

Shakespeare as Rip Van Winkle: Huge Scale Historical Amnesias; the Shakespearean Poetic and Authorship; and 'Dissociation of Sensibility' (TS Eliot)

The philosophical understanding of historical amnesia and historicity is a non-linear principle of temporal change. This resolves the paradox that, whilst the Shakespearean poetic, emerging from the depths of feudal consciousness (Hegel), is the first modern consciousness, the principles necessary to its recognition were not discovered (Vico, Hegel, Coleridge) until the turn of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries, two centuries later.

This undercuts the theorising of those who think that authorial intentionality and biographical linkage in the modern sense is an anachronism as applied to Shakespeare.

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1. Peter Dickson's (*Bardgate: Shake-speare and the Royalists Who Stole the Bard*) relating of the Shakespeare problem to Homer, Jesus, and Columbus. Why the big problems get SO big and so intractable. Connections with fundamental Historicity and Religious-Philosophical issues.
<http://shake-speares-bible.com/2011/10/31/guest-post-by-dr-heward-wilkinson-the-significance-of-the-longevity-of-the-shakespeare-authorship-question/>
 2. Key Problems with the Stratford Man: a Prima Facie Problem, though a Prima Facie case also:

Huge Ambiguity of First Folio and Ben Jonson's Contributions; Possible Indications that the Author was dead by 1609; the falling off of Shakespeare publications after 1604; absence of any national lamenting at the Stratford Man's death in 1616; The Shakespeare Apocrypha, and the Use of the Shakespeare Title on the Plays; the Stationers' Register; the holding back of Sixteen Plays till 1623 by what are called 'the Grand Possessors' (Preface to *Troilus and Cressida*); evidences of the Stratford Man's Catholicism; Jonson's *Poet-Ape* (and related allusions) and the Stratford Man's semi-literacy, and absence of a literary paper trail; his lack of interest, for a very litigious man, in the pirating of Shakespeare plays; Ben Jonson's allusion to the third stanza of the Ignoto poem prefacing the Fairie Queene in 1589; http://oxford-shakespeare.com/Newsletters/EK_2_of_7-50.pdf; <http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/173731>; etc etc.
 3. Why the question was forgotten: the Loss of Uncanniness and of the Shakespeare Poetic (*Macbeth*); Shakespeare's verse in relation to Dryden's *All for Love*
 4. The Civil War, Dissociation of Sensibility, the Eighteenth Century Enlightenment, Rise of Critical-Historical Thinking, and Rise of Technology-based Science in the

Nineteenth Century, the Whig Interpretation of History (Butterfield, Macaulay's History Chapter 3)

5. Some Major Historical Amnesias and related issues of 'displaced identity':
The Stratford Man as Front Man who replaces the actual author;
James the Brother of Jesus and his historic displacement by Paul the Apostle;
<http://depts.drew.edu/jhc/rpeisman.html>; the connection, therefore, of these huge displacements with fundamental historical shifts of consciousness;
Another analogy being: Nietzsche and Heidegger and the question of the loss of Greek Tragic consciousness (and then The Death of God)
6. The First (Re-?) Emergence of the Authorship Question:

Many Elizabethan-Jacobean clues; Modern Day Emergence of the Question appears to coincide with rise of Scientific-Critical Mentality, around 1838; the Recrudescence of the awareness of Catholicism in England via the Tractarian Movement:
<http://www.newmanreader.org/works/apologia/index.html>; Art for Art's Sake, Aesthetic Neutrality, and the Authorship Question
7. 19th Century Recovery of 'The Momentary Self' (Yeats, Schoenbaum) and Shakespearean Poetic: Coleridge; Keats; Hopkins; Eliot; Coleridge on the Opening of *Hamlet*; The Beginning of Jane Austen's *Emma*; Daniel Stern's patient; Derrida on *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*
8. TS Eliot as a pivotal figure; his ambiguous position between 'aesthetic neutrality' and 'our interpretations of Shakespeare are merely projections' (c.f., *Shakespeare and the Stoicism of Seneca*, 1927, in *Selected Essays*), and the recognition that the poet essentially turns or can turn *everything* into poetry: "The possible interests of a poet are unlimited; the more intelligent he is the better; the more intelligent he is the more likely that he will have interests: our only condition is that he turn them into poetry, and not merely meditate on them poetically. A philosophical theory which has entered into poetry is established, for its truth or falsity in one sense ceases to matter, and its truth in another sense is proved."
9. The extreme mercuriality of the actual author, and his pivotal position in the Elizabethan political world, explains why he is so elusive, why he is so attractive to someone like Eliot, yet also possesses the uncanniness and the enormous historical dimension which the Stratford Man lacks.