

EARLY MODERN LITERARY STUDIES



‘What’s in a name?’ Shakespeare’s *inventio* and the Topic of ‘*notatio*’ (names)

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Students of the Elizabethan grammar school, including the King Edward VI School in Stratford-upon-Avon, were trained on the Ciceronian conception of the *ars rhetorica* which included the three canons of composition: *inventio*, *dispositio*, and *elocutio* (invention, arrangement, and style).¹ Yet, while much has been published about Shakespeare’s uses of the tropes and figures (his *elocutio*), not a great deal is known about Shakespeare’s applications of *inventio* methods.² Most precepts for *inventio* focus on the consideration of particular ‘topics’ to help invent arguments for oratory, such as considering the *definition* of one’s subject, or its *name*, its *genus*, its *species*, its *causes*, its *effects* and so forth. The Romans called these topics ‘*loci*’ (places) or ‘*sedes*’ (seats or regions), and they were conceived as quasi-literal hiding places in the mind where arguments lurked, waiting to be discovered, and drawn out, thus *in-vented* into the world.³

¹ Quentin Skinner, *Forensic Shakespeare* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), p.4.

² Raphael Lyne, discussing Barthes’s explanation of *inventio* as more ‘extractive’ for discovering *existing material* than ‘creative’, notes that ‘one of the problems in the reception of rhetoric has been an over-emphasis on the ‘third part of the *technè rhétorikè* known as *lexis* or *elocutio*, to which we are accustomed to pejoratively reducing rhetoric because of the interest [we] Moderns have taken in the figures of rhetoric’, *Shakespeare, Rhetoric and Cognition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 71-2; Roland Barthes, ‘The Old Rhetoric’, in *The Semiotic Challenge*, (p. 83), translated by Richard Howard (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988; *L’aventure sémiologique* first published Paris: Seuil, 1985), pp. 11–94. Skinner also discusses the ‘tendency to concentrate almost exclusively on *elocutio* [when] speaking of “Shakespeare’s rhetoric”’, p. 4 and *n.* 15.

³ Cicero, *Topics [Topica]*, trans. by H. M. Hubbell and ed. by Jeffrey Henderson for Loeb Classical Library (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1949), I.7-8, pp. 386-7; Quintilian, *The Orator’s Education [Institutio Oratoria]*, ed. and trans. by Donald A. Russell for Loeb Classical Library (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2001), 5.10.20-1, pp. 374-7.

Aristotle had originally related 337 rules for discovering arguments in his *Topica*,⁴ and he included a compact collection of 28 ‘topics’ in his *Rhetorica*,⁵ where he also distinguished between ‘specific’ topics and ‘universal’ topics of invention.⁶ The specific topics are akin to recipes for composition attributed to specific types of discourse, such as the three different branches of oratory – deliberative, forensic, epideictic (political, legal, or ceremonial), or such topics as the circumstances.⁷ The ‘universal’ topics, however, were said to be inherent to any subject (such as the six mentioned above), but these universal topics were never conceived as a practical scheme until Cicero published his *Topica* (44 BCE), which promoted a manageable scheme of 16 that he considered to be comprehensive for inventing material for any subject whatsoever.⁸ While Lorna Hutson (2007, 2015) and Quentin Skinner (2014) have produced recent and convincing evidence for Shakespeare’s applications of the forensic precepts for composition – especially those found in Cicero’s *De inventione* (87 BCE) and the anonymous *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (84 BCE)⁹ – including many *specific topics*, these books do not include

⁴ Peter Mack, *Renaissance Argument: Valla and Agricola in the Traditions of Rhetoric and Dialectic* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1993), p. 132; Aristotle, *Topica*, trans. by Hugh Tredennick and E.S. Forster for Loeb Classical Library (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1960), *passim*.

⁵ Aristotle, *Art of Rhetoric [Rhetoric]*, trans. by J. H. Freese for Loeb Classical Library (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1926), II.XXIII, pp. 296-325.

⁶ Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1358a-b, I.II.21-I.III.1, pp. 31-3.

⁷ The topics of circumstance helped lawyers establish proofs for their case, and for Cicero these were either specific to ‘persons’ (*name, nature, manner of life, fortune, habit, feeling, interests, purposes, achievements, accidents, and speeches made*) or specific to ‘actions’ (*place, time, occasion, manner, facilities, or things consequential to the deed*), Cicero, *On Invention [De inventione]*, trans. by H.M. Hubbell for Loeb Classical Library (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1949), I.XXIV.34-I.XXX.50, pp. 67-91. Lorna Hutson notes that while the ‘circumstances’ became the more objective kind of proof we now call ‘circumstantial evidence’ in the eighteenth century, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries these *circumstances* remained ‘rhetorical, dialectical, and poetic’, relying on the artificial invention of the orator to help replicate a persuasive *narratio* of relevant events; see *Circumstantial Shakespeare* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), p. 2.

⁸ Cicero’s full scheme is actually comprised of 17 topics, of which 16 are inherent to any subject, and the additional singular topic that is extrinsic considers existing material based on *authority* such as forms of testimony (sources that are not artistically *invented* by the author), *Topica*, II.8, p. 387; IV.24, p. 397; XIX-XX.72-78, pp. 437-43. For the sake of clarity, I refer only to Cicero’s main scheme of 16 topics. Cicero is believed to have adapted a late Hellenistic treatise on these topics (perhaps by Aniochus of Ascalon or Diodotus), so did not necessarily create the scheme himself. However, as no earlier treatise survives, Cicero’s *Topica* is credited with publishing the first practical treatise on the universal topics of invention (Henderson, ed., *Topica*, p. 378).

