Shakespeare's Verbal Art

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By

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For Sara

and

Nicole, Paul, Daniel, and Astrid

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

INTRODUCTION

Whether the foregrounding of *seale* is remembered
when one encounters *lease* depends on whether
the reader shares with Shakespeare the Renaissance
fascination with the way words look when printed.
Shakespeare belongs to the world of print, a world
in which anagrams were recognized and enjoyed.
—Helen Vendler, *The Art of Shakespeare's Sonnets*

This is a book about Shakespeare's virtuosity in the art of anagram. Based on recent discoveries in relation to the inherent duplicity of pre-Enlightenment text, it aims to show how Shakespeare, the greatest poet of his age, may prove also the greatest anagrammatist.[1]

The English word anagrammatism is ultimately derived from Greek *anagrammatismos* ("the art of re-writing"), and is used here in its broadest and original sense, to describe the concealed reiteration of any textual entity in terms of another.[2] The textually embedded anagram that is typically deployed by Shakespeare is thus to be distinguished from the stand-alone, self-advertising device that might for example take the form of "D'EVREUX: VERE DUX" or "FRANÇOIS DE VALOYS: DE FAÇON SUIS ROYAL".[3] For Classical Latin and Renaissance poets, these popular devices are merely debased versions of the concealed anagrams that form an integral part of the text within which they are customarily embedded. As will become clear in later chapters, a conventionally "sub-textual" anagrammatism is not only pervasive in Shakespeare's verse, but is fundamental to his verbal art. The anagrammatic poetic, as thus defined, is apparently pre-Homeric in origin. It is pervasive in Ancient Greek, in Classical Latin, in later Latin, and in the vernacular literatures of the Renaissance. It became obsolescent in the general purification of the dialect of the tribe in the European Enlightenment.[4]

The duplicitous text that would for example incorporate Shakespeare's unmarked transposition of the letters of *feale* in the form of *leaſe* (to cite Helen Vendler's example) is necessarily disingenuous.[5] It is incumbent upon the poet writing in the Graeco-Roman tradition to compose his verse in such a way that the revelatory anagrams hidden within it appear to arise

naturally and without regard to the poet's volition. The practical poet is obliged by long-established convention to disown responsibility for the linguistic transpositions (such as that between *ſeale* and *leaſe*) which are invoked within the covert dimension of his text, and around which his verse is in fact composed. It is thus that the concealed re-writing of what Jean Starobinski calls *les mots sous les mots* ("words below words"), while greatly enhancing the expressive power of text, necessarily implies a linguistic doubling. Because Shakespeare affects to disown responsibility for his exploitation of the expressive affiliation of words such as *ſeale* and *leaſe*, it has been impossible for post-Enlightenment readers to attribute intention to such gestures with any certainty. Yet sub-textual expression in the covert dimension of pre-Enlightenment text is found to be of fundamental importance in understanding the "point" or "meaning" of any particular textual entity – whether a word, phrase, metrical line, stanza, or complete poem or play. As a consequence, modern readings of Shakespeare's texts have necessarily been superficial ("of the surface"), and often wholly inadequate. This is because what Shakespeare appears to be saying in the overt dimension of his text may be amplified, modified, or radically subverted by anagrammatic utterance in the covert dimension. The revelatory anagrams in the covert dimension of text must by read in counterpoint to, and in combination with the overt dimension.

  A striking example arises in relation to the markedly disingenuous text of Sonnet 55, in the overt dimension of which the poet promises his patron Henry Wriothesley that he will *shine more bright in these contents*:

> NOt marble, nor the guilded monument,
> Of Princes shall out-liue this powrefull rime,
> But you shall shine more bright in these contents
> Then vnswept stone, besmeer'd with sluttish time.
> When wastefull warre shall Statues ouer-turne,
> And broiles roote out the worke of masonry,
> Nor Mars his sword, nor warres quick fire shall burne
> The liuing record of your memory.
> Gainst death, and all obliuious emnity
> Shall you pace forth, your praise shall stil finde roome,
> Euen in the eyes of all posterity
> That weare this world out to the ending doome.
> So til the iudgement that your selfe arise,
> You liue in this, and dwell in louers eies.

  Shakespeare's original reader, recognising that Henry Wriothesley is damned with faint praise in *"you shall shine more bright … / Then vnswept stone, besmeer'd with sluttish time"*, will thus have been alerted

to the conventional presence of counter-thematic anagrams in the ambient text. As we shall see, Quintilian refers to such covert gestures as *controversiae figuratae* ("figured contrary themes"). In the first quatrain, anagrams of the words *SLIME* and *SEMEN* (referring here to the residues of sexual intercourse) are concealed in the covert dimension of the text, and must be read in revelatory apposition to the overt dimension if the poet's meaning is to be understood. An anagrammatic reading of the sonnet as a whole reveals that the young earl is accused of having had *"wilfull taste"* of the poet's mistress.[6] The residual evidence of that illicit love-making (i.e. *"sluttish slime"*) will, the poet explains, shine bright in the traditionally concealed invective of the sonnet. As will become clear in Chapter Four, these anagrams and Shakespeare's invective are deployed in accordance with ancient protocols. For the original reader, tutored in Latin language and literary convention from an early age, the syncopic *SLIME* anagram in *SLuttish tIME* will be as obvious as it is counter-intuitive in the eyes of the post-Enlightenment reader (who is cognitively biased in favour of the pristine indivisibility of words). Vendler, sensitive to such gestures in Shakespeare's sonnets, would doubtless respond also to the phonetic anagram in *SLuttish tIME*, which can best be appreciated when uttered aloud in the form *sluttish time ... slime ... sluttish time*. When, as convention requires, the anagram is substituted for its textual matrix, and when the relevant lines are re-written in the manner of *anagrammatismos*, the underlying truth is revealed: *"But you shall shine more bright ... besmeered with sluttish SLIME"*. A full account of the sonnet, and of Stephen Booth's painstaking attempt to understand the designedly transposable syntax of lines 1-4, is given in Chapter Four.

