, and Nicolas de Nancel would later validate Ramus's analogy: "[H]e had great courage, enough to rival that of Socrates, especially in putting up with insults, and in taking no notice of the calumnies and rivalries of his enemies and opponents" (247). That parallel would find expression again some five years later, but the immediate reaction to his testimony was Ramus's forced return to Fontainebleau, where he wrote *Prooemium mathematicum* (1567). Knowing this volume to be a confrontational exercise under present circumstances, Ramus stoked his provocation of Charpentier still further, taking Plato as his latest target. Plato's "almost womanly jealousy" (qtd. in Goulding, *Defending Hypatia* 46) had restricted the audience for mathematics. Plato had tailored his findings for other philosophers. Plato's "blind ambition" (qtd. in Goulding, *Defending Hypatia* 48) had fostered an educative inversion: he had relegated mathematics to universities alone. In short, Plato had translated the natural simplicity and practicality of mathematics into complexity and impracticality.⁷

Ramus returned to Paris in 1568. One of his first concerns was John Gordon (1544–1619). The Scottish prelate had arrived in France three years earlier. Gordon's religious wavering between Christian denominations matched those of Ramus. Gordon "was born a Catholic," as Dorothy Mackay Quynn traces, "but must have welcomed his conversion with his father in 1559, if for no other reason than that Protestantism legalized his mother's marriage and legitimized him" (136). In France, Gordon befriended notable Protestants, including Ramus and the Scottish historian George Buchanan, gaining admittance to the households of both the Prince of Condé and King Henry III of Navarre (1553–1610). Even though

Mary, Queen of Scots, regarded Gordon as receptive to Catholic reconversion, on 7 July 1568, “he wrote to the Regent, Murray, asking for an appointment as spy at the French court. To prove his intimate knowledge of the court secrets, he told the Regent of a plot to rescue Mary” (Quynn 120). On 12 July 1568, “two letters were sent to Cecil on behalf of Gordon.” In one, “Sir Henry Norris, Elizabeth’s Ambassador at the French court, wrote that Gordon was learned in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, and that he had supplied the embassy with certain information about Mary, Queen of Scots.” In the other, Ramus reported that Gordon would soon arrive in England, “bring[ing] Ramus’ greetings to Cecil in person” (121).⁸

Later that year, under mounting pressure from his detractors, Ramus left France. His travels over the next two years, reports Graves, “were nominally a species of thinly disguised expatriation” (91). Yet, “they soon took on the character of almost a triumphal journey and a matter of great moment to the entire [academic] world” (91–92). Ramus initially traveled east; the softening in his *Ciceronianus* of earlier uncompromising attitudes helped to ease his reception at Strasbourg; indeed, “Ramus was not only safer among foreigners than among his own people,” as Graves comments, “but was treated more honourably” (265). Hereafter, “Ramus visited a large part of Germany and Switzerland, and conferred with the most renowned scholars in classics, mathematics, logic, and especially theology” (92). As “probably the foremost French philosopher of his century” (vii), this “‘French Plato,’” as Ramus was called (by those who presumably had read neither *Prooemium mathematicum* nor its revision as *Scholae mathematicae* [1569]), “was received with great consideration by all the universities and cities to which he came” (92). He was offered “well-endowed chairs [...] in the Palatinate, Westphalia, and even Poland, Transylvania, and Hungary” (92–93), but eventually “felt impelled” (100) to return to France under the terms of the general amnesty for Protestants proclaimed by King Charles IX.

Ramus immediately confronted unabated hostility. His enemies “had induced the timorous king,” reports Graves, “to interpret the agreement in such a way as to bring Ramus under the head of ‘deserters from the faith,’ who had forfeited their privileges in Paris” (100). Charpentier tried to persuade the university board to dispense with Ramus. Having a heretic on the staff was academically and morally unacceptable. Charpentier even threatened the administrators with the wrath of the Cardinal of Lorraine and the suppression of the College of Presles should Ramus be retained. By this time, the cardinal had earned the sobriquet of “the tiger,” and

although Charpentier's tactics failed, Ramus was doomed: for, as Hume summarizes, "Paris was in seething discontent"; the cardinal and his nephew Henry (b. 1550), Duke of Guise (r. 1563–88), "beloved" by the Catholics of Paris, had fallen out of favor with the king; and, as a result, the throne was "tottering" (273).

At the end of 1571, Sir Thomas Smith again served as ambassador to France, but he returned to England the following July. He must have sensed a fate worse than temporary imprisonment. His *convictore* Ramus might have advised him to leave. For Ramus's Calvinism, as an issue stoked by Charpentier, now served him particularly ill. Matters climaxed six days after King Henry III of Navarre's marriage on 18 August 1572 to Margaret of Valois (1553–1615). That Sunday (24 August), and the two days that followed, witnessed the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre. This slaughter accounted for many of the Huguenots who had attended the royal wedding. Also "among the sufferers most basely betrayed, and most cruelly used," as Nares reports, "was the celebrated Peter Ramus" (*Memoirs* 2:602 n). With his death, Ramus became a Protestant martyr, another humanist, like his Catholic counterpart John Fisher, murdered amid sectarian discord.

By the time of his murder, Ramus epitomized the intellectual attractions of Huguenot philosophy. The Anglican academic Owen Chadwick (1916–2015) even labels him a "Huguenot scholar" (416). Above all else, then, the Guises, Charpentier, and their congeners feared Ramus's mind. The manner of his murder on 26 August betrayed that dread. "Shot through the head and pierced with a sword," relates Graves, "he was flung from the window" of his fifth-floor study in the College of Presles; his body "was dragged with a rope through the streets until the Seine was reached, where a surgeon struck off the head, and the trunk was cast into the river" (107). The analogy Ramus had drawn between himself and Socrates had found another parallel in the authoritarian pressure behind each man's death. Ramus's courage, as a third similarity, had certainly rivaled that of Socrates.

Apocryphal evidence posits Gordon's active role in events. Lord William Burghley worried that King Charles IX and his mother, Catherine de Medici (b. 1519), "were cooling in the agreement for France and England jointly to aid the Flemish rebels" (Hume 273) in their fight against Spanish-Papal forces. Secret agents and regular messengers shuttled backwards and forwards between London and Paris. Gordon, working under Sir Francis Walsingham (c. 1532–90) as one of Burghley's spies, had returned to France

in September 1571. Records of Gordon's affairs are practically nonexistent until 1574, but his efforts at espionage "are summed up in a report of his activities made," as Quynn recounts, "when Cecil asked for information about him in another connection" (122). This dossier suggests that Gordon played each side against the other to his own benefit: "[H]is custom was to dine with the one and sup with the other company, making his profit of both, and making both privy of [the] other's counsels" (State Papers, Foreign, 1572–74). During the massacre, according to his relative Robert Gordon (1580–1656), John "saved himself and divers of his cuntriemen of the reformed religion: which he might the easier doe, being the king's domestick servant, and suspecting the plot befor hand" (291). Historical evidence discounts this version of events. First, "no one of Gordon's rank could have known the exact nature of the plot in time to save anyone." Second, "Gordon was at that time more intimate with the Prince of Condé and the King of Navarre than with the plotters" (Quynn 124).

More creditable is the separate evidence concerning Walsingham and Sidney. "From his former post at the English embassy in Paris," as Anderson chronicles, Burghley's spymaster "Walsingham had seen the carnage of St. Bartholomew's Day" (207). For Sidney, "a young Englishman just beginning his political education abroad, the Massacre was [also] lived experience," as Robert E Stillman documents. "He witnessed the killings first hand, saw the mutilated corpse of Admiral Gaspard de Coligny, leader of the Huguenots, and like his devoted friends and fellow humanists, Philippe Duplessis-Mornay and Hubert Languet, fled Paris in terror of his life" (1–2). What is more, adds Nares, "it has been conjectured that Lord Burghley was meant to be included in the massacre" (*Memoirs* 2:602). Edward de Vere's father-in-law, however, was in England at the time. "Burghley had heard about the murders by 11 September," relates Alford. "He called for vigilance and repentance. Special prayers were commissioned and printed a few weeks later. More immediately England's sea coasts were prepared for a possible invasion and the navy was put to sea" (199). The news from Paris "fell upon Elizabeth and her court like a death-knell," writes Hume, "for it seemed that at last the threatened crusade against Protestantism had begun, and that England was struck at as well as the Huguenots" (275). The loss of Ramus, as the epitome of Huguenot intellectualism, particularly disturbed the Protestants of Britain.

"If the Admiral, and all those martyred on that bloody Bartholomew day, were guilty," railed Smith, "why were they not apprehended, imprisoned, interrogated, and judged; but so much made of as might be, within

two hours of the assassination? Is that the manner to handle men either culpable or suspected? So is the journeyer slain by the robber, so is the hen of the fox, so the hind of the lion, so Abel of Cain, so the innocent of the wicked, so Abner of Joab" (qtd. in Strype 121–22). Smith's erstwhile pupil Edward de Vere "reacted so viscerally" (75) to the events in Paris that he sent "the most admiring and heartfelt letter" he "ever composed" (Anderson 59) to his father-in-law, Lord Burghley.

Oxford's "St. Bartholomew's Massacre Letter" (September 1572) warns that Burghley remains a target for zealous Catholics. "And think if the admiral in France was a eyesore or beam in the eyes of the papists," reasons Oxford, "that The Lord Treasurer of England is a block and a crossbar in their way; whose remove they will never stick to attempt, seeing they have prevailed so well in others" (qtd. in Fowler 55). Correlating Oxford's writings to the earl's Geneva Bible annotations, Roger A. Stritmatter explains that the phrase "eyesore or beam in the eyes" is "an unmistakable allusion to Matthew 7.3" (*Marginalia* 118), an allusion that will recur in Shakespeare's plays. Cecil, once Smith's great mote, was now the papists' block and crossbar.

The "news," writes Oxford, "ring[s] dolefully in the ears of every man of the murder of the Admiral of France, and a number of noble men and worthy gentlemen, and such as greatly have in their lifetimes honoured the Q(ueen's) Majesty our mistress" (qtd. in Fowler 54). The queen reciprocated that honor. She held firm to her Protestantism. "It was no coincidence," observes Whittemore, "that little more than a year after the Bartholomew's massacre, on December 20, 1573, the Queen, at Burghley's urging, appointed Francis Walsingham as joint Secretary of State with Sir Thomas Smith" (5).

Burghley retained his faith too. A significant support to that belief was Ramism, and concerning university matters, that support would eventually encompass Ireland. Dublin, as Hugh F. Kearney emphasizes, presented "a unique opportunity of setting up a university curriculum *de novo*" (67), and Burghley ensured that the queen founded Trinity College along Ramist lines. The year was 1591. Edward de Vere had no commercial interests in Ireland. The province was of historical importance to him, however, owing to the special relationship between Robert de Vere (1362–92), Ninth Earl of Oxford, and King Richard II. Robert was five years Richard's senior, as Richard Desper chronicles, "and the two lads, both fatherless, were constant companions when Richard inherited his grandfather's crown at the age of ten." Robert's influence over Richard

was significant. In thankful recognition, “the king lavished great favor upon his friend, creating him first Marquess of Dublin and then Duke of Ireland” (28)—and no one else has ever held these titles.

The first chancellor of Trinity College Dublin was William Cecil, Lord Burghley; the first provost was Adam Loftus (c. 1533–1605); one of the first scholars was James Ussher (1581–1656).⁹ Unsurprisingly, as Ussher’s notebooks confirm, Ramism dominated the curriculum. That influence would remain with Ussher as Primate of All Ireland (1625–56). His was a “mind trained on Ramist principles” (Kearney 68). As “Cambridge Ramists” (67), the second, third, and fourth provosts, Walter Travers (r. 1594–98), Henry Alvey (r. 1601–9), and William Temple (r. 1609–27), respectively, ensured these principles continued to fashion the curriculum.¹⁰ “During the first thirty years of its existence,” therefore, “Trinity College Dublin was a Ramist foundation” (Kearney 67). Indeed, under Burghley’s chancellorship, as Jack Cunningham chronicles, Trinity had been “called the ‘Fanatics’ College’ by its enemies” (4); this apparent fanaticism rested in no small part on a “strongly Ramist ethos” (3), and that ethos did not alter significantly until Temple’s death in 1627.

NOTES

1. This was another appointment held by Cecil until his death.
2. See also Christina Hallowell Garrett, *The Marian Exiles: A Study in the Origins of Elizabethan Puritanism* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2010).
3. See Jolly’s “‘Shakespeare’ and Burghley’s Library” for more details.
4. Eddi Jolly and Patrick O’Brien (22) provide these details.
5. Cecil’s award was somewhat surprising: he had been chancellor of the university for five years.
6. Marie-Dominique Couziniet summarizes the differing remarks of Théophile de Banos and Nicolas de Nancel concerning Ramus’s conversion. According to Banos, “Ramus, a good Catholic, had gradually slipped into Protestantism.” According to Nancel, “Ramus always attended daily Mass and imposed such attendance on all members of the college.” His attendance and its associated imposition lasted until 1568 (289). Scrupulously disinterested, “Nancel does not comment on Ramus’s motives” for this subterfuge; rather, he proposes that Ramus “acted either by personal conviction or by a desire to deprive his opponents of any opportunity to slander his religious practice” (289–90).

7. The outburst over Plato's "almost womanly jealousy" recalls Ramus's lament concerning Quintilian's overflowing vanity.
8. Gordon "must have gone to England as planned, but without seeing Cecil," reasons Quynn, "for he wrote Cecil in December, 1569, referring to his arrival a year and a half earlier, 'cast upon his (Cecil's) shores, as if by ship-wreck, and despoiled of all his possessions and his fortune'" (121). Onto this letter, Gordon scribbled "notes in six languages, Syriac, Ethiopie, Arabic, Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, in the hope of empressing [*sic*] Cecil with his ability along these lines." These additions, however, "consist only of salutations and familiar phrases which anyone could copy, and in some cases they are obviously the work of one who did not know the languages. Whatever Ramus may have thought of Gordon's learning, it was certainly less extensive than Gordon pretended" (121).
9. This was another appointment held by Cecil until his death.
10. Travers had an "interest in Ramism" (31), as Steven J. Reid notes, despite (or because of) his time at Trinity College. Henry Alvey had studied at St. John's College. William Temple had attended King's College.



CHAPTER 4

Ramus's Method

*“Method,” both in the form of “learning” and of “sagacity,” is the
sovereign light of reason.*

—Peter Ramus, *Dialectique* (135; Graves's translation)

The practical fundamentals of Peter Ramus's principled attitude relate to correct reason (*recta ratio*), natural reason (*ratio naturalis*), and trained reason (*ratio artificiosa*). Correct reason is the independent, God-inspired basis of reasoning, which analytical philosophy now terms protologic. Natural reason is the inborn, human faculty of reason. This logical ability, however, requires tuition from the senses, from induction (which Ramus also calls *example*), and from deduction. “Art,” reasons Ramus in *Dialecticae institutiones*, “always presupposes nature, as exercise presupposes art” (115). A natural capacity attends the art of logic, which studies the a priori framework of rational thought, addresses the rules of argument, and aids rational fitness. Beyond ratiocination, correct reason unites natural reason with moral sense (*synderesis* or *synteresis*) through the animating force of holy conscience (or religious spirit).

The works attributed to William Shakespeare testify to a creative appreciation of correct reason. At an intuitive level, this understanding need not differentiate between Edward de Vere and William Shakspeare, but Oxford's formal education—his trained reason—would have supplemented his intuitive understanding of the protological basis of logic—his natural reason—to

a degree that Stratford's minimal education—his barely honed reason—could not have attained. That Shakespeare's canon supplies abundant proof that its author's natural reason was particularly receptive, trained at once in logical procedure and its attendant rhetoric, in its low-end versions in the vernacular as well as in its high-end versions in Greek and Latin, fits this Ramist provenance.

Kees Meerhoff explains how Ramus's "enthusiasm for vernacular culture" exemplifies an "open 'spirit'" in which transmission of knowledge "to a general audience is among the major responsibilities of a scholar" (133). This enthusiasm emerged from Ramus's personal history and informed his educational strategies as a scholar. Each of these wellsprings promoted an egalitarian attitude toward learning that suited the French Huguenot proposition of a nation of Protestant freedom. During Ramus's lifetime, university teaching in Europe was in Latin, so Ramism at once accommodated and challenged this standard. "It is not paradoxical, but perfectly understandable," asserts Meerhoff, "that Ramus saw fit to publish his plea in favour of the vernacular in Latin." Despite Ramus's reservations concerning Cicero's Asiatic style, "this is precisely what happened in his *Ciceronianus*" (146), which praised Cicero "for his efforts to raise the level of Latin eloquence by studying the riches of Greek language and speech" (146–47). Just as knowledge of Greek emancipated Latin, so knowledge of classical languages emancipated the vernacular.

Frank Pierrepont Graves notes that Ramus "produc[ed] vernacular treatises on both grammar and dialectic, at a time when, according to [Estienne] Pasquier, it was doubted whether it was 'worth while to couch the arts in French'" (122, n. 1). Yet, Ramus found support among La Pléiade, as Joachim du Bellay's (c. 1522–60) opinion testifies. "The broadening of our language [...] cannot be accomplished without principles and without learning," avows du Bellay. "I recommend these to all who aspire to the glory of imitating the great Greeks and Romans, or even Italian, Spanish, and other literatures: else let them not write at all" (174). Indeed, the traces of "'real' or colloquial speech, that is, of *dialogue* between persons, which sixteenth- and seventeenth-century poetry specializes in," as Walter J. Ong states in *Ramus, Method, and the Decay of Dialogue*, "give it its characteristic excellence" (287; emphasis original). A corresponding excellence in Oxford's "Massacre Letter" strikes Roger A. Stritmatter. "The letter accomplishes what de Vere in his own preface to Bartholomew Clerk's Latin translation of *The Courtier* praises as Castiglione's own accomplishment" (*Marginalia* 675): the vivid yet natural relation of everyday conversation.

In sixteenth-century England, Sir Thomas Bodley typified the educated attitude toward the vernacular, as Sears Jayne and Francis R. Johnson explain, “in scorning English books in general as ‘idle bookes and riffe-raffes.’” The library of Edward de Vere’s cousin John Lumley was, however, less typical of the English Renaissance. While most of the works were in Latin, “Lumley’s views on the subject were probably not so extreme as Bodley’s” (11), with his library holding 187 books in English. The other major libraries to which Oxford had access speak of the divide between the atypical and typical. Judged from his preference for hard words over their inhorn alternatives, and from his eagerness to buy copies of books in English as well as in their original languages, Sir William Cecil was of Lumley’s persuasion.¹ In comparison, as the 1566 manifest of his Hill Hall collection attests, Sir Thomas Smith was closer to Bodley’s persuasion. “Numbers of titles in the different languages,” relates Stephanie Hopkins Hughes, “show us how low English stood as a literary language in the 1560s; of titles in Latin, Smith lists 259, in French, 56; in Greek, 43; in Italian, 25, and in English, only 21” (1). Cecil was more of Ramist in this matter than was Smith.

“In England,” writes Emma Annette Wilson, “the concept of vernacular logic and rhetoric textbooks met with comparative success” (71). “Logical study,” avers Hardin Craig, “was probably largely in the vernacular, if we may judge by Thomas Wilson’s [1524–81] *The Rule of Reason*, which appeared in 1551” (381). Wilson derives the introduction to his volume from John Seton’s (c. 1498–1567) *Dialectica* (1545). Seton’s text “was based directly on Aristotle” (440), as Lawrence D. Green reveals, and following revision by Peter Carter (1530–90), as Peter Mack chronicles in *Elizabethan Rhetoric* (2002), “was much used in Cambridge from the 1540s” (56). Wilson’s companion volume, *The Art of Rhetoric*, appeared two years later. “Wilson believed that every discipline could be reduced to a method,” and his attitude, as Craig R. Smith asserts, “reflects the influence of Ramus” (221).

Wilson’s renown rests more on *The Art of Rhetoric* than on *The Rule of Reason*, but his vernacular approach did not simplify the art of logic to the extent that Craig assumes. First, Wilson retained many Aristotelian obscurities, as his recourse to Seton adumbrates. Second, while his definition of logic posited a dialectical approach, Wilson retained the common currency of the *loci communes*. In contrast, while resolving Aristotelian obscurities, Ramus abided by categorical and hypothetical propositions, thereby hardening the “seats of arguments” (Stritmatter, *Marginalia* 131).² “Loci-based memory, a mentalization structured by division and composition,”

explains Matthew Guillen, “was simply transformed by Ramus into content structured in a set of visible or sight-oriented relations on the page” (44–45). Wilson’s approach did not presage such a transformation.

Ramus’s hardening of rationality appealed to lawyers and mathematicians. Oxford, who would have been conversant with the range of rational methods from soft dialectic to harder logic, would also have appreciated this crystallization. Stratford, who might have been conversant with the soft approach, would have been less familiar with the harder alternative. This difference is crucial to the authorship debate. For, “however deeply the poetic impulse stirs the mind to which it is granted,” asserts Giovanni Boccaccio, “it very rarely accomplishes anything commendable if the instruments by which its concepts are to be wrought out are wanting” (40). Unlike Stratford’s trained reason, Oxford’s *ratio artificiosa* challenged epistemological standards, with Ramism forming an important constituent of his rational bedrock, foundations that were advanced, composite, and complete.

The everyday expression of natural reason in either action or language appealed to Ramus. “Humanists had praised man’s natural logical faculties, elevating them over artificial technique,” as Robert Goulding relates in “Method and Mathematics,” “but Ramus was the first to look beyond the walls of the university and the writings of the ancients to find natural dialectic at work” (65). He exhorted students not only to study classical languages, but also to unearth logic in common practice. In *Aristotelicae animadversiones*, for example, Ramus cites uneducated vineyard workers. Students should question such laborers about soil fertility, crop yield and quality, and prospects for the coming year. Their replies, “as if their minds were mirrors,” states Ramus, “would be reflections of natural logic” (8).

Such an instance exemplifies an early step in the teaching of logic, but to Ramus, as suggested by the vernacular expression of natural reason in either action or language, that tuition depended on clarity. Teachers had to make logic easy to learn. Fabricated lessons failed this test. Indeed, *commentitium*, which means forged, false, invented, devised, improvised, fictitious, or fabricated, was prominent among Ramus’s critical terms. Ideally, university educated logicians—men trained to discount the irrelevant, overly detailed, and otherwise inappropriate material that blighted the scholastic approach to logic—would avoid fabrication. They would answer the educative need for the reintroduction of first principles. Returning the art of logic to its natural simplicity required a thorough (but somewhat ironic) education in logic.

For Ramus, the arts and sciences were disciplines, which required practice. Each discipline was unique, fabrication had marred each, and each needed reorganization. All reordered disciplines would then naturally reveal their phenomenological structures. Whatever the text—whether vernacular, formal, nonfictional, fictional, or philosophical—Ramus's mode of analysis remained largely unaltered. This consistency rested on his belief that the logical structure of rational minds produced texts worth studying. In most cases, that framework would not be immediately apparent, but would emerge during the process of textual analysis.

Put succinctly, as Goulding argues, Ramus's approach "is not just a useful way to arrange the precepts of logic, but a representation of the deep structure of discourse, and hence of the human mind, the instrument of discourse and the source of dialectic" (66). Whereas Oxford's education empowered an appreciation of this aspect of Ramism, Stratford's education did not: "the highest point of education," as Goulding states of Ramus's approach, "consists of recovering this total structure, a process which will cleanse the mind of its false beliefs and allow it to recognize its innate dialectical structure" (67).

The philosophical aspect of Ramus's argument also impinges on the question of Shakespearean authorship. "For Shakespeare and his contemporaries," opines Joseph Pearce, "the battle between realism and nominalism was a very hot topic" (67–68). As a species of methodological essentialism, explains Karl Popper, realism aimed "to reveal essences and to describe them by means of definitions." This explanation "can be better understood when contrasted with its opposite, *methodological nominalism*. Instead of aiming at finding out what a thing really is, and at defining its true nature, methodological nominalism aims at describing how a thing behaves in various circumstances, and especially, whether there are any regularities in its behaviour" (30). Ramus and Oxford were effectively cohorts in the fight for realism. "Shakespeare," as Pearce avers, "clearly takes a position in [its] defense." Pearce's avowal has problems, with a reduction of the medieval debate between realism and nominalism to a battle between opposites, but Pearce does understand that by Shakespeare's time the debate over realism informed the "complex conflict between an increasingly secularized humanism and an entrenched but defiant scholasticism" (68).

Ramus outlines the means of surpassing that defiance in *Dialecticae institutiones*. Empowered by dialectic mastery, and starting with rhetoric, the humanist mind accedes to moral philosophy and physics, before

attaining perfection in mathematics. Fortuitously, the edict against Ramus of 1544 had allowed him to address mathematics, and he had thereby gained masterful control of the subject. With the abrogation of that edict in 1547, Ramus returned to studying and teaching philosophy, but the preeminence he accorded mathematics never wavered. His Latin version of *Euclid's Elements* charged Euclid with disciplinary misrepresentation. *Aristotelicae animadversiones* had provoked official censure, but Ramus's version of Euclidean geometry, basic number theory, and incommensurable lines went *almost* unremarked.

If Euclid remained Ramus's classical *bête noire*, then Pythagoras became his classical *éminence grise*. "As a member of the Collège Royal," explains Richard J. Oosterhoff, "Ramus was busy inventing his own Pythagoras, transforming him into a systematizer of commonly known mathematical truths" (550–51). Oronce Fine (1494–1555), the chair of mathematics at the College Royal, raised no objection to Ramus's work. When Fine vacated his position in 1551, however, Jacques Charpentier, as the new chair, was immediately at odds with Ramus, the new chair of eloquence and philosophy. Charpentier, who "openly despised mathematics," insisted that Pythagoras "taught through enigmatic sayings, hiding rather than exposing the truth." This stance offended Ramus. His response was to construct a history of mathematics, *Arithmetica* (1555), "making Pythagoras the pinnacle of mathematical perfection" (551).

Above all, Pythagoras exemplified Ramus's appeal to vernacular practice: Pythagoras reached the pinnacle of mathematics not because of mystical insight, "but because he gathered the common notions about lines and points from artisans and fishermen" (Oosterhoff 551). Moreover, Pythagoras was a mathematician in the vanguard of philosophy, and this preeminence supported Ramus's opinion of mathematics. "The rise of philosophy itself can be interpreted [...] as a response to the breakdown of the closed society and its magical beliefs," avows Popper. "It is an attempt to replace the lost magical faith by a rational faith." Pythagoras contributed to "inventing the tradition of criticism and discussion, and with it the art of thinking rationally," and that contribution "stand[s] at the beginning of our civilization" (178). To Ramus, mathematical training propelled natural reasoning toward the summit of human learning, and Pythagoras had attained that height.

Ramus, who distanced himself from Aristotle's assertion in his *Metaphysics* concerning the total separation of mathematics from other disciplines, hereby promoted the humanist perspective initially posited by

Charles de Bovelles (1479–1553) and subsequently forwarded by Jacques Peletier du Mans (1517–82). “In the 1550s and 1560s,” expounds Timothy J. Reiss in “From Trivium to Quadrivium” (2000), “increasing numbers of writers saw some sort of mutual inter-reference between mathematics, the order of words and the order of things.” Bovelles and Pelletier, in particular, “saw numbers as relating to what ruled the *system* of things and so revealing of the ‘hidden properties of all natural things,’ as both said.” Ramus “held the same view” (50; emphasis original).

As Goulding makes plain in *Defending Hypatia* (2010), Ramus also shared with Bovelles and Pelletier the Pythagorean notion that “mathematics was something divine” (28). The discipline, rather than the mystical practitioners of mathematics, provided a conduit between the physical and metaphysical realms. “Because they establish a connection between the visible world of geometry and the suprasensible world of pure number,” as Stritmatter notes in “Triangular Numbers in Henry Peacham’s *Minerva Britanna*” (2012–13), “figurate numbers—including square, triangular, cubic and pyramidal numbers—had been central to Pythagorean doctrine for many centuries” (95–96). This principle was also central to Ramus’s structural approach to the arts and sciences; mathematics was the purest expression of dialectic, and this contention effectively anticipated Robert Hanna’s concept of protologic.

Ramus’s friendship with John Dee (1527–1608) reveals his influence on mathematics in England. “Dee collected a number of Ramus’s works,” writes Peter French, “and Ramus considered Dee the most suitable man in England to hold a mathematical chair at either of the universities; he even petitioned Elizabeth to establish such a chair” (143). Ramus’s failure on Dee’s behalf would find a mirror image in his failure to oppose Charpentier’s accession to the chair of mathematics at the College Royal, and while Ramus and Charpentier would remain antagonists, Ramus and Dee would remain affable correspondents. “Ascham was also a friend of Dee,” adds Paul Lawrence Rose, “and received, like him, a letter from Ramus in 1564 offering copies of Greek mathematical texts by Pappus, Apollonius, and Serenus in return for help in obtaining an Archimedean treatise” (58). As French argues, therefore, “it seems almost impossible that Dee, who taught [Philip] Sidney the mathematical sciences, did not introduce him to Ramistic thought.” Ascham, an acquaintance of Sidney’s mother, is another possible source of Ramist influence. “There is certainly no reason to assume, as [John] Buxton does, that Sidney had little if any acquaintance with Ramus’s work before leaving England for his tour on the

Continent in 1572" (143).³ That Edward de Vere "enjoyed a lively correspondence with the queen's astrologer John Dee in 1570" (Mark Anderson 444) reemphasizes the complementary conclusion: Oxford was familiar with Ramism too.

Sir Henry Savile's (1549–1622) Oxford University lectures of 1570 confirm the suggestion of Ramus's influence on mathematics in England. Savile, as John Fauvel and Robert Goulding report, "had read with close attention Ramus's popular introduction to mathematics, the *Prooemium mathematicum*." He "even borrowed entire well-turned sentences for his own lectures" (64). These presentations constituted an exception that substantiated not only the "little" in Graves's dictum that Ramism "made little progress" (212) at Oxford University, but also the "barely a fraction" in Fauvel and Goulding's insistence that "at Oxford Ramism attracted barely a fraction of the support that it enjoyed at Cambridge" (64). Savile prefaced his lectures, as Goulding traces in "Method and Mathematics," "with a history of the mathematical sciences," which drew on Ramus's *Prooemium mathematicum* as his major (but unacknowledged) source. Savile shared Ramus's poor opinion of the teaching of mathematics; he shared withal Ramus's mission of correcting this undesirable situation, but Savile rejected Ramus's egalitarian tendency toward the dissemination of learning. Savile argued that Ramus had failed to return mathematics to its natural state, "enmir[ing] it in the physical world and in base, commercial, and artisanal applications" (81). In contrast, Savile determined "to counter the prejudice among students that mathematics was the proper task of merchants, sailors, and other lower-class practitioners" (82). To Savile's mind, Ramus was guilty of unwarrantably breaching social distinctions, because mathematics was for gentlemen rather than for yeomen, artisans, or merchants.⁴

In returning to philosophical authorship after the abrogation of the 1547 edict, Ramus kept mathematics firmly in mind, at once softening his attitude toward Aristotle and hardening his attitude toward Euclid. Indeed, as Graves observes, Ramus "borrow[s] certain detached principles from Aristotle" (144). These appropriations would underpin Ramus's three methodological laws for defining and organizing the subjects of study: his *law of truth* derives from Aristotle's *principle of universal application* (or *universal necessity*), his *law of justice* derives from Aristotle's *principle of complete homogeneity* (or *necessary relationship*), and his *law of wisdom* derives from Aristotle's *principle of total application* (or *necessary association*).

In these instances, Ong agrees with Graves, but is less reserved: Ramus's laws, he insists, are "torn" (*Decay* 259) from Aristotle. This difference in critical emphasis arises from Ong's snapshot of a continuous process. In other words, as with his attitude toward Cicero and Quintilian, Ramus gradually tempered his hostility toward Aristotle. His disagreements with the Aristotelian philosopher Jakob Schegk (1511–87) did much to encourage this moderation. In "the works that grew out of his contest with Schegk," agrees Graves, "he even shows a great admiration for Aristotle." The young Ramus castigated the Peripatetics, yet, in appreciating Aristotle's strengths as well as his faults, the mature Ramus eventually "professes to be a better Peripatetic than his adversaries" (144).

Each of Ramus's three methodological laws found Euclid wanting. According to Ramus's law of justice, arithmetic and geometry are separate sciences, and instructors must teach them accordingly. In contrast, Euclid often expresses arithmetical rules in geometrical terms. Under Ramus's law of wisdom, general sciences precede particular ones, so number precedes magnitude. In contrast, Euclid violates this precession by opening his *Elements* with geometric considerations. Under Ramus's law of truth, all the precepts of an art or science must be true. In contrast, Euclid fails this condition in leaving the laws of justice and wisdom unmet.

Ramus's *Arithmetica* was his initial attempt to rectify Euclid's deficiencies. Later, as Goulding chronicles, Ramus produced "his *Geometry*, *Algebra*, and *Optics*." Thereafter, "he returned anew to writing the history of mathematics" ("Method" 75), seeking a natural discipline structured by logic. Meeting that objective would facilitate a related aim: the stepwise teaching of the subject. "The individual propositions arranged in place and order will not only be statements of their own truth," asserts Ramus in the posthumously published *Collectanea praefationes* (1599), "but even demonstrations of it" (qtd. in Goulding, *Defending Hypatia* 32). Ramus continued to target these progressive goals. "Although he was never completely satisfied with his reform[s]," as Goulding remarks, and despite the relative failure of his Latin version of *Euclid's Elements*, Ramus's general publications on mathematics "remained popular school textbooks for more than a century after his death" ("Method" 77).

Ramus was more content with the application of his three methodological laws to dialectic and rhetoric. The law of justice asserts that all precepts must be germane not only to the subject, but also to each other. "Arrangement," which comprises the axiom (or proposition) and the syllogism (or derivation), comes under this law. The quality of an axiom is

either general or special; the quantity of an axiom is either positive or negative. Part of Ramus's earliest worries about Aristotelian thought concerned the principles and causes needed for a syllogistic conclusion. Two premises support a syllogism: the *major premise* contains the *major term* that is the predicate of the conclusion; the *minor premise* contains the *minor term* that is the subject of the conclusion. Common to these premises is a *middle term* excluded from the conclusion.

Ramus's methodical approach to the syllogism identified a major Aristotelian fault: by promoting intuition and judgment at the expense of invention, Aristotle had made himself the source of middle terms: Aristotle appealed to Aristotle. Assuming "man's inability to secure an apodictic middle term," to expand a previous quotation from Craig Walton's "Ramus and Bacon on Method," "Ramus intended to develop one dialectical logic to include both invention and judgment. That is, just as invention proceeds from artificial to inartificial arguments, so judgment should proceed in parallel—from axiom as the conjunction of two or more artificial arguments [...] to contingent axioms as composed of inartificial arguments [...] and thence to conclusions" (296). Hence, Ramus recognized composite syllogisms, identifying their common everyday usage, and Ramists greeted this recognition as one of Ramus's most important discoveries.⁵

Ramus's division of rhetoric into *elocutio* (or expression) and *pronuntiatio* (or action), which defines *elocutio* as the graceful ornamentation of speech and *pronuntiatio* as oral delivery, relocates invention, arrangement, and memory to logic. According to the law of truth, as Graves explains, "every precept must be in keeping with truth, not only in some instances, but always. It must necessarily, and not accidentally, be true; its validity must be incontrovertible" (111). This law prompted Ramus's distinction between nonartificial (*inartificiel*) and artificial (*artificiel*) invention. Nonartificial invention, which reveals an argument by "taking the form of some artificial argument" (*Dialectique* 32), is derivative. This revelation relies on the skills of the deliverer, but "does not demand proof of great strength" (*Dialectique* 33). In contrast, "because Ramus understood God to be Logician and Artificer of creation," as Walton expounds, "all of God's works are intelligibly artificial—i.e., made according to His dialectical logic, exercised through the arts of His practice or genesis. Consequently, they are artificially intelligible: that is, if we are to find the basic explanatory factors of a thing, we must find their 'how,' those artifices which circumstantially reciprocate to constitute 'what' it is. Invention is therefore

primarily artificial, since it is comprised of the art of discovering how things are artfully made by God" ("Method" 295).

If the honing of judgment concerns *analysis* as stage one in the Ramist development of the rational mind, then the honing of invention concerns *genesis* as stage two. "The way in which rhetoric, just like dialectic and any other art, should be practiced is explicitly twofold," states Ramus in *Rhetoricae distinctiones in Quintilianum*, "that is, analysis and genesis. For first of all we must understand the use of the art in representative examples, and then we must fashion our own like them" (155). Analysis produces the simple from the complex.

Marion Trousedale illustrates a Ramist analysis with an example from a Cambridge University commonplace book of the sixteenth century. The student takes the Lord's Prayer as a form, pattern, or rule for prayers in general. A Ramist analysis indicates that this form has two parts: an entrance (or preparation) and the prayer itself. The entrance describes God with an axiom (or sentence copulative). "The Subiecte is that which hath any thing adioyned vnto it" (31), counsels Ramus, and the student notes, as Trousedale details, how "the first reason—Our Father—is from the 'adjoynt of Relation.' Our Father is adorned with that manner of exclamation that utters a familiar affection, as my father, my son" (15). Ramus explains that "the adioynt is that which hath a subiecte to the which it is adioined" (33), and for the student, as Trousedale observes, "the second reason is from the subject, *which art in heaven*. 'Heaven is the throne or seate or place of Gods majesty & power whear this is moeste cleare and manifest beeing put for the majesty and power ytsel by a Metonimia or chang of name whear the place or Subject is put for the thing placed or Adjoynt, so that our reverens myt bring forth such cognitions, desyres and words in such manner as may becom his majesty, because he is in heaven and we in earth'" (15; emphasis original). In fine, as Ramus concludes, "the proposition is connexiue, whose coniunction is connexiue: as, yf thou haue faythe, thou must haue charitie" (77). Trousedale traces how "the substance of the prayer itself is analyzed in a similar way. It is seen as having two parts: the form of 'our request' and the confirmation of it containing a thanksgiving. The form of request 'is set down in a cupling axiome which numbrell up the several petitions, whear the bond or coupl of the Axiome is left out, as the manner is when one doth beg earnestly, and because of earnestnes doth spidely requyre or wil a thing'" (15).⁶

The student must understand his subject of imitation before succeeding to invention. Hierarchical (rather than precipice) reductionism follows

hierarchical (rather than precipice) constructivism. Genesis—so named by Ramus in “Pro philosophica disciplina,” because this process “generates a new and efficacious work of art” (1010)—synthesizes a new product from analytical material. For Ramus, as Reiss explains in *Knowledge, Discovery and Imagination in Early Modern Europe*, “invention corresponded to syllogistic reasoning and disposition to rational methodical discourse, and [...] both together were a logic corresponding to universal human reason itself” (121). In “Peter Ramus and Imitation: Image, Sign and Sacrament” (1972), Peter Sharratt agrees with Reiss: “[T]he conception of ‘genesis’ is the nearest approach that Ramus (or any of his immediate contemporaries) seems to have made regarding the idea of originality” (26).

Ramus’s contribution to Omer Talon’s *Institutiones oratoriae* (1545) posits transcendence as the final stage in rational development. During this phase, the genius of the erstwhile student accompanies his judgment. Actualization of imitative potential tends toward self-effacement. This tendency removes the basic precepts of Ramism from works of genius inspired by Ramus, but this removal does not equate to self-defeat. The Geneva Bible marginalia of Edward de Vere indicate Oxford’s appreciation of this difference. Stritmatter reveals how these annotations show de Vere’s “faith in the transcendent value of secret works (*Matthew* 6.1–4; *Wisdom* 1.11) which, despite the erasure of his name (*Ecclus* 41.11; Sonnets 25, 71–76, 81), will become a legacy to posterity effecting the eventual historical redemption of his name (*Micah* 7.9; Sonnets 72 and 76)” (*Marginalia* 94; emphasis original). Ramus “saw imitation as part of the general process by which man must strive to make himself more like God, and to realize that he is *already* made in the image of God” (Sharratt, “Imitation” 27; emphasis original). That Ramus hints at, rather than defining, this final stage of intellectual development reiterates his earlier judgment that contemporary writers and orators have not mastered genesis.

Although Francis Bacon “seems to have shared the notion of creation as the artifice of God,” adds Walton, “he did not treat arguments as expressive of the art of God’s logic. That is, where Ramus saw arguments as God’s way of communicating the art of his logic, Bacon assumed that Ramus’ arguments were merely formal or rhetorical, but not material and circumstantially evident” (“Method” 301). Puritans effectively disagreed with Bacon. Ramus’s differentiation between the artificial and the nonartificial suited their mindset. “With Ramus,” as Walton explains, “the Puritans believed that God could work either directly or indirectly. Their inference was that they should both obey Him in so far as He was teaching

them directly, and also ceaselessly study any proximate causes (circumstantial evidence) which worked well enough to teach [them] of His ways" ("Socrates" 127, n. 26). Whereas nonartificial inventions were assumed, artificial inventions, which include arguments for agreement, disagreement, and combinations of agreement and disagreement, had to be demonstrated.

Application of the law of wisdom, which follows this justification, and which involves both dialectic and rhetoric, concerns Ramus's concept of method. This approach, as Ong remarks in *Rhetoric, Romance, and Technology*, "is not easy to trace with absolute precision. The concept itself is somewhat protean or chameleonlike, at times losing outline when it is applied—as Ramus insisted it should be—to every conceivable subject" (174). Certain contours, however, are mappable. Aristotelians have a greater recourse to induction than Platonists do; Platonists have a greater recourse to deduction than Aristotelians do. Ramus follows Plato. While learning can sometimes benefit from induction, method pays "lip service" (171) to inductive reasoning. Bacon agrees with Ramus on this point. "To conclude upon a bare enumeration of particulars (as [some] logicians do) without instance contradictory," writes Bacon in *De augmentis scientiarum* (1623), "is a vicious conclusion; nor does this kind of induction produce more than a probable conjecture" (4:410)—and Ramus, as previously discussed, discounted probabilism.

Method is deductive; it arranges arguments from the most important first to the least important last; the general precedes the particular. Genera rather than individuals are the initial concern of Ramism; the vernacular expression of natural reason suggests this focus: taxonomical appreciation in children quickly develops from singulars to species to genera. "Apprehension in terms of universals or 'generals,'" as Ong relates, "can be effected permanently and at a tender age" (*Decay* 255). A "child comes with no difficulty to this point, whereupon *all* universals are more known to him (*notiora nobis*) than are nonuniversals" (*Decay* 256; emphasis original). For Ramus, "the method of 'learning' is strongly scientific," as Graves explains, "and follows the laws of logic, going from definitions and general principles to the distribution and special arrangement of parts" (152).

Sagacity is the corresponding method among poets, orators, and historians. While learning takes a purely logical form, sagacity does not, arising from a combination of wisdom and applied reason. As Ramus asserts in *Dialectique*, "'Method,' both in the form of 'learning' and of 'sagacity,' is

the sovereign light of reason,” and practitioners “differ very widely among themselves in the qualification.” They “all naturally share in the syllogistic faculty,” but “the number of those who study how to use it well is very small, and of that small number there are still fewer who know how to arrange and judge according to good ‘method’” (135; Graves’s translation). William Shakespeare, as a learned and sagacious practitioner, belongs to this select group; Edward de Vere, as his response to his intellectual upbringing intimates, was eligible for inclusion; but William Shakspeare, as his background adumbrates, was almost certainly ineligible for membership.

Ramus’s first extended work, his master’s thesis of 1536, anticipated his three methodological laws. Ramus’s return to philosophical authorship employed them. “Thus, by means of these three laws,” as Graves concludes, “our reformer undertook to criticize the mass of subject matter employed in the education of the times.” Ramus “separated the wheat from the chaff. The useless and false material that had crept in through medieval commentaries, sophistry, and faith in authority, he was able, by means of the law of ‘truth,’ to detect and eliminate.” Then, “by means of the laws of ‘justice’ and ‘wisdom,’ he found a more logical and more easily remembered arrangement, and rid the various subjects of confusion and tautology” (113).

Ramus’s goal in mathematics and philosophy hereby echoed his goal in dialectic and rhetoric: reeducating practitioners in higher education to recognize, appreciate, and reimpose the natural order of correct reason, so that they could reintroduce their disciplines into lower education on a valid footing. Ramus’s murder inspired a second generation of British Ramists to realize this aim. Their efforts, however, provoked opposition. In *La disputa del metodo nel Rinascimento* (1997), Guido Oldrini provides an overview of intellectualism in England at this time, arguing that Ramism came under particular scrutiny. In “Ramus 2000” (2000), Sharratt affirms Oldrini’s claim, identifying the growing accommodation of Ramism at Oxford University, on the one hand, and the widening division over Ramism at Cambridge University, on the other.

“At Oxford,” details Sharratt, “we find Puritan sympathisers and some other Ramists” (435). These sympathizers included John Rainolds, the Puritan reader in Greek at Corpus Christi College (1572–78), who, “like Ramus, was a thoroughgoing humanist” (Margo Todd 69). At Cambridge University, as Sharratt enumerates, the major Ramists were “Laurence Chaderton, lecturer in logic and rhetoric; Gabriel Harvey, professor of

rhetoric; George Downham, professor of logic; William Perkins; and William Temple" (435). Harvey's patrons included Sir Thomas Smith and Edward de Vere. Perkins (1558–1602), as a fellow of Christ's College, became an influential Puritan. His approach to the Scriptures, which successively studied biblical grammar, rhetoric, and logic, followed Ramus's method. His loyalty to Ramism, however, went beyond structural analysis; and, as Smith did, Perkins promoted the republican implications of Ramus's principled attitude. All members of the Elect were fundamentally equal. The concept of hereditary social status was illegitimate. Perkins dismissed this notion with his concept of *calling*: an individual does not inherit a calling; he must choose one. For Perkins, the three estates of Church, Commonwealth, and Family, rather than those of Monarch, Lords, and Commons, should constitute society. The reformed commonwealth, as the rational development of the medieval common weal, would be a Protestant republic. Individual achievement would mean more than personal heredity.

Ironically, this wish worked against Sir Thomas Smith himself. Those wary of his reforms feared social dilution. Put succinctly, the old aristocracy feared the baseborn Smith's sociopolitical radicalism. Under these circumstances, while Cecil would be elevated to the peerage, Smith would not. Indeed, after promotion to Lord Burghley on 25 February 1571, Burghley would enter the Most Noble Order of the Garter in April 1572. "There was," remarks Stephen Alford, "no greater mark of his position in Elizabeth's government" (192). In the summer of 1572, Smith became the queen's new Secretary, while Burghley became the queen's new Lord High Treasurer. The roles of Smith (the erstwhile senior and once Second Secretary) and Cecil (the erstwhile junior and once Master of Requests) were now reversed: "If the Secretary was in theory one of the most junior of the Privy Council, then the Lord Treasurer was virtually its most senior member" (198). Nor would the Most Noble Order of the Garter admit Smith (or Oxford).

The radicalism of Cambridge University, which Smith had helped to generate, and which Edward de Vere had experienced as an undergraduate, persisted. On the foundation of Emmanuel College in 1584, as Sargent Bush and Carl J. Rasmussen report, "the curriculum stipulate[d] the works of Ramus as required reading" (27). The theological associations to this Ramism were clear: "where Ramus is found in the notebooks," as Todd observes, "his works are cited among those of Christian humanists" (71). "The list of Cambridge Ramists," reports Hugh F. Kearney, "reads

like a list of the most radical Cambridge Puritans.” This hardcore included “Cartwright, Hildersham, Fenner, Alvey, Perkins, Ames, Downham, Richardson, Travers, Penry, Temple and Gouge” (61). Their pursuit of Ramism benefitted from two sources: the college libraries and local bookbinders. In the first instance, the extant library inventories of the Cambridge colleges for the period indicate that fourteen contained at least one volume by Ramus. In the second instance, local bookbinder John Denys (among others) maintained a good stock of the author’s works.

The Ramists’ main opponents at Cambridge University still came from Trinity College. Under John Whitgift, its Master from 1567 to 1577, the college remained what Rosemary O’Day calls “a bastion of Aristotelianism” (128). This stronghold produced Everard Digby (c. 1578–1606) and Francis Bacon. Digby, who had entered the university in 1567, was “one of Cambridge’s most popular dons and a renowned opponent of Ramism” (Walton, “Method” 300 n. 27). Bacon, who entered Trinity College on 5 April 1573, came under Digby’s direct influence, and thereby “derived his critical attitude towards Ramism” (Kearney 61).

Beyond the university, as Paolo Rossi explains, Bacon encountered “the survival of medieval Scholastic traditions” (xii) among men such as Richard Hooker (1554–1600) and John Case (c. 1540–1600). Hooker decried the “poverty” of that “devised aid,” which he called “Ramistry.” The best Hooker could say for Ramism came in a backhanded compliment: “[W]e may find it to be an art which teacheth the way of speedy discourse, and restraineth the mind of man that it may not wax overwise” (138). Case, “who made extensive use” of “low-grade Ramism” (Mordechai Feingold 137), nevertheless, professed to be an Aristotelian.

The academic split over Ramism in England exposed the fault line that underlay English Puritanism. The town and the merchant, on the one hand, and the country and the gentleman, on the other, constituted this deeper divide. “The social values which were associated with trade and urbanization contrasted with those associated with the country house and the social hierarchy of the country” (Kearney 46). Merchants derived prestige from traditional university degrees. Ramism provided that kudos with a cutting edge. The basics of Ramism promoted stepwise and practical logic. One could adopt a Ramist ethos without having to master the more abstruse aspects of Ramism. While a Ramist mindset enabled a gentleman to approach religion with logical devotion, a simpler version of that mindset allowed a merchant to approach business with rational confidence.

Edward de Vere, as an aristocrat, a courtier, and a member of the intellectual avant-garde, witnessed the Puritan divide; Ramism served that testimony, and Oxford's foreign travels heightened that service. In February 1575, less than three years since Ramus's murder, less than five years since Savile's Oxford University lectures, and less than ten years since Ramism had reached its initial peak in England, de Vere found himself in France for the coronation and subsequent marriage of Henry III. During this visit, he met Jacques Amyot (1513–93), the new king's erstwhile tutor. Amyot had attended the University of Paris at the time of Ramus's undergraduate studies.⁷ The two men had become friends (Michel Balard 48). In fact, Amyot's humanism suggests that he supported Ramus, and the preface to Ramus's *Grammaire* (1562) indicates its author's reciprocity in proposing Amyot as the prince's preceptor.⁸ These links extend to the authorship debate concerning William Shakespeare. Amyot had translated Plutarch's *Vitae* into French; Oxford had purchased a copy of Amyot's translation in 1570; so "de Vere and the sixty-two-year-old scholar," whatever their academic differences, "would have shared much intellectual common ground" (Anderson 76).

After his attendance at Henry's nuptials, Edward de Vere ventured east along a route previously traveled by Thomas Smith in 1539, Roger Ascham in 1552, and Peter Ramus in 1568. Each man spent time with Jean Sturm at his Protestant Gymnasium in Strasbourg. "Smith went abroad," reports M. F. Hubbard, "to visit foreign universities, in search of knowledge" (203 n). In effect, Smith's time at Strasbourg broke his journey; his ultimate destination was Italy. Here, at the University of Padua, Smith received the law doctorate that would facilitate his promotion to King's Professor of Civil Law at Cambridge University in 1542. Ascham's personal connections (both academic and courtly) informed his foreign travels. In consequence, he was "in touch with several of the leading Continental scholars of his generation," as Lawrence V. Ryan enumerates, "including Peter Ramus, the reformer of dialectical studies at Paris; the medical pioneer Vesalius; the Strasbourg educator Johann Sturm; [and] the theologian Martin Bucer" (2–3).

Bucer (1491–1551) moved to Cambridge in 1549. He would hold the Regius Professorship of Divinity there until his death. During this tenure, Bucer would compose *De regno Christi*. Published posthumously in 1557, this seminal work "illustrates the importance of first generation Protestants for the transmission of humanist social ideas." Edmund Grindal, the Bishop of London, "collected this and other materials written

by Bucer in England for Conrad Hubert's edition of the *Scripta Anglicana* (Basle, 1577), and a résumé of *De regno Christi* by the puritan Thomas Sampson was sent to Lord Burleigh [*sic*] in 1577" (Todd 57).⁹

Ascham had written his first letter to Sturm on 4 April 1550. This missive not only "comment[ed] on the value and interconnection of logic and rhetoric" (Ryan 116), but also praised the erudition of Princess Elizabeth and the English nobility. The tenor of these remarks, Ascham's high valuation of Sturm's writings, his exhortation to Sturm to publish a long-awaited commentary on Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, and each man's respect for Cicero placed them firmly in Ramist territory. Moreover, rumors circulating at Cambridge University at this time suggested that Ramus decried both men's work, and Ascham's introductory missive includes a barely veiled attack on Ramus. Ascham translates Ramus's French Christian name ("Pierre") into Latin ("Cephas"); he then conflates this translation with a concocted Latin surname ("Chlononius"). This Cephas Chlononius, this self-contradictory brag of a stone twig, rails Ascham, attacks both Aristotle and Cicero, but in doing so he has "insolently wronged their good work and misused his own intellect" (*Letters* 161).

Ascham's letter reached Sturm that November. Sturm demurred on the subject of Ramus, but "the zeal with which Ascham [...] extolled Princess Elizabeth and other royal and noble personages of England for their learning," as Ryan relates, drew "a correspondingly enthusiastic response" (144). Sturm even published the two letters under the title "Epistolae Duae de Nobilitate Anglicana" (1551). On 29 January 1552, Ascham again wrote to Sturm concerning the domain they at once shared and contested with Ramus. Explicitly citing Ramus in this letter, Ascham moderates his earlier criticism—"in my heart I am certainly well disposed toward Ramus" (*Letters* 199)—by effectively recognizing Ramus's main targets. Ryan interprets Ascham's second letter similarly: "Ramus, as Ascham himself admitted, was really attacking the late medieval and Renaissance Aristotelians rather than their master" (148).

To Ascham's mind, however, two major faults remained. First, Ramus's attack "had gone too far." Second, Ramus had apparently "poked fun at some of the remarks on imitation, and the veneration of Aristotle and Cicero," which "Epistolae Duae de Nobilitate Anglicana" contained (148). Ramus "will press you and rush upon you with the greater vehemence," Ascham explains to Sturm, "because he knows in the first place that you regard as part of the art of rhetoric *inventio*, which he removes from the rhetorical school, and that with Aristotle you properly and learn-

edly consider *pronuntiatio*." Ramus's strategy, concedes Ascham, is understandable: "[H]e does not wish to be μιμητής [mimetic], lest he appear to ape Aristotle." Nonetheless, "little Ramists prize" *pronuntiatio* "as a matter of exercise rather than of learning" (*Letters* 199).

Ascham retained another objection to Ramus's views on rhetoric—which he would express in *The Scholemaster* (1570) in terms of Ramus's and Talon's "singularity in dissenting from the best men's judgments, in liking their own opinions" (176)—but his next letter to Sturm (29 January 1552) expresses more about Ascham than it does about Ramus. "Now," as Alvin Vos perceives, "he is thinking somewhat disingenuously about rewriting his differences with Ramus and about defensive strategies, particularly about how Sturm might help to ease tension by comments within his own *Aristotelian Dialogues*" (197). For, notwithstanding the rumors at Cambridge University, no evidence exists of Ramus's criticism of either Ascham or Sturm. Indeed, Ramus appears to have borne no grudge against Ascham; rather, as Ryan documents, "in later years he wrote a pleasant and gracious letter to Ascham that affords no hint of any former disagreement or antagonism" (148).

Nor did Ramus resent Sturm. The young Ramus had learned much from Sturm in Paris, and relations between the two men, which were beyond direct contamination from the rumormongers at Cambridge University, always seemed congenial. To reiterate, when Ramus traveled east from Paris in 1568, Strasbourg was his first extended stop. "Here he was met by a large delegation," as Graves records, "and was acclaimed like a prince of the blood" (93). He and Sturm discussed "the study of the liberal arts, the education of youth, the nature and effect of rewards, and other problems in school and educational work generally. The professors of the university and the teachers in the gymnasium gave Ramus a public proof of their esteem by tendering him a banquet" (94).

Beyond the promotion of language as a rational construct, Sturm forwarded a theory of imitation that emphasized not only the choice of subject matter (*res*), but also the detachment of thoughts from that matter. The student must observe the technical means used to express original thought. Honing observation allows the accurate imitation of modes of expression. Once the student has mastered this process, he can choose to vary those modes. Ramus imitates Sturm's approach, deeming the imitation of a careful selection of esteemed practice the surest route to developing written and oratorical skill. "Quintilian thinks that the student should imitate many authors, not just one," writes Ramus in *Rhetoricae distinctio*—

nes in Quintilianum. “I gladly accept this [...] since we should emulate the virtues of many rather than the faults of just one—provided, however, that you have been educated first of all by some of the best models” (157).

A student’s ability in Greek and Latin was vital to this enterprise. While Greek enabled the student to analyze an adequate cross-section of religious writings from their original sources, Latin remained the common language of Christian Europe. Ramus accepted that the basics of rhetoric and dialectic were natural endowments, but knowledge of Greek and Latin enhanced these provisions. These languages, “both because of their intrinsic difficulty and their being the key to the other arts, required the greatest industry and the most skilled instruction” (Graves 133–34). Having mastered imitation, the student should choose a related topic, developing that subject in the same style. This exercise sharpened both judgment and invention.

Edward de Vere honed each discipline to perfection. “With reference to the terms for the fundamental divisions of logic, namely, *judgment* and *invention*,” concedes Craig, “it is hard to tell whether or not Shakespeare’s uses are technical” (387; emphasis original). Craig’s interpretational difficulty lies in a Stratfordian stance that assumes Shakspeare’s grammar school study of primers in logic and rhetoric. Whereas Oxford’s education undoubtedly provided the Ramist necessity of highly skilled instruction, Stratford’s certainly did not. Whereas Oxford’s educational grounding and sociopolitical status enabled his erudition to flourish, Stratford’s did not.¹⁰ Moreover, just as Ramus and Smith had studied under Sturm, so did Oxford. De Vere, as quoted by William Plumer Fowler, “pass[ed] some time in Germany with Sturmius” (171, n. 19), and Sturm’s philosophy would have resonated with him. “The Elizabethans,” as Trousdale explains, “were in many senses of the word methodists.” They promoted “the importance of theory” and “the efficacy of rules” (14). Sturm echoed this promotion. The two men struck up a relationship of mutual respect, with Oxford making a long-lasting impression on his host. For, when writing to Queen Elizabeth from Strasbourg on 15 March 1584 concerning the Protestant fight against Catholicism, Sturm could not help but praise the “faithful and zealous personage[s] [of] the Earl of Oxford, the Earl of Leicester, [and] Philip Sidney” (qtd. in Alan H. Nelson 292).

From Strasbourg, and now following in Smith’s wake alone, de Vere traveled to Italy. He would spend ten months there. “De Vere visited Venice, Padua, Milan, Genoa, Palermo, Florence, Siena, and Naples,” reports Anderson. “In traveling between his known destinations, de Vere

had probably also seen parts of Messina, Mantua, and Verona" (106). That Edward de Vere saw so much of Italy, while William Shakspeare "never left England" (John Butler 16), is telling for the topographical aspects of the authorship debate. Italian cities populate Shakespeare's works. "Omitting the references to Rome, which are just under four hundred in number," as Horatio Forbes Brown enumerates, "we find that the chief cities of Italy come in this order: Venice, with fifty-one references; Naples, thirty-four; Milan, twenty-five; Florence, twenty-three; Padua, twenty-three; and Verona, twenty." That Oxford spent a considerable proportion of his Italian sojourn in Venice is even more significant in topographical terms: Shakespeare "displays a knowledge of Venice and the Venetian dominions deeper than that which he appears to have possessed about any other Italian state" (160).

Oxfordians have failed to address, however, the Ramist nature of the attendant intellectual landscape. The general attitude of Italian scholars toward their French coeval, which is more complex than it initially appears, somewhat mitigates this oversight. That initial appearance involves Giordano Bruno (1548–1600). F. A. Yates (242), John Bossy (48), and M. A. K. Halliday (106) point to Bruno's assertion in *De la causa, principio e uno* (1584) that Ramus was an "archpedant" (54), and this epithet formally announced the charge brought against Ramus by the *critique of pedantry*. This criticism, which Michel de Montaigne (1533–92) soon endorsed, conflates the ancient assumption that teaching and philosophy are incompatible with the assumption that Ramism demands the unmitigated application of dialectic. In other words, Ramus was an educator not a philosopher, and this pedagogue had infected humanism with a scholastic trait: the obdurate application of a steadfast method. The pedant was no longer the teacher of classical definition. He had become a teacher whose learning was injudicious, whose tuition naïvely granted the unseasonable appearance of that learning, and whose lessons attached too much importance to the formal and precise implementation of Ramism.

The University of Bologna and the University of Padua, however, housed major exceptions to Bruno's critical rule in Leonardo Fioravanti (1517–88) and Simone Simoni (1532–1602), respectively. Fioravanti was a graduate of medicine from the University of Naples as well as from the University of Bologna. Famed for his reconstructive surgery, Fioravanti authored *La chirurgia* (1570), which John Hester would translate into *A Short Discourse on Surgery* (1580), with a dedication to the Seventeenth Earl of Oxford. Simoni, who had graduated in medicine at the University

of Padua, was a convert to Lutheranism. Like other Italian Ramists, who “felt obliged to withdraw from the country sooner or later” (Graves 211), Simoni came under pressure to change his views. He demurred, but the duress intensified, so he left Padua for the University of Geneva. Here, as a professor of philosophy, Simoni continued to defend “Ramism against the attacks of Carpentarius and Schegk” (212).

Furthermore, as Graves’s assessment of late humanism suggests, the intellectual relationship between Italian scholars and Ramism was so complex that “we might perhaps consider as continuing the spirit of Ramism a number of later Italian writers, *including* the unfortunate Bruno, who distinguished themselves by their attack upon Aristotle’s philosophy” (212; emphasis added). In short, while explicitly deriding Ramus’s pedagogy, Bruno implicitly defended Ramus’s philosophy.

Having returned to London from his European travels in 1576, Edward de Vere reestablished himself at court, accompanying Queen Elizabeth on her 1578 visit to East Anglia. This progress included the mixture of learned debates and theatrical entertainments that had defined her previous visits to Cambridge (1564) and Oxford (1566). In 1564, as Trousdale details, Elizabeth had told the Cambridge disputants that no course was straighter, “none shorter, none more adapted to win the good things of fortune or the good-will of your Prince, than the pursuit of Good Letters,” and with Ramism riding its first wave of popularity, “one would have to ignore the evidence to imagine that language and language skills were not a preoccupation of the age” (23). The queen’s progresses of 1566 and 1578 confirmed that preoccupation. Fifteen years later, during the queen’s tour of 1583, de Vere was again among her entourage. The destination was Oxford University. Bruno also attended. Despite his critique of pedantry, Bruno’s implicit defense of Ramus’s philosophy helps to explain why “Oxford University and Giordano Bruno were celestial bodies in opposition” (Anderson 196), and why Edward de Vere retained a “fondness” for the “ideas and ideals of Italian Renaissance thinkers” (Anderson 203), including Bruno, Marius Nizolius (b. 1498), and Gerolamo Cardano (b. 1501).

Although Nizolius and Cardano both died in 1576, Oxford may have met them during his time in Italy. Henry Hallam describes Nizolius as a “distinguished scholar,” whose aim “was to set up the best authors of Greece and Rome and the study of philology against the scholastic terminology” (99). Daphne Pearson describes Cardano as a “polymath, a mathematician, man of medicine and philosopher” (137). He introduced the matrix (or rectangular array) to European mathematics in *Ars magna* (1545). Nizolius agreed with Ramus on the subject of Aristotle’s authority. “So long as

Aristotle shall be supreme in the logic and metaphysics of the schools,” complained Nizolius, “so long will error and barbarism reign over the mind” (qtd. in Hallam 100). Like Ramus, as Nancy S. Struever relates, Cardano commended “mastery in the art of dialectic” (189). Neither Nizolius nor Cardano, however, was a little Ramist. “That as many logicians and metaphysicians as are any where [*sic*] found,” contended Nizolius, “so many capital enemies of truth will then and there exist” (qtd. in Hallam 100). Such remarks may have salted Bruno’s views on Ramus’s principled attitude, and a related wariness surely informed Edward de Vere’s attitude toward Ramism.