⁹ Hutson (2015); Hutson, *The Invention of Suspicion: Law and Mimesis in Shakespeare and Renaissance Drama* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); Skinner, *Forensic Shakespeare* (2016).

the analysis of Shakespeare's applications of the *universal topics* (which is the subject of this paper). This paper will introduce the universal topics and the modest amount of literature that has addressed Shakespeare's applications of them. Focusing on the topic of 'notatio' (names), I will argue that when Juliet says, 'What's in a name?' (*RJ*, 2.2.43), and Falstaff says, 'What is in that word "honour?"' (*IHV*, 5.1.134), and Cassius says, 'what should be in that "Caesar?"' (*JC*, 1.2.141), and the Countess says, 'What's in "mother"/ That you start at it?' (*AW*, 1.3.138-9), these four passages from four different plays are united by the same method of composition – considering the topic of 'names'.¹⁰ As Shakespeare is known to have drawn on existing sources for his plays, this paper will also examine Shakespeare's sources to help establish that these passages were indeed *invented* by Shakespeare. I will also show how Shakespeare appears to use other topics of invention such as partition, comparisons, and adjuncts (in combination with the topic of names) which further contributes to the case that Shakespeare was trained on some broader suite of topics.

By default, this paper contributes to the study of onomastics in Shakespeare, which has been adroitly surveyed by Laurie Maguire's *Shakespeare's Names* (2007), examining 'the problematic relation between names and the named world', and thus the 'interface between onomastics and semiotics' regarding Shakespeare's use of linguistic labels.¹¹ My approach, however, as mentioned, stems less from an interest in Shakespeare's names, as such, and more from addressing a subfield of Shakespeare's rhetoric that receives little attention: Shakespeare's applications of topical invention. Although the universal topics are generally distinct from the forensic concerns of oratory, this paper should serve as a modest complement to the recent scholarship by Hutson (2007, 2015) and Skinner (2014) who examine Shakespeare's forensic rhetoric, where Skinner's main aim was 'to say something about Shakespeare's creative process by way of excavating the intellectual materials out of which [his] passages are constructed'.¹² Skinner restates this as

¹⁰ All references to Shakespeare's work conform to *The Arden Shakespeare Complete Works*, ed. by Richard Proudfoot, Ann Thompson, and David Scott Kastan (Sydney: Bloomsbury, 2014).

¹¹ Laurie Maguire, *Shakespeare's Names* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 5, 3. See also Manfred Weidhorn, 'The Rose and its Name: On Denomination in *Othello*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Julius Caesar*', *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, 11.1 (1969), 671-86, and Marvin Spevack, 'Names and Namelessness in Shakespeare', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 56.4 (1993), 383-98.

¹² Skinner, p. 2.

‘identify[ing] some of the sources that Shakespeare used in order to get his imagination on the move’,¹³ and similarly, I propose that Cicero’s *Topica* should be included as a likely source that contributed to those techniques that constitute Shakespeare’s ‘creative process’.¹⁴ I also examine those traditional sources linked to the relevant passages to help demonstrate the ways that topical invention would have been used even when Shakespeare was adapting some precedent,¹⁵ and I make original claims about those sources by drawing on Colin Burrow’s distinction between a ‘source’ and an ‘authority’ to frame my discussion.¹⁶ According to John Drakakis, such heuristic interactions between source materials and modes of invention can provide ‘a window into the activity (and possibly a psychology) of the successful practicing dramatist as he shapes, adapts, and expands his frames of reference to generate new meanings’.¹⁷ This paper is also an extension to those chapters (and partial chapters) within previous books about Shakespeare’s rhetoric that have provided formative analysis of Shakespeare’s applications of the universal topics—in Baldwin (1942), Baxter (1980), Trousdale (1982), Mack (2010), and Altman (2010),¹⁸ which I discuss in more detail below. Differing from these treatments, however, my specific focus on the singular topic of *notatio* (or names) allows for a deeper analysis of Shakespeare’s practice, and aims ultimately to demonstrate

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ See Skinner’s note on the unusual absence of rhetorical texts from ‘recent inventories of Shakespeare’s books and reading’ (such as Ackroyd 2005, pp. 403-6; Nicholl 2007, pp. 80-6; Bate 2008, pp. 141-6; Potter 2012, pp. 26-9), p. 3, *n.* 9.

¹⁵ Although she focusses more on the borrowings than on the inventions, Janet Clare provides excellent discussion of the rhetorical conventions that combined *imitatio* and *inventio* used by Renaissance playwrights in *Shakespeare’s Stage Traffic: Imitation, Borrowing and Competition in Renaissance Theatre* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), particularly pp. 3-11.

¹⁶ Colin Burrow, ‘Shakespeare’s Authorities’, in *Shakespeare and Authority: Citations, Conceptions and Constructions*, ed. by Kate Halsey and Angus Vine (London: Palgrave, 2018), pp. 31-53.

