A Deeper Look at the Arthur Golding Canon
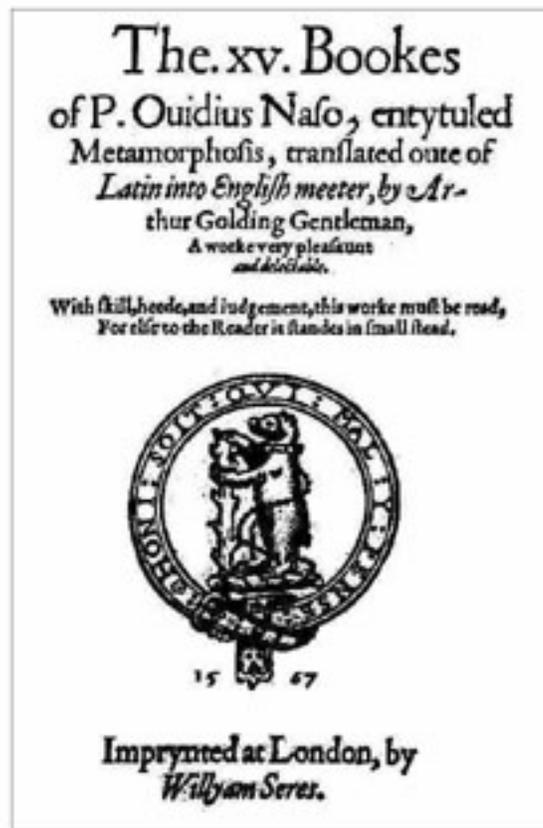
By Robert Prechter

Arthur Golding (1536-1606) was the half-brother of Oxford's mother, Mary Golding, and thus Oxford's uncle. After Oxford's father died in 1562, "Golding, fourteen years his senior, accompanied the young Earl as personal 'receiver' of the Vere estates which were then apparently among the greatest in the realm"(Barrell Page Number). In that capacity, he served as the "collector of rents and revenue for both Lord Oxford and his sister, Mary Vere" (Anderson 167). The year when Golding began looking after his nephew's revenues also happens to be the year that publications began appearing under Golding's name. Perhaps his new source of income allowed him to finance his publishing efforts.

Oxford and Golding were oil and water with regard to their religious tastes and literary styles. Oxford was not pious, while Golding "showed strong puritan predilections" (Stephen 75). Oxford wrote fanciful poetry, while Golding wrote moral treatises in prose. Oxford wrote and produced plays, while Golding "…denounced with puritan warmth the desecration of the Sabbath by the public performance of stage plays on Sundays" (Stephen 75).

The first four books of Golding's celebrated translation of Publius Ovidius Naso's *Metamorphoses* from Latin into English verse—in rhymed septameter couplets called "fourteeners"—were published in 1565; the full translation appeared in 1567. Elizabethan critics "spoke of his poetry as that of an English Ovid" (Rowse, per Ogburn 443). Today, it is "considered by contemporary critics to be among the best translations of the

Title page of the 1567 issue of the first fifteen books of The Metamorphoses, identified in the title page as being translated by Arthur Golding.

age" (Kunitz 225).

Many Oxfordians suspect that Oxford was behind Golding's universally admired work. This article examines some reasons why this suspicion is justified, explores who contributed the prefacing material and attempts to define the Golding canon.

A Stark Anomaly

The translations of Ovid stand out as an anomaly—in terms of both subject and mode—in the list of Golding's works (Table One, p. 8).