Even so, as Paul Oskar Kristeller argues in *Renaissance Thought* (1961), “there was a persistent tendency which began with Valla and culminated in Ramus and Nizolius to reform Aristotelian logic with the help of rhetoric.” Indeed, “during the latter part of the sixteenth century [...] Ramism was a serious rival of Aristotelian logic in the schools of Germany, Great Britain, and America” (43). In England, a “great contest arose in both universities,” as John Strype chronicles in *Annals of the Reformation and Establishment of Religion* (1725), “concerning the two philosophers, Aristotle and Ramus, then chiefly read, and which of them was rather to be studied.” In 1585, the high chancellor of Oxford University, Robert Dudley (1532–88), First Earl of Leicester, “gave them both their commendations and characters in his said epistle: *Juvenilem ardorem animi in utraque academia decertasse; utrum in perdiscendis artibus plus Aristotelis magnum acumen quam Rami fluens ingenium praevaleret*” (500).

Whereas Dudley’s attempt to neutralize the debate failed, the Ramists of Cambridge University had helped to lay the institutional basis of what Rose calls “a new natively English mathematical tradition” (59). Thomas Hood (1556–1620), a fellow of Trinity College Cambridge published a translation of Ramus’s *Geometria* in 1590. Eight years later, as Jess Edwards records, he was “appointed mathematical lecturer to the City of London.” This position enabled Hood to continue fulfilling his Ramist desire to popularize mathematics. “Hood’s lectures,” states Edwards, “were clearly part of that third university established in late sixteenth-century London, where knowledge was designed to be shared between university scholars and practical men. Their audience was an open one” (103). Both Edward de Vere and William Shakspeare could have enjoyed this source of Ramism—although, as Christopher Dams reports, “there is no mention of” Shakspeare at “any of the Inns of Court” (31)—but not to the same extent. That Hood corresponded with Lord Burghley, as E. G. R. Taylor documents (328), further widens this division.

NOTES

1. Michael Hickes remarks Cecil's "plainness in familiar common words" (122).
2. De Vere's letters evidence his use of both forms of hypothetical proposition. In a letter to Burghley (March 1575), which conveys Oxford's response to the news of Anne de Vere's pregnancy, he uses the disjunctive form in abjuring the need to come home. "For now it hath pleased God to give me a son of my own (as I hope it is)," writes Oxford, "methinks I have the better occasion to travel sith, whatsoever becometh of me, I leave behind me one to supply my duty and service" (Cecil Papers 8/24). During Oxford's subsequent estrangement from his wife, Burghley desired to bring his daughter to court, and his son-in-law accepted this wish as long as he (Oxford) was elsewhere. "But now I understand," wrote Oxford to Burghley on 13 July 1576, "that your Lordship means this day to bring her to the court," despite his son-in-law's presence. A conjunctive phrase expresses the warning that follows: "Now if your Lordship shall do so, then shall you take more in hand than I have or can promise you" (Cecil Papers 9/15).
3. When Théophile de Banos "wrote the Life of his famous friend and master," remarks Buxton, "he dedicated it to Sidney not merely because of his own but because of Ramus's affection and respect for Sidney" (45–46).
4. "'Gentle' [...]" in sixteenth-century usage," as Anderson emphasizes, "meant not 'docile' or 'kindly' but rather someone of the next highest caste above yeoman" (326).
5. Ramus also grants a grudging legitimacy to enthymeme and sorites. Enthymeme is an abbreviated form of syllogistic logic in which one premise is not openly stated. Sorites is the paradoxical logic that arises from vague predicates.
6. Ramus's quotations come from Roland M'Kilwein's *The Logike of the Moste Excellent Philosopher P. Ramus Martyr*.
7. Amyot studied at the College of St. Barbara.
8. Ramus "proposes for the king's tutor, above all other excellent scholars, Jacques Amyot, Bishop of Auxerre, who has done much for his country" (qtd. in Charles Waddington 419).
9. Bucer also communicated by letter with Cecil. See Basil Hall (146).
10. In *The First Part of King Henry VI*, when Gloucester initially tries to persuade his nephew to marry, the king's response has the air of a Cecilian ward: "Alas, my years are young;/And fitter is my study and my books" (5.1.21–22).

CHAPTER 5

The Strengths and Weaknesses of Ramism

*And therefore, as in Historie, looking for trueth, they goe away full
fraught with falshood: so in Poesie, looking for fiction, they shal use the
narration but as an imaginative groundplot of a profitable invention.*

—Philip Sidney, *An Apologie for Poetrie* (39.20–23)

“Following in the footsteps of continental rhetorician Peter Ramus,” writes Bernard J. Hibbitts, “leading English legal scholars such as Sir Edward Coke [1552–1634] and [Sir] Henry Finch [1558–1625] promoted the usage of schematic, dichotomizing diagrams to clarify legal concepts and arguments” (256). As contemporaries of these scholars, both Edward de Vere and William Shakspeare are likely to have encountered such schemas in legal documents, but the deeper roots of Oxford’s education suggest that he, unlike Stratford, had already met Ramus’s diagrams in primary form. “Ramus and his disciples,” as Timothy J. Reiss insists in “From Trivium to Quadrivium,” “did make extensive use of visual aids” (44).

Decision (or logic) trees were preeminent among Ramus’s visualizations of dialectic. Figure 5.1 offers a typical example.

Ramus founded his concept of decision trees on the Tree of Porphyry (or *Arbor Porphyriana*). He could have read about this tree (or comb) firsthand. Porphyry of Tyre discusses the subject in his introductory remarks to Aristotle’s *Categories*. Two additional sources were available to

Ramus: he may have seen medieval representations of the Tree of Porphyry; he may have studied Boethius's interpretation of Porphyry. "By far the most common example of a Porphyrian Tree in medieval authors," observes Eleonore Stump, "is that which begins with substance as the highest genus." That and each subsequent "genus is divided by a pair of opposite characteristics, its divisive differentiae, into two species, each of which is picked out and constituted by one of that pair of differentiae. Thus, *substance* is divided by the divisive differentiae *corporeal* and *incorporeal*." Although they are species of substance, these differentiae also constitute genera for other things, and can be subdivided just as substance was. Corporeal substance becomes the genus *body*. This genus "is divided by the differentiae *animate* and *inanimate*" (253). The animate body becomes the genus *animal* and is divided by the differentiae *irrational* and *rational*. The rational animal is the species *human*. This species is *infima* (or indivisible).

For Porphyry, there were no further categories beneath this species, but Ramus went one stage further: the human was a genus differentiated by the species *female* and *male*. When Jacques Charpentier challenged this division, Ramus offered a weak defense, citing material accidents. Otto Schwallenberg would promote Ramus's extension of Porphyry. As Walter J. Ong chronicles in *Ramus, Method, and the Decay of Dialogue*, however, Schwallenberg's efforts at Leipzig University "g[ot] Ramism outlawed there" (203) during the 1580s. The capacity of Ramism for alienating academics—whatever their attitude toward late scholasticism—had not been checked by Ramus's murder.

A visual basis also underpins Ramus's conceptions of *elocutio* as tropes and figures, as their respective synonyms of turnings and shapes imply. Reiss rightly argues that the quantity rather than the quality of Ramus's diagrammatics is the historically significant issue. The qualitative precedents for Ramus's visual method "went back beyond Aristotle" (44); Ramus (in a rare instance of agreement) had approved of Aristotle's observations and classifications in *Historia animalium*, and more recent antecedents of diagrammatics included Ramon Llull (c. 1232–c. 1315) and Charles Bovelles (1479–1553 or 1567). In short, Ramus did not originate schematic, dichotomizing diagrams, but quantity can be a quality, and their common usage in his publications became, as Nicholas Jardine asserts, "a central part of the humanist programme" (147).

Writings attributed to Edward de Vere suggest his awareness of this usage. The observations that introduce each sonnet in Thomas Watson's

The Hekatompathia; Or, Passionate Centurie of Love (1582), which carries a dedication to the earl, display both craft and erudition, and Oxford probably wrote them. Most significantly, the commentator's preface to Sonnet 41 cites the humanist rhetorician Johannes Susenbrotus (c. 1485–c. 1543). This sonnet "is framed upon a somewhat or too much affected continuation of that figure in Rhetoric which of the Greeks is called *paltsgia* or *anadiplosis*, of the Latins *Reduplicatio*; whereof Susenbrotus (if I well remember me) allegeth this example out of Virgil, '*Sequitur pulcherrimus ustur, / Auftur equo fidens*'" (55). Although Susenbrotus's *Epitome troporum ac schematum* (1540) draws on Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria*, "since Susenbrotus initially presents an overview of his system in the form of a tree diagram," as George Puttenham emphasizes, "it is likely that he was influenced by the thinking of Peter Ramus, who pioneered such visualizable schematization" (53, n. 117). Ramus's diagrams offered a simple but effective means of analyzing iterative devices such as *paltsgia* (in which successive clauses repeat a word or words); Oxford would have recognized what William Plumer Fowler calls Sir William Cecil's "repetitiveness of speech" (xxi), and annoyance with this characteristic could have prompted the comments about reduplication that preface Watson's forty-first sonnet.

Oxford's use of hendiadys, a device that joins two nouns of different logical status, often an abstract one with a concrete one, could also derive from Susenbrotus. In *The Marginalia of Edward de Vere's Geneva Bible*, Roger A. Stritmatter (675) classes "treasons and vile instruments," "hope and pillar," and "eyesore or beam"—all from Oxford's "Massacre Letter"—as examples of this classical *figure verborum*. Hendiadys was not widely employed by Elizabethans. Susenbrotus's *Epitome* provides the first theoretical account of this device, and Oxford's letter demonstrates the author's familiarity with its usage five years before its first rhetorical account in English, as provided by Henry Peacham in his *Garden of Eloquence* (1577). In 1944, T. W. Baldwin (1:664–65) posited William Shakespeare's knowledge of Susenbrotus, and in 1981, George T. Wright addressed the specifics of this influence. "The developing playwright appears to have taken this odd figure [hendiadys] to his bosom and to have made it entirely his own," remarks Wright. "For, much as English poets have imitated Shakespeare, almost no one has followed him in this" (169). Twenty years after Wright's pronouncement, Stritmatter drew Edward de Vere into the debate, observing how "Shakespeare seems to have had a manifest affinity for this 'Oxfordian' figure" (675).

“Sir Thomas Smith and the tutors of Cecil House,” as Mark Anderson concludes, “would have been proud to claim the anonymous commentator” from *The Hekatompathia* “as their former student” (183), and this theoretical adoption points to Oxford’s awareness not only of Susenbrotus, but also of Ramus’s influence on Susenbrotus. “All the learnings that his time/Could make him the receiver of,” as the First Gentleman in *Cymbeline* remarks, “he took,/As we do air, fast as ’twas ministered” (1.1.43–45). The receivers of Ramist mind maps of the sort employed by Thomas Hood, Edward Coke, and Henry Finch for clarifying legal concepts and arguments established a representational and methodological tradition. This convention “made extensive use of *tabulae*, dichotomies and divisions,” as Mordechai Feingold explains, “in order to alleviate the complexity of the subject matter,” and this “diagrammatic predilection” was the sort of “low-grade Ramism” embraced by that professed Aristotelian John Case (137).

This tradition remains vital. “PowerPoint presentations, outlining tools and ‘the scourge of bullet points,’” avers Matthew Guillen in quoting Steven Maras, are “the most obvious evidence of lingering Ramist issue” (45). Ramus’s quantitatively notable use of diagrammatics contributed to “the shift in sensibility” effected by “the development in typography” of which Ong remarks. “This shift,” writes Ong in *Rhetoric, Romance, and Technology*, “brought Western man to react to words less and less as sounds and more and more as items deployed in space.” Printing culture “heightened the value of the visual imagination [...] and made accessible a diagrammatic approach to knowledge such as is realized in the dichotomized tables which often accompanied the typographical treatment” (167).

That Philip Sidney at once boasted a Ramist educational pedigree and employed Ramus’s visual method helps to consolidate the relays between Ramism and noted literary productions of the Elizabethan era. In turn, this consolidation underpins the link between Edward de Vere and William Shakespeare. For, Cecil’s power over de Vere, on the one hand, and his fondness for Sidney, on the other, fostered a rivalry. “Cecil House,” as Jan van Dorsten chronicles, “was young Philip Sidney’s first encounter with a private center of learning. He often stayed with the Cecils, and after the 1568–69 Christmas holidays, which ‘my darling master Philip’—Cecil’s phrase—spent at their house, no less than a marriage settlement between Cecil’s favorite daughter, Ann[e], and Philip himself was agreed upon by Sir Henry Sidney and Ann[e]’s father” (199).

Unlike Oxford, Sidney did not cohabit with the Cecils, living part of the time with his mother “opposite Paul’s Wharf,” as Malcolm William Wallace documents, “but generally at Leicester House” (161). During this period, “Sidney’s most indefatigable correspondent [...] was Banosius, the translator of the *Commentaries* of Ramus and his biographer” (162). Indeed, Théophile de Banos would dedicate his *Rami vita* to Sidney. In addition, as H. R. Woudhuysen traces, “at least six presentation manuscripts written by contemporaries are known to have been dedicated to [Sidney]. Three contained works by Abraham Fraunce, including the manuscript of his play *Victoria*, and his beautifully illustrated summary of Ramist logic” (209). This exposure makes Sidney’s contribution to the dissemination of Ramism impossible to discount.¹ Henry S. Turner’s argument concerning Sidney’s spatial and geometrical conceptualization of literature supports this proposition. *An Apologie for Poetrie* (1595), which Sidney wrote at the end of the 1570s, adopts this mindset “to speak not simply of poetry or prose but of plays in particular” (110).

In 1579, Stephen Gosson dedicated a Puritan pamphlet, *The School of Abuse*, to Sidney. Gosson disparaged literature as the handmaid of evil. Agreeing with this dedication, *An Apologie for Poetrie* derides current dramaturgical works, but disagreeing with this dedication, Sidney’s apology also derides those who condemn literature as profane. Poetry is “not being an Art of lyes, but of true doctrine,” he avows, “not of effeminatenes, but of notable stirring of courage: not of abusing mans witte, but of strengthening mans wit: not banished, but honored by *Plato*” (47.22–25). Defending poetry against the charge of deception, Sidney asks,

What childe is there, that comming to a Play, and seeing *Thebes* written in great Letters upon an olde doore, doth beleeeve that it is *Thebes*? If, then, a man can arive at that childes age to know that the Poets persons and dooings are but pictures of what should be, and not stories of what have beene, they will never give the lye to things not affirmatively, but allegorically and figurativelie written. And therefore, as in Historie, looking for trueth, they goe away full fraught with falshood: so in Poesie, looking for fiction, they shal use the narration but as an imaginative groundplot of a profitable invention. (39.13–23)

“Sidney’s ‘groundplot,’” explains Turner, “is a hermeneutic model generated by the interaction between text and reader or play and audience, a tool of reading or visual apprehension that enables the mental arrangement

of material in both a spatial, structural formation and a linear, progressive movement through a series of textual instances" (110–11). Turner argues that Sidney, as if visualizing for the dramaturgical stage, devises his ground-plot "in good Ramist fashion." This plan "correlates the act of intellectual analysis with the forward progression of the reader/viewer, who 'maps' arguments, characters, actions, and concepts onto discrete 'places' and then reconstitutes them into a series of abstract relationships, perceiving them temporally but understanding them as a spatial synthesis of elements according to the model of the geometrical form" (111).

Ramus's spatial model supported his structural conception of tropes as graceful ornamentation. In effectively denying a complex interrelationship between dialectic and rhetoric, however, his reconstitution of abstract relationships included the rhetorical but not the intersubjective question. Moreover, as Ong details, "despite the spatial analogy, which they involve, figures have to do largely with the sound of words—among the figures are anaphora and other verbal repetition, rhythmic movement, and the quasi-acoustic effects of exclamation and apostrophe (figures of 'sentence')" (*Decay* 281). Ramus's *Rhetoricae distinctiones in Quintilianum* confirms Ong's point. "Structure and rhythm," states Ramus, "are a fashioning of style removed from everyday usage; therefore each is a figure" (149). Hence, argues Ong, Ramist *elocutio* "declare[s] in favor of tropes when a choice between tropes and figures has to be made. This is a declaration against sound in favor of (silent) thought" (281). On the one hand, "Ramist dialectic has lost all sense of Socratic dialogue and even most sense of scholastic dispute." On the other hand, "Ramist rhetoric [...] is not a dialogue rhetoric at all" (287). Put succinctly, Ramus's use of Solon's Law "severed rhetoric from dialectic with savage rigor and without any profound understanding of the interrelationship of these two disciplines" (289). In consequence, "the second half of rhetoric, *oral* delivery, perishes of neglect" (281; emphasis original).

Ong's summation is stark:

The Ramist arts of discourse are monologue arts. They develop the didactic, schoolroom outlook which descends from scholasticism even more than do non-Ramist versions of the same arts, and tend finally even to lose the sense of monologue in pure diagrammatics. This orientation is very profound and of a piece with the orientation of Ramism toward an object world (associated with visual perception) rather than toward a person world (associated with voice and auditory perception). In rhetoric, obviously someone had to

speaking, but in the characteristic outlook fostered by the Ramist rhetoric, the speaking is directed to a world where even persons respond only as objects—that is, say nothing back. (287)

Ironically, Ramus's challenge to late scholasticism resulted in his unintentional development of a scholastic attitude toward pedagogy. If Ramism was "at root a cluster of mental habits evolving within a centuries-old educational tradition and specializing in certain kinds of concepts, based on simple spatial models, for conceiving of the mental and communicational processes and, by implication, of the extramental world" (8), as Ong reasons, then that internal paradigm excluded intersubjectivity. "By its very structure, Ramist rhetoric asserts to all who are able to sense its implications that there is no way to discovery or to understanding through voice, and ultimately seems to deny that the process of person-to-person communication play[s] any role in intellectual life." Ramist rhetoric "renounce[s] any possibility of invention within this speaker-auditor framework; it protests in principle if not in actuality, that invention is limited to a dialectical world where there is no voice, but only a kind of vision" (288).

Yet, as a consideration of *coordination problems* suggests, the insularity of Ramism goes further than Ong appreciates. In these strategic situations, people must make choices in the knowledge that other people face the same options, that a *coordination condition* equivalent to silence pertains between the participants, and that the outcome for each person will result from everybody's decisions. Such a situation is particularly problematic when a logical approach to its solution provokes what Oskar Morgenstern (1902–77) calls "an endless chain of reciprocally conjectural reactions and counter-reactions" (174). This lack of closure demands what often amounts to an unsatisfactory response: an arbitrary choice from the solutions on offer. What is more, coordinative conversations do not guarantee the best outcome, because verbal communication between strategists often amounts to what Vincent Crawford terms *cheap talk*. "Such a message cannot convey any useful information," insists Crawford. "Then the only equilibria are 'babbling' equilibria, in which the Sender's message is uninformative and is ignored by the Receiver" (287).

Ramus would have agreed. Silent thought countermanded scholasticism and sophistry. "Abide by your own opinion" unless "some sounder opinion convinces you" (361)—another of Ramus's occasional acquiescences to Cicero (this time, from "The Oration of M. T. Cicero in

Defence of L. Murena, Prosecuted for Bribery”)—was his preferred doctrine. The sagacious, as wise individuals who had mastered Ramist method, and who rarely met an alternative opinion of equal or greater strength, persuaded others of the truth. In this matter, Ramus differed from Rudolph Agricola, who believed that the art of discussion (or Aristotelian persuasion) was the proper test of an issue. Validation through discussion was Agricola’s route to consensus. Ramus’s alternative approach accepted the dialectical immanence of correct reason but effectively denied one of its inherent corollaries: coordination problems. Less explicitly, therefore, but carrying at least the same importance as the Ramist provenance to the representational and methodological tradition, Ramus’s mapping of arguments, characters, and actions onto discrete locations *approached, but ultimately drew back from*, the modeling of coordinative dilemmas. This foreclosure resonated “with Ramus’ own lack of interest in dialogue, as evinced by his silence in company, and his way of lashing out to annihilate his opponents” (Ong 287).

As Ramus aged, he transformed dialogue into a one-way process of persuasion, which aimed to force a dissenter into conceding defeat. Ramus’s use of decision trees anticipated and supported this transformation. He navigated these visualizations in one direction from starting node to each branch end. In pedagogical terms, while Ramus was the origin, his students were the termini. Ramus did not adopt the two-directional approach to logic facilitated by the matrices that Gerolamo Cardano had introduced to European publications on mathematics. Ramus’s one-way approach also retracted the process of persuasion into the thinker’s mind. In consequence, his teaching created singular minds adapted to coerce rather than to debate.

In short, Ramus promoted an introverted form of one-way persuasion, which Oxford’s education under Cecil would have highlighted. Smith could be gruff, but Cecil could be hardheaded. Oxford’s first supervisor would have been aware of the weaknesses as well as the strengths of Ramism. Oxford’s second supervisor would have treated the weakness of one-way persuasion as another methodological strength. Thomas Smith and William Cecil cast long shadows over Edward de Vere. Their shadowing of William Shakspeare was practically nonexistence. Whereas formal education and life at court exposed Oxford to the dedicated Ramism of both Smith and Cecil, Stratford partook of no such opportunities. The result for the gifted Oxford was a critical appreciation of Ramism that at once embraced the positives and questioned the negatives of Ramus’s

principled attitude. Ramus thought himself the greatest of Peripatetics. Oxford, as a rational critic of Ramus's critical rationalism, was a rationalist above other Ramists.

Not all intellectual historians, however, accept the underlying argument. François Rigolot is a notable example. "Ong held Ramus largely responsible for what he thought to be the ultimate 'decay of dialogue' in the mapping of universal knowledge. According to Ong, communication through lively speech was gradually thought to be undesirable." In contrast, Rigolot "fail[s] to see in Ramist theory any 'declaration' against dialogue 'in favor of (silent) thought.'" The present study decides this point in Ong's favor. Ramus's silent declaration emerges from Ramus's reasoning. Biographical information testifies to this withdrawal from the dialogical (as opposed to the dialectical). Hence, Rigolot is correct when he states that the emergence of "modes of self-consciousness and subjectivity" (17) in sixteenth-century Europe can be "traced to a gradual 'inward turn' of dialogical questioning" (17), but incorrect when he states that "dialogue has turned 'inward' but has not 'decayed'" (16) under Ramus's handling.

The crux of the issue involves judgment. For Ramus, common judgment pertains to dialectic, but not to rhetoric. In consequence, indisputable (or apodictic) judgment—"which," as Ong explains, "necessarily bespeaks utterance, an assent or a dissent, a *saying* of yes or no" (*Decay* 289; emphasis original)—disappears. Ramus's theory of judgment uncovers the connections between axioms. This process, explains Craig Walton in "Ramus and Bacon on Method," reveals how axioms "are linked together in stages of increasing scope so as to enable us to judge well of them, discern which are primary axioms and which are derivative or contingent axioms, and so on down through syllogism to conclusions" (291). Apodictic judgment culminates in the "realization of the encyclopedia of all arts and sciences in one unified 'chain'" (293). Ramus, notes Walton in "Ramus and Socrates," "place[s] the theory of the syllogism in judgment's second phase" (126). Nonetheless, with the disappearance of profound judgment from rhetoric comes the loss of "all rational interest in the psychological activities which such a term covers" (Ong, *Decay* 289).

For Ramus, Aristotle had erred in placing invention last behind intuition and indisputable judgment, but in moving invention to logic, Ramus's response simultaneously removed invention from speaker-auditor relations. "The more formal features of [Ramist] inquiry," as Walton recognizes, "must be of second priority, subservient to subject-matter as

interpreted by artful men" ("Method" 293). Because "God subordinates judgment to creativity, logic to genesis, theory to practice, then so must we" ("Method" 299). Ramus "believed that inquiry is a dialectical exchange between God and man, that men differ in their gifts, and that only a few ever reach the peaks of achievement" ("Method" 300)—and Ramus judged himself most artful.

"In so far as man cultivates this created world by way of dialectic laboring to repair his postlapsarian ignorance by disciplined stages of access to the logic of God's artifice," explains Walton in "Ramus and Socrates," "then in just as great a degree as 'man surpasses the beasts by the syllogism, by that much do those who use method well, surpass other men'" (127–28). Ramus's fundamental separation of humans from other animals, which echoed Aristotle's classifications in *Historia animalium*, Porphyry's taxonomy, and Cicero's thoughts in *Paradoxa Stoicorum*, rested on intellect. The singular mind forever picks a monologic route through dialectical reasoning. "With all rhetorical organization governed from outside rhetoric by this 'arrangement,'" laments Ong, "the role of voice and person-to-person relationships in communication is reduced to a new minimum" (*Decay* 289). Ramism retains dialogue as a strangely singular act of persuasion rather than a mutual act of negotiation.

Christopher Marlowe's (1564–93) *The Massacre at Paris* (printed c. 1593) informs this debate. "The play," as Scott Oldenburg summarizes, "depicts the massacre, the assassination of Gaspard de Coligny in 1572, the crowning of the Duke of Anjou as Henry III in 1575, the Battle of Coutras between Henry of Navarre and Anne, Duke of Joyeuse in 1587 (in which the Huguenot forces overwhelm the Catholic royalist army), the battle between Henry III and Henry, Duke of Guise, and the murder of the duke in 1588, and finally the assassination of Henry III in 1589" (62). *The Massacre at Paris* also portrays the Duke of Anjou stabbing Ramus at the Duke of Guise's behest.

Guise condemns Ramus for his reductive withdrawal from the dialogic. "He that will be a *flat decotamest*,/And seen in nothing but Epitomes," rages Guise, "Is in your judgment thought a learned man" (7.389–91; emphasis added). Guise's dialogic route through dialectical reasoning compounds this denouncement, allowing him to gainsay Ramus—"to contradict which, I say Ramus shall dye" (7.396)—to which Ramus's monologic route, his refusal of disputation, cannot effectively respond: "how answered you that?" chides Guise, "your *nego argumentum*/Cannot serve" (7.397–98).

This informed reference to Ramism comes as little surprise: the Ramist pedigree of Marlowe's education was comparable to that of Edward de Vere and Philip Sidney. "Marlowe benefited from scholarships throughout his schooling, and attended the King's School in Canterbury," as Harold Bloom chronicles in *Christopher Marlowe* (2009), "going on to Corpus Christi College, Cambridge" (15). He gained his bachelor's degree in 1584. Thereafter, Marlowe fitfully studied for a master's degree, which the university eventually awarded in 1587. Although some twenty years had elapsed since the more conscientious Edward de Vere had passed through St. John's College, the profile of Ramism at the university remained notable, thanks to second-generation Ramists.

Marlowe and Shakspeare may have shared a grammar school education; Marlowe and Oxford did share a higher education; Marlowe, like Oxford, but unlike Stratford, would have appreciated the faults as well as the strengths of Ramism. That Ramism denied Ramus profound judgment, thereby undercutting his learned credentials, was one such weakness. *The Massacre at Paris* expresses this ironic outcome. Ramus's flat dichotomies usually rebuffed his opponents, but this strategy eventually redounded, with the dialogic murder of the monologic. If one accepts the Duke of Guise's opinion in *The Massacre at Paris* as the playwright's own—an assumption that Kathleen M. Swaim (93), Richard Wilson in *Christopher Marlowe* (1999) (1), and M. L. Stapleton (135) make—then Marlowe was contemptuous of Ramus.

The early writings of Francis Bacon ally this derision. Apprised to a certain degree of Ramist fundamentals—Bacon's "writings," as Peter Zagorin enumerates, "mentioned or discussed many noted modern philosophers and scientists, among them Ficino, Paracelsus, Copernicus, Tycho Brahe, Agrippa, Cardano, Patrizi, Telesio, Campanella, Ramus, Gilbert, and Galileo" (28–29)—Bacon demonstrates this alliance in *Temporis partus masculus* (1602–03). This experimental fragment describes Ramus as "that hide-out for ignorance, that pestilent book-worm, that begetter of handy manuals," who is "below the sophists" (qtd. in Benjamin Farrington 64). In *The Advancement of Learning* (1605), Bacon is somewhat less dismissive, praising Ramus's rules for framing propositions. Nonetheless, he condemns the methodical dichotomies of Ramism as "the canker of epitomes" (175), and although Walton traces Bacon's further moderation of his attitude—"twenty years of thought softened Bacon's early scorn for Ramus" ("Method" 290)—Bacon would always decry Ramus's method. This supposedly principled attitude, states *De augmentis scientiarum* (1623), "was

a kind of cloud that overshadowed knowledge for awhile and blew over.”² Ramism, “with its distribution of everything into two members,” asserts Bacon, is “a thing no doubt both very weak in itself and very injurious to the sciences.” For, “when a thing does not aptly fall into those dichotomies, either pass it by or force it out of its natural shape, the effect of their proceeding is this,—the kernels and grains of the sciences leap out, and they are left with nothing in their grasp but the dry and barren husks.” Ramism, therefore, “produces empty abridgments, and destroys the solid substance of knowledge” (122).

Bacon, as a philosopher, rather than Marlowe, as playwright, poet, and translator, hereby supported Giordano Bruno’s critique of pedantry. To Bacon, Ramism was an instruction in method rather than a means to innovative thinking. Both Zagorin and Lisa Jardine agree with this assessment of Bacon’s opinion. “What Ramus propounded as method,” writes Zagorin, “was highly successful in providing teachers with an efficient means of instruction and in helping students to develop orderly habits of thought so as to learn a subject systematically. At best, however, it could serve only for the organization of knowledge and discourse; as an instrument for the discovery of new truths in natural philosophy it was useless” (55). Bacon’s references to Ramus and Ramism make them “a *source* for [his] views only in a limited sense,” adds Jardine. “They suggest that Bacon takes familiarity with the controversial issues in Ramus’ dialectic (the three rules and the dichotomous method) for granted as background to his own discussion. And they show that as far as Bacon himself is concerned, he recognises that these issues belong strictly in the realm of *presentation* of knowledge, and judges them accordingly” (68; emphasis original). Bacon’s sole *borrowing* “appears to be his use of the term ‘axiom’ atypically as Ramus uses it, for any proposition used as a premise for argument” (8).

Significantly, however, and adding even more complexity to the issue, *De augmentis scientiarum* discloses a debt to Ramism. “Bacon rarely refers directly to another author,” states Jardine, “but in [one] passage he makes explicit reference to Ramus, and *commends* him in a limited way for *adapting* Aristotle’s three rules, as a guide to the scope and type of proposition appropriate to any specified field of discussion” (67; emphasis added). Bacon took time to appreciate this contribution. “Ramus,” he grudgingly admits,

merited better in reviving those excellent rules of propositions (that they should be true, universally, primarily, and essentially), than he did in introducing his uniform method and dichotomies; and yet it comes ever to pass,

I know not how, that in human affairs (according to the common fiction of the poets) “the most precious things have the most pernicious keepers.” Certainly the attempt of Ramus to amend propositions drove him upon those epitomes and shallows of knowledge. For he must have a lucky and a happy genius to guide him who shall attempt to make the axioms of sciences convertible, and shall not withal make them circular, or returning into themselves. Nevertheless I must confess that the intention of Ramus in this was excellent. (128)

Beyond his eventual approval of Ramus’s Aristotelian adaptations, however, Bacon never realized that Ramus’s greatest problem was the logical dilemma that successfully resisted a singular solution.

Margo Todd notes how “the Ramist concept of the essential unity of rhetoric and logic has been described as the link between the literary humanism of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and the scientific empiricism of the seventeenth and eighteenth” (68). Notwithstanding the entangled skeins of Ramus’s postulations, explains Peter Sharratt in “Peter Ramus and Imitation,” “he is neither purely Platonist, purely Aristotelian, nor purely Christian.” In effect, Ramus “adopts the Christian synthesis of neo-Platonism and the gospel, and so he is able to ignore the real differences between Platonic and Aristotelian doctrines of imitation.” Indeed, “he manages to combine the idea that reality, as we think we know it, is once removed from true reality, and art is twice removed, with the idea that art and philosophy somehow bring out the universals in nature” (27). Ramus presciently anticipates the conceptualization of protologic as an irreducible normative fact, a given that provides coordination problems with their schematic framework. In short, and whatever Bacon liked to believe, the supposed “blowing over” of Ramism did not occur during Bacon’s lifetime. Indeed, the insight required to establish the axiomatics of coordination would not make its presence felt until John von Neumann (1903–57) established the theory of games of strategy (or game theory) in 1928.

During that interregnum, the critique of pedantry decried not only the tendency to misapply Ramism, but also the formalism and precision of that method. This criticism, which the paradoxical nature of Ong’s *Ramus, Method, and the Decay of Dialogue* did nothing to mitigate, demands reevaluation. For Marie-Dominique Couzinnet, who takes this paradox as her “starting point,” Ong heads a critical tradition that “always seems to consider Ramus and Ramism in the category of pedantry” (29). This legacy owes much to a belief that has accompanied pedagogy since its infancy: teaching

precludes philosophical thinking. In criticizing Ramus, Bruno adopted this assumption, conflating it with the unyielding application of dialectical method. Michel de Montaigne endorsed this conflation. Ramus was an educator not a philosopher, and this pedagogue, with his unyielding application of an uncritical method, had infected humanism with the taint of scholasticism. The pedant was no longer the teacher of classical definition. Under Ramism, the pedant had become a teacher whose learning was injudicious, whose tuition allowed the unseasonable appearance of that learning, and whose lessons attached too much importance to formalist precision.

Couzinet defends Ramus against these charges. She emphasizes how “historiography has adopted some controversial classes—such as pedantry—with that historiography recognizing pedagogy, and its inherent pedantry, as a component of humanism” (81). For Couzinet, Ramus’s contribution to that component excluded neither critical imitation nor apodictic judgment, with Couzinet’s argument supporting the critical perspective mooted by Nelly Bruyère in 1984. To repeat, Ramus hoped to reshape teaching into a practical profession based on *usus*. University-educated Ramists, men trained to discount the extraneous, overly detailed, and inappropriate material that characterized scholasticism, would avoid fabrication in answering the educative need for a return to first principles. Hence, as the present study contends, one way to undercut the unreasonable damnation of Ramus as a pedant is to consider his intervention in the educative field as a philosophical contribution that formally approached trained reason with the limited pedantry demanded by necessary precision.

In other words, as Peter Mack cautions in “Ramus and Ramism: Rhetoric and Dialectic” (2011), “we must not succumb to a critique of Ramus,” as Bruno, Montaigne, and Bacon did, which “lumps together Ramus’ own alleged failings with the excesses of his followers” (8). Unfortunately, Ramus’s refashioning of the teaching profession actually failed his desired standards, enabling these excesses, with many Ramists implementing a pragmatic school of formalism. This collective imposition produced the drift in the late-humanist program identified by the critique of pedantry. Thus, as Couzinet expounds, “critics of Ramism in terms of low thought or pragmatism echo in many ways the philosophical criticism of pedantry as a divorce between teaching and thought” (81). These critics fail to appreciate not only how Ramus’s entrenchment in correct reason defers to what Couzinet calls “the rules imposed outside and prior to knowledge” (479), but also how this grounding liberates the exercise of rationality. This double failure applies especially to Ong.

Less illuminating, however, is Couzinet's recourse to Daniel Walker in highlighting a major inconsistency in Ong's findings. "The reason why the dialogue-form is so prevalent in an age where Father Ong finds so much convincing evidence of the shift from dialectical thinking to visual, diagrammatic systems" (357) particularly intrigues Walker. Yet, both he and Couzinet leave this issue hanging. That the transition in question accepted the dialectical immanence of correct reason but effectively denied the dilemmas of coordination as one of its inherent corollaries answers this issue. Ramus's dialectical thinking *and* his diagrammatic systems limited binary options to the primary agent. That limitation denied the existence of coordination problems that possess a contestable rather than an irrefutable solution.

Ramus's approach to coordinative (or dilemmatic) reasoning was a consequence of his reductive retraction from the dialogic. "The dilemma was imported into logic from rhetoric by Peter Ramus," as Charles S. Peirce (1839–1914) details. "Dilemmatic reasoning was not known to the medieval logicians, nor was it employed (unless very rarely) by any writers during the middle ages. Since the reformation, it has had a place in all logical treatises, but usually with some disparagement" (355–56). Ramus shared this sentiment. His logic recognized the dilemma, but his dialectical framework excluded dilemmatic reasoning. Thus, Ramus is logical when considering all but coordination problems that yield no immediate answer. In these cases, he falls prey to his own supposed authority, accepting the innate lessons of his own select mind. Ramus identified the conjectural process demanded by coordinative dilemmas—in accepting their theoretical existence, he did not completely overlook them—but he dismissed that procedure. He assumed that a logical situation demanded an incontrovertible answer. The self-enclosed circularity that coordination can engender was anathema. Frank Pierrepont Graves notes how Ramus "declines to consider any of the fundamental ontological or epistemological problems that are often thought [today] to be preliminary to logic" (154). In effect, Ramus deemed the conjectural form of coordination untenable in practice.

Notwithstanding the critical assumption shared by Swaim, Wilson, and Stapleton, Marlowe realized something of Ramus's trouble with logical dilemmas. "The mischievous logic and rhetoric of Marlowe's plays," as Douglas Duncan suggests, "tilted at" Ramism. "Just how much serious purpose lay behind Marlowe's mischief," however, "is the most slippery problem posed by a notoriously elusive writer" (111). Yet, as the guise of

his name implies, the Duke de Guise in *The Massacre at Paris* surely conveys something of Marlowe's deeper relationship with Ramism. Marlowe must have intended the duke's condemnation of Ramus to lack a Ramist nuance. "The source of Marlowe's 'danger' as a playwright," as Duncan contends, "lay less in his thought than in his method, his use of logic and rhetoric in the fallacious ways he had been trained at university to detect" (110)—and Ramism, which reached its second peak in popularity while Marlowe was at Cambridge University, promoted the need for methodological awareness.

Ramus's aversion to *commentitium* (or fabrication) alights on the scholastic fashioning of logic, and in distinguishing the *natural method* from its *prudential* counterpart (or *crypsis*), as Duncan avers, Ramus takes this criticism further. The natural method, which philosophers and pedagogues favor, "moves from what is conspicuous to what is less conspicuous according to the perceptions of a well-trained mind." The prudential method, which orators and historians favor, moves in the opposite direction. This approach "is adapted to the capacity of less educated hearers and readers" (110). Crypsis, explains Ong, reverses Ramus's "rule of proceeding from the general to the particular" (*Rhetoric* 175). This reversal, as knowing practitioners appreciate, can be particularly specious.

As Ong relates of Ramus's related anxiety, the orator or historian employs the prudential method "as a major part of his tactics, when he sets out to sway the people, the many-headed monster. He deceives in all sorts of ways. He starts in the middle, often proceeding thence to the beginning, and getting on to the end by some equivocal and unexpected dodge" (*Decay* 253). Indeed, another cryptic deception—the intermediaries of Catholicism—was crucial to Ramus's growing discontent with the Church of Rome. According to Ramus's law of justice, Aristotle had made himself the source of middle terms, and Catholicism had produced its own related varieties. These intermediaries, which church elders took to be self-evident, included the confessional, the priest, and the icon. Each of these devices prevented direct communication between the faithful and God. Believers had to rely on these deceptive intermediaries much as scholastics had to rely on Aristotle.

What had struck Ramus about second scholasticism, then, was not only "the barrenness of the current dialectic method for any real use in the 'arts' or in life" (Graves 21), but also the perversion of that method for unscrupulous ends. "*Crypsis* is the method resorted to by the specialists in rhetoric" (*Decay* 281), agrees Ong, whose auditors are "brought to an

absolutely certain conclusion unawares" (*Decay* 253). Ramus was, therefore, extremely wary of orators (both secular and religious) and historians. At the same time, he worried about the gullibility of the general populace, believing them both individually and collectively vulnerable to the wiles of self-interested rhetoricians. Ineke Murakami summarizes Ramus's fears. "At least as often as it molded virtuous statesmen, rhetoric taught men about the power of rhetoric: how it traded on popular beliefs in education's transformative power and could be manipulated to sway an audience to ill effect. This was possible, according to Ramus, because 'the inexperienced common people' were convinced by arguments like Quintilian's that rhetoric itself was a moral virtue" (105). The mature Ramus tempered Quintilian's belief: the scheming orator could hide his true nature.

This repudiation colored Ramus's attitude toward dramatists. He believed that (like rhetoricians) they often exploited classically inflected form and diction, with politics rather than mimesis being their ultimate objective. In consequence, Ramus and his followers displayed what Ong calls a "marked hostility to drama" (*Decay* 287). As with Ramus's ultimate attitude toward Catholicism, however, his final (and finally unsurprising) attitude toward the stage crystallized over time. When first appointed principal of the College of Presles, as Nicolas de Nancel reports, Ramus "put on plays for the public, both comedies and tragedies," and he "himself appeared in the theatre as the prompter, and director or principal actor." Later, however, he "abandoned the idea" (183). One can read the divergence found in Sidney's *An Apologie for Poetrie* between the condemnation of current dramaturgical works and the commendation of poetic art as a snapshot of this transformation.

The increasing consonance between his wariness of crypsis and his developing Calvinism prompted Ramus's abandonment of the stage, and his later abolition of student plays at the College of Presles attested to the continued hardening of this accord. Just as scholasticism had had to cede ground to the humanist return to basics—"the simple explanation of principles and their practical application" (Todd 69)—so must the Church of Rome. What mattered was the principle of living well ("doctrina bene vivendi" [qtd. in Todd 69]). That tenet behooved teachers to instruct rather than to inform: information about a subject was of little value; instead, pupils should gain experience and proficiency in that discipline ("finis doctrinae non est notitia rerum ipsi subjectarum, sed usus et exercitatio" [qtd. in Todd 69]).

Ong rightly emphasizes that this particular “reform” spoke to the inconsistencies of Calvinism. Its followers championed “a ‘methodical’ theory of speech, which their performance seldom fit[ted], and a curiously ingrained dislike of drama” (*Decay* 287). The Calvinist attitude to language, which approved of the “homiletic *monologue*” (*Decay* 287; emphasis added), but which distrusted the dialogic, echoed Ramus’s wish to avert dilemmatic reasoning. Peter Ramus’s dismissive actions at the College of Presles found an English counterpart in the straightlaced Lord William Burghley’s intellectual dismissal of contemporary poetry and plays. The calculatingly astute Burghley wanted *crypsis* to remain solely a political tool. Edward de Vere’s “Not Attaining to His Desire, He Complaineth” (1576; revised in 1596), recognizes Burghley’s mastery of this instrument: “Thus contraries be vsed I finde, of wise to cloke the couert minde” (8).

Ramus’s attitude toward the poetics of probable logics conflated his desire to forestall dilemmatic problems, but this conflation carried Rudolph Agricola’s aim—that “all discourse is to be directed toward the same objective” (Ong, *Decay* 102)—to the conclusive end that Agricola had disfavored. “The distinction between a dialectic of probabilities and scientific demonstration, uncertain enough in the central medieval tradition is deliberately eliminated. Either the scholastic disputation striving for scientific certitude (although often falling far short of it) is assimilated to other less scientific forms of discourse (Agricola’s sympathies favor this),” as Ong expounds, “or all discourse can be assimilated to scientific, and the poem made as ‘logical’ as the mathematical treatise (Ramus will advance this view explicitly)” (*Decay* 102–03). Elizabethan dramatists tended to side with Agricola. “What has real-world application and is devoid of ambiguity and uncertainty,” as John E. Curran observes, “seems far too restrictive” (97).

Marlowe suggests as much. While English editions of Ramist logic concentrated on its natural method, and while Sidney promoted the poetic groundplot, Marlowe put the dangerous potential of *crypsis* center stage. His plays, argues Duncan, “reflect the *succès de scandale* at Cambridge of ‘diabolical’ authors such as Lucian, Julian, Machiavelli and Aretino who had supposedly devoted their verbal skills to perversion of truth” (111). *The Tragical History of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus* (c. 1594) offers the most explicit example of this reflection. Marlowe’s drama questions how students trained in rhetoric and dialectic approach the philosophical sciences, and points to the danger of a Faustus, who relies on

crypsis. "He can only conceive of [dialectic] as a way of arguing about philosophical problems because that is what the dialecticians have taught him to do," as David Riggs expounds. "It never occurs to him that logic could be a way of doing philosophy, of actually solving problems" (86). Marlowe confines Faustus to a Ramist straightjacket. "Ramism," as Curran remarks, "ameliorates the shortcomings of Scholasticism not at all." While scholastic learning does not offer Faustus "the inquiry into 'Metaphisickes' he wants," Ramus's "methodology deprives him of inquiry itself" (97).

Ong believes that Ramus's geometrical mindset "throughout his explanation of method hints at perhaps the principal reason why Ramus had eschewed the probable logics": he did not admit its bidirectional plotting. Decision trees can represent "forward motion and its reversal," as systems analysts admit, "but since he has endorsed his picture of forward motion as the only method," Ramus must relegate such reversals to his critique of crypsis (Ong, *Decay* 254). "It was Petrus Ramus," avers Gottfried Wilhelm Freiherr von Leibniz, "who pointed out that conversion can be demonstrated by means of [the] figures" of a syllogism. "If I am not wrong," submits Leibniz, "he brought a charge of circularity against logicians who demonstrate these figures with the aid of conversion" (or the reversal of logical transit). These logicians, though, "ought to be accused not so much of circularity—since they did not use these figures in turn to justify conversion—as of *hysteron proteron*, or doing things backwards, since conversion ought to be demonstrated from these figures rather than these figures from conversion" (cccvi).

Ong appreciates that the decision tree can express the bidirectional plotting of probable logics, but that Ramus chose to restrict logic to one direction. The intended consequence of Ramus's reading of tree diagrams confirmed his denial of coordinative (or dilemmatic) reasoning. Furthermore, the unintended consequence of this dialectical reading affected Ramus's own rhetorical practice. Ramus, remarks Ong, "exhibits a strong tendency to think of his now soundless rhetoric simply as dialectic in reverse," which leads to the heavily criticized "hypertrophy of ornament in Ramist rhetoric" (*Decay* 281). This excessive ornamentation found a parallel in the rhetoric associated with late scholasticism.

For Ramus, as Ong reiterates, crypsis is a political method for "dealing with recalcitrant, unusually ignorant, or otherwise ill-disposed audiences" (*Rhetoric* 175). Yet, Ramus acknowledges, however grudgingly, that poets (as well as orators and historians) understand the deployment of crypsis. "Although Ramus elsewhere expresses the opinion that poetry is a separate

art, like medicine, from the earliest editions of Talon's *Rhetoric*, poetry, in the Ramist tradition, is really treated as part of rhetoric" (*Decay* 282). "The apparent collusion between Ramist dialectic and rhetoric," on the one hand, "and the habits of thought and imagination of Elizabethan poets," on the other, "testifies to common background rather than any conscious sympathy" (*Decay* 286).

Notwithstanding what Ong terms these co-adaptive "points of agreement" (*Decay* 286), Ramism was a logical and rhetorical system that suited reformed minds. John Charles Adams agrees. The scholarship separately led by Ong and Wilbur S. Howell, observes Adams in "Ramus, Illustrations, and the Puritan Movement," "focused primarily on explaining the preceptive form of Ramus's *Dialecticae* [*libri duo*]: its nature, sources, potential utility as a system of logic, its place in history as evidence of a 'decay of dialogue,' and its connection with Cartesian method" (195–96). This "scholarship is necessary and important," as Adams states, but "its primary focus" has obscured the "strategic importance" of Ramism to "the Puritans in the advancement of their movement." Ramus's advocacy of reform in *Dialecticae libri duo* is "as much a strategic act of advocacy with political and social implications as it is a description of the precepts of reason" (196). This strategy suited Puritans. It suited their reliance on natural law, supported their belief "in competence as the foremost criterion for social or political position," and promoted "the right of all civil persons to participate in," but not control, "governance" (202). Ong would have accepted Adams's argument. "Back of the points of agreement" between Ramism and Elizabethan poets, as Ong insists, "there was a divergence extremely profound" (*Decay* 286). Those poets had a more rounded understanding of the human mind's dialectical capability than Ramus did. That mind could interpret its ontological environment as an intersubjective one made up of other dialectically capable minds.

Shakespeare was receptive to the linguistic potential of this environment. The Ramist possibilities of vernacular English would find middle- to late-seventeenth-century expression in the works of John Milton, but Shakespeare had already identified and expressed these possibilities (at proletarian, mercantile, and bourgeois levels). Hence, when Hardin Craig diligently cross-references vernacular forms of Aristotelian terms in logic with Shakespeare's works—and Miriam Joseph points to Shakespeare's "knowledge of formal logic" in citing how "Craig considers it probable that he knew Wilson's *Rule of Reason* and perhaps also *The Arte of Rhetorique*" (44)—his detailed enumeration weighs in Oxford's (rather than in Stratford's) authorial favor.

That the local dialect of Essex is the most prominent of all county dialects in Shakespeare's dramas and that Oxford was born in Essex both underwrite that support.³ The authorship question, therefore, asks academics to gauge both the egalitarian and the timocratic credentials of William Shakspeare and Edward de Vere. If the egalitarian weighs in favor of "the commoner" (7) Stratford, as Ren Draya calls Shakspeare, then the timocratic weighs in favor of "the nobly-born and highly cultivated, passionately wayward," but "to some extent *déclassé* aristocrat, Edward de Vere" (211), as Sigmund Freud calls Oxford.⁴

Ramus would have approved of Shakespeare's attitude toward the vernacular. Shakespeare, however, was also open to intersubjective coordination itself, and Ramus would have disapproved of this receptivity. For, while the young Ramus decried the sterility of current dialectical method for any practical use in the arts or in life, and while he would always promote the importance of the vernacular, the mature Ramus effectively dismissed coordinative dilemmas. His preference for persuasive rather than negotiated (let alone a random) solutions to coordination problems increased as his intellectual profile rose. Fame as a thinker demanded infallibility.

The immediate cause of Ramus's conversion from Catholicism to Calvinism resulted from a coordination problem. That this dilemma arose at the Colloquy of Poissy is, therefore, a further irony. This doctrinal conference "took place in September, 1561," as Graves details, "with the idea of bringing out a discussion of the points of difference between Catholics and Protestants and so effecting some degree of toleration between the two parties" (73). Ramus's current patron, Charles, Cardinal of Lorraine, was present, as was Edmund Grindal, the Bishop of London. Grindal had written to Sir William Cecil concerning the upcoming colloquy. The bishop insisted that reliable representatives of the Reformed Churches must attend. He nominated the Italian theologian Peter Martyr Vermigli and the French jurist François Baudouin. Championing "the English Prayer Book and Church polity in France" (571), as Alexander Russell documents, Martyr proved to be a wise choice. Baudouin, as his growing understanding with the Cardinal of Lorraine signaled, proved otherwise. Thomas Windebank alerted Cecil to the situation. "Windebank sent Cecil Calvin's *Adversus versipellem quendam* and Baudouin's reply *De famosis libellis*" (570). These documents "would have brought to Cecil's attention the nature of Calvin and Baudouin's differences, especially relating to the persecution of heretics" (570–71).

The Cardinal of Lorraine's response to the growing tension backfired. "Perhaps in a miscalculated effort to disarm the Protestants," writes David Deming, "the Cardinal admitted that the Christian Church had become corrupted over the centuries" (122). What the cardinal did not acknowledge, however, was the logical conclusion to this concession: Calvinism was correct. His silence on this point, rather than the Calvinist representations from another attendee, the theologian and political theorist Theodore Beza (1519–1605), convinced Ramus. The result was stalemate for the colloquy and conversion for Ramus. Hereafter, Ramus "began to absent himself from mass and the other usages of the church" (Graves 75). Ramus's nonattendance was a closely related expression of his theoretical and practical detachment from intersubjectivity. Isolated individualism fitted not only Ramus's philosophical stance, but also his self-avowed religious practice of living in harmony with God. Ramus's goal in religion hereby echoed his aim in mathematics, philosophy, dialectic, and rhetoric. His conversion to Calvinism in 1561/62, which balked at the Catholic obfuscation of Christian fundamentals, was a politically dangerous but knowing move. In effect, Ramus was helping to mold what Frank Kermode identifies as the "Protestant tradition, that of the devout dissenter animated only by the action of the spirit, abhorring the claim of the institution to an historically validated traditional interpretation" (40).

Anger at Ramus's conversion manifested itself immediately: his rejection of Catholicism stoked Jacques Charpentier's explicit enmity. Less specifically, the second session of the Council of Trent (1562–63) "and the rise and spread of the Jesuits," as Graves documents, "were bringing the religious controversy in Europe to an acute stage" (9). Moreover, Ramus was neither suited to, nor equipped for, nor learned in coordinative dilemmas, and his involvement in such disputes would often miscarry. A previous intervention had already exemplified this unsuitability. In 1557, a quarrel had broken out between the students of the University of Paris and the monks of neighboring St. Germain. Ramus attempted to pacify the situation, but his speech became a harangue, and his enemies accused him of "further inciting the students" (67, n. 1).

Ramus's appeals to the Cardinal of Lorraine on returning to Paris after his European tour of 1568–70 provide further evidence of his intersubjective weakness. In response to Charpentier's attempt to persuade the university board to dispense with his services, Ramus wrote to the cardinal,

but simply misjudged the current state of his former confrere's mind. Graves, in drawing on the consensus of *Three Lives*, takes up the story:

In reply, the cardinal evaded the issue by reproaching him in a friendly way for not coming to see him, and then accused him of ingratitude, impiety, and rebellion. Taking this as a sincere expression, Ramus wrote another letter. He explained his not seeing the cardinal in person on the ground that he would have run grave risks in so doing. As to "ingratitude," he declared that he had, "through his own labors and the sweat of his brow," shown himself worthy of the chair bestowed upon him, and that he would long since have resigned and accepted the better endowed chair at Bologna, had he not hoped by remaining to show his appreciation of past favors. As to "impiety," his religious change should not be considered an apostasy, but a return to the truth of the Gospel and the primitive church which the cardinal himself had praised at the Colloquy of Poissy. (101–02)

Ramus's genuine response served no good. Gamesmanship, as a form of prudential or cryptic practice, was alien to Ramus. "Without more ado," the cardinal "refrained from interfering with the program of the reformer's enemies, and on the 15th of December, 1570," as Graves reports, "Ramus was excluded from active teaching and administration in the university" (103).

Although Ramus's logical response had failed him, Ramism would continue to support reformation. Where "the specifics of Ramist offerings are concerned," writes Feingold, "what was adopted were the charts, dichotomies, and disjunctive syllogisms that better facilitated the propagandist needs of Puritans" (136). The disjunctive syllogism, when religiously inflected, found especial favor among English Puritans. In *The Artes of Logike and Rhetorike*, his translation of Ramus's *Dialecticae libri duo*, Dudley Fenner highlights numerous instances of this practice. In addition, Fenner's volume—as would Thomas Granger's *Syntagma Logicum, or The Divine Logike* (1620) and Antony Wotton's *The Art of Logick* (1626), his English translation of Ramus's *Dialecticae libri duo*—followed Roland M'Kilwein's lead in replacing many of Ramus's tree diagrams with biblical illustrations. These replacements increased the religious tenor of Ramism without diminishing its visual domination of the oral. "Techniques of expression will still be taught," as Ong attests, "but all the while a curious subconscious hostility to speech in all its forms will eat away at the post-Ramist age." On the one hand, "for a while, at least in Puritan lands, the stage, where speech is at its maximum as speech, will go" (*Decay* 291). On

the other hand, there is a silent nostalgia for speech in the face of burgeoning print culture.

Ramism started to lose favor when “a new demand for a logic of inquiry was met by [René] Descartes [1596–1650]” (*Rhetoric* 168), but even then, what Ong describes as the “distinctive mark” of Ramist logic—“individual inquiry into issues thought of as existing outside a framework of discourse” (*Decay* 290)—remained. Only after Peirce’s work on dilemmatic reasoning would hostility toward the dialogic “begin effectively to wane” (*Decay* 291). Even then, Peirce’s work on relational logic owed something to Ramus’s legacy, not only to his forebear’s diagrammatic approach to dialectic, but also to that forebear’s theoretical acknowledgment of the logical dilemma.

For Peirce, as Roberta Kevelson explains in *Hi-fives* (1998), “dilemmatic reasoning [...] is never fully conclusive, but is open-ended and provisional, and at bottom, hypothetical” (69). Peirce insists that the dilemma, which depends on the *principle of excluded middle*, “is of a far greater order than the syllogism.” Indeed, the prevalence of dilemmatic reasoning in nineteenth-century epistemology “indicates a stage of intellectual development much beyond the dogmatism,” or blind faith in Aristotle, “of the middle ages” (359). The “free and open thinking” demanded by relational logic, as Kevelson argues in “On Peirce and Romance” (1999), “is the common bond” (581) between Peirce, Josiah Royce (1855–1916), and von Neumann. Just as Ramus had laid the way for Peirce’s investigation of dilemmatic reasoning, so Peirce laid the way for von Neumann’s analysis of coordinative logic.

Ramus had hoped that his Latin version of *Euclid’s Elements* would promote his curricula reform of mathematics, but trusted accounts of Euclidian geometry already existed, and although his general textbooks on mathematics remained popular in European schools until the turn of the seventeenth century, his volume on Euclid was not widely adopted. British mathematicians Alfred North Whitehead (1861–1947) and Bertrand Russell (1872–1970) would suffer a related disappointment. “All geometry in Euclid’s *Elements* (and much more) is derived from just five axioms,” explains William Poundstone, and “the number of axioms in other fields is usually comparably small” (30). In attempting to axiomize the field of mathematics in their three-volume *Principia Mathematica* (1910, 1912, 1913), Whitehead and Russell extended the basis of axiomatics beyond the geometrical provenance of Euclid’s *Elements*, but they failed to attain their ultimate goal. This failure intrigued the German

mathematician David Hilbert, and while overseeing von Neumann's post-graduate work on axiomatics, he encouraged his protégé to go beyond *Principia Mathematica*. Like Ramus, Whitehead, and Russell, however, von Neumann suffered a related chagrin: mathematics, as Kurt Gödel soon demonstrated, cannot be reduced to axioms alone.

Yet, in retaining a supplementary interest in the mathematics of gaming, von Neumann was able to allay his disappointment. That secondary focus connects von Neumann to Ramus through Peirce, and this thread concerning "Ramus's synoptic organization of knowledge within a binary organization," as Jonathan Sawday argues, "look[s] forward to the conceptual and material revolution we have come to associate with the dawn of the computer age" (39). Von Neumann's contribution to modern computing "shows us how many of the problems associated with the information explosion of the late twentieth century were in many ways anticipated in the parallel explosion following the Gutenberg 'revolution' of the mid-fifteenth century" (27). Moreover, "the language which has evolved to describe so many of the activities which we now associate with computer culture is [...] indebted to a view of the world which first made itself apparent in Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries" (39). Instrumental to the initial appearance of that paradigm was Ramism. Ramus's reduction of person-to-person relationships to a singularly new minimum prevented his acceptance of coordinative dilemmas, but his role in philosophizing mathematics remains decisive.

NOTES

1. For more in connection with this assertion see John Webster's "Temple's Neo-Latin Commentary on Sidney's *Apology*" (1985).
2. *De augmentis scientiarum* was Bacon's Latin edition of *The Advancement of Learning*.
3. See Gary Goldstein's *Reflections on the True Shakespeare* (2016) for a commentary on the Bard's county dialects.
4. Freud makes these observations during his "Address Delivered in the Goethe House at Frankfurt" (1930).

SECTION II

The Rational Shakespeare



CHAPTER 6

Introduction: Ramism and Game Theory

I believe that it is probably true that fortune is the arbiter of half the things we do, leaving the other half or so to be controlled by ourselves.
—Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince* (105).

Peter Ramus often turned to a particular visual aid, the decision tree, to represent dialectic. This visualization is also suited to the representation of coordination problems. Thus, as an inheritor of Agricolan dialectic, on the one hand, and as a pioneer of eidetic techniques, on the other, Ramus remains central to an intellectual lineage that stretches from Plato, Aristotle, Lorenzo Valla, and Rudolph Agricola to Charles S. Peirce, Josiah Royce, Émile Borel, and John von Neumann.

Game theory, which is shorthand for “the theory of games of strategy” (John Davis Williams 3), represents von Neumann’s contribution to this history. The word strategy, “as used in its everyday sense, carries the connotation of a particularly skillful or adroit plan, whereas in Game Theory it designates any *complete* plan.” Put succinctly, “*a strategy is a plan so complete that it cannot be upset by enemy action or Nature*; for everything that the enemy or Nature may choose to do, together with a set of possible actions for yourself, is just part of the description of the strategy” (16; emphasis original). Each strategic participant in a coordination problem is a *player*. “Coordination games,” as Michael S. Alvard and David A. Nolin

emphasize, “are characterized by common interest among players” (534), and “in some models,” as Paisley Livingston notes, “a single ‘player’ is comprised of a number of ‘agents’” (69).

Von Neumann established modern game theory in “Zur Theorie der Gesellschaftsspiele” (December 1928). In games of strategy, each logically minded player in a self-interested situation has to anticipate the other players’ choices and pick a strategy according to the prospects of preference-satisfaction. “The problem,” states von Neumann, “is well known, and there is hardly a situation in daily life into which this problem does not enter” (13). Von Neumann’s analysis of this common occurrence “demonstrated that any two rational beings who find their interests *completely* opposed can settle on a rational course of action in confidence that the other will do the same” (William Poundstone 97; emphasis original). Selection in such situations involves each player minimizing the maximum harm that can befall him. This *minimax theorem* underpins game theory.

Von Neumann would apply and extend his theorem in the seminal work he coauthored with Oskar Morgenstern: *Theory of Games and Economic Behavior* (1944). This volume opens by stressing the important distinction between the abstract concept of a strategic game and the discrete plays of that game. “The *game* is simply the totality of the rules which describe it. Every particular instance at which the game is played—in a particular way—from beginning to end, is a *play*” (49; emphasis original). The taxonomic distinction between games of *perfect, complete, and incomplete information* is of additional importance. If a game has sequential (or dynamic) rather than simultaneous (or concurrent) moves, then perfect information requires knowledge of all preceding moves. Complete information does not involve details of previous moves. Incomplete information involves neither details of previous moves nor absolute certainty over current options.

As with Ramus’s desire to establish a single, dialectical logic that abides by categorical (or attributive) and hypothetical (or conditional) propositions, coordination problems often present each player with two choices. These options concern *cooperation* or *defection*. Coordinative situations often present a wider range of choices, but game theory can translate these options into a series of paired decisions. Most game-theoretic modeling, therefore, deals with two-player dilemmas. If a situation involves three or more players, then the analysis breaks down their relations into a set of two-player dilemmas. Hence, modeling usually concerns two-choice, two-player scenarios, and the *social dilemmas* of Deadlock, the Prisoner’s

Dilemma, the Assurance Game (or Stag Hunt), and Chicken are the most prevalent of these games.

A *utility* describes the preference-satisfaction score for each possible outcome. A *banker* (or *umpire*)—who is either detached from or embedded in the play, and who comprises an agency, authority, or a combination of the players themselves—sets the utilities. A player's *cost-benefit analysis* considers the losses and gains associated with each combination of player choices. The outcome from mutual cooperation concerns *remuneration* (*R*), the outcome from unilateral defection concerns *temptation* (*T*), the outcome for mutual defection concerns *punishment* (*P*), and the outcome for unilateral cooperation confers the role of *sucker* (*S*).¹ The seeming tautology of “mutual cooperation” designates the players' simultaneous choice of collaboration.

Certain sets of player choices lead to what game theorists call a *Nash equilibrium*. John Nash's (1928–2015) concept of equilibrium, explain Alvard and Nolin, “describes a combination of players' strategies that are best against one another.” When a game reaches a “Nash equilibrium, no player can do better by changing his or her decision unilaterally” (534). A Nash equilibrium is sometimes a Pareto optimum. Pareto optimality measures efficiency: a Pareto optimum arises when no other outcome makes at least one player better off and no player worse off.

A *zero-sum* dilemma occurs when acquisitions or losses derive from the players alone so that no gain or loss accrues in toto. An ordinal, a discrete, or a continuous scale ranks the outcomes of a game. Mathematical models often involve the second of these scales, a narrow utility (or *payoff*) that consists of material gain alone. A *strategic move* involves a player's additional assumption of the banker's role. This action enables that player to alter the options and payoffs for the game.