The question then arises as to what an inherently binary text might mean in the context of Shakespeare studies, and indeed in relation to pre-Enlightenment scholarship generally. It would seem, for example, that Vendler, the most acute of commentators on Shakespeare's sonnets, does indeed remember *feale* when she encounters *leaſe*. And Stephen Booth, the most accomplished of editors of the sonnets, seems determined to defend what he calls the "ocular pun" in *fickle glass, his ſickle* in the un-modernized text of Sonnet 126, where the word *glass* has the sense (inter alia) of hourglass:[7]

O Thou my louely Boy, who in thy power,
Doeſt hould times fickle glass, his ſickle, hower:

In both of these cases – in Vendler's *feale/leaſe*, and in Booth's *fickle/ſickle* – Shakespeare's covert gesture, if deliberate, would take the form of a trope characterized by repetition with revelatory variation. In

both cases the variation, if deliberate, would consist in a re-writing involving the concealed transposition of textual entities. Hitherto, those commentators who have claimed authorial intention in relation to such instances have been unable to authenticate their readings by reference to any known regulatory system which might govern the construction and deployment of textually embedded anagrams and thus enable them to be read with confidence. In line 5 of Sonnet 81, to take a further example, Shakespeare's patron, Henry Wriothesley, is assured that *"Your name from hence immortall life shall haue"*. Henry Wriothesley is not named overtly in the sonnet or the sequence, but Andrew Gurr (for example) believes that Henry is designedly memorialised in line 3 in the form of a self-referential *HENRY* anagram, an anagram that depends in part upon the privileging of the acrostic letter-groups at the respective extremities of a potentially separable textual matrix: [8]

HENRY:

HEN*ce your memo*RY

The syncopic *SLIME* anagram in Sonnet 55 would then be persuasively comparable:

SLIME:

SL*uttish t*IME

In the latter case, Shakespeare's commonly found sound-play on the words *time* and *teeme* (which were nearly homophonous in the period) has the effect of revealing an optimally relevant underlying truth. In the Elizabethan sexual vocabulary the word *teeme* ("a pouring forth") refers in general to sexual emission. The "point" of the word *slime* now becomes clear, in that the *slime* which characterizes the philandering Henry and which will shine bright in the sonnet, is in fact a *sluttish teeme*. It should be emphasised that such indecencies are endemic in Classical Latin.

Lucretius beautiful *DAEDALUS* anagram in the proem to *De rerum natura* is also comparable. It is easy to imagine how such anagrams may have developed from the rhetorical device of syncope, in which a letter or letters are omitted from the middle of a word (or word-group):

DAEDALUS:

DAEDEL*a tell*US

When the phrase *hence your memory* is notionally abstracted from the text of Sonnet 81 and read in isolation in a double syntax, the poet's naming and remembering of Henry is strongly marked indeed. It is from these three self-transactional words, standing alone, that Henry's memory is manifestly to be derived. The three-word textual matrix of the anagram is so composed as to refer in the overt dimension of the text to the figure concealed within the covert dimension. It is only when the *HENRY* anagram in the covert dimension is read in revelatory counterpoint to the overt, that the promise in *"Your name from hence immortall life shall haue"* becomes meaningful. It is thus that Henry Wriothesley is famously anonymous in the overt dimension of Shakespeare's sonnets. Nevertheless, many post-Enlightenment readers, cognitively biased in favour of the inviolable integrity of words, will object that the alleged re-writing may have arisen as a mere accident of language. In the absence of a universally recognised and consistently applied shared set of compositional rules which might govern the construction of the putative *HENRY* anagram, and enable it to be recognised as definitively "authentic", there has in practice arisen an interpretative impasse, a critical aporia beyond which it has hitherto been impossible to proceed. Fortunately, however, it has now proved possible to extrapolate such a set of compositional rules from the unfinished work of the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, and to validate them in relation to a wide variety of texts in Greek, Latin, Italian, French, and English.[9] The present study aims to describe the principles and practice of concealed anagrammatism in terms of Shakespeare's pursuit of what is found to comprise an essentially anagrammatic poetic.

The compositional rules attaching to textually concealed anagram (or *anagramma figuratum* as the poet Horace describes it) are elegantly simple in principle and strictly observed in practice.[10] The concealed anagram (the *anagramma figuratum*) is in fact discovered to comprise a composite figure consisting of three distinct mandatory components. First, the existence and location of the anagram must be marked by a word or phrase which begins and ends with the first and last letters respectively of the theme-word. For obvious reasons, Horace calls this component of the composite anagram the *forma* ("outline model"). In the case of Shakespeare's *HENRY* anagram in Sonnet 81, the phrase *"hence your memory"* itself comprises the obligatory *forma* or outline model of the theme-word. Because the original reader shares with the poet the universally recognised protocol that confers a special privilege on the acrostic letters at the extremities of words and phrases, the phrase *Hence your memorY* is an easily recognisable textual surrogate for the theme-word *HenrY*. The *forma* or outline model of Shakespeare's *HENRY*

anagram is enclosed in square brackets in the annotated version of Sonnet 81 below. On this occasion, what might be called the acrostic co-identity of *forma* and theme-word is emphasised in the text and in the marginal annotation:

O R I shall liue your Epitaph to make,
Or you suruiue when I in earth am rotten,
From [**h**ence your memor**y**] death cannot take,   **H**(*enr*)**y**
Although in me each part will be forgotten.
Your name from hence immortall life shall haue,
Though I (once gone) to all the world must dye,
The earth can yeeld me but a common graue,
When you intombed in mens eyes shall lye,
Your monument shall be my gentle verse,
Which eyes not yet created shall ore-read,
And toungs to be, your beeing shall rehearse,
When all the breathers of this world are dead,
You still shall liue (such vertue hath my Pen)
Where breath most breaths, euen in the mouths of men.

The second mandatory component of the anagram is the device that Horace calls the *figura extensa* ("extended figure"), which takes the conventional form of an internal acrostic. The *figura extensa* or extended figure must begin in the first letter or letters of the *forma*, be constructed thereafter in due order of spelling exclusively from the first or last letters or letter-groups of words, and must end in the last letter or letter-group of a proximately ensuing word. The extended figure of Shakespeare's *HENRY* anagram is thus compliant with these protocols:

HENce youR memorY

The letters forming the *figura extensa* of the anagram are emphasised in the annotated extract below, and are additionally noted in the margin. Once the outline model has been recognised, the start-point of the extended figure is fixed, and its location is thus readily apparent to the experienced reader:

O R I shall liue your Epitaph to make,
Or you suruiue when I in earth am rotten,
From [**HEN**ce you**R** memor**Y**] death cannot take,   **HEN-R-Y**
Although in me each part will be forgotten.
Your name from hence immortall life shall haue,

To reiterate, Shakespeare's *figura extensa* is perfectly compliant with the narrowly drawn rules which govern its construction. It takes the form of an internal acrostic which begins in the first letters of the outline model, is constructed thereafter in the ensuing text in due order of spelling exclusively from the first and/or last letter(s) of words, and ends in the final letter(s) of a proximately ensuing word. These rules also apply to those *figurae extensae* which are not confined to a single metrical line, but which are extended over a plurality of lines. In such a case it is a mandatory requirement that at least one letter be taken from each consecutive line. No line must be left "barren". If, for example, the *extensa* of a proemial anagram is composed in such a way as to span the first three lines of a poem, each of those three lines must contribute at least one letter to the figure.[11]

The third and final obligatory component of the anagram is that which Horace describes as the *figura condensa* ("condensed figure"). This component consists of a well-defined and relatively compact part of the text (typically a word, phrase, or line) which in the eyes of the accustomed reader is obviously dedicated to the theme-word. All of the letters of the theme-word must be contained within the *figura condensa*, where they are customarily dispersed in orthographically jumbled form. Less frequently, in the case of a particularly honorific or significant anagram, the letters of the theme-word may appear in due order of spelling. Here again, a special privilege is granted to the acrostic letters or letter-groups situated at the beginning and/or ends of words, and the theme-word must be capable of being constructed exclusively from the first and/or last letters or letter-groups of words within the *figura condensa*. In addition, the condensed figure must be self-bounding in the sense that the letters at its extremities must themselves be constituent letters of the theme-word. In the present instance, the emphatically "acrostic" structure of the condensed figure is readily apparent to the cognitively biased original reader. It is emphasised by typographical adjustment in the extract below:

HENce your memoRY

||>   HENRY   <||

It is usual for the condensed figure to be located in the ambient text at the beginning or end of the *figura extensa*, but in the case of especially significant anagrams (as here) the *condensa* may be so disposed as to be coterminous with the *extensa* in the text. The condensed component of Shakespeare's *HENRY* anagram is thus fully compliant with the

compositional rules attaching to such figures. On this special occasion, it is coterminous with the extended figure. The *figura condensa* in *"HENce your memoRY"* consists of a well-defined phrase which in the eyes of the cognitively biased original reader is obviously dedicated to the theme-word. All of the letters of the theme-word are contained within the *condensa* (on this honorific occasion, in due order of spelling), and all of those letters are capable of being provided exclusively by the first and/or last letters or letter-groups of words. Finally, the condensed figure is self-bounding in the sense that the letters at its extremities are themselves constituent letters of the theme-word. In order for the *anagramma figuratum* to be considered authentic, each of its three components must be compliant in every respect with the tightly drawn compositional rules attaching to it, and the disposition of the three components relative to each other must also comply with those rules.

These are the fundamentals. In addition, the anagram must (as here) be marked by a prompt or prompts in the ambient text. It must also be meaningful and relevant in relation: (a) to the overt dimension of the text; (b) to the aesthetic strategy pursued by the poet; and (c) to other anagrams concealed in the covert dimension of the text. We shall look askance at a potential anagram that does not meet these conventional requirements. In the present instance, the sonnet is informed by the prior *devise* that envisages lines 1-10 as Henry Wriothesley's textual monument or tomb (as in *"When you intombed in mens eyes shall lye, / Your monument shall be my gentle verse"*). As will become clear in Chapter Four, Sonnet 81 is composed in the form of a Proteus Poem, in which the reader is presented with a number of alternative ways of reading the text.[12] In one such perspective, Shakespeare's *HENRY* anagram, situated with etymological accuracy at the head of the textual monument, takes effect as a quasi-anagrammatic epitaph that is not untypical of epitaphic inscriptions in the period.[13]