¹⁷ John Drakakis, ‘Inside the Elephant’s Graveyard: Revising Geoffrey Bullough’s *Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare*’, in *Shakespeare and Authority: Citations, Conceptions and Constructions*, ed. by Kate Halsey and Angus Vine (London: Palgrave, 2018), pp. 55-78 (p. 57).

¹⁸ T.W. Baldwin, *William Shakspeare’s Small Latine & Lesse Greeke*, 2 vols. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1944), II: pp. 108-37; John Baxter, *Shakespeare’s Poetic Styles: Verse into Drama* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1980), pp. 136-43; Marion Trousdale, *Shakespeare and the Rhetoricians* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982), pp. 27-36; 58-63; Peter Mack, *Reading and Rhetoric in Montaigne and Shakespeare* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2010), pp. 74-89; Joel B. Altman, *The Improbability of Othello: Rhetorical Anthropology and Shakespearean Selfhood* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), pp. 120-33, 141-50.

how Shakespeare was employing his training by using the topic of *notatio* as a lens through which to observe specific instances of his applications of a fuller suite of topics.

Cicero's universal topics

In Cicero's *Topica* (44 BCE), he introduces a scheme of 16 topics of invention that are inherent to all subjects,¹⁹ and asserts the comprehensiveness of this scheme by declaring that once you have drawn your subject through all 16 topics there will be 'no region of arguments remain[ing] to be explored'.²⁰ Cicero's main scheme of topics includes:

1. Definition
2. Enumeration of parts / Division
3. *Notatio* or Names
4. Conjugates
5. Genus / Whole
6. Species / Parts
7. Similitudes
8. Differences
9. Contraries
10. Adjuncts
11. Consequents
12. Antecedents
13. Repugnants
14. Causes
15. Effects
16. Comparisons to things greater, less, or equal²¹

¹⁹ *Topica*, XIX.72-3, pp. 437-9.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, XVIII.71, p. 437.

²¹ *Ibid.*, II.9-IV.24, pp. 389-99; III.11, p. 391; V.26-XVIII.73, pp. 399-439; XVIII.71, p. 437. Cicero does not discuss 'wholes' and 'parts' explicitly as topics in their own right but shows that if your subject is material (such as a person or a house) it must have its parts enumerated, but if your subject is *notional* or conceptual (such as honour, love, or justice) its genus should be divided into its species. Wholes and parts would therefore replace genus and species whenever one's subject was material, so it is important to consider wholes and parts as subtopics of Cicero's genus and species; *Topica*, V.28-VIII.34, pp. 400-7.

The process for using these topics involved the author considering their subject in relation to each of these headings and recording the ideas and arguments that were prompted to mind, a sophisticated *brainstorming* tool for busy orators. Where Cicero suggests we ‘examine them [all] and seek arguments from them all’,²² he also suggests that ‘some topics are better suited to some inquiries than to others’.²³ When Erasmus discusses topical invention in *De copia*, he suggests that students should ‘look at all the possible topics in turn [and] go knocking from door to door so to speak, to see if anything can be induced to emerge’, but, with practice, ‘the right ones will come to suggest themselves naturally, without this process being necessary’.²⁴ More recently, Rosemond Tuve has examined the Elizabethan poets in relation to ‘the most well-worn part of any logic text’, which she asserts was ‘the *Topics* or “places” of Invention’.²⁵ Tuve describes how,

consistent and long-continued training in composing by this method was given to every young Renaissance student [so that] the influence of constant training would be [aimed] chiefly toward inculcating the practice of *stopping to think* of a number of regular, specified ways in which the thought to be conveyed could be developed and presently of using those ways habitually.²⁶

For poets like Shakespeare, who is believed to have received a grammar school education, the diverse array of compositional techniques to be used through processes of *inventio*, *dispositio*, and *elocutio* would have surely become ‘habitual’ through regular practice, and this paper seeks to locate evidence for Shakespeare’s particular applications of the universal topics.

²² *Divisions of Oratory [De partitione oratoria]*, trans. by H. Rackham for Loeb Classical Library (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1942), III.8, p. 317.

²³ *Topica*, XXI 79, pp. 443-45.

²⁴ Erasmus, ‘De copia’, in *The Collected Works of Erasmus, vol. XXIV*, ed. by C.R. Thompson (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978), pp. 290-659 (p. 606) – Erasmus paraphrases Quintilian’s remarks about knocking on ‘every door’ until some ‘native capacity’ is developed for using individual topics; Quintilian, 5.10.122-4, p. 429.

²⁵ Rosemond Tuve, ‘Imagery and Logic: Ramus and Metaphysical Poetics’, in *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 3.4 (1942), 365-400 (p. 372), added emphasis.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 372-3, added emphasis.