The primary fact we may glean from this list is that, in an extensive canon of 34 books written over a period of nearly half a century, Arthur Golding never wrote a book of poetry, fantasy, (intended) fiction or anything derived from Greco-Roman mythology aside from the project that is widely recognized as his seminal contribution to English literature. Rather, he typically offers such stultifying language as these opening lines "To the Reader" in *Bucer and Phagius*, from 1562:

If causeles anye yet to doubt, whether the wilye Papistes be the long foretold and looked for Antechristes: to theyr oft confuted doctrine, let him joyne the judgement of theyr damned dedes. And discerne that theyr faith, (whose justification they justly flye) by the filthines of theyr frutes. Which reason, was whilom among them of such force, that in stede of disproving doctrine, they curiously searched others innocent lives, as blamelesse themselves, not fearing (as the

(Golding, cont. from p. 7)

abhominable harlotte, who upbrayded her chaste neyghbour with her owne shame) most impudently to appeache others of unhonest life, where themselves are so staynd with al kinde of uncleannes, as but for that shamelesse dissemblinge, which serveth them fo so many mischieves, theyr confeyences would even in theyr blushyng faces, crie the contrary to theyr shamelesse wordes.

The other fact we may glean from the list of Golding's publications and from addresses such as the one just quoted is that Golding's obsession was religion. Almost every title not labeled "religion" in Table 1 is nevertheless related to the subject: The "current events" treatises defend pious people; the "philosophy" treatises focus on morals; Frossard (i.e.,Froissart), the subject of the later "history" entry, is quoted in religious treatises; and the entry labeled "anthropology" is mostly pseudo-anthropol-

Publication	Subject	Mode	Title
1562	religion	prose	*A Briefe Treatise concerning the Burninge of Bucer and Phagius*
1563	history	prose	*The Historie of Leonard Aretine*
1564	history	prose	*The histories of Trogus Pompeius*
1565	history	prose	*The eyght bookes of Caius Julius Caesar*
1565	fantasy	poetry	The Fyrst Fower Bookes of P. Ovidius Nasos...Metamorphosis
1567	fantasy	poetry	*The XV Bookes of P. Ovidius Naso, entytuled Metamorphosis*
1567	religion	prose	*John Calvin his Treatise concerning offences*
1569	religion	prose	*Expositions of the Gospels read in Churches of God on Sundayes*
1570	religion	prose	*Certeine Epistles usually red in the Church of God the Sundayes*
1571	religion	prose	*The Psalms of David...with M. John Calvins Commentaries*
1572	religion	prose	*A Booke of Christian Question and answers*
1572	religion	prose	*A Confutation of the Popes Bull*
1573	religion	prose	*The Benefit that Christians receyve by Jesus Christ Crucified*
1573	current events	prose	*Discourse of the Murther of...a worshipful citizen of London*
1574	religion	prose	*Sermons of M. John Calvine upon the Epistle of Saincts Paule*
1574	religion	prose	*Sermons of M. John Calvin upon the Booke of Job*
1574	religion	prose	*A Catholike Exposition upon the Revelation of Sainct Joan*
1575	religion	prose	*The Testamentes of the twelve Patriarches, the Sonnes of Jacob*
1575	current events	prose	*A Justification of clearing of the Prince of Orendge*
1576	religion	prose	*Warfare of Christians...against the Fleshe, the World, the Devill*
1576	religion	prose	*The godly...maintainer of the trew Christian Religion in France*
1576	current events	prose	*An Edict, of Proclamation set forthe by the Frenche Kinge*
1577	religion	prose	*The Sermons of M. John Calvin upon the Epistle of S. Paule*
1577	religion	prose	*A Tragedie of Abraham's Sacrifice*
1577	philosophy	prose	*The woorke of the excellent Philosopher Lucius Annaeus Seneca*
1580	religion	prose	*A Discourse upon the Earthquake...Throughe...Christendom*
1582	current events	prose	*Joyful and Royal entertainment of...Duke of Brabande*
1583	religion	prose	*The Sermons of M. John Calvin upon the fifth booke of Moses*
1585	geography	prose	*Pomponius Mela, That...worthy Cosmographer*
1587	anthropolo gy	prose	*The excellent and Pleasant Worke of Julius Solinus Polyhistor*
1587	religion	prose	*A Woorke concerning the Trewnesse of the Christian Religion*
1595	philosophy	prose	*Politicke, Morall and Martial Discourses...by Jaques Hurault*
????	religion	prose	*A Godly and Fruteful Prayer*
1608	history	prose	*Epitome of Frossard's Chronicles*

Table 1: Chronology of Golding Translations

ogy, containing sober descriptions of fantastical people, places and animals, which Golding seems to have taken as real, along with angels and devils. Even his essay on the earthquake proposes that this geological event is God's punishment of human wickedness.