Horace's thematically important signature-anagram in the opening words of Satires 2.6 (in the form of *HORATIVS*) is comparable with Shakespeare's *HENRY* anagram. Here again the *forma* in *Hoc erat in votis* ("This was in my prayers") is coterminous with both the extended and the condensed components of the composite *anagramma figuratum*:

HORATIVS:

HOc eRAT In VotiS

On this auspicious occasion, the *figura extensa* and the *figura condensa* are identical. Nevertheless, the mandatory rules attaching to each

component are perfectly observed. The signature-anagram is of particular significance in this instance because Horace's poem is in part a votive offering to his patron Maecenas in thanks for his splendid gift of the *hortus* or country estate now known as the Sabine Farm. The poem is informed throughout in the manner of *anagrammatismos* by the prior word-within-word conceit that finds the words *HORTUS* (in the sense of "country seat") and *HORA* (in the sense of "leisure time") concealed within *HORATIUS* in the forms *HORaTiUS* and *HORAtius* respectively.[14]

As a consequence of the innate duplicity of text written in the Graeco-Roman tradition, the twenty-first century commentator must be alert to the danger of relying upon concepts derived from an exclusively superficial reading of pre-Enlightenment texts, whether in prose or poetry. It is also potentially misleading to construe such texts in the light of misapprehensions arising from our post-Enlightenment ignorance of literary history in this context. For example, William Camden's well-known definition of *"Anagrammatisme"* in *Remaines of Britain* (1605) has hitherto been read as referring to vulgar anagram in the mode of *D'EVREUX: VERE DUX*, but careful reading reveals that it is capable of addressing both open "anagram" and concealed *anagramma figuratum*. Camden's duplicitous remarks are in fact helpful in putting Horace's (and Shakespeare's) onomastic anagrammatism in perspective:[15]

> The onely *Quint-essence* that hitherto the *Alchimy* of wit coulde draw out of names, is *Anagrammatisme,* or *Metagrammatisme,* which is a dissolution of a Name truly written into his Letters, as his Elements, and a new connexion of it by artificiall transposition, without addition, substraction, or chang of any letter into different words, making some perfect sence applyable to the person named.
> The precise in this practise strictly observing all the parts of the definition, are are onely bold with H, either in omitting it or retaining it, for that it cannot challenge the right of a letter. But the licentiats somewhat licentiously, lest they should preiudice poeticall liberty, will pardon themselues for doubling or reiecting a letter, if the sence fall aptly, and thinke it no iniury to vse *E* for *AE, V* for *W, S* for *Z,* and *C* for *K,* and contrariwise.[16]

In his opening paragraph, Camden defines anagrammatism in relation to "a Name" whose letters are deemed to be generically "elemental" in relation to that particular Name. A new, paradigmatic "connexion" of that Name is made by the transposition of its elemental letters (without addition, subtraction, or change) into "different words, making some perfect sence applyable to the person named". It is noteworthy that Camden avoids stipulating that the "different words" with which the Name

is newly connected must be made up exclusively of the letters of the Name. There may, in other words, be an unused residue of letters. Overall, in fact, his definition is designedly but unobtrusively capable of embracing both Horace's *HORATIVS: HOc eRAT In VotiS* and Shakespeare's *HENRY: HENce your memoRY*.   As we shall see, an anagrammatic reading of Classical and Renaissance literary theoreticians reveals the existence of an absolute injunction to silence in relation to concealed anagram. If an author wishes to refer to events in the covert dimension of text, he must do so in terms of concealed anagram. Camden follows this traditional course by incorporating an *ANAGRAME* anagram in such a way as to describe the customary form and function of concealed anagram. Once again, it is the role of the anagram to reveal a specific truth which has the effect inter alia of re-contextualizing the overt dimension of the text:

ANAGRAME:

[**ANA**grammatisme], or Meta**GRA**mmatis**ME**,

… which is a dissolution of a Name

The "Name" in question here is the name Anagrame. Its new "connexion" with the "different words" comprised in *"Anagrammatisme, or Metagrammatisme"* is created by means of the "dissolution" of that Name in the form of ANA-GRA-ME within those words. In effect, a single word is envisaged as having been dissolved within three different words, whilst retaining is elemental nature. The gesture is conventionally marked in duplicitous deixis by the subordinate clause which immediately follows it: "which is a dissolution of a Name". When the anagram is abstracted from the text and read in isolation, the theme-word is set in paradigmatic   apposition   ("a   new   connexion")   to   the   words *"Anagrammatisme, or Metagrammatisme"*.

The references to anagrammatic licence in Camden's second paragraph are also relevant to the protocols of concealed anagrammatism. One such dispensation, relating to the sub-division of complex words, is defined covertly in the anagram itself. The letter-group GRA in ANA-GR-AME (see below) is deemed to occupy an acrostic position in relation to the sub-lexical entity *GRammatisme*, the prefix *Meta-* being notionally detached from *Meta/GRammatisme* for this purpose:

ANAgrammatisme, or *Meta-*GRAmmatisME
ANA   GRA   ME

The rules as to verbal sub-division state inter alia that prefixes and suffixes may be notionally detached from complex words in order to convert otherwise medial letters to acrostic letters in relation to the sub-lexical entities thus created. Here the otherwise medial letters GRA are sanctioned for anagrammatic use by virtue of the fact that they comprise the first letters of the sub-lexical entity *GRAmmatisme*. This rule also applies to adjectival and adverbial suffixes, as for example in the case of the word *heauen/ly*, where the letter *n* is medial within the adjective but is available for anagrammatic use because it is the final letter of the noun *heaven*.