Previous examinations of Shakespeare's universal topics

Despite the great value placed on invention and the clear incorporation of topical invention in Renaissance composition manuals, not a great deal of scholarship on Shakespeare's applications of the universal topics has emerged. As mentioned, Hutson (2007, 2015) and Skinner (2014) have examined Shakespeare's applications of the specific topics found in such forensic texts as Cicero's *De inventione* and the *Ad Herennium*,²⁷ including the topics of circumstance to help establish proof for building a legal case. However, only partial chapters in broader works on Shakespeare's artistry have been devoted to Shakespeare's applications of the universal topics. These examinations are found in Baldwin (1942), Baxter (1980), Trousdale (1982), Mack (2010), and Altman (2010).²⁸ The analysis of Trousdale and Altman is rather brief and cursory, discussing only one or two topics, and only Altman refers to the topical precepts in any detail.²⁹ Baxter examines Cicero's topics in relation to Richard II's dungeon speech (5.5.1-66), but he too makes no reference to Cicero's precepts and is not always clear about which parts of the text have been informed by which topics.³⁰ The studies by Baldwin and Mack are much more dedicated to the task of locating evidence of Shakespeare's applications of the universal topics, although they are divided about whether Shakespeare used Agricola's topics or Cicero's.³¹ In *Reading and Rhetoric in Montaigne and Shakespeare* (2010), Mack refers exclusively to Agricola's *De inventione dialectica* but makes no mention of Cicero's topics as a primary source. He selects two

²⁷ William P. Weaver also examines Shakespeare's application of the circumstantial topics in relation to forensic modes of composition in 'The Rape of Lucrece' and 'A Lover's Complaint', *Untutored Lines: the making of an English Epyllion* (Edinburgh, Edinburgh UP: 2012), pp. 134-137.

²⁸ See note 18.

²⁹ Trousdale, pp. 27-36; Altman, pp. 124, 143-7.

³⁰ Baxter, pp. 138-41.

³¹ During the Renaissance, Agricola published *De inventione dialectica* (1479), which attempted to reveal the ultimate foundations of discourse in one comprehensive theory and drew on both Cicero's and Aristotle's topics to develop his own scheme of 24 topics for inventing arguments; J.R. McNally, 'Rudolph Agricola's *De Inventione Dialectica Libri Tres: A Translation of Selected Chapters*', *Speech Monographs* 34 (1967), 393-422 (p. 394); Agricola, *De Inventione Dialectica Lucubrationes; Facsimile of the Edition Cologne 1539* (Nieuwkoop: B. De Graaf, 1967), pp. 22-160. Mack notes that studying Agricola's treatment of invention was the domain of the university, not the grammar school, but also, paradoxically, that Shakespeare never attended university (*Reading and Rhetoric*, p. 7).

passages from *Coriolanus* and four from *Hamlet* to show ‘Shakespeare using his logical and rhetorical inheritance’, which includes Agricola’s topics of invention, yet Mack refrains from any reference to Agricola’s precepts for the topics, which makes it difficult to compare Agricola’s theory with Shakespeare’s practice.³²

It was T.W. Baldwin’s two-volume *Shakspeare’s Small Latine & Lesse Greeke* (1942) which provided the first pioneering analysis of Shakespeare’s likely applications of the universal topics.³³ Baldwin believed that Shakespeare was conversant with Cicero’s *Topica*, and Baldwin remains the only scholar to have used a systematic method for locating evidence – by starting with the topics themselves and attempting to locate passages from Shakespeare that conform with each topic. I have reviewed Baldwin’s analysis elsewhere and noted multiple discrepancies which can weaken his overall claim for Shakespeare’s use of Cicero’s fuller scheme.³⁴ What is unique about Baldwin’s analysis, however, is that as part of his three strongest claims (those claims about the topics of contraries, division, and adjuncts) he quotes passages from Shakespeare that happen also to *display* the topical term. When Baldwin discusses the topic of ‘contraries’ he uses Gonzalo’s passage from *The Tempest*, ‘I would by *contraries*/ Execute all things...’ (2.1.148-157);³⁵ when discussing ‘division’, he refers to a passage from *Macbeth*, ‘I... abound/ In the *division* of each several crime’ (4.3.95-6); and when discussing ‘adjuncts’, he quotes Berowne’s ‘Learning is but an *adjunct* to ourself’ (*LLL*, 4.3.314). This suggests that Shakespeare may have considered some topics to such an extent that the topical term itself has found its way into the text, and with an oeuvre of some 40 major works to examine it is reasonable to suggest that Shakespeare’s work might yet be littered with such passages that *display* his debts to some training in the topics. My method therefore combines the two strengths that are unique to Baldwin’s approach: his systematic method that starts with the topics and necessitates discussion of their precepts, and his inclusion of *displayed* applications of the topical term (two methods that have not been replicated since Baldwin’s pioneering analysis in 1942). By targeting what might be called Shakespeare’s *demonstrare artem* applications of the

³² Mack, *Reading and Rhetoric*, pp. 74-89.

³³ Baldwin, II, pp. 108-137.

³⁴ Kirk Dodd, ‘Shakespeare and the Universal Topics of Invention’, *Shakespeare* (2019), 1-22 (p. 7).

³⁵ Baldwin, II, pp. 115, 113, 116.

topics,³⁶ the topical terms (in this case, Cicero's topical terms) become veritable 'search terms' that can be entered into Shakespeare databases to help facilitate the location of probable applications of the topic, thus making practical use of digital methods for concordance searches that were not available to Baldwin in 1942.