Theorists tabulate games of strategy using matrices and decision trees. Ramus's contemporary Gerolamo Cardano introduced matrices to European mathematics, Ramus used decision trees, and Edward de Vere would have been aware of the latest trends in mathematics. “By the late years of the sixteenth century,” chronicles Ann E. Moyer, “such steps tended mainly in the same direction, away from the ‘theoretical’ arithmetic of Boethius and toward [the] computational, ‘practical’ arithmetic” (130) of Cardano and Ramus. Although Ramus's Latin version of *Euclid's Elements* made relatively little impact in England, both his friendship with John Dee and his wider influence on rational thought, to repeat Paul Lawrence Rose, helped to lay the institutional basis of “a new natively

English mathematical tradition" (59). That tradition embraced Cardano's innovation. In fine, matrices as well as decisions trees would have been familiar to the Seventeenth Earl of Oxford.

Game theorists employ the most convenient modeling option. "When there are more than two players, or two strategy choices at a move," as Steven J. Brams explains, "the payoff matrix quickly becomes cumbersome and the game-tree analysis is easier" (41). Whenever there is a *dominant strategy*, however, matrices have a major advantage over tree diagrams. A dominant strategy, explains Anatol Rapoport, "leads to the most preferred outcome regardless of what else may happen or what others may do" (309). This "dominating strategy principle" (311) governs both reflective and reflexive rationality: if a player has a dominant strategy, then he invariably chooses that course; if an opponent knows of this option, then he invariably assumes this course to be his counterpart's inevitable choice. A dominant strategy precludes the need for the other player's preference information. Whereas the matrix approach does not require backward rationality calculations to discern this possible preclusion, the game-tree method does.

The basal standard of human behavior for the game-theoretic assessment of utilities is self-interest. "The resolute application of the assumption of self-interest to social actions and institutions," as Russell Hardin summarizes, "began with Hobbes and Machiavelli, who are sometimes therefore seen as the figures who divide modern from early political philosophy. Machiavelli commended the assumption of self interest to the prince; Hobbes applied it to everyone" (64). In *The Prince* (1532), Niccolò Machiavelli does not renounce the influence of God on human affairs, but unlike most Renaissance scholars, he charges individuals with significant responsibility for their personal circumstances. "I believe that it is probably true that fortune is the arbiter of half the things we do," states Machiavelli, "leaving the other half or so to be controlled by ourselves" (105). Notwithstanding this division of responsibility, as his judgment of individual loyalty to an alliance attests, Machiavelli believes certain attitudes involve self-interest alone: the utility "for being a true friend" is "prestige"; loyalty in collaborative games "is always more advantageous than neutrality" (96).

Ramus's mindset accommodated what Kendrick W. Prewitt calls its founder's "willingness to apply methodical study to courses of military or political action" (22–23). These courses concern what game theorists call *strategic imagery*. "One can distinguish two levels or components of the

image,” expound Glenn H. Snyder and Paul Diesing: “a background or long-term component, which is how the parties view each other in general, apart from the immediate crisis, and an immediate component, which comprises how they perceive each other in the crisis itself.” Before a definite crisis begins, “only the background component exists” (291). The Ramist accommodation of strategic imagery met the Machiavellian mindset in Sir William Cecil. That meeting was tangible. For some theoreticians, such as Poundstone, “game theory is about *perfectly logical players interested only in winning*” (44; emphasis original). An extreme judgment of the calculating Cecil casts him in this guise. “At the most abstract level,” avows Poundstone, “game theory is about tables with numbers in them—numbers that entities are efficiently acting to maximize or minimize” (61), and from this perspective, Cecil becomes a calculating machine.

This assessment of Edward de Vere’s father-in-law agrees with previous character studies. In *William Cecil, the Power Behind Elizabeth* (1934), Alan G. R. Smith describes Cecil as “planning, weighing, calculating” (25). Denver Ewing Baughan, whose document on “Sir Philip Sidney and the Matchmakers” appeared four years after Smith’s publication, calls Cecil “calculating” (509). More recently, in “Elizabeth I and the Politics of Gender” (2007), Jennifer Clement concurs, accepting John Banks’s portrayal of Cecil (as Lord Burleigh) in *The Unhappy Favourite, or the Earl of Essex, a Tragedy* (1682) as “a cold and calculating man” (15). Lastly, in *Burghley: William Cecil at the Court of Elizabeth I* (2008), Stephen Alford offers a similar assessment, casting his subject as forever “evaluating, calculating and planning” (106).

That profounder judgment, to repeat Walter J. Ong from *Ramus, Method, and the Decay of Dialogue*, “simply disappears” in Ramism, “and with it all rational interest in the psychological activities which such a term covers” (289; emphasis original) also fits Poundstone’s game-theoretic abstraction. A concession toward unconsciousness, however, opens a means of addressing the conundrum that faces theorists of competent cognition: why players with perfect strategic knowledge do not necessarily exploit that omniscience. “People,” as George Ainslie confirms, “often fail to maximize” (136), and “game theorists,” as Livingston avers, “do not contend that we should always assume that players adopt optimal strategies” (69). Even when perfect information identifies the most profitable strategy to adopt, players often choose another course of action for social, cultural, religious, or moral reasons, and most game theorists accept such influences.

A *focal point* can discourage a player to maximize. This lure results from a cultural predisposition. Humans embody an evolutionary receptiveness to protological structures that Ramus would have called correct reason. Their game-theoretic sense—what Ramus would have termed their natural reason—is inherent. “Worn pathways and synapses,” avers Arthur F. Kinney, “suggest that any cognitive response is in large part unconscious,” where Kinney’s reference to unconsciousness refers to nonconscious rather than subconscious motivation. Individual behavior draws “on the predispositions of a person’s past and a person’s culture” (130). That past and that culture have substrates determined by evolution, and those predispositions encourage the formation of focal points. In psychological terms, cultural norms often canalize a player’s desire, directing strategic behavior. The player either chooses a specific option or rejects closure. Denial occurs when the choices on offer fail to provide the answer demanded by contextually inculcated norms.

Another reason not to maximize is mutualism. Evolutionary biologists frequently invoke cooperative interactions to explain the social predisposition of certain species. This *synergistic mutualism* applies especially “to economies of scale that make the combined effect of individuals’ working together greater than the sum of their individual efforts” (Alvard and Nolin 534). In contrast, *by-product mutualism* does not preclude maximization by a self-interested individual: any benefits accrued by other players are an incidental product of that individual’s actions.

Players can also accept lesser payoffs than logic demands because kindness, generosity, and altruism come into play. Peter Brosius notes how “the relationship between individual and collective life—between self-regarding behavior and altruism—has been a perennial issue in social and political theory. A central concern to Enlightenment *philosophes*, 19th-century evolutionists, and 20th-century anthropologists, it has reemerged in recent decades in Darwinian guise” (549–50). Derek Parfit, as a utilitarian philosopher with an evolutionary awareness, addresses this concern. “Altruistic reasons,” he expounds, “are *person-relative* or *partial* in the sense that these are reasons to be specially concerned about the well-being of people who are in certain ways *related to us*” (1:40; emphasis original). *Kin-related altruism* is one example of self-interested partiality. Beyond kin-relatedness, however, “we also have some reasons [...] to care about everyone’s well-being.” These “reasons are *impartial* in the sense that (1) these are reasons to care about anyone’s well-being whatever that person’s relation to us, so that (2) we would have these reasons even if

our situation gave us an impartial point of view.” This impartial perspective considers “possible events that would affect or involve people who are all strangers to us” (1:40; emphasis original).

Utility allows game-theoretic simulations of decision-making to accommodate the impulses that inflect each player’s rational preferences. Two functions comprise utility. In strict mathematical terms, as expressed by Shaun P. Hargreaves-Heap and Yanis Varoufakis, “utility is given as the sum of two sub-utility functions: $M(\bullet)$ and $\Psi(\bullet)$, $U_i(O) = M(O) + \Psi(O)$.” Player i receives utility U_i from outcome O , in which $M(O)$ denotes “player i ’s material gains, and $\Psi(O)$ denotes what we shall call the ‘psychological utility’ from this material outcome” (269). While paying especial heed to the power of rationality, utilities both acknowledge the contribution of the unconscious and recognize the influence of conscience.

This wider game-theoretic applicability appealed to von Neumann, whose “later probing into the relationship between the computer and the brain,” as Norman Macrae reports, “was sometimes criticized as too Freudian” (56). Defending von Neumann against this charge involves recognition of his insightful acknowledgment of the psychological pressures imposed by interpersonal relations. These pressures of conscience, which express the mediation between the unconscious and conscious minds, mold individual psyches from their psychological template. While self-consciousness accompanies “all the acts of our minds,” as Slavoj Žižek explains, unconscious activity prevents the full actualization of this consciousness, “and it is this very intermediate status that defines Self-Consciousness” (35). This unconscious interference often expresses itself in a player’s attitude toward his banker, and the resultant dynamic can be problematic, as Edward de Vere’s relationship with Sir William Cecil, Lord Burghley, demonstrates.

NOTE

1. “So long, sucker” (159), in the words of Princeton game theorists, and as documented by one of them, Martin Shubik, expresses the defector’s cynical relief at his opponent’s naïve decision.



CHAPTER 7

The Banker and His Player

Burghley was celebrating with great magnificence the marriage of his eldest daughter [...] with the young Earl of Oxford, a connection which in after years brought him much trouble and anxiety.

—Martin A. S. Hume, *The Great Lord Burghley* (263)

John de Vere, Sixteenth Earl of Oxford, knew that should he die, kin-related altruism could not forestall his son's wardship. The knight-service obligation in capite—Earl John's tenure of lands and manors held immediately of the crown—accounted for this inevitability. The earl's death on 3 August 1562 realized these commitments, trapping Edward de Vere as a game-theoretic player within the Court of Wards and Liveries. Sir William Cecil, as master of that court, became Edward's immediate game-theoretic banker. Cecil held no illusions concerning this mastery; the young Oxford would have recognized the dangers of becoming Cecil's strategic subordinate, but recognition did not easily translate into counteractive force; indeed, Edward would never fully escape the power relations established by wardship.

Nonetheless, the Seventeenth Earl of Oxford benefitted as well as suffered from the perverse mixture of impartial altruism and by-product mutualism that William Cecil respectively bestowed on, and garnered from, his charges. Cecil's official guardianship over the young earl, which lasted until his charge's twenty-first birthday, not only facilitated the banker-player relations between Oxford and the Cecil dynasty, but also ensured that de Vere

was raised a Protestant. The Elizabethan age demanded this religious upbringing. In ascending denominational order, William Cecil, Queen Elizabeth, and God constituted the hierarchy of Edward de Vere's religious bankers, with Elizabeth intending to expunge the influence of that other banker of European standing, the pope, from English minds. The queen was following her late brother's project, and with the ingrained rigor of a Ramist, Cecil started to tackle this issue on Elizabeth's accession: he drew up "The Device for the Alteration of Religion." This paper recommended the establishment of a commission to ensure that all religious policies complied with the Protestant settlement.

Queen Elizabeth appreciated Cecil's device. She also acknowledged Cecil's religious supervision of Oxford, sending de Vere to join Thomas Radcliffe, Third Earl of Sussex, during Radcliffe's 1570 crackdown on Catholic insurrectionists in northern England. By the time of Oxford's arrival, the potential rebellion had been stamped out, thanks to what Mark Anderson deems Sussex's "strategic vision and military prowess" (42). Nevertheless, "de Vere passed his twentieth birthday (April 12, 1570) amid Sussex's entourage" (43); Oxford thought Sussex "an attractive role model and mentor" (43); and Sussex's Protestant ethos dovetailed with that of Queen Elizabeth.

European politics of the 1570s would shape the numerous foreground components of that imagery. During this decade, as Anderson remarks, "Spain, France, and England were like three dancers trying to tango." Two participants (or game-theoretic players) "would attempt a couple of steps together; then the third would cut in, leaving one or both of the original partners slighted" (135). For Elizabeth's noblemen, this political maneuvering met personal politics through the mediating agency of the court, and by 1571, as Louis Thorn Golding reports, "Oxford was a favorite of Queen Elizabeth who used to send for 'her Turk,' as she nicknamed him, to dance with her" (66). These courtly dances presaged the strategic difficulties that would soon impinge on Oxford's foreground play.

The various political alliances between England, France, and Spain created an unstable environment for the nurturing of Oxford's role at court. The Ridolfi Plot, which broke on 1 September 1571, gave ample proof of this strategic terrain. Financed by the Italian merchant Roberto di Ridolfi, with the approval of Felipe II of Spain and Pope Pius V, the plan involved not only the Earls of Northumberland and Westmorland, but also Oxford's cousin, Thomas Howard (1536–72), Fourth Duke of Norfolk. The plot envisaged a rebellion against Elizabeth followed by a Spanish invasion of

England from the Low Countries. The Duke of Norfolk and Mary, Queen of Scots, would replace Queen Elizabeth, and under their rule, England would return to Catholicism.

On 7 October, Cecil and the Earl of Leicester ordered the arrest of Ridolfi, whom they suspected of bringing money from the pope to fund the rebellion. Under questioning, Ridolfi convinced his examiner, Francis Walsingham, of his innocence. Meanwhile, “Norfolk’s secretary, bearing a bag of gold and a ciphered letter, had let his cargo slip into the hands of a suspicious tradesman, who notified the authorities” (Anderson 49). Cecil, whom Stephen Alford describes as “something like the chief of the Elizabethan intelligence service” (167), asked Smith, as “an old hand and an experienced interrogator” (173), to question the secretary. Having completed the interrogation, Smith advised Burghley to imprison Norfolk, pending the duke’s prosecution for treason. Burghley followed Smith’s advice. Oxford, who resented Burghley’s decision, intervened on his cousin’s behalf. This move proved unproductive. Norfolk required a banker’s, not a player’s, intervention.

For the queen’s own reasons, the case would not come to trial until 16 January 1572, and during this interregnum, and despite the expiration of his official guardianship, Burghley retained his strategic power over Oxford. Altering his daughter’s courtship game, Burghley transferred Anne’s marriage plans from Sir Philip Sidney to the Seventeenth Earl of Oxford. De Vere’s wardship had added social ascension to Burghley’s personal aim of dynastic perpetuation. Put succinctly, Anne’s father wished to marry her into the oldest patrilineal dynasty in England, and he exploited the complex and onerous circumstances of Oxford’s inheritance to this end. By right of service, the crown had seized one-third of that bequest. “On top of this,” as Jane Greatorex observes, Edward “had to pay some of his father’s annuitants, who in turn had had to pay some of *his* father’s annuitants” (82; emphasis original). Margery de Vere (d. 1568)—probably charged under the auspices of the Court of Wards and Liveries with her daughter Mary’s upbringing—had been unable to help her son financially. Edward would even have to sue for marriage. The banker Burghley offered a £15,000 dowry to marry Anne; this lure worked; the wedding took place at Westminster Abbey on 16 December 1571.

The proposed settlement had become Oxford’s focal point; this focus was the purpose of Burghley’s gamesmanship; marriage to Anne consolidated that purpose, and this consolidation became immediately apparent to Oxford. Burghley was unwilling to meet the prenuptial agreement. De Vere

answered in kind. Still resenting Burghley's role in Norfolk's imprisonment, Oxford forsook his marriage bed. The banker's strategic move had prompted his key player to delay the perpetuation of that banker's family tree. Intervention by the queen only exacerbated the situation. "Cecil made for Ann[e]," remarks Conyers Read, "a very unhappy match indeed with the volatile young Earl of Oxford" (437).

Oxford's frustrations—familial, strategic, and religious—came to a head in October 1572. Riven with contesting thoughts, he sought solitude, and withdrew from London. Wivenhoe, one of his Essex estates, became Oxford's refuge. The presence of Anne de Vere must have chafed the sore arising from her absent dowry, but Edward eventually had the chance to address this problem. In July 1574, he traveled to the continent to collect a secret payoff—amounting to the dowry total of £15,000—that the Spanish had promised to Burghley. The banker, however, was again controlling his player, with Oxford bearing the risk. Indeed, on this occasion, as Burghley must have known, the stakes went beyond the familial.

Disillusioned as he was with Protestantism, de Vere had been flirting with Catholicism, befriending Henry Howard and Howard's cousin Charles Arundell. The latter praised Oxford lavishly: rightly "reputed for his eloquence another Cicero," Oxford's clarity of thought was of equal standing, for he "left nothing to reply, but everyone to wonder at his judgement" (qtd. in B. M. Ward 128). Concerning religion, however, that wonder played both ways. For, "the three of them," as Anderson documents, "plotted insurrections and wild-eyed schemes to return the British kingdom to the Roman Catholic fold" (165). To de Vere, these plots were idle, drunken fantasies, but the English court read them otherwise. His Spanish assignation made the matter worse. Oxford appeared to be both a traitor and a religious defector. Elizabeth would eventually understand Oxford's behavior as characteristic of what the young courtier Gilbert Talbot called de Vere's "fickle head" (qtd. in Charlton Ogburn 511). Yet, the duration of his flirtation with the papal religion was significant, and that religious fickleness would explicitly reappear during his European tour of 1575–76.

In February 1575, within three years of Peter Ramus's murder, and as a second generation of Cambridge University Ramists were coming to prominence, Edward de Vere found himself in Reims for the coronation of Henry III. Oxford, who informally allied himself with Henry, Duke of Guise, and Guise's uncle, the Cardinal of Lorraine, continued to seek a banker on whom he could rely. In extremis, the alternative banker whom

de Vere sought was Pope Gregory XIII, but appending an Italian stage to his European sojourn would incur additional expense. Oxford, who had warned in the aftermath of the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre that Burghley was in danger of becoming "a block and a crossbar" (qtd. in William Plumer Fowler 55) in the papists' way, was in danger of becoming a styer in his father-in-law's frugal eye. Hence, de Vere's immediate need for money brought home an ultimate irony: on 3 January 1576, while in Siena, he had to sell some of his estates, and Burghley, rather than Oxford's uncle, Arthur Golding, superintended these sales.

"Fiscal improvidence, the great sin of many young aristocrats," notes Roger A. Stritmatter in *The Marginalia of Edward de Vere's Geneva Bible*, "is a standard character flaw conventionally attributed to de Vere" (40). Daphne Pearson's judgment of Oxford abides by this convention: "the earl's overwhelming concern throughout his life was short-term self-interest" (140). Yet, as Pearson acknowledges, Oxford's livery fees on reaching his majority meant that the "earl became a victim of the system under which he lived, when selling land was forced on nobles because of the cost of living on credit for more than a few months at a time. Had this been the earl's answer to an occasional problem all would have been well," adds Pearson, "but it became his way of life: a short-term solution turned into long-term ruin" (33). Unlike William Shakspeare, however, Edward de Vere never experienced destitution.

Burghley was loath to comply with his son-in-law's demand from Siena—he wished to minimize both the religious and financial harm that could befall his daughter Anne—but grudgingly did so. This reluctance must have annoyed Oxford, whose frustrations with the rational structures of interrelations remained most obvious in his dealings with Burghley: Oxford's father-in-law—whether as a detached or as an embedded banker—held the advantage. In the first instance, banker Burghley embraced the intersubjectivity of coordination problems among his players. In the second instance, player Burghley recognized the intersubjectivity of coordination problems among his fellow participants, but retained the capability to make strategic moves. William Burghley could act like Peter Ramus, unwilling to embrace interrelational coordination with his junior, but Edward de Vere could seldom reciprocate—the forsaking of his marriage bed was a rare exception. Traumatized at a young age by the unexpected death of his father, Oxford had transferred his need for a paternal figure onto his wardmaster. That reassignment rarely fulfilled Oxford's unconscious needs. He found himself either subjected to that

guardian's flat dichotomies or forced to coordinate with strategies that that guardian could unhinge with strategic moves; as a result, de Vere attuned himself to the difficulties and subtleties of intersubjectivity.

The manner in which Oxford extended his European sojourn in January 1576 risked long-term financial straits, and although Oxford's ultimate gain would be significant, the prolongation of his tour was fleeting. For, learning of Anne's pregnancy, and accusing her of cuckolding him, Oxford returned to London that spring. Edward's subsequent estrangement from Anne interposed a coordination condition of silence between them. Burghley's initial response to his son-in-law's behavior matched that condition: he demanded that Edward keep his distance from Anne. Regard for these related stipulations would at once translate the married couple's estrangement into separation and stoke Edward's frustrations as a player. Denied banker status, Oxford directed his energies into taking risks.

In 1578, Martin Frobisher sought investors for his third expedition in search of the Northwest Passage, and Oxford could not resist. The odds of success were small, but the rewards for success were substantial. Committing himself to a £3,000 bond, he was the single largest investor, but the enterprise foundered. In consequence, as Chancery Records reveal, Oxford would have to sell, "by indentures dated 4 March 1580 and 6 April 1580," his "manors of Waltons and Netherhall in Essex" to his uncle Arthur Golding (1). "The Earl of Oxford," reports Louis Thorn Golding, "was busily wrecking the great estate left him by his father" (76). Notably, Sir Philip Sidney, under the same lure, had showed himself to be a more prudent gambler. His backing of Frobisher's missions amounted to "£25 in one voyage and £50 in another" (128).

That Sidney's speculative foresight outreached de Vere's risk-taking speculation only compounded the enmity between them. De Vere had seemingly stolen Anne Cecil from Sidney. Then, in August 1579, Oxford and Sidney had argued on a Whitehall tennis court. This quarrel not only involved the two men's position in the aristocratic hierarchy, but also brought to wider notice the rivalry that had been brewing between them since their early years of contact at Cecil House. As with Edward's separation from Anne, a coordination condition equivalent to silence kept his current dispute with Sidney alive; the two men studiously avoided each other; Sir Walter Raleigh acted as their go-between. Queen Elizabeth eventually intervened. The accepted difference in degree between earls and private gentlemen was considerable, and the queen was bound to support the nobility, whom Sidney agreed to treat with due respect.

The queen's rebuke of Burghley's favorite did little to mitigate de Vere's status as a player; as such, he continued to take risks. Despite his professed return to Protestantism, Oxford had sent men to fight for the Duke of Mayenne (1554–1611) against the Huguenots at Poitou in 1577. In a similar vein, de Vere also involved himself in the contentious matter of Queen Elizabeth's succession. Francis, Duke of Anjou and Alençon, and his mother, Catherine de Medici, were pressing Elizabeth to accept Alençon's suit. Their animosity not only toward Spain, but also toward Catholicism played in Alençon's favor. The St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre, however, jeopardized his cause. Unsurprisingly, Sir Philip Sidney opposed the Alençon match, and Robert Dudley, First Earl of Leicester, supported Sidney's stance. Surprisingly, Burghley favored Alençon's suit, and Oxford, overlooking family tensions, backed his father-in-law's attitude. Different reasons prompted their combined support of Alençon. Burghley's response was strategic: he thought the alliance would thwart Spanish ambitions; the alternative was war with Spain. Oxford's response was religious: he still decried Protestant "ineptitude" (Anderson 137).

Nor had the outfall from Oxford's Catholic flirtation with Henry Howard and Charles Arundell dissipated, and by 1581, he found himself pitted against his erstwhile confederates. In this two-choice, two-player scenario, the combined agency of Howard and Arundell answered Oxford's indictment of plotting regicide with a list of counter-accusations. De Vere's former conspirators tried to play him for a (game-theoretic) sucker. Oxford's attempt to flee the country failed. He denounced Howard and Arundell as Spanish spies. All three found themselves imprisoned in the Tower of London. After two and a half months, the queen recognized Oxford's essential loyalty and forbore further punishment. Howard and Arundell, whose guilt was far more tangible, but whom the queen also favored, escaped further punishment too. Hereafter, as his rationality counseled, Oxford would remain a Protestant. Indeed, as if welcoming this return to the fold, Thomas Stocker dedicated *Divers Sermons of Master John Calvin*, his 1581 translation of Calvin's teachings, to the Seventeenth Earl of Oxford.

By this time, the earl was not just "fed up with the royal court, Oxford's usual lament," but "unquieted with the uncertainty of the world" (Alford 239). Coordination problems were getting the better of him. De Vere now moved in another way to counteract his continuing status as a player. Edward's father had "kept a group of travelling players," as Greatorex chronicles, "who performed in several towns; for Henry VIII; for Sir

William Petre as well as at the de Vere seat of Castle Hedingham" (122). The law required troupes to have a sponsor; John de Vere's group had disbanded on his death; so, without a theatrical company to inherit, Edward took over the Earl of Warwick's Men. "Warwick was still patron on 1 January 1580," as Alan H. Nelson reports, "but by April the company's transfer to Oxford was complete" (239). Edward, who renamed his players the Earl of Oxford's Men, then founded the Earl of Oxford's Boys.

Drawing on Thomas Nashe's (1567–1601) *Summer's Last Will and Testament* (1592), Stritmatter argues that Oxford's generosity to "the English theatre and other literary enterprises during the decades of the 1570's and 1580's was the chief cause of his impoverishment" (*Marginalia* 42). At various times during this period, and in addition to his adult players, Oxford patronized three troupes of child actors: the Children of Pauls and the Children of the Chapel as well as his own company. "The high point of Oxford's land sales," adds Stritmatter, "came in 1580, the same year in which he apparently began subsidizing his adult troop" (*Marginalia* 43). For the earl, whose wardship had left him with massive and long-term financial problems, this expense was onerous. Rarely self-denying and rarely risk-averse, however, Oxford could not help himself.

But was Edward de Vere financially improvident? To answer this question, one ought to distinguish between his ultimate aim and the instrumental aim by which he achieved that final goal. According to Sidney Lee, whose summary thoughts on "Edward de Vere" (1889) appeared in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, "Oxford had squandered some part of his fortune upon men of letters whose bohemian mode of life attracted him" (227). Such an attitude toward money would have irked both Sir Thomas Smith and Lord William Burghley. Oxford's generosity with, and disdain for, money was at odds with the frugality exhibited by the emergent class of aristocrats that his former mentors headed. Yet, when recast in ultimate and instrumental terms, Oxford's squandering looks altogether different: that waste becomes an investment.

"In his 1573 preface to Bartholomewe [*sic*] Clerke's *Cardanus Comforte*," as Stritmatter remarks, "Oxford compares the literary labors of the translator to a mass of gold which Clerke threatens to have 'murdered in the waste bottoms' of his chests. 'What doth it avail a mass of gold to be continually imprisoned in your bags and never to be employed to your use?'" (*Marginalia* 41). Oxford's largesse as a patron earns praise in the majority of the thirty-seven books dedicated to him. What is more, as Smith would have conceded, this munificence channeled the earl's

self-interest toward a common good. "Being privy not only of his public dealings, but also of his private doings and secret intents," states Andrew Trollop in a 1587 letter to Burghley, "[I] found and knew him indued with special piety, perfect integrity, great care to discharge all trust imposed in him, and no less desire to do good in the commonwealth" (qtd. in Gilbert Slater 199). Put succinctly, Oxford would have found ideological support for his largesse in Smith's revolutionary argument concerning self-interest in *A Discourse of the Common Weal of This Realm of England*.

Despite the newly accepted responsibility of his troupes, when his recklessness went too far, Oxford still depended on his father-in-law's intervention. The latest such reliance arose from Oxford's extramarital affair with Anne Vavasour (c. 1560–c. 1650). Edward and Anne met in 1579. Anne was pregnant with de Vere's child by the following summer. Oxford mooted marriage, which would have made him a bigamist, followed by exile to Spain. Even though Vavasour's miscarriage solved the couple's immediate difficulty, the queen banished Oxford from court. When, in the summer of 1581, Anne fell pregnant for a second time, her uncle, Thomas Knyvet, challenged Oxford to a duel. De Vere accepted. "The Earl was permanently lamed in the duel," writes Percy Allen, "and probably walked with a limp for the remainder of his life" (190). Soon thereafter, "Gerard Ashby, an apprentice butcher, walking through Blackfriars, learned [...] that a fight between the Oxford-Knyvet factions was imminent." Oxford's men were outnumbered, but one of the earl's retainers, named Gastrell, took the fight to the opposition, "and was promptly wounded" (187).

Another factional brawl ensued on 28 June 1582, and a third in July, in which Gastrell "provoked, and slew, a certain Long Tom, who seems to have passed from Oxford's service to that of Knyvet." The queen heard of "this street-brawling in her capital city, between rival factions of her own courtiers," and admonished both parties (188). The rarely self-denying Oxford was unwilling to compromise. His father-in-law's intercession was required. De Vere's reconciliation with his wife during the winter of 1581–82 had somewhat mollified her father. Burghley imposed his game-theoretic status. "One full year following the duel of March, 1582," as William Kittle traces, "Burghley earnestly sought to secure justice for the Earl of Oxford by writing to Sir Christopher Hatton on March 12, 1583" (33); Hatton, who had been Lord Chancellor since 1578, approached the queen; she responded by readmitting Oxford to her court.

On 9 June 1583, Thomas Radcliffe, Third Earl of Sussex, died. Sussex was one of the few men Edward de Vere both trusted and revered. The

queen had to reassign Sussex's responsibilities as Lord Chamberlain to another courtier, but she dashed Oxford's hopes of promotion by choosing Walsingham. Concerning the cultural duties of the office, the queen's choice seems strange, even illogical. Yet, "spymaster" (108, 109) Walsingham, as Jacob Hughes describes him, "shrewdly recognized the value of the public theater, and sought to employ it in order to bolster fervor against Catholicism and solidify national unity" (108). The astute Elizabeth welcomed this complementary shrewdness, and in targeting English solidity, Walsingham formed the Queen's Men. Burghley, Walsingham's immediate boss, dismissed contemporary poetry and plays in intellectual terms, but their propaganda value was something worth pursuing. Indeed, as Privy Councilor to Queen Elizabeth and Chancellor of Cambridge University, Burghley would wield greater power over Walsingham's company than Walsingham himself did.

Both politically and dramaturgically, Burghley appeared to command the stage, and his dealings with Catholic equivocation reconfirmed his ability to make strategic moves. Burghley's games with religious prisoners were decidedly tortuous. What he deemed to be the hypocritical and sophistical responses of Catholics under physical coercion particularly intrigued him. Whether penned by Burghley himself or to Burghley's dictation, the disingenuously titled "A Declaration of the Favourable Dealing of Her Majesty's Commissioners Appointed for the Examination of Certain Traitors, and of Tortures Unjustly Reported to Be Done upon Them for Matters of Religion" (1583), summarizes his thoughts on the subject. In Burghley's judgment, Catholic prisoners evade the truth through equivocation, and physical force effectively counters this tactic. In 1584, Martin Azpilcueta would formally articulate the *doctrine of equivocation*, but Burghley forestalled the principle espoused by the Spanish prelate. Burghley's approach to Catholic equivocation was an extreme expression of one-way persuasion. Like Ramus, but far more brutally, Burghley decried an impasse. De Vere, as a Ramist by education and as an erstwhile religious equivocator, must have understood the reasoning behind his father-in-law's method. He too suffered torture—albeit of the mental kind—under Burghley.

Ironically, and frustratingly for many of her courtiers, Queen Elizabeth appeared to be the greatest of English equivocators. Her wavering inflicted mental torture on Burghley. In March 1584, Jean Sturm—that influence on Peter Ramus, Thomas Smith, Roger Ascham, and Edward de Vere—pleaded with Elizabeth by letter to intercede militarily in the Netherlands.

She procrastinated. The queen was not necessarily cautious; “coyness and procrastination,” as J. E. Neale notes, “were state diplomacy” (142). Instead, she purposefully maintained the coordination problems of international relations. In both the internal and external aspects of these matters, she played one side against the other, waiting for the dilemma to either emerge from the strategic background or simply dissolve.

By the winter of 1584, the foreground image in the Lowlands demanded an English intervention against Spain. In meeting this necessity, Elizabeth had to solve the internal question of who would command her ground forces, with the risk-accepting Oxford seriously promoting his own candidacy. De Vere made this request for a military command despite his persistent domestic problems. Financial exigencies had recently forced him to sell his manor of Castle Campes, Cambridgeshire, to a London merchant, Thomas Skinner. Furthermore, Burghley had been surreptitiously questioning Oxford’s servants, as de Vere had recently discovered. Writing to Burghley on 30 October 1584, Oxford advised his father-in-law to “leave that course. For I mean not to be your ward or your child. I serve Her Majesty” (55).¹ Consummately strategic, Burghley was ensuring that the courtly game was one of perfect information for the banker (himself) and incomplete information for his players (such as Oxford). De Vere, who was simultaneously asking for Burghley’s help in rescheduling his debts to the crown, remained at a strategic disadvantage. To make matters worse, the Oxford–Knyvet feud now reignited, with Anne Vavasour’s brother, Thomas, challenging Oxford to a duel. Only when de Vere, employing a form of queenly procrastination, ignored this challenge did the feud fizzle out. Oxford’s debts, however, did not fade away. Still frustrated at his player status, and despite the failure of Frobisher’s 1578 voyage, de Vere invested in John Davis’s 1585 search for the Northwest Passage. He also risked further capital in ventures that concerned the mining and trading of tin.

Nor did political machinations promote Oxford above player status. On 10 July 1585, Queen Elizabeth appointed Sir John Norris to temporary command of the military expedition to relieve Antwerp. The following month, de Vere joined Norris as commander of the horse, but the queen recalled her Turk in October. Leicester then acceded to overall command. De Vere was piqued. What the outcome of the English campaign under the risk-inclined Oxford would have been remains a matter of speculation, but as a hidebound strategist of no invention, Leicester led a disastrous operation. Lieutenant Rowland Yorke, who had unsuccessfully attempted to betray the allies to the Spanish in 1584, tried more subterfuge, and the

combination of Leicester's ineptitude and Yorke's treachery resulted in a bloody impasse. One notable victim of this game-theoretic stalemate, which saw the hostilities last for more than sixty years, was Sir Philip Sidney. Lured far more by physical danger than by financial speculation, Sidney had risked his life, and died from battlefield wounds on 17 October 1586.

The Armada emerged as the foreground image from the stalemated backdrop that had developed in the Lowlands. That emergence revealed Queen Elizabeth's attitude toward risk. "Elizabeth," as Keith Rinehart notes, "staked her throne on a decisive sea battle" (85). The forthcoming conflict offered Edward de Vere the timocratic chance to secure honor and fame, but his contribution to the battle, as with the land campaign, rapidly receded into the background. Oxford might have participated in the three search-and-destroy operations mounted by the navy between 20 and 22 July, but these expeditions would have been the extent of his Armada experience, and they failed to find the Spanish fleet.

For the hitherto rarely self-denying earl, this disappointment probably offered some solace, because kin-related altruism was now making its presence felt. Oxford wanted to provide for his two legitimate children—Elizabeth (b. 1575) and Bridget (b. 1584)—and warfare risked that provision. Yet, de Vere continued to absorb the additional expense of running theatrical companies, because strategic as well as artistic reasons urged this course. He wished to be a poet and a dramatist.

Like Ramus, who knew how dramatists could exploit classically inflected form and diction for political rather than aesthetic ends, the Puritans of England mistrusted drama. To them, the theater was an expression of decadence, and they wished to suppress all incitements to moral decline. Queen Elizabeth, however, as her attendances at university degree ceremonies and her progresses in general attest, indulged players. De Vere's troupe sponsorships, therefore, aligned him with the queen. Stocker's dedication of *Divers Sermons of Master John Calvin* to Oxford did not mean that his dedicatee held a Puritanical view of the stage. Rather, de Vere promoted the sort of titled meritocracy, or timocracy, of which Ramus had approved. Oxford hereby aligned himself with Burghley. Each man understood Sir Thomas Smith's republican paradigm, but diluted the revolutionary aspects of that model. Art could respond and counter decadence without fomenting rebellion.²

This stance enabled Oxford to achieve his ultimate aim. For, on 21 June 1586, Burghley asked Walsingham by letter if he had consulted the queen about a proposal concerning Oxford. Two days later, the Star

Chamber, as the judicial manifestation of the Privy Council, decreed what Stritmatter describes as “the most important censorship act in Elizabeth’s reign, specifically designed to consolidate the control of the Crown and Anglican authorities over the sphere of propaganda and symbolic action.” Then, on 26 June, “a 1000 pound per annum grant was issued to Oxford.” Although no formal requirements attended this award, “the grant was issued under a formula used for secret service payments, stipulating that neither Oxford nor his heirs should ever be called to make an accounting for the money’s expenditure” (*Marginalia* 58).

In *The Comedy of Errors*, as Stritmatter observes, “the changeling Dromio of Syracuse bars his master Antipholus of Ephesus from entering his home while his counterpart abuses him for having ‘stolen both *mine office* and my name.’” Dromio later “sardonically relates this ‘office’ both to the figure of ‘a thousand pounds’ and also the rope which his master uses to beat him: ‘I buy a thousand pound *a year*: I buy a rope’ (4.1.21; emphasis added).” This “reference is to *an annuity* of the same amount by which Oxford’s ‘office’ was subsidized” (*Marginalia* 65; emphasis original). What is more, the denomination of 1,000 positively litters *The Comedy of Errors* from the Duke of Ephesus’s “unless a thousand marks be levied” (1.1.21) to Antipholus of Syracuse’s “Where is the thousand marks thou hadst of me?” (1.2.81) to Antipholus of Ephesus’s “and charged him with a thousand marks in gold” (3.1.8).

De Vere’s annuity, which Elizabeth granted him in perpetuity, resulted from Walsingham’s request, but ultimately rested on Burghley’s (second-hand) intervention. Oxford’s subsequent notion of commuting his annuity for a single payment of £5,000, which he reveals in a letter dated 18 May 1591, seems “extraordinary” (412) to Fowler. The earl’s instrumental means, however, were often pressing; the arrival of Oxford’s third daughter, Susan, on 26 May 1587 had increased his sense of kin-related altruism, and Anne de Vere’s unexpected death on 8 June 1588 further heightened this feeling. Fortunately, marriage in the winter of 1591 to Elizabeth Trentham—a woman of means and financial acumen—forestalled Oxford’s recourse to commuting his annual grant.

“It has been argued that the Queen’s annuity was granted to improve [de Vere’s] estate,” writes Hughes, but “1000 pounds per year is a tremendous amount of money, and Walsingham’s involvement further complicates matters” (109). If this annuity underwrote de Vere’s playwriting, and his playwriting expressed his opposition to the ingrained dislike of drama displayed by Puritans as well as Calvinists (such as Ramus), then this

warrant sealed Oxford's compact with what Thomas Nashe would call Elizabeth's "Policy of Plays." Fifteen years had passed since the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre, but the queen's strategy responded to the fears engendered by that event in supporting attempts to maintain public and religious order. In the context of the present study, therefore, Oxford's "Massacre Letter" becomes his most important correspondence. This mis-sive underwrites associations between Ramism, Edward de Vere's life, and William Shakespeare's canon. Ann B. Clark notes the recurrence in Shakespeare's plays of expressions in this letter that other dramatists rarely use. Fowler is of the same opinion: this correspondence is "a quarrying ground for many less ordinary parallelisms between the Earl's writings and those under the name of Shakespeare" (56).

"Theatrical entertainment," explains Hank Whittemore, "tended to distract the Queen's subjects from civil war or rebellion against the crown; and this 'policy' of plays was essential, no matter how much the Puritans and others wanted to curtail or banish stage productions" (7). Thus, from the summer of 1586 onward, Oxford worked for the state as a playwright intimately associated with the Queen's Men (as well as with his own troupes). "*King Leir*, *The Famous Victories of Henry V*, *The True Tragedy of Richard III*, and *The Troublesome Raigne of John*," as Hughes enumerates, "were all major productions undertaken by the company, a veritable laundry list of plays that would be used, as orthodox critics would put it, as sources for some of Shakespeare's key tragedies and histories" (108). De Vere's circumstances make "it is not unreasonable to consider Oxford as a viable candidate for author of the Shakespeare 'sources' performed by Walsingham's propaganda troupe. With his former top actors already in the mix, financial woes to consider, and a reputation to rebuild, Oxford would have been an auspicious commission on the part of the spymaster" (109). Indeed, both Ramón Jiménez (2001, 2004) and Richard Desper (2006) attribute the anonymously authored *Thomas of Woodstock*, *The True Tragedy of Richard the Third*, and *The Famous Victories of Henry V* to the youthful Oxford.

Until his royal warrant, as Sonnet 48 from Shakespeare's canon suggests, Oxford had kept his literary talents somewhat hidden, or under his own sure wardship, and sheltered from his familiar wardmaster's interference: "How careful was I, when I took my way,/Each trifle under truest bars to thrust,/That to my use it might unused stay/From hands of falsehood, in sure wards of trust?" (1-4). Now guaranteed monetary support, Oxford

could concertedly develop his talents, drawing on both his experiences and his erudition. Indeed, *All's Well That Ends Well*, as if tracing Oxford's life, opens with a father's death, a mother's impotent lament, and a son's unavoidable wardship. "In delivering my son from me," grieves the Countess of Rousillon, "I bury a second husband" (1.1.1). "And I in going, madam," laments Bertram, "weep o'er my father's death anew;/but I must attend his Majesty's command, to whom I am now in/ward, evermore in subjection" (1.1.2–4).³ The stage offered Oxford an outlet for the frustrations supposed by this "evermore." The domain of statecraft had too often cast him as a player without strategic moves. The domain of stagecraft would cast him as a banker; de Vere's father-in-law appeared to command the political and dramaturgical stages, but Oxford had found a response (if not an answer) to his ongoing subjection to the calculating Burghley: he put his well-rounded understanding of Ramism to impeccable use.

That Ramism promoted logic to the communicative foreground did not straitjacket creative writers. They did not have to create characters who were rational, whose thoughts were unerringly structured according to correct reason, and whose spoken words and conscious thoughts displayed logical necessity, sufficiency, and economy. According to both Walter J. Ong and John Charles Adams, the co-adaptive points of agreement between Ramism and Puritanism concerned their advocacy of natural law, the competency that arose from an acceptance of that law, and the egalitarian implications of that acceptance for social and political standing. Ong and Adams fail to appreciate, however, that Puritanism accepted Ramism in unwittingly precluding those implications: higher minds exchanged points of view, on the one hand, and superintended lower minds, on the other. Put succinctly, Ramism upheld the banker status of prominent Protestants, including Sir Thomas Smith and Lord William Burghley, who were "the leading architects of Elizabethan Protestantism" (Flynn 28), but that architecture would seldom raise the common mind.

At Cecil House, the educational strands previously implanted in Edward de Vere by Smith were not only refined, but also broadened; and that thorough grounding enabled Oxford to appreciate the weaknesses, strengths, and moral dimensions of Ramism as a philosophy, a method of reasoning, and an approach to teaching. Certainly, Ramism accepted the inherence of natural reason, with the dialectically capable mind understanding its inter-subjective environment as one composed of other dialectically capable minds, but Ramus ultimately transformed the dialogue of teaching into a

one-way process of persuasion, retracting that process into the confines of his own mind. When fully realized, Ramus's pedagogy encouraged this twofold transformation, creating singular minds adapted to one-way persuasion rather than to discussion. Ramus hereby failed Ramism.

That failure often characterized Burghley's behavior. When confronted with well-founded or trenchant opposition, he attempted to coerce his interlocutor; if this approach failed, then an impasse ensued. Coercion and deadlock—solutions beyond logical defense—were not the natural outlets for dialectic. De Vere, who witnessed and endured this practice as Cecil's ward and Burghley's son-in-law, experienced this bind. Oxford suffered as a game-theoretic player under "the autocratic minister" (Michael Murphy 4). Badgering Oxford over Norfolk's involvement in the Ridolfi Plot, for example, had resulted in Oxford's renouncement of his marriage bed. This coercion had produced a stalemate. Oxford's union with Anne Cecil promised to be barren, and by the summer of 1576, Burghley had found himself attempting to engineer their rapprochement. Slowly, but ever so surely, Oxford was learning to treat intersubjectivity as a series of dramaturgical events.

Beyond personal travails, however, Burghley had to analyze the social, political, and religious problems of the age. Exercising the rigorous skills of a trained Ramist, but with a mind attuned to the Queen Elizabeth's delicacies, enabled him to meet this demand. Burghley's dialectical skill facilitated his role as Secretary to the queen. "A careful approach to problems, a habit of presenting both sides of each issue, the ability to grasp the broad spectrum of government policy and the deft management of personalities," as Clark enumerates, "characterize Cecil, the Elizabethan statesman" (34–35). When he required a more philosophical cast of mind, he "turned to an acknowledged expert," and "that expert was probably Sir Thomas Smith" (135). Smith possessed the one mind capable of comprehending the complex interaction of social, economic, and religious issues that dominated Elizabethan England. Like a game theorist, Smith isolated the components of such problems and ranked them according to importance. Burghley then attended to these prioritized concerns.

In a sense, Smith helped to structure Burghley's application of Ramism, which would otherwise have risked political inconsistency. For, as Burghley's monologic approach to supposed inferiors sometimes revealed, his dedication to Ramism could lack subtlety and insight.

Anderson effectively reiterates this contention: Burghley was colorless, unwitty, and “prolix, socially awkward” (45); he exhibited “a prolixity befitting Polonius” (48), and his letters were “typically prolix” (71).⁴ Burghley’s recourse to dialectic, as with Ramus’s methodological implementation, could be obsessively unyielding; and his attitude toward contemporary plays and poetry, as evidenced by the library contents at Cecil House, echoed Ramus’s similar attitude. Each man feared the poet’s use of crypsis. “This is what the poet does as a major part of his tactics, when he sets out to sway the people, the many-headed monster,” as Ong expounds in *Ramus, Method, and the Decay of Dialogue*. “He deceives (*decipit*) in all sorts of ways. He starts in the middle, often proceeding thence to the beginning, and getting on to the end by some equivocal and unexpected dodge” (253).

Ramus’s anxieties concerning crypsis conditioned his attitude toward poets and playwrights. Nicolas de Nancel notes how Ramus “rarely associated with poets, as though they did not have common interests.” On one occasion, however, he “invite[d] to lunch all the most famous poets in Paris, with Ronsard at their head” (255). Edward de Vere, as the probable commentator on the sonnets in Thomas Watson’s *The Hekatompathia*, respects the preeminent French sonneteer Pierre de Ronsard (1524–85): the poetic “sense” of the foremost member of La Pléiade is undoubted; Watson’s first six verses “imitated perfectly sixe verses in an *Ode of Ronsard*” (41). *The Hekatompathia*, as if the product of Ramus’s advice, has sprung from a worthy model.

Ironically, however, Ramus’s lunch was a disaster. His guests, unlike Sir Thomas Smith and Ludovicus Regius, did not become his *convictores*. Ramus vowed “never again.” One of his guests, that fellow promoter of the classical influence on the vernacular, Joachim du Bellay, “even made a bitter taunting attack on Ramus, imitating [François] Rabelais [c. 1494–1553], who had insulted him with similarly sarcastic comments” (255).⁵ This experience did nothing to allay the deep-seated unease that would eventually prompt Ramus to abolish student plays at the College of Presles. Power over the one-way process of persuasion ought to lie with philosophers, politicians, preceptors, and reformed ministers, not with creative writers. Burghley would no doubt have promoted politicians to the front of this list of persuasive professionals. Oxford, as a player subjected to Burghley’s statecraft, would surely have agreed. Oxford, as a banker in stagecraft, however, surely proved otherwise.

NOTES

1. This quote comes from Richard M. Waugaman's "Betrayal in the Life of Edward de Vere and the Works of Shakespeare" (2014).
2. This promotion denies what David Norbrook understands to be the critical tendency to read Shakespeare's plays, especially his later works, as celebrations of "the restoration of monarchical legitimacy as a return to a transcendent natural order" (245).
3. With Bertram's unwilling marriage to Helena, who is beneath his social standing, *All's Well That Ends Well* extends its autobiographical trace into Oxford's adult life.
4. George Russell French first identified Burghley with Polonius in *Shakespeareana Genealogica* (1869). Looney (1920), E. K. Chambers (1930), John Dover Wilson (1936), Joel Hurstfield (1958), and Stritmatter (2001), among others, have subsequently supported French's contention.
5. In "Rabelais, Ramus et Raminagrobis" (1982), Peter Sharratt argues that Nancel's Rabelaisian reference points to the 1552 edition of *The Fourth Book of Pantagruel*. One must note, however, that Rabelais's ideological attack in the Prologue concerns Ramus's acolytes, not Ramus himself.



CHAPTER 8

Oxford, Ramus, and *Love's Labour's Lost*

*His tutor then read with him On Methods of Signifying, with
commentaries by Windbaghius, Plodmannius, Too-many-Likemmius,
Galahad, John Thickeadius, Billonius, Quimius and a heap of others.*
—François Rabelais, *Gargantua* (251)

Although Lord William Burghley had urged the granting of Edward de Vere's royal warrant of £1,000 per annum, the mercurially witted Oxford must have deemed his father-in-law an irritant. Banker Burghley, with his hardheaded Ramism, constantly strategized, and when the schemes in question concerned Burghley's son-in-law, they cast Oxford as a player. An analysis of *Love's Labour's Lost*—an examination that relates to, and enlarges on, Abel Lefranc's historical contextualization of the play—helps to gauge the extent of Edward de Vere's irritation; this assessment reveals humor as a palliative response to Burghley's Ramism, and this revelation supports the Oxfordian side of the authorship debate.

Lefranc identified King Henry II of Navarre (1503–55), and Margaret of Angoulême (1492–1549), the French princess whom Henry married in 1527, with Shakespeare's Ferdinand, King of Navarre, and the Princess of France. "From an early date," as Anthony Guggenberger chronicles, "Protestantism obtained numerous adherents in France in every class of society, even at court." King Francis I, Margaret's brother, initially encouraged reformation of the Church. His attitude toward higher education echoed this encouragement. To repeat, Francis followed Guillaume Budé's

advice in attempting to soften the dogmatic attitude of the University of Paris, founding the College Royal in 1530. Francis's agnomen of the Father and Restorer of Letters rang true at this time, but "breaches of the public peace and attacks on churches, images, and priests" soon unsettled the king. Fearing that "religious revolt might lead to a civil revolt," he started to persecute French converts. Many who fled found protection under Henry and Margaret, whose court became a center for "Protestants and Freethinkers" (238). M. A. Screech explains that the queen "*was a platonizing, mystical, evangelical Christian.*" She "*was a great patron of other evangelicals, striving to protect them even from agencies approved by her brother, François I*" (399; emphasis original).

The courtly refuge offered by Henry and Margaret was in the capital of northern Navarre, Nérac, where John Calvin would sojourn in 1534. David Honneyman, who reports that Henry founded "a Humanist Academy at Nérac" (8), agrees with Lefranc's historical contextualization of *Love's Labour's Lost*. Carla Mazzio furthers the argument: Peter Ramus first attended the College of Navarre; that relatively progressive institute retained a humanist agenda; and critics can reasonably conflate the capital of northern Navarre, Shakespeare's Navarre, and the Navarre of Ramus's youth. Hence, although Mazzio associates Ramus with "quintessentially *educational* poetics," rather than with the possible dangers of poetic education, she correctly argues that "Navarre's 'little academe'" in the play "may in many ways be read as a spoof on Ramist educational theory" (204; emphasis original). Mazzio provides the critical exception to the rule that Ramus's influence on Shakespeare was insignificant.¹

Fitting with Ferdinand's desire to establish an academy, "many modern productions" of *Love's Labour's Lost*, as William C. Carroll observes, "have placed the [opening] scene in a library" (61 n). In this setting, the king and his congeners, despite Berowne's reluctance, forswear love, wealth, and pomp—"With all these," as Dumaine announces, forthwith "living in philosophy" (1.1.32). Ramus's first principle underpins this philosophical future. Berowne's reservation about the uncritical appeal to authority—"Small have continual plodders ever won,/Save *base authority* from others' books" (1.1.86–87; emphasis added)—attests to this foundation.

Mazzio also contends that the schoolmaster Holofernes's name recalls the tyrannical Assyrian general killed by the eponymous heroine of the *Book of Judith*. Honneyman's proposal of additional correspondences that Lefranc fails to identify—Shakespeare's Holofernes and Don Adriano de Armado with Guillaume de Salluste Du Bartas (1544–90) and Théodore

Agrippa d'Aubigné (1552–1630), respectively—underwrites this contention. Du Bartas and d'Aubigné were “Nérac courtier-poets with characteristics exactly in line with those of Holofernes and Armado in the play.” Protestants celebrated Du Bartas for “Judith,” his poetic rendition of the biblical book, so “‘Holofernes’ is the perfect nickname for Du Bartas and would have been obvious in sixteenth century France” (9). “Shakespeare cites at least once from almost every book of the Bible,” as Roger A. Stritmatter traces in *The Marginalia of Edward de Vere's Geneva Bible*, “including relatively obscure books such as Malachi, I & II Esdras, Judith, Tobit, I & II Maccabees, Susanna, Bel and the Dragon, Titus, and Jude” (106). Furthermore, “de Vere read his Bible frequently and with sustained attention even to such obscure chapters [...] as the apocryphal books of Tobit [and] Judith” (107).

Honeyman suggests that the Protestant propagandist d'Aubigné was the “ur-Sonneteer” (11) on whose work the “neo-Sonneteer” (11) William Shakespeare drew. This influence, as Sonnet 6 in Shakespeare's cycle establishes, “make worms thine heir” (14). “‘Worm’ in French is ‘ver,’” as Richard Whalen remarks, and “the Earl of Oxford's family name was de Vere.” One can interpret “the English ‘worm’ [...] as a pun on the French ‘ver,’ standing for de Vere, the English dramatist with the French surname” (12). The worm, ver, or de Vere of Sonnet 6 appears, therefore, to acknowledge his literary inheritance from d'Aubigné. No surprise should attend the thought of d'Aubigné's manuscript, unpublished in France, finding its way to England: “[T]here were numerous contacts between the English Court and that at Nérac, especially involving literary men and politicians of Puritan leanings” (102).

Honeyman continues his argument in turning to other sonnets: “the fair friend is Henry of Navarre” (73); “the ‘learned’ poet (Sonnet 78), ‘the worthier pen’ (Sonnet 79), and the ‘better spirit’ (Sonnet 80) can hardly be anyone else other than Du Bartas.” Any doubt, asserts Honeyman, “evaporates when we realize that the phrase: ‘dedicated words which writers use’ in Sonnet 82 relates to actual dedications (still surviving for examination) made by Du Bartas to Henry of Navarre and Marguerite de Valois” (74). Although Honeyman assumes that William Shakspeare was Shakespeare, the Oxfordian case provides a better fit, especially in the light of Honeyman's final suggestion: “[P]erhaps [d'Aubigné's] manuscript was taken to London by Du Batas when he visited Walsingham in 1587” (102). That year witnessed Walsingham's formation of the Queen's Men and his involvement in the granting of Edward de Vere's annuity.

In *Love's Labour's Lost*, Holofernes is, in part, a Cecilian agent. Shakespeare's schoolmaster is a caricature of the Master of the Court of Wards and Liveries. De Vere, as a close observer of Cecil's mannerisms, would have met his wardmaster's dramaturgical archetype not only in Erasmus's *commedia di carattere* (especially his *Praise of Folly* [1511]), but also in Venetian *commedia dell'arte* and *commedia erudite*. To repeat, Oxford stayed in Venice in early 1576; most Italian scholars of the period opposed Ramism, so the contribution of Il Dottore (the doctor or master) to Oxford's portrayals of overly zealous Ramists would be entirely fitting. That the schoolmaster Rhombus in Philip Sidney's *The Lady of May* (1578) and the schoolmaster Holofernes in Shakespeare's *Love's Labour's Lost* share major characteristics is no surprise either: Sidney, as another astute observer of Cecil, had also spent time in Venice; his sojourn there lasted between November 1573 and August 1574.

Unlike Stratford, observes Stritmatter, "Oxford [...] was a known enthusiast of continental culture and literature who may well have read and enjoyed [François] Rabelais" (128), and the name Holofernes cannot help but invoke the preceptor Tubal Holofernes from Rabelais's *Gargantua* (1535). With the name Tubal, Rabelais adds connotations of what Screech calls "confusion and ignominy" (250) to the surname associated with the Assyrian general. "Magister Tubal Holofernes," recounts *Gargantua*, "taught Gargantua his ABC so well that he could recite it by heart backwards." This exercise, however, took "five years and three months" to perfect. Holofernes then read with Gargantua "*On Methods of Signifying*, with commentaries by Windbaghius, Plodmannius, Too-many-Likemmius, Galahad, John Thickeadius, Billonius, Quimius and a heap of others" (251). This task occupied "eighteen years and eleven months" (251–52). Thus, as with his ABC, "he knew it so well that he recited it backwards," so proving "to his mother on his fingers that *On Methods of Signifying* has nothing to do with learning" (252). In fine, Roger Ascham's caricature of Peter Ramus as Cephas Chlononius, or brag of a stone twig, finds a counterpart in Oxford's Rabelaisian caricature of the Ramist Cecil as Holofernes, or hollow fern of a stick.

Love's Labour's Lost charges Holofernes with the sort of learned confusion that sometimes tarnished Ramus's public reputation. Holofernes's estimation of Nathaniel's poetry, which rejects its "colourable/colours" (4.2.131–32), "seems to be rejecting Scholastic reasoning" (Carroll 116 n). Hardin Craig asserts that "it is hard to tell whether or not Shakespeare's uses" of the terms "judgment" and "invention" are "technical" (387), but

Craig himself provides an example from *Love's Labour's Lost* in which Holofernes promises to "prove" (4.2.138) that Nathaniel's verses are "very unlearned, neither savouring of poetry, wit, nor/invention" (4.2.139–40). Holofernes's alternative to scholastic reasoning, however, produces little more than "sterility and clotted pedantry" (Carroll 7). Moreover, "the language of textbooks that informs Holofernes's and Armado's use of love poetry" (203) is not so much facilitated by Ramism, as Mazzio argues, but stymied by Ramus's faults. For, as with Ramus's ultimate disengagement from his students, as Mazzio effectively acknowledges, "what all of the lovers and scholars have in common in this play is a notable detachment from the audience they presume to know." This faulty dynamic is "played out in a number of ways by the members of Shakespeare's mock French academy" (204).

Especially dangerous is the antagonistic complementarity to which dialectical reasoning can succumb. On the one hand, as Ferdinand implicitly recognizes through homophony, Armado is "a man of compliments" (1.1.166). On the other hand, as Ferdinand explicitly recognizes, Armado is a man of complements "whom right and wrong/Have chose as umpire of their mutiny" (1.1.166–67). De Vere, as his European tour testified, was a traveler of (and for) refinement. He also acknowledged, as Ferdinand's lines imply, his inculcated tendency toward dialectical wavering. While this trait is apparent to William Plumer Fowler in Armado's "stilted" letter (61) to Ferdinand, Browne has subjected his own thoughts to seemingly endless complementarity too: his outburst on "Signor Junior, giant dwarf, Dan Cupid" (3.1.157) being self-revelatory.

The academicians' sonnets, which "are composed for people imagined not only as 'objects,' but also as simple reflections of the academy itself" (Mazzio 204), constitute another attack on Ramus's personal faults. In Act 4, Scene 3, "one of the great comic scenes in early Shakespearean drama" (Carroll 117 n), Berowne values women as "the books, the arts, the academes" (4.3.321) of scholarly "authors" (4.3.328). Ramus's unwarranted extension of Porphyrian taxonomy did nothing to allay such assumptions. Gender neutrality, as his assumption of the difference between the manly Attic and the womanly Asiatic styles of rhetoric confirms, does not pertain to Ramus's understanding of natural reason. The mature, twice married de Vere, who appreciated his first wife's acumen in retrospect and his second wife's acumen in current practice, disagrees: gender does not inflect natural reason—and Amado concedes as much in calling Costard, his love rival for Jaquenetta, a "rational hind" (1.2.96).

The four-level structure of Act 4, Scene 3, in which Ferdinand, Berowne, Longaville, and Dumaine “spy on one another, deceive themselves, are exposed, ruefully admit their infatuations, and then come together” (Carroll 117 n), reemphasizes this neutrality. Structurally, the scene echoes the quaternary structure of a two-player, two-choice decision tree, on the one hand, and the quaternary structure of a two-player, two-choice strategy matrix, on the other. This structural strategy would reappear in the famous eavesdropping scenario of Act 5, Scene 2 from *Troilus and Cressida*: form is commensurate with content, and this transposition of branching, two-dimensional Ramism—what Mordechai Feingold calls “low-grade Ramism” (137)—into a scene that occupies and exploits the three-dimensional space of the theatrical stage bears Oxford’s (not Stratford’s) hallmark.²

Of course, the women of *Love’s Labour’s Lost* show themselves to be at once their own authors and more than adequate readers of less than authorial men. Hence, when a test of wits breaks out between Maria, Katherine, and Boyet, the Princess of France counsels: “This civil war [...] were much better used/On Navarre and his bookmen, for here ’tis abused” (2.1.222–23). In effect, therefore, and going beyond a criticism of Cecil, the play indicts Ramism as an agent-neutral method susceptible to exploitation for agent-partial ends. Although Sir Thomas Smith courted the danger of blind adherence to Ramism, falling into this trap when advising Edward Seymour, First Duke of Somerset, the hardheaded Cecil was more cautious: the wardmaster often assumed control of the Seventeenth Earl of Oxford, but he never treated Queen Elizabeth in this manner.

Nor was Smith the only additional example of the Ramistic pedant available to Oxford. De Vere knew withal another of Smith’s protégés, that Cambridge Ramist Gabriel Harvey. To repeat Marion Trousedale, Elizabethans “were in many senses of the word methodists,” who “believed in the importance of theory and in the efficacy of rules.” Although “a more perfect method meant, if practiced, a more perfect art” for Thomas Nashe, as Trousedale details, the uncritical use of Ramism could not meet that standard (14). Thus, as Harvey discovered at Nashe’s hands, writerly jest often targeted methodological obedience. The ramifications of what Sarah Knight calls Nashe’s “satirical war” (61) went beyond Harvey, however, with Nashe “convert[ing] Ramus into a satirical archetype, a caricature, that would prove tremendously influential on other writers” (63). Edward de Vere, who repeatedly features in the written quarrel between Harvey and Nashe, was one such author.³

Contextual overtones would conflate this influence. For, despite “idealistic pedagogical hopes [...] that the right sort of higher education would train men to assume—and to expect—key positions in church and state,” as Knight reports, “the reality in the late sixteenth century was very different: too many graduates were being produced for too few jobs.” In consequence, satirical texts “were frequently animated by the writer’s frustration at being over-educated but socially under-valued.” This is the case with Nashe’s *Anatomie of Absurditie*, as Knight relates, which condemns “the tendency of the university to ‘hot-house’ young men into entering the church.” Criticisms such as Nashe’s reveal “how the early modern universities functioned; how useful (or otherwise) the education they provided seemed to their graduates; and how academic learning was perceived at the time, particularly by those who regarded their education as a commodity to be used for advancement in the world” (67).

The hotheaded Harvey, as another hardheaded Ramist, displayed a changeable attitude toward Oxford. The ridicule Harvey suffered for his humble origin helps to account for this inconsistency. He harbored an ingrained dislike of the aristocracy. “The pedant Gabriel Harvey,” remarks Paul Hemenway Altrocchi, “publicly praised his benefactor Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, while privately satirizing him in verses” (232, n. 47). Oxford garnered plaudits from Harvey in his *Gratulationum Valdenensium* (August 1578). This address, suggests Mike Hyde, “seems to set the stage for future patronage requests to de Vere” (23). Yet, “*Speculum Tuscanismi*,” the poem that closes Harvey’s *Three Letters* (1580) and which unashamedly scoffs at de Vere’s Italianate pretensions, broke that promise. Oxford’s response—his concerted criticism of pedantry, which appears most openly in *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Twelfth Night*, and *Love’s Labour’s Lost*, and most especially in the latter—would more than repay this Ramist’s mockery.⁴ “Formal logic is to Shakespeare, for the most part,” opines Craig, “a subject of jest” (393). Yet, Craig’s contention aligns more persuasively on Shakespeare’s purveyors of logic than on the discipline itself.

Oxford hereby rates Harvey alongside Cecil and Smith for irony; each man unwittingly transgresses Ramus’s fundamental principle with an indiscriminating appeal to authority, and that authority is Ramus! As a second-generation Ramist, but one of discrimination rather than of blind loyalty, Oxford could contemplate the uptake and personal fashioning of Ramism. “The connection of Ramism with radical Puritanism was,” as Hugh F. Kearney explains, “both its strength and its weakness” (61).

Opponents linked the latest generation of Ramists with the radical pamphlets of Martin Marprelate. “The suspected author of Marprelate, John Penry, possessed a notebook containing logical definitions on Ramist lines, and Nashe referred to him as ‘a new fangled friend unto Ramus’” (60). Shakespeare’s satiric portrait of Holofernes emerges, in part, from this context too. Indeed, Stritmatter argues that Oxford’s close association with “the Queen’s Men during their heyday from 1583–1592” may account for the troupe’s “excessive zeal in parodying Puritans during the Marprelate scandal of 1589” (*Marginalia* 62).