Golding's interests are not merely different from *Metamorphoses*; they are antithetical to it. Calvinism is virtually the furthest thing from Ovid's sprightly, scandalous, racy stories—which got the original poet banned from Rome ("no less!" quips Ogburn [444])—that one could imagine. Orthodox scholars can see the contrast but don't quite know what to do with it: "An odd col-

laboration, that between the sophisticated darling of a dissolute society, the author of a scandalous handbook of seduction, and the respectable country gentleman and convinced Puritan who spent much of his life translating the sermons and commentaries of John Calvin"(Nims xiv). "Odd" is an understatement necessary to the conventional view, as a balanced consideration of the idea exposes the idea of such "collaboration" as untenable.

All of Golding's other works are allowed to speak for themselves, but the two books on Ovid are padded with fervent, moralistic justifications for being published. Golding's discomfort comes out in the introductory material, in which he attempts to argue that "...Ovid may be reconciled with Christian doctrine" (Donno 4). Scholars are satisfied that these excuses justify why this devoted Christian would "...translate a poet so exuberantly pagan"(Nims xvi), but we should not be. The contrast is akin to a modern preacher producing and starring in a pornographic movie to demonstrate the teachings of the New Testament.

Notably, in the same two years that Golding issued editions of the incredibly ambitious *Metamorphoses*, he also somehow found the time to translate eight books of *Julius Caesar* and write a religious pamphlet. Saunders (2005) did a masterful job demonstrating that Golding would have had to double his rate of output for at least two years to do both projects, and his analysis does not even adjust for the fact that *Metamorphoses* is all poetry, which—for most people—takes

much longer to write or translate. This anomalous output is better understood as Golding sticking to his normal publishing schedule while at the same time allowing his name to be placed on his nephew's literary project.

Prefatory Material in the 1565 Book

The Fyrst Fower Bookes begins with a dedication to the Earl of Leicester signed "Arthur Goldyng" and closes, "At Cecill house, the xxiij of December, Anno. 1564." The author aspires to be one of those writers with "a zeale and desyre too enryche their native language with thinges not hertoofore published in the same." This line could apply to either Oxford or Golding. The dedication also contains numerous abject apologies, for "my default…the want of skill and rudenesse…a poore Neweyeres gift" and "this my maimed and unperfect translation." Shakespeare takes the same tone in the dedications for *Venus and Adoni*s and *Lucrece,* but in this case the evidence seemingly in favor of Oxford's authorship is void, because we find similar comments in Golding's actual works (see later discussion), including *Caius Julius Caesar,* in which he apologizes for "my slender knowledge," and *Trogus Pompeius*, in which he speaks of "thys my rude and unpolished translation" and "this my symple Translation" and humbly claims "the wante of fyne pennyng."

Other considerations tip the scales. Shakespeare's dedications do not praise his own work, but this author insures Leicester that his translation is full of "excellent devises and fyne inventions contrived in the same, purporting outwardly moste pleasant tales & delectable histories, and fraughted inwardlye with moste piththie instructions and wholesome examples." The utilitarian promise is typical of the practical Golding but not of Ovid's translator or of Shakespeare, who wrote to delight. Certain quirks of spelling that occur throughout the prefatorymaterial in these books are atypical of the translation itself and of Shakespeare. For example, Golding continually contracts "the" and the ensuing noun. In his Leonard Aretino, we find "thupper hand and thonour," and in the dedication we find "Thauthor." Throughout the prefacing material we also

find the word *to*, in all its uses, commonly spelled "too"; in this brief dedication, we find "too their friends," "too their betters," "too offer it," "too your worthynesse," "too the state" and "too persever." This same form appears numerous times in the dedication and body of Golding's *Psalmes of David*. It also appears in "The Epistle"

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from the 1567 *Metamorphoses*, prefacing material that I will argue is Golding's as well. In contrast, on the first page of the translation, we find "transformed to bodies," "to entreate," "to my tyme," "to beare," "to agree," "to aire," "to close," "to whom" and "to beate." (The second page has a few instances of *too*.) The closing phrase, "Beeseeching God," fits the devout Golding better than Oxford. These small differences reveal the dual authorship of the volume, with one writer handling the introductory material and the other the translation.