The topic of '*notatio*' (names)

Cicero's third topic of *notatio* prompts us to consider when 'some argument is derived from the force or meaning of a word'.³⁷ Cicero's topic is usually translated as 'etymology',³⁸ because Cicero's examples focus on etymology in their analysis. However, Reinhardt translates Cicero's fuller treatment of *notatio* as a topic of 'denotation',³⁹ which is more specific, and I believe better captures 'the force or meaning of a word'. Where 'etymology' examines the historical origin of a word and the development of its meaning (*OED* 1.), 'denotation' includes the prospective context of a word's application, or the way that a word designates some *thing* by its signification (*OED* 1-3).

In Reinhardt's translation of Cicero's discussion of '*notatio*' (below), I insert some of Cicero's Latin terms in square brackets to help demonstrate why Reinhardt's translation of '*notatio*' as 'denotation' is justified (whilst the curved parentheses are Reinhardt's):

³⁶ Heinrich Plett (2004) refers to the decline of humanist culture during the renaissance period when it became no longer 'appropriate to *exhibit* the art of persuasion (*demonstrare artem*) but rather to *conceal* it (*celare artem*)' (78, added emphasis), proposing that a mode of rhetorical display (*demonstrare artem*) had been much in vogue before the dissembling mode of *celare artem* became the preferred decorum at court, *Rhetoric and Renaissance Culture* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2004). I have reasoned elsewhere that *demonstrare artem* was a mode of composition used in the humanist grammar schools, and the term helps to qualify the prospect that some of Shakespeare's topical applications may therefore be *hiding in plain sight* in his existing work, Dodd (2019), pp. 8-9.

³⁷ *Topica*, II.10, p. 389.

³⁸ *Topica*, II.10, pp. 388-9; VIII.35, pp. 408-9; Tobias Reinhardt, trans., *Cicero's Topica: edited with a translation, introduction, and commentary by Tobias Reinhardt* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), II.10, p. 121.

³⁹ Reinhardt (trans.), VIII.35-6, p. 133.

Many arguments are also derived from denotation [*notatione*]. This is when an argument is elicited from the meaning of a word. The Greeks call this etymology, that is in word-for-word translation *veriloquium* (saying of truth). But I shrink from the novelty of a word which is not particularly suitable and prefer to call this type denotation [*notationem*], because words denote things [*verba rerum notae*]. Therefore Aristotle calls the same thing *σύμβολον* [*symbolon*], which in Latin is token (*nota*). But when it is understood what is meant, there is less need to worry about the name [*de nomine*]. In discussion many arguments are elicited from the word [*ex verbo*] through (analysis of the) denotation [*disputando notatione*].⁴⁰

In typical fashion, Cicero demonstrates the logicity of the topic (*notatio*) in his very description of its function, and it is clear (both from this demonstration and its contents) that Cicero is concerned with both etymology and denotation. Cicero's precepts also address 'the name' (*de nomine*) and 'the word' (*ex verbo*), so we should understand *notatio* as a topic for examining nouns – both proper nouns (names) and common nouns (the *words* or *names* of things). Maguire has usefully noted Plato's stipulation that not all words are names, but all names are certainly words, and indeed 'ancient Greek had only one word, *onoma*, to designate both personal name and grammatical noun'.⁴¹ Indeed, Rubinelli notes that Cicero's topic emerged from his earlier iteration of it in *De oratore*, where the topic was originally one of vocabulary (*vocabulum*) or *locus ex vocabulo*,⁴² which affirms that the topic of *notatio* is concerned with a consideration of the denotation of words, and not just their etymology.

Quintilian is extremely brief in his own summary of Cicero's topic, which includes a paraphrase of Cicero's example for 'assiduus' (a rich man), affirming the dual nature of Cicero's topic when he suggests we examine a word either by its 'significance' (denotation) or by its 'etymology'.⁴³ The account of this topic by Erasmus in *De*

⁴⁰ Reinhardt (trans.), VIII.35, pp. 132-3.

⁴¹ Maguire, pp. 21-2 (Plato, *Sophist*, as cited in Fine, pp. 292, 290); see Gail Fine, 'Plato on Naming', *Philosophical Quarterly* 27 (1977), 289–301.

⁴² Sara Rubinelli, *Ars Topica: The Classical Technique of Constructing Arguments from Aristotle to Cicero* (Lugano: Springer, 2009), p. 120.

⁴³ I refrain from discussing the complexity of Cicero's example for *assiduus* because of its obscurity. Loeb editors also advise that the etymology is incorrect, but that it was the one commonly accepted at the time, *Topica*, pp. 388-9.

conscribendis epistolis is also brief. Erasmus calls the topic ‘Etymology’, which he defines as ‘the interpretation of a name’ (*etymologia est nominis interpretatio*), or else ‘the explanation of its meaning’ (*siue notatio*), again suggesting its denotation.⁴⁴ Erasmus uses the same Latin terms as Cicero (‘*nominis*’ and ‘*notatio*’), so that the development of the topic from one of ‘*notatio*’ to one of ‘names’ was complete by the Renaissance period. In *Topica*, it is worth noting, the two examples for the topic explored by Cicero pertain to common nouns (‘*postliminium*’ and ‘*assiduus*’) and not to proper names, whilst the examples used by Erasmus all refer to proper names – ‘this man is called Chrysogonus because he produces gold wherever he goes’ (the Greek *chrysos* denotes ‘gold’ and *genos* denotes ‘birth’ or ‘production’).⁴⁵ This again is a demonstration of how the topic of *notatio* came to be known as a topic of ‘names’, which could consider the etymology or denotation of both common and proper nouns. Renaissance logicians such as Agricola, Wilson and Fraunce also referred to this topic as the ‘name of a thing’ (*De nomine rei*) or the ‘interpretation of the name’,⁴⁶ and Miriam Joseph, when touching on the topic in her examination of Shakespeare’s rhetorical figures, is careful to distinguish between the two aspects of the topic’s credence – ‘Etymology is [...] only one aspect of argument from the name [whilst] Another is the relation between the name and the thing’, or its denotation.⁴⁷