This dispensation is never used out of mere anagrammatic expediency. Its literary function is to facilitate expressive word-play, as for example in the word-within-word trope that for example finds the revelatory word *Hora* in *Hora/tius*, where the inflectional suffix *-tius* is notionally detachable from the name. Camden's pedagogic gesture is wittily self-referential in this context, since the Greek prefix *meta-* (in the sense of "beside") is itself capable of creating a lexical entity which is super-added to another such entity. At the same time Camden is able (covertly) to cite the Latin word *Meta*, which signifies inter alia (a) an aim, end, or goal, or (b) the emblem which marks the end of the course in the Roman circus. Ovid's use of the word *Meta* in the envoi to *Metamorphoses*, where it marks the achieved climax of the poet's *morphoses*, was apparently a locus classicus of anagrammatic word-play in the Renaissance.[17] Prohibited by conventional protocols from describing the dispensation overtly, Camden demonstrates the way in which the expressive power of covert anagrammatism may be exponentially increased by requiring the revelatory sub-division of words.

The English *anagramma figuratum* is founded upon that of Classical Latin, and conventional or idiomatic usages in Latin are frequently adapted to the requirements of the English language. It is axiomatic that concealed anagrams must be constructed exclusively from the first and/or last letters of lexical entities. In Shakespeare's age, participial terminations in *-ing* (for example) and plurals in *s* and *es* are frequently treated as notionally detachable from the singular word. The optional *e-* termination, as for example in *green(e)*, may also be disregarded. Very occasionally, etymological considerations are also brought into play in order to authorise the analysis of a complex word in order to reveal a contextually apt "word within a word". In addition, hyphens and apostrophes may sometimes be deemed to be omitted for the purposes of the rule as to the exclusive use of the acrostic letters of words.

Camden's citation of instances of licentious letter-substitution is also relevant to covert anagrammatism, although the customary tendency of the composer of concealed anagram is to avoid such substitutions as far as possible. Where substitutions are used, they are often found to be conventional, and thus easily recognisable. For example, the relatively low frequency of the letter *x* in both Latin and English seems to have encouraged the widely found substitution of *s* for *x*. Thus, covert references to the Earl of Essex (a popular feature of Elizabethan verse) customarily involved the composition of concealed anagrams in the form of *ESSES*. The substitution of *s* for the letter *x* was also conventionally invoked in concealed chronogram, where the registration of a year in the 1590s, for example, requires four instances of the numeral letter *x*. Similarly, Horace's illustrative chronograms of the year 746 *ab urbe condita* in the *Ars poetica* again require four instances of the numeral letter *x*, and are also constructed in this respect by reference to the letter *s*.[18] English practice in relation to letter-substitution follows Classical Latin practice in this respect. Diphthongs are deemed interchangeable with their constituent letters, including: *a* and *e* for *ae*; *a* and *u* for *au*; and *o* and *e* for *oe*. In addition, the letter *t* may be substituted for *th*, the letter *c* for *ch*, and the letter *c* for *ck*.[19]

Except where otherwise indicated, the Shakespearean texts cited in this book are based upon the first published editions of *Venus and Adonis* (1593), *Lucrece* (1594), and *Shake-speares Sonnets* (1609) and the 1623 Folio of the plays. Other quotations from the period follow the first published editions.

Notes

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[1] For the suggestion that Shakespeare may be "the greatest anagrammatist" of his age, see Alastair Fowler, *Literary Names: Personal Names in English Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 87.

[2] For the use of Greek *anagrammatismos*, Latin *anagrammatismus*, and English *anagrammatisme*, see Chapter Two.

[3] Both anagrams are cited in William Camden's *Remaines of Britain* (1605).

[4] On the Augustan rejection of Renaissance literary culture, see Banford Parker, *The Triumph of Augustan Poetics: English Literary Culture from Butler to Johnson* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 23, 94-5, 176. See also Roger D Lund, *Ridicule, Religion and the Politics of Wit in Augustan England* (Ashgate: Farnham, Surrey, 2012), 1-24, 165, 200.

[5] Helen Vendler, *The Art of Shakespeare's Sonnets* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1997), 95.

[6] The phrase *"wilfull taste"* occurs in Sonnet 40, which also takes as its theme Henry Wriothesley's illicit enjoyment of the poet's mistress. See Chapter Four.

[7] Sonnet 126, which is composed in the form of a concealed technopaegnion in the form of an hourglass, is discussed in greater detail in Chapter Four, Section 7, "The Fourth Transilition".

[8] I am grateful to Andrew Gurr for confirming in private correspondence that he believes the *HENRY* anagram in Sonnet 81 to be intentional.

[9] See Chapter One.

[10] For Horace's account of *anagramma figuratum*, see Chapter Two.

[11] The principles and practice of concealed anagram are described and illustrated in more detail in Chapter One.

[12] Optatian's poem 'Ardua componunt felices carmina Musae' ("The blessed Muses compose difficult poems") - which is capable of being read in a multitude of different ways - was known in the period. The use of the name "Proteus" to describe such verse was popularized by Julius Caesar Scaliger in *Poetices* (1561), in which his own Proteus poem appeared. See Aaron Pettari, *The Space That Remains: Reading Latin Poetry in Late Antiquity* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014), 77. Shakespeare's Sonnet 81 contains attributive *SCALIGER* and *PROTEUS* anagrams. See Chapter Four for a detailed analysis of this sonnet.