"The Preface" titled "To the Reader" in the same publication is unquestionably Golding's as well. Nearly the same ap-

pellation, with different spelling—"The Praeface" "To the Reader"—attends *Caius Julius Caesar,* which is by Golding (see later discussion). As you will find three times in the excerpt quoted below, the author again consistently spells the infinitive form of *to* as "too." He also writes "doo" for *do* (twice) and "mo" for *more* (six times), forms that are also atypical of the author of the translation. I present these lines of verse as Golding's finest and most poetic passage, yet even here it is clear that his poetical talents lie beneath those of Ovid's translator:

For this doo lerned persons deeme of Ovid's present woorke:
That in no one of all his bookes the which he wrate, doo lurke
Mo darke and secret mysteries, mo counselles wyse and sage,
Mo good ensamples, mo reproofs of vice in youth and age,
Mo fyne inventions too delight, mo matters clerkly knyt,
No nor more strange varietie too shewe a lerned wit.
The highe, the lowe: the rich the poore: the maister, and the slave:
the mayd, the wife: the man, the child: the simple, and the brave:
The young, the old: the good, the bad: the warriour strong and stowt:
The wyse, the foole: the countrie cloyne: the lerned, and the lout:
And every other living wight shall in this mirrour see
His whole estate, thoughtes, woordes and deedes expresly shewd too bee.

At one point Golding notes, "Poets… Did under covert names and termes their doctrines so emplye." Given our context, this is an interesting reference.

Prefatory Material in the 1567 Book

Evidence just as conclusively indicates that for the complete edition of 1567—*The XV Bookes of P. Ovidius Naso*—Golding wrote "The Epistle," a lengthy address in verse to the Earl of Leicester. The arguments in "The Epistle" are often preposterous, as when the writer claims he can "detect/ That Poets tooke the ground of all their chiefest fables out/ Of scripture"; that the pitiful, pining Echo

(Golding. cont. from p. 9)

"dooth kindly represent the lewd behavior of a bawd, and his due punishment"; or that stories of moral license teach people how not to behave. Nims seems just a tad uncomfortable when he notes the "…moralizing and allegorizing process to which Ovid was subjected; his most scandalous stories, it seems, could be seen in a religious light, dim as that light may seem to us" (Nims xxxviii).

Golding's tortured reasoning with respect to religion appears also in his prose works, as when he argues in his 1580 book that because a certain earthquake did not have the usual prefacing signs, including a "raging of the sea, the weather being fair, tem-

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Thus, the stylistic aspects of the poetry in the material prefacing the Ovid books are consistent with those of Arthur Golding's known poetry. This consistency fits the conclusion that he wrote all the introductory material for both editions of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, thereby confirming Ogburn's suspicion that "The prefatory verses…may be assumed to be of his conception."

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perate and unwindy, calmness of the air matched with great cold; dimness of the sun for certain days afore," and so on, "therefore we may conclude…that this miracle proceeded not of the course of any natural cause, but of God's determinate purpose."

As befits a practical man rather than the romantic Oxford, many arguments in "The Epistle" sound like Polonius' maxims in Hamlet: "Arachne may example bee that folke should not contend/ Against their betters, nor percist in error too the end." Shakespeare writes to impress, impassion and delight, but Golding stresses utility. In his view, Ovid's stories are not for pleasure but for instruction: "These fables out of every booke I have interpreted,/ To shew how they and all the rest may stand a man in sted."