“Holofernes’s assertion that ‘to imitate is nothing,’” as Carroll explains, “is both true, in the sense that ‘the truest poetry is the most feigning’ (*AYLI* 3.3.19–20)—that is, based on imagination—and false, since imitation was the chief instructional method.” To reiterate, learning under Ramus subordinated conversation and disputation to critical imitation and exercise work. Holofernes has not mastered this approach. “He can do little more than mechanically imitate, and poorly at that, various poetic and rhetorical discourses” (Carroll 115 n). Nathaniel compounds this failure. “Fawningly in awe of Holofernes’s sterile erudition” (109 n), as Carroll notes, Nathaniel is to Holofernes what Jobelin Bridé—whose name, as Screech explains, “*means a bridled fool*” (250; emphasis original)—is to Tubal Holofernes in Rabelais’s *Gargantua*. Each of these secondary characters intensifies the scholastic tendency toward academic idolatry that Ramus decried. What makes this devotion worse is the fabricated tuition that these acolytes purvey—and *commentitium*, to repeat, loomed large among Ramus’s critical terms.

Rabelais’s exuberant, multifaceted, and scabrous comedy alighted on many prominent contemporaries. What requires accurate assessment is the critical emphasis on each possible target. In Ramus’s case, which remains much contested, Marie-Dominique Couzinet concurs with Peter Sharratt.⁵ They argue that Ramus resembles the dying poet Raminagrobis from Rabelais’s *The Third Book of Pantagruel* (1546). “Even though Ramus is neither a poet nor dying,” explains Couzinet, “he bears a resemblance to Raminagrobis by his sophistic quality and by several other traits” (318–19). The following argument, however, is surely preferable: at the deepest level, as the intellectual and religious reception of their works by the Parisian authorities testified, Rabelais and Ramus were fundamentally empathetic.

“Rabelais,” as Screech charts, “was troublesome from the start. Each book of his at once provoked a storm for, besides his many admirers, he

had powerful enemies who would willingly have burnt his books (and him as well)" (xxvi). Taking on the Sorbonne, which now constituted the primary body of French theologians, and the Vatican, which still constituted the preeminent body of Catholic theologians, required great courage. "The *Letters of Obscure Men* (1515), Erasmus's *Praise of Folly* (1511) and *Antibarbari* (1520), More's *Utopia* (1517) and later Rabelais's *Gargantua and Pantagruel* (1532–1546)," as Alan R. Perreiah observes, "were all efforts to awaken readers to the dangers of a regnant scholasticism" (102). Rabelais's main goal was a critique of second scholasticism from the perspective of second humanism. In *Pantagruel*, as Screech asserts, "*the Sorbonne comes in for sustained and increasing mockery*" (37; emphasis original). Pantagruel learns from his father, Gargantua, to take a "*renewed enthusiasm for Ancient learning*" (44; emphasis original), and that authority, as Ramus argued, concerns God's principles.

The execration of scholasticism in *Gargantua* is even more barbed. *Gargantua* shows how a young man, "reduced to laughable insanity by paternal ignorance, crapulous old crones and dirty, syphilitic dons from the Sorbonne, can be turned into a Christian knight, cultured and healthy, trained to excel in the arts of peace and war." Rabelais effects this change for the better in Gargantua, whose education, as Screech submits, "may have been first conceived as a model for the sons of François I; released in 1530 from their restraint in Madrid as hostages of the Emperor Charles V" (xxix). The king, fearing the dilution of his sons' embodiment of princely independence, was determined to have them liberally educated. Rabelais shows "how ideally it could be done" (xxx). That Francis soon became anything but the Father and Restorer of Letters was a sorry indictment of his sectarianism.

Rabelais's dedication of *The Third Book of Pantagruel* to his patron, Margaret of Navarre, and specifically to her "mind," supported this condemnation. To have Margaret's patronage at once marked Rabelais for not just approval, but also cynical scrutiny. "*In the eyes of some academics in the Sorbonne,*" as Screech traces, Rabelais remained "*a particular danger to their concept of orthodoxy*" (399; emphasis original). In the almanac, *Pantagrueline Prognostication for 1533*, which he underwrites with astronomical and astrological data for that year, Rabelais predicts that people under Jupiter, "such as bigots, black-beetles [...] notaries and fat-cats" (178–79), will have to "live according to their incomes" (179). The name Ramus resonates to Rabelais's word for fat cat: "raminagrobis."

“The term” notes Screech, “comes to the fore in the *Third Book* where it is challengingly used for the name of the good evangelical theologian” (179, n. 25). In this volume, Panurge repeatedly seeks the definitive answer to the question of whether or not he should marry. In Chap. 21, he imposes himself on the aged poet Raminagrobis. “*This dying old sage, despite his comic pussycat name,*” as Screech propounds, “*is wise*” (488; emphasis original). The seriousness of this scene “*is emphasized by the allusion to the death of his late patron Guillaume du Bellay*” (489; emphasis original). Guillaume, a politician of some standing, was the brother of another of Rabelais’s patrons, Cardinal Jean du Bellay. “I wish simply to recall to your mind,” as Raminagrobis tells Panurge, “that learned and gallant nobleman Guillaume du Bellay, the late Seigneur de Langey, who died on Mount Tarara on the tenth of January in the year of his climacteric” (490). The name Raminagrobis signifies a fat cat in *Pantagrueline Prognostication for 1533*, but designates an evangelical theologian worthy of reverence in *The Third Book of Pantagruel*, with the knowing Rabelais implying that a proper name can conjure up contradictory expectations.

Raminagrobis simply wishes to die in peace, but Panurge is persistent, so the poet lays out both sides of his visitor’s predicament:

Take a wife and take her not.
 Take her, there is good in view.
 Take her not and it is true
 You will find a measured lot.
 Gallop, and yet merely trot.
 Backwards go yet forwards too:
 Take her do: take her n...
 Fast, but eat a double lot;
 Undo what has been tied anew;
 Tie it again, retie it, do;
 Wish life and death to be her lot:
 Take her do: take her n.... (491)

This dialectical peroration fits Thomas Wilson’s definition in *The Rule of Reason* of logic as “an Arte to reason probably, on bothe partes, of al matiers that be putte foorth, so ferre as the nature of euery thing can beare” (8).

Having left Raminagrobis, Panurge and his companion, the aptly named Epistemon, discuss the poet’s peroration. Panurge rages that Raminagrobis’s argument was “all disjunctive propositions.” Likening

Raminagrobis to a great prophet from antiquity, Epistemon replies that Tiresias “made similar avowals at the beginning of all his divinations.” For Panurge, however, whom no one has successfully counseled, Raminagrobis remains “a subtle sophist, born so, and full of *ergos*” (494). The old man is either “an heretic” (493) or “a half-converted Jew” (494). Epistemon advises Panurge otherwise—“you do evil” in “expound[ing] his words” and “you wrong that good poet by detraction” (495)—but, true to his present state of mind, Panurge ignores Epistemon’s, and therefore the wise Raminagrobis’s (or Ramus’s), counsel.

Frère Jean des Entommeures, who first appears in *Gargantua*, then in *The Third Book of Pantagruel*, repeats Raminagrobis’s expressive tendencies. In trying to relieve Panurge’s fears of cuckoldom, Frère Jean deploys humanist reasoning, but (what Panurge would surely judge to be) methodological overconfidence infects his rhetoric. “Not every man who would be cuckolded is so,” he assures Panurge. “If you are a cuckold, *ergo* your wife will be beautiful; *ergo* she will treat you well; *ergo* you will have many friends: *ergo* you will be saved” (517). The common Latin term for closing a syllogism is *ergo*, and one of Ramus’s pedagogic characteristics, which earned some ridicule, was his frequent repetition of phrases, especially “*ergo, ergo*” (Nicolas de Nancel 228). Charles Waddington expands on Nancel’s recollection: “Some, for instance, found that he smiled too constantly; others, like Doctor Quentin, reproached him with raising his voice too much, when, towards the end of an argument, he repeatedly exclaimed: *Therefore, therefore* (*ergo, ergo*)” (312). In this contextual light, Rosaline’s mockery of Browne in *Love’s Labour’s Lost*—when he tells her, “My love to thee is sound, *sans* crack or flaw” (5.2.415), she replies, “*Sans ‘sans,’ I pray you*” (5.2.416)—echoes the mockery of Ramus’s personal rhetoric.

Adrien Turnèbe (or Adrianus Turnebus) (1512–65), in going beyond the attendant fault of speech overladen with logical constructs, allied this characteristic with what he saw (in Couzinet’s words) as Ramus’s “sophistical reasoning,” which “skew[ed] its answers through analysis and divisions” (318). Turnèbe’s *Disputatio ad librum Ciceronis de fato* (1556) ridicules this combination of traits: this is the precious usage “by which you once defended your cause, which has already been largely lost, by clamoring, laughing at everyone: ‘Mr. President, I demand the *usus*, I demand the *usus*!’” (qtd. in Couzinet 319). Waddington’s introduction to these criticisms offers some defense of Ramus, however, in emphasizing how “he listened willingly to criticism. He even begged his friends to address it to him,

and they did not fail to do so" (312). What is more, "a short time before his death" (257), as Nancel chronicles, Turnèbe was reconciled with Ramus.

The English vernacular for "ergo" is "argal," and the gravedigger in *Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*, utters this term, one that appears nowhere else in Shakespeare's canon (nor in Wilson's *The Rule of Reason*), three times in a single scene (5.1). He might simply garble the proper term; Shakespeare could be echoing Ramus's French vernacular ("donc") in vernacular English; or Shakespeare could be drawing on Sidney's *New Arcadia*. To repeat, John Dee (on whose behalf Ramus had petitioned Queen Elizabeth) and Roger Ascham were well acquainted with, and probably introduced Sidney to, Ramism. Certainly, Shakespeare satirized Sidney as the malapropism spouting Sir Andrew Aguecheek in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Slender in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, and Cassio in *Othello*, but Sidney's death might have prompted Oxford to reflect on his predecessor's *New Arcadia*.

That consideration might have encouraged Oxford to draw a parallel between Prince Hamlet and Desdemona, on the one hand, and Sidney's Argalus and Parthenia, on the other. A translation from the Latin of "argal" yields "had begotten Argalus," and "when Parthenia chooses Argalus over Demagoras, the unworthy suitor selected by her mother," as Joshua Scodel explains, "her mother loses all 'reason' and goes to all 'extremities' to obstruct the lovers' marriage" (163). In *Hamlet*, two instances of the logical gravedigger's use of the word "argal" concern Desdemona's extreme behavior in committing suicide: "Argal, she drowned/herself wittingly" (5.1.10–11), and "Argal, he that is not/guilty of his own death shortens not his own life" (5.1.16–17).⁶ In fine, these examples strengthen the connections between Ramus's Ramism, Sidney's *New Arcadia*, and Shakespeare's *Hamlet*.

Shakespeare's explicit use of the formal "ergo" tends to be for comedic effect. In *The Merchant of Venice*, Launcelot Gobbo—whom Harris Jay Griston calls "a loquacious fellow" (112), but whom Ratri Ray and Benedikt Höttemann respectively describe less charitably, but more accurately, as "a clownish low class Christian" (81) and "a typical *Commedia Dell'Arte* performer" (74)—displays the jester's hallmark of flippancy yet logical wit in explicitly using "ergo." "But I pray you, *ergo* old man, *ergo* I beseech you" (2.2.46), asks Launcelot of his father, "talk you/of young Master Launcelot?" (2.2.46–47). To which Old Gobbo replies, "Of Launcelot, an't please your mastership" (2.2.48). This response elicits what A. D. Richardson describes as Launcelot's "double talk" (26 n). "*Ergo* Master Launcelot," he tells his father. "Talk not of Master Launcelot" (2.2.49).⁷

The present study has already cited a written example of Ramus's rhetorical penchant for repetition: in *Rhetoricae distinctiones in Quintilianum*, Ramus laments Quintilian's lack of "one instrument but an absolutely essential one for the teaching of his art—the syllogism, I repeat, the syllogism" (43), and in *Love's Labour's Lost*, the wordplay between Holofernes and Armado of Act 5, Scene 1 foregrounds a similar tendency toward verbal repetition. Armado informs Holofernes that the king wishes "to/congratulate the Princess at her pavilion, in the posteriors of this/day, which the rude multitude call the afternoon" (5.1.71–73). The expression "the 'posterior' of the day" (5.1.74), replies Holofernes, "is well/culled, choice, sweet, and apt,/I do assure you, sir,/I do assure" (5.1.75–76). To which Armado adds, "Sir, the King is a noble gentleman,/and my familiar, I do/assure ye" (5.1.77–78).

Oxford's "Massacre Letter" also contains the rhetorical trait of "assured" repetition. "The Earl's interjection, 'I do assure your Lordship,'" emphasizes Fowler, "is another of his many characteristic expressions common to Shakespeare" (63). In doubling one of his own characteristic expressions, and then repeating it again, Oxford effectively satirizes Ramus in *Love's Labour's Lost* in a Rabelaisian manner. Chapter 5 has noted the problematic nature of Ramus's dialectical treatment of rhetoric: logical reversal overloaded his speech with logical constructs. Hence, while the preceptor Tubal Holofernes in *Gargantua* echoes an acolyte who follows Ramus blindly, Raminagrobis in *The Third Book of Pantagruel* echoes Ramus himself.

For Mark Anderson, Holofernes and Armado in *Love's Labour's Lost* represent Harvey and Oxford, respectively. This parallel, however intriguing, is too neat. "The play's verbose pedant Holofernes," argues Anderson, "becomes Harvey hoist with his own petard" (261). Yet, Holofernes's unrealized use of self-criticizing Latin (such as "*vir sapit qui pauca loquitur*" [4.2.71] and "*Imitari* is nothing" [4.2.112]) and his debates with Nathaniel about everything from affairs of state to the state of poetry ridicule Harvey's (not Oxford's) erudition. Armado's overly Latinate words (such as "festinately" [3.1.4]), high-flown phrases (such as "congruent epitheton" [1.2.11]), and false syllogisms (such as "Love is a familiar; Love is a devil. There is no evil/angel but Love" [1.2.140–41]) pierce the same target. Oxford's (rather than Stratford's) familiarity with pedantry, on the one hand, and classical languages, on the other, accounts for this derision.

Overly Latinate words and high-flown phrases were more typical of second scholasticism than Ramism. Rabelais took particular delight in satirizing such usage. Chapter 18 of *Gargantua*, which concerns Magister Janotus de Bragmardo's demand for Gargantua's return of the bells of Notre-Dame, exemplifies this mockery. "We have in the past," he huffs, "turned down good money for them from the people of Londres-en-Cahors and those of Bordeaux-en-Brie, who wished to purchase them on account of the substantifical quality of the elementative complexion which is enthronized in the terrestreity of their quiddity" (262).

Burghley was fluent in Latin; he could be prolix, but he was no Bragmardo. Stritmatter notes how "Oxford's court allies during the 1570's and 80's defended the naturalism of the English language" against "the misplaced faith in classical meters" espoused by Sidney's partisans (*Marginalia* 24). Burghley also favored hard words over their inkhorn alternatives. As Secretary of State, Burghley did little to forward a monolingual nation, rejecting the creation of what Carol Percy and Mary Catherine Davidson term "a state-sponsored language academy" (3). His reluctance set England apart from its major European counterparts. Burghley's determination to disseminate Protestantism led him "implicitly to encourage the maintenance of Standard Welsh, and Scottish clerics like John Knox to use English norms for published writings" (2). These encouragements safeguarded languages in Britain from Latinate complications—and that protection, to some degree, contributed to Burghley's unofficial titles of *pater patriae* at court and *quasi rex* among the people.

Specifically, Burghley's patronage favored the so-called Cambridge doctrine, which promoted plain English. "The Cambridge doctrine," explains Ian Lancashire, "opposed the making of inkhorn words, which were Latinate synonyms that bulked up Early Modern English, adding copiousness without new significance" (40). The founders of this doctrine "who prized logical clarity and plainness in language were three humanist professors from the University of Cambridge. They were: John Cheke, first Regius professor of Greek; Thomas Smith, Regius professor of civil law and author of *De Rectae Emendata Linguae Anglicanae Scriptio* (1568), a work on spelling reform; and Roger Ascham, public orator, Elizabeth's tutor, and author of *The Scholemaster* (1570)" (42). In his preface to *Toxophilus* (1545), Ascham mocked what Lancashire terms the "lexical inkhorn style of Edward Hall's chronicle of Henry VIII [1548]" (43), and whatever Ascham's concerns over Ramism, Ramus's attitude toward rhetoric implicitly supported this stance.

When Oxford shone at court in the early 1570s, this wit of the period was tacitly endorsing such an approach: his discourse deferred to Erasmus's technique of copiousness. In Erasmus's procedure, as Marion Trousdale expounds, language is "varied by the use of synonym; by *enallage*, in which a different form of the same word is used; by *antonomasia*, or change of name; by paraphrase, which Erasmus calls an extended *antonomasia*; by metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, hyperbole, or diminution; and, if one wants to vary a speech in such a way as to change its emotional tone, by *interrogatio*, irony, *admiratio*, *dubitatio*, or even *abominatio*" (52). Erasmus's technique, which differs from the sensual description and linguistic sport of Cicero's Asiatic style, promotes copiousness for a meaningful end. Today's academics, therefore, both blame late humanists for and exonerate late humanists from linguistic ossification. The ground between these opinions indicts the vestiges of second scholasticism, on the one hand, and the self-educated and unrestrainedly corrupt use of late-humanist learning, on the other, for this tendency toward linguistic self-defeat.

Understandably, but somewhat unfairly, the censure of linguistic affectation alighted on Harvey. Excessive ornamentation characterized his early writing style. In repaying Harvey for "Speculum Tuscanismi," Oxford emphasizes this characteristic to comedic effect in *Love's Labour's Lost*, despite Harvey's self-assessment having ironed out this flaw by the time of his *Ciceronianus* (1577). The cause of Harvey's stylistic improvement "can be simply stated," avers Kendrick W. Prewitt: "where before Harvey adopted the theory and practice of the imitation of Cicero at a superficial and strictly linguistic level, after the order of the Italians, he later could recognize the value of the *Ciceronianuses* of the Northern humanists." The thoughts of Erasmus and Ramus prompted Harvey to imitate not only the refined style, but also the political diplomacy of Cicero. "Harvey fashions his *Ciceronianus* in turn as a narrative account of his near-religious conversion from a superficial Ciceronianism—imitating Cicero's sentence structure and methods of arrangement—to a deeper and fuller version, a conversion based largely on adopting a fuller notion of *imitatio*." He regrets having dismissed Sturm and Ramus "because their Latin was not purely Ciceronian and because they did not imitate Cicero's language and thought as fanatically as he did" (22). De Vere chose to overlook this regret.

Oxford might also have chosen to exaggerate this deliberate oversight by inflecting Holofernes and Armado with some of Ramus's idiosyncrasies. Nancel's biography made these traits public knowledge. "The private

and sometimes intimate nature of Nancel's revelations," as Couzinet notes, "makes Ramus a familiar character, often close to comedy" (276). Ramus's critics, decrying his thoughtless pride, noted his fondness for peacocks.⁸ "He liked the singing of birds," remarks Nancel, "and also looked after peacocks at home, a kind of bird, as those who were jealous of him said, resembling him in its desire for praise" (237). This particular "comic trait," argues Couzinet, "is worthy of the character of the pedant" (277), and the parallel with Armado is intriguing. "The degree to which Armado's peacock display of finery in the shape of flowers of rhetoric is a form of conspicuous consumption—the only kind he can afford, it transpires—is glaringly evident," writes Ruth Nevo, "but Holofernes' ecstasy of school-mastering is also something of a paying proposition if the adulation of Sir Nathaniel is any indication" (74).

In company, Ramus was sometimes considerate, sometimes pompous, and sometimes a figure of fun. "Dinner was always a philosophical meal," recalls Nancel, "if you consider either the food and the dishes, or the conversation of the guests. There was always something learned and graceful being passed about among the cups, and dinner was both food for our minds, and a lesson in itself to most of us boys, and indeed the guests." Nancel relates this recollection to a particular anecdote. "Some Italian noblemen heard of Ramus's reputation and invited him to a banquet," recounts Nancel. "He put in a sober appearance, and was unusually silent throughout the meal, for since they knew practically no Latin, and did not speak French, they spent the whole meal bandying Italian about, a language which Ramus did not know." In effect, a room of unpersuadable interlocutors confronted Ramus, so he responded, as was his wont, with a silent reproach. He "rose from the meal quite sober, and, since he had been slighted, having made no contribution to it, returned home in indignation" (235).

Ramus's vocal habits, to appropriate Couzinet on the characteristics of "the theater pedant" (318), also align Holofernes with Ramus. "His voice was bass, or perhaps slightly higher, between that of bass and tenor, yet sonorous and pleasant to listen to," recalls Nancel. "When, however, he raised his voice in his teaching, then it became sharper" (229). Each of the *Three Lives* emphasizes this trait. Nancel blamed this tendency on Ramus's "*inconstancy and changeableness*" (249; emphasis original). "The contrast between the dignity of his pace and his volubility," concludes Couzinet, "is a characteristic that Ramus shares with the pedant of the humanist comedy" (286). That divergence signaled Ramus's withdrawal into the solipsistic realm that Holofernes so often occupies in *Love's Labour's Lost*.

Reasonable literary critics—those who agree that late humanism influenced William Shakespeare—must, therefore, agree that the blind, unimaginative, and prolix application of method that Edward de Vere (and others such as Francis Bacon) associated with Peter Ramus's acolytes also figures in Giordano Bruno's resuscitation of the critique of pedantry. The overt attitude toward Ramism in *Love's Labour's Lost* accords with that resuscitation. This layer of the text reflects a period "when the great humanist tradition of eloquence and copiousness—of 'facility'—had, for some, been petrified in the ludicrous synonyms of Holofernes" (Carroll 9). This reflection involves the opposition to Ramism that had developed among humanists at Strasbourg and Heidelberg. The implicit attitude toward Ramism in *Love's Labour's Lost*, however, goes beyond this interpretation. This deeper textual layer rests on an author keenly versed in the complex relationship that Ramus forwarded between logic, cognition, and rhetoric.

Crucially, that aspect of Ramism, which at once transformed dialogue into a one-way process of persuasion and retracted that process into the confines of a singular skull, was self-defeating. The St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre was the indirect manifestation of this individual failure. As Honneyman contends, the opening quatrain of Sonnet 19—"Devouring Time, blunt thou the lion's paws,/And make the earth devour her own sweet brood,/Pluck the keen teeth from the fierce tiger's jaws,/And burn the long-lived phoenix in her blood"—references the major figures responsible for this debacle. Charles, Cardinal of Lorraine, in accordance with his sobriquet, is the tiger. Catherine de Medici is the phoenix. The words "burn" and "blood" recall "the murdered Huguenots for whose deaths she takes the major blame" (Honneyman 48). For François Hotman (1524–90), who deferred on this issue to "the excellent Ramus" (qtd. in James Veazie Skalnik 131) and Huguenot theorists, Catherine personified despotic governance. The Huguenots, explains Anne McLaren, "cultivated, exercised, and enacted their political virtue by protecting the common weal from that most desperate of all perils confronting monarchical government at this point in the sixteenth century: tyranny exercised against the body of the realm by its legitimately constituted (female) ruler. (We need only think of Mary Stuart and Catherine de' Medici)" (938).

Sonnets 12 and 15 also concern the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre. The meditative structure that imbues these poems certainly follows Ramus's method. The opening lines of the first poem ("When I do count the clock that tells the time,/And see the brave day sunk in hideous night" [1–2]) find their complement in those of the second ("When I consider

every thing that grows/Holds in perfection but a little moment" [1-2]). Each poem, as Colin Burrow remarks, "mov[es] inevitably from general observation to the particular case" (410 n). In Sonnet 31, as Honneyman suggests, the opening lines—"Thy bosom is endearèd with all hearts/Which I by lacking have supposed dead,/And there reigns Love and all Love's loving parts,/And all those friends which I thought buried" (1-4)—reference not only the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre, but also the unexpected survival of both King Henry III of Navarre and Théodore Agrippa d'Aubigné. In the first instance, "Jeanne d'Albret, in correspondence which has been preserved, warns Henry of the vice and corruption prevalent in the Paris Court and exhorts her son to remove his wife to Navarre immediately after the wedding" (55). Henry found no opportunity to escape Paris, but "Henry's life was saved thanks to frenzied appeals by his young wife, on condition that he became a Catholic and remained as a 'palace prisoner' in the Louvre." In the second instance, d'Aubigné "escaped the massacre thanks to the lucky chance that he was in hiding from the authorities because he had been engaged in a duel" (53).

Peter Ramus, of course, did not escape, and in effectively conceding how Ramism has "blown" him so "full of maggot ostentation" (5.2.409) that he must "forswear" (5.2.410) that practice, Berowne seemingly conjures up Ramus's putrid corpse at the end of *Love's Labour's Lost*. Deeply entrenched inculcation, however, is difficult to uproot. That struggle is borne out when Berowne tells Rosaline that he can overcome the shortcoming that she has mocked with "*Sans 'sans'*" (5.2.416) only "by degrees" (5.2.418). Sir Thomas Smith, as a man of extremes, also manifested this self-defeating aspect of Ramism at the individual level. His sociopolitical vision was one of maximums from his perspective, but minimums from the perspective of the well-to-do.

Collective attempts to pursue the transformation and retraction of Ramism, being (by definition) at odds with the retractive component of that process, are also bound to fail. The overall result, which embraces the personal and the collective, is a victory for commonsense: the type of triumph that *Love's Labour's Lost* presents in the failure of each lord's "silken terms precise" (5.2.406) and "figures pedantical" (5.2.408). De Vere must have hoped to witness this type of victory in response to the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre. This desire is pertinent to character names in the play. As Carroll admits, in otherwise rejecting a substantive link between Shakespeare's dramaturgical conception and the European wars of religion, "there is no denying the topicality of the[se] names" (27). This admittance is especially

striking because “nowhere else in Shakespeare does a play present the names of living contemporaries” (27–28). To reiterate, February 1575 had found Edward de Vere in Reims for the coronation of King Henry III of France. King Henry III of Navarre—a palace prisoner still—also attended the ceremony. For Honneyman, Sonnet 125—“Were’t aught to me I bore the canopy,/With my extern the outward honouring” (1–2)—fits this context. “At the coronation,” notes Burrow, “the canopy was normally carried by members of the aristocracy or favoured courtiers” (630 n). “I have little doubt,” asserts Honneyman, “that the reference is to Henry of Navarre bearing the canopy at the Coronation of Henry III of France” (54). Henry of Navarre fled Paris the following year. He dedicated his freedom to the Huguenot cause.

The Princess of France in *Love's Labour's Lost*, as H. H. Furness conjectures, could represent Catherine de Medici. “The leading event of the comedy,—the meeting of the King of Navarre with the Princess of France,—lends itself as readily to a comparison with an actual occurrence of contemporary French history as do the heroes of the play to a comparison with those who played chief part in it.” At Saint Bris, at the end of 1586, King Henry III of Navarre and King Henry III of France had attempted to settle their differences. “The mediator was a Princess of France,—Catherine de Medici,—who had virtually ruled France for nearly thirty years, and who now acted in behalf of her son, decrepit in mind and body, in much the same way as the Princess in *Love's Labour's Lost* represents her ‘decrepit, sick, and bed-ridden father.’” Despite the ostensible success of the Saint Bris negotiations, Henry of Navarre parted from “Catherine and her sirens without bringing their negotiations to a satisfactory decision” (346).

In *Love's Labour's Lost*, the princess thanks Ferdinand “for my great suit so easily obtained” (5.2.713), but the play does not stage Navarre’s granting of her petition, nor remark that approval elsewhere. Her reason for thanking him remains a matter of speculation. Furness argues that the probability is high that “the meeting of Navarre and the Princess on the Elizabethan stage was suggested by the well-known interview at Saint Bris.” That Shakespeare attempts “to depict in the Princess the lineaments of Catherine,” however, Furness “do[es] not for a moment assert” (346–47). Carroll contests such hesitancy. The hunting scene that opens Act 4, in which the princess kills a deer, leads him to note that “for some critics, the Princess’s self-conscious aggression in the hunt reflects her actions towards Navarre” (102 n). That reflection invokes the specter of Catherine de Medici.

Catherine died on 5 January 1589; Jacques Clément assassinated Henry III of France on 1 August 1589; the result was civil war. King Henry III of Navarre, supported by the Marshal Biron (Armand de Gontaut) and the Duke of Longueville, eventually forced the Duke of Mayenne's Catholic League to withdraw. Some twelve years earlier, Oxford had sent men to fight for Mayenne against the Huguenots, but in the aftermath of Navarre's accession to the French throne as King Henry IV, the new monarch willingly corresponded with Oxford.⁹ "Hence," to appropriate Carroll, "the current general relevance of the names Navarre, Dumaine, Longaville, and Berowne" (27) in *Love's Labour's Lost*. Henry IV of France began a process of sectarian reconciliation, and although his wavering between Christian denominations—with which Edward de Vere as well as Peter Ramus and John Gordon would have empathized—would earn him a reputation as an oath breaker, Henry's religious initiative contributed to the French incorporation of Northern Navarre. The compact that opens *Love's Labour's Lost*—"You three, Berowne, Dumaine, and Longaville,/Have sworn for three years' term to live with me,/My fellow scholars, and to keep those statutes/That are recorded in this schedule here" (1.1.15–18)—represents this reconciliatory union.

"It is hardly to be expected," asserts John Doherty in *The Ignorance of Shakespeare*, "that Shakespeare would have been intimately acquainted with the complex history and politics of Navarre." The play exhibits this small history and lesser politics: for, "there is none of it in *Love's Labour's Lost*" (65). That supposed ignorance, however, pertains to the William Shakspeare behind the title of Doherty's book. In fact, the play is historically and politically aware, with Edward de Vere, the knowledgeable playwright behind the nom de plume of William Shakespeare, presenting Ferdinand of Navarre's oath breaking as well as that of his fellow scholars as an ultimate and necessary disloyalty.

Underlining this necessity, the play ends with a "dialogue" (5.2.852) between "two learned men" (5.2.853), a set piece that reemphasizes the difficulty of uprooting deep inculcation. This dialogue, in which Holofernes plays Spring (or "Ver" [5.2.857, 858]) and Nathaniel plays Winter (or Hiems [5.2.857]), remains two lone monologues. For this reason, each lord's enlightened response to Ramism, as if rejecting Ramus's personal example, counsels that love, as Berowne avers, "lives not alone immured

in the brain" (4.3.297). The wellspring of self-awareness promises to end the self-deceit of wintry isolation. Moreover, the alternative name of Holofernes's character intimates that the playwright monitored his own tendencies toward excessive Ramism, with Ver referencing not William Shakspeare of Stratford but Edward de Vere of Oxford.

NOTES

1. Literary critics have been in denial against their better judgment. Tzachi Zamir demonstrates this condition. "Controversies over Ramism," avows Zamir, "probably never touched Shakespeare in any significant way" (212). Yet, as Zamir's double qualification implies, critics should not ignore Ramus's influence.
2. Layered observation and split perspective also characterize the Mousetrap Scene (3.2) in *Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*.
3. "The quarrel," observes Ronald Brunlees McKerrow, "seems in its origin to be an offshoot of the well-known one between Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford, and Sir Philip Sidney in 1579, and to have arisen out of what may have been a simple misunderstanding or misinterpretation of a harmless piece of impersonal satire" (73).
4. *The Taming of the Shrew* includes four direct references to the pedant. Hortensio: "But, wrangling pedant, this is/The patroness of heavenly harmony" (3.1.4–5). Hortensio: "The bass is right; 'tis the base knave that jars./ (Aside) How fiery and forward our pedant is!" (3.1.45–46). Hortensio: "But I have cause to pry into this pedant" (3.1.85). Biondello: "Master, a marcantant, or a pedant,/I know not what; but formal in apparel,/In gait and countenance surely like a father" (4.2.63–65).

The pedant is explicitly mentioned in *Twelfth Night*. Maria: "Most villainously. Like a pedant that keeps a school i'th'church" (3.2.74).

Love's Labour's Lost also includes four direct references to the pedant. Berowne: "I, that have been love's whip;/A very beadle to a humorous sigh,/A critic, nay, a night-watch constable,/A domineering pedant o'er the boy" (151–54). Berowne: "Taffeta phrases, silken terms precise,/Three-piled hyperboles, spruce affectation,/Figures pedantical—these summer-flies/Have blown me full of maggot ostentation" (5.2.406–09). King Ferdinand of Navarre: "Here is like to be a good presence of Worthies. He presents/Hector of Troy; the swain, Pompey the Great; the parish/curate, Alexander; Arinado's page, Hercules; the pedant, Judas/Maccabaeus" (5.2.526–29). Berowne: "The pedant, the braggart, the hedge-priest, the fool, and the boy./Abate throw at novum, and the whole world again/Cannot pick out five such, take each one in his vein" (5.2.534–36).

5. Couzinet turns in particular to Sharratt's "Rabelais, Ramus et Raminagrobis" (1982).
6. The third occurrence of "argal" in *Hamlet* comes between these two uses when the gravedigger upbraids his colleague: "Now, thou dost/ill to say the gallows is built stronger than the church; argal, the/gallows may do well to thee" (5.1.39–41).
7. Nonetheless, the humor derived from "ergo" can have a dark undercurrent, as in *The Comedy of Errors*. "Light is an effect of fire, and fire will burn," reasons Dromio of Syracuse. "Ergo, light wenches will/burn" (4.3.48–49).
8. The boastful Ajax in *Troilus and Cressida*, remarks Thersites, "stalks up and down like a peacock" (3.3.251).
9. See William Farina (50) for more on this willingness.



CHAPTER 9

Oxford, Ramus, and *Hamlet*, *Prince of Denmark*

*These sorts of action against each another necessarily take place between
friends, enemies or people who are neither.*
—Aristotle, *Poetics* (53^b15–17)

Queen Elizabeth, with her love life immured in her brain, ruled alone. She remained a masterful banker, but as Elizabeth's approach to courtship evinced, this strength could sometimes be a weakness. She employed what game theorists call the *strategy of domestic bliss*. The executor of this strategy assesses suitors for signs of faithfulness in the hope of securing a trustworthy partner. Demanding a prenuptial investment from each candidate fosters qualities of domesticity in advance. A long period of celibacy will induce casual suitors to give up in frustration. Perseverance certifies devotion.

As Edward de Vere would have remembered, October 1559 had found his father “undertaking a special task in north Essex,” as Jane Greatorex reports, “furthering the prospects of Her Majesty’s Courtship” (66). John de Vere, Sixteenth Earl of Oxford, worked alongside Sir William Cecil and Sir Thomas Smith in this task. These emissaries “met the Duke of Finland, brother of the Protestant king elect of Sweden.” He was offering Queen Elizabeth “the hand in marriage of his elder brother, Prince Eric” (66 n). Nothing came of the project.

Nor did Smith’s “Philoxenus, or Lovealien” (1561), his dialogue on the queen’s marriage, produce more than Elizabeth’s annoyance. She was

blind to Smith's subtle criticism of her increasing self-infatuation, but not to his suggestions concerning appropriate suitors, which she found particularly irksome. The choice was hers, not Smith's; yet, by 1586, not a single suitor survived. Elizabeth had overplayed her strategy. She expected too much of a husband. The queen had not only become self-infatuated, but had also rationalized that self-infatuation, believing that her subjects approved of her strategic resolve. Self-interest to the extent of self-delusion was the ultimate reason for her failure to marry.

Elizabeth did not vacillate concerning marriage; she wanted the perfect husband, and that dominant wish never altered. She vacillated only when faced by the Banker God. Her conduct toward Mary, Queen of Scots, exemplifies this characteristic. On 11 August 1586, Elizabeth ordered Mary's arrest in connection with the Babington Plot, but she delayed Mary's execution until 8 February 1587. Why did Elizabeth prorogue her cousin's death? While kin-selected altruism surely told, executing Mary denied God's choice of Scottish monarch.

Where God was not involved, however, Elizabeth made strategic moves. Hence, she granted Edward de Vere a banker's role in stagecraft, but not in statecraft; and William Burghley remained her subordinate banker, casting his shadow, and by proxy, Elizabeth's queenly power, over the Seventeenth Earl of Oxford. A changing of the guard little altered this state of affairs. Mary Cecil had died on 22 February 1544; in December 1545, her widower had married Mildred Cooke; and on 1 June 1563, Mildred had given birth to a son, Robert, whom the Cecils brought up at Cecil House alongside de Vere. What is more, Cecil extended his proper (or Ramist) ordering of the Court of Wards to his own children. He aimed at the endurance and promotion of his dynasty. His daughter Anne's marriage to Oxford was a case in point. The codes of behavior he drummed into his descendants ensured they looked to him for guidance—guidance that would direct them toward his dynastic aims.

Tradition portrays Robert Cecil as a Machiavellian figure. This convention owes much to William Burghley's attitude toward the civil life. Burghley eventually set out this position in his "Ten Precepts" (1587) to Robert. These rules would first appear in public print as "Certaine Precepts, or Directions for the Well Ordering and Carriage of a Man's Life" (1617). The second rule states that the father who trains his sons for war "can hardly be an honest man, or a good Christian." For, "*every war of itself is unjust, though good cause may make it lawful*." Besides it is a science no longer in request than use; for soldiers in peace are like chimneys

in summer" (262; emphasis original). Burghley's "advice," remarks Paul A. Jorgensen, "agrees substantially with Machiavelli's doctrine" (220). Robert Cecil heeded that advice, and the term "'Machiavellian' which is often applied to Robert," as Peter Brimacombe avers, "is highly appropriate, for like his father he had read Nicolo [*sic*] Machiavelli's definitive *Discorsi* published in 1531, a revolutionary exposition of the art of statesmanship" (67).

Robert, according to Brimacombe, took Burghley's "pragmatism to its outer limit" (67). By 1587, the son was beginning to usurp his father's courtly and governmental roles. This accretion of power meant that Robert was becoming another of Edward de Vere's bankers, and Robert's political expediency, as well as his spinal deformity, emphasizes a relationship important to the Oxfordian argument: the similarity between Sir Robert Cecil and William Shakespeare's King Richard III.

A second aspect to the changing of the guard occurred with Anne de Vere's death in 1588. The list of mourners at her funeral does not include Oxford. The coordination condition of silence that had blighted the early years of their marriage seems to have clouded Oxford's attitude toward Anne's burial. In turning inward thereafter, however, Oxford seems to have reappraised Anne. That reevaluation, which commended her, but which condemned him, emerged in Oxford's writings. In *Troilus and Cressida*, Hector decries the tempers that prevent Troilus from thinking rationally: "is your blood/So madly hot," he demands, "that no discourse of reason,/Nor fear of bad success in a bad cause/Can qualify the same?" (2.2.115–18). Shakespeare's recourse to technical language here—the "discourse of reason" being a reference to Ramist first principles—emphasizes Hector's disbelief. That incredulity echoes the mature Oxford's attitude toward his impetuous youth. *Cymbeline* then dramatizes Edward de Vere, as the irrationally jealous Posthumus, and Anne de Vere, as the innocently victimized Imogen. *The Winter's Tale* takes this dramatization further. This play "fixates on the slandered wife Hermione's death and then revels over her rebirth. The play's jealous husband, Leontes, presents de Vere in a brutally honest self-portrait—a tyrannical egomaniac who accuses his wife of infidelity and stubbornly refuses to hear any contrary arguments" (Mark Anderson 221).

In December 1588, de Vere disposed of Fisher's Folly, his London house on Bishopsgate Street. This sale helped to distance Oxford physically from the House of Cecil. Over the next eight years, while builders worked on Plaistow House, de Vere's property in Essex, he divided much

of his time between Bilton, his estate in Warwickshire, and Billesley, another Warwickshire estate, which belonged to the Trussells.¹ Billesley Manor, with its well-stocked library, made an excellent retreat.² Oxford may have composed *Julius Caesar* there. The assassination on 23 December 1588 of the Henry, Duke of Guise, as ordered by King Henry III of France, certainly provided grist to Oxford's ratiocinative mill. The alignment between the historical event and its contemporary counterpart was almost perfect. The resultant piece of stagecraft testifies to de Vere's maturation. Oxford's honed intuition as an artist and his dialectic reasoning now edged toward what poststructuralists would call deconstructive ambiguity. "Perhaps," ventures Anderson, "it took his liberation from the Manichaeic life under the Cecils for de Vere to begin to appreciate the scales of gray in the world" (240). Those scales were clearly visible to Sigmund Freud's follower and biographer, Ernest Jones, who identified the repressed patricidal tendency that animates *Julius Caesar*.³

Notwithstanding (what one can call) his deconstructive awareness, Oxford's game-theoretic situation was a closed circle that maintained his subservience to the Cecils. This status predetermined Oxford's inability to free himself from their banking interests. Indeed, as Anderson notes, "by 1589, Burghley had already begun to look around for a husband for de Vere's eldest daughter, Elizabeth, now age fourteen" (236), and "*A Midsummer Night's Dream*," as Anderson argues, "retells the story, in satirical form, of de Vere's obsession with one of his daughter's potential bridegrooms" (287). Moreover, in gradually eclipsing his father, Robert Cecil was updating the role of the House of Cecil. A knighthood in 1591, which confirmed his courtly status, underwrote that modernization. "Two essential factions defined the face of power in the waning years of the Elizabethan era," as Anderson enumerates: "A ring of gentlemen, spies, and nobles clustered around Sir Robert Cecil (age thirty in 1593); and a cult of personality surrounding the earl of Essex, the late earl of Leicester's stepson." Robert Dudley, First Earl of Leicester, had opposed Queen Elizabeth's mooted marriage to Francis, Duke of Anjou and Alençon. As Oxford was well aware, having supported Alençon's suit, the Leicester-Cecil power struggle "was continuing into the 1590s—under new management" (273).

Even so, the 1590s opened with fresh hope for Edward de Vere, with a third aspect to the changing of the guard. His marriage to Elizabeth Trentham was a success; they initially lived in Stoke-Newington; Elizabeth gave birth to a boy on 24 February 1593; they christened him Henry.

Oxford, who had been a jealous doubter of his first wife, was a confident believer in his second. That confidence drew on Elizabeth's support. "Although appointed to the Earldom as early as 1568 when he turned eighteen," as Roger A. Stritmatter remarks in *The Marginalia of Edward de Vere's Geneva Bible*, "the former ward remained a debtor to the Court until after his [...] remarriage" (23). By the time of Henry de Vere's birth, thanks to Trentham's own money, her financial acumen, and her husband's dedication to his ultimate aim of writing, Oxford was probably debt free. Appropriately, this year of stabilization saw not only "Praise of a Contented Mind," his poem appended to *Willobie His Avis* (1594), appear in print, but also the name "Shakespeare" legitimized in print, with the publication of *Venus and Adonis*. Oxford's contentment had seemingly enabled him to consider the many contours of love.

The strategic relations of Oxford's second marriage ushered in a short period of relative calm. During this hiatus, tensions between Robert Devereux (c. 1566–1601), Second Earl of Essex, Sir Charles Danvers (c. 1568–1601), an English parliamentarian, and Henry Wriothesley, Third Earl of Southampton, on the one hand, and Robert Cecil, on the other, had an unforeseen result: Oxford's fleeting promotion to state banker. Devereux's rebellion of 1601 led to his trial for treason alongside Danvers and Southampton. As a judge as well as a juror, de Vere found himself in the position to make strategic moves: the jury found the defendants guilty, but while Devereux and Danvers were beheaded, Southampton was imprisoned (and eventually released from the Tower of London on the accession of King James [24 March 1603]).

Time as state banker can only have heightened de Vere's self-awareness of the player status to which he returned. What was worse, his annuity from the state no longer stretched to supporting either of his remaining theatrical companies, with the Earl of Worcester's troupe subsuming both the Earl of Oxford's Men and the Earl of Oxford's Boys. Withdrawing to the confines of his singular mind, de Vere put these mental burdens to exigent, yet excellent, use. Game theorists have recourse to matrices; Peter Ramus's decision trees are allies of Gerolamo Cardano's rectangular arrays; and creative writers can partake of a similar formalism. The mathematical inflection to Ramism does not eschew aesthetic contemplation. Rather, in line with Renaissance attitudes—arithmology was one of the principal symbolic systems for authors—that inflection emphasizes such considerations. Ramism hereby complies with artistic fundamentals. Oxford would have appreciated that agreement. "The ideals of symmetry, proportion,

and ratio,” as Stritmatter notes in “Triangular Numbers in Henry Peacham’s *Minerva Britannia*,” “are guiding principles of all other arts—architecture, music theory, and visual art—from their earliest developments” (93). Quoting Ernst Robert Curtius’s findings (508), Stritmatter further argues that a structural aesthetic based on arithmology “accomplished the twofold purpose of supplying ‘formal scaffolding’ and endowing a work with ‘symbolic profundity’” (93). Oxford’s prescient delineation of social dilemmas provided a related, critically unheralded, and somewhat deeper basis for artistic organization, with protologic offering an a priori, rather than a formally enumerated, model of interhuman relations.

The correspondences between formal scaffolding and literature are particularly explicit in the sonnet form attributed to Shakespeare. The matrix for a two-choice, two-player coordination problem comprises four divisions, as do the three quatrains and single couplet of such a sonnet—and each quatrain comprises a further four divisions. This formal sense, as Sonnet 103 implies, values logic above its rhetorical ornamentation: “The argument all bare is of more worth/Than when it hath my added praise beside” (3–4). For Ramus, there was only one method, God’s method, and Ramism advocated its renaissance. Sonnet 76 captures the essence of this promotion. The poet’s initial lament—“Why with the time do I not glance aside/To new-found methods” (3–4)—turns into an acknowledgment of the diurnally fresh material that this sempiternal form provides—“For as the sun is daily new and old,/So is my love, still telling what is told” (13–14). Ramus’s method is likewise both new and old (or a priori).

Intriguingly, Sonnet 76 tempers this apparent support of Ramus’s dialectic with a seeming criticism of Ramus’s rhetoric. This undercurrent reechoes Walter J. Ong’s observation that Ramus tended to think of rhetoric as dialectic in reverse. That inclination produced excessive ornamentation. Hence, the poet eventually renounces not only “new-found methods,” but also “compounds strange” (4). That additional rejection, which reveals a poet versed in the weaknesses as well as in the strengths of Ramism, points to Edward de Vere of Oxford rather than to William Shakspeare of Stratford.

John von Neumann’s minimax theorem suggests that versification maximizes cogent polysemy from a minimum of language. In addition, as Brian Boyd argues, verse “employs language to fit a humanly universal cognitive constraint. Controlling one’s attention matters for any conscious creature facing a world teeming with potential information, but in humans atten-

tion attains a unique importance" (17). In the language of Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren's *Understanding Poetry* (1938), this cognitive constraint is a "unit of attention" (643), which the gifted writer potentializes to its outmost. "Great poets in their best lines," concurs Boyd, "maximize the variation, pacing, and patterning of stress and sequence in ways that generate instant interest and conviction" (39). Shakespeare's game-theoretic practice, to appropriate Philip Davis from *Shakespeare Thinking* (2007), "means the working out of the impulsive laws of the whole underlying matrix, the very shapes and spaces and niches out of which all things come into being" (8). In fine, the works of Shakespeare's singular mind employ "a maximal language" (8–9), which opens unlimited opportunities for interpretation.

Read in this context, the lament over the issueless husband in Sonnet 9 elicits the maximum from Ramus's reduction of person-to-person relationships to a singular minimum. Autoeroticism provoked by dedication to the life of an academic lies at the root of such introversion: "No love toward others in that bosom sits/That on himself such murd'rous shame commits" (13–14). Ramus's pudicity certainly exercised Nicolas de Nancel. "Ramus remained a bachelor throughout his life," explains Nancel, "because University laws [did] not allow college principals in Paris to marry" (245). "Nancel," as Marie-Dominique Couziniet remarks, "will return freely to this 'kind of life,' that is celibacy, imposed on Ramus by his post of college principal" (277).

Comedic renditions of the pendant, from whatever era, often alight on the theme of celibacy. "The theme of 'Love's Labour's Lost' is not the satire of an age," wrote an anonymous reviewer of the 1904 variorum edition of the play, "but satire for all time, the sharp yet kindly ridicule of pedantic, affected Celibacy turned to naught at the first brush with Reality" (135–36). Yet, Nancel also notes, as Couziniet acknowledges, that celibacy was "a subject on which the master himself did not hesitate to joke, while maintaining a reserve that kept him safe from [such] criticism" (277). Even so, individuals who speak with utmost consistency either hide their desires or have few desires to repress, and Ramus appears to have been of the latter persuasion.

Above all, Ramus tried to be rational, but without being sophistical. Consistency of thought was fundamental. "Whatever is treated in an art," explains Peter A. Duhamel of Ramism, "must be basic to the art and must belong to it because of a natural priority." Homogeneity seems to be the rule that Ramus "saw most frequently violated" (166). He strictly held

that logic must not contain the illogical. Thus, in *Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*, the phrase “though this be madness, yet there is method/in’t” (2.2.200–01) does not indict Polonius for sophistry, because “he means that Hamlet’s argument about the symptoms of old age is arranged according to the principles of logical method” (Hardin Craig 395).

Polonius, then, parodies Cecil, the zealous Cambridge scholar, whose self-discipline seemingly echoed that of Ramus; Cecil’s guardianship of Oxford ensured his ward’s similar diligence, and Cecil constructed those studies in accordance with Ramism. “Modern editors,” as Eddi Jolly laments in “The Writing of *Hamlet*” (2004), “tend not to discuss the possibility that Polonius is a caricature of Burghley, or else dismiss it with little discussion” (191). Yet, “over the years,” as William Farina remarks, “commentators [...] have noticed that the character of Ophelia’s father, Polonius, appears at least partially modeled on William Cecil, Lord Burghley” (199).

At the Sorbonne, in his younger days, Ramus had acted in repertory; and in *Hamlet*, the prince teases Polonius about his appearance in a university play:

- Hamlet. ... My lord, you played once i’t’h’university,
 you say.
Polonius. That did I my lord, and was accounted a good actor.
Hamlet. And what did you enact?
Polonius. I did enact Julius Caesar; I was killed i’t’h’Capitol. Brutus
 killed me.
Hamlet. It was a brute part of him to kill so capital a calf there. (3.2.87–93)

Burghley’s preceptual attitude, which his prolixity must have inflected, is an important constituent of Polonius’s character. In some of Burghley’s precepts, remarks George Russell French, “the identity of language with that of Polonius is so close that SHAKSPEARE could not have hit upon it unless he had been acquainted with Burleigh’s parental advice to Robert Cecil” (303; emphasis original). E. K. Chambers submits that “conceivably [William Shakspeare] knew a pocket manuscript” (418) of Burghley’s “Ten Precepts.” Modern scholars, such as Samuel Schoenbaum (*Shakespeare’s Lives* 493) and Robin Williams (106), discount this claim: Corbould’s publication dates to the year of Stratford’s death. In contrast, Oxford is likely to have heard Burghley’s dictums, and may well have read the “Ten Precepts.” Whatever the facts, however, the ingrained Ramism of Burghley,

which was the bedrock of his avowed precepts, still supports the Oxfordian view of Polonius.

“Not only does [Polonius] recognize logical method,” as Craig asserts, “but he pretends to follow it” (395). “Your noble son is mad” (2.2.92), Polonius tells Queen Gertrude, “Mad call I it, for to define true madness,/ What is’t but to be nothing else but mad?” (2.2.93–94). To which the queen replies, “More matter with less art” (2.2.95). Like Burghley, “the supreme political survivor” (3), as John Alexander Guy calls him, Polonius knows how to fashion a logically acceptable answer. “Madam,” he replies,

I swear I use no art at all.
That he is mad, ’tis true; ’tis true ’tis pity,
And pity ’tis ’tis true—a foolish figure,
But farewell it, for I will use no art.
Mad let us grant him then, and now remains
That we find out the cause of this effect,
Or rather say, the cause of this defect,
For this effect defective comes by cause.
Thus it remains, and the remainder thus. (2.2.96–104)

Polonius’s rejoinder “recalls obviously the dialectic of Ramist logic, which,” as Craig notes, “dwelt upon the ‘cause effective’ and the ‘effect of the cause’” (395).

Shakespeare’s treatment of pedantic logic undoubtedly tends toward parody, yet “not only in the conception of Ramus, but of all logicians,” as Craig adds, “logic was the art of disputing well, and it is the logical terms of disputation that are found most plentifully in Shakespeare” (393). Craig explains that Shakespeare’s usage crosses “the line between the clearly technical use of logical words and the popular use, when it is difficult to tell whether the sense is a strictly logical one or a merely popular sense into which the logical meaning shades off” (386).⁴

The term “syllogism” does not suffer this difficulty. A syllogism—even if the conclusion is false—denotes deductive rather than inductive reasoning.⁵ In *Twelfth Night*, for example, Olivia’s servant Feste constructs and then names a syllogism, before offering a syllogistic alternative to that construction. His mistress, tired of the “dry fool” (1.5.33), whom she believes has “grow[n]/dishonest” (1.5.33–34), orders his removal. Feste resists this order, however, and addresses his supposed failings. “Two faults, madonna, that drink and good counsel will amend” (1.5.35), he begins:

for give the dry fool drink, then is the fool not dry; bid the dishonest man mend himself; if he mend, he is no longer dishonest; if he cannot, let the botcher mend him. Anything that's mended is but patched: virtue that transgresses is but patched with sin, and sin that amends is but patched with virtue. If that this simple syllogism will serve, so [be it]. (1.5.36–41)

Otherwise, “what remedy? As there is no true cuckold/but calamity, so beauty's a flower. The lady bade take away the fool;/therefore, I say again, take her away” (1.5.41–43).⁶ A supposedly clownish servant hereby artfully reverses his mistress's meaning. However much individuals “naturally share in the syllogistic faculty,” to repeat Ramus from *Dialectique*, “the number of those who study how to use it well is very small, and of that small number there are still fewer who know how to arrange and judge according to good ‘method’” (135; Graves's translation).

The skill of disputing well, whether with interlocutors, one interlocutor, or with oneself (usually in the form of an interior dialogue), is a game-theoretic art. Edward de Vere's critical Ramism enabled him to appreciate the danger of untried and barely implemented precepts. He had the ability to parody the defective use of dialectic as well as to emulate, and often supersede, its skilled application. “In this connection,” as Peter Sharratt observes in “Peter Ramus and Imitation,” “Ramus compares the acceptance of principles without practice to the dinner which Heliogabalus offered to his guests, where everything was painted and artificial; teachers of logic are like him if they lay before their students nothing but empty precepts” (25). Art for Ramus, however decisively imprinted by repetition, remains a matter of nature and of practice.

Oxford's Ramism, which appears in the appropriation, modification, and valences of Ramus's terms, principles, and practices, is formal, technical but self-effacing, or vernacular according to his needs. As Christopher Marlowe surely intends in *The Massacre at Paris*, therefore, the Duke of Guise's interpretation of the term “judgment” (7.391) when lambasting Ramus lacks Ramist nuance. Rather, as Oxford's Ramism demonstrates in a less overt manner than the subtle but overt presentation of Ramus and Guise by Marlowe, accurate analytical judgment requires the training and practice of a well-endowed faculty. “*Disposition* in logic,” asserts Craig, “is the due arrangement of the parts of an argument and is a synonym for judgment” (387). Prince Hamlet uses the word “disposition” in this synonymic sense when confronted by his father's ghost: “What may this mean,” asks the prince,

That thou, dead corse, again in complete steel
 Revisits thus the glimpses of the moon,
 Making night hideous, and we fools of nature
 So horribly to shake our disposition
 With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls? (1.4.51–56)

The Ramus of *Dialecticae institutiones* would have approved of Oxford's spectral recourse. Navigating dialectic with two-valued Aristotelian logic, the student breaks down the logical steps and their attendant rhetoric, and then examines the results. Concerted practice makes this entire operation a part of the student's mindset. "We feel ourselves being coloured by other peoples' virtues, as men who walk in the sunshine are affected by the sun," states Ramus; "although they are thinking about, and doing, other things, yet they are coloured by the sun without wanting to be and without knowing it" (177–78). This same principle "applies to us, that when we read eloquent and elegant authors, even though our aim is to analyze the logical artifice, yet unintentionally we assimilate the ornateness of the transitions" (178). This process of assimilation answered the percipient bourgeoisie's increasing demand for what John O. Ward calls "cogent reasoning and lucid explanation of the increasingly complex ramifications of learning and science." Members of this class were not "held at bay by the 'aristocratic' tradition of ornamented discourse, the euphuistic or figurist tradition" (128). They wished to improve their literacy, but in a straightforward manner, and Ramism supported that desire.

The maximal language of a singular mind reaches its high point in English literature with Prince Hamlet, Shakespeare's greatest dialectical pedant, whose inner reasoning suits the decision trees and matrices that game theorists so often employ. Present and future predicaments, coordinative and otherwise, plague the prince. While fostering thoughts of his coordinative relations with King Claudius, on the one hand, and the coordinative relations between King Claudius and Queen Gertrude, on the other, as well as considering the relays between these interrelated but disconnected relations, the prince considers the question of a decisive solution. He does not discuss this question with an interlocutor. As with Ramist rhetoric at its most withdrawn, no speaker–auditor framework aids invention; instead, the prince's vision emerges from a dialectical monologue. Ramist *elocutio*, to requote Ong from *Ramus, Method, and the Decay of Dialogue*, "declare[s] against sound in favor of (silent) thought" (281). Nonetheless, unlike the eponymous protagonist of Christopher Marlowe's

The Tragical History of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus, Prince Hamlet both conceives of dialectic as a means of arguing about philosophical problems and puts that conception into (albeit monologic) practice.

The prince's "to be, or not to be" (3.1.56) soliloquy prefigures the sort of cost-benefit calculations that concern game theorists. Peter Ramus would have encountered a similar form of soliloquizing in Aristotle's *Poetics*. Aristotle employs this means, for example, in deducing the type of poetic situations that dread, on the one hand, and compassion, on the other, elicits. These emotions arise "between friends, enemies or people who are neither" (53^b16); this situation is the province of game theory, and, in enumerating their possible causes, Aristotle produces a subjective soliloquy consonant with that domain:

The action may arise (i) in the way the old [poets] made people act knowingly, i.e. in full knowledge, just as Euripides too made Medea kill her children. Or (ii) they may be going to act, in full knowledge, but not do it. Or (iii) they may act, but do the dreadful deed in ignorance, and then recognise the friendly relationship later, as Sophocles' Oedipus [does]. This is outside the drama; but [they may do the deed] in the tragedy itself, as Astydamas' Alcmeon or Telegonus in the *Wounded Odysseus* [do]. Again, fourth beside these [ways] is (iv) to be about to do something deadly in ignorance [of one's relationship], but to recognise it before doing so. Beside these there is no other way: for the act is necessarily either done or not done, and those who act either have knowledge or do not. (53^b27–38)

Moreover, the poet faces a creative dilemma because he "cannot undo the traditional stories, I mean e.g. that Clytaemestra is killed by Orestes or Eriphyle by Alcmeon" (53^b23–24). In consequence, the poet must "invent for himself, i.e. use the inherited stories, well" (53^b25–26).

Compared to his emergent game-theoretic dilemmas, and compared to the fickleness of chance ("the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune" [3.1.58]), Prince Hamlet believes he can solve the problem of whether "to be, or not to be" (3.1.56). In pondering suicide, however, the prince effectively acknowledges the existential quality of this question. Conscious thought leads him not only to this realization, but also to a cost-benefit analysis. "A fictional situation presenting a mixture of reality and imagination," argues Andrew Vazsonyi, "offers an excellent way to obtain insight into the decision analysis of real life conditions" (45). This analytical process provides, therefore, a complement to psychoanalysis. "As the Freudians have pointed out," observes Norman C. Dalkey in "A Case Study of a

Decision Analysis: Hamlet's Soliloquy" (1981), "the most perceptive characterization of an ethos stems from literature rather than from scholarship" (46). Thus, as Dalkey's excellent examination attests, Prince Hamlet's most famous soliloquy provides a wonderfully considered delineation of conscious thought.

This presentation is not a simple matter of mastering dialectical technique. The differences between the second (Q2) and first (Q1) quartos reveal the additional requirement of careful, individual fashioning. The earlier version of Hamlet's soliloquy, as Marion Trousdale notes, "also begins 'To be, or not to be,' but continues with 'I there's the point'" (59). Where Q1 closes down Hamlet's options, Q2 asks a question that creates multifarious choices. In each quarto, the prince's soliloquy begins with "an explicit statement of its general idea, stated in both the affirmative and the negative" (58), and this quandary provides, as Q2 recognizes, but Q1 does not, the subject matter (*res*) for copious development. Employing Erasmus's developmental technique, hereafter, Q2 probes the deep structure of the prince's discourse, thereby capturing his "convoluted" thoughts.

At one level, the affinity and opposition used for that expansion meet in that classical *figure verborum*, so little employed in the English Renaissance, but at once so freely used in Oxford's "Massacre Letter" and so richly deployed in Prince Hamlet's soliloquy: hendiadys. With its coordinating conjunction, which joins two nouns of different logical status together, hendiadys displays a game-theoretic characteristic superbly suited to the prince's thoughts. The "*slings and arrows* of outrageous fortune," explains George T. Wright,

are not parallel terms: one is an instrument for slinging, the other is the thing slung, but slings do not sling arrows; in speech we might expect "bows and arrows" or "slings and bows" or "slings and stones" or "stones and arrows." If the phrase Hamlet uses is not exactly hendiadys, it is at least more comprehensible in a setting where hendiadys is a prominent figure. The "*whips and scorns* of time" (III.i.70), which Hamlet, in the same soliloquy, doubts we would want to bear if we did not fear death, also come from different categories: one is concrete and metaphorical, the other abstract and immediate, and together they might seem out of focus if we were not so accustomed to the pattern of hendiadys. Time or a satirist's scorn may make us feel whipped, or the two words may express two ways time has of punishing us (wrinkles and disappointment), but the terms seem to interweave their meanings as simple conjoined nouns do not usually do. (182; emphasis original)

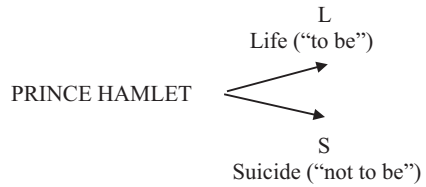
While hendiadys brings together the “Massacre Letter” and the play, the more general link between the Seventeenth Earl of Oxford’s copious epistle and Prince Hamlet’s copious soliloquy deserves particular emphasis. That letter clearly overflows with the “fluency and fire” (490), “endless fecundity of phrase, image, and epithet” (490), and “prolonged organic pulsation” (485) that the Stratfordian J. M. Robertson cannot help but identify as distinctly Shakespearean.

At another level, copious development in terms of affinity and opposition provides the semantic kernel of the four lines that follow the prince’s initial quandary. These lines divide the problem into dialectical parts. This technique restates yet unfolds. As Jean Sturm instructed, and as Peter Ramus and Edward de Vere learned, this expansion avoids the random as well as the tautological, stating everything, but without redundancy. This approach, as Q2 shows in comparison with Q1, produces what Trousdale calls “a dramatic language that seems both inevitable and unexpected” (60). Thus, the prince’s concern over the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune unfolds, not “as a straightforward disputation as Claudio and the Duke do in *Measure for Measure*, but as an initial inquiry into the nature of noble action” (61).

In the next lines—“But that the dread of something after death,/The undiscovered country from whose bourn/No traveller returns, puzzles the will,/And makes us rather bear those ills we have/Than fly to others that we know not of” (3.1.78–82)—the prince derives a general statement from his preceding thoughts. Instead of resolving his initial question in a predictable fashion, this summary proffers another opinion concerning the uncertainty of death. What is more, as Trousdale recognizes, this type of analysis is “essentially of the kind proposed by [...] Erasmus.” This analytical method—the type later promoted by Sturm and Ramus—reveals “much about the means of Shakespeare’s art.” To Erasmus, Sturm, and Ramus, “the playwright would have been seen not only to have started with a body of received patterns or formulae, but to have written his plays from them, finding always new ways in which to vary them.” By this “recombining of old patterns,” concludes Trousdale, “he wove into the fabric of his text portraits that by their color and shape seemed to be taken from [...] life” (61). “Neyther,” as Sturm remarks, “is there any thing more pleasaunt and exceptable to the eare, than to heare one thing often expressed in other wordes” (qtd. in Trousdale 62).