[13] For examples of anagrammatic epitaphs, see H B Wheatley, *Of Anagrams: A Monograph Treating of their History from the Earliest Ages to the Present Time* (London: Stephen Austin, 1862), 122-172.

[14] For the isomorphism of Frederick Ahl's "word within word" trope in Classical Latin (1985) and Helen Vendler's "word-inside-word" in Shakespeare's sonnets (1997), see Chapter One.

[15] Shakespeare's commitment to onomastic *invenio* is described and illustrated in Chapters Four, Five, Six, and Seven.

[16] William Camden, *Remaines of Britain*, 1605.

[17] See William Bellamy, "Ben Jonson and the Art of Anagram", in Richard S Peterson (ed.), *Jonsonian Soundings* (New York: AMS Press), 2015.

[18] For Horace's account of *apices numerales* and concealed chronogram, see Chapter Two.

[19] Ahl's account of what he calls "linguistic possibilities" in Classical Latin contains a useful summary of the licences customarily exploited in Latin word-play. See Frederick Ahl, "Sounds at Play", in *Metaformations: Wordplay and Soundplay in Ovid and Other Classical Latin Poets* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1985), 54-60.

WORDS

1. Duplicities

Shakespeare's way with words has been described by the most insightful of recent commentators in terms of the expressive re-writing of one word in terms of another. Helen Vendler, for example, writes: "Whether the foregrounding of *seale* is remembered when one encounters *lease* depends on whether the reader shares with Shakespeare the Renaissance fascination with the way words look when printed… Shakespeare belongs to the world of print, a world in which anagrams were recognized and enjoyed".[1] Vendler is not alone in her claims in this context, as readers of Christopher Ricks' *Shakespeare and the Anagram*, Alastair Fowler's *Literary Names*, and Mary Hazard's *Elizabethan Silent Language* will be aware.[2] Fowler provides some persuasive examples, and goes so far as to suggest that "Shakespeare, the greatest poet of his age, may prove also the greatest anagrammatist".[3] In order to understand this designedly provocative statement, it is necessary to distinguish generically between two distinct modes of literary "anagram". Fowler refers not to the open, epigraphic device that might take the adulatory form, for example, of *DEV'REUX: VERE DUX*, but to the covert anagram that is concealed beneath the apparently innocent surface of a text that is ostensibly heedless of the anagram hidden within it. Ricks points to the distinction between overt and covert anagram in his remarks on Ben Jonson, who affected to despise the open, epigraphic form while adopting the covert, textually embedded variety in his own poetry:

> Again, this poet who scorned anagrams avails himself of an intricate one, scarcely available to the ear (one would have thought) in *The Speeches at Prince Henry's Barriers* (1610):
>
> > Now when the Iland hath regain'd her fame,
> > Intire, and perfect, in the ancient Name,
> > And that a monarch, æquall good and great,
> > Wise, temperate, iust, and stout, claimes Arthurs seat.

In the Conclusion, he who claimes Arthurs seat is Charles James Stuart, James I. [4]

Jonson's text is thus inherently disingenuous. Essentially duplex and in form and ulterior in intent, it gives a quite false impression of taking effect in a single dimension. It is as if this intricate, intricately concealed, and textually embedded anagram has been incorporated in his text by a poet who affects to disclaim all responsibility for it. The practical poet has composed his verses as if he did not intend the revelation that gives "point" to the Conclusion, and indeed, to the verse itself. If we did not know that the open, epigraphic anagram *CHARLES IAMES STUART: CLAIMES ARTHURS SEAT* is separately cited by William Camden, Jonson's carefully secreted version would be scarcely available to either ear or eye. If the poet is generically committed to hiding his anagrammatic light under a bushel (and perhaps even of suppressing the slightest suspicion of poetic intent) how is the ever-sceptical post-Enlightenment reader to credit the existence of such hidden figures?

The text which incorporates Shakespeare's covert transposition of the letters of *lease* in the form of *seale* is similarly disingenuous. The concealed re-writing of words, while greatly enhancing the expressive power of verse, necessarily implies a linguistic doubling, and the question then arises as to what an inherently duplex language might mean in the context of Shakespeare studies, and indeed in relation to pre-Enlightenment scholarship generally. It would seem, for example, that Vendler, the most acute of commentators on Shakespeare, does indeed remember *seale* when she encounters *lease*. But Shakespeare gives no apparent indication of intent. Fowler and Hazard go further in suggesting that pre-Enlightenment literary culture is in part characterized by the concealed anagrammatic naming of otherwise anonymously cited personages. The non-naming of the dramatis personae of Shakespeare's sonnets is a well-known example of the draining of specificity from the overt dimension of text. But what, then, are the poetic protocols that might confer certainty of intention in the case of such prospective anagrams as that which might seek to find *HENRIE* (the name of a revered patron) concealed within the adulatory and self-referential line *"HEREIN lives wisdom, beauty, and increase"*?

If, as here, such gestures were invariably composed in such a way as to appear to arise naturally, and independently with regard to the poet's intention, how are they to be deemed "authentic" in any given case? It would seem logical to seek to discover the regulatory system that presumably underpinned these concealed, textually embedded anagrams,

and enabled them to be read with as much confidence as the overt dimension of the text within which they were concealed.