A particular stylistic aspect of "The Epistle," namely its blizzard of split lines and senses, is starkly different from what we find in the body of the work. The result is a series of passages that, despite their accord with septameter rhymed couplets, read far better as prose than poetry. Despite the aid of rhyme and the consistent, seven-iamb lines, it is nevertheless nearly impossible to insert the original line divisions in such sections as these (for the answer, see Endnote 1):

> And though that of these three he make discourse

dispersedly: yet specially they bee discussed in the latter booke in that oration, where he bringeth in Pythagoras dissuading men from feare of death, and preaching abstinence from flesh of living things.

> Thys fable also signifies, that valiantnes of hart consisteth not in wordes, but deedes: and that all flight and act give place to prowesse. Furthermore in Nessus we may see what breach of promise commeth to, and how that such as bee unable for to wreake theyr harmes by force, to ofe devise to wreake themselves by pollicie, in far more cruel wise.

> (As though he in a chariot sate well ordered) should direct his mind by reason in the way of vertue, and correct his fierce affections with the bit of temperance, least perchance they taking bridle in the teeth like wilfull jades should prance away, and headlong carry him to every filthy pit of vice, and drinking of the same defile his soule with it.

These lines are prose, I contend, because that's what Golding habitually wrote. As revealed in Table 1, 32 out of 34 publications with his name on them are written in prose. The two editions of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* are the only exceptions.

A Comparison to Golding's Other Poem

Golding is known to have written only one other poem, for the preface to John Baret's dictionary, *An Alvearie* (1574), and parts of it, too, have more in common with prose than verse. Here is an excerpt, with the lines unmarked:

> For my instruction gladly I woulde lerne, how men might trye what wryter setteth downe the Article aryght, or who doth drowne the Pronowne by misplacing it, as now most wryters doe, and yit they marke not how.

This short poem also spells the infinitive form of *to* as *too,* three times, and contains a religious reference in "confirmed by the Sovereines will." Equally revealing are the simplicity and ineptitude of the versification. Note particularly the line-ending word, and, and the resulting split sense in the clumsy stanza quoted here:

> And Barret here good Reader doth present
> A Hyve of home to thy gentle hand,
> By tract of tyme in peynfull labor spent
> Well wrought, and brought to such perfection and
> Good purpose, as (if truth be rightly scand)
> Thou art to blame but if thou be his detter
> Of earned thankes, and fare by him the better.

Thus, the stylistic aspects of the poetry in the material prefacing the Ovid books are consistent with those of Arthur Golding's known poetry. This consistency fits the conclusion

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Stylistic Aspects of the Translation

The subject matter and stylistic qualities of the translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* differ starkly from the introductory material in the two books and from the literal prose translations in the remainder of Golding's canon. While Golding is consistently stodgy, this translation of Ovid is renowned for "…its racy verve, its quirks and oddities, its rugged English gusto…" (Nims xiv) its "zest," "fun," "jaunty swing," "energetic doggerel," "rough-and-tumble verses" and "strange, quirky, colloquial vocabulary"; "with Golding's weird and piquant vocabulary, we feel we are in Lewis Carroll country" (Nims xxxv). Orthodox scholars, to no useful purpose, cannot help but observe the difference: "…the patterns of English speech" in his yeoman prose are "…not what we find too often in his verse" (Nims xxiv). In comparing the "straight-forward" introductory verses to the "wordiness, ostentatious parade of adjectives and outlandish inversions of language" of the translation itself, Ogburn asks rhetorically if the two were by the same author and answers, "Are you kidding?"(Ogburn, 444)

The poetry goes beyond zestiness to include verbal invention. Nims makes an offhand list of 30 "Golding-isms," newly coined words that permeate the book. Likewise Shakespeare is celebrated for his neologisms, which famously enriched the English language. In our context, we can see that these inventions are not "Golding-isms" at all, but Oxford's youthful, daring inventions of vocabulary.