Shakespeare was not averse to exploiting the etymologies of proper names such as Posthumus’s surname ‘Leonatus’ in *Cymbeline*, construed from ‘*leo*’ and ‘*natus*’ (Latin for *lion* and *son*), allowing ‘the lion’s whelp’ to be ‘the fit and apt construction of [his] name’ (5.5.444-6).⁴⁸ And the name for ‘Pandarus’ in *Troilus and Cressida* can also be

⁴⁴ Erasmus, *De conscribendis epistolis opus* (Lugduni: apud Ioan. Tormaesium et Gul. Gazeium, 1558), p. 162; Erasmus, ‘De conscribendis epistolis’, *The Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol. XXV, ed. by J. K. Sowards (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985), pp. 1-267 (p. 124); The topic is missing from the original list of topics (1558: p. 160/ 1985: p. 123), but it appears in his extended analysis between ‘definition’ and ‘wholes and parts’.

⁴⁵ Erasmus (1985), p. 124.

⁴⁶ Mack, *Renaissance Argument*, p. 147 and 159; Agricola (1967), p. 117; Thomas Wilson, *The Rule of Reason, Conteynyng the Arte of Logique* (London: Richard Grafton, 1551), Fol.98. D.ii; Abraham Fraunce denies *notatio* a place amongst the topics: ‘So in Notation, the interpretation of the name, seemeth rather the dutie of a dictionary, then any Logically institution’, yet he nevertheless acknowledges the function of the topic as it was known, *Lawier’s Logike* (London: 1588), Fol.50 v; Miriam Joseph, *Shakespeare’s Use of the Arts of Language* (Philadelphia: Paul Dry Books, [1947] 2005), p. 339.

⁴⁷ Joseph, p. 163.

⁴⁸ Baldwin, I, p. 719; II, p. 109; Joseph, p. 162.

by one's name is amplified by the repeated third-beat placement of the existential verb 'be' (35, 36), so that Juliet says to effect: *be my husband and make me Mrs Montague and I will no longer be Juliet Capulet*. Both proposals consider forms of escape from the surnames conferred at birth by the patriarch, and while both involve tremendous risk it is the latter course of marriage that will be attempted. This logical and argumentative treatment of the functions of names and *naming* is consistent with considering the topic of names and the denotative possibilities of proper nouns.

Juliet then continues to develop arguments that draw from a consideration of the denotative attributes of names, and how names relate (or not) to the objects that they designate:

38 'Tis but thy *name* that is my enemy:
39 Thou art thyself, though not a *Montague*.
40 *What's Montague?* It is nor *hand* nor *foot*
41 Nor *arm* nor *face* nor any other *part*
42 Belonging to a man. O, *be* some other *name!* (added emphasis)

Juliet argues between the general and the specific, between the 'Montagues' as a group (whom she is conditioned to hate) and Romeo as an individual whom she has fallen in love with. Shakespeare almost certainly makes use of the topic of *partition* here (Cicero's second topic), or the enumeration of the *parts* of a *whole*. Juliet works through a '*partitio*' of negation to accentuate the discrepancy between the name and the thing it denotes – 'It is nor hand nor foot / Nor arm nor face nor any other *part* / Belonging to a man' (40-42). Cicero's example for *partitio* was that 'in an enumeration [*partitione*] we have... parts, as for example a body has head, shoulders, hands, sides, legs, feet',⁵² and Juliet's '*partitio*' includes hands and feet just as Cicero's does. In *Topica*, '*partitio*' is discussed immediately before '*notatio*' (names), while in Erasmus's *De conscribendis epistolis* it is discussed immediately after the topic of names,⁵³ so conjecturally, these topics might have readily lent themselves to combination in classroom exercises.

onomastic icons of enmity... becom[ing] determinants and discriminators of allegiance, and rallying cries to battle' (p. 6).

⁵² *Topica*, VI.30, p. 403.

⁵³ Erasmus (1985), p. 124; *Topica*, VIII.33, pp. 406-7; VIII.35, pp. 408-9.

I would tear the word' (57) – is another playful reminder of how names are communicated and is consistent with drawing arguments from 'the name' and 'the word' as recommended by the topic of '*notatio*'. Later in the play, when Romeo kills Tybalt and flies to Friar Lawrence in a fraught state, he cries out:

O, tell me, Friar, tell me,
In what vile part of this anatomy
Doth my *name* lodge? Tell me, that I may sack
The *hateful* mansion (3.3.104-7, added emphasis).

These and other references in the extended sequence (where Romeo's 'name' is 'hateful' and like an 'enemy' that must be destroyed) suggest that Shakespeare's composition of 3.3 might partly re-employ leftover materials he had originally invented for Juliet's balcony scene, a copious brainstorming session that was clearly concentrated on the theme of names and the acts of denotation.