In Ramist effect, Prince Hamlet’s first conscious response to the quandary of “to be, or not to be” (3.1.56) establishes a sequence of choices,

Fig. 9.1 The initial branches of Prince Hamlet's decision tree



and the decision trees of game theory provide a suitable visualization of the prince's rapidly proliferating thoughts. The resulting diagram represents the prince's options as nodes on a branching decision-structure accompanied by the utility for each outcome. Two initial branches, as shown in Fig. 9.1, describe the choice between life ("to be") (*L*) and suicide ("not to be") (*S*).

In answering this initial question, the prince considers whether it is nobler, on the one hand, "to suffer/The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune/Or" (3.1.57–59), on the other, "to take arms against a sea of troubles,/And by opposing end them" (3.1.59–60). This consideration, which exemplifies the "kinds of moral motivation" (267) of which the game theorists Shaun P. Hargreaves-Heap and Yanis Varoufakis write, requires Prince Hamlet to assign utilities. He must think beyond the narrow confines of simple payoffs. His cost-benefit calculations must consider how the interrelated aspects of nobility and mental suffering contribute to his decision-making *as a process*.

Suffering is a negative attribute when considered in isolation. As a demand on mental fortitude, and as far as Prince Hamlet is concerned, however, suffering increases the positive attribute of nobleness. Faced with this difficulty, the prince moves from the undefined utility for continued life to the alternative of suicide. The outcome to the latter option—death—seems far simpler to calculate. Notwithstanding the ambiguities of second-order thoughts concerning dignified conduct—will others judge the prince's suicide as a noble gesture, an act of cowardice, or an expression of desperation?—death ends suffering. Briefly put, suicide promises an "end" (3.1.61) to "The heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks/That flesh is heir to" (3.1.62–63).

Suffering is, as Dalkey states, "the critical dimension in Hamlet's utility function" (47), so decision *S* apparently outweighs decision *L*. The prince immediately qualifies this choice, however, with a consideration of suffering in Afterlife. Death might not foreclose dreams. "To die, to sleep—/To sleep—perchance to dream" (3.1.64–65), he worries, "Ay, there's the

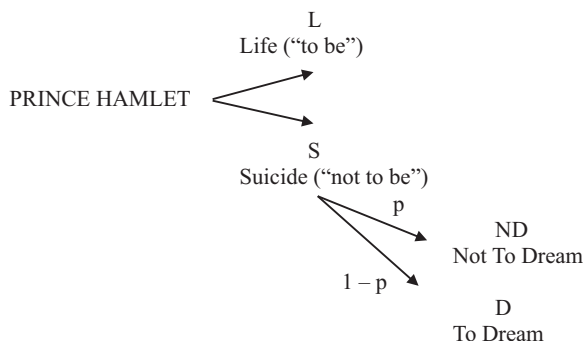


Fig. 9.2 The extended branches of Prince Hamlet's decision tree

rub" (3.1.65). Conscious consideration of postmortem dreams forces the prince's expansion of his reasoning to include not only the options of "to dream" (D) and not to dream (ND), but also their respective probabilities. Figure 9.2, in which p and $1-p$ stand for the probability of not dreaming and dreaming, respectively, illustrates this extended model.

By this ratiocinative stage, the prince's thoughts have become recursive, and they immediately re-emend his model to include "what dreams may come" (3.1.66). "We may note here," observes Harold Fisch, "the dichotomizing habit of language so popular among Ramus and the Puritans." Ramus "divided Logic into Judgement and Invention and each of these into further doublets. This endless bifurcation of subject matter was a useful method for arranging material, but behind it there was also a metaphysical principle, that of a bisected universe and a bisected psyche" (84). That principle is ideally suited to Shakespeare's delineation of Prince Hamlet's divided mind. Figure 9.3, in which q_i stands for the probability of having dream i , illustrates the related hyperextended model.⁷

Prince Hamlet does not know the probabilities associated with dream occurrence—incomplete information hampers his modeling—but he does intuitively realize what each dream will cost him in suffering. Thus, by the closing lines of his soliloquy, the prince has rendered his extensive tree into a less cumbersome game-theoretic form: a matrix.

"A strategy," to repeat John Davis Williams, "*is a plan so complete that it cannot be upset by enemy action or Nature*; for everything that the enemy or Nature may choose to do, together with a set of possible actions for yourself, is just part of the description of the strategy" (16; emphasis origi-

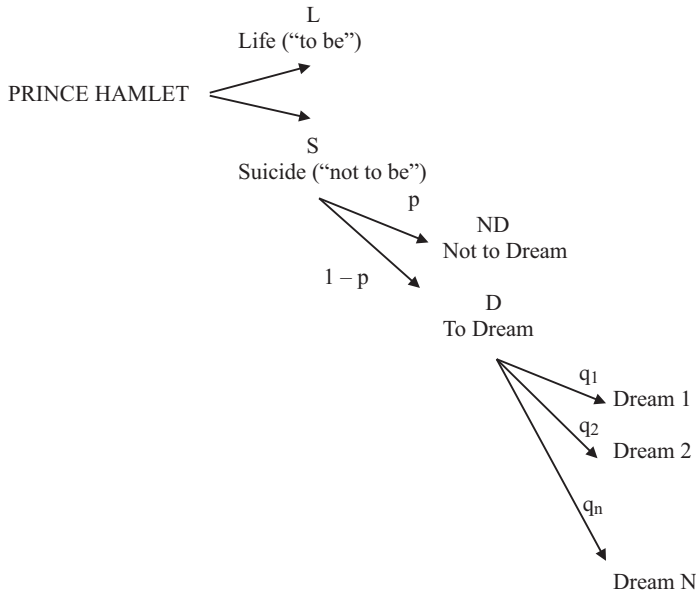


Fig. 9.3 The hyperextended branches of Prince Hamlet’s decision tree

Table 9.1 The matrix Prince Hamlet intuitively renders from his hyperextended model

	<i>No dream</i>	<i>Dream₁</i>	<i>Dream_i</i>	<i>Dream_n</i>
Live (L)	−10	−10	−10	−10
Suicide (S)	0	+100	−1000	−5

nal). The enemy that confronts Prince Hamlet is Afterlife. Table 9.1 reproduces Dalkey’s associated matrix.

If Prince Hamlet decides to commit suicide, then freedom from consciousness means he will no longer “suffer/The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune” (3.1.57–58). Dreams in Afterlife, however, vary from pleasant ones, with a utility of +100, to mildly disturbing ones, with a utility of −5, to dreadful ones, with a utility of −1000. The prince chooses to minimize the maximum harm that can befall him. In effect, Prince Hamlet employs John von Neumann’s minimax theorem. Afterlife can only realize its maximum utility (+1000), which equates to the prince’s

worst outcome (–1000), when Prince Hamlet is dead. The rational prince, therefore, chooses to live: the worst he can suffer comes from the fickleness of chance. This solution is the dominant strategy. Continuing to live is always the rational answer to this dilemma.

“Subsequent events in the play,” maintains Dalkey, “show that selecting the first alternative was indeed Hamlet’s decision.” To this extent, Hamlet’s rationale is a remarkable anticipation of game-theoretic analysis. The prince then takes, however, “an ultramodern step—*assessment of his own decision analysis*” (48; emphasis original). Reevaluating the hyperextension necessitated by his decision tree “give[s]” him “pause” (3.1.68). Intriguingly, this hiatus actually keeps Prince Hamlet’s mind in motion, and he now reconsiders what had originally appeared to be (in the light of his nascent game-theoretic problems) the relatively straightforward question of suicide. “In effect,” states Dalkey, “he carries out a post-mortem examination of his decision” (48).

On the one hand, as the prince enumerates, there are numerous reasons to commit suicide:

the whips and scorns of time,
Th’oppressor’s wrong, the proud man’s contumely,
The pangs of despised love, the law’s delay,
The insolence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of th’unworthy takes. (3.1.70–74)

On the other hand, and again in consideration of second-order thoughts, the prince wonders whether the willingness of others to suffer this burden bears witness to the “respect” (3.1.68) demanded by human “life” (3.1.69).

Despite this testimony, the prince wonders whether this social norm might relate not to reverence for life, but to anxiety concerning Afterlife:

Who would these fardels bear,
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
But that the dread of something after death,
The undiscovered country, from whose bourn
No traveller returns, puzzles the will,
And makes us rather bear those ills we have
Than fly to others that we know not of? (3.1.76–82)

The prince concludes this thought with the complaint that “conscience does make cowards of us all” (3.1.83).

Many commentators rightly interpret Prince Hamlet's use of the term "conscience" to mean introspection. "The introspective habit of mind, especially where, as in Hamlet's case, it is joined with high imaginative power," states A. W. Verity, "tends to an unpracticable detachment from the realities of life" (272). "Introspection," agrees Edward Burns, "holds us all back from non-being" (150). Indeed, as Agnes Heller insists of Prince Hamlet, "no other Shakespearean hero tortures himself with such angry introspection" (45). Underpinning this inwardness, however, is Ramus's understanding of holy conscience: that animating force is an impetus to correct reason (*recta ratio*), and that impetus unites the prince's *ratio naturalis* (natural reason) with his moral sense (*synderesis*).

Edward de Vere was effectively, correctly, and morally expressing his own pain. Although the domain of stagecraft cast him as a banker, the domain of statecraft continued to cast him as a player without strategic moves, and his risk-taking speculations testified to a lack of speculative foresight. He had not received Anne Cecil's dowry. He had lost money in backing the separate expeditions of Martin Frobisher and John Davis. His investment in the mining and trading of tin did not pay off. His loyalty to Henry Wriothesley ensured that Robert Cecil refused his petition for the lands of the executed Charles Danvers. The staging of his plays cost him money.⁸

In admitting to these losses, de Vere agreed to downsize, moving his family to King's Place, Hackney. The year was 1597. By this time, Elizabeth's courtiers knew Oxford's father-in-law as *pater patriae*, the people deemed him *quasi rex*, and politicians at home and abroad spoke of the *Regnum Cecilianum*. For Peter Ramus, a timocracy of free Protestants comprised the ideal nation, and individuals who acquired prominence were fulfilling their natural potential. Sir Thomas Smith's republican model, which Burghley had adopted and adapted, echoed Ramus's paradigm. Oxford understood and decried these convergences. *The Rape of Lucrece* parallels the emergence of the Roman Republic with its prospective English version under Burghley. Where Sextus Tarquinius's rape of Lucretia had incited a successful revolt against the House of Tarquin, Burghley had effectively seized power from the House of Tudor.

Now, with the gradual adoption of his aging father's political mantle, Sir Robert Cecil was wielding increasingly more of that power. The death of Burghley on 4 August 1598, which constituted a fourth aspect to the changing of the guard, consolidated Robert's takeover. With the death of John de Vere on 3 August 1562, Edward de Vere had effectively transferred his

Oedipal conflict onto Cecil, and although this transference had cost Oxford heavily, it had also conferred significant benefits. Try as he might, as *The Rape of Lucrece* exemplifies, de Vere could not deny this positive utility. Indeed, the mature Oxford, as Prospero in *The Tempest*, praises Burghley, as the elderly Gonzalo, for gifting him the written word: “Knowing I loved my books, he furnished me/[...] with volumes that/I prize above my dukedom” (1.2.166–68).

The books of greatest value were those that Oxford penned. His annual salary, his second wife’s own financial resources, her domestic management, and his turn from selfishness to kin-related altruism had secured this prize. The galling instrumental price for his ultimate achievement in letters was not penury. Rather, Oxford’s artistic gain had come at the price of approaching Smith’s commonwealth (or Ramus’s timocratic republic) from the wrong direction. Edward de Vere, as Stritmatter asserts, “was undoubtedly among the most downwardly mobile of the class of medieval nobility” (*Marginalia* 40). This instrumental price, emphasized by the personal and dynastic ascent of the ambiguously paternal William Burghley, must have sorely chaffed. Yet, as a man once devoted to the selfish pursuits that informed his art, Oxford found consolation from his ultimate devotion. That he underlined “the gospel ethic of voluntary poverty (Mark 10.21; Matthew 5.3; 6.19–21; 19.21) and ‘secret charity’ (Matt. 6.1–4)” (*Marginalia* 91) in his Geneva Bible intimates as much.

NOTES

1. De Vere’s paternal grandmother was Elizabeth Trussell (1496–1527).
2. That library, reports Richard Wilson in *Secret Shakespeare* (2004), “is supposed to have been a room where Shakespeare studied” (112).
3. This reference concerns Jones’s *Hamlet and Oedipus* (1910).
4. Notwithstanding this remark, Craig (386) identifies one definitely and one probably technical use of the term “proposition” in Shakespeare’s canon. The former usage occurs in *As You Like It*: “It is as easy to count atomies” (3.2.225), Celia complains to Rosalind, “as to resolve the/propositions of a lover” (3.2.225–56). The latter usage occurs in *Troilus and Cressida*: “The ample proposition that hope makes/In all designs begun on earth below” (1.3.3–4), mourns Agamemnon, “Fails in the promis’d largeness” (1.3.5).
5. Indeed, on one occasion in Shakespeare’s plays, in *The Comedy of Errors*, the seemingly true is known to be false, and this fallacy is named as such: “What error drives our eyes and ears amiss?” (2.2.175), asks Antipholus of Syracuse

in an aside. “Until I know this sure uncertainty” (2.2.176), he determines, “I’ll entertain the offered fallacy” (2.2.177).

6. Shakespeare’s use of enthymeme is rare. Other examples occur in *Coriolanus* (“Wouldst thou have laughed had I come coffined home,/That weep’st to see me triumph?” [2.1.149–50]) and *Troilus and Cressida* (“The amity that wisdom knits not, folly may easily untie” [2.3.90]). Shakespeare’s acceptance of the device, like Ramus’s, is grudging.
7. Of course, the sum of these probabilities $\left(\sum_{i=1}^n q_i\right)$ equals 1.
8. Oxford leased the Blackfriars theater for his troupes in 1596.



CHAPTER 10

Deadlock and the Prisoner's Dilemma in *King John*

CITIZEN: *Blood hath bought blood, and blows have answered blows;
Strength matched with strength, and power confronted power;
Both are alike, and both alike we like.
One must prove greatest. While they weigh so even,
We hold our town for neither, yet for both.*
—William Shakespeare, *King John* (2.1.329–33)

In a game-theoretic sense, logical practice, rational people, illogical behavior, and irrational characters manifest that predetermined “set of *schematic logical structures*” that Robert Hanna terms “protologic” (43; emphasis original). Human rationality has evolved to make effective, practical use of this predetermined set, and “in Shakespeare,” as Philip Davis avows, “it is not character that speaks, originally or finally, but a life-force, as anterior to character as it is prior to explicit theme or conceptualized agenda, which is entrusted to work itself out” (9). The schematic structures of protologic are integral to this resolution. “There are energies in Shakespeare *before* there are characters, and when the characters are called into being,” as Davis insists, “the forces that summon them still go on within and between them” (87; emphasis original); and for Oxfordians, as the present volume confirms, there were significant energies, actions, and events in Edward de Vere’s life before there was concerted creative writing.

Davis's complement to this Oxfordian insistence also resonates to a game-theoretic interpretation. "Shakespeare's drama generates a language creatively anterior to, and more primary than, mere paraphrase—where paraphrase means the approximate re-description of what is supposed to be already there, the subsequent laying on of pre-established opinion, the language of the mere second-order aftermath. And paraphrase is what we mainly do," as Davis maintains, "not just in literary criticism but in existence." We spend our time "putting received things into other words, knowingly repeating the already known in another version" (1). Protologic helps to structure this creatively anterior practice.

Sigmund "Freud has told us often enough that he would have to go back to the function of consciousness, but," as Jacques Lacan admits, "he never did" (57). Unlike Freudianism, game theory—"the 'conjunctural science,'" according to Bruce Fink, "with which Lacan most closely associates psychoanalysis" (x)—does not neglect this faculty. Nor does Shakespeare, whose *King John* consummately articulates the conscious management and self-interested perpetuation of regimes of status. Moreover, in dramatizing a monarchical reign so pertinent to the Oxford lineage, *King John* answers those questions of artistic stimulus that critics have so often asked. "Shakespeare's motivation for composing *King John*," asserts Jacob Hughes, "must be ascertained." On the one hand, this work is "set in a far earlier period than his other history plays" (107). This anomaly strikes a particular chord with Michael Delahoyde. What was "the initial motivation," wonders Delahoyde, "for Shakespeare resurrecting historical material so far outside his normal predilection for fifteenth-century English history" (7). On the other hand, as Hughes remarks, "the historical King John was very weak and generally accepted as a vastly inferior ruler to his brother" (107). Why base a play on such a figure?

A game-theoretic analysis of *King John* reveals that a determination to delineate the evolution of rational calculation was the playwright's principal motivation. Strategic thinking had become a matter of cultural inheritance for the Earls of Oxford. Aubrey de Vere (c. 1115–94) defected against the ultimate English banker by supporting Empress Matilda's claim to King Stephen's throne. After the king's capture during the First Battle of Lincoln (2 February 1141), the Earl of Essex negotiated an earldom for his brother-in-law, and Aubrey became the First Earl of Oxford, with his seat at Castle Hedingham, Essex. Although Stephen eventually quashed Matilda's uprising, and subsequently arrested Oxford, Aubrey successfully negotiated a rapprochement with the king.

Learning from his father's experiences, the Second Earl of Oxford, Aubrey de Vere (c. 1163–1214), cooperated with the ultimate English banker by staunchly serving King John (r. 1199–1216), only for Aubrey's brother Robert (c. 1165–1221), the third earl, to more than gainsay his brother's strategic example. This period in English history witnessed, as Jane Frecknall-Hughes details, "a large number of disputes over various feudal incidents, often to do with amounts payable to inherit, to marry, etc. John de Lacy, William Marshall the younger, Richard de Montfichet, Robert de Vere, William de Mowbray and Richard de Percy were all affected by such issues" (261). Robert de Vere, "a kinsman of the Mandevilles and the Clares," notes J. H. Round, "was an Essex magnate" (710). He was, as Alan H. Nelson emphasizes, "one of the peers who forced King John to sign the Magna Carta" (10) on 15 June 1215. The king's subsequent refusal to abide by that charter was a form of game-theoretic defection. The First Barons' War was the immediate result. Events soon assumed, however, a wider significance.

In November 1215, as William Chadwick chronicles, "a great Council was held at Rome; at which the Abbot of Beaulieu, and Thomas Hardington and Geoffrey de Crawcombe, knights, appeared as proxies of the King of England against the Archbishop of Canterbury, to accuse him publicly of connivance with the English barons" (115). Pope Innocent III (r. 1198–1216) found in King John's favor; he excommunicated the barons en masse; but "seeing that a general sentence of excommunication had little effect upon the barons, now, by the King's desire, [he] excommunicated them by name and individually" (117). Those individuals included Robert de Vere. Despite the pope's intercession, the rebellion continued with the support of Lewis, the French Dauphin, whom the barons proposed for King John's throne. Part of the king's response involved a successful siege of Castle Hedingham; Lewis returned to France; King John retained his crown.

De Vere now pledged loyalty to the king, but paid homage to the dauphin, who proclaimed himself king on John's death. Lewis subsequently recaptured Castle Hedingham. He restored the earl's seat, but not all of his estates. Oxford's response was defection. He joined those barons—the majority—who favored the crowning of the late king's son. Their collaborative desertion of the dauphin was successful: Henry of Winchester acceded to the throne as Henry III on 19 October 1216. Within two years, the king's advisors were satisfied of Robert de Vere's steadfastness, and Henry fully restored his estates. Nevertheless, the Earls of Oxford would never forget nor excuse King John; he had effectively set these

sorry events in motion; and this lineal memory supports the self-effacing “presence” of Robert de Vere, Third Earl of Oxford, in *King John*.

Shakespeare’s play, with what Hughes calls its “aware[ness] of primogeniture, land disbursement, politically motivated marriage arrangements, and commodity” (109), on the one hand, and “its vigorous anti-papal elements and topical relationship with Elizabeth’s relationship with the Vatican” (107), on the other, captures both the reasons and the consequences of Robert de Vere’s defection. That encapsulation concerns two-choice, two-player coordination problems in which men of political power tend less toward blind faith and more toward rational calculation. To reiterate, Oxford eschews the reduction of coordination problems to flat dichotomies, and this attitude toward other people is calculative rather than presumptive. Unlike Peter Ramus, Edward de Vere does not assume that the profounder judgment of one player precludes his opponent’s choice of cooperation or defection. Ramus does not embrace the intersubjectivity of coordination problems, but Oxford does.

The tendency toward rational calculation by men of political power in *King John* is apparent from the dramaturgical outset. As Lester A. Beaurline observes, Part I, which comprises Acts 1–3, “creates the conditions for John’s tragedy in a series of dubious and difficult choices, vows and broken vows, that foreshadow worse times to come” (37). Thus interpreted, “chance and chaos” (69) do not render “the complex world” (17) of *King John* “unamenable to rational formulation” (69), as Kenneth Tucker supposes. Rather, as Beaurline argues, the “characters are forced to make personal choices in a society torn with strife, and they act in response to specific pressures that bring them to dramatic life” (49).

Beaurline’s interpretation identifies a shift in English mindset from a religious conscience that knows no countermand toward a calculative rationality. In turn, this identification at once confirms Shakespeare’s principal reason for composing the play and raises the critical significance of that play. “It is commonly said,” as Beaurline summarizes, “that *King John* is poorly constructed, that the Bastard is or should really be the hero, and that Shakespeare lacked interest in the script” (1).¹ A game-theoretic reading of the play agrees with Beaurline in undercutting this hackneyed response. Acts of genuine religious conscience are reflexive rather than reflective. “Whether faith expresses a character’s trust in, or fear of, God,” as Steven J. Brams explains, “it allows him to act blindly, thereby lifting from him the burden of sophisticated calculations” (53). Blind faith is a species of dominant strategy that dictates player behavior. Such a player

believes that he has chosen the unconditionally best option. Hence, "when a character's faith in God is not blind," as Bram maintains, "he needs to make more sophisticated calculations to ascertain how to act rationally." Blind faith may advocate the same strategy as recommended by rational choice, but "the logical process needed to arrive at it in the second case will be more demanding in terms of both the preference information required and the sophistication needed to process this information" (43).

While identifying a paradigmatic move toward a rational mindset, Shakespeare's revolutionary interpretation of European history in *King John* acknowledges the attendant transitional burden. The ambivalence of Tudor historians toward King John fits this twofold recognition, and the young Edward de Vere would have encountered this divided attitude in Robert Fabyan's *The New Chronicles of England and France* (1516), a copy of which Sir Thomas Smith held in his Hill Hall library. "Tudor historians," as Igor Djordjevic traces, "consulted a growing number of medieval sources to produce the major printed chronicles of the sixteenth century" (14). Concerning King John:

There is a remarkable consistency in their portrayal of the major events of his life and reign. Robert Fabyan, Richard Grafton—both as printer and continuator of John Hardyng's verse *Chronicle* (1543) and as author of his own *Chronicle at Large* (1569)—John Foxe in the two editions of *The Acts and Monuments* (1563 and 1570), John Stow in *The Summary of Chronicles* (in several editions from 1565), and Raphael Holinshed in the 1577 edition of the *Chronicles*, as well as in the revised 1587 edition of his work supervised by Abraham Fleming in the portion dealing with English history, all rely on a sequence of major events that build his character and construct, on the whole, an ambivalent royal portrait. (14)

King John suggests that the national and international powerbrokers of the High Middle Ages were beginning to see statecraft anew. The play represents, as John Francis Danby avers, "the dissolving of the Chronicle pattern, its break-up and rearrangement" (69). The anachronistic use of historical details is a tactic toward this end: *King John* implies that cost-benefit analyses were contributing to the machinations of statecraft: monarchs and statesmen were coming to believe that the process and progress of history were not under God's sole aegis.

The dramaturgical tactic of dissolving the Chronicle pattern also concerns the topic of literary sources. The influence on Shakespeare of John Bale's *King Johan* (1562), a Protestant propaganda piece, is undoubted.

John de Vere, the Sixteenth Earl of Oxford, was one of Bale's patrons; a copy of *King Johan* was at hand at Castle Hedingham; Edward de Vere probably read Bale's play. Nor would Oxford have forgotten that *Regnans in Excelsis*, Pope Pius V's bull of 25 February 1570, had declared Queen Elizabeth a heretic and a schismatic. The pope's declaration had hardened the already distrustful attitude of English Protestants toward their Catholic counterparts. "It is impossible that they should love her," stated Lord William Burghley's confidante Robert Beale, "whose religion founded in the Pope's authority maketh her birth and title unlawful" (qtd. in Stephen Alford 199). After the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre, the slaughter that Francis Walsingham and Philip Sidney had witnessed and that had included Peter Ramus among its victims, the Queen's Men "applied the lessons of John Bale's *King Johan* (1562) on a nationwide scale," repackaging "the story of a long-gone monarch to advance the cause of Queen Elizabeth's reign [...] against the scourge of Catholicism" (Mark Anderson 207).

Nor should Shakespeare's additional familiarity with *The Troublesome Raigne of John, King of England* constitute a surprise. Initially published as an anonymous work in 1591, the reprinted version of *The Troublesome Raigne of John* from 1611 appears under the authorship of "W. Sh." *King John* not only rearranges and balances the two primary characters from *The Troublesome Raigne of John*, but also omits superfluous material from that play. These differences suggest, as Hughes argues, "that *Troublesome Raigne* was written first." Compositionally, "it is more logical" for a playwright "to omit rather than to add" (107). Structurally, "Shakespeare's mastery is reflected in rearrangement and omission, a reprioritization of the play's loci" (110). These particulars have their Ramist correspondences. Compositionally, to repeat Ramus from *Rhetoricae distinctiones in Quintilianum*, "in every art one should teach as many parts as exist in its proper, natural subject matter, and no more" (105). Structurally, as Manuel Breva-Claramonte observes, Ramism promotes "a structural approach to language" (73), and this promotion often necessitates a reduction or distillation of compositional material. These homologies point to an author with a highly attuned rationality. That indication supports the Oxfordian argument. *King John* rearranges, emends, and reprioritizes its various sources, historical and literary, in Ramist fashion. A refined piece of stagecraft is the result. "The play appears not to be derivative but original theatre of a high *order*" (Beaurline 1; emphasis added).

That high order cleverly parallels King John's reluctance to sanction the murder of his nephew Arthur, Duke of Brittany, with Queen Elizabeth's

prorogation of Mary Stuart's execution. The Royal Proclamation of 16 May 1559 "had prohibited stage plays from dealing with 'either matters of religion or of the governance of the estate of the common weale,'" as Brian Gibbons relates, "and this seems to have been interpreted as meaning 'forbidding direct treatment in plays of current public issues or the representation of important living persons'" (1–2). The Policy of Plays, however, exploited the stage for political ends. This strategy served its purpose—one that resounded to Ramus's understanding of cypsis—in subtly attempting to inculcate the populace. Rather than Mary's eventual fate, the subtext of *King John* testifies to Queen Elizabeth's conscience. Difficult issues elicited the queen's conscious and painstaking consideration. Edward de Vere witnessed, and was sometimes prey to, this protracted process. Yet, while Oxford often chaffed under game-theoretic bankers, *King John* effectively legitimizes the monarchical right to strategic moves. "If royal conflict is different from other forms of conflict," suggests Brams, "it is probably so in the a priori legitimacy royalty usually enjoys." Monarchs "enter most conflicts with certain advantages that make them more powerful game players" (127). Oxford acknowledged these prerogatives.

International politics of the Tudor period pitted regimes of status against each other, with conflicts across national borders amounting to contests for the role of European banker. Although Edward de Vere's position in Elizabeth's court subjected him to strategic games, this subjection apprised him withal of global affairs. Selfishness, dishonesty, chicanery, and callousness were emerging as political characteristics in an age when rational calculation was becoming coextensive with religious conscience. "Since God does not speak in His own person," states Beaurline, "He must speak only through someone whom the political order has authorised to speak" (47). "The crucial thing," as Sigurd Burckhardt observes, "is not whether that someone is the Pope, the Emperor or the King; the crucial thing is that there *be* one, and only one, such voice" (143; emphasis original). Holy leagues built on subservience to assumed authority jarred with the apostatic Ramus. His eventual rejection of Catholicism in favor of Calvinism expressed this reaction.

In contrast, as his promotion of an egalitarian shift in the dissemination of learning attested, political authorization of God's earthly representative resonated with the timocratic Ramus. That envoy combined holy conscience with correct and natural reason. In game-theoretic terms, as the Ramist John Milton would imply with the designation of "umpire conscience"

(3.195) in *Paradise Lost* (1667), that representative was God's banker. In the context of *King John*, three different men embodied that role: Pope Innocent III in the Vatican, King Philip II (r. 1180–1223) in France, and King John in England. The first pertinent decision concerning these figures in the play, which comes prior to the events recounted in *King John*, concerns the English monarch's refusal of Pope Innocent's choice of Stephen Langton as Archbishop of Canterbury. "Where we do reign," as the king later reasserts, "we will alone uphold/Without th'assistance of a mortal hand" (3.1.157–58) from Rome. "I alone," insists John, "alone do me oppose/Against the Pope" (3.1.170–71).

Similarly, the Third Earl of Oxford's excommunication by Pope Innocent III, Roger Ascham's criticisms of Pope Clement VII, Pope Pius V's *Regnans in Excelsis*, and the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre came before Oxford's composition of the play. "In 1534," as Alford chronicles, "Roger Ascham spoke against the Pope and so was disciplined by the senior fellows of St John's. But, as he wrote years later, the matter of the King and the Pope was 'then in every man's mouth'" (18). That same year, the vice-chancellor of Cambridge University, and master of Queen's College, Simon Heynes debated the extent and validity of papal authority. Finally, Edward de Vere's description of Admiral Gaspard de Coligny as an "eyesore or beam in the eyes of the papists" (qtd. in Fowler 55) finds expression, as Naseeb Shaheen first remarked (132), in the preliminaries to Arthur's execution in *King John*:

- Hubert. Come, boy, prepare yourself.
 Arthur. Is there no remedy?
 Hubert. None but to *lose your eyes*.
 Arthur. O God, that there were but a *mote* in yours,
 A grain, a dust, a gnat, a wandering hair,
 Any annoyance in that precious sense. (4.1.89–93; emphasis added)

The compositional strategy of crypsis comprises various tactics, as Ramus noted, with the narratological move of starting in the middle being foremost among them. Correspondingly, the strategic games in *King John* begin in medias res, with a two-choice, two-player coordination problem. This dilemma, which is more pressing than King John's denial of papal authority, emerges during Act 1. Chatillon, the French ambassador to London, claims the English throne for Arthur, Duke of Brittany, in the

name of King Philip. King John's response is immediate. He gathers his army, makes to mainland Europe, and heads for the city of Angiers. His arrival occurs almost simultaneously with Chatillon's report to King Philip of this incursion. In effect, as King Philip's regret ("How much unlooked for is this expedition" [2.1.79]) reveals in response to his ambassador's summation of the situation ("To parley or to fight, therefore prepare" [2.1.78]), John has called the French king's bluff.

Apocryphally, the ducal principality of Angiers, situated in the Comite region of Anjou, was of historical importance to the de Veres. "It must be admitted," writes Catherine Powlett, Duchess of Cleveland, "that the modern heralds are less imaginative than their predecessors. The genealogy of the De Veres (quoted by Leland) derives them directly from Noah." That lineage includes "Meleagar that slew the Caledonian boar, Diomedes who was at the siege of Troy, &c., till it reaches Verus, 'so named from his true dealing, and baptized by Marcellus A.D. 41,' from whose second son descended Miles de Vere, Duke of Angiers and Mentz, the brother-in-law of Charlemagne, and progenitor of the family" (1:4 n).

In *King John*, the English and French armies confront one another outside the disputed Angiers, the inhabitants of which the Citizen represents. "These flags of France, that are advanced here/Before the eye and prospect of your town," the English monarch warns him, "Have hither marched to your endamagement" (2.1.207–09). For the sake of protection, urges King John, the Citizen should grant the English "harbourage within your city walls" (2.1.234). Conversely, King Philip swears no greater harm to Angiers than Arthur's rights demand: "Being no further enemy to you," he states, "Than the constraint of hospitable zeal,/In the relief of this oppressed child,/Religiously provokes" (2.1.243–46). If Angiers admits the English, however, "'Tis not the roundure of your old-faced walls/Can hide you from our messengers of war," warns King Philip, "Though all these English and their discipline/Were harboured in their rude circumference" (2.1.259–62).

Each of these disingenuous approaches fails. "The two kings make equally plausible arguments and are equally unconvincing," contends Beaurline, "for their speeches seem confected" (25). *King John* hereby anticipates what Douglas Duncan calls "the mischievous logic and rhetoric of Marlowe's plays" (111). The "smoke of rhetoric" (3.1.52) in these works, to appropriate Armado from *Love's Labour's Lost*, recalls the rhetoric of those "diabolical" authors, such as Lucian and Niccolò Machiavelli, whom second-generation Ramists were reading at Cambridge University.

These devilish writers “had supposedly devoted their verbal skills to perversion of truth” (111). The kingly arguments proffered at Angiers in *King John* attempt to meet this diabolic standard. Under the Citizen’s careful consideration, however, their effect is unconvincing.

An evolution in rational thought accounts for this failure: preeminent men were embracing the promoted status of logic in statecraft; the English king’s Great Council was commanding greater constitutional power; and European citizens were beginning to apprehend facts, interpret events, and anticipate political actions. “Even before King John signed the Magna Carta,” as Thomas Regnier notes in “Did Tudor Succession Law Permit Royal Bastards to Inherit the Crown?” (2012–13), “English kings were not absolute rulers. The king’s Great Council, which had the power to prevent the king from raising taxes, eventually evolved into what we now call ‘Parliament’ and officially assumed that name in the 1230s” (42). Edward de Vere, Seventeenth Earl of Oxford, through Sir Thomas Smith and Lord William Burghley, was closely associated with current parliamentary developments; William Shakspeare of Stratford was not. That Burghley was known as *pater patriae* at court and as *quasi rex* among the people, and that the term *Regnum Cecilianum* was widely applied at home (as well as abroad) to English governance, all spoke of his involvement in this process. That the Citizen in *King John* is equal to kingly strategies is consistent both with history and with Oxford’s view of Burghley’s strategic power.

The Citizen senses the equality of the armies arraigned against Angiers; he realizes that these forces are best dissipated against each other; quite rationally, therefore, he returns the dilemma to the kings. “Till you compound whose right is worthiest,” he calmly announces, “We for the worthiest hold the right from both” (2.1.281–82). Crypsis informs at once the kings’ disingenuous strategies and the Citizen’s strategic intuition. This democratic use of method in reverse helps to reveal how King John and King Philip unintentionally promote the Citizen to the position of game-theoretic banker (or international powerbroker). Canonically, this promotion is significant because a similar elevation does not attend the representative of Bordeaux in *The First Part of King Henry VI*. Bordeaux and Angiers undergo similar sieges; the General and the Citizen personify each respective city, but the dramaturgical space afforded to the General is conspicuously different to that allotted to the Citizen: whereas the General makes only a fleeting appearance in *The First Part of King Henry VI*, the Citizen appears repeatedly throughout *King John*.

This comparison reveals not only Oxford's determination to express a personal dissatisfaction, but also his artistic evolution. In the first revelation, the Citizen's promotion dramatizes Oxford's desire for brokerage status. When he composed *King John*, but not before, Oxford realized that the dramaturgical stage alone would afford him this rank. In the second revelation, the Citizen effectively separates differences in logic from socially constructed differences. By definition, protologic antedates the social constructions of class, race, gender, and sexuality, and the Citizen's reasoning acknowledges the independence of coordinative logic from these constructs. More specifically, *King John* understands how the divisions of formal logic involve those characteristics that distinguish *difference* in *special* terms—where *special* is the Renaissance adjectival form of *species*—and how the wielders of power attempt to misappropriate this distinction. “In logic,” explains Hardin Craig, “*difference* means the quality, mark, or characteristic that distinguishes a species from all other species in the same class; it is the attribute by which a species is distinguished from other species of the same genus” (388).

Craig illustrates this aspect of Shakespeare's logical awareness with reference to Sonnet 105. “The fourth line of the sonnet” (“To one, of one, still such, and ever so”) is “expressive of absolute unity,” and “gives rise to the logical description in the eighth” (“One thing expressing, leaves out difference”). Craig “insist[s] also that ‘argument’ in the ninth” (“Fair, kind, and true, is all my argument”) as well as “‘invention’ in the eleventh” (“And in this change is my invention spent”) “are used with logical references” (389).

The Merchant of Venice carries this logical awareness too. Shylock reckons on a cost–benefit analysis to demote Bassanio in Venetian society. The removal of Bassanio's specialness will make him Shylock's social equal. “Well, thou shalt see” (2.5.1), the moneylender promises Launcelot; “thy eyes shall be thy judge,/The difference of old Shylock and Bassanio” (2.5.1–2). Part of what prompts Shylock's design against Bassanio is the moneylender's general classification as a racial inferior. Salerio challenges Shylock about Jessica's paternity on precisely these grounds. She cannot be your daughter, reasons Salerio, because “[t]here is more difference between thy flesh and hers than/between jet and ivory; more between your bloods than there is/between red wine and Rhenish” (3.1.31–33). Yet, as the Duke of Venice indicates, the difference that truly counts between Shylock and the Venetian majority is a utility rather than a payoff. “That thou shalt see the difference of our spirit” (4.1.364), predicts the

duke, "I pardon thee thy life before thou ask it" (4.1.365).² Moreover, Shylock's ultimate failure at the court of justice, as this distinction adumbrates, will hinge on logic rather than on social standing.

In *King John*, recognition of the independence of coordination problems from participant status lends importance to the Citizen's words as *speech acts*. In terms of *illocutionary force*, or the performative aspect of a statement as implied by its speaker, and *perlocutionary force*, or the perceived value of a statement as inferred by its hearer, the physical locations of locution are significant. In addressing the Citizen, who stands on the city walls, the kings must look up to him. The *locutionary force*, or the semantic meaning of the Citizen's statements, is additionally instructive. The Citizen has mastered the Ramist understanding of rhetoric as the dangerously exploitable Ciceronian art of speaking well. In contrast to the kings' "confections," and as if expressing the mirror symmetry that pertains between the monarchs, the Citizen's rhetoric displays what Beaurline calls "a pattern of equal phrases" (25).

As this equivalence foretells, the ensuing battle reaches a stalemate, and as the Citizen expects, the kings again resort to bluff. King Philip's herald announces "victory with little loss doth play/Upon the dancing banners of the French" (2.1.307–08). King John's herald declares the return of armor "all gilt with Frenchmen's blood" (2.1.316). Each party, as supposed conqueror of the other, demands the right to enter Angiers, but each king favors inkhorn words over their hard alternatives. "After the battle the English and French heralds claim victory for their respective armies, in *symmetrical* communiqués purporting to be straight from the field," notes Beaurline in unconsciously echoing the vocabulary and mathematical visualization of a game theorist, "but their pompous, ceremonial language and over-confident declarations of victory *cancel each other out*" (25; emphasis added). Armado's overly Latinate words, high-flown phrases, and false syllogisms from *Love's Labour's Lost* find their complement in these overblown announcements.

Beyond indicating that both kings remain blind to the rational abilities of their subjects, their heralded declarations confirm the current stalemate, which conjures up the quaternary structure of rational thought that Peter Ramus approached when visualizing dialectic. The inner four boxes of a two-choice, two-player game-theoretic matrix summarize this model. "In lieu of merely telling the truth," to appropriate Walter J. Ong from *Ramus, Method, and the Decay of Dialogue*, *King John* "'contain[s]' the truth, like

Table 10.1 The Angiers Deadlock

		French	
English	Cooperate (C)	Cooperate (C)	Defect (D)
	Defect (D)	1,1 3,0	0,3 2,2

boxes" (313), where Ong's simile refers to Ramus's diagrammatic mind-set. In precise game-theoretic terms, the two armies are at *Deadlock*.

With *C* standing for cooperation and *D* for defection, the mathematical formula that expresses the descending outcomes in this social dilemma is $DC > DD > CC > CD$. The temptation for unilateral defection (*T*) betters the punishment for mutual defection (*P*), which surpasses the reward for mutual cooperation (*R*), which betters the sucker outcome for unilateral cooperation (*S*). The descending outcomes in this nomenclature produce the formula $T > P > R > S$. Table 10.1 sets out this model in a manner that a Ramist of Oxford's caliber would have understood.

Mutual defection is the single Nash equilibrium for Deadlock; this equilibrium is a Pareto optimum; Deadlock is a zero-sum game that meets both the minimax and the dominating strategy principles.

The "two parties fail to cooperate," as William Poundstone states, "because neither really wants to—they just want the other guy to cooperate." Effectively, each side tries to coerce the other, and an impasse describes the result. "Deadlock," maintains Poundstone, "is not properly a dilemma at all" (218). In theoretic terms, Glen H. Snyder and Paul Diesing support this contention, but they attribute more significance to its practical effects than Poundstone does. "Empirically," they maintain, "the story is not that simple" (124). Complexities arise because each player lacks the willingness to either think reflexively or bargain, or lacks both of these inclinations simultaneously. The resultant combination of complementary deficiencies marks the dispute as a mutual "duty or absolute constraint" (128). Any concessions mooted by *soft-liners*, or reflexive thinkers willing to bargain, are vetoed by ruling *hard-liners*. Hence, the breaking of a Deadlock often requires third-party intervention.

As an Elizabethan courtier, Edward de Vere witnessed not only two impasses on the international stage, but also English interventions to break those Deadlocks. In tracing the sixteenth-century origins of modern Europe, Heather M. Campbell discusses the relevant willingness of nations to intercede on behalf of other countries. "It is scarcely surprising that,

when any struggle became deadlocked, the local rulers should look about for foreign support; it is more noteworthy," as she observes, "that their neighbours were normally ready and eager to provide it." Self-preservation accounted for their support. "This willingness to assist arose because every court in Europe believed in a sort of domino theory, which argued that, if one side won a local war, the rest of Europe would inevitably be affected." Elizabeth appreciated the domino effect: she "offered substantial support after 1585 to the Dutch rebels against Philip II [of Spain] and after 1589 to the Protestant Henry IV of France against his more powerful Catholic subjects" (53).

Like Edward de Vere, William Shakspeare would have faced social dilemmas, such as Deadlock, but unlike Oxford, Stratford was not embroiled in the machinations of Elizabeth's court. That artists attempt to employ aesthetic constructions commensurate with the social dilemmas they delineate comes as no surprise, yet only a gifted minority achieved this correspondence. "We strive not only to follow," states Ramus in "Pro philosophica disciplina" (1551), "but in some places to conquer and overcome" (1016). Providential ability is not enough to achieve artistic consummation. The interpersonal relays that articulated social dilemmas on the international as well as national stage informed Oxford's mind, and the art that eventually emerged from that source appreciates both the anticipated and unexpected ramifications of Deadlock. "Many interesting and frustrating things," aver Snyder and Diesing, "can happen on the reluctant journey to [this] inevitable outcome" (124).

Ramus's invalidation during his master's examination of the late-scholastic appeal to Aristotle's authority had brought about a short-lived intellectual Deadlock. On that occasion, and according to the preference structure of this social dilemma, Ramus's logic had forced his examiners to act illogically in cooperating with their examinee. This logical paradox, which had appealed at some level to their Aristotelian rationality, had temporarily overcome his examiners' intransigence. Nevertheless, as the constraining edict of 1544–47 attested, their autocratic inclination demanded redress. The accession to the French throne of Henry II freed that impasse, but the underlying antagonism remained until the ultimate breaking of the Deadlock, with the two parties' mutual defection leading to Ramus's brutal murder.

As Oxford understood, and as *King John* delineates, a bloody Deadlock describes the situation between the English and French forces at Angiers: no matter what the other king does, as a logical cost–benefit analysis of

the possible outcomes shows, each achieves a better outcome if he defects. Although his troops suffer, each monarch avoids the lowest two outcomes. For King Philip, "this is the very sum of all" (2.1.151). For King John, to quote his response to Chatillon's original proposal, "here have we war for war and blood for blood,/Controlment for control" (1.1.19–20). Neither monarch wants to compromise; he only wants his opponent to back down. For the Citizen, who understands this logic—"Blood hath bought blood, and blows have answered blows" (2.1.329), he observes, "Strength matched with strength, and power confronted power;/Both are alike" (2.1.330–31)—the Deadlock must continue. "Both alike we like" (2.1.330), he maintains. "And till it be undoubted, we do lock/Our former scruple in our strong-barred gates,/Kinged of our fears," he admits, "until our fears, resolved/Be by some certain king, purged and deposed" (2.1.369–72). In effect, and for the sake of Angiers, the Citizen pushes each king toward a rational kind of madness: the insanely logical outcome of mutually assured destruction.

Like the Citizen, the Bastard acknowledges the "undetermined differences of kings" (2.1.355), but despite his newly awarded status as "Sir Richard and Plantagenet" (1.1.162), he lacks the Citizen's standing. The Citizen is an international powerbroker, the Bastard is not. What is more, the Citizen personifies untitled meritocracy, and this grates with the Bastard, whose political perspective echoes the Aristotelian understanding of social polity. The Citizen, whose profession remains unknown, exemplifies Abraham Fraunce's defense of Ramus. "Coblers be men," avers Fraunce in *The Lawiers Logike*, "why therefor not logicians? and carters haue reason why then not logike?" (23). Fraunce's artisans and laborers find their generic manifestation in the Citizen.

As that second-generation Ramist William Perkins insisted, an individual did not inherit a calling, he chose one; that choice equated to a form of game-theoretic strategy; and Citizenship in *King John* is a calling. The widening acceptance of this calling in sixteenth-century England was a tangible result of the late-humanist challenge to its scholastic counterpart, with the Edwardian project of Protestant reform facilitating a moderate relaxation of prescribed identity. In consequence, as Edward de Vere would have read in Sir Thomas Smith *De reipublica Anglorum*, governance must direct a willful people toward the collective good. Furthermore, a similar mutuality exists between the queen and her councilors, so that England functions at once as a monarchy and as a meretricious republic. Parliamentarians, logically and rhetorically gifted, but loyal rather than cryptic, have succeeded Church fathers. The House of Commons, as Anne

McLaren explains, “will secure England’s elect status (the conditional tense is suggestive), through edification of ‘the people’ inclusively defined [in] the body of the realm” (926). Smith’s reformed republic, as tempered in practice by Burghley, values social mobility and material prosperity as Protestant virtues. In effect, relational structures between citizens now approach protological first principles, with virtue and recognition replacing earlier bonds of servitude and subjection.

In Smith’s *A Discourse of the Common Weal*, Oxford would have read how his former tutor unequivocally equated rank with virtue. This stance was characteristic of a Protestant apologetic and far removed from the conventional view that Shakespeare invests in Iago. For Iago, the social order is not only hierarchical, but also static, and the Protestant equation of rank with virtue provoked anxiety among many families of aristocratic standing. *Othello* both articulates this fear and expresses the accompanying political resistance. That the baseborn Iago embodies these responses is ironic. As a thinker and politician, Smith should have eased such fears, but this man of extremes erred toward singular persuasion rather than dialectical compromise. Individual attempts at social promotion, as Smith’s personal tendency demonstrated, are conducive to internal Deadlocks. Edward de Vere was well aware of this tendency. He would surely have learned how the relationship between Edward Seymour, First Duke of Somerset, and Sir Thomas Smith had effectively reached an impasse. Seymour exiled Sir Thomas Smith to Eton College. Smith’s rise through the social ranks, whatever his later contributions as ambassador to France during Queen Elizabeth’s reign, never fully recovered from this setback. Unlike William Cecil, Smith neither became a lord nor gained admittance to the Most Noble Order of the Garter, and Oxford, whom the chivalrous order also shunned, would have recognized these failures.

Cecil understood how attempts to maximize revolutionary potential often led to minimal change. The destabilization of established social classes tends to produce internal strife. The timocratic but downwardly mobile Oxford would have concurred with his father-in-law. The choice is between a rigid hierarchy—controlled by matters of birth, rules of inheritance, and conferrals of promotion by recognized superiors; the sort of static order that the Bastard champions in *King John*—and a descent into the “chaos” that Ulysses fears in *Troilus and Cressida* (“when degree is suffocate,/Follows the choking” [1.3.126–27]). Cecil, who mitigated Smith’s Ramism, engaged his sovereign in the art of discussion. The resultant *Regnum Cecilianum* retained “the souerayntie ouer the rude and

vnleamed" (*Discourse* 23), of which Smith wrote, in establishing what Neal Wood calls "the parliamentary rule of the landed classes of monarch, gentlemen (*nobilitas maior* and *nobilitas minor*), and yeomen" (36).

Important to this rule under Queen Elizabeth was the perceived gender of citizenship. In this matter, Smith was less extreme than the unmitigated apologist John Aylmer (1521–94), and Smith's chauvinism was another reason for the queen's guarded attitude toward him. Aylmer's *An Harborowe for Faithfull and Trewе Subjects* (1559) advanced St. Paul's decree countenancing women's governance of men. Smith demurred. Not only Martin Bucer, as a professor of divinity at Cambridge University, but especially François Hotman, as a political theorist of Ramist inclination, influenced this attitude. The affinity between Smith's *De republica Anglorum* and Hotman's *Francogallia* (1573), as McLaren suggests, supported Smith's "image of a Protestant nation uniquely designed, through history and by God's grace, to survive the threat of ungodly rule—at this point potentially at hand (in England) in the form of a female ruler" (938). That affinity, in its turn, deferred to Ramus's *Liber de moribus veterum Gallorum*. Thus informed, Smith "proposes marriage as a God-ordained model of office-holding in which male and female conjointly exercise rule," as McLaren expounds, "metaphorically describing the relationship between queen and counsel that will make of the unmarried queen a 'prince'" (934). Put succinctly, Smith accommodates the protological antecedence of gender by casting the author of dialectic, God, as the male antecedent of protologic.

For Smith, the House of Commons should be an egalitarian assembly in which "perpetual oration" expressed collective (male) reason, and the Speaker of the House finds his Shakespearean counterpart in the (male) Citizen in *King John*. The Speaker embodied parliament itself; the virtuousness of his position foreswore degree; he spoke for the entire assembly. In theory, the House of Commons recognized all *men's* consent. Neither the crown, nor the parliament, nor the common Englishman is supreme. In practice, however, landowners still wielded parliamentary power. They seldom deferred to the wishes of the lower orders, and only did so when compelled by law or self-interest. Smith's belief in individual self-interest coordinated toward the common good was never realized. "In actuality," remarks Wood, "the English state of the time was arguably the most sovereign of any in Western Europe" (40).

Queen Elizabeth, as the disputations attended by Edward de Vere and Sir William Cecil during her 1564 visit to Cambridge University evinced, sought to uphold that sovereignty. The opening disputation, as proposed

by Thomas Byng, posited two contentions. First, “monarchia est optimus status republicae” (monarchy is the best state of the republic). Second, “frequens legum mutatio est periculosa” (frequent changes of statute are dangerous) (Bromley Smith 497–98). Smith’s “Philoxenus” had irritated the queen.³ His argument in *De republica Anglorum* that the queen was a prince was a further irritant, which his contention that majesty was inherent in the body politic, rather than in the body of the monarch, exacerbated. To Smith, monarchical qualities were divorceable from the prince; as such, either the Star Chamber or the House of Commons could embody these capacities. Smith’s Protestant commonwealth recognized a form of civic capacity that any man or men could potentially exercise.

Yet, both chambers, as manifestation of “wise men,” were hardly egalitarian. Social standing, as Burghley ensured, governed admission to them, and these bodies alone had official access to the monarch. Smith seems to have recognized this fact. Indeed, *De republica Anglorum*, as though echoing Plato’s contrast between the extremes of wisest kingship and final sickness, contrasts monarchy with tyranny. The wise prince’s share in lawmaking provides equity to meet the common law. The people’s role in this process is substantial. Their collective consent legitimizes the monarch. For some Tudor historians, King John’s signing of the Magna Carta had transformed him into the ideal prince. Before that act, he had been a tyrant; and Huguenot political discourse, as Smith knew from his ambassadorial duties in Paris (1562–66, 1571–72), figured Louis XI as a tyrant too.

According to Smith’s definition, “a tyraunt they name him, who by force commeth to the Monarchy against the will of the people, breaketh lawes alreadie made at his pleasure, maketh other without the advise and consent of the people, and regardeth not the wealth of his communes but the advancement of him selfe, his faction, and kindred” (15). Indeed, some judges “blame *Lewes* the xi. for bringing the administration royall of Fraunce, from the lawfull and regulate raigne, to the absolute and tyrannicall power and governement. He himselfe was wont to glory and say, he had brought the crowne of Fraunce *hors de page* as one would say out of Wardship” (16). François Hotman and Theodore Beza, as Huguenot political theorists of a Ramist inclination, described Louis XI as a king *hors de page* (or beyond constraint). Smith uses exactly the same term. One wonders whether the Puritan in Smith, in composing *De republica Anglorum* in 1561, when he was still responsible for Edward de Vere’s upbringing, envisaged a profligate future for his charge. Did Smith, as his translation of “*hors de page*” as “out of Wardship” implies, foresee Oxford’s uncontrollable majority?

Oxford's controlled aesthetic was, in a sense, always out of control. Thus, the elevation of the Citizen in *King John* to game-theoretic banker, as if Oxford's art overpowered both his noble caste and Ramus's commitment to timocracy, signals social improvements to come. For the Bastard, this promotion is an immediate threat to monarchical preeminence and a step toward constitutional disintegration. "The Bastard," according to Beaurline, "wants the kings to avoid negotiation or compromise" (26). More accurately reasoned, however, the Bastard recognizes game-theoretic banking as a regal role. "By heaven, these scroyles of Angiers flout you, kings" (2.1.373), he rages, "And stand securely on their battlements/As in a theatre, whence they gape and point/At your industrious scenes and acts of death" (2.1.374–76). The Bastard's counterintuitive alternative promotes mutual cooperation (or the compromise of confederation) between the kings. This alliance should target Angiers. Beyond teaching the Citizen a lesson, this action will weaken the forces arraigned against the English: "Austria and France [will] shoot in each other's mouth" (2.1.414); the post-Angiers battle will fall in England's favor. This strategy is not, as Beaurline thinks, "hare-brained" (26); the Bastard is not "zany" (26); he is astute and clear-sighted.

Game-theoretically, this clarity envisages a temporary change in utilities, with mutual cooperation trumping mutual defection. In effect, the Bastard proposes to replace Deadlock with a Prisoner's Dilemma. In a Prisoner's Dilemma, the temptation for unilateral defection (T) betters the reward for mutual cooperation (R), which surpasses the punishment for mutual defection (P), which betters the sucker outcome for unilateral cooperation (S). The mathematical formula that expresses the descending outcomes in this nomenclature is $T > R > P > S$. Table 10.2 provides the matrix for the Prisoner's Dilemma proposed by the Bastard.

"The essential difference between Deadlock and Prisoner's Dilemma," emphasize Snyder and Diesing, "is that in the latter there is some compromise (R, R) available, which both parties would prefer to no agreement (P, P)" (46). Like Deadlock, mutual defection is the single Nash equilib-

Table 10.2 The Prisoner's Dilemma proposed by the Bastard

		French	
		Cooperate (C)	Defect (D)
English	Cooperate (C)	2,2	0,3
	Defect (D)	3,0	1,1

rium for the Prisoner's Dilemma, but unlike Deadlock, this equilibrium is not a Pareto optimum. "Deadlock," as Poundstone relates, "is a Prisoner's Dilemma with the reward and punishment payoffs switched" (217).

The Bastard's solution would strip the Citizen of his status as game-theoretic banker, reestablish King John and King Philip as international powerbrokers in his stead, and demote the utility for Angiers from best to worst. Beaurline is correct, therefore, in rating the Bastard's proposal as "honourable" (26), because the Bastard anticipates the prospective reengagement between England and France as "armour conscience buckled on" (2.1.564). In other words, the Bastard understands that the rational abilities of monarchs are coextensive with their religious consciences, that the former faculty sometimes assumes behavioral dominance over the latter, but that conscience presently dominates.

Faced with the potential danger of a social dilemma solved to the disadvantage of Angiers, and in a further revelation of his rational powers, the Citizen echoes the Bastard's strategic assay. The Citizen suggests a form of mutual cooperation that the kings will find more tempting than both the defect-defect option in Deadlock and the cooperate-cooperate option in a Prisoner's Dilemma: a dynastic marriage between Blanche of Spain, the English king's niece, and Lewis, the French king's eldest son. Of course, Edward de Vere could testify to the dynastic ambition of William Cecil, who had successfully exercised his strategic mind in securing his daughter's marriage to Oxford. Cecil's ultimate aim concerned the Cecilian generations to come. His dynastic template was a mental projection, which Ramus's visualizations of rational thought, especially his decision trees, appeared to shadow. In failing to produce a male descendant with Cecil's daughter, Oxford thwarted his father-in-law's design. A stalemate pertained between the oldest patrilineal dynasty of nobles in England and Burghley's dynastic strategy. Anne de Vere's death ensured the perpetuity of that Deadlock.

In *King John*, the union between Blanche and Lewis would permanently dissolve the present impasse and, more importantly for the Citizen, waylay the Bastard's scheme. To promote his plan, the Citizen plies the kings with the rhetorical style of their failed attempts to persuade him to their respective causes. "Like Cicero before him," writes Ineke Murakami, "Quintilian's version of rhetoric and dialectic sought to transform students into orators destined 'to control the state and its citizens.'" Ramus realized, however, "that classical rhetoric's mixture of discursive techniques with moral philosophy produced unanticipated results. At least as often as it molded

virtuous statesmen, rhetoric taught men about the power of rhetoric: how it traded on popular beliefs in education's transformative power and could be manipulated to sway an audience to ill effect. This was possible, according to Ramus, because 'the inexperienced common people' were convinced by arguments like Quintilian's that rhetoric itself was a moral virtue—that beautiful speech signified a beautiful soul" (104–05). Ramus tempered this contention. Skilful oratory could hide one's true nature. Thus, "when the Citizen finds it necessary to save the city from almost certain destruction by the combined armies," as Beaurline observes, "he dissimulates as much as the kings and in the same style" (25).

In response, the Bastard ridicules the Citizen's linguistic style, but to no avail. Ramus deemed the imitation of a careful selection of esteemed practice the surest route to developing written and oratorical skills. The Citizen, who esteems the political rather than the rhetorical aspect of the monarchs' oratory, abides by this Ramist standard. Each king's social status supports his rhetorical action (or *pronuntiatio*), but his rhetorical expression (or *elocutio*) shrinks under Ramist inspection, with its tropes and figures exposing the mediocrity of their thoughts. The Bastard, who esteems both the political and the rhetorical aspects of the monarchs' oratory, does not practice such scrutiny. The mimetic rhetoric of the Citizen's oratory, which is both poorly constructed and doggedly insistent, supports his argument. The Bastard's use of parody, which unwittingly parodies the monarchical mode of expression, undermines his scheme. In consequence, King John and King Philip adopt the Citizen's compromise, with the dynastic marriage between Blanche and Lewis promising to outperform the alternatives of Deadlock or Prisoner's Dilemma. The English monarch "give[s] Volquessen, Touraine, Maine,/Poitiers and Anjou, these five provinces/With her to thee" (2.1.527–29). He adds to this dowry, "Full thirty thousand marks of English coin" (2.1.530). This supplemental gift, as Oxford knew well in dealing with his father-in-law's reluctance to transfer parental property, makes the dowry a strategic focal point. The French monarch accepts this offer. The "peace and fair-faced league" (2.1.417) proposed by the Citizen has wiped the Bastard's plan from kingly minds.

To the Bastard, peaceful and permanent cooperation, rather than a Prisoner's Dilemma of bellicose and temporary cooperation, is a "mad composition" from "mad kings" in a "mad world" (2.1.561). The proper minds of kings have settled on improper coordination. In Ramist terminology, each king's state of mind is proper to his status as a monarch—where

“*proprium*, both as *proper* and *propriety*,” as Craig details, “is frequent in Shakespeare in its logical sense of pertaining to one of a species but not common to the whole” (389)—but improper in its improvidence.

Nor is the Citizen directly responsible for this condition. The Bastard concedes this point in blaming him for awakening “that smooth-faced gentleman, tickling Commodity” (2.1.573), where Commodity denotes “profit; personal advantage; self-interest” (Rhona Silverbush and Sami Plotkin 12), “scheming self-interest” (Geraldine Cousin 25), and simple “self-interest” (Russell A. Fraser 11). In effect, as his rant against “this Commodity,/This bawd, this broker” (2.1.581–82) attests, the Bastard blames one powerbroker (the Citizen) for indirectly empowering another (Commodity).

Oxford must have charged Burghley, however implicitly, with the same offense. In June 1586, Burghley had enquired whether Walsingham had consulted the queen about Edward de Vere. Burghley’s continuation of that request—“I pray you, send me word if you had any *commodity* to speak with Her Majesty to speak of My Lord of Oxford and what hope there is”—is revealing. Although Burghley’s use of the word “commodity” meant “opportunity” or “occasion,” his language barely repressed the underlying issue, which concerned the earl’s finances. If Walsingham had any news, continued Burghley, then “let Robert Cecil understand [that] it [is] to relieve his sister” (qtd. in Anderson 209; emphasis added). Burghley feared for his daughter’s financial well-being and her brother’s anxieties on that account. Kin-related altruism, as a species of Commodity, overwrote any compassion for his son-in-law.

“To the Elizabethans,” writes Harold Clarke Goddard, “Machiavelli was the father of this god, Commodity.” In referencing Commodity, the playwright introduces a term that postdates King John’s reign, employing this anachronism because “no synonym quite expresses the wealth of meaning that the Bastard compresses into the word” (1:142). In this manner, *King John* captures Machiavelli’s notion of Commodity as well as Ramus’s recasting of logic and rhetoric. Although Smith’s treatises do not use the word “commodity” as a synonym for acquisitiveness, *A Discourse of the Common Weal* and *De republica Anglorum* posit self-interest, specifically “avarice,” “lucre,” and “profit,” as the cornerstone of civil unity. In this compositional context, then, the Bastard’s repeated use of the singular anachronism “Commodity”—six times in a single scene, but on no other occasion—is highly significant. To Machiavelli, self-interest was a human trait, and in coordination problems, as von Neumann insists, the behavior of each player “is motivated by the same selfish interests” (13). The appearance of Commodity in *King John*, to appropriate Larry S. Champion’s conclusion

about the play as a whole, "reveals historical process as human process determined innately by fundamental self-interest, a concept vital to the nature of [Shakespeare's] subsequent histories and tragedies" (173).

The Bastard's comprehension of Commodity, however, is incomplete. The resulting ironies facilitate much of his stage presence. On the one hand, he rhetorically acknowledges the personal lure of deferred self-interest—"And why rail I on this Commodity?/But for because he hath not wooed me yet" (2.1.587–88)—but fails to realize that this enticement nurtures his desire for "honourable war" (2.1.585). On the other hand, he decries not only self-interest, but also the monarchical shift from blind faith toward rational calculation that leads King John and King Philip to eschew self-interest. Commodity had prompted mutual defection during their Deadlock, and would have prompted mutual cooperation in a Prisoner's Dilemma, but they chose neither course. "The most electric character in the play," as Delahoyde believes, "the Bastard, Faulconbridge, is positioned as faithful to his sovereign but ambivalent about his sovereign's motivations. He rails against the hollowness of commodity while the king desperately plays political musical chairs on the continent" (7).

Oxford hereby recognizes the set of schematic logical structures that articulate problems of coordination. *The Troublesome Raigne of John and King John* cannot help but share similarities of plot and structure, but while the former draws on aesthetic tactics and stratagems that are common to traditional stories such as *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, the latter shows greater authorial prescience. Delahoyde, in summing up Hughes's argument concerning the respective Bastards in *The Troublesome Raigne of John and King John*, echoes Hughes's conclusion about this insight. "If we see both bastards on an artistic continuum, their frustrations are compatible, but Shakespeare's Faulconbridge presents a nuanced and articulate[d] expansion on the other's anger. In effect, the bastard has grown up" (7). More accurately stated, however, the dramatist has matured.

That maturation recognizes how the Bastard's partial blindness toward Commodity—he does not believe, as Sir Thomas Smith did, that well-directed self-interest can secure the realm—protects him from excessive mental turmoil. Seeking a logical and unique solution to social dilemmas produces, to repeat Oskar Morgenstern, "an endless chain of reciprocally conjectural reactions and counter-reactions" (174). The arbitrary choice of the solutions on offer can be unpleasant, but this type of solution is the only legitimate one. Otherwise, as *Troilus and Cressida* testifies, a player must step outside the ordinary rules of engagement. Diomedes implicitly usurps Pandarus's part as Troilus and Cressida's agent. Achilles, in order

to diffuse his shame at Ajax's unforeseen promotion, orders his "fellows" to "strike" (5.9.10) the "unarmed" (5.9.9) Hector. Ulysses, beyond the extent of the play, but surely on the playwright's mind, breaks the stalemate at Troy with his deployment of the Trojan Horse. Only Edward de Vere, Seventeenth Earl of Oxford, was capable of deploying two-valued logic in the Ramist manner that underpins this aspect of *Troilus and Cressida*. Only Oxford had what Virginia Woolf in *A Room of One's Own* (1929) describes as a truly "androgynous" (624) (or two-valued) mind. Only Oxford was able to promote this high-grade Ramism. Only Oxford could have fully appreciated the unsportsmanlike (or extraludic) dissolution often elicited by such problems.

Assuming the cloak of paradox in social dilemmas, logic seemingly rebels against logic: the circular chain of reasoning "can never be broken by an act of knowledge but always only through an arbitrary act" (Morgenstern 174); and the lack of a logical and unique solution, where such an answer to a coordinative dilemma is a contextual expectation, can drive a player toward a combination of compulsion, obsession, hysteria, and paranoia. "There is," as Ian Parker explains of a psychoanalytical reading of this predicament, "a tension [...] between the 'subject' and 'structure'" (338). The subject expects an answer, *the* answer, from this structure, but that expectation is never met. This provocative lack helps to explain why, as David Metzger reports, there is a "curiously logical range of behaviors identified in the psychoanalytic clinic" (81).

The Bastard's endurance of such contradictions is, therefore, nothing as compared with Constance's complementary suffering. As one can surmise from Eleanor's judgment concerning Constance's ludic desire to "check the world" (2.1.123) as well as from Constance's ensuing plight, King John's sister-in-law has a particularly strategic frame of mind. An active impasse between her (Ramist) favoring of certainty over probability and her consideration of (game-theoretic) social dilemmas undermines her mental health. Her admission, "With my vexed spirits I cannot take a truce" (3.1.17), expresses the resultant turmoil. "Peace is to me a war" (3.1.113), she rants in backing the option of mutual defection on the battlefield, which the mutual cooperation between her brother-in-law and King Philip then doubly confounds. An active impasse more accurately describes Constance's condition than the standard recourse to madness does; with Edward de Vere, the assured dramatist, finding more to stalemates than William Poundstone, the doubtful game theorist, can.

NOTES

1. Present-day disparagement of *King John* usually draws on E. M. W. Tillyard's *Shakespeare's History Plays* (1944). This volume, as Frances A. Shirley traces, "became one of the standards for generations of students. The chapter on *King John* is a scholarly attempt to get at the cause of his dislike of the play, with its disjunction between John the man and John the patriotic English King standing up to foreign pressures" (xvi).
2. This significant logical difference dovetails with what Anderson calls Oxford's addition of "an underplot relevant to current events in 1597" (294). "On 11 January 1597," reports Paul Hemenway Altrocchi, "Oxford wrote to Sir Robert Cecil concerning a petition to the Privy Council by Thomas Gurlyn against Oxford's wife, Elizabeth. The background to Gurlyn's petition is obscure, but appears to relate to events which transpired shortly after Oxford's arrival in the Low Countries on 27 August 1585." Gurlyn's case "was dismissed at trial" (54). The underplot of *The Merchant of Venice* carries a specialized message, therefore, one informed by Oxford's specialized knowledge of Venice as a mercantile city, and one expressly aimed at a specialist audience: that of lawyers and students of law.
3. Queen Elizabeth might have been blind to subtle criticisms concerning her increasing self-infatuation, but Oxford understood this undercurrent to Smith's dialogue on the queen's marriage, with his former guardian's pretensions finding expression in the arrogance of characters such as Achilles in *Troilus and Cressida*. Ulysses damns the "seeded pride" (1.3.317) that has to "maturity blown up/In rank Achilles" (1.3.318–19). Overblown pride can be fatal to its bearer. The leitmotif of self-consumption in *Troilus and Cressida* affirms this danger. "He that is proud eats up himself," maintains Agamemnon, "pride is his own glass, his/own trumpet, his own chronicle, and whatever praises itself but in/the deed devours the deed in the praise" (2.3.141–43). The play speaks loudly of the want of humility.



CHAPTER 11

Assurance Games in *Antony and Cleopatra* (Part 1)

Make not your thoughts your prisons.

—William Shakespeare, *Antony and Cleopatra* (5.2.184)

“*Antony and Cleopatra*,” writes Kenneth Tucker, “feature[s] lovers willing to risk much to consummate their desires, disruptive conflicts between the lovers, and opposition from *thinking types* who seek to disprove the value of such ardent love or disregard such passion in the pursuit of ‘*rational goals*’” (57; emphasis added). The a priori demands of coordination account for these features. Hence, a game-theoretic reading of *Antony and Cleopatra* at once identifies the play’s dominant social dilemma and questions the capacity of the play’s characters to resolve the relational dynamics enforced by that governance.

The formal shape of *Antony and Cleopatra* implies that William Shakespeare derives his groundplot from the coordinative relations chronicled in Plutarch’s *Vitae*. In *The Problem Plays of Shakespeare* (1963), Ernest Schanzer outlines these relations, with the structural pattern of *Antony and Cleopatra* “consist[ing] (a) of a series of contrasts between Rome and Egypt; and (b) of a series of parallels between Antony and Cleopatra.” This double construction “helps not only to give the play shape and coherence but also, more importantly, it becomes a silent commentator, a means of expressing the playwright’s attitudes and concerns.” Shakespeare uses this constructive principle elsewhere, but “of all [his] plays this is probably the one in which the structural pattern is most perfectly adjusted to the theme

and has, in fact, become one of the chief vehicles for its expression" (133). From a Ramist perspective, the doublings, recapitulations, and mirrorings of plot in *Antony and Cleopatra* express the coordinative designs established by the structural manifestations of dialectic. Game theory, which provides a concise summary of the options available to two players facing the same pair of choices, encapsulates these manifestations in a single model, and that model captures both strands of Schanzer's outline.

Within that framework, and within the purview of a game-theoretic reading, the misapprehension that players can alter protologic contributes significantly to the unfolding tragedy. The playwright could have discovered intimations of this misunderstanding in either Plutarch's *Vitae*, the Countess of Pembroke's *The Tragedie of Antonie* (1592), or Samuel Daniel's *Tragedie of Cleopatra* (1594), and these intertextual proposals undoubtedly favor the Oxfordian hypothesis. "It is easier to connect Edward de Vere with Shakespearean sources," to repeat the well-founded insistence of Eddi Jolly and Patrick O'Brien, "than to connect Shakespeare of Stratford with them" (24). In the case of Plutarch's *Vitae*, Sir Thomas Smith owned a copy, and the young Edward de Vere had access to this volume. In the case of Pembroke's *The Tragedie of Antonie*, Mary Herbert (née Sidney), Countess of Pembroke, was among Oxford's friends. M. B. Malyutov writes of "an aristocratic Inner Circle surrounding the Queen," which included Francis "Bacon, Edward de Vere and Mary Sidney Herbert" (370). William Farina calls the countess "mother to the 'Incomparable Brethren' to whom Shakespeare's First Folio would be dedicated" (66). In the case of Daniel's *Tragedie of Cleopatra*, as Farina observes, "Samuel Daniel dedicated to Mary Sidney the first edition of his *Cleopatra*, intended as a companion piece to her *Antonie* and growing out of his associations with the Sidney literary circle" (214).

From ahistorical sources, and as previously discussed, the author of *Antony and Cleopatra* could have found suggestions of humanity being responsible for its own fate in Niccolò Machiavelli's *The Prince*. This additional influence also upholds the Oxfordian argument: Smith's Hill Hall library held Machiavelli's complete works; "Sir William Cecil," as Sara Warneke reports, "received a copy of one of Machiavelli's discourses from Sir William Pickering in 1551 or 1552, although it is more than likely that he encountered Machiavellian theory earlier" (120). Moreover, Smith and Burghley were no doubt familiar with the popular but somewhat misconstrued attitude toward the Machiavellian, as forwarded by Innocent Gentillet (c. 1535–88) in *Contre Nicolas Machiavel* (1576). Gentillet

“ascribed to Machiavelli’s writings,” as Edward Meyer observes, “not only the massacre of St. Bartholomew, but also the whole French policy, from Henry II to Charles IX and Henry III” (7–8).

In fine, Edward de Vere’s critical appreciation of Ramism supports the Oxfordian case for *Antony and Cleopatra*, with the playwright’s prescience at once acknowledging the crucial role of rational dilemmas in human affairs and the a priori structuring of these situations. Whatever the outcomes to such dilemmas, as the play repeatedly recognizes, codependent decision-making accounts for these results. Each player, anticipating the other players’ choices, selects from the available strategic options. In complex mathematical models, a continuous scale ranks the possible outcomes, but rudimentary simulations need only rank outcomes in ordinal sequence. As if to illustrate this point, Charmian’s bawdy wordplay concerning the love life of another of Cleopatra’s servants, Alexas, enumerates a succession of steadily reducing outcomes: “O, let him marry a woman that cannot go,/sweet Isis, I beseech thee,” jests Charmian. “And let her die too, and give him a/worse, and let worse follow worse till the worst of all follow him/laughing to his grave, fiftyfold a cuckold!” (1.2.58–61).

With their startlingly effect, these rare moments of broad humor break receptive indifference, helping to define *Antony and Cleopatra* as a *problem play*, but not in the usual definition of this term. Conventionally, as Schanzer relates, “we find a concern with a moral problem which is central to [the play], presented in such a manner that we are unsure of our moral bearings, so that *uncertain and divided responses* to it in the minds of the audience are possible or even probable” (6; emphasis added). The underlying issue in *Antony and Cleopatra*, however, concerns the structuralism that seemingly prefigures the play’s reception. The structural basis of *Antony and Cleopatra* tends to remove the human subject from interpretative consideration. This abstraction restricts an audience’s empathy with the characters. “Because Shakespeare is primarily interested in having an audience understand the conflicting demands upon Antony,” as William Rosen notes, “we do not become emotionally involved with the protagonists” (152). Impassive responses to Antony’s predicament, observes David Bevington, “seem structured into the play itself in its many antitheses: Egypt and Rome, the contrary attractions of pleasure and of political or military ambition, and the like.” Yet, these “polarities are inherent in the life of every individual to a greater or lesser extent,” and a critical awareness of that inherence helps to banish receptive indifference (Bevington 15).

Bevington's observation supports the structuralist explanation of the playwright's unusual decision concerning contextual superimposition. As Bevington relates, Shakespeare normally "impose[s] upon the late pagan world [...] the sensibilities of post-classical and Renaissance England," but *Antony and Cleopatra* "is remarkably free from the moral constraints found in most of Shakespeare's other great tragedies" (12). The protological framework of *Antony and Cleopatra* secures this freedom. To repeat, whether the text was vernacular, formal, nonfictional, fictional, or philosophical, Peter Ramus's mode of analysis remained largely unaltered. Oxford's structurally problematic *Antony and Cleopatra* emerges from, and responds to, his critical Ramism. In consequence, "what modern-day critics see immediately is that the world of this play very closely resembles our own" (Charles A. Hallett 77).

Recourse to the work of Stephen A. Shapiro reaches the same conclusion from a classical angle. "Paradox pulses through the drama," avers Shapiro. "Cleopatra 'makes hungry/Where most she satisfies' (II. ii.237–38), and tensions of conflict enrich the life of Antony, who seeks what it is death to find. Both Antony and Cleopatra make 'defect perfection'" (24). The "Heraclitean" paradigm, which consists of "flux, conflict, and paradox" (25), hereby articulates the play. For Heraclitus, explains Philip Wheelwright, "a radical and serious paradox does not hang upon a removable confusion, but is demanded by the complexity and inherent ambiguity of what is being expressed" (98). Similarly, "what is being expressed in *Antony and Cleopatra*," as Shapiro concludes, "is the relationship between self and world, a relationship *structured necessarily* by *ambivalence and paradox* because no simple harmony can resolve the antitheses—ego—objective world, pleasure—pain, activity—passivity—that govern our lives" (25; emphasis added).

The play does not lay bare this framework: the mathematical exploration of the rational paradoxes that attend certain coordination problems would not appear until John von Neumann's foundation of game theory. So, in placing Antony under different conditions to his other tragic heroes, and despite having Ramus's dialectic on which to draw, the playwright cannot explicitly articulate, so must intimate, the protological basis of Antony's predicament. Pandarus, as Oxford's Cecilian agent in *Troilus and Cressida*, traces the pattern of interrelations between the eponymous lovers, and in doing so incites them to discuss their problems, however hesitantly and inchoately, but no comparable intermediary serves Antony and Cleopatra.

The political conditioning of Antony's situation stems from his behavior as a triumvir at a time of increasing civil unrest. The sixteenth-century student could turn to Ramus as well as to other notable sources, such as Aelius Donatus, for information about this period of Roman history, but had to be wary of misinformation. In his *Life of Virgil*, Donatus claims that Cicero admired Virgil's *Eclogues*, yet "there is a chronological error here," as Pierre Bayle observes, "for it is certain that Virgil did not write his *Eclogues* till after the triumvirate of Octavius, Marc Anthony, and Lepidus, during which Cicero was cruelly murdered." Maurus Servius Honoratus, working from Donatus's *Life of Virgil*, made a comparable mistake in relating how "the sixth Eclogue having been heard with vast applause when the author recited it, it was afterwards sung upon the stage by the courtezans Cytheris or Lycoris, and that Cicero one of the auditors was seized with astonishment" (14). Ramus noted this error: "[I]t is contrary to chronology," he states, "for Cicero was killed four or five years before in the proscription under the triumvirate" (qtd. in Bayle 14). That Ramus, a man whose works suffered proscription, empathized with Cicero should come as no surprise (whatever Ramus's concerns over Ciceronian rhetoric): in styling himself as a present-day Socrates, the French philosopher had effectively prophesized his own state-sponsored murder.

Hence, a playwright well versed in reliable sources, such as Plutarch and Ramus, as Edward de Vere surely was, would have known of the unrest within the Roman Republic at the time of Antony and Cleopatra. That period witnessed the coordinated powers of three men—Marcus Aemilius Lepidus, Mark Antony, and Octavius Caesar—control and maintain the republic. The dominant social dilemma that vouchsafed this political equilibrium was the Assurance Game (or Stag Hunt)—one of those interrelational dilemmas effectively discounted by Ramus but effectively acknowledged by Oxford—that Jean-Jacques Rousseau later outlined in *A Discourse Upon the Origin and Foundation of the Inequality Among Mankind* (1755).

For Rousseau, personal gain through cooperation for the common good became primitive man's strategic reaction to the evolution of communality. The hunt for prize game encapsulated this response. "If it was a matter of hunting a deer," reasons Rousseau, "everyone well realized that he must remain faithfully at his post" (111).¹ Group hunting exhibited synergistic mutualism. This collective experience helped primitive men "come gradually together" (113); "relationships became more extensive and bonds tightened" (114); "it was no longer possible for anyone to be refused consideration" (114). *Core division*, the sharing out of proceeds

from a joint venture, accounted for this impossibility. Repeated hunts enforced this behavior as a social norm. Hereafter, players mutually coordinated their expectations of one another, and the uptake of strategic assurance led to more rapid social advances, with human progress removing the species ever further from its primitive condition.

Concerning the Oxfordian case, and apparently overlooked by game theorists, is Thomas Smith's anticipation of Rousseau's argument. Smith's *A Discourse of the Common Weal of This Realm* predates Rousseau's discourse on inequality by more than 200 years. Oxford must have brought his well-rounded judgment of Ramism to bear on Smith's treatise. Alongside an appreciation of their benefits, that judgment would have acknowledged the two major problems that attend Stag Hunts. Failing to find a deer undermines trust between the hunters. Ravenous and bored, "if a hare happened to pass within reach of one of them," as Rousseau remarks, "we cannot doubt that he would have gone off in pursuit of it without scruple and, having caught his own prey, he would have cared very little about having caused his companions to lose theirs" (111). Nor do coordinative expectations necessarily facilitate beneficence: mutual recognition facilitates riots and mob violence too. The coordinated expectations of Catholics during the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre denied core division to the Huguenots and Calvinists of Paris. Ramus's murder exemplified this denial. Hence, in putting Smith's notions into practice, Burghley at once resisted an empire ruled by a tyrannical monarch and a republic ruled by chaos and disorder—and whatever their personal differences, Oxford would have been conscious of his father-in-law's delicate balancing act.

For the game-theoretic model of an Assurance Game, where C stands for cooperation and D for defection, the mathematical formula that expresses the descending outcomes is $CC > DC > DD > CD$. The reward for mutual cooperation (R) betters the temptation of unilateral defection (T), the temptation of unilateral defection betters the punishment for mutual defection (P), and the punishment for mutual defection betters the sucker outcome for unilateral cooperation (S). The mathematical formula that expresses the descending outcomes in this nomenclature is $R > T > P > S$. Table 11.1 sets out this model in a manner that a Ramist of Oxford's ability would have understood.

The Assurance Game is a non-zero-sum game that meets neither the minimax theorem nor the dominant strategy principle. There are, however, two Nash equilibria: mutual cooperation and mutual defection. The former solution is *payoff dominant*: combined effort promises the greatest

Table 11.1 Possible outcomes to an Assurance Game

Player 1	Player 2	
	Cooperate (C)	Defect (D)
Cooperate (C)	3,3	0,2
Defect (D)	2,0	1,1

reward. The latter solution is *risk dominant*: defection in the face of disloyalty avoids the worst payoff. These stable solutions are Pareto ranked; the Pareto optimum is mutual cooperation, yet, as Michael S. Alvard and David A. Nolin observe, “experimental evidence shows that [...] groups can get ‘stuck’ at [the] nonoptimal equilibrium” (536). This unfortunate outcome often results from individual foolhardiness.

Edward de Vere, as a player who redirected his strategic frustrations into risk-taking, exemplified this tendency. When faced with the two stable solutions to an Assurance Game, his focal point tended to favor payoff dominance. This inclination was particularly pronounced in the period between his majority and the granting of his state annuity. He appreciated Pareto optimality and usually targeted that outcome. John de Vere, Edward’s father, was a committed hunter; he displayed the cooperative patience required to secure prize game, but “the son,” as Alan H. Nelson chronicles, “never developed a passion for the hunt” (23). Intuition might suggest that a risk taker would relish this activity, but game theory refutes this proposal, forging an accord with the historical evidence. The paradox of assurance means that common interest does not guarantee cooperation: successful collaboration requires not only mutual beliefs, but also trust.

At the outset of *Antony and Cleopatra*, rationality dictates cooperation between the triumvirs, and that mutuality favors the Pareto optimum. With just three participants, this strategy is relatively easy to coordinate, with loyalty securing the major prize of the Roman Republic (or Stag). Disloyalty would threaten the loss of their republican prize. Oxford’s wardmaster had experienced this kind of small player coordination firsthand. Cecil’s “The Device for the Alteration of Religion” had suggested the creation of a commission to ensure that government policies complied with the Protestant settlement. This proposal, which Stephen Alford classes as “one of the most intriguing and important [...] of the first years of Elizabeth’s reign” (91), revealed Cecil’s (implicit) appreciation of a *quorum*.

Defection during a many-person dilemma need not necessarily defeat the overall scheme (or *lumpy good*), because there is often the opportunity

to *free ride*: a lumpy good demands no more than the satisfaction of a quorum (or *provision point*). Business meetings illustrate these game-theoretic terms. “Everyone is better off if the meeting is held and departmental business is completed,” as Richard Jankowski suggests. “However, it is often preferable to free ride if one knows that the quorum will be met” (456). That the minimum number of attendees is unmet, and that everybody suffers as a result, is the danger associated with free riding. Oxford’s wardmaster appreciated this menace. “Division in council,” insisted Cecil, is “dangerous, if not a subversion of a state” (qtd. in Michael Hickes 142). To avoid this possibility, Cecil proposed that a few commission members should have an elevated status, which empowered any subgroup of six commissioners they headed to act with overall authority.

The rendition of Roman rationality in *Antony and Cleopatra* is consistent with this logic.² On the one hand, as George Wilson Knight notes in *The Imperial Theme* (1931) of Cleopatra’s insightful estimation of Antony, “a world of meaning is compressed in the simplest phrase: ‘a Roman thought hath struck him’ (I.ii.87)” (204). On the other hand, the game-theoretic structure of the Roman Assurance Game encourages and accommodates Shakespeare’s atypical reliance on prosaic language. “The most powerful phrases are often colourless” (204), as Knight maintains, because language matches personal estimations of the considered task. “The royal occupation” (4.4.17) of war, for example, will make Antony, in his own words, merely “a workman in’t” (4.4.18). “There is no sonority, nor, in fact, any deep notes at all in the play,” reiterates Knight. “Tragedy is taken lightly, almost playfully: yet this lilting merriment of diction holds, strangely, a more intense fire than the solemn cadences or curbless passions of the somber plays” (203). Indeed, this apparently staid style, which follows the Ramist rubric of subordinating rhetoric to logic, “holds in it a more dynamic and intense power, and emotion than any other [style],” as Knight insists: “words and phrases here are as atoms compressing an infinite force and energy” (204).

The a priori structuring of human relationships at once articulates and empowers this atomistic use of language, and Edward de Vere, while residing at King’s Place, Hackney, employed the philosopher Nicholas Hill (c. 1570–c. 1610) as his secretary. Contemporary critics ridiculed Hill for advocating Democritus’s atomic philosophy. The Democritean universe consisted of atoms. The quantitative properties of atoms—their size, shape, and motion—were invisible. Their qualitative arrangement produced observable matter. Hill’s advocacy of this philosophy, whatever the

thoughts of his detractors, complemented Oxford's critical Ramism. The formation and arrangement of (visible) game-theoretic players can create or dismantle (invisible) strategic relations.

Significantly, the logical coalition, or human relationship, that ensures the triumvirs' retention of power in *Antony and Cleopatra* depends on three markedly different personalities. The dramaturgical focus on the differences between these characters contributes to the banishment of receptive indifference. Lepidus, according to Mungo William MacCallum, is "insignificant and imitative" (297); he is, avow Harold Bloom and Neil Heims, "a weak and ineffectual man" (41); "the weakest of the triumvirate," concurs Roma Gill, Lepidus has become the object of "derisive comments" (57). Among the purveyors of this scorn is Domitius Enobarbus. In endowing Enobarbus with a propensity for brachylogia (the logical device of omitting conjunctions), the playwright displays his own mastery of logic and rhetoric, a combination of skills that exemplifies Ramus's insistence in *Brutinae quaestiones* that although "the aims and instruction of these arts are kept apart," they can become "associated through usage" (280). "But he loves Caesar best; yet he loves Antony:/Hoo!" intones Enobarbus. "Hearts, tongues, figures, scribes, bards, poets, cannot/Think, speak, cast, write, sing, number, hoo!/His love to Antony" (3.2.15–18). The conjunctive lack in these lines steadily increases the rhetorical force of Enobarbus's invective.

Nonetheless, the Roman Assurance Game requires not only Lepidus's loyalty, but also his seemingly negative attributes. No Pandarus serves Antony's relationship with Cleopatra, but Lepidus figures as a communicative agent between Antony and Octavius. "Lepidus," as Pompey (Sextus Pompeius) notes, "flatters both" (2.1.14). "He must be everybody's friend; and," as Harley Granville-Barker argues, "while the patching-up of quarrels is in train, who more useful than this mild-mannered little man, with his never-failing, deprecating tact?" (136). The lack of genuine prestige awarded by these friendships, however, emphasizes their speciousness. As a go-between, Lepidus draws on his automatic imitativeness of Octavius to avoid the coordination condition of silence, and so promote tripartite consensus. What MacCallum rates as a negative is, therefore, more than an occasional positive.

In contrast, Octavius's self-regulated rationality is coldly calculative. This delineation, which is consistent with Octavius's portrayal in *Julius Caesar*, answers to Oxford's possible sources. Smith's Hill Hall library, as his 1 August 1566 manifest indicates, held "Tacitus Annales Généalogiques"

(John Strype, *Life* 276) and “Appiano di Guerre Civile” (Strype, *Life* 277). The first of these volumes, as Francesca Santoro L’Hoir remarks, praises the “heroic” (258) Octavius. What is more, “historians in the Society of Antiquaries,” as Karen Ordahl Kupperman reports, “were joined by national leaders such as Francis Bacon and William Cecil in their interest in the study and dissemination of Tacitus’s works” (37). Smith, who mentions Octavius (219) in his “Philoxenus,” was another of these interested parties. The second of these volumes, contends Schanzer in both *Shakespeare’s Appian* (1956) and *The Problem Plays of Shakespeare*, was a minor source for Shakespeare’s *Antony and Cleopatra*.³

Shakespeare’s Octavius, however, evolves from these sources. The resultant character is constantly reckoning strategic outcomes. He embodies an ethos of committed self-interest. His ultimate aim targets a personal empire. The need to manage the forces of self-interest would have recalled Smith’s revolutionary tracts on strategic assurance to Oxford’s mind: without government intervention, self-interest endangers the common interest, but with that involvement, self-interest promotes civil discipline; this policy requires the artful manipulation of individuals into a cohesive body. “Self-seeking,” explains Elizabeth Lamond, “is a great force which may be directed by the wise statesman” (xxiv). Burghley had accepted this directorship under Queen Elizabeth. The queen’s tolerance of his role showed she was no tyrant. The *Regnum Cecilianum* manifested Burghley’s “sovereignty” over the rude and unlearned. Unrestrained avarice was a subversive force, so the government intervened in economic relations, making strategic moves in favor of the common good.

Both domestic and international trade, as Oxford would have learned from Smith’s theory and its Burghlian practice, could be non-zero-sum games. No one need lose. The accompanying feelings of success crowned home and foreign relations. Prior to Smith’s treatises, economic discourses emphasized the national prospects from international trade, with little thought afforded to mutual benefits. By-product mutualism reigned over its synergistic alternative. After Burghley put Smith’s notions into rudimentary practice, however, government intervention effectively encouraged the choice of optimal equilibria in non-zero-sum trade games with other nations. Cooperation favored all parties. Defection promised a greater individual reward, but was riskier, depending as it did on the compliance of others.

Defection is the Machiavellian choice that appeals to Octavius in *Antony and Cleopatra*. “He is seen in this view,” writes Robert P. Kalmey, “as the

evil and impelling force of the material and base world" (277). Octavius is a self-seeker who rates himself as the wisest of politicians. Shakespeare, who cites Machiavelli in *The First Part of King Henry VI*, was familiar with Octavius's archetype. This rare Shakespearean reference to a Renaissance philosopher occurs when Richard Plantagenet describes Francis, the Duke of Alençon, as "that notorious Machiavel!" (5.4.74).⁴ Gentillet's *Contre Nicolas Machiavel* was dedicated to Alençon, and Oxford, during his disillusionment with Protestantism, had supported Alençon's proposal of marriage to Queen Elizabeth. The mature playwright, reconciled with the religion of his birth and upbringing, regretted that decision. In dramaturgical terms, he acknowledges his fluctuating responses to Alençon, creating a number of memorable Machiavels for the stage.

Iago is the most familiar of these figures. Using his knowledge of the strengths and weakness of Ramism, Oxford draws on the late-humanistic narrative supplied by Giraldi Cinthio's *Hecatommiti* (1565) for *Othello*, giving Iago that "deeper motivation" of which Anthony Gilbert writes. For Gilbert, this profounder aspect concerns a barely hidden delineation of "two contrasting modes of belief" (3.5): the Catholic Othello is at the Protestant Iago's mercy. Gilbert's argument is pertinent to the authorship question. "The mercantile city of Venice had been particularly astute in keeping excessive Catholic and Protestant influence at bay during the sixteenth century, and was virtually an independent enclave in the Catholic south of Europe" (3.13). These observations support the case for an author who knew Venetian sectarianism from personal experience.

Unfortunately, Gilbert's otherwise commendable insight into the "contemporary religious dimension" (3.2) to *Othello* is somewhat unjust on Ramus. Correct in identifying crypsis as "distinct from the normal method of presentation of arguments in Ramistic logic" (3.20), Iago as a keen employer of this approach, and the question of "the priorities" in Othello's "conscious mind" (3.12), Gilbert loses his critical grip on the characteristic of methodological abnormality. He insists that modern-day academics follow Elizabethan audiences in "recognis[ing] Iago as a Ramist" (3.20). Gilbert cites a passage on crypsis from Ramus's 1555 edition of *Dialectique*—"if [one's interlocutor] is a wise and refined man, it is not necessary to show our pieces one after the other, but to change, to mix, to gambol, to pretend the opposite, to recover, to think, to say that it is vulgar and accustomed, to hasten, to anger, to debate, to proceed with great boldness, and finally to discover and execute the ambush so that the astonished adversary says: 'What is the purpose of this?'" (79)—but, unlike

Ramus, Gilbert fails to emphasize the opening conditional phrase that concerns the necessity of dealing with a shrewd and wily interlocutor. Put more accurately, then, and in keeping with the Oxfordian argument, the play, and Gilbert's initial distinction, Iago is a Machiavel with knowledge of Ramism, rather than a Ramist.

The scheming Iago personifies Shakespeare's appreciation of rhetorical logic, and Oxford could have drawn on Ramus to this end. Gerolamo Cardano would have been an additional source. To repeat, contemporary Italian humanists often disagreed with Ramus, but Cardano did seek to incorporate dialectic into rhetoric. Above all, the crypsis that concerned Ramus, that Cardano acknowledged, and that Oxford must have noted in Burghley's rhetorical practice finds expression in the Machiavellian Iago. Exposure to this method can fool a player in a coordinative situation into picking the option that best suits his opponent. The "worst cause prevailed," remarks Erasmus, "when pleaded by the worst of men but the best of advocates" (*The Epistles of Erasmus* 1:218). Like a proficient Ramist, as Gilbert observes, "Iago is particularly clever at varying his language across the formal/informal register to suit his listeners." This ability, which is consistent with the Machiavellian Iago's knowledge of Ramism, supports withal the Oxfordian argument. On the one hand, Iago "is clearly a sophisticated speaker, whose knowledge of fashionable rhetorical strategies is persuasive and considerable." This persuasiveness bespeaks Oxford's knowledge of crypsis. On the other hand, Iago is a "rough-spoken military man" (3.8). This "undercurrent of the *lingua mordace* of the Italian streets" (3.12) bespeaks at once Oxford's appreciation of vernacular logic and his knowledge of Italy.

In *Antony and Cleopatra*, as a self-seeker who sees himself as the wisest of politicians, Octavius aims to manage the republic toward his own (rather than collective) ends. This characterization departs from the figure portrayed by Plutarch, Tacitus, and Appian; this departure reemphasizes what Theodor Meron calls Machiavelli's "important impact on the England of the 1590s" (4), and that influence accounts for Shakespeare's alterations to the historical record. "At Philippi," as Robert S. Miola notes, "Plutarch's Octavius falls sick and, consequently, Antony wins the glory." In contrast, "Shakespeare's Octavius, ever the cold, efficient, proud, and lethal commander, fully shares in the victory" (108). Unlike the vacillating Antony, whose self-knowledge is limited, Octavius is unwaveringly self-aware, knows his desires, and plans to achieve them. "The charges against him of being a Machiavel," concludes Bevington, "cannot be shaken off" (20). In

fine, as John Alan Roe avers, “Machiavelli would have had no difficulty in appreciating Shakespeare’s representation of Octavius” (204).

The calculating Octavius values the triumvirs’ Roman Assurance Game, so does Lepidus, but Antony’s loyalty is in question. “Synergistic mutualism as described by the assurance game has two Nash equilibria (both cooperate or both defect) but only one Pareto optimum (both cooperate),” reiterate Alvard and Nolin. “In these sorts of games, while mutual cooperation is preferred, cooperating while a partner defects is worse than mutual defection. In other words, there exists a certain degree of risk to cooperation depending on the degree of trust between players” (534). The fear of collective instability that haunts the triumvirate in *Antony and Cleopatra* manifests this risk. The charge that Shapiro levels against both Antony and Cleopatra, but which Enobarbus applies to the Egyptian queen alone (“that she did make defect perfection” [2.2.240]), therefore, adds the game-theoretic implication of full-scale defection to this accusation. Should the other triumvirs trust Mark Antony?

The issue of internal assurance tends to move from background image to strategic foreground when external threats are minimal. During the sixteenth century, as Neal Wood explains, “the zero-sum game of warfare was to some extent replaced by the zero-sum game of foreign and domestic commerce that under careful government supervision would help promote civil unity and mobilize the energies and resources of a nation for the common interest” (40). Whereas Lepidus flatters and Octavius is cautious, Antony takes risks. Roman rationality understands calculated risks, but not the Egyptian foolhardiness that has seemingly tainted Mark Antony. Like the Edward de Vere of the 1570s and 1580s, Antony has a game-theoretic predilection for large stakes with long odds, and as with Oxford’s yearning for Anne Vavasour, Antony’s desire for Cleopatra expresses that preference. The sensuality of a paramour elicits risk-taking in the pursuit of consummation. That pursuit—as much as for Oxford as for Antony—breaches the limits of commonsense.

Yet, according to Shakespearean critics of the nineteenth century, irrationality was a female preserve. From this critical perspective, *Antony and Cleopatra* anticipated the author’s later plays, especially *Cymbeline*. Shakespeare supposedly exalted “his heroines [...] into paragons of womanly virtue,” as Una Mary Ellis-Fermor relates, but made these paragons particularly fragile. Cleopatra suffered from this “unhappy [critical] treatment” (xli). Algernon Charles Swinburne exemplified this fault in *A Study of Shakespeare* (1879). “The very crown and flower of all her father’s

daughters,—I do not speak here of her human father, but her divine—the woman above all Shakespeare’s women,” contends Swinburne, “is Imogen.” Her dramaturgical archetype, claims Swinburne, is the Egyptian queen: “in Cleopatra we found the incarnate sex, the woman everlasting” (227). This incarnation’s principal characteristic is irrationality. In his *Introduction to the Study of Shakespeare* (1889), Hiram Corson explicitly charges Cleopatra with this deficiency: “she is,” he opines, “simply irrational” (270).

Corson’s opinion exhibits a vexatious longevity. In *The Mortal Worm: Shakespeare’s Master Theme* (1977), Elias Schwartz berates “Cleopatra’s irrational treatment of the messenger” (78) in Act 2, Scene 5, while in *The Imperial Theme*, Knight asserts that Cleopatra “is unfair, quite irrational, [and] typically feminine” (294) in reproaching Antony’s hardheartedness over the death of his wife Fulvia. The recourse to notions of sensuality underscores the persistence of this critical tenor. “In *Antony and Cleopatra*,” proposes Samuel Leslie Bethell in *Shakespeare and the Popular Dramatic Tradition* (1944), “Shakespeare returns to [...] the affections as rooted deep in the sensual nature. Of these Cleopatra is the symbol, sensual even in death” (130). “More than any other poet,” argues Marilyn French in *Shakespeare’s Division of Experience* (1981), “Shakespeare breathed life into his female characters and gave body to the principle they are supposed to represent. Yet his dis-ease with the sexuality supposedly incarnate in women grew, as he aged, into a terrified loathing” (31).

That terror could defer to legend. “The story of Omphale and Hercules, in which the Amazonian queen subdues the hero and puts him to work spinning among her maids,” observes Bevington, “was widely used in the Renaissance as a cautionary tale.” The attendant moral concerns the dangers “of male rationality overthrown by female will” (8). Natale Conti’s *Mythologiae* (1567) and Vincenzo Cartari’s *Imagines Deorum* (1581) could have come to Oxford’s notice, and he could have drawn on them for Cleopatra’s claim that she “drunk [Antony] to his bed;/Then put my tires and mantles on him” (2.5.21–22). These possibilities, however, negate neither the regretful critical tenor that omits models of rationality from literary studies nor the mature Oxford’s respect for strong women.

Ramus’s extension of Porphyrian taxonomy posited a gender inequality to natural reason, but the rational Shakespeare repeatedly presents the strength of women’s mind. The Trojan Cressida is the Egyptian Cleopatra’s coldly rational prototype, and like Plutarch, Shakespeare repeatedly identifies Cleopatra with the Egyptian goddess Isis. These numerous identifications posit an authorial belief in the generic status of natural reason.

“Plutarch’s account of Isis and Osiris,” relates Michael Lloyd, “was published in Philemon Holland’s translation of the *Moralia* in 1603, and a reading of Holland’s text encourages the view that Shakespeare had read it, and was echoing it” (91). Isis, according to Plutarch, “is eminently wise and speculative.” As such, “knowledge and science [...] appertain more peculiarly to her than any other thing” (66). She is “no other than wisdom” (67).

Antony and Cleopatra evokes Isis not only in Cleopatra’s imprecations, but also in her apparel. “By Isis,” she swears in rebuking Charmian for likening Antony to Julius Caesar, “I will give thee bloody teeth/If thou with Caesar paragon again/My man of men” (1.5.73–75). Later, when Octavius recalls Antony’s “contemning Rome” (3.6.1) “in Alexandra” (3.6.2), he describes how Cleopatra “in th’habiliments of the goddess Isis/That day appeared” (3.6.17–18). Thus deified, as Ania Loomba notes, Cleopatra “recall[s] the attempts to depict Elizabeth as the Virgin Queen, which fixed her visually as a goddess” (76). Quite correctly, as Richard Whalen notes, “many commentators over the years have taken Cleopatra to stand for Queen Elizabeth” (12), and Oxford was the ideal candidate to dramatize such an analogy. He was at once a member of Elizabeth’s court, with an annuity that sealed his compact with the Policy of Plays, and a Protestant who had flirted with, but ultimately rejected, Catholicism. The wise Protestantism of the Elizabethan era, as the mature Oxford appreciated, had effectively abolished the cryptic middle terms of Catholicism. The Ramism of Smith’s discourses and Burghley’s selective implementation of Smith’s political ideas had favored this abolition, and the deification of Elizabeth had filled the resultant vacuum without reintroducing a middle term. Oxford undoubtedly grasped these implications.

Such inferences do not discount human emotions. Nevertheless, when the *loci communes* do not intervene, Cleopatra is as rational as an unemotional Antony; and when the soft logic associated with these seats of argument does intervene, oftentimes her reasoning is the less affected. However unintentionally, therefore, Knight’s interpretation of Cleopatra also offers some critical redress. He concludes that Cleopatra’s characteristics, supposedly typical of femininity, “are projections of one central reality: her burning passion, fierce tigress-love, for Antony” (*Imperial* 294). *Antony and Cleopatra* associates Cicero’s Asiatic rhetoric with this passion. To reiterate, the purportedly Attic style of Cicero manifested two extremes: the selfless, restrained, and virtuous pole of *De officiis*, and the selfish, unrestrained, and vituperative pole of *Pro Milone* and *In Catilinam*.

These rhetorical poles met in a cloying, verbose, and undisciplined style that earned the epithet “Asiatic.”

Edward de Vere’s intimacy with William Burghley would have acquainted him with these three styles. “It has become a commonplace,” observes Peter Lake, “that the likes of Burghley and Bacon identified themselves with the Cicero of the *De Officiis*, the theorist of selfless dedication to the commonweal, the archetype of Roman republican virtue. But there was also the Cicero of the *Pro Milone* and the *In Catilinam*, the political attack dog, whose mastery of forensic and vituperative rhetoric could be used to justify the murder of one street thug and political gang leader by another, who just happened to be on Cicero’s side” (470). The use of scathing rhetoric for high moral purposes was no contradiction, and from the respective viewpoints of “Cicero and William Cecil,” as Lake concludes, “the goodness of the causes being defended and the malignity of the threats being unmasked were both sufficiently self-evident to ensure that this remained the case” (470–71). Mixing purpose and application, however, courts the danger of mixing styles. Cicero fell into this trap; Burghley, whatever his preference for hard words over their inkhorn alternatives, probably did so on occasion; and Cleopatra certainly does. Although noting Burghley’s use of familiar words, Hickes innocently adds a reminder of his subject’s prolixity: Burghley was “beyond the eloquence of others” (123). Cleopatra’s verbal style of sybaritic description and ludic linguistics—Ciceronian faults against which Erasmus, Justus Lipsius, and Ramus warn—complies with sixteenth-century assumptions concerning Egyptian rhetoric.

The rational Antony’s rhetoric, the self-disciplined style he uses when in Rome, creates a sharp contrast. “Shakespeare,” writes John Wilders, “fashioned for Antony and Cleopatra a way of speaking which he used in no other play and which contributes more than anything to the extreme contrast between Egypt and Rome” (50). In his two *Philippics*, works with which Ramus was particularly familiar, Cicero detailed the necessary virtues of a governor. “Antony,” as Keith Linley summarizes, “did not fit this template.” Cicero attacked both Antony and Cleopatra “for their debts and lifestyle and Cicero’s two critical pamphlets condemned Antony’s character, accusing him of extravagance, promiscuity, ostentation, luxurious living and forgery. In revenge, Antony argued vehemently for Cicero’s execution for an alleged role in the plot against Julius Caesar” (81). The Attic rhetoric of the rational Antony bespoke that vehemence.

Ironically, however, Shakespeare’s rhetorical divide between the self-disciplined Antony and Antony’s idolized Cleopatra reinforces their

mutually intensive love. This reciprocated passion, which encapsulates Knight's "central reality" (*Imperial* 294), has no logical motivation. Antony and Cleopatra are ordinarily rational, but the passion between them circumvents this standard. Cleopatra was naïve with respect to Julius Caesar—"I was," she admits to Charmian, "green in judgement" (1.5.77)—but her chastisement of Charmian (1.5.73–75) attests to her appreciation of Antony's greater worth. This testimony maintains the complimentary analogy between the Egyptian queen and Queen Elizabeth. Although Cleopatra is smitten with Antony, her judgment remains sound; whatever the state of Elizabeth's amours, the same is true of her. The play, as an Elizabethan propaganda piece, suggests this positive parallel, and that positivity mitigates the self-defeating nature of Elizabeth's self-infatuation, which would consign the queen, as Smith's "Philoxenus" effectively prophesied, to childlessness.

For Cleopatra, as much as for her Roman lover, passion countermands rationality, but of the pair, only Antony embodies two frames of mind: the rational and the rationally blind. "This dotage of our general's" (1.1.1), Philo tells his coeval Demetrius, "O'erflows the measure" (1.1.2). "His captain's heart,/Which in the scuffles of great fights hath burst/The buckles on his breast, reneges all temper" (1.1.6–8), complains Philo, "And is become the bellows and the fan/To cool a gipsy's lust" (1.1.9–10). "The triple pillar of the world," rages Philo has been "transformed/Into a strumpet's fool" (1.1.12–13). Emotional spontaneity—rather than a combination of supposed Egyptian and feminine whiles—has eclipsed rational thought.

Further to this evaluation, and again in favor of Cleopatra's rationality, is her strategic attitude toward danger. Cleopatra's power over Egypt is not a matter of assurance. Hers is a strategic grip that no internal enemy can undo. She need not place her trust in others. In contrast, Antony's willingness to undertake high-risk ventures has been fundamental to the triumvirs' assured success. "When thou once/Was beaten from Modena, where thou slew'st/Hirtius and Pansa," recalls Octavius, "at thy heel/Did famine follow, whom thou fought'st against,/Though daintily brought up, with patience more/Than savages could suffer" (1.4.57–62). He even drank "the stale of horses and the gilded puddle/Which beasts would cough at" (1.4.63–64). In this predicament, with the tables seemingly turned against him, Antony succeeded in the hunt for glory. "Thy palate then did deign/The roughest berry on the rudest hedge" (1.4.64–65), maintains Octavius, "Yea, like the stag when snow the pasture sheets,/The barks of trees thou browsèd" (1.4.66–67). The elaphine Antony secured the triumvirs' Stag Hunt.

Antony's predilection for taking risks, however, betrays his destabilizing potential. "There are two couples in the play," writes Allan Bloom, "the enemy couple, Octavius (later Augustus) and Antony, and the loving couple, Cleopatra and Antony. Antony's presence as the common element of these two pairs indicates the *high-risk, high-stakes game* acted out in this play. Never before or after," believes Bloom, "was love actually put in the balance to be weighed against ecumenical imperium" (31; emphasis added). Indeed, to consummate his desires, Antony willingly risks too much. Since the triumvirs' victory, he has enjoyed his assured utility, but from a distance. He has forsaken Rome. Two of Antony's followers, Demetrius and Philo, fear the strategic danger of his absence. "Is Caesar with Antonius prized so slight?" (1.1.58) asks Demetrius. "Sir," replies Philo, "sometimes when he is not Antony/He comes too short of that great property/Which still should go with Antony" (1.1.59–61). Antony's bearing (his current nonchalance toward the other triumvirs whose presence in the capitol maintains their Roman Assurance Game) falls short of his winnings (the material wealth afforded by his social standing). Octavius is aghast at the tales of Antony's outlandishness in Egypt. "Our great competitor" (1.4.3), he decries, "fishes, drinks, and wastes/The lamps of night in revel; is not more manlike/Than Cleopatra, nor the queen of Ptolemy/More womanly than he" (1.4.4–7). Ostensibly, "competitor" means representative, or playing partner, but there is also the sense of "opponent," in Octavius's usage. This connotation increases the implied danger that attends Antony's absence. Physical distance, which reinforces the coordination condition of silence, favors Octavius. Antony cannot help himself, replies Lepidus: his faults are "hereditary/Rather than purchased" (1.4.13–14); he has acted unthinkingly, according to passion, rather than according to logic; his faults are "what he cannot change" (1.4.14) rather "than what he chooses" (1.4.15).

On the one hand, Egypt seemingly rewards Antony in excess of his triumphal outcome. "Antony and all his friends are having a wonderful time in Egypt," remarks Allan Bloom. "They drink, they feast, and they make love. It is for them heaven on earth. The picture of the regal Antony and Cleopatra roaming the streets together at night, spying on the pleasures of the common folk, is most enticing" (35). On the other hand, Antony's presence in Egypt undercuts the mutually cooperative outcome from his Roman Assurance Game: residing in Egypt feeds that other blind-

ing passion: boundless risk-taking. In consequence, the triumvirs' republic faces its first significant challenge. Fulvia and Lucius, who were previously strategic opponents, confederate as the means to possible success. They "made friends" and are now "jointing their force 'gainst Caesar" (1.2.87). Antony is not only Fulvia's husband, but also Lucius's brother; as such, Antony's loyalty to Cleopatra becomes more than a matter of his absence from Rome: it emboldens the rebels.

Antony, who enjoys Egypt as if it were his own dominion, seems content for his fellow triumvirs to lose all. "Let Rome in Tiber melt and the wide arch/Of the ranged empire fall!" he proclaims. "Here is my space" (1.1.35–36). Deeming his love for Cleopatra beyond calculation—"There's beggary in the love that can be reckoned" (1.1.15)—Antony is willing to forsake Italy for Egypt. Passion overwrites the rational cost-benefit analysis he would have hitherto conducted; the Asiatic (or passionate) rhetoric despised by Ramus overwrites the serious, self-disciplined Attic style of Antony's homeland; as a result, the Egyptian Hare of Octavius and Lepidus's evaluation has the same value as Antony's Roman Stag. "The nobleness of life/Is to do thus," admits Antony, "when such a mutual pair/And such a twain can do't" (1.1.38–40). "Antony imagines a topographically and politically level surface," note Lynne Bruckner and Daniel Brayton, "whose sole value lies in sustenance, not in the kingdoms or the cities built upon it" (89). The desert swathes of Cleopatra's Egypt fulfill Antony's desires. "There's not a minute of our lives should stretch/Without some pleasure now," he tells Cleopatra. "What sport to-night?" (1.1.48–49). He deems the Roman Assurance Game of little consequence.

That the cold logic of Octavius should disrupt Antony's enjoyment is hateful to him. "Grates me! The sum" (1.1.19), he execrates, annoyed with the arrival of a messenger from Rome. This minion represents the rational domain. His unrequested but undeniable appearance before Antony symbolizes the reimposition of that suzerainty over Antony's thoughts. What is more, in the present instance, the demands of that domain are pressing: Fulvia and Lucius's temerity—although Octavius's "better issue in the war from Italy/Upon the first encounter drave them" (1.2.88–89)—has provoked republican stirrings.

Sir Thomas Smith's political tracts encouraged such a spirit in sixteenth-century England. Yet, the monarchical situation, as Smith conceded, courted the total unbridling of that spirit, with the associated danger of social chaos. On Elizabeth's accession, Smith had returned to political power, but with severe reservations. "How could a woman," as Anne

McLaren explains of Smith's views, "stand in the very place of Christ, as Supreme Head of the Church of England? How could she, as emperor, claim the charisma that would preserve the godly of the True Church from the depredations of the Romish antichrist?" (919). Under "The Boy King" Edward VI, Smith and Cecil had addressed the problem of inadequate governance with "a specifically Protestant politics of association." They had endeavored to translate a common weal into a commonwealth through a *monarchy of counsel*. Whereas the common weal consisted of relationships among the aristocracy, the commonwealth would consist of associations between its peoples, and the king's advisors had begun to supervise this transition. This Protestant vision led to these counselors' ostracism during Queen Mary's reign, but under Queen Elizabeth, Smith and Cecil reemerged. Now they attempted to translate their previous constitutional notion into that of a *mixed monarchy*. This concept "represented an attempt to reintroduce a politics of association similar to that which had been enacted in Edward VI's reign, without unleashing its egalitarian or demotic potential. The new version proposed an incorporated English crown—a marriage of queen and commonwealth—as a mode of national identity" (913). The *Regnum Cecilianum*, which resisted tyrannical monarchy, but which suppressed the dangerous freedoms of republicanism, resulted.

Pompey, who "Hath given the dare to Caesar and commands/The empire of the sea" (1.2.177–78), personifies the type of social challenge that the incorporated crown of Queen Elizabeth's reign suppressed. A related challenge for the Roman Republic, which is the subject of the message to Antony from Rome, comes from Quintus Labienus. With the armies of both Octavius and Lepidus thus overstretched, and without their completing third in the forces loyal to Antony, Labienus—a republican (of the faction initially formed by Brutus and Cassius)—has occupied Antony's former province of Syria. This uprising has occurred during Antony's leisured absence, but the messenger, who hesitates on "Whilst—" (1.2.99), cannot bring himself to say so. Both Pompey and Labienus are willing to defect against Rome in the hope of making defection perfect.

In mulling over the international situation, Antony reverts to his more considered (and less spontaneous) frame of mind. "He was disposed to mirth," notes Cleopatra, "but on the sudden/A Roman thought hath struck him" (1.2.77–78). Her strategic response employs two tactics. On the one hand, she tries to counter Antony's cognitive state with second-hand news of her own demeanor. "If you find him sad" (1.3.3), she tells Charmian, "Say I am dancing; if in mirth, report/That I am sudden sick"

(1.3.4–5). On the other hand, she expresses her intense feelings through that “most distinctive feature” (Wilders 51) of the Asiatic style: hyperbole. Recalling “the love she has shared with Antony” (Wilders 51)—“Eternity was in our lips and eyes,/Bliss in our brows’ bent; none our parts so poor/But was a race of heaven” (1.3.35–37)—Cleopatra “conceives of it in terms which are nothing less than transcendental” (Wilders 51).

Cleopatra’s strategy, however, is to no avail. Unlike Edward de Vere, for whom the Policy of Plays provided the release for dramaturgical thoughts, Antony now casts a negative light on leisure for stilling his ratiocinative powers. “[W]e bring forth weeds” (1.2.105), he concedes, “When our quick minds lie still” (1.2.106). Antony intends to uproot the lies of leisure. In accordance with this rueful pun, he rates Pompey as “the main soldier” (1.2.184), the major threat “whose quality, going on,/The sides o’th’world may danger” (1.2.184–85). This qualitative analogy, which critics usually read in architectural terms, is just as suited to game-theoretic interpretation: the motif of squares opposing circles contrasting game-theoretic dilemmas with the ties of interrelational harmony.

Antony, who acknowledges at once that he commands one-third of the Roman forces and that the combined strength of Octavius and Lepidus only equals that of Pompey’s disposition, determines to intervene. “Equality of two domestic powers” (1.3.47) means that Rome “commands/Our services awhile” (1.3.42–43). The unexpected news of Fulvia’s death adds to Antony’s contemplative grist; as a result, he inverts the utilities attending his current situation: “The present pleasure,/By revolution lowering, does become/The opposite of itself” (1.2.121–23). Enobarbus, as if assigning utilities to a coordination problem, seemingly corroborates Antony’s conclusion. “Under a compelling occasion, let women die,” he advises Antony. “It were/pity to cast them away for nothing, though between them and a/great cause they should be esteemed nothing” (1.2.134–36). In Ramist terms, Enobarbus’s figuration is an elegant adornment of speech, the sort of trope Oxford learned from Jean Sturm, a figuration that foregrounds *elocutio*. Read from a game-theoretic perspective, the Roman Assurance Game, as far as Antony is concerned, has regained preeminence.

Antony, wishing he had never seen Cleopatra, now inverts the utilities of his cost–benefit analysis (as Oxford sometimes did during his relationship with Anne Vavasour). In contrast, Enobarbus suggests that “not to have been blest withal would have *discredited*/your travel” (1.2.149–50; emphasis added). Foreign travel, as both Ramus and Oxford well knew, affords creditable experiences. Even so, as Antony acknowledges of Fulvia’s actions,

“The business she hath broachèd in the state/ Cannot endure my absence” (1.2.164–65). “The business you have broached here” (1.2.166), counters Enobarbus, “cannot be without you” (1.2.167). Antony might initially read this as a flippant remark with sexual undertones—he insists on “no more light answers” (1.2.169)—but Enobarbus’s comment, which recognizes the conditional dilemma that faces Antony, is far from politically frivolous. A cautious player would gravitate toward the safer option, but the payoff-dominated outcome motivates Mark Antony. The behavioral code of the Roman world, “a self-consciously masculine, macho culture,” as Jerry Toner avers, “in which austerity, muscularity, and inflexibility were held up as prize attributes” (91), lures him from sensual entanglement in Egypt. Antony, therefore, is not so much reckless—the utility for success is the retention of his third of the Roman Republic—as ready to hazard danger for what he currently values.

The sociopolitical effect on situations of coordination can be dynamic, and rational players (such as Constance in *King John*), rather than those who are blindly resolute (such as the monarchs in *King John*), will actively register the consequences wrought by this influence. Having determined to return to Rome, Antony consoles Cleopatra with the argument that physical distance cannot separate them. “That thou, residing here, goes yet with me” (1.3.104), he tells her, “And I, hence fleeting, here remain with thee” (1.3.105). Like a game theorist predicting the possible behavior of another player, Cleopatra imagines Antony’s actions from afar. “Where think’st thou he is now?” she asks Charmian. “Stands he, or sits he?/ Or does he walk? Or is he on his horse?” (1.5.20–21). Cleopatra displays this gaming disposition again with her self-frustrated recourse to recreation during Antony’s absence. “Let’s,” she instructs her attendants, “to billiards” (2.5.3), before immediately changing her ludic interest, “Give me mine angle,” she commands, “we’ll to the river” (2.5.10). Even reports of Cleopatra cast her in game-theoretic form. “She’s a most triumphant lady,” states Maecenas, “if report be square to her” (2.2.195).

Indeed, by sending a message from Rome to Egypt via Alexas, Antony appeals to Cleopatra’s ludic disposition. “Say the firm Roman to great Egypt sends/ This treasure of an oyster” quotes Alexas, “at whose foot,/ To mend the petty present, I will piece/ Her opulent throne with kingdoms” (1.5.45–48). In turn, Cleopatra attempts to sustain her relationship with Antony by confounding the coordination condition of silence. “He shall have every day,” insists Cleopatra, “a several greeting” (1.5.80), and that promise, as Oxford would surely have intended, encapsulates the lure of Asiatic self-indulgence.

NOTES

1. The quotations from Rousseau come from Maurice Cranston's translation in *A Discourse on Inequality* (1984).
2. "It is perhaps not without interest," notes Karl Popper, "that rationalism flourished in the former Roman provinces, while men from the 'barbarian' countries were prominent among the mystics" (434).
3. Kenneth Muir confirms Schanzer's assertion in *The Sources of Shakespeare's Plays* (1977).
4. The reference to Machiavelli, as a lack of effacement, helps to confirm the general critical opinion that *The First Part of King Henry VI* is one of Shakespeare's earliest plays.



CHAPTER 12

Assurance Games in *Antony and Cleopatra* (Part 2)

*I hear him mock
The luck of Caesar, which the gods give men
To excuse their after wrath.*

—William Shakespeare, *Antony and Cleopatra* (5.2.279–81)

Mark Antony's reappearance in Rome is timely because Pompey (Sextus Pompeius) has formed a coalition with Menecrates and Menas. Each of these rebel leaders is eager to gain a narrow utility, payoff, or "profit" (2.1.7) from the mooted war. Pompey's collaboration with "pirates" (1.4.49) might undermine his republican credentials, but the citizens of the republic, with an inconsistent political outlook that oscillates between one faction and the other, embody an additional danger to the triumvirate. "This common body" (1.4.44), complains Octavius Caesar, "Like to a vagabond flag upon the stream,/Goes to and back" (1.4.45–46). Pompey plays on this inconsistency to secure one of four supports to his rebellion. The second provision is Antony's assumed absence—"Mark Antony/In Egypt sits at dinner, and will make/No wars without doors" (2.1.11–13). The third support is Marcus Aemilius Lepidus's weak link in the triumvirate. Lepidus may flatter Octavius and Antony, and they may flatter him, "but he neither loves,/Nor either cares for him" (2.1.15–16). Lepidus imitates but cannot invent. He is the forebear of a little Ramist who cannot master Ramism. The fourth provision is Octavius's need to buy support: "Caesar gets money where/He loses hearts" (2.1.13–14).

Niccolò Machiavelli, that succès de scandale among second-generation Ramists at Cambridge University, cautioned against the use of mercenaries: they “are useless and dangerous.” Such auxiliaries never guarantee stability and security. “For mercenaries are disunited, thirsty for power, undisciplined, and disloyal; they are brave among their friends and cowards before the enemy; they have no fear of God, they do not keep faith with their fellow men; they avoid defeat just as long as they avoid battle; in peacetime you are despoiled by them, and in wartime by the enemy” (51). Mercenaries might secure “slow, belated, and feeble conquests,” but they also bring “sudden, startling defeat” (55), because their overriding trait is “cowardice” (58).

Machiavelli would have been one, but not the main, source of Edward de Vere’s knowledge of mercenaries. “It was in the long and desperate war between the Dutch and Spaniards which broke out about the beginning of the reign of Queen Elizabeth,” as Arthur Pollock documents, “that the English first learnt the trade of mercenaries”; and in Sir Francis Vere (c. 1560–1609) and his brother Sir Horace Vere (1565–1635) “we have examples of the best” (239). In 1596, these nephews of Edward de Vere joined the English mercenaries’ assault on Cadiz under Robert Devereux, Second Earl of Essex. While Francis served directly under Devereux, Horace served under Sir John Wingfield. Befitting their mercenary status, the immediate aim of this force was material rather than spiritual, with Essex “intent on using the incident primarily to forward his own standing with Elizabeth” (Gary Waller 13). Devereux’s men sacked the city; Wingfield died in the assault; Horace took over Wingfield’s regiment; and Horace’s services earned him his knighthood. Ironically, yet in keeping with the English game-theoretic hierarchy, the mercenaries’ action answered their immediate aim but excused the queen from paying them. They henceforth pledged their allegiance to the Dutch.

Family history tempers the Machiavellian view of mercenaries for Oxford; and the resulting perspective in *Antony and Cleopatra* resonates with the classical record. The overall threat Pompey, Menecrates, and Menas pose to the triumvirs is significant enough to make Octavius and Lepidus doubt a successful defense. “[Y]et must Antony” (1.4.23), fumes Octavius, “No way excuse his foils when we do bear/So great weight in his lightness” (1.4.24–25). Antony’s military duty is hostage to his peccadilloes, rails Octavius: he follows the course not of men, but of boys, who “[p]awn their experience to their present pleasure/And so rebel to judgement” (1.4.32–33). From a Ramist perspective, immaturity has left

Antony open to the unmanly yet persuasive power of Asiatic rhetoric. This style, with its intimations of prodigality, fits Antony's risk-taking.

Octavius reckons that Antony enjoys perverse utilities: Asiatic sloth and self-indulgence hold him in their grip; Antony rates the Egyptian Hare over the Roman Stag, and this perversion works in favor of Pompey's confederacy. Unexpected news from Varrius, however, seeds Pompey's mind with doubt. "Mark Antony," he tells Pompey, "is every hour in Rome/Expected" (2.1.29–30). Pompey now foresees a short-lived pact between the two leading triumvirs. "For they have entertained cause enough/To draw their swords. But how the fear of us/May cement their divisions and bind up/The petty difference," he concedes, "we yet not know" (2.1.47–50).

In fact, Antony's demeanor on his return to Rome, which anticipates an outcome at neither end of the game-theoretic spectrum, foretells of factional compromise: "Like to the time o'th'year between the extremes/Of hot and cold," Alexas reports to Cleopatra, "he was nor sad nor merry" (1.5.54–55). The queen salutes this news: Antony exhibits a "well-divided disposition!" (1.5.56). Alexas's qualitative simile finds its quantitative counterpart in Lepidus's reconciliatory hopes. Now is not the time for private resentment, he tells Domitius Enobarbus, "small to greater matters must give way" (2.2.11). "Not if the small come first" (2.2.12), counters Enobarbus, because "Every time serves" (2.2.10). Lepidus's rejoinder is that of a rational man who understands something of the Antony in Enobarbus. "Your speech," he cautions, "is passion" (2.2.13).

Lepidus maintains this position in advising Antony to be rational rather than emotional. "That which combined us was most great," he states, "and let not/A leaner action rend us" (2.2.20–21). Oxford displays his critical appreciation of Ramism in Lepidus's reasoning. Lepidus has a notion of descending genera and species that warns him to uphold what Peter Ramus would have seen as the special difference between triumvirs and ordinary citizens. The human genus favors the triumvirs. They are naturally superior. The triumvirs should not, therefore, "debate/Our trivial difference loud" (2.2.22–23). Such discussions, which advertise the fallacious nature of their special difference, as Oxford surely intends, "do commit/Murder in healing wounds" (2.2.23–24).

Octavius still worries about Antony's earlier confederation with Cleopatra. If Antony has previously established a coalition other than the Roman Assurance Game, then he might do so again. "[I]f you there/Did practise on my state, your being in Egypt" (2.2.44–45), he tells Antony, "Might be my question" (2.2.46). Antony denies this suggestion. He "neglected"

(2.2.96) rather than “denied” (2.2.96) support to Octavius. Antony excuses his inaction concerning Fulvia and Lucius’s revolt: the ultimate goal of their scheme was Fulvia’s desire “[t]o have me out of Egypt” (2.2.102); Antony was the innocent party. “’Tis noble spoken” (2.2.105), says Lepidus, apparently closing the issue.

For Octavius’s peace of mind, however, the matrix (or square of coordination) requires a stronger band (or hoop) than an Assurance Game provides with mutual cooperation. “[F]or’t cannot be/We shall remain in friendship, our conditions/So differing in their acts,” states Octavius. “Yet if I knew/What hoop should hold us staunch, from edge to edge/O’th’world,” he claims, “I would pursue it” (2.2.119–23). Like the Citizen in *King John*, who suggests a union between Lewis (the French king’s eldest son) and Blanche of Spain (the English king’s niece), Agrippa suggests a dynastic marriage to remedy Octavius’s concerns. “To hold you in perpetual amity” (2.2.133), explains Agrippa, “To make you brothers, and to knit your hearts/With an unslipping knot, take Antony/Octavia to his wife” (2.2.134–36). Antony is a widower and the widowed Octavia is Octavius’s sister. “By this marriage” (2.2.139), maintains Agrippa, “All little jealousies, which now seem great,/And all great fears, which now import their dangers,/Would then be nothing” (2.2.140–42). This union should quash Octavius’s doubts. Menas’s anxiety—“then is Caesar and he for ever knit together” (2.6.113)—supports this prospect.

News of the impending marriage prompts Cleopatra to contemplate forsaking her kingdom. The queen’s metaphor—“Melt Egypt into Nile” (2.5.79)—echoes Antony’s earlier one—“Let Rome in Tiber melt” (1.1.35). Her Asiatic style renounces Antony for his reversion to Roman ways. Apparently, to reappropriate Erasmus’s *Ciceronianus*, “Asiatic feasts have ceased to please” Antony. Cleopatra even overturns her own comparison between Antony and Julius Caesar. “In praising Antony,” she concedes to Charmian, “I have dispraised Caesar” (2.5.109).

Uncertainty, however, underlies Antony’s prospective union with Octavia. Maecenas predicts that Antony will find Octavia “a blessed lottery” (2.2.253). Enobarbus goes further: “If I were bound to divine of this unity,” he responds to Menas’s prediction, “I would not/prophesy so” (2.6.114–15). The wedding band, the circle that challenges the game-theoretic square, “will be the very strangler of their/amity” (2.6.119–20). This marriage, he concludes, will invert its expected utility: “that which is the/strength of their amity shall prove the immediate author of their/variance” (2.6.124–26). Octavius’s “calculated desire to marry Antony to

his sister Octavia, the one woman for whom he can care,” as David Bevington contends, “is more than simply a matter of putting political necessity ahead of private affairs; we have every reason to suspect that he knows the marriage will not work” (21).

The coldly calculative Octavius even reckons on Antony’s return to Africa. Indeed, those possible Oxfordian sources of the Omphale-Hercules legend, Natale Conti’s *Mythologiae* and Vincenzo Cartari’s *Imagines Deorum*, counsel that personal fulfillment requires not only vigorous action and pleasurable satisfaction, but also rational restraint. Hercules must learn to harmonize the *vita activa* and the *vita voluptuosa* through the *vita contemplativa*. Irrationality is not a female preserve. Men can be irrational too. The Machiavellian Octavius recognizes this possibility in Antony; Antony’s blind passion will overpower his rational sense; “Octavia’s misery will then afford [Octavius] an excuse for war” (Bevington 21).

In the meantime, Antony’s presence in Rome increases the triumvirs’ chances of safeguarding their republic. Pompey acknowledges the equal division of the Roman dominion between Lepidus, Antony, and Octavius—“To you all three,/The senators alone of this great world” (2.6.8–9)—but further realizes that Assurance Games concern the participants’ individual worth as well as their overall number. Pompey’s acknowledgment that his worst fears have materialized—“We looked not for Mark Antony here” (2.6.106)—formally recognizes this aspect of the situation. His reckoning of Antony’s “soldiership” (2.1.35), as “twice the other twain” (2.1.36), displays both the binary and quaternary aspects of a two-choice, two-player Assurance Game, with Antony as one player and Lepidus and Octavius as the other. This calculation implies that the triumvirs, as Antony cautions Pompey, “o’ercount” (2.6.26) the land forces of his confederacy. Like Antony, however, Pompey is a risk taker, not only hoping that he, Menecrates, and Menas can “rear/The higher our opinion” (2.1.36–37), but also applying a cost–benefit analysis to his side’s chances of victory. “At land indeed,” he agrees with Antony, “Thou dost o’ercount me of my father’s house” (2.6.27); yet, “since the cuckoo builds not for himself,” cautions Pompey, “Remain in’t as thou mayst” (2.6.28–29): the outcome of a prospective sea battle is far less predictable.

Two confederations, each of a venturesome disposition, now stand face to face. Rationality, which appreciates the uncertain chances of victory, directs them to compromise. “Be pleased to tell us” (2.6.29), Lepidus inquires of Pompey, “how you take/The offers we have sent you” (2.6.30–31). Antony, as his demeanor in leaving Egypt had suggested,

and Octavius, as his self-interest directs for the long term, advise Pompey to accept Sicily and Sardinia as a payoff. "Which do not be entreated to," adds Antony, "but weigh/What it is worth embraced" (2.6.32–33). Consider "what may follow," warns Octavius, "To try a larger fortune" (2.6.33–34). Pompey, again behaving like Antony, takes rational stock of the situation. In game-theoretic terms, there are two Nash equilibria available, with the Pareto optimum of mutual cooperation recommending itself. Quite rationally, therefore, Pompey is "prepared/To take this offer" (2.6.40–41).

As suggested during the dinner that follows Pompey's acceptance, however, the resultant truce was merely one of the possible conclusions. The conjectures spawned by the complete set of outcomes to this Assurance Game attested to the underlying arbitrariness of any solution. That a lottery will decide who starts the peace celebrations intimates as much. "We'll feast each other ere we part," cries Pompey, "and let's/Draw lots who shall begin" (2.6.60–61). From Menas's point of view, which aligns extraludic manipulation to piracy, this celebration gives Pompey an unprecedented opportunity. Oxford, constantly aware that his marriage "into the house of Cecil," to repeat Mark Anderson, had "meant entering a world of political maneuvering and cutthroat gamesmanship" (49), was attuned to such situations, with the imminence of extraludic manipulation at the end of *Troilus and Cressida* and the repeated conjuration of its specter in *Antony and Cleopatra* making gamesmanship an Oxfordian leitmotif.

Menas's proposition to Pompey concerning Octavius, Anthony, and Lepidus is simple: murder all three. "These three world-sharers, these competitors" (2.7.66), he tells Menas, "Are in thy vessel" (2.7.67). Pompey abjures. This decision echoes Oxford's commitment to Burghley in his "Massacre Letter." The statement, "For I am one that count myself a follower of yours now in all fortunes," as William Plumer Fowler relates, "finds its negative expression in *Antony and Cleopatra*, when Menas, dissatisfied with Pompey's rejection of mass murder, exclaims: 'I'll never follow thy pall'd fortunes more'" (55). Pompey's decision also resonates with de Vere's critical appreciation of Ramism: Oxford appreciated the possibility of unsportsmanlike solutions to social dilemmas (as *Troilus and Cressida* implies), but preferred their equitable alternatives (even if, as in this instance from *Antony and Cleopatra*, that answer is extremely hazardous). Pompey's sportsmanship—his adherence to the lesser outcome (from his perspective) of an interrelational dilemma already settled—precludes Menas's plan of triple murder. "Tis not my profit that does lead mine honour" (2.7.72),

explains Pompey. For this decision, Menas privately avows to forsake him: Pompey is credulous in playing by the rules; and “doth this day laugh away his fortune” (2.6.104). A circle of hands—the stage direction after 2.7.106 calls for music as Enobarbus “*places*” the celebrants “*hand in hand*”—symbolizes the peace accord between the members of the overall alliance. This ring holds the players together; it defies the rectilinear form of the paradox-facilitating matrix of their Assurance Game (even though the drunken Lepidus’s absence presages its severance).

Without doubt, Shakespeare’s plays include numerous scenes of the gifting or exchanging of rings (*Cymbeline* [1.1], *King Richard III* [1.2], *The Merchant of Venice* [3.1], *The Merry Wives of Windsor* [3.4], *Romeo and Juliet* [3.2], *Twelfth Night* [2.2], and *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* [2.2]), and the mooted marriage of Antony and Octavia presages a further example. Yet, “the required giving of a ring or rings in the church ceremony, which was highly objectionable for Puritans,” as B. J. Sokol and Mary Sokol observe, is “not seen in any Shakespearean setting in relation to solemnisation” (91). The Oxfordian resonance with rings in *The Merchant of Venice* helps to explain this contrast. “The modern Italian word *vera*, translated into English, is the adjective *true*,” explains Ian Haste. “But other lesser known translations show *vera* as a noun of various meanings. One example of its use as a noun is the wall which surrounds the top of a well which prevents animals from falling in, this is called a *vera*. Also when two water pipes are abutted, a metallic band is sealed around the join to prevent leakage. This seal is called a *vera*.” In short, concludes Haste, “*vera* is synonymous with round, particularly a circular flat band” (23).

The “*vere*” of de Vere has the aural ring of “*vera*,” and the importance of the secular use of rings—which the Shakespearean oeuvre posits as a “cognitive power” (55), according to Arthur F. Kinney, a power that invests signet, betrothal, wedding, memorial, and mourning rings (76)—was familiar to Oxford.¹ Burghley, as Lord Privy Seal (1571–72; 1590–98), “was the fourth-ranking officer of state, and used the [Privy] Seal whenever the Great Seal was unavailable and, increasingly in Elizabethan times, for financial payments as a warrant from the Exchequer.” Sir Nicholas Bacon was the Lord Keeper of the Great Seal during Burghley’s first tenure as Lord Privy Seal. Sir Christopher Hatton followed by Sir Thomas Egerton filled the position during Burghley’s second tenure. “The Lord Keeper of the Great Seal [...] was the second-ranking state officer and he affixed the seal to all proclamations, writs, letters patent, and documents giving power to sign and to ratify treaties under Elizabeth” (55).

The circle of hands in *Antony and Cleopatra* denotes peace, but with the dissolution of the immediate threat to the triumvirate, private resentment, temporarily assuaged, becomes difficult to stomach. Octavius becomes too zealous in promoting the idea of Antony's marriage to Octavia. "No further, sir" (3.2.23), Antony entreats, "Make me not offended/In your distrust" (3.2.33–34). Antony knows that Octavius still fears him as the common factor in two pairings: Antony and Lepidus, on the one hand, and Antony and Cleopatra, on the other. "You shall not find,/Though you be therein curious," Antony reassures his future brother-in-law, "the least cause/For what you seem to fear" (3.2.34–36). This vow portends the continued "boxing in" of Antony and Octavius according to the mutual cooperation of their Roman Assurance Game. Until now, "I have not kept my square," admits Antony, "but that to come/Shall all be done by th'rule" (2.3.6–7). Rationally considered, Antony ought to stick to this cooperative solution, because luck (rather than providence), a supposedly unpredictable factor, seemingly plays in Octavius's favor: the sportsmanlike and risk-dominant solution fails to negate its payoff-dominant but unsportsmanlike counterpart.

De Vere must have reckoned that chance similarly favored Burghley in their relationship. "If thou dost play with him at any game" (2.3.25), the Soothsayer reminds Antony, "Thou art sure to lose; and of that natural luck/He beats thee 'gainst the odds" (2.3.26–27). Antony acknowledges this prophetically endowed observation. He admits that his own (game-theoretic) schemes are never a match for Octavius's luck. "The very dice obey him" (2.3.33), Antony concedes,

And in our sports my better cunning faints
Under his chance. If we draw lots, he speeds;
His cocks do win the battle still of mine
When it is all to nought, and his quails ever
Beat mine, inhooped, at odds. (2.3.34–38)

Although Antony is a risk taker, the present situation prompts this "gambler," as Linda Woodbridge argues, "to *try* a little risk management" (200–01; emphasis original). Antony, whose "strategy to minimize risk is to 'make space enough' [2.3.23] between himself and Caesar" (201), hopes that his tactic for consoling Cleopatra—"That thou, residing here, goes yet with me,/And I, hence fleeting, here remain with thee" (1.3.104–05)—will now satisfy Octavius.

Antony's wish, however, remains unmet, with Oxford again conjuring the specter of gamesmanship. Physical distance does not still Octavius's rational machinations concerning Antony, and his calculated wish for Antony's marriage to Octavia has prefigured two resorts to extraludic manipulation. The drunken Octavius had slurred his words at the peace conference—"mine own tongue/Splits what it speaks" (2.7.117–18)—but his tongue had forked in telling lies. Ventidius's defeat of the Parthians means that the Roman Assurance Game no longer needs Antony's participation. With Ventidius's return, and with Pompey off guard following the peace accord, Octavius and Lepidus can launch a campaign against the rebels. Octavius lies in not informing Antony of this campaign.

A game-theoretically inflected hermeneutic, therefore, insists that some episodes in *Antony and Cleopatra* are more significant than critical tradition suggests. Notwithstanding his (ultimate) hostility toward drama and his (eventual) abolition of student plays at the College of Presles, Ramus "contributed to the development of facultative psychology in the Renaissance which destroyed the concept of the unity of the mind fostered by Aristotle" (Norman Edward Nelson 19). This contribution posited a cognitive receptivity on two fronts. Oxford embodied those fronts. Personal experience taught him that unconscious impulses often express themselves in a player's attitude toward risk. He committed that lesson to paper when constructing figures such as Antony. Oxford also translated unconscious impulses into a dramaturgical force for the dissolution of the Aristotelian unities.

Recent criticism of Shakespeare's dramas pays less deference to these standards too. "Shakespeare," maintains Jack Lynch, "made mincemeat of these rules" (114). "Shakespeare," agrees Robert C. Evans, "clearly ignored 'neoclassical' 'unities'" (145). Although Shakespeare subjects the timescale of *Antony and Cleopatra*, which covers approximately eleven years from the military campaign of Fulvia and Lucius to the suicides of Antony and Cleopatra, to considerable condensation, the staged events unfold over a protracted historical period. "On occasion," adds Bevington, "Shakespeare also rearranges the order of events. Antony hears the Soothsayer's warning to keep space between himself and Caesar (2.3) before the negotiations with Pompey, not afterwards as in Plutarch" (4). In Plutarch's *Vitae*, as MacCallum concurs, "the Soothsayer's warning to Antony follows, in Shakespeare it precedes, the composition with Pompey." This transposition is unimportant in chronological terms, "but it does make a difference in our estimate of Antony: his consequent decision shows more levity and rashness in the play than in the biography" (334).

Game theory takes such observations further. While occasionally changing the course of events, the playwright's alterations to the historical record place coordinative structures center stage. Giorgio Melchiori implicitly confirms this contention. "The compression of time and sudden dislocation in place are common features of many Elizabethan and Jacobean plays," writes Melchiori, "but *Antony and Cleopatra* interweaves the two dimensions in an unprecedented way that in fact foreshadows dramatic and narrative forms experimented [with] three centuries later" (203–04). The inclusion of seemingly peripheral episodes and supposedly insignificant characters answers structural needs. "The paired and opposing voices heard throughout the play," as Bevington notes, "offer an antiphonal pattern of thesis and antithesis, one that opposes accommodation to the community with the integrity of the heroic individual life" (31). Temporal unification and spatial divergence complement the social dilemmas at the dramaturgical core. Antony's personal struggle between reason and desire, as emphasized by his readiness to hazard danger, demand an unprecedented means of expression. The compositional strategy of *Antony and Cleopatra* provides that means.

Octavius openly recognizes Antony's powers of rationality—"my brother, my competitor/In top of all design, my mate in empire,/Friend and companion in the front of war" (5.1.42–44)—but still expects Antony's desire for Cleopatra to sever the triumvirs' rapprochement. Antony "does not so much hie himself to Egypt," notes William Flesch, "as recklessly give himself over to a nonchalant defiance" (203). Flesch's assessment applies as equally to Oxford as it does to Antony—especially to Oxford's attempted escape from England, but eventual imprisonment in the Tower of London, after Henry Howard and Charles Arundell tried to play him for a sucker. Whereas Octavia supposes her new husband is "in Athens" (3.6.66), Antony has at once repaid Cleopatra's gamble and Octavius's expectations by returning to Egypt. "Unto her/He gave," as Octavius declares to Agrippa and Maecenas, "the stablishment of Egypt, made her/Of lower Syria, Cyprus, Lydia,/Absolute queen" (3.6.8–11). Octavius knows that "Cleopatra/Hath nodded him to her" (3.6.67–68), and couches his revelation of this fact to Octavia in language that Oxford's "Massacre Letter" to Burghley resounds. Octavius's "You are abused/Beyond the mark of thought" (3.6.89–90)—"words all too applicable to their true author" (Fowler 59)—echoes Oxford's "I have been greatly abused" (54).

"Beware," as Oxford could have read in Ramus's *Brutinae quaestiones*, "the lure of Asiatic exuberance." Ramus issues this warning in discounting

the dangers of "Roman seriousness" (29). Oxford would have realized the related irony: the duplicitous Octavius exploits Pompey; as a result, variations in the Roman Assurance Game account for Pompey's rebellion. Octavius needs Lepidus no more. Lepidus's absence from the circle that symbolized the erstwhile peace accord was certainly ominous. Octavius has the weak and ineffectual triumvir executed as a traitor. The fabricated charge against Lepidus is the second lie from Octavius's forked tongue. "So," as Eros tells Enobarbus, "the poor third is up" (3.5.10). Octavius is willing to give Antony some of the spoils from Pompey's defeat, but demands a reciprocal payoff. "For what I have conquered,/I grant him part," he informs Agrippa and Maecenas, "but then in his Armenia/And other of his conquered kingdoms I/Demand the like" (3.6.35–38). The Roman Assurance Game no longer concerns three thirds but two halves.

Antony's treatment of Octavia in returning to Egypt, with consideration for their dynastic marriage overwritten by his passion for Cleopatra, again expresses the Oxfordian leitmotif of gamesmanship; and Octavius continues to speculate on this instance of ludic otherness. Dynasty was Burghley's ultimate aim. De Vere was well aware of this goal. Burghley was an avid genealogist with "a passion for knowing and celebrating the past" (Stephen Alford 208). The familial present, however, was very much against him, with Antony's passion for Cleopatra finding a parallel in Oxford's passion for Anne Vavasour. Antony's behavior becomes an excuse for Octavius's attempt to dissolve their two-person Assurance Game. Antony reciprocates Octavius's intentions: he plans to play as he pleases "With half the bulk o'th'world" (3.11.63). Octavia's hope concerning reciprocal loyalty between her brother and husband, her feeling that there is "no midway/"Twixt these extremes at all" (3.4.19–20), has assumed the grim reality of another coordinative dilemma. That Octavia must calculate which individual to support, "Choose your own company and command what cost" (3.4.37), falls in her brother's favor. The symmetrical response sees Cleopatra confederate with Antony against Octavius. By analogy, Anne Vavasour confederated with Oxford against his father-in-law.

In turn, William Burghley confederated with his daughter against her husband, with Anne Cecil's collusion expressing her trained reason. Oxford's wife boasted an education to rival his own. "It was a tradition in her family that women received the same education as the men," as Alford observes. "Her mother and her aunt, Lady Anne Bacon, were fine classical scholars and translators" (147). Cecil, with his banker's mind bent toward dynastic advancement, had wanted Anne to marry well. Philip Sidney was

her original intended, but the Earls of Oxford embodied the oldest patrilineal descent among English nobles, so Cecil dropped Sidney in favor of de Vere. Oxford's cooperation in this matter, however, soon turned to defection. The unwontedly jealous Edward stopped sleeping with his wife. The Cecils responded with the "bed trick."

In this stratagem, explains Roger A. Stritmatter in *The Marginalia of Edward de Vere's Geneva Bible*, "a woman entraps a reluctant male into having sexual relations with her by luring him to an assignation with another woman for whom the protagonist then substitutes herself" (68). According to rumor, Anne Cecil fell pregnant to her husband by these means. Thomas Wright's *The History and Topography of the County of Essex* (1836) reports that rumor: "the father of the lady Anne, by stratagem, contrived that her husband should, unknowingly, sleep with her, believing her to be another woman, and she bore a son to him in consequence of this meeting" (1:516–17). Nonetheless, Anne sometimes ignored her father's counsel. In 1576, for instance, she traveled to Dover to meet Oxford on his return from Europe. "Burghley's advice to Anne was to wait for her brother's report of Oxford's 'contentation.' But she was too impatient, and so went off to meet her husband" (Alford 218).

The colluding and impatient Antony and Cleopatra, as Octavius tells Octavia, "are levying/The kings o'th'earth for war" (3.6.69–70). They have assembled:

Bocchus, the king of Libya; Archelaus,
Of Cappadocia; Philadelphos, King
Of Paphlagonia; the Thracian king, Adallas;
King Manchus of Arabia; King of Pont;
Herod of Jewry; Mithridates, King
Of Comagene; Polemon and Amyntas,
The Kings of Mede and Lycaonia,
With a more larger list of scepters. (3.6.71–78)

Participant worth again comes to the fore. Cleopatra is the determining factor, but her contribution inverts that of Antony's earlier support of Octavius and Lepidus. Cleopatra detracts from, rather than adds to, their collaboration. "Your presence needs must puzzle Antony" (3.7.10), Enobarbus tells her. "Take from his heart, take from his brain, from's time,/What should not then be spared" (3.7.11–12). "His whole action grows/Not in the power on't" (3.7.68–69), decries Canidius, one of Antony's attendants. "So our leader's led,/And we are women's men" (3.7.69–70).

What Canidius understands as his leader's compliance to female diktat finds voice in what Ramus would have called the feminine aspect of Antony's recourse to Asiatic rhetoric. Antony's restrained and virtuous rhetoric—the self-disciplined style he used in Rome—loses its separate identity. By the time of his alliance with Cleopatra against Octavius, as John Gillies observes of the playwright's recourse to “non-Plutarchan legend,” Antony is “master of an insidiously ‘Asiatic’ rhetorical style.” That “mastery” reveals Antony's moral dissolution. “Admirer of Alexander, propounder of a subversively ‘cosmopolitan’ model of empire as against the hallowed Romanocentric model, spurner of his Roman wife and Roman mores, lover of a foreign queen, and finally leader of invading hordes from the East—the ‘historical’ Antonius,” states Gillies, “is a case-study in ‘exorbitance’; the classic example of a conqueror who ‘went too far’” (113).

Antony was born into “that tradition of Spartan and Roman land fighters,” as Allan Bloom states, “who went to war on foot and who the ancient thinkers believed were the most reliable foundations of stable republics” (46). Yet, with his compulsive trait suiting his Asiaticism, Antony's risk-taking makes its reappearance: he decides to meet Octavius at sea. “Why will/My lord do so?” (3.7.28–29), asks an incredulous Canidius. “For that he dares us to’t” (3.7.29) is Antony's reply. “So hath my lord dared him to single fight” (3.7.30), Enobarbus reminds him. “Ay, and to wage this battle at Pharsalia,/Where Caesar fought with Pompey” (3.7.31–32), adds Canidius. “But these offers,/Which serve not for his vantage, he shakes off,/And so,” Canidius urges Antony, “should you” (3.7.32–34). Do not “Give up yourself merely to chance and hazard/From firm security” (3.7.47–48), exhorts Enobarbus, but Antony bluntly responds, “I'll fight at sea” (3.7.48).

Oxford, another man of the land, not the sea, had committed a similarly reckless act. In the summer of 1588, the Armada had emerged as the foreground image from the background stalemate of the Low Countries campaign. That emergence had revealed Queen Elizabeth's attitude toward risk. She had staked her throne on a naval battle; de Vere had wished to share that hazard, but the English fleet's unsuccessful search-and-destroy expeditions, which numbered three in total, were probably the limit of his Armada experience. Circumstances, rather than rational contemplation, restrained and checked de Vere's recklessness.

What Ramus calls the Ciceronian inability “to restrain and check [one] self” (*Brutinae quaestiones* 8) now infects Antony. He responds to Cleopatra's manifest of “sixty sails, Caesar none better” (3.7.49), with a

brag: "Our overplus of shipping will we burn" (3.7.50). Both Antony's rhetoric and his avowal are unrestrained. Antony's continual vaunting of his recklessness hereby heightens an ironic resemblance between sworn enemies. The divide between Antony and Cicero was narrower than either man would have credited. Antony's "burning" boast comes from a man, who, as Dolabella will argue, "had superfluous kings for messengers" (3.12.5). Antony's actual courier, Dolabella observes to Octavius, "'tis his schoolmaster—/An argument that he is plucked, when hither/He sends so poor a pinion of his wing" (3.12.2–4). In this instance, the word "argument," as Hardin Craig notes, "carries its logical application to the middle term in the syllogism, the proof or evidence" (386–87). In Ramist terms, as Oxford surely intended, Antony's messenger is the assumption, or minor premise, of a simple syllogism—and that a schoolmaster makes a lamentable messenger cannot but reiterate Oxford's attitude toward hide-bound pedants (as so devastatingly delineated in Holofernes in *Love's Labour's Lost*).

The ensuing battle, according to Enobarbus, "half to half the world opposed" (3.13.9). Antony's forces, with Cleopatra his foremost confederate, gain the advantage, only for Cleopatra's defection to wreck their hopes. Shock at the queen's actions almost overwhelms Enobarbus. Notwithstanding his game-theoretic tendencies, which include assigning utilities to coordination problems and using brachylogia as a logical device for expressing derision, passion can rule Enobarbus's tongue, as Lepidus once recognized. Hence, as a register of Enobarbus's shock, dialectic meets passion in *hysteron proteron*. "Th'Antoniad, the Egyptian admiral" (3.10.2), he reports, "With all their sixty, fly and turn the rudder" (3.10.3). Cleopatra's defection temporally disorders the logical order of Enobarbus's rhetoric. "I'th'midst o'th'fight" (3.10.11), he complains to Scarus, "When vantage like a pair of twins appeared/Both as the same, or rather ours the elder,/The breeze upon her, like a cow in June,/Hoists sails and flies" (3.10.12–15). Ramus brought the charge of circular logic against those who practiced techniques such as *hysteron proteron*. More accurately reasoned, however, and as Gottfried Wilhelm Freiherr von Leibniz argued, these logicians were performing logical reversals. Leibniz's adjustment to Ramus's reasoning applies to Enobarbus: while he retains the relays of logical thought at the most pressing of times, the direction in which these relays function can suffer temporary reversal; at such moments, therefore, Enobarbus is unintentionally cryptic.

The participative loss of Cleopatra prompts Antony to defect too. Although Antony believes his retreat was "a most unnoble swerving"

(3.11.49), akin to the behavior of “a doting mallard” (3.10.19) in Scarus’s estimation, Cleopatra’s retreat undoubtedly weakened Antony’s allegiance to the confederacy. The prospect of mutual cooperation fed Antony’s pugnacity, but depleted cooperation motivated his retreat. Antony’s corporeality, his very body, expresses the incompatible mixture of recklessness and pusillanimity induced by his enthrallment to the Egyptian queen. “My very hairs do mutiny,” he admits; “for the white/Reprove the brown for rashness, and they them/For fear and doting” (3.11.13–15).

Passion for Anne Vavasour produced a similar reaction from Oxford. Affection vied with fear. Vavasour was a lady-in-waiting to the queen. “With the first kiss of this forbidden love,” observes Kurt Kreiler, Oxford “had plucked the rose so jealously guarded by the Virgin Queen. It was as if a mortal were to court one of the symbols of purity, the companions of the goddess Diana. The ladies-in-waiting were recruited from the highest families in the realm and in return for services rendered they were prepared for marriage to high-ranking husbands.” The Queen protected the avowed virginity of her ladies-in-waiting. Any man who violated this protection sorely tested his monarch. Oxford’s contesting thoughts, which simultaneously sought exorbitant risks and no risks at all, were doubly blind to rationality. Antony experiences a similar blindness. Cleopatra—whose rational viewpoint when faced with Octavius’s forces prefers the risk-dominant (rather than the payoff-dominant) outcome to her Assurance Game with Antony—“little thought/You would have followed” (3.11.53–54).

Enobarbus, with his game-theoretic relays still reversed, intends loyalty to Antony. “I’ll yet follow/The wounded chance of Antony,” he confides to Scarus and Canidius, “though my reason/Sits in the wind against me” (3.10.34–36). What is more, Antony’s own inner voices of rationality and passion, as if relaying back and forward between the extreme utilities of game-theoretic assurance, cry out. “Haply you shall not see me more,” he tells Enobarbus, “or if,/A mangled shadow. Perchance tomorrow/You’ll serve another master” (4.2.27–29). Ellipsis (or eclipse) contributes to the delineation of Antony’s mental approach to the minimum that is disarticulation, but syntactical compression also helps to maximize rhetorical reason. Self-confidence, having articulated self-pity, then overcomes that articulation. “I hope well of tomorrow,” he informs Enobarbus, “and will lead you/Where rather I’ll expect victorious life/Than death and honour” (4.2.43–45). In response to such wavering, Antony’s confederacy starts to disintegrate. In a form of mirror symmetry, Alexas, from Cleopatra’s attendants, and Canidius, from Antony’s attendants, join the defectors.

"Shakespeare," as Bevington observes, "alters his source [Plutarch] to emphasise the cold-bloodedness and ingratitude of Caesar's calculations" (216 n) toward these prospective supporters. Reading Machiavelli may have initially alerted Oxford to the trade of mercenaries and to the circumstances that alter their loyalties, but in maturity he could have drawn on the testimony of his nephews Sir Francis Vere and Sir Horace Vere to confirm Octavius's adherence to Machiavelli's prognostications. Simply put, Octavius might have recourse to mercenaries when exigencies demand, but he renounces them thereafter. "Canidius and the rest/That fell away have entertainment but/No honourable trust" (4.6.16–18). They resemble Robert Devereux's mercenaries after the sacking of Cadiz: Queen Elizabeth refused to pay them. With the execution of Alexas, however, Octavius's brutality outweighs the behavior of his Elizabethan counterpart. Octavius's combined actions forestall what he determines to be inevitable: the turncoats' defection to another leader should better circumstances attend that rival. Similarly, Antony's plea bargain for himself—"Lord of his fortunes he salutes thee, and/Requires to live in Egypt; which not granted,/He lessens his requests, and to thee sues" (3.12.11–13), Antony's Ambassador imparts to Octavius, "To let him breathe between the heavens and earth/A private man in Athens" (3.12.14–15)—is rejected.

Enobarbus now seemingly resolves his personal dilemma: "Mine honesty and I begin to square" (3.13.41). Antony, "that would make his will/Lord of his reason" (3.13.3–4), is at fault. Enobarbus equates Antony's trust in Cleopatra—"The loyalty well held to fools does make/Our faith mere folly" (3.13.42–43)—with a form of blind faith. She means more to Antony than their remaining forces do. Meanwhile, Antony recognizes his own guilt, and regains rational control, telling Cleopatra that she will receive a positive outcome if her solution to their dilemma is permanent defection. "To the boy Caesar send this grizzled head" (3.13.17), he advises her, "And he will fill thy wishes to the brim/With principalities" (3.13.18–19). Cleopatra refuses this proposition, but Antony misinterprets her feigned recognition of Octavius's authority as genuine compliance. "Increasingly in the later stages of the play her motives are complex and hard to fathom," as Bevington notes, "and that very fact makes analysis of her as tragic protagonist difficult. If we are never entirely certain whether she intends to desert Antony or not, or whether she conceals her wealth from Caesar in order to deceive him, how are we to measure the interrelation of her character and her fate?" (20).

In resealing their pact, irrational passion resolves this misunderstanding, and Antony again vows to take the maximum risk in leaguings with the queen. "The next time I do fight" (3.13.196), he swears to her, "I'll make Death love me, for I will contend/Even with his pestilent scythe" (3.13.197–98). Enobarbus interprets this claim as a further sign of Antony's shrinking reason. "A diminution in our captain's brain" (3.13.202) may well "Restor[e] his heart" (3.13.203), but "When valour preys on reason,/It eats the sword it fights with" (3.13.203–04).

Maecenas, however, retains his game-theoretic sense, interpreting Antony as the stag that Octavius's forces will surely bay. During the retreat from Modena, Antony had suffered yet survived, but "When one so great begins to rage," Maecenas assures Octavius, "he's hunted/Even to falling" (4.1.8–9). "Within our files there are,/Of those that served Mark Antony but late,/Enough to fetch him in" (4.1.13–15), concurs Octavius, who (in effect) expresses an awareness of the number of players involved in their Assurance Game.

Enobarbus, more mindful of Octavius's luck than Antony is, now defects from Antony's side. When, however, Antony forwards Enobarbus's treasure to him, Enobarbus has a fit of conscience. Correct reason unites natural reason with moral sense; and terms akin to those of a game-theoretic utility reveal something of Enobarbus's guilt: "O Antony,/Thou mine of bounty," he cries, "how wouldst thou have paid/My better service, when my turpitude/Thou dost so crown with gold!" (4.6.32–35). Enobarbus, as if conditioned to game-theoretic situations, cannot help but berate himself. "Let the world rank me in register" (4.9.21), he beseeches, "A master-leaver and a fugitive" (4.9.22). News of Octavius's preemptive actions toward Alexas inflates Enobarbus's sense of personal condemnation, and the resulting estimation validates his self-inflicted death. Machiavelli's prognostication concerning mercenaries, as Sir Francis and Sir Horace Vere could have testified, does not always hold true.

The shock of Enobarbus's death compounds Antony's inability to maintain blind faith in Cleopatra. Doubt about her loyalty continues to tax his thoughts. Oxford's "Massacre Letter" encapsulates a similar wavering. The events of St. Bartholomew's Day 1572 prompted Oxford's rational effort to reach a common understanding with Burghley. His father-in-law, as a practiced Ramist, was "one [on] whom I have builded my foundation" (56). Oxford even accepted Burghley's status as banker ("both in this, as in all other things, I am to be governed and commanded at your Lordship's good devotion" [55]) and vowed to cooperate with

him ("I have no other remedy but to look better to amend the fault in the rest of my dealings hereafter" [54]). Oxford's pledge—"in all fortunes; and what shall hap to you I count it hap to myself" (55)—states his expectation of a symmetrical outcome to their mutual efforts. In the long term, though, Oxford could never be certain of Burghley.

Yet, after Antony's defeat at Philippi, "Cleopatra's eunuch Mardian contradicts Antony's expressed suspicion that she had played him false by helping Caesar" (Fowler 92): "No, Antony,/My mistress loved thee, and her fortunes mingled/With thine entirely" (4.14.23–25). "Antony, however much he seems to forgive the betrayals he has suspected in her," concurs Bevington, "seems convinced to the last that she will make an accommodation with Caesar (4.15.48)" (20). "Cleopatra and Shakespeare alike," as Bevington concludes, may "exploit with gusto the notion that men commonly find women mysterious" (20), but a larger part of Antony's insecurity revolves around the vacillations in human relationships facilitated by coordinative structures. Antony "can never be sure of" Cleopatra, writes Harold Bloom in *William Shakespeare's Antony and Cleopatra* (1988), "only of his own irrational fascination"; and "even that has its ebbs and flows" (49).

The first day of what will be the final battle falls in favor of Antony and Cleopatra. Antony praises their combined forces, as if the participants were equals in an Assurance Game: "For doughty-handed are you, and have fought/Not as you served the cause, but as't had been/Each man's like mine" (4.8.5–7). Buoyed by success, Antony confides to Cleopatra his newfound confidence in his own rationality. Despite the inferences of physical vigor attending the younger Octavius, "yet ha' we/A brain that nourishes our nerves and can/Get goal for goal of youth" (4.8.20–22). Notwithstanding this declaration, on the second and decisive day of the battle, Antony resorts to hazard-accepting type. "Antony," as Allan Bloom notes, "risks himself on the sea" (46).

That Antony is a land fighter, who cannot forget the previous rout triggered by the Egyptians' defection, indicates the height of his folly. "Elizabeth," to expand a previous quotation from Keith Rinehart, "staked her throne on a decisive sea battle—the fight with the Spanish Armada—and won; Cleopatra staked hers on the decisive Battle of Actium and lost" (85). With the Egyptians' retreat, Antony construes Cleopatra's second defection as a secret strategy: Cleopatra "has/Packed cards with Caesar," he complains to Eros, "and false-played my glory/Unto an enemy's triumph" (4.14.18–20). A game-theoretic focal point provides a more accurate interpretation of Cleopatra's actions than Antony's construal does. To

appropriate Kinney, Cleopatra's "worn pathways and synapses" (13), her habits of mind, choose between the two stable solutions to an Assurance Game: she favors risk dominance. For Woodbridge, "among many ways to read Cleopatra is as a bold international gambler" (207), and Cleopatra's ludic disposition, as evinced in her self-frustrated recourse to games during Antony's absence from Egypt, certainly fits Woodbridge's description of her. Yet, Cleopatra's level-headedness (rather than boldness), as her choices in successive Assurance Games attest, often determines her decisions. In effect, she reduces her exposure to chance: her (rectilinear game-theoretic) rationality mitigates the (circle or) "false huswife" (4.15.46) of luck.

With the withdrawal of either participant from a two-person Assurance Game, the game is effectively over, so the (erroneous) news of Cleopatra's death is enough to prompt Antony to take his own life. Cleopatra has brought "a superhuman vitality out of Antony that Rome cannot equal," as Northrop Frye explains, "not in spite of the fact that it destroys him, but because it destroys him" (296). "The odds," as Cleopatra declaims, "is gone" (4.15.68), and Octavius, as "[s]ole sir o'th'world" (5.2.119), wins all. The successive outcomes of international intrigue, as if measured on a discrete game-theoretic scale, have moved from a third to a half to the whole of the Roman Republic; as a result, that republic becomes an empire, and triumvir Octavius Caesar becomes Emperor Augustus. He promises a pact of honor with Cleopatra—even appealing to the Aristotelian quality of her predisposition: "Give her," he commands Proculeius, "what comforts/The quality of her passion shall require" (5.1.62–63)—but she does not trust his assurances. She has already summed Augustus up, anticipates what he wishes to hear from her, and identifies the focal point of Augustus's coordinative proposal.

Individuals can play a social dilemma according to their memories of past interactions. These memories groove their own synaptic pathways. In effect, just as Oxford recognized the Machiavel in Burghley, so Cleopatra recognizes the Machiavel in Augustus. Cleopatra has formed the opinion that Augustus only cooperates for selfish purposes. She knows that his self-interest will surely undo the "Cleopatrician."² In addition, Dolabella encourages the queen to discount Augustus's promises, advice that confirms Cleopatra's extreme solution to her dilemma: suicide as defection. "Among her many and complex motives for suicide," avers Bevington, "we should not eliminate the element of personal calculation, of wishing to avoid the disgrace of being led captive to Rome." Such calculations "are perfectly human" (27).

The brief appearance of the clown in the scene (5.2) that encapsulates this rational response deserves particular consideration. Richard Whalen supplies numerous reasons for this attention: neither the clown's comical intrusion nor the queen's death by snakebite occur in Plutarch's *Vitae*; the poisonous reptile "is referred to not as an asp, or a snake, or a serpent," but "as a 'worm'"; and "the word 'worm' appears nine times in just thirty-six lines [...]—far more than in any other play" (12).³ The exchange of "serpent" for "worm" is unusual, and is archaic today, but corresponds to the first definition of "worm" in the *Oxford English Dictionary*. This meaning is intriguing from an Oxfordian perspective: another substitute for "worm" in Edward de Vere's vocabulary, as Chap. 8 reveals, is "ver," its form in French. "Edward de Vere in the person of the clown," as Whalen argues, "is talking about himself, the worm, to Queen Elizabeth in the person of Cleopatra" (12). The clown wishes "you all joy of the worm" (5.2.256) and the queen particular "joy o'th'worm" (5.2.273). Oxford's drama, or the worm's bite, is for all theatergoers to enjoy. Moreover, just as the play will "make Cleopatra immortal," so it "will make Queen Elizabeth immortal" (Whalen 12). Even so, the queen's favorite, her "Turk," had become, to appropriate Cleopatra, her "[p]oor venomous fool" (5.2.299). Put succinctly, Elizabeth thought Oxford foolish for pursuing an ultimate aim that had depleted his inheritance—but she recognized his venomous insight, her immortalization in *Antony and Cleopatra*, and the (albeit necessarily self-effacing) immortality of Oxford's art.

Suicide is the deed that seals the complementarity between Antony and Cleopatra. "Cleopatra has become like Antony," argues Bevington, "internalising his Romanness even as he has dared to become like her" (29). Yet, that Romanness, that Heraclitean paradox, that game-theoretic framework has structured their relationship from the start. Whatever the machinations of rhetorical style, be they of Cicero's Attic extremes or of the Asiatic style that results from their admixture, natural reason constructively and epistemically presupposes logical thought. Oxford learned this lesson from Ramus. Cleopatra disparages Augustus's luck, because she believes at some level that coordinative dilemmas temper contingencies, as if the higher powers bestowed Augustus with good fortune in order to condemn his boastfulness: an inescapable downfall awaits those who exhibit hubris: "I hear [Antony] mock/The luck of Caesar," declaims the queen in dying, "which the gods give men/To excuse their after wrath" (5.2.279–81). Even Augustus, the calculating machine, senses

this inevitable requital. His command to Dolabella concerning the funeral of Antony and Cleopatra has a game-theoretic tone, but the last word of his order, and that of the play, is one of gravitas: “see/High order in this great solemnity” (5.2.359–60).

According to one interpretation of classical history handed down to the Renaissance, the transition from a republic to an empire ended an era of divisiveness. Augustus’s desire for, and actualization of, political stability, as J. Leeds Barroll observes, meant that many Elizabethans considered him “an eminently impressive historical figure” (252). Renaissance historians understood his reign as the epitome of good governance; they saw the subsequent decline into decadence as a form of historical usurpation, and they wished to connect present-day narratives of empire to Augustus’s example. Ramus’s *Liber de moribus veterum Gallorum*, which would influence later European redefinitions of national self-image, such as that proposed by the Italian historian Lodovico Antonio Muratori (1672–1750), manifested this academic wish. Indeed, Ramus’s morality study emphasizes what Paola Gambarota calls “the originality and uniqueness” that had made the French empire preeminent among “neo-Latin cultures” (89).

When tyranny overcomes that beneficent mode of governance, however, cruelty can spread like the “vesper Sicilianus” (55). This reference from Oxford’s “Massacre Letter,” explains Fowler, “is to the massacre of the French garrison in Sicily some 300 years before—starting, as the St. Bartholomew’s one did, at a wedding during a festival or pageant, on the eve of Easter Monday, March 31, 1282.” Oxford and Shakespeare share a familiarity with the *Vesper Sicilianus*, the St. Bartholomew’s Day Massacre, and their dark pageantry. “Sometime we see a cloud that’s dragonish,/A vapour sometime like a bear or lion,/A towered citadel” (4.14.2–4), Antony tells Eros. “Thou has seen these signs,” continues Antony, “They are black vesper’s pageants” (4.14.7–8).

That Edward de Vere had had access to a copy of Ramus’s Gallic treatise cannot be overstated. The Augustus of *Antony and Cleopatra*, avers Julian Markels, “is no villain, but, like King Henry V, whom he so resembles in character, the agent of political order renewing itself” (126). In the context of Renaissance historiography, Augustus’s Machiavellian streak is a positive attribute for both Barroll and Markels. In contrast, Meron Theodor and Michelle Zerba still understand the Machiavel in Augustus as the negative attribute of base materialism. More accurately adduced, however, the play follows a less polarized course, providing a continuum that Kalmey’s criticism understands as a snapshot. “The distinction made

in the Elizabethan histories of Rome,” states Kalmey, “holds that Octavius is to be honored as positive example of the ideal prince *only after* he is crowned Emperor in Rome after the defeat of Antony.” Yet, “*before* this precise occasion, the same Elizabethan histories of Rome characterize Octavius as a vicious tyrant who fomented bloody civil war and a reign of terror solely for his personal gain” (278; emphasis original).

De republica Anglorum supplemented these histories. This treatise represented what Anne McLaren calls “Smith’s attempt as a citizen of the elect nation to theorize the ‘mixed monarchy’ inaugurated with Elizabeth’s accession” (911). Smith’s thesis resulted from his “engagement in a debate which resonated throughout Europe during the sixteenth century over ‘who hath taken the righter, truer, and more commodious way to govern,’ in accordance with God’s will and the example of classical antiquity” (939). Augustus (née Octavius) figures Smith’s contrast in *De republica Anglorum* between a monarch and a tyrant; he echoes the opinions of King John before and after his signing of the Magna Carter, and he recalls the double-sidedness of character that Charles Arundell intended in describing Oxford “for his conduct a Caesar” (qtd. in B. M. Ward 128).

When playing within the rules of a social dilemma, as *Troilus and Cressida* reveals, the arbitrary solution of a social dilemma can be unpleasant. An alternative response, as variously enacted by Diomedes, Achilles, and Ulysses, is to step outside the ordinary rules of engagement. Extraludic manipulation can outflank coordinative stipulations. Another alternative arises in *Antony and Cleopatra*. The play’s subject matter, as George Wilson Knight traces in *The Imperial Theme*, “ranges from the material and sensuous, through the grand and magnificent, to the more purely spiritual. There is an ascending scale” (204). Transcendence over situations of coordination, however, arrives only with death. “The ambiguity of *Antony and Cleopatra*,” argues Shapiro, “is ‘integrative’ and serves to present us with an image of our ambiguous world. Its meaning does not inhere in the sage words of any single character, but in the play’s oscillating structure” (32). A game-theoretic perspective understands that oscillation as the free yet structurally restrained dynamic inherent to interpersonal coordination. A critical appreciation of Ramism informed Oxford’s logical, dialectical, and rhetorical ideas; as a result, the value judgment of *Antony and Cleopatra* eclipses that of *Troilus and Cressida*, presenting the immutable framework of interrelational ontology not as a structure to sidestep, but as an inescapable facilitator of human relations.

NOTES

1. The prominent part played by Spring, or Ver, at the close of *Love's Labour's Lost* finds an aural resonance at the end of *The Merchant of Venice*, which closes on the word "ring," in a scene that concerns two marriages (Portia's union with Bassanio and Nerissa's union with Gratiano). In effect, this double figuration turns that final word from "ring," or the Italian "vera," into "rings," or the Italian "vere." As with *Love's Labour's Lost*, Oxford signs *The Merchant of Venice*, as Haste notes, "in exactly the place where you and I would sign our names to something we had written" (25).
2. The term "Cleopatrician" (166) arises in James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* (1939).
3. Whalen reports that the word "'worm' [...]" occurs only once or twice in about half of the other plays, sometimes to mean a serpent, usually to mean an earthworm or maggot, as in 'the worm of conscience' (*Richard III*, *Much Ado About Nothing*)" (12).



CHAPTER 13

Chicken in *King Henry V* (Part 1)

*Which oft our stage hath shown—and for their sake,
In your fair minds let this acceptance take.*
—William Shakespeare, *King Henry V* (Epilogue 13–14)

“Calling someone a chicken for cowardice,” states Barry O’Neill, “probably goes back at least to the fifteenth century” (264). Peter Ramus’s attempt to pacify the antagonism between students at the University of Paris and monks at the neighboring St. Germain in 1557 posited him as an ineffectual man. His detractors might even have charged him with cowardice owing to his periods of isolation in Fontainebleau (1562 and 1567) and on his European tour (1568–70). Each of these spells took Ramus beyond the reach of his enemies. Yet, his behavior when faced with the murderous spectacle of the St. Bartholomew’s Day Massacre denies such an accusation. Peter Ramus was no Marcus Aemilius Lepidus.

Ramus’s loyalty to his master’s thesis thirty-six years earlier, which was a form of defection in the eyes of his examiners, had produced a short-lived Deadlock. When his examiners were obliged to concede, effectively having to cooperate with their examinee, the impasse ended in Ramus’s favor. The situation between Ramus and his “examiners” in August 1572, however, was markedly different. Ramus, whose radical outlook had not only defied second scholasticism, but also prompted his conversion from Catholicism to Calvinism, did not seek to escape. Indeed, Ramus did not meet his death until the third day of the massacre, when most of the

atrocities were over. "The outrage" on Ramus's person, writes Frank Pierrepont Graves, "seems to have been a piece of private revenge on the part of Carpentarius" (105–06). Ramus remained composed, but the "hired assassins," who "forced their way into the College of Presles and at length found Ramus in his little study on the fifth floor," almost chickened out.¹ Ramus "was devoting his last moments to prayer, and, as the old man rose from his knees, his venerable dignity seemed for a moment to have overawed the intruders" (106).

Hence, in drawing on the consensus of *Three Lives*, Graves somewhat counteracts the version of Ramus's murder presented in Christopher Marlowe's *The Massacre at Paris*. Unlike the stage portrayal, Henry, Duke of Anjou, and Henry, Duke of Guise, were undoubtedly absent; and Ramus's actual assassins were apparently silent. Ramus had no dialogic route for conversation or dialectical argument. He examined neither his assailants for misology nor his own discourse. Rather, acknowledging that he had "hope for neither pity nor mercy" (106), Ramus remained in monologic mode. "If we may believe his biographers," submits Graves, "his last utterance was strangely like that of his Master on Calvary. 'Pardon these wretched men, my God, for they know not what they do!'" (106–07). The assassins hesitated, but Jacques Charpentier's arrangement with them preempted their defection, and murder triumphed over Ramus's propensity for instituting Deadlocks. Ramus's demise strengthened the analogy that he had drawn at the time of his master's examination and that he had later laid before the Privy Council. Ramus suffered as Socrates had. Embroiled in a fatally dangerous game, and without recourse to Deadlock, either man could have chickened out, but neither did. Death was the tragic payoff for Ramus's contribution to the decay of dialogue.

Despite the provenance cited by O'Neill, a formal account of Chicken did not occur until Bertrand Russell's meditation on *Common Sense and Nuclear Warfare* (1959). This social dilemma "is played by choosing a long straight road with a white line down the middle and starting two very fast cars towards each other from opposite ends. Each car is expected to keep the wheels of one side on the white line." Mutual destruction becomes imminent as the cars approach one another. "If one of them swerves from the white line before the other, the other, as he passes, shouts 'Chicken!,' and the one who has swerved becomes an object of contempt." When played by discontented youths, as Russell remarks, "this game is considered decadent and immoral, though only the lives of the players are risked." These malcontents use the middle of the road to rebel against

orthodoxy—they are simply not prepared to abide by delimiting lines (or rules). “When the game is played by eminent statesmen” in the postatomic world, however, they “risk not only their own lives but those of many hundreds of millions of human beings.” Both sides believe that their political representatives “are displaying a high degree of wisdom and courage, and only the statesmen on the other side are reprehensible.” Russell disagrees. The statesmen on both sides “are to blame for playing such an incredibly dangerous game” (19).

Russell inextricably linked Chicken to mutually assured destruction, but limiting this social dilemma to scenarios of nuclear war would be a mistake. “Chicken games,” agrees Richard Jankowski, “are more pervasive than the scant attention paid them in the literature” (450) of game theory suggests. This social dilemma arises whenever players face each other in a test of daring. The best utility results when one player’s resolve to defect forces the other player to cooperate (or chicken out); the next best outcome occurs if both players cooperate; the penultimate utility results when one player cooperates in the face of the other player’s determination to defect; and the worst outcome occurs if both players defect. “In a Chicken game,” explains O’Neill, “one person or the other must compromise to avoid a mutual disaster. Each player wants to convince the other that he or she will not back down” (264). Any player who backs down is a chicken.

If *C* stands for cooperation and *D* for defection, then the mathematical formula that expresses the descending outcomes for Chicken is $DC > CC > CD > DD$. The temptation for unilateral defection (*T*) betters the reward for mutual cooperation (*R*), which surpasses the sucker outcome for unilateral cooperation (*S*), which betters the punishment for mutual defection (*P*). This nomenclature expresses the descending outcomes with the formula $T > R > S > P$. Table 13.1 sets out this model in a manner that a Ramist of Oxford’s caliber would have understood.

“Chicken is a Prisoner’s Dilemma with punishment and sucker payoffs reversed” (William Poundstone 217). This social dilemma is particularly awkward because it involves a deficient Nash equilibrium that results from

Table 13.1 Possible outcomes to a Chicken game

Player 1	Player 2	
	Cooperate (C)	Defect (D)
Cooperate (C)	2,2	1,3
Defect (D)	3,1	0,0

a combination of strategies. This weakened form of stability answers to a player's possible regret for disloyalty. Defection promises either the maximum or the minimum outcome. That maximum can mean complete victory. That minimum can mean total catastrophe.

A sense of the destructive punishment that can attend mutual defection had enveloped the court of Queen Elizabeth in the wake of the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre. Sir Thomas Smith and Lord William Burghley remained bitter over the atrocity. News of the massacre must have scarred Edward de Vere's memory too. "Oxford was only twenty-two years old when the civilized world was shocked by the fateful Massacre of Saint Bartholomew," relates William Plumer Fowler, with the "murder of France's Admiral Coligny and some 10,000 of his fellow Huguenots [...] spreading into the French provinces until over 100,000 Huguenots had been slain" (56).

Edward de Vere's psychological trauma reveals Chicken as a foreground image of Oxfordian importance. His initial reaction to the news from Paris was visceral, sending that most commiserative of letters to his father-in-law, whose position as Edward's strategic banker had survived the expiration of official guardianship. That Cecil had transferred the marriage plans for his daughter Anne onto Oxford was central to this survival. The inability, or unwillingness, to surrender his daughter's dowry, however, led to unforeseen problems. In 1573, Lord Treasurer Burghley was negotiating with Spain, attempting to facilitate a mutual improvement in trade. The Spanish, who wished to maximize the outcome from these talks and who had learned of Burghley's outstanding obligation to Oxford, attempted to suborn the lord treasurer. Burghley could not personally meet Antonio de Guera, the Spanish agent sent to England to settle the bribe, so he urged Oxford to collect the payment. For Edward, Anne's dowry remained a strategic focal point, but if he undertook the mission, as both he and Burghley knew, defection would brand him (rather than his father-in-law) a spy.

The background image at Elizabeth's court actively compounded Oxford's predicament. She played the game-theoretic banker among her prominent courtiers. The Virgin Queen, as if in response to her politically stalemated childbearing, trapped these players in a Deadlock. Oxford met de Guera in January 1574, but the discovery of his assignation prompted Elizabeth to keep him under personal observation; this supervision delayed the monetary transaction, and this prorogation relocated that transaction to the continent. Financially pressed and anxious to collect his dowry, Oxford cited cultural aspirations for his (feigned) wanderlust. "II Cortegiano,"

declares Percy Allen, “with his alluring laudation of Italy, as soul and centre of European culture; and the large rumours from the world without, ever floating through the galleries of Whitehall, are augmenting de Vere’s inward urge towards foreign travel.” The suspicious Elizabeth refused him leave of absence: “never,” remarks Allen, “can he wring the necessary permission” (50).

Oxford ended this brief Deadlock that summer. He crossed the English Channel without the queen’s authority. Many of her courtiers feared an act of defection. That interpretation was in line with Oxford’s venturesome predisposition. Fortunately, Burghley managed to temper the queen’s concerns, and although Elizabeth displayed her fury, sending Thomas Bedingfield to retrieve Oxford, she forgave her errant Turk.² Edward de Vere, who had dared to break his background Deadlock with Queen Elizabeth, was astute enough to chicken out (or cooperate) when faced with her wrath. He could not hope to win this foregrounded Chicken.

De Vere’s current rival for the greatest utility in England—the queen’s affections—was Christopher Hatton. Oxford disliked the Puritan in Hatton; even the relative optimism of Aristotle’s *Politics*, with its Platonic rating of monarchy as the best form of government, would have elicited little joy from him, and his business dealings only intensified Oxford’s disdain. Whereas Oxford lost his significant investments in expeditions by Martin Frobisher and John Davis, Hatton gained a handsome return on his partial funding of Francis Drake’s adventures.

Oxford’s next personal crisis, which stemmed from what Marilyn Savage Gray calls his “merry war” (127) with Anne Vavasour, plunged him into another Chicken. When Vavasour fell pregnant for the first time, Oxford mooted marriage, followed by exile (or chickening out) to Spain. Vavasour’s miscarriage solved the couple’s dilemma. Chance had intervened. Oxford need not abscond from Elizabeth’s court. When, in the summer of 1581, Vavasour fell pregnant for a second time, as Alan H. Nelson documents, “Oxford faced the same dilemma” (252). With a propensity for choosing cooperation in Chicken, and without a second miscarriage intervening in his favor, Oxford kept his paramour at a distance. His aloofness, which mutedly echoed his previous plan of exile, prompted a demand from Anne’s family for reputational redress.

Thomas Knyvet, Vavasour’s uncle, took charge of this demand. From Knyvet’s perspective, decadence and immorality attached themselves to Oxford’s relations with his niece, and he challenged the earl to a duel. De Vere did not chicken out; he accepted Knyvet’s challenge; this choice

accorded with his predilection for taking risks, and the result was a permanent reminder of the players' mutual defection. With the fate of Thomas Brincknell in mind, Knyvet was probably fortunate to escape harm at Oxford's hands, but the duel permanently lamed Oxford. "So I," laments the poet-persona of Sonnet 37, was "made lame by Fortune's dearest spite" (3). Oxford's biblical annotations also attest to this minimum coordinative outcome. "A series of marked verses in the late prophet Micah (4.6–7)," as Roger A. Stritmatter observes in *The Marginalia of Edward de Vere's Geneva Bible*, "lay stress on God's redeeming mercy towards the lame" (90). Oxford's response to his dangerous game with Knyvet paralleled those of Socrates and Ramus in similarly dangerous dilemmas: the two philosophers forfeited life for their mutual defections from authority; Oxford was fortunate the same utility did not attend his combat with Knyvet.

An international crisis then enmeshed Oxford in another personal situation that tended toward Chicken: political machinations to guarantee English Protestantism produced the crisis of 1588. Burghley superintended these schemes; this role conflated the anger of his religious enemies from both sides of the English Channel, and Catholics came to loath him. "Burghley was the great survivor of Elizabeth's government and his enemies hated him for it," avers Stephen Alford. "There was something about his longevity that to Catholics made his crimes even more dastardly." Burghley was "the base-born nobleman who had brought the realm to perdition, who all but held Elizabeth I captive, and who made himself rich and powerful at the expense of the Queen and her subjects" (316). The Spanish reaction to Burghley's scheming eventually brought international relations to a military head.

"Evidence for Oxford's role in the battle of the Armada," details Nelson, "takes two separate forms: literary-historical reports and contemporary letters" (312). Richard Hakluyt supplies the former source. "The English nauie in the meane while increased, whereunto out of all Hauens of the Realme resorted ships and men: for they all with one accord came flocking thither as vnto a set field, where immortall fame and glory was to be attained, and faithfull seruice to bee performed vnto their prince and country" (148–49). Among these respondents "were many great and honourable personages, as namely, the Erles of Oxford, of Northumberland, of Cumberland, &c." (149). Robert Dudley, First Earl of Leicester, showing his continued interest in Oxford, supplies the latter source. De Vere struck Dudley "as 'most willing to hazard his life in this quarrel,'" as Nelson recounts. In consequence, "Leicester sought Walsingham's advice

on how best to use him" (316). The nature of that guidance remains unknown, but the English fleet would mount three search-and-destroy missions, as detailed in Chaps. 7 and 12, and these unsuccessful forays probably constituted Oxford's total involvement in the campaign.

Oxford's subsequent irritation caused him to act with his familiar ambiguity. "De Vere dispatched himself to London on the night of July 27," as Mark Anderson chronicles, "to fetch his armor and furniture" for the expected sea battle (225). Although Oxford's behavior showed him "evidently committed to lay down his life or be taken hostage if the situation merited" (225), the queen gave him "the assignment of commanding two thousand men in the Essex deep-water port city of Harwich." The venture-some Oxford "wanted no part of it." He "yearned to be on a warship chasing Spaniards" (226). By 1 August, he had returned to London, angering Leicester in the process. Oxford's actions made Dudley "gladder to be rydd of him than to haue him but only to have him, contented, which now I finde wyll be harder than I tooke yt & denyeth all his former offers he made to serve rather than not to be sene to be Employed at this tyme" (qtd. in Nelson 317). De Vere's act of denial smacked of chickening out. "The story of the Armada, now enshrined in myth, ends happily for England," remarks Anderson. "But for de Vere, the tale of Spain's naval assault in the summer of 1588 is one that begins with his wife's death, follows with an inglorious retreat from a naval mission gone awry, and ends onshore with a clash of egos and military authority" (226). The public learned nothing of Oxford's actual behavior. Instead, he was "lionized," as Nelson reports, "in a ballad celebrating a service of Thanksgiving at St Paul's Cathedral." The motivation for Oxford's actions had been "pique"—he had felt the same emotion when summoned from the Low Countries by the queen in October 1585—"but pique cannot excuse a refusal to obey a superior office in time of war" (318), and Oxford would have understood how his detractors could construe such behavior as chickening out.

"Although the Spanish Armada was defeated in 1588," as William Farina observes, "England remained at war with Spain throughout the reign of Elizabeth." What is more, "England was racked with internal dissensions, from Catholic insurgents and even more so from Puritan fanatics who rejected outright the supremacy of the crown as head of the Anglican Church" (126). Radical Puritanism drew on Ramism, and that deferral was a negative as well as a positive, with the ideological and philosophical battles over second-generation Ramism "fought out in the interminable bickering of college politics" (Hugh F. Kearney 62).

The early history of Gresham College, London, encapsulates that bickering. Sir Thomas Gresham (the Elder) (1519–79) had bequeathed his assets to establish a seat of learning. The college was eventually founded in 1597. “Ramism was a dominating influence behind the foundation” (Kearney 66) and resistance to this inspiration had precipitated the twenty-year delay in fulfilling Thomas Gresham’s dying wish. Edward de Vere, as a critical Ramist, could contemplate the uptake and self-fashioning of Ramism at the college. Because he knew all about Ramism, Oxford was no blind adherent, and that Gresham College soon became anti-Ramist would not have surprised him. His personal complaint with social constructs, as an earl more and more alienated from his father’s estates, rested elsewhere: on the anachronistic land tenure of knight-service.

Oxford’s complaint added to Queen Elizabeth’s difficulties as the ultimate English banker. Her game-theoretic role came under scrutiny. Little wonder that the queen’s survival, English prosperity, and colonial expansion “were surprising to those observers who could not see beyond these overt problems” (Farina 126). The Policy of Plays, as fulfilled by the Queen’s Men, helped to counter this surprise. Their repertoire at this time included Robert Wilson’s *Three Lords and Ladies of London* (c. 1588), George Peele’s *The Old Wives Tale* (1595), and the anonymously authored *The Famous Victories of Henry V* (1594). All of these works are “marked by allegorical characterization and staging and are directed toward the praise of Elizabeth and her government” (Frank Ardolino 147).

The Henriad, as Ramón Jimenéz (2001) traces, repeats every scene from *The Famous Victories of Henry V*; the anonymously authored play, as Chap. 7 argues, is probably one of Oxford’s early efforts; and *King Henry V* prosecutes the same propagandist strategy as its youthful forebear: an allegory that demonstrates how “England, despite all of its apparent handicaps, was the little engine that could” (Farina 126). The Armada, “and the later threats of invasion or of Spanish-financed insurrection in Ireland, the long wars against Spanish Catholicism in the Low Countries, the Jesuit-led subversion of English Catholics after the Council of Trent and the Papal Bull freeing Catholics from the duty of obedience to heretical princes,” as Andrew Gurr enumerates, “all meant danger.” Stubborn English resistance to these threats produced the background image of Deadlock. That Deadlock “provoked militarism” (22).

The foreground image of Chicken—the social dilemma in which Edward de Vere so often found himself involved—emerged from the international specifics that interacted with this strategic backdrop. An emergent foreground

image is partly the logical outcome of strategic forces operating on a background image; a strategic cause logically produces a strategic effect; Edward de Vere's sociopolitical strategies would have familiarized him with this causation, and *King Henry V*, as an allegory of the international politics of Elizabeth's reign, demonstrates this awareness.

Nonetheless, for numerous critics, including Phyllis Rackin (38), Donald Hedrick (477), and Michael Quinn (45–52), *King Henry V* concerns conceptions of providence. Renaissance scholasticism distinguished between a general and a particular providence, and the playwright interrogates this distinction in the context of the dynastic struggle initiated by Henry Bolingbroke's monarchical claim and terminated by the Battle of Bosworth Field. The most obvious historical sources for the Wars of the Roses were Edward Hall's *The Union of the Two Noble and Illustre Families of Lancastre and Yorke* (1548) and Raphael Holinshed's *Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland* (1577). These accounts, as Quinn summarizes, present the conflict as "a rough demonstration of the truth of a general providence: crime is ultimately punished and time inevitably brings in the triumph of virtue." Crucially, however, "in the manner of demonstrating this truth," as Quinn concedes, "we may see the intimate and fruitful relationship between Shakespeare's dramatic technique and his idea of providence." Primarily, in what amounts to a late-humanist response to late-scholastic metaphysics, "he shows a far greater concern for the logic of cause and effect than any other dramatist writing in the early 1590's and in fact makes that logic a good deal clearer than it is in the chronicles" (47).

This concern extended to Oxford's reading of his family history. The executions of John de Vere (c. 1408–62), Twelfth Earl of Oxford, and John's eldest son, Aubrey, as Lancastrian supporters, constituted a logical response from their enemies. Providence played little part in the two men's demise, and Edward de Vere's Ramist sensitivity toward dialectical, strategic, and rhetorical issues matches his commitment to the logic of cause and effect. "Without suggesting any direct debt," states Quinn, "one may note that [the playwright's] method bears more than a passing resemblance to that recommended by one of the more accessible humanist historiographers." Quinn refers to Francesco Patrizi (Franciscus Patricius) (1529–97), whom Thomas Blundeville (c. 1522–c. 1606) quoted in *The True Order and Methode of Wrying and Reading Hystories* (1574).

Oxford's ten months in Italy between 1575 and 1576 may have included a meeting with Patrizi. Blundeville emphasizes Patrizi's insistence

“that the historian must first pick out from any sequence of historical events ‘the principall deede,’ to which ‘all meaner deedes ought to be applied’” (Quinn 47–48). Patrizi shared not only Ramus’s deference to cause and effect, but also his reformist zeal. “During the years that Ramus tried to reform dialectical pedagogy,” as Craig Martin traces, “Patrizi found in Platonism and Hermeticism the bases for understanding nature and the universe,” with each man offering “a textual interrogation of the authenticity of the Aristotelian corpus” (113). Blundeville, however, was one “of the English counterreformers,” as Wilbur S. Howell notes, who wrote “to restore scholasticism.” Even so, as Howell admits, Blundeville made this attempt “while preserving some of Ramus’s innovations” (285), and Blundeville’s manual exemplifies this preservation. Almost despite its authorship, therefore, *The True Order and Methode of Wryting and Reading Hystories* deferred to Ramism.³

For Oxford, one of the positive aspects of Ramism concerned structured reasoning, and as the reasoned thoughts of the Chorus make clear in the Prologue to *King Henry V*, the English Channel (La Manche) enforces a structural difference between England and continental Europe: “Suppose within the girdle of these walls [of the theater]/Are now confined two mighty monarchies,/Whose high upreared and abutting fronts/The perilous narrow ocean parts asunder” (19–22). In effect, the Prologue emphasizes the contribution of the coordination condition of silence in maintaining international tension, and, based on the structures of protologic, this tension will promote the foreground image of Chicken from the background image of Deadlock.

In a related move, the Chorus pits interpolative accuracy against extrapolative inaccuracy in a tactic that Gurr deems “unique in Shakespeare.” At periods during the reign of King Henry V, jingoism had to triumph over issues of degree, and the Chorus echoes this phenomenon by “coercing the audience into an emotionally undivided response to what the Chorus calls ‘this star of England.’” For Gurr, “one of the most peculiar features of [the Chorus’s] appearances is how frequently and consistently he whips up enthusiasm for his *misrepresentation* of what follows” (7; emphasis original).

A game-theoretic insight supports Gurr’s undercutting of this supposed peculiarity. The impetuous Prince Hal spent his youth riotously. Yet, his reasoning was never less than receptive, and he fostered his contemplative side, training his reason, as if covertly. Hence, the strategically minded King Henry is not, as many critics assume, a prodigal conversion of the previously idle Prince Hal.⁴ To Shakespeare, as *The First Part of King*

Henry IV attests, Prince Hal is predisposed to strategizing; the prince's idleness and shiftlessness are a ruse; he is a double agent for his own ends. Gurr, as an exception to the critical majority, elucidates: Shakespeare "shows Hal refusing to fall for Falstaff's temptation to become a thief, only joining the Gad's Hill exploit when Poinc proposes the double game of robbing the robbers" (10). The prince, left alone to reflect on Poinc's game, expresses a fittingly Janus-faced intention. Along one trajectory, "I [...] will awhile uphold/The unyoked humour of your idleness" (1.2.155–56). Along the opposite trajectory,

will I imitate the sun,
Who doth permit the base contagious clouds
To smother up his beauty from the world,
That when he please again to be himself,
Being wanted, he may be more wondered at
By breaking through the foul and ugly mists
Of vapours that did seem to strangle him. (1.2.157–63)

King Henry V confirms this earlier evidence of Henry's capacity and willingness to play the double agent. The insightful Bishop of Ely tells the Archbishop of Canterbury how "the prince obscured his contemplation/Under the veil of wildness, which, no doubt,/Grew like the summer grass fastest by night,/Unseen, yet crevice in his faculty" (1.1.63–66). The similarly perceptive Canterbury agrees on this logical explanation for what appears to be the instantaneous maturation of Henry's mind: "It must be so, for miracles are ceased,/And therefore we must needs admit the means/How things are perfected" (1.1.67–69). Fittingly, Henry even displays a rational skill in exegesis, as Canterbury avers:

Hear him but reason in divinity,
And all-admiring, with an inward wish,
You would desire the king were made a prelate.
Hear him debate of commonwealth affairs,
You would say it hath been all in all his study.
List his discourse of war, and you shall hear
A fearful battle rendered you in music. (1.1.38–44)

The prince's youthful playacting has important game-theoretic consequences. In one respect, his training in the simultaneous pursuance of two strategic trajectories readies him for any divergence between background and foreground images. In another respect, Prince Hal learns that the

establishment of honest relationships is almost impossible, because coordinative talk is cheap. Oxford had learned this lesson in numerous ways. William Cecil's unmet promise of a wedding dowry is a good example. Game-theoretic players should rarely take the verbal communication between strategists as more than unrevealing chatter.

The social dilemmas to which Deadlock and Chicken belong at once promote and rely on cheap talk. The playwright's understanding of this strategic phenomenon is clear from the canonical outset. In *The First Part of King Henry VI*, the Duke of Gloucester and Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester, appear to settle their strategic relations. Gloucester assumes cooperative reciprocity ("Here, Winchester, I offer thee my hand" [3.1.126]). Winchester appears to reciprocate ("Love for thy love and hand for hand I give" [3.1.135]), but his aside ("As I intend it not" [3.1.141]) refutes this assumption. Winchester's cooperative pledge is cheap talk.

Ramus, who appreciated silence, ignored cheap talk. Ultimately, this disregard limited invention to a dialectical world devoid of interpersonal talk, accepting the immanence of correct reason while denying the existence of one of its inherent corollaries, coordination problems. In contrast, when coordinative dilemmas arise in *King Henry V*, an atomistic self-awareness attends each (game-theoretic) player, including the English king. Thus, when three of his soldiers, John Bates, Alexander Court, and Michael Williams, mistake King Henry for an ordinary citizen, he replies, "I think the King is but a man as I am" (4.1.97). When the king "sees reason of/fears, as we do," maintains Henry in continuing to withhold his identity, "his fears, out of doubt, be of the same relish as/ours are" (4.1.102–04). As Henry openly but secretly acknowledges, however, a monarch must be able to outstrip the norms of reason: "Yet in reason no man should possess him with any/appearance of fear, lest he by showing it should dishearten his/army" (4.1.104–06).

This higher mental plane facilitates Henry's demand for what one of the French ambassadors calls "certain dukedoms [in France], in the right/Of your great predecessor, King Edward the Third" (1.2.247–48). Nonetheless, Henry requires confirmation of this belief (from Canterbury), because he recognizes the magnitude of such stakes:

For never two such kingdoms did contend
Without much fall of blood, whose guiltless drops
Are every one a woe, a sore complaint
'Gainst him whose wrong gives edge unto the swords
That makes such waste in brief mortality. (1.2.24–28)

The hypallage of hyperbaton—"Our gayness and our guilt are all besmirched" (4.3.110), concedes King Henry, "With rainy marching in the painful field" (4.3.111)—helps to express the extremity of the English position.

The use of logical but absurd language, as Oxford's immersion in Ramism must have taught him, would have struck Ramus as perverse. The trope of hypallage, as a turning too far, stands alongside metalepsis and catachresis in forging improbable links between systematic units of language. According to that unabashed Puritan and purveyor of Ramism Dudley Fenner, as he discusses in *The Artes of Logike and Rhetorike*, his translation of Ramus's *Dialecticae libri duo*, even metonymy provides an illustration of this perversity. For, while the disjunctive syllogism that Ramus promoted found especial favor among English Puritans, as Fenner's numerous illustrations suggest, this "fine maner of wordes" emphasizes "the diuer sortes" too. Foremost among these dubious highlights is "the chaunge of name called a Metonomie" (27). This change, "where the name of a thing, is put for the name of a thing, agreeing with it" (27), has two modes of expression. The case "when the cause is put for the thing caused, and contrariwise" (27), relies on a preceding relationship. The case "when the thing to which any thing is adioyned, is put for the thing adioyned, and contrariwise" (27), creates an arbitrary connection. Like the more complex hypallage of hyperbaton, each instance of metonymy resists Ramus's method, effectively establishing a game of Chicken that pits the polyvalent against the univocal.

Showing his ratiocinative mind in a cost-benefit mode, and as advised by history ("my great-grandfather/Never went with his forces into France/But that the Scot on his unfurnished kingdom/Came pouring like the tide into a breach" [1.2.146–49]), King Henry appreciates that strategic considerations must include, but go beyond, France. "We must not only arm t'invade the French/But lay down our proportions to defend/Against the Scot, who will make road upon us/With all advantages" (1.2.136–39). Henry hereby confirms the axiom proffered by his uncle, the Duke of Exeter—"While that the armèd hand doth fight abroad/Th'adviseèd head defends itself at home" (1.2.178–79)—with the strategically astute monarch displaying at once a learned mind and a willingness to take advice. That learnedness, however, almost succumbs to that willingness when Canterbury quantifies this qualitative axiom, advising the king to "Divide your happy England into four,/Whereof take you one quarter into France" (1.2.214–15).

The initial diplomatic mission by the French, which Henry allows to intercede at this point in his considerations, confirms their misconception of the English king. According to the Dauphin's reckoning, Henry is a play-boy, who lacks a monarch's strategic nous.⁵ The Dauphin "Says that you savour too much of your youth" (1.2.250), as the Dauphin's first ambassador informs King Henry, "And bids you be advised: there's nought in France/That can be with a nimble galliard won;/You cannot revel into dukedoms there" (1.2.251–53). Through his ambassadors, the Dauphin offers Henry a payoff ("This tun of treasure, and in lieu of this/Desires you let the dukedoms that you claim/Hear no more of you" [1.2.255–57]) for the disputed French dukedoms. The Dauphin thinks this narrow utility befits a prodigal youth. "What treasure, uncle?" (1.2.258), asks the king. "Tennis-balls, my liege" (1.2.258) comes Exeter's answer. True to his doubling ability, Henry vows to deride this mockery ("Shall this his mock mock out" [1.2.285]); the Dauphin "hath made a match" (1.2.264); and Henry's second-order derision changes their interplay from the light-hearted to the serious: "tell the pleasant prince" (1.2.281), Henry directs Exeter, "this mock of his/Hath turned his balls to gun-stones" (1.2.281–82). English cannon balls will answer French tennis balls: no frivolous game is afoot: "Now all the youth of England are on fire/And silken dalliance in the wardrobe lies" (2.0.1–2). Henry's elegant adornment of speech, or Ramist *elocutio*, more than answers the Dauphin's *façon de parler*.

A short reacquaintance with the hostility between Edward de Vere, Seventeenth Earl of Oxford, and Sir Philip Sidney posits Chicken as the compositional context for this ludic metaphor. De Vere and Sidney, states Farina, "were rivals politically, personally, and poetically" (21). A long gestation shaped this enmity. They had first met at Cecil House. This center of learning became a shared resource. William Cecil's favoritism toward Sidney, however, opened a divide between the two students. On 1 February 1567, de Vere enrolled at Gray's Inn, and Sidney followed suit the next day. De Vere attended Cambridge University; Sidney entered Oxford University. De Vere received a degree; Sidney left without one. Oxford University inculcated a dislike of Ramism in Francis Bacon but not in Sidney. Sidney's Ramism lacked de Vere's critical insight. This appreciative difference compounded other matters of degree.

First, Anne Cecil's engagement to Sidney had fallen through in 1571, with Oxford marrying Anne later that year. Second, as the two men rose in courtly prominence, two literary factions formed around them. "The court *littérateurs*," confirms J. Thomas Looney, "were divided into two

parties, one headed by Philip Sidney, and the other by the Earl of Oxford" (122). While Oxford's partisans defended poetic naturalism, Sidney's allies placed their faith in manmade constructs. The rivalry between these figureheads reached its climax "on a London tennis court in 1579," as Farina reports, "when a dispute arose over whose turn it was" (21). The order of play became symbolic of the sociopolitical order, with Sidney unwilling to acknowledge Oxford's preeminence, and Oxford unwilling to set a precedent in forfeiting that superiority. The logic of the situation ranked the players on equal terms; the social politics of the situation ranked Oxford over Sidney; but each man recognized the other's logical equality, and neither player would chicken out.⁶ Queen Elizabeth had to settle the matter. She did so in Oxford's favor.

NOTES

1. Some historians question Jacques Charpentier's involvement in Ramus's death. See Graves (106, n. 1).
2. "Upon making full submission, he was, by 7 August, wholly reconciled with the Queen" (Allen 51).
3. Indeed, Blundeville's appreciation of Ramism seems to have steadily increased, and in 1599, as Marion Trousdale chronicles, "Blundeville published *The Art of Logike* 'specially for such zealous Ministers as have not been brought vp in any Vniuersity'" (22).
4. Ramón Jimenéz (2001), for example, argues *King Henry V* is "a logical expansion of the twenty scenes in *Famous Victories*" (8), a source text in which Prince Hal's maturation into King Henry V is sudden and complete, with the prodigal realizing his errors by his father's deathbed.
5. The Dauphin betrays the sort of preconception that clouds Daphne Pearson's judgment of Edward de Vere.
6. The tennis court dispute also finds a parallel in the strategic game between Achilles and Ajax in *Troilus and Cressida*. Queen Elizabeth and Commander Ulysses are the respective umpires, but while Elizabeth made a strategic move, Ulysses attempts to cure competing pride without one. He maps out a coordination problem in which "[t]wo curs shall tame each other" (1.3.389). After requiting Hector's challenge, however, Ajax is even prouder than before, and the historical analogy with the tennis court dispute is again revealing. That Queen Elizabeth found in favor of Edward de Vere over Philip Sidney can only have added to the "insolence and pride" (505) that John Aubrey blames for the earl's eventual downfall. The mature Oxford's art appears, therefore, to prefigure his own life from Aubrey's perspective, and just as complete success failed to crown Elizabeth's intervention, so unmitigated triumph failed to seal Ulysses's strategy.



CHAPTER 14

Chicken in *King Henry V* (Part 2)

You take a precipice for no leap of danger.
—William Shakespeare, *King Henry VIII* (5.1.139)

Unlike Edward de Vere, Seventeenth Earl of Oxford, who at least recognized Sir Philip Sidney's game-theoretic significance, the Dauphin in *King Henry V* discounts the English monarch. The Dauphin's supposition concerning King Henry's dissolute state promotes a fearlessness of the English: England, he tells his father, King Charles VI, "is so idly kinged,/Her sceptre so fantastically borne,/By a vain, giddy, shallow, humorous youth,/That fear attends her not" (2.4.26–29). In game-theoretic terms, the Dauphin rates King Henry as a chicken, but respects Henry's military force. The Dauphin is aware that French defenses are inadequate, and these deficiencies must be resolutely addressed: "It is most meet we arm us 'gainst the foe," he advises his father, "For peace itself should not so dull a kingdom" (2.4.15–16), "Therefore I say 'tis meet we all go forth/To view the sick and feeble parts of France./And let us do it with no show of fear" (2.4.21–23). These measures need be subtle, so not as to incite French defections, and Charles Delabreth, High Constable of France, in returning to the Dauphin's assessment of King Henry, recommends strategic care. "You are," he warns, "too much mistaken in this king" (2.4.30), who is "terrible in constant resolution" (2.4.35). The Dauphin, who trusts the high constable, factors this counselor's advice into his defensive

calculations: "In cases of defence" (2.4.43), he concedes, "'tis best to weigh/The enemy more mighty than he seems" (2.4.43–44).

King Henry's open declaration of his earls' support makes this a sensible concession on the Dauphin's part:

I doubt not that, since we are well persuaded
We carry not a heart with us from hence
That grows not in a fair consent with ours,
Nor leave not one behind that doth not wish
Success and conquest to attend on us. (2.2.20–24)

In effect, King Henry envisages an Assurance Game, with France as the Rousseauan Stag. The French, however, preempt him. For, once in possession of good (if not complete) information concerning Henry's resolve, they resort to gamesmanship. The Chorus, as if expecting the manifestation of this Oxfordian leitmotif, had forewarned as much: "The French, advised by good intelligence/Of this most dreadful preparation,/Shake in their fear, and [introduce] pale policy" (2.0.12–14). Like a game-theoretic banker, the French introduce a lesser but more attainable prize into King Henry's scenario: they "seek to divert the English purposes" (2.0.15) with "treacherous crowns" (2.0.22).

In response, as Queen Elizabeth must have feared of Oxford's flirtation with Catholicism, even if she appreciated that Henry Howard and Charles Arundell had tried to play him for a sucker, three corruptible men have for French "gilt" (2.0.26) "[c]onfirmed conspiracy with fearful France" (2.0.27). These traitors—"One, Richard, Earl of Cambridge, and the second/Henry, Lord Scroop of Masham, and the third/Sir Thomas Gray, knight of Northumberland" (2.0.23–25)—have agreed to defect from King Henry's side. Social rank (or personal degree) predicates the English and French Assurance Games alike. This basis mitigates any guilt the conspirators hold about defection. Whether kings are blood relations or not, they are brothers, and "brotherhood," as Gurr remarks, "is exclusively royal" (33). Notwithstanding international tension, as King Charles clearly states on two occasions, King Henry remains his "brother of England" (2.4.76, 2.4.116). Each game exhibits the same origin for the same preference structure. The deciding factor for the conspirators is money.

Learning of these rank defectors, Exeter attributes their treachery to the lure of money alone ("a foreign purse" [2.2.10]). King Henry, in revealing his open declaration to be a subterfuge in keeping with the

traitors' actions, cites the same charge: Cambridge "Hath for a few light crowns lightly conspired/And sworn unto the practices of France/To kill us here in Hampton" (2.2.86–88). "May it be possible" (2.2.97), the king asks Scroop, "that foreign hire/Could out of thee extract one spark of evil/That might annoy my finger?" (2.2.97–99). Gray is not explicitly singled out, but is included in the king's judgment. "You have conspired against our royal person,/Joined with an enemy proclaimed" (2.2.162–63), he states, "and from his coffers/Received the golden earnest of our death" (2.2.163–64). The guilt of a supplementary payoff had overwritten any guilt at defecting. In the end, however, the lesser prize of foreign gold has earned the defectors the minimum possible outcome: their execution.

King Charles, whatever the French success in producing English defectors, understands heredity to support the high constable's opinion of King Henry—"This is a stem/Of that victorious stock, and let us fear/The native mightiness and fate of him" (2.4.62–64)—and orders his son to "strongly arm to meet him" (2.4.49). Furthermore, Exeter, as one of King Henry's ambassadors, urges the French king to "Deliver up the crown, and to take mercy/On the poor souls for whom this hungry war/Opens his vasty jaws" (2.4.104–06). With Harfleur beleaguered—"see a siege" (3.0.25), the Chorus that opens Act 3 demands of the audience: "Behold the ordnance on their carriages/With fatal mouths gaping on girded Harfleur" (3.0.26–27)—King Charles adopts the banker's role. He tries to withdraw from the confrontation, and, in altering the utilities that structure current French–English relations, tenders a strategic move: the "ambassador from the French" (3.0.28) telling "Harry that the king doth offer him/Katherine his daughter," and with her, a "dowry" (3.0.29–30). Sir William Cecil had offered a significant nuptial settlement for marrying his daughter Anne. That proposal became Oxford's strategic focus. In *King Henry V*, Charles also promises a significant nuptial settlement, but Henry's cost–benefit analysis of that proposal, which rates it as "some petty and unprofitable dukedoms" (3.0.31), immediately reveals its true worth.¹ How the mature Oxford must have wished his younger self had performed a similarly insightful analysis.

In rejecting the offer of Katherine's hand ("The offer likes not" [3.0.32]), King Henry responds to the Dauphin's scoff, that there is "nought in France/That can be with a nimble galliard won" (1.2.251–52), with "the nimble gunner" (3.0.32) of the "devilish [English] cannon" (3.0.33). The rebuff to Henry's hoped-for glory is immediate, however, "with the retreat from the breach at Harfleur and the failure of the renewed

assault" (Gurr 7). The city defies the English in a game of Chicken. The Governor of Harfleur determines to resist the English until the arrival of the French forces. He can then set the Dauphin against King Henry. Act 3, Scene 3 hereby promises to recall the English–French Deadlock from *King John*, with the Governor playing a similar role to the Citizen of Angiers. The Governor's strategy fails, however, when the Dauphin chickens out.

"The modern reader," avers A. R. Humphreys, "is not likely to applaud what looks like Henry's unholy relish in so ruthlessly depicting war's horrors and then blaming the proposed victims for provoking them. But the play takes him to be in the right and his foes to be in the wrong, his army is in peril, and as commander he must shake his opponents' nerve; having done so he shows mercy" (192). Game theory offers an alternative reading. The rhetorical design of the strategically minded King Henry aims to push Harfleur into chickening out:

I will not leave the half-achieved Harfleur
Till in her ashes she lie buried.
The gates of mercy shall be all shut up
And the fleshed soldier, rough and hard of heart,
In liberty of bloody hand shall range
With conscience wide as hell, mowing like grass
Your fresh fair virgins and your flowering infants. (3.4.8–14)

In fact, Henry wishes to spare bloodshed on each side, and uses imagery designed to persuade the Governor to cooperate: "What say you?" (3.4.42), he asks. "Will you yield, and this avoid?/Or guilty in defence be thus destroyed?" (3.4.42–43).

The Governor accepts Henry's offer. Unlike the Citizen of Angiers in *King John*, the Governor of Harfleur in *King Henry V* does not play one army off against the other. Instead, he cooperates: "The Dauphin, whom of succours we entreated,/Returns us that his powers are yet not ready/To raise so great a siege" (3.4.45–47). In return, Henry does not impose the utility for defection, which would have been the game-theoretic minimum. Rather, he orders Exeter to "Use mercy to them all" (3.4.54). Similarly, Henry chooses leniency over cruelty in what amounts to a victorious game over the French in general. "We give/express charge that in our marches through the country there/be nothing compelled from the villages," he orders, "nothing taken but paid/for, none of the French upbraided or

abused in disdainful/language. For when lenity and cruelty play for a kingdom, the/gentler gamester is the soonest winner" (3.7.92–97).²

Strategically, the Siege of Harfleur (18 August–22 September 1415) was not as important as the Battle of Agincourt (25 October 1415) would be, but events at Harfleur were more important than many historians assume. What is more, owing to the participation of Richard de Vere (1385–1417), Eleventh Earl of Oxford, in both the Battle of Agincourt and the Naval Battle of Harfleur (the Battle of the Seine) (15 August 1416), these events and their locations ranked highly in Edward de Vere's heritage. "A survey of the eleventh earl's career," as James Ross traces, "is effectively a survey of English military activity in the early fifteenth century." Richard was "under the command of the duke of Clarence in 1412–13, with Henry V at Agincourt in 1415, and with the duke of Bedford at the naval battle of Harfleur in 1416" (22).

That each scene in *King Henry V* repeats one from *The Famous Victories of Henry V*, therefore, directs Richard Desper's attention to a "curious omission between the two plays: why is such a prominent character in *Famous Victories* as the 11th Earl of Oxford totally absent in *Henry V*?" Richard de Vere "has a notably significant role in *Famous Victories*, acting, as it were, as the king's right hand man, putting his ideas (such as the row of sharpened stakes to protect the English archers) into action. Indeed, he is not only the king's leading nobleman in the war with France; he is the only English nobleman (excluding royalty) in the cast of characters." In contrast, "*Henry V* has no shortage of noblemen accompanying him to France in the later play, but no Earl of Oxford. His absence is a notable anomaly." Richard de Vere "seems to have been deliberately written out in the process of revision" (26).

This nonappearance is deliberate. Oxford's authorial move is not a curious anomaly nor does this tactic disqualify the importance of this familial link to the Oxfordian argument. To repeat, Peter Ramus believed that actualization of imitative potential tended toward self-effacement. This removal did not, however, equate to self-defeat. The Geneva Bible marginalia of Edward de Vere, as Chap. 4 details, indicate Oxford's appreciation of this difference. Self-effacement served his dramaturgical career. Edward de Vere was a hidden propagandist for Queen's Elizabeth. No wonder, then, that "this deemphasizing of the roles of the past Earls of Oxford in the history plays is a repeating pattern, not an isolated situation involving *Famous Victories* and the 'Henriad'" (27).

Desper effectively confirms this assertion with reference to one antecedent and one descendant of Richard de Vere. Robert de Vere, Ninth

Earl of Oxford, as a confidant of King Richard II, incurred the jealousy of the Lords Appellant. These nobles attempted to restrain the king's power by impeaching his most notable supporters. Matters came to a head at the Battle of Radcot Bridge (19 December 1387), where Robert deserted his troops, escaping to France. For Edward de Vere, his ancestor's desertion "was rather indefensible," and while *Thomas of Woodstock* makes "only vague allusions to his failings" (29), *King Richard II* contains neither explicit mention of, nor implicit allusion to, the ninth earl.

Despite the execution of his elder brother Aubrey on 20 February 1462 and the execution of his father six days later, John de Vere (1442–1513) remained a loyal Lancastrian. The Thirteenth Earl of Oxford was "a leading Lancastrian participant in the Second Battle of Barnet in 1471," as Desper chronicles, and "sustained his opposition [...] even after the death of Henry VI in that year." Two years later, "he was forced to surrender at the island of St. Michael's Mount in Cornwall." For the next twelve years, John was held a prisoner at Hammes Castle, one of the forts of Calais. "He escaped in 1485 with the aid of his jailer" and joined Henry Tudor in France. "In the ensuing invasion of England, Oxford played a prominent role in the victory at Bosworth Field, in which Richard was deposed and Henry Tudor became King Henry VII" (27).

In Desper's judgment, John was "the foremost military hero among the Earls of Oxford" (25); accordingly, Edward de Vere's early *The True Tragedy of Richard the Third* "has much to say of this Earl of Oxford and his role in the defeat of King Richard III" (27). In "*The True Tragedy of Richard the Third*" (2004), Ramón Jiménez emphasizes this prominence: "[I]n each of the three scenes in which Henry Tudor appears, the author of *True Tragedy* has placed the Earl of Oxford at his right hand, and made him the leading spokesman for his supporters" (133). Fitting the mature playwright's self-effacing strategy, however, the thirteenth earl is virtually absent from *King Richard III*. "Oxford," as Desper observes, "is limited to two lines." While he has not been "totally written out, as was his predecessor, the 11th Earl of Oxford, between *Famous Victories* and *Henry V*, the character of the 13th Earl of Oxford has been diminished from his deserved prominence to near insignificance between *True Tragedy* and *Richard III*" (28).³

With the fall of Harfleur, and the subsequent English crossing of "the River Somme" (3.6.1), the French leadership commits itself to resisting Henry: "greet England with our sharp defiance" (3.6.37). Montjoy, a French herald, delivers King Charles's message to King Henry: "we could

have rebuked/him at Harfleur, but that we thought not good to bruise an/injury till it were full ripe" (3.7.104–06). Like the English, the French interpret the victory at Harfleur as a Pyrrhic one. Hence, when the injuries of that campaign reach full maturity, the English will pay. The toll of their postbattle march across France presages this cost.

Delabreth, whose earlier assessment of King Henry was more accurate than the Dauphin's evaluation, now blunders. He understands the weakened state of the English, yet attributes their continued steadfastness to stupidity rather than to bravery: "If the English had any apprehension," he argues, "they would run/away" (3.8.122–23), but they lack both fear and understanding. The Duke of Orleans agrees with Delabreth. The English must lack brains, "for if their heads had any intellectual/armour they could never wear such heavy headpieces" (3.8.124–25). The duke foresees a crushing French victory. King Henry's forces, like "foolish curs, that run winking into the mouth of a/Russian bear," will "have their heads crushed like rotten apples" (3.8.128–29). Being both intellectually aware and courageous, however, the English are anything but (to mix metaphors) chickens. Their courage is directly proportional to the danger they face. "How dread an army hath enrouned him" (4.0.36), avers the Chorus, as Henry camps overnight at Agincourt; yet, as the king tells Gloucester: "'tis true that we are in great danger" (4.1.1), but "the greater therefore should our courage be" (4.1.2).

At this other site of Oxfordian relevance, as the Chorus emphasizes in opening Act 4, the two sides are closely encamped. The coordination condition of silence that separates them, as once imposed by the English Channel (La Manche), almost dissolves into thin air: "From camp to camp, through the foul womb of night,/The hum of either army stilly sounds,/ That the fixed sentinels almost receive/The secret whispers of each other's watch" (4.0.4–7). Moreover, the manner in which one camp mirrors the other ("Fire answers fire, and through their paly flames/Each battle sees the other's umbered face./Steed threatens steed, in high and boastful neighs" [4.0.8–10]) indicates that their situation constitutes a symmetrical dilemma. The resolution of this coordination problem, whatever King Charles's side might think of King Henry's forces ("Proud of their numbers and secure in soul/The confident and over-lusty French/Do the low-rated English play at dice" [4.0.17–19]), reiterates this indication. The strategically astute King Henry not only accepts this signal, but also turns the inversion provided by mirroring to his figurative advantage: "our bad neighbour makes us early stirrers,/Which is both healthful and good

husbandry./Besides, they are our outward consciences/And preachers to us all, admonishing/That we should dress us fairly for our end" (4.1.6–10). Hence, "may we gather honey from the weed/And make a moral of the devil himself" (4.1.11–12).

King Henry, while in disguise before his soldiers Bates, Court, and Williams, counsels them to eschew defection, because this treacherous option ensures its choosers the minimum utility: "Where they feared the death they have borne life away, and/where they would be safe they perish" (4.1.155–56). Indeed, the king's decision to disguise himself brings the accounting imagery that occurs throughout the play to the fore; that promotion emphasizes that motif's prescient correspondence with its strategic counterpart, and the notion of what Williams calls the king's "heavy reckoning" (4.1.124) underscores Henry's attempt to subvert the payoffs of an Assurance Game. Realizing that this tactic cannot succeed with men whose trained reason effectively informs their game-theoretic sensibility, the king does not make a strategic move at this point. Rather, when reuniting with Sir Thomas Erpingham, and sensing that the English are vastly outnumbered, he expresses his hope in a form of blind faith: "O God of battles," he cries, "steel my soldiers' hearts./Possess them not with fear. Take from them now/The sense of reckoning ere th'opposed numbers/Pluck their hearts from them" (4.1.263–66).

The English "are embattled" (4.2.14) and "starvèd" (4.2.16). Moreover, although estimates of the size of the French and English forces vary—"Of fighting men," states Westmorland, "they have full threescore thousand" (4.3.3); Exeter, calculating the ratio of forces as "five to one" (4.3.4), posits 12,000 English troops, but King Henry estimates his strength at just "five thousand men" (4.3.76)—they are vastly outnumbered by the French. For Humphreys, Shakespeare "neglects" numerical details that will go unnoticed in performance, but the game-theoretic Oxford would have noted that "Holinshed numbers the French at 60,000 but makes the proportion six to one" (206). In other words, the figures given in *King Henry V* are deliberately inaccurate: the dramatist worries little over numbers that in practice would have been difficult to gauge.

The decisive issue concerns French estimates of English resolve. The French, knowing the condition and standing of the enemy, continue to underestimate this utility. The high constable boasts "how our steeds for present service neigh" (4.2.8). "Mount them, and make incision in their hides," exhorts the Duke of Bourbon, "That their hot blood may spin in English eyes/And dout them with superfluous courage!" (4.2.9–11). So

be it, enthuses Delabreth: "our approach shall so much dare the field/
That England shall couch down in fear, and yield" (4.2.36–37). Yet, as Desper emphasizes, "the Dauphin's presence at Agincourt is a liberty taken by the playwright for dramatic effect." The nature of this effect is, in part, game-theoretic. The French have such confidence in the outcome at Agincourt that the loss of the heir apparent is simply unthinkable. (In reality, the dauphin's father "had ordered his absence" [29, n. 1].)

Faced with a growing sense of inevitable defeat among his men, King Henry transforms their thoughts of a payoff into thoughts of a utility, so that psychological prospects far outweigh those of material gain. To underpin this alteration, and now making a strategic move, Henry guarantees (game-theoretic) chickens a safe homeward passage at his own expense: "That he which hath no stomach to this fight/Let him depart. His passport shall be made,/And crowns for convoy put into his purse" (4.3.35–37). Far better to calculate one's strength according to an assured group—"We few, we happy few, we band of brothers" (4.3.60); happy because each has confidence in his coevals—than according to a group that harbors potential absentees. Indeed, Henry rates the proffered psychological utility so highly that "gentlemen in England, now abed,/Shall think themselves accursed they were not here,/And hold their manhoods cheap whiles any speaks/That fought with us upon Saint Crispin's day" (4.3.64–67).

King Henry's speech is in marked contrast to the structurally analogous one he delivered at Harfleur. Each oration boasts a *pronuntiatio* backed by the same monarchical status, but the earlier speech, with its figures of diction and figures of thought shrinking under Ramist scrutiny, is the rhetorically weaker of the two. In terms of assurance, "the chief difference in the Agincourt speech from the Harfleur speech," as Gurr observes, "is its insistence that the whole English army is a single brotherhood" (32). Henry offers comradeship. He counters fear with friendship. Henry wants no worthless assurers. He desires only cooperators: "We would not die in that man's company/That fears his fellowship to die with us" (4.3.38–39).

Nonetheless, the play registers a fluctuation in unconscious fears, with King Henry's admonishment of Westmorland for his desire that, with "God's will, my liege, would you and I alone,/Without more help, could fight this royal battle!" (4.3.74–75). The king, stating how Westmorland "hast unwished five thousand men,/Which likes me better than to wish us one" (4.3.76–77), inflates (whether consciously or unconsciously) the psychological utility associated with the resolve needed to defect in the

forthcoming Chicken. At this moment, Montjoy reappears, asking King Henry “If for thy ransom thou wilt now compound/Before thy most assurèd overthrow” (4.2.80–81). With a resolute riposte—“Dying like men, though buried in your dunghills,/They shall be famed, for there the sun shall greet them/And draw their honours reeking up to heaven” (4.3.99–101)—Henry rejects the offer. Death carries not so negative a utility as this accursed overture.

In the ensuing battle, the English do well enough to threaten a French collapse (“Why, all our ranks are broke” [4.5.7]). Yet, the Duke of Bourbon (“Let us die!” [4.5.11]), High Constable Delabreth (“Let us on heaps go offer up our lives” [4.5.19]), and the Duke of Orleans (“We are enough yet living in the field/To smother up the English in our throngs” [4.5.20–21]) manage to dispel this possibility. King Henry praises his men’s bravery. Even so, he openly admits that, whatever the initial troop ratio, this quality is not quantitatively lacking: “Well have we done, thrice-valiant countrymen./But all’s not done, yet keep the French the field” (4.6.1–2). At Harfleur, King Henry’s successive attacks had failed, and he knows that continued French defiance at Agincourt will require a greater degree of concerted English daring.

Richard de Vere exemplified this determination on 25 October 1415. The single mention in the play of the Earl of Huntington (or Huntingdon) in the final act helps to trace the Eleventh Earl of Oxford’s commitment at Agincourt. King Henry, in requesting members of the English nobility to “go with the [French] king” (5.2.85) and “Augment or alter as your wisdoms best/Shall see advantageable for our dignity,/Anything in or out of our demands,/And we’ll consign thereto” (5.2.87–90), singles out “uncle Exeter,/And brother Bedford, and you brother Gloucester,/Westmorland, [and] Huntington” (5.2.83–85). Edward de Vere effaces his forebear, as is his creative wont, but Robert de Vere’s exploits, as quoted by Anne Curry, were recorded in a ballad of the time. This popular song includes the Eleventh Earl of Oxford in King Henry’s band of brothers:

Huntingdon and Oxford both,
 Were wonder fierce all in that fight
 That first was laid, they made full wroth;
 Through them many onto death were sent.
 The earls fought with main and might,
 Rich hauberk they tore and rent;
 Our king to help they were full light;
 Now bless them, God omnipotent. (291)

Robert de Vere, confirms Edward Baines, “eminently distinguished himself at the battle of Agincourt,” and, as if in answer to the poetic plea above, was blessed with “the honour of knighthood” (203).

The battle that counted above all others, however, was one of logic. “The entire arc of action in the concluding scenes of *Henry V*,” writes Roger A. Stritmatter in *The Marginalia of Edward de Vere’s Geneva Bible*, “can be analyzed as a fusion of the idea of Wisdom 11.13—that the wicked are punished by their own devices—with the idea of Wisdom 18.21—that ‘prayer is the “weapon of the godly.”’ The intense piety of Henry V, in his late-night theological discussions with his men and in his public prayers on the morning of the battle, contrasts with the idolatrous emphasis on weaponry witnessed in the French camp in 3.7” (218). In terms of Oxford’s hidden propaganda, the idolatrous are not only the Catholics of Continental Europe, but also those of Elizabethan England.

Ramus’s approach to education would supplant the blind obedience to hierarchies inculcated by religious iconography—especially the submission expected by Catholicism—with the secular directives of logical visualization. The originating node of a decision tree need not stand atop a branching structure, but can equally well branch laterally from the structural base or edge. “The subversive thrust of Ramism,” as Margaret Tudeau-Clayton maintains, “was, however, strictly relative, in so far as the Ramist system, like the more traditional systems, was available only to those with some form of education beyond basic literacy” (36). That relativity favors Oxford as the author of Shakespeare’s works. Edward de Vere is likely to have assimilated Ramus’s subtle form of iconoclasm; William Shakspeare is not.

For Oxford, the jockeying for social position among ambitious men, which had initially turned him away from Protestantism, contributed to this probable assimilation, which blossomed into a secular iconoclasm. “Erasmus,” as Herschel Clay Baker observes, “was anything but a Jeffersonian democrat.” Yet, “with the notable exception of Vives,” Erasmus was “almost alone” among sixteenth-century Catholics in “deplor[ing] the misery of the downtrodden in a ruthless hierarchal society” (232). Edward de Vere was acquainted with both men’s work. He had met Erasmus’s legacy at Cambridge University. He had also had access to Juan Luis Vives’s (c. 1493–1540) publications—for, as Stephanie Hopkins Hughes catalogues (36), Smith’s Hill Hall library included Vives’s *De disciplinis* (1531), *De causis corruptarum artium* (1531), and *De ratione dicendi* (1533).

Seditious sentiments were “more characteristic of the seventeenth than of the sixteenth century” (233), as Baker remarks, but a number of

Erasmus's Protestant coevals, "increasingly contemptuous of ecclesiastical checks," were "outspoken" (232). Of the next generation, as Peter Sharratt notes in "Peter Ramus and Imitation," the apostatic Ramus expressed "sympathy for the iconoclastic movements" (28). His followers, states Perry Miller, "uttered stirring sentiments for 'freedom' in philosophy, attacked authoritarianism and excessive veneration for any man, argued that all philosophers including Aristotle should be 'not lords but leaders'" (493–94). Walton agrees with Miller. "Ramus's dialectic became influential in part because its simplicity and use gave a feeling of liberation from 'authorities'" ("Ramus and Socrates" 127, n. 26). Oxford, the perennial game-theoretic player, appreciated this sentiment.

Assurance Games, with mutual cooperation aimed at communal benefit, contributed to a sense of freedom. What is more, pitting the assurance of brotherhood against mercenary cooperation, as *King Henry V* illustrates, can be a telling move. Gurr calls Henry's tactic before the Battle of Agincourt "morale-boosting" (9). The Earls of Huntington and Oxford needed no such encouragement. Nevertheless, the king determined to ensure an effort both widespread and determined. The assurance of brothers against the cooperation of mercenaries fulfills this resolution, and despite the military successes of Sir Francis and Sir Horace Vere, Oxford sticks to the historical record. King Henry distrusted hirelings. The king anticipated Niccolò Machiavelli's opinion that they "are useless and dangerous" (51). "The presence of four captains of Henry's army in France, with an Irish and a Scots company joining the English and Welsh, might easily have been read as a not particularly subtle piece of political prophecy," writes Gurr. "It was certainly an Elizabethan rewriting of English history." In the historical record, "Holinshed notes the presence of Welsh as well as Scottish mercenaries fighting not for the English but for the French against Henry's army" (4). The insertions of "the Irish Macmorris and the Scots Jamy [...] is the most puzzling," muses Gurr, "especially in view of the emphasis given to the threat from Scotland in 1.2, and the fact that while the English and Welsh were subjects of Henry's, the Irish were more doubtfully so, and the Scots were certainly not" (29). The paramount importance to the playwright of the Assurance Game of brotherhood—specifically, the overall balance of other-regarding (instead of mercenary) motives—addresses this puzzle. In the person-relative (or partial) terms of *King Henry V*, the Irish and the Scots have more reasons to care about the English, whom they credit with relative impartiality, than do the French.

The importance of the Assurance Game of brotherhood also explains why, as Gurr further observes, “some parts of the story are altered from the sources to support the Chorus.” One alteration is “the elimination of the tactic with the archers protected by stakes at Agincourt, which Holinshed makes much of and which the earlier stage-play *The Famous Victories* mentions twice” (9). These omissions, as Gurr recognizes, were not accidental. They leave “Henry’s ‘band of brothers’ speech, and the killing of the prisoners” (27) as the only reasons for the English victory. Even so, these lacunae do not so much “minimise Henry’s professionalism as a soldier,” as Gurr claims, as maximize the king’s emphasis on strategic nous. For, as Gurr himself argues, the playwright’s most notable changes from his probable sources “all make Henry a cooler and *more rational* being than the sources made him.” These alterations include “the images of the dogs, the transposition of the tennis balls insult from before the decision to invade France until after, Henry’s order to his soldiers to have mercy on Harfleur, and the order to kill the prisoners, which is put before the news of the attack on the baggage train” (29; emphasis added).

On the one hand, Henry’s “band of brothers” speech promotes the importance of internal assurance when faced with external Chicken. On the other hand, cold logic rather than vengefulness dictates Henry’s directive to kill the French prisoners. The skeptical undercurrent to the play—“in some significant respects *Henry V* offers on its surface the patriotic triumphalism of a Chorus who glorifies Henry’s conquests, while through the story itself runs a strong hint of scepticism about the terms and the nature of his victories” (Gurr 2)—is one means of expressing the king’s loyalty to protological necessity.

In paralleling King Henry’s life with that of Alexander the Great, Llewellyn is at first misunderstood by Gower. The Welshman persists in his analogy, however, “for there is figures in all/things” (4.7.26–27). Llewellyn talks of figures in terms of analogy, but in a play that affords important roles to quantities, payoffs, and utilities, Llewellyn’s talk has mathematical connotations too. Angry with French indecision concerning a continuation of the battle, the strategically calculative King Henry is ready to challenge them to a game that precludes chickening out: “If they will fight with us, bid them come down,/Or void the field. They do offend our sight./If they’ll do neither, we will come to them” (4.7.48–50). Montjoy’s reappearance removes the need for such an order. “The day,” he tells King Henry, “is yours” (4.7.76). Another of

Shakespeare's historical omissions—Holinshed's detail of King Charles's "old disease of frensie" (3:68)—helps to intimate the arbitrary resolution that certain coordination problems demand.⁴

Earlier, when reunited with Erpingham, King Henry had expressed a hope in his men's blind loyalty. Now, with the English victory, the king recognizes this success as a metaphysical manifestation (a miracle that the Archbishop of Canterbury, considering his belief that "miracles are ceased" [1.1.67], would not have foreseen). For "ten thousand French/That in the field lie slain" (4.8.72–73), the English have paid with the lives of "Edward, the Duke of York, the Earl of Suffolk,/Sir Richard Keighley, Davy Gam, esquire./None else of name, and of all other men/But five and twenty" (4.8.95–98). King Henry attributes his forces' victory, which returns dramatically opposed payoffs of a quantitative but impersonal nature, to their lack of reckoning: "O God, Thy arm was here!" (4.8.98); for "When, without stratagem,/But in plain shock and even play of battle,/Was ever known so great and little loss/On one part and on th'other?" (4.8.100–03). "The victory," as Gurr remarks, "allows Henry to adjust his attitude back again to its former strong sense of the differences in degree" (33): the manifests of the French and English dead, each of which the king reads aloud, specifically identifies the "gentlemen of blood and quality" (4.8.82).

The Duke of Burgundy laments the French people's loss of strategic nous:

And as our vineyards, fallows, meads and hedges,
Defective in their natures, grow to wildness,
Even so our houses, and ourselves, and children
Have lost, or do not learn for want of time
The sciences that should become our country,
But grow like savages, as soldiers wills
That nothing do but meditate on blood,
To swearing and stern looks, diffused attire,
And everything that seems unnatural. (5.2.54–62)

King Henry, unlike the strategically lamentable French, has learned and practiced the logic becoming a game-theoretic need.

Hence, in the aftermath of that practice, he pushes for matrimonial union with Katherine. Until now, he has rejected the option of mutual cooperation, preferring the more highly valued (but more risky) option of mutual defection. Hereafter, Henry's conquest of Katherine goes hand in hand with his city conquests, with this structural analogy suggesting that Katherine chickens out in the face of King Henry's resolve. Henry had deployed war as sex imagery before the defenders of Harfleur: "the fleshed

soldier, rough and hard of heart,/In liberty of bloody hand shall range/
With conscience wide as hell, mowing like grass/Your fresh fair virgins
and your flowering infants" (3.4.11–14). Katherine's maiden modesty
now elicits a complementary image from Henry: "I am content, so the
maiden cities you talk of may wait on/her, so the maid that stood in the
way for my wish shall show/me the way to my will" (5.2.291–93).

Just as the Siege of Harfleur is more important than many historians
assume, so Henry's relationship with Katherine is more significant than
many literary critics suppose. The scenes between Henry and Katherine,
avers Gurr, "were designed as comedy," but as Gurr himself recognizes,
"no play of Shakespeare's makes so much use of differences in language
and has more language barriers" (34). Casting Gurr's observation in
game-theoretic terms: none of the dramatist's other plays so consum-
mately illustrates an equivalent alternative to the coordination condition
of silence. There is sound, there is fury, and there is cheap talk. Gurr writes
of "one entire scene in French, another half in French, and the French
nobles regularly starting their scenes by making use of French phrases,
plus Llewellyn's, Macmorris's and Jamy's non-standard English, Pistol's
theatrical and old-fashioned quasi-verse, together with Mrs. Quickly's
malapropisms" (34). All the same, noncommunication, the coordination
condition for the various social dilemmas in the drama, holds firm.

Hence, while the single mention of the Earl of Huntington in *King Henry V* silently inscribes the Eleventh Earl of Oxford's committed and well-remembered fighting at Agincourt into the final act, that act ends with the surmounting of noncommunicative communication. "Act 5," as Gurr suggests, "does make Henry a member of the French royal family, son-in-law to the king and heir to his crown." Brotherhood has "replaced the alienation signalled by the different accents" (35). In pursuing matrimonial union with Katherine, Henry continues to prosecute his belief in a certain lack of reckoning. "She must/be blind too" (5.2.280–81), he tells the Duke of Burgundy; "As love is, my lord," replies the duke, "before it loves" (5.2.282). This single strategy, Henry assures the duke, will take his kingly eye from other French prizes: "you may, some of you, thank love for my/blindness, who cannot see many a fair French city for one fair/French maid that stands in my way" (5.2.283–85). Henry and Katherine's marriage will preclude future coordination problems between England and France, "whose very shores look pale/With envy of each other's happiness" (5.2.313–14). The union between England, as manifest in Henry, and France, as manifest in Katherine, will remove the barrier of noncommunication. "As man and wife, being two, are one in love," as Katherine's mother Queen Isabel recognizes,

“So be there ’twixt your kingdoms such a spousal/That never may ill office
or fell jealousy,/Which troubles oft the bed of blessèd marriage,/Thrust in
between the paction of these kingdoms/To make divorce of their incorpo-
rate league” (5.2.324–29).

Unfortunately, the resulting international union proved fleeting because this marriage could neither drain La Manche (the English Channel) nor join the shores of France and England. With the next generation, and owing to an asymmetry in strategic management, the coordination condition of noncommunication returned. As the Epilogue makes plain, Chicken between two individuals has a different dynamic than Chicken between two multiplayer agents. “So many had the managing” (Epilogue 11) of “Henry the Sixth, in infant bands crowned king/Of France and England” (Epilogue 9–10), “[t]hat they lost France and made his England bleed” (Epilogue 12). The French gained and maintained their strategic grip. The English lost theirs. The advisors of King Charles VII of France, as his agnomen of “The Well-Served” suggests, pursued rationales that were self-supporting in their admixture. The representatives of King Henry VI of England, as his agnomen of “The Boy King” suggests, needed greater strategic nous. They failed that requirement in pursuing strategic rationales that were self-defeating in their admixture. Mary Tudor’s accession effectively brought the same charge against the managers of King Edward VI’s minority. Edward de Vere, Seventeenth Earl of Oxford, would have appreciated this accusation. Two of his own childhood supervisors, Thomas Smith and William Cecil, as important figures to “The Boy King” Edward, had suffered ostracism under Mary for their reformist inclinations. Moreover, Oxford’s long-term “relationship” with Ramus, as self-effacing as his authorship of Shakespeare’s canon, taught him to appreciate coordinative dangers, “Which oft our stage hath shown—and for their sake,/In your fair minds let this acceptance take” (Epilogue 13–14).

NOTES

1. That focus precluded Anne’s use of the strategy of domestic bliss.
2. While Pistol is bereft of Nell Quickly (“my Doll is dead” [5.1.72]), the less than honorable Bardolph and Nym “are both hanged” (4.4.57): the former for “for robbing a/church” (3.7.86–87); the latter presumably for the same crime, because Bardolph and Nym are “sworn brothers in filching” (3.2.38).

3. "Of all the plays published under the 'Shakespeare' name," observes Desper, "only *III Henry VI* retains a major role for an Earl of Oxford." This play does acknowledge the historical importance of John de Vere, Thirteenth Earl of Oxford. "However, this play is usually assigned to the early 1590s, early in the standard chronology of the Shakespeare plays, and may well be considerably earlier than that" (29).
4. "It was thought," writes Holinshed, "that when they were at point to haue growne to agreement concerning manie articles, if the French king had not newlie fallen into his former disease of frensie, there had better effect followed of this treatie." Owing to his sickness, however, "each man departed, before that anie principall articles could be fullie ordered and make perfect" (2:832).



CHAPTER 15

Conclusion

We are The Reasoning Race.
—Mark Twain, *Is Shakespeare Dead?* (131)

The present volume, as the following summary of its conclusions admits, is rather contentious. Peter Ramus, as the most controversial philosopher and pedagogue of the sixteenth century, overshadowed the intellectual landscape of Europe. His principled attitude, his Ramism, was important to Sir Thomas Smith, Sir William Cecil (Lord Burghley), and Edward de Vere, Seventeenth Earl of Oxford, but was of little importance to William Shakspeare of Stratford. The works of William Shakespeare reveal a rounded appreciation of the strengths and weaknesses of Ramism. Oxford (not Stratford) is the rational Shakespeare.

The intellectual groundwork for these contentions is threefold. The first aspect of that work confirms and develops Ramus's place as the most outstanding of late humanists. He had such a "powerful impact on his age," as Craig Walton documents in "Ramus and Socrates," "that the works of Ramus and his collaborator, Omer Talon, went through almost 750 editions within a hundred years of his first work's publication" (119). Ramus's search for a natural method of inquiry, a method free from the deference, complacency, and manifest errors of second scholasticism, posited his willingness to court controversy in the search for methodological truth. The manner of Ramus's return to first principles, as expressed in his repeated rejection of the late-scholastic regard for Aristotle, confirmed his

unwillingness to compromise. That confirmation left many contemporary commentators to interpret Ramism as either wallowing in skepticism (even Pyrrhonism) or lacking in humanism. The first charge stemmed from Ramus's desire to replace a reliance on intuition with the art of judgment. The second charge stemmed from Ramus's desire to extend dialectic to nature as a whole.

In accepting these two indictments, modern-day critics have tended to treat Ramism as either a simple-minded polemic—"a doctrine that seems the very acme of banality" (Neal W. Gilbert 129)—or a straightjacketed approach to teaching—"his thought displays pedagogical clarity and simplicity rather than originality" (John Herman Randall 1:234). Marie-Dominique Couzinet, as the most committed of recent researchers on Ramus and Ramism, dilutes these charges: the stereotypes of Ramus's method of inquiry emerge from "an easy and unspecific process that reaffirms *in extremis* the values that it has deliberately excluded from its analysis" (69). In contrast, Couzinet "questions the relationship that Ramus entertained with philosophy, as part of a broader questioning of the forms taken by philosophical questioning, in a culture" (9) that scholasticism could no longer satisfy. This considered approach identifies and reappraises the unquestioning adoption by Ramus's detractors of the critique of pedantry. This critique, which originated with Giordano Bruno and which Michel de Montaigne supported, conflates an ancient assumption, that teaching and philosophy are incompatible, with a new assumption, that Ramism demands the unyielding application of dialectical method. Ramus was an educator not a philosopher, and this pedagogue infected humanism with a scholastic trait: the obdurate application of a steadfast method. The pedant was no longer the teacher of classical definition. He had become a teacher whose learning was injudicious, whose tuition naïvely granted the unseasonable appearance of that learning, and whose lessons attached too much importance to the formal and precise application of Ramism.

This critique, which emerged from moderate humanism, became the critical standard for assessing Ramus's legacy. That benchmark found an enthusiastic twentieth-century revivalist in Walter J. Ong. Ong's *Ramus, Method, and the Decay of Dialogue* accepts Ramus's attempt at curricula improvements as a legitimate response to social turmoil—the Renaissance and the Reformation demanded educational reform—but deems the consequences of Ramism catastrophic and irreversible. Ramus's "cluster of mental habits" (8), argues Ong, "engage[d] some of the most powerful

and obscure forces in intellectual history" (270). That engagement unleashed the phenomenon of impersonality. "Sometime after the sixteenth century," bemoans Ong, "a 'dissociation of sensibility,' to use Mr. T. S. Eliot's now well-worn phrase, had become discernible in the way man confronted the world around him" (4). Ramism instigated this form of alienation. Ramus's principled attitude, as Walton summarizes of Ong's lament, "produced today's fixation with impersonal method and logical analysis both deaf and dumb to real people, their abilities and needs for interpersonal communication" ("Socrates" 120).

In reexamining Ong's argument, Couzinet calls for a reevaluation of Ramism as a practical method based on actual use, as distinct from a pragmatic school based on formalism. This approach recasts Ramus: he was not a straightlaced educator, as his detractors assert, but an important philosopher, whose erudition and freethinking challenged epistemological deference. Couzinet's perspective hereby corroborates Paul Oskar Kristeller's prescient judgment in *Eight Philosophers of the Italian Renaissance* (1964) that Ramus "attained the success vainly hoped for by his predecessors" in the humanist cause, such as that desired by Lorenzo Valla, Rudolph Agricola, and Juan Luis Vives, with his system of thought "adopted by followers in many countries for several centuries" (35). In turn, Couzinet's corroboration at once accepts Walton's assessment of Ramus's art of judgment, as "the highest level of wisdom because it coordinates and mediates between discovery and action," and denies Walton's rebuttal of "Ong's charge of depersonalization" against Ramus ("Socrates" 136). The present volume accepts and builds on this intriguing conclusion. Ramus understood that a matter of degree distinguished the teacher from his student, but he reserved the insurmountable peak of dialectical practice for himself. Ramus's practice of Ramism, which at once transformed dialogue into a one-way process of persuasion and retracted that process into the confines of a singular skull, was self-defeating. Ramus ultimately failed Ramism.

The second aspect of intellectual groundwork establishes that Oxford's formal education—his trained reason—enhanced his intuitive understanding of the protological basis of logic—his natural reason—to a degree that Stratford's minimal education—his barely honed reason—did not attain. The mature Ramus, who mitigated the philosophical zeal of his youth, exhibited a critical appreciation of Aristotle. Ramus appreciated that proving a truth through iterative evidence alone (inductive reasoning) is no proof at all. "If based on a great number of like instances," explains Lodi Nauta, "an inductive argument may have the *appearance* of universality"

(265–66; emphasis added), but this semblance guarantees no universal conclusion. Late humanism appreciated the difference between inductive appearance and deductive substance to a degree that second scholasticism did not. Lorenzo Valla “criticizes Boethius’s definition of induction for lacking three necessary elements,” as Nauta enumerates: “apposition of similar things, interrogation, and proof” (265). Valla favors the definition provided by *The Orations of Marcus Tullius Cicero*. “Induction,” opines Cicero, “is a manner of speaking which, by means of facts which are not doubtful, forces the assent of the person to whom it is addressed. By which assent it causes him even to approve of some points which are doubtful, on account of their resemblance to those things to which he has assented” (278). In maintaining Valla’s stance, Ramus emphasized the *example* of inductive reasoning, deeming this type of argument a necessary but insufficient means of training the inborn faculty of natural reason. Logic, deduction, and dialectic must inform trained reason. Oxford and Ramus shared this commitment. Their late humanism supported the transition from the *loci communes* of late scholasticism toward a somewhat harder logic. Oxford’s subservience and frustrations as a player under the *Regnum Cecilianum* served that insight. His ultimate goal, writing, would eventually express that prescience. The annuity he received from 1586 until his death, his turn from selfishness to kin-related altruism, his second wife’s financial resources, and her domestic management secured that goal.

The third and final aspect of intellectual groundwork approaches the critique of pedantry with caution in positing Ramus’s influence on Shakespeare. Until now, literary critics have been in denial against their better judgment. Tzachi Zamir demonstrates this condition. “Controversies over Ramism,” to repeat Zamir’s avowal, “probably never touched Shakespeare in any significant way” (212). Yet, as Zamir’s double qualification implies, Ramus’s effect is not dismissible. It makes sense that a playwright who relates human thought to interpersonal relations, on the one hand, and who understands assurance as the bulwark to social progress, on the other, sees beyond the critique of pedantry. Shakespeare’s canon supplies abundant proof that its author had such vision. He possessed a natural faculty trained at once in logical procedure and its attendant rhetoric. A critical appreciation of Ramism underpinned that training. Shakespeare follows the Ramist promotion of rationalism, but does so reservedly. He explicitly admonishes the inappropriate and the excessive application of Ramism by implicitly charging Ramus with these methodological faults. This censure, which concerns Ramus’s fundamental approach to the coordination

of human relations, required a profound understanding of Ramism; such a necessity impinges on the question of Shakespearean authorship; this requirement points to the author's educational and personal profiles, and that indication favors the Oxfordian case.

The events of August 1572 cannot have inflicted the same level of trauma on Stratford as they did on Oxford. Oxford's response to those events was twofold. The immediate response was his "St. Bartholomew's Massacre Letter." The considered response was *Love's Labour's Lost*. At a personal level, Ramism failed Ramus, but the play leavens that failure, and the playwright's own scarred memory, with a comic indictment of the overeager Ramist. Oxford's milieu included prominent but subtly different embodiments of this methodological type. Smith courted the danger of blind adherence to Ramism in advising Queen Elizabeth; Burghley was more cautious when applying Ramism to issues of state, but his Ramist mannerisms lent themselves to parody; and Gabriel Harvey's rhetoric could be comically repetitive. Stratford's milieu did not include such personalities.

That Oxford's education apprised him of not only the strengths, but also the weaknesses of Ramism enabled his prescient delineation of social dilemmas. The application of the theory of games of strategy—a theory that Ramus approached but never effectively broached—reveals this prescience. The spoken thoughts of Prince Hamlet represent the maximum linguistic expression of a singular mind. The prince is the greatest dialectical pedant of the stage, whose inner reasoning suits the decision trees so familiar to Ramus (and so often used by game theorists). Present and future predicaments, coordinative and otherwise, plague the prince. In adopting and adapting Erasmus's technique of copiousness, the playwright captures the extensive structure of the prince's discourse, and with it, the convolutions of his mind. That mind reveals a Ramist understanding of the animating force of holy conscience. For Aristotle, moral philosophy required the application of suitable logic, and Ramus retained this Aristotelian principle. Mental fulfillment emerged from grammatical and rhetorical mastery, and that control stemmed from the implementation of dialectic, with the dialectical method being in force throughout the process of rational development. In *Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*, the mature Oxford was effectively expressing the pain of nostalgia. Although the domain of stagecraft cast him as a banker, the domain of statecraft had cast him as a player without strategic moves. Oxford's Ramism converges with personal experience in the Danish prince. No similar convergence supports the Stratfordian case.

King John goes beyond the appreciation of many game theorists in emphasizing the importance of Deadlock. This emphasis traces the evolutionary history of rational calculation. During the period covered by the play, preeminent men were embracing the necessary logic of statecraft, the English Great Council was commanding greater constitutional power, and European citizens were beginning to apprehend facts, interpret events, and anticipate political actions. The Citizen, as signaled by his status as a game-theoretic banker, personifies the demand for social evolution. For the Bastard, this promotion is an immediate threat to monarchical preeminence and a step toward constitutional disintegration. *King John* captures the resultant constitutional tension. That unease speaks of the demand for social improvements under Queen Elizabeth.

Strategic thinking had become a matter of cultural inheritance for the Earls of Oxford. They never forgot and never excused King John for the First Barons' War. The repercussions of that conflict led to the excommunication of Robert de Vere, Third Earl of Oxford, and the temporary loss of Castle Hedingham. This lineal thread upholds the self-effacing presence of Robert de Vere in *King John*. In turn, the play echoes its own author's absent presence. Oxford was in the midst of constitutional action; Stratford never was; sociopolitical issues enveloped Oxford to an extent never experienced by Stratford. Self-promotion under the Policy of Plays would have forestalled creative liberty. Self-effacement afforded Oxford freedom of expression.

Oxford's knowledge of Thomas Smith's *A Discourse of the Common Weal of This Realm* informs his strategic vision of Assurance Games in *Antony and Cleopatra*. Smith's argument anticipated Jean-Jacques Rousseau's discourse on inequality. Oxford brought his critical appreciation of Ramism to bear on Smith's discourse. Alongside an appreciation of their benefits, Oxford would have acknowledged the two major problems that attend Assurance Games: failing to secure the biggest payoff undermines trust; coordinative expectations do not necessarily facilitate beneficence. Without government intervention, self-interest endangers shared interests, but with that involvement, self-interest promotes the common good. This intervention requires the artful manipulation of individuals into a cohesive unit. Lord William Burghley mastered this requirement. In putting Smith's Ramist notions into practice, Oxford's father-in-law instituted democratic advances in resisting both an empire ruled by a tyrannical monarch and a republic ruled by chaos and disorder.

Resisting these extremes of national governance, however, does not negate external pressures. The friction emanating from chaffing sequestration can undermine cooperation between neighboring states, and the resulting coordinative structure often instantiates the social dilemma of Chicken. *King Henry V* reveals the importance of this coordination problem as a foreground strategy during Queen Elizabeth's reign. The play effectively parallels Henry's French dilemma with Elizabeth's Spanish predicament. These international crises also express Oxford's familial and personal experiences of Chicken. In familial terms, French defiance required concerted English daring. Richard de Vere, Eleventh Earl of Oxford, exemplified the necessary determination. Owing to Richard's participation in both the Battle of Agincourt and the Naval Battle of Harfleur, these campaigns ranked highly in Oxford's heritage. Stratford's lineage reveals no comparable participant. In personal terms, unsuccessful forays in the naval arena constituted Oxford's probable involvement in the Armada campaign. Oxford put his frustrations to dramaturgical use, with his Ramist sensitivity toward dialectical, strategical, and rhetorical issues matching his commitment to the logic of cause and effect. *King Henry V* exhibits this sensitive determination: whatever the cheapness of cheap talk, players must strive to forestall the coordination condition of silence and game-theoretic bankers must retain their strategic grip.

In fine, Shakespeare's plays implicitly endorse the principle that underpins Ramism: nature endows humans with rational minds that require education in logic to appreciate that bequest. The convergences, differences, and divergences between Ramism and Shakespeare's art serve not only to promote the radical essence of Shakespeare's humanism, but also to outline the personal, national, and international contours of the Elizabethan sociopolitical terrain. Detailed analyses of the playwright's interrogation of social dilemmas across his canon confirm both that revolutionary essence and that contextualization. That author was Edward de Vere, Seventeenth Earl of Oxford, not William Shakspeare of Stratford. This Oxfordian conclusion, which appeals to an impersonal and a universal standard of truth, is entirely rational.

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