Of specific interest is an observation that "the translation is so jaunty and comic it could well have been addressed to a child…in such descriptions as the goddess Ceres 'eating hotch-potch' and being called 'a greedy gut.'"(Anderson 159) "If the Latin mentions Midas's 'tiara,' Golding calls it a 'purple nightcap'" (Nims xxxi). Instead of saying a character throws darts, he says, "The hand of Prince Meleager/ Plaid hittymissie" (Nims 207). He renders classical names in child-speak: "Pentheus, Theseus, Orpheus, and others lose a few inches of their heroic stature when they are called 'Penthey,' 'Thesey,' and 'Orphey.' Thisbe tells Pyramus she is his darling 'Thisb'" (Nims xxxii). As if to delight a young boy, the author displays "…macabre verve in describing the witches' brew Medea cooks up" (Nims xxxiii). Revealingly, in many instances "…the mischief is not in Ovid" (Nims xxxiv), but a characteristic of the impish translator. But think a moment: The idea of an adult poet writing an entire book of adult, racy Ovid stories to delight a child is absurd. The impression that this work is addressed to or for a child is just a preposition away from revelatory accuracy. We should realize that it was written by a child. Oxford was 14 when he finished the first four books and 16 when he completed the rest.

William Webbe in *Discourse of English Poetrie* (1586) praised Golding only for his translation of Ovid, not his work in general. This selectivity is not due to oversight, because critical

focus has not shifted in the ensuring centuries. Says the DNB, "It is as the translator of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* that Golding deserves to be best known" (Stephen 8:76). Nims adds, "…it is still more enjoyable, more plain fun to read, than any other Metamorphoses in English" (Nims xiv). Ezra Pound, somewhat hyperbolically, called it "the most beautiful book in the language" (as qtd. in Nims back jacket). It might not be quite that, but, being the first major triumph of a young literary genius, it may be the most

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beautiful book in English up to the year 1567.

Metamorphoses and Shakespeare

Scholars agree that Ovid's *Metamorphoses* is Shakespeare's most oft-used source. Moreover, "We know that Shakespeare knew the book in both the original Latin and Arthur Golding's translation" (Bate, in Nims xlii; ror copious evidence, see Bate [in Nims xlii]). Why would a busy playwright use both? One scholar "has brought his impressive knowledge to bear on this and other problems; his conclusion is that Shakespeare quite possibly used Golding in the Stratford school along with the Latin" (Baldwin,

(Golding. cont. from p. 11)

as qtd in Nims xx). Yes, with nary a speck of evidence, we may nevertheless presume that the grammar school of Stratford was teaching the local boys two versions of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. The Oxfordian solution to the problem is far better: The man who became Shakespeare knew both versions intimately because he immersed himself in Ovid's Latin original in order to write the translation. This is the reason why Shakespeare intimately knows Ovid. This is the reason why he uses both English and Latin versions.

It makes little sense that Oxford's Puritan uncle would choose to dive into a lengthy translation of the frisky, worldly Ovid and then labor twice to explain why Ovid's stories can lead to spiritual redemption. It makes less sense that the author of the vibrant verse of the translation would write such plodding poetry and prose in every other instance.

It fits both the characters and talents involved that Oxford wrote the translation, and then Golding wrote the prefacing material to make the subject matter palatable to Puritan sensibilities before he would allow his name to be placed on it.

In an article for the 2007 *Oxfordian*—"Is Ovids Fable of Narcissus (1560) One of Oxford's Earliest Literary Works?"—I argue that Oxford's first translation of a story from Ovid actually came at age ten. If that analysis is correct, we need little wonder why Shakespeare had such a deep-rooted knowledge of Ovid.

Another notable aspect of the translation is "…how wordy Golding is…writing twenty words for Ovid's three, or turning one line into two, three, or even four" (Nims xxii). Guess who else is wordy in the same way, using the same source: "Venus and Adonis takes a one hundred line story from the third book of the Metamorphoses and expands it into more than a thousand lines of elegant artifice" (Bate, in Nims xliv). So Golding's unusual practice reappears as Shakespeare's.