Shakespeare is known to have followed his main source very closely for this play – Arthur Brooke's narrative poem *The Tragicall Historye of Romeus and Juliet* (1562) – so this poem should be examined to confirm that Shakespeare's method of inventing material around a theme of names was indeed his own. In Brooke's poem, there is no mention of names in the balcony scene, and the only passage close to it that mentions names stems from the Capulet ball, when Juliet seeks 'To learne his *name*, that intertained her in so gentle wise' (342, added emphasis), and asks her nurse about the identity of Romeus.⁶⁰ First, however, Juliet craftily asks about two other gentlemen at the party – 'What twayne are those (quoth she) which prease unto the doore, / Whose pages in theyr hand doe beare, two tooches light before?' (347-8) – as Shakespeare's Juliet also does with 'Tiberio' and 'Petruccio' (1.5.27-36). To this, Brooke's *narrator* informs us, 'And then as eche of them had of his houshold *name*, / So she him *namde* yet once agayne, the yong and wyly dame' (349-50, added emphasis). Thus, Juliet repeats the two names provided by the nurse, before asking more specifically about Romeus:

⁶⁰ Geoffrey Bullough (ed.), *Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare Volume I: Early Comedies/Poems/Romeo and Juliet* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul. 1957), p. 295. Hereafter all line numbers refer to Bullough's edition.

351 'And tell me, who is he with visor in his hand,
352 That yonder doth in masking weed beside the window stand?''
353 'His *name* is Romeus', said [the nurse], 'a Montague,
354 Whose father's pride first stirred the strife which both your households
rue'.
355 The *word* of Montague [Juliet's] joys did overthrow,
356 And straight instead of happy hope despair began to grow.
(added emphasis)

This sequence uses 'name' four times (342, 349, 350, 353), the patronym 'Montague' twice (353, 355), and the word 'word' once (355). Brooke's treatment helps to raise the dramatic stakes of a *forbidden love* between two members of rival families, yet his use of 'name' itself is quite incidental, and his focus on the 'word' 'Montague' as a *sound* that Juliet is struck by is much more effective. What is absent in Brooke (by this comparison) is any poignant focus on names, and there is no onomastic discussion about names or how they operate. In Brooke, Juliet is seen at her 'windowes high' (440), not her balcony, and Romeus loiters in the garden 'a weeke or two in vayne' (461), before he sees Juliet. It would have been too noisy at the Capulet ball for Shakespeare's Juliet to be allowed any extended rumination on Romeo's 'name' (as a response to Brooke's own precedent), so the next logical place for this to occur would be on Juliet's balcony, where Shakespeare's treatment works perfectly to shift the mood from noisy and crowded fanfare to quiet and private intimacy (informing the audience about Juliet's fondness for Romeo whilst allowing the hero to admire Juliet unnoticed). It is very likely, then, that Shakespeare recognised in Brooke's incidental treatment of 'names' the spark of inspiration for extending this aspect of the story (a spark that triggered the invention of some of the most well-loved passages in western literature), and some training in the universal topics of invention would have helped Shakespeare to have recognised this potential.

1 Henry IV (1596-8)

There may at first glance appear to be very little to compare between the romantic heroine of Shakespeare's Juliet and the 'swollen parcel of dropsies' we all know and love as Sir

John Falstaff. Yet the technical methods of composition used to develop Falstaff's famous catechism on honour and those used to develop Juliet's famous balcony scene are quite similar, and each is consistent with considering the topic of names. Where Juliet for the most part examines proper nouns, Falstaff examines the common noun of 'honour'. Before the battle of Shrewsbury, Prince Hal tells Falstaff that everybody 'owest God a death', to which Falstaff says 'Tis not due yet [and] I would be loath to pay him before his day' (5.1.126-8). As the prince takes his leave, Falstaff continues to ruminate:

... 'tis no matter; honour pricks me on. Yea, but how if honour prick me off when I come on? [...] Can honour set to a leg? No. Or an arm? No. Or take away the grief of a wound? No. Honour hath no skill in surgery, then? No. *What is honour? A word. What is in that word 'honour'? What is that 'honour'?* Air. A trim reckoning. Who hath it? He that died o'Wednesday. Doth he feel it? No. Doth he hear it? No. 'Tis insensible then? Yea, to the dead. But will it not live with the living? No. Why? Detraction will not suffer it [...] Honour is a mere scutcheon [replica shield] And so ends my catechism (129-140; added emphasis)

A catechism is a form of instruction that uses modes of question and answer (*OED* 2.), and Falstaff responds to his own questions eleven times. This is not a technique used by Juliet, who tends to posit rhetorical questions requiring no answer. However, there are other similarities between the two speakers. Falstaff's question 'What is honour?' (133) is akin to Juliet's 'What's Montague?' (40), and where Juliet uses a *partitio* of Romeo, Falstaff uses a *partitio* when he asks whether 'honour' can tend to a 'leg', or an 'arm', or a 'wound' (131-2) – the specific parts of a fallen soldier (Juliet used 'hand', 'foot', and 'face'). Falstaff's partition serves to amplify the disconnection between the noun and the object it denotes, as did Juliet's, and both speakers stand to gain some advantage by amplifying the extent of that disconnection. Falstaff's question, 'What is *in* that word 'honour'?' (134) is also akin to Juliet's 'What's *in* a name?' (43), where both characters seek to understand the *substance* of the nouns they examine, or else, what might be contained *within* the definition or *definement* of those nouns.⁶¹

⁶¹ Young also compares Falstaff's catechism to Juliet's balcony speech in his argument about Shakespeare's nominalism—'What Juliet says about the name, "Romeo Montague", Falstaff says about the abstract term, "honor" [sic]' (p. 24). Young does not, however, discuss the lexical similarities shared by these passages. While Falstaff's catechism has inescapable affinities with nominalist concerns purely because the speech

Cicero's precepts in *Topica* do not use examples of proper names but only two common nouns ('*postliminium*' and '*assiduus*'), so Falstaff's examination of the common noun 'honour' is in keeping with these precepts. Shakespeare clearly understood common nouns to be the names of things, as is evidenced by Brutus saying, 'I love / The *name of honour* more than I fear death' (*JC*, 1.2.88-9), and Ligarius saying, 'Any exploit worthy the *name of honour*' (*JC*, 2.1.315-16). Maguire usefully draws a link between the dyads name/identity, language/meaning, word/thing, and the Latin correlate *verbum/res*, noting that Cooper's *Thesaurus* (1584) states explicitly 'A name is a nowne'.⁶² Interestingly, when Cicero completes his discussion of the topics in *Topica*, he turns to discussing the four main types of conjecture that are useful to consider with topical invention, and for the conjecture about 'whether anything exists or is true', he proposes this example: 'Is there really any such thing as *honour* or equity, or are these merely matters of opinion?'⁶³ This question would have proved fruitful for classroom debate when studying the topics, and students might have considered the topic of *notatio* in response to the problem – for if *honour* had no existence, it would need to be considered at least as a word that denotes some universal concept.

As with *Romeo and Juliet*, it is important to understand how Shakespeare may have made use of any sources for this catechism to help isolate those lexical choices that can safely be called his own, and the heritage of probable sources proves rich and somewhat convoluted. Parallels have been made between Falstaff's catechism and Montaigne's *Essais* (1580),⁶⁴ which were Englished by John Florio in 1603, particularly Montaigne's essay 'Of Glory' (II:XVI) and 'That a man should not communicate his glory' (I:XLI). Montaigne's essay 'Of Glory' begins:

discusses the universal term 'honour', Juliet's reflections on socialized *naming* practices are much more consistent with the flexible approaches promoted by topical considerations than nominalist concerns about the existence of universals. Manfred Weidhorn (1969) also affirms that Falstaff's speech is concerned with *names* when he draws a link between Juliet's balcony speech, Falstaff's treatment of 'honour', and the passage between Brutus and Cassius which I also discuss below; see 'The Rose and its Name', (p. 681).

⁶² Maguire uses the traditional '*res/verbum*' which I switch to preserve the correlation (p. 21).

⁶³ *Topica*, XXI.82, pp. 445-7, emphasis added.

⁶⁴ Folger Shakespeare Library, 'Textual and Critical Notes', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 7.3 (1956), 2-44 (p. 39); Harold Bloom (ed.), *Shakespeare's Henry IV Parts One and Two* (New York: Berkley Publishing Group, 2004), p. 28; Stanley Wells, 'General Introduction', in William Shakespeare's *Henry IV Part One*, ed. by Peter Davison (London: Penguin, 2005), p. lv.

There is both *name*, and the thing: the *name* is a *voice* which noteth and signifieth the thing: the *name* is neither *part* of [the] thing nor of [its] *substance*: it is a stranger-piece joyned to the thing and from it.⁶⁵

If Montaigne was Shakespeare's source, even though Falstaff never mentions a 'name', this would confirm that Shakespeare understood Falstaff's concerns to be related to the topic of names, and references here to the insubstantial airy 'voice' of a name that is no 'part' of a thing is also telling. In Montaigne's other essay, 'That a man should not communicate his glory', he begins with the following statement:

Of all the follies of the world, the most universall... is the care of reputation and study of glorie, to which we are so wedded that we neglect and cast-off riches[,] life and health... to follow that *vaine image*, and *idlie-simple voice*, which hath *neither body nor hold-fast* [substance].⁶⁶

This passage is also in keeping with Falstaff's view of honour, where the insubstantial reference to 'voice' (in both essays) relates to Falstaff's 'Air. A trim reckoning'. Montaigne's essay then discusses the story of Catalus Luctatius, who in battle could not urge his soldiers to stay and fight so instead turned and 'put himselfe amongst the runawaies', becoming 'a coward' so his men 'might rather seeme to follow their Captaine than [to] flie from the enemye'.⁶⁷ This ironic example, of a captain who follows honour to such an extent that he risks looking dishonourable by running away to preserve the honour of his men, would also have appealed to Falstaff's disposition. Many other parallels between these essays and Falstaff's treatment of honour could also be made, but despite these echoes, Stephen Greenblatt argues that Shakespeare would not have used Montaigne as his source.

⁶⁵ Michel de Montaigne, 'Montaigne's Essays', trans. John Florio (1603), *Renascence Editions* <<http://www.luminarium.org