We have long ago been exhorted by William and Elizabeth Friedman to look for system, consistency, and predictability in any potential cryptogram and we shall therefore expect any alleged set of compositional rules to exhibit system and rigour, to be tightly drawn, and to leave no room for ambiguity.[5] Thus two recently published authors, Peter Jensen and Roy Winnick, claim to have detected the letters of Henry Wriothesley in selected lines in Shakespeare's sonnets, but neither has been able to support his case by suggesting a regulatory syntax for concealed anagram.[6] Vendler's (1997) discovery of the Renaissance trope that she calls "word-inside-word" is found to be helpful in this context. She notes, for example, that Shakespeare refers to Sonnet 81 as an everlasting monument which *"eyes not yet created shall o'er-read"*, and points out that this statement is reinforced by the conceit that finds the word *READ* concealed and thus perpetuated in the word *cREAteD*. [7] Vendler detects another instance of the word-within-word device in Sonnet 52, noting that the poet refers to the *"ward-robe which the robe doth hide",* where the word *robe* is "literally hidden inside" the word *word-robe*. [8]

Vendler is apparently unaware that the Classicist Frederick Ahl had in 1985 used a similar epithet to describe the Latin trope that he describes as "word within word". [9] In a sub-chapter headed 'Word within Word', Ahl points to the pervasive use of this device by Classical Latin poets: "In *De rerum natura* I.641-44, Lucretius comments on people who find things hidden beneath words, who think that linguistic games reveal the truth … There is IGNIS (fire) in lIGNIS (wood) because the word IGNIS is contained within lIGNIS".[10] The evidence adduced by Jonathan Bate in *Shakespeare and Ovid*, and more recently by Colin Burrow in *Shakespeare and Classical Antiquity*, would suggest that Shakespeare was tutored from a relatively early age in Latin language and literary practice.[11] It is therefore entirely possible that Shakespeare knew of the wide use in Classical Latin of the word-within-word trope, and that he pursued a Classical poetic adapted to vernacular English, a poetic based upon in part upon anagram and the revelatory inter-penetration of word and word. Joseph Addison, writing in 1710, appears to have had both ancient and modern practice in mind when he describes the Business of the Anagrammatist and the pursuit of "False Wit":

> When the Anagrammatist takes a Name to work upon, he considers it at first as a Mine not broken up, which will not shew the treasure it contains till he shall have spent many Hours in the search of it: For it is his Business to find out one word that conceals itself in another…[12]

Addison goes on to suggest - quite rightly - that the Anagrammatist bases his poetic not upon perceived affinities between one idea and another, but upon the inter-verbal and other linguistic resemblances that it is his Business to seek out.

In this context, both Ahl (1985) and Vendler (1997) appear to owe an ultimate debt to the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, and to Jean Starobinski's influential book *Les mots sous les mots: les anagrammes de Ferdinand de Saussure* (1971).[13] Ahl states in a footnote:

> For Latin anagrams, Ferdinand de Saussure's work is fundamental, although I take a much narrower view of what constitutes an acceptable anagram.[14]

Ahl abstains from explaining what he means by "fundamental" or "an acceptable anagram".

2. The protocols of textually embedded anagram

It has in practice proved possible to extrapolate a coherent set of compositional rules for concealed, pre-Enlightenment anagram from Ferdinand de Saussure's meticulously recorded observations of *les mots sous les mots* in Classical Latin. When due allowance is made for Saussure's fundamental error in assuming that Classical Latin anagrammatism is regulated exclusively by reference to phonemic phenomena, it is discovered that the textually embedded anagram is in fact a composite device consisting of the three distinct components. These correspond respectively to Saussure's *mannequin*, his *locus princeps,* and the third manifestation that he describes as "more extended, and consequently more dispersed".[15] Saussure famously insisted that *les mots sous les mots* in Classical Latin are based exclusively upon *les phonèmes*, and in particular upon the allegedly irreducible entity that he named *le diphone*.[16] It is discovered, however, that the phenomena he detected were in fact the mere phonetic traces of a pervasive anagrammatism based exclusively upon *les signes écrits* and envisaged in terms of letters of the alphabet. My comments in this context refer not to the hypothetical relation between speech and writing in language, but simply to the terms in which the regulatory rules are found to be expressed, and which appear to underlie its principles and practice.

Having thus become newly literate with regard to concealed anagram, we are further assisted by those pre-Enlightenment texts which describe and illustrate the composite figure. As will become clear, overt reference to the covert dimension of text is subject to a long-standing, Hermetic

injunction to silence. It is therefore obligatory for references to *les mots sous les mots* to be confined to the covert dimension of text, and to be expressed in terms of concealed anagram and covert word-play.   As already noted, the poet Horace, for example, describes the overall device (covertly) as *anagramma figuratum* (or "figured anagram"), and identifies its three mandatory components as (1) *forma* ("outline model"), (2) *figura extensa* ("extended figure"), and (3) *figura condensa* ("condensed figure"). It is to Saussure's eternal credit that his *mannequin*, his "more extended" form, and his *locus princeps* are thus respectively confirmed as the phonetic traces of the alphabetic figures that Horace describes.

    To reiterate, the rules of *anagramma figuratum* are elegantly simple. First, the existence and location of any particular concealed anagram must be marked by a *forma* or outline model, which must comprise a word or phrase beginning and ending with the first and last letters, respectively, of the theme-word. The *forma*, functioning as a model in outline of the theme-word, takes effect as an easily recognisable textual surrogate for the theme-word. In Sonnet 7, for example, Shakespeare is found to deploy the aptly epideictic word *HeavenlY* as the mandatory outline model which marks the *HenrY* anagram which begins in line 5. The *forma* or outline model comprises a form of re-writing which, in accordance with ancient convention, sets the outline model (*HeavenlY*) in revelatory apposition to the theme-word (*HenrY*).   The *forma* is typically capable of notional abstraction from the ambient text and of being reconfigured in quasi-anagrammatic (and here, adulatory) form.

<div align="center">

HenrY:

HeauenlY

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The meta-textual figure thus introduced into the text typically takes the form of a revelatory paradigm, where the word paradigm is used in its simplest and etymologically apt sense of a "side-by-side showing".

    The second component of the tripartite anagram (i.e. the *figura extensa* or extended form) must begin in the first letter or letters of the outline model, be constructed thereafter in the text exclusively from the first and/or last letters of words (or word-stems in the widest sense), and must end in the final letter(s) of a proximately ensuing word. Any deviation from this obligatory norm will render the figure inauthentic. In Sonnet 7, for example, the extended form of the name *HENRY* is constructed in the apt verbal sequence *"HEaveNly … Resembling … his beautY"*.   In the annotated extract below, the outline model is enclosed within square brackets and the extended figure is emphasised in the text and noted in the

margin. The apparently medial letter *n* of *heauen/ly* is sanctioned for use in the *figura extensa* because it is the final letter of the word *heauen.* In the extract below, and henceforth, the fragmentation of a word for anagrammatic purposes is shown in the form *heauen/ly* (*sic*):

And hauing climbed the steepe-vp [**HE**aue**N**|ly] hill,	HE-N
Resembling strong youth in his middle age,	R
Yet mortal eyes adore his beaut**Y** still,	Y
Attending on his golden pilgrimage.	

Thus far, the figured anagram or *anagramma figuratum* has been found to be perfectly compliant with the regulatory protocols. The *forma* or outline model in *HeauenlY* marks the existence and location of the *HenrY* anagram, and comprises a word or phrase which begins and ends with the first and last letters respectively of the theme-word. The *figura extensa* begins in the first letter or letters of the *forma*, is constructed thereafter in the text exclusively from the first and/or last letters of words, and ends in the final letter(s) of a proximately ensuing word. At least one letter of the extended component must be taken (as in the present example) from each of the consecutive lines which contain the figure. In due accord with the protocols attaching to the construction of a multi-linear *figura extensa*, there is no intervening "barren" line. It should be noted that in the case of particularly significant anagrams, a plurality of *figurae extensae* may flow from a single *forma*.

The third and final component of the anagram is the *figura condensa* or condensed form, which is customarily located in the ambient text at either the beginning or end of the *figura extensa*, and must consist of a relatively compact textual matrix that is manifestly dedicated to the theme-word and that contains its letters. In Sonnet 7 the condensed component of the *HENRY* anagram is comprised in line 6: *"Resembling strong YoutH iN his middle agE"*. Here again, the textual matrix which comprises the condensed component must be capable of yielding the letters of the theme-word exclusively from the first and/or last letters of words, and the figure must be self-bounding in that the letters at either extremity must themselves be constituent letters of the theme-word. The condensed component in line 6 is found to comply in every respect with these strictly drawn requirements. It is an apparent characteristic of the condensed form that it should be capable of notional abstraction from the ambient text and of being set in revelatory apposition to the theme-word, rather in the manner of overt, epigraphic anagram:

HENRY:

Resembling strong Youth iN His middle agE

When, as convention requires, the *figura condensa* is construed in this way, the paradigmatic gesture has the effect of re-contextualizing the textual matrix of the figure (as in *"resembling strong youth in his middle"*), and of offering an alternative reading in a double syntax. As will become clear in Chapter Four, Shakespeare's ulterior theme in Sonnet 7 is conventionally sexual in character, the word *"middle"* in the Latin and Elizabeth sexual vocabularies signifying the sexual regions of either male or female. The "perfection" of the poet's re-writing of the name in this instance consists not in any wholesale transposition of all of the letters of a word or phrase to form another, but in its witty implementation of the tightly drawn conventions of the Classical "figured anagram" and of its precise compliance with the ancient protocols.

The evidence adduced in the present study is based upon the testing of the above-defined rules and customs of concealed anagram in relation to a multitude of specific examples. It is discovered that the great texts in Classical Latin, in the Christian tradition, and in the vernacular literatures of the Renaissance, are composed around and pervasively imbued with tripartite anagrams of the kind described by Horace. These omnipresent anagrams are found (a) to be perfectly compliant with the narrowly drawn compositional rules, (b) to be customarily accompanied and corroborated by duplicitous deixis in the ambient text, and (c) to reveal otherwise unspoken truths which re-contextualize the overt dimension of text, and endow it with specific meaning and point. As will become clear, the mandatory protocols which appear to govern the construction and incorporation such anagrams are rigorously defined, systematically applied, and expressively coherent in relation to the overt dimension of the text. The strict requirements of the Friedmans as to "cryptogram" are met in full. In each prospective case, the three components of the composite anagram must all be present. Each component is governed by a separate set of mandatory protocols, and must comply with them. The disposition of the three components in relation to each other is governed by a further set of rules, which must also be strictly observed. And we shall be suspicious of a potential anagram that is not marked by some duplicitous prompt in the surrounding text, as for example in the self-referential deixis of *"HENce youR memorY"* in line 3 of Sonnet 81, a gesture which preserves intact the memory of *HENRY*.

It will be apparent from the foregoing that the compositional rules of concealed anagram are based ultimately upon the principles of *acrostichis*,