A Cooperative but Reluctant Golding

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Why would Golding acquiesce to this deception? While earning fees in his capacity as the young lord's receiver, Golding served at the behest of the royal warder—William Cecil—and was even living at Cecil House. It is not much of a stretch to imagine that Sir William, who was looking after the legacy of his ward, might have imposed upon Golding to take credit for the book. Given Cecil's position and hospitality, Golding could hardly have refused. If this is what happened, we may conjecture that he wrote

Publication	Section	Author
First 4 books of *Metamorphoses* (1565)		
	Dedication to Leicester	Golding
	"The Preface" "To the Reader"	Golding
	Translation	Oxford
Complete *Metamorphoses* (1567)		
	"The Epistle" to Leicester	Golding
	Translation	Oxford

Table 2

the prefaces to justify the translation to himself and his circle, to Oxford's conservative warder Cecil and to the Archbishop, who would need a reason to let it pass censure.

To conclude, I believe that Oxford wrote the entire translation of Ovid's tales, and Golding wrote all the introductory material. Table 2 summarizes these attributions.

The Rest of the Golding Canon

Twenty-nine of the remaining books published in Golding's name are quite obviously his. But observe in Table 1 that the three translations of 1563 through 1565, which precede the *Metamorphoses* translations, are not related to religion, but to classical history, a subject of interest to Shakespeare and thus surely to the boy who would become him. Not only poetry but also history suddenly cease for Golding after 1567, the year that Oxford left Cecil House for Gray's Inn. When I read, "That Golding also acted as tutor and general adviser to his nephew can be taken for granted, for the translator addresses Oxford in such a dual spirit

in dedications of books published in 1564 and 1571" (Barrell 1940), I wondered whether one or more of the history translations in these early years were Oxford's completed assignments under Golding's instruction. But the stylistic evidence (some of which is mentioned above) indicates that Golding wrote all these books. I therefore agree with Ogburn that they were "Golding's own early translations" (Ogburn 447).

To give Golding his due, one scholar calls *The eyght bookes of Caius Julius Caesar* "a landmark in English history and scholarship for it was the first translation of the greatest of all military classics to be printed in the vernacular" (Barrell 1940). Barrell notes that the Roman general Lucius in Shakespeare's *Cymbeline* speaks to the British leader of "thine uncle,—Famous in Caesar's praises," suggesting that Oxford was cleverly referring to his own uncle and his composition. I have little doubt that this is the case.

I would guess that Oxford's very presence for five years in the Cecil household exerted some force of literary moderation upon Golding, because the year that Oxford departed, Golding returned to the turgid, Calvinistic prose that he introduced in *Bucer and Phagius*. Without his secular nephew to wince at such words, Golding was free to indulge his natural vein. As a result, he accomplished nothing else of note.

Among Oxfordians there has always been some question as to the authorship of Golding's early histories and the various portions of the two publications of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. After investigating all the material, I am confident that we may redefine the Arthur Golding canon as comprising everything published in his name except the translation *per se* of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*.

On Good Terms

The uncle and his nephew apparently stayed on good terms, as Golding dedicated Calvin's version of the Psalms of David to him. Dated October 20, 1571, it is clearly a wedding gift, since "Oxford's Marriage was planned for 21 September 1571, but postponed until 19 December" (Roper n.d.). In the dedication, Golding praises his nephew's "graces of mind." He also entreats Oxford to adopt "true Religyon" and to "consider how God hath placed you upon a high stage in the eyes of all men," a metaphor probably referencing Oxford's theatre activities. In reaching out to his nephew, Golding plays to Oxford's romantic sensibilities when he wishes for him and his new wife, Anne Cecil, an "unseperable love, like the love of Ceix and Alcyonee." It is a rare, touching moment in his canon of otherwise strident original composition.

Endnote 1

Here are Golding's septameter line breaks:

　　And though that of these three/ he make discourse dispersedly: yet specially they bee/ discussed in the latter booke in that oration, where/ he bringeth in Pythagoras dissuading men from feare/ of death, and preaching abstinence from flesh of living things.

Thys fable also signifies, that valiantnes of hart/ consisteth not in wordes, but deedes: and that all flight and act/ give place to prowesse. Furthermore in Nessus we may see/ what breach of promise commeth to, and how that such as bee/ unable for to wreake theyr harmes by force, to ofe devise/ to wreake themselves by pollicie, in far more

> To give Golding his due, one scholar calls *The eyght bookes of Caius Julius Caesar* "a landmark in English history and scholarship for it was the first translation of the greatest of all military classics to be printed in the vernacular" (Barrell 1940). Barrell notes that the Roman general Lucius in Shakespeare's *Cymbeline* speaks to the British leader of "thine uncle,—Famous in Caesar's praises," suggesting that Oxford was cleverly referring to his own uncle and his composition....
> I would guess that Oxford's very presence for five years in the Cecil household exerted some force of literary moderation upon Golding, because the year that Oxford departed, Golding returned to the turgid, Calvinistic prose that he introduced in *Bucer and Phagius*. Without his secular nephew to wince at such words, Golding was free to indulge his natural vein...

cruel wise.

　　(As though he in a chariot sate well ordered) should direct/ his mind by reason in the way of vertue, and correct/ his fierce affections with the bit of temperance, least

perchance/ they taking bridle in the teeth like wilfull jades should prance/ away, and headlong carry him to every filthy pit/ of vice, and drinking of the same defile his soule with it.

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telligence, rationality, sanity, etc.), or in our character, e.g, that we're all class snobs who cannot accept that a commoner could be a great writer.

This strategy serves them well. The authorship issue has been effectively de-legitimized and stigmatized. In much of aca-demia, it has become a taboo subject. If there is no room for doubt about Will Shakspere, then considering alternatives is inherently irrational, and authorship doubters of all persuasions can be summarily dismissed. Rather than deal with contrary evidence, they can intimidate and marginalize authorship doubters with ridicule. This is not to say that there is some sort of "conspiracy" among them to conceal the truth. The great majority of orthodox scholars are probably totally sincere in their stated beliefs.

Nor should we assume that English professors are monolithic in their views of the issue. Earlier this year, New York Times culture desk editor William Niederkorn instigated an online survey of English professors at U.S. colleges and universities sampled randomly and found that 82% felt there was no good reason to question the traditional attribution. While clearly one-sided, 82% is a far cry from the 99% that many would have predicted. More importantly, however, the major institutions – those with the power and authority, to which the media turn for expert commentary – are solidly, and adamantly, against us.

A recent example is the article, "There's No Doubt It's Will," by Professor Stanley Wells, chairman of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, in the "Outlook" section of the *Washington Post* on March 18, 2007, opposite an article on the authorship issue by Roger Stritmatter. "The nonsense started around 1785," Wells began, "the year a Warwickshire clergyman fantasized that William Shakespeare . . . was not the author of the works . . . (and) laid the foundations of the authorship question . . . , an immense monument to human folly." Stritmatter wrote an excellent article, but it's hard to make much headway when one isn't allowed to get a clear message out without it being ridiculed by some orthodox authority.

Wells's SBT website describes the authorship issue as "a psychological aberration of considerable interest. Endorsement of it in favour of aristocratic candidates may be ascribed to snob-bery - reluctance to believe that works of genius could emanate from a man of relatively humble origin . . . Other causes include ignorance; poor sense of logic; refusal, willful or otherwise, to accept evidence; folly; the desire for publicity; and even certifiable madness (as in the sad case of Delia Bacon . . .)" Reading this, one might well wonder whether Dr. Wells took his degree in English literature, or abnormal psychology.

Another example is the reaction of Harvard English Professor Stephen Greenblatt, author of *Will in the World: How Shakespeare Became Shakespeare* (Norton, 2004), to an article in the New York Times on August 30, 2005, in which Reporter William Niederkorn asked rhetorically, "What if authorship studies were made part of the standard Shakespeare curriculum?" In a letter to the editor of *The Times*, Greenblatt responded as follows:

The idea that Shakespeare's authorship of his plays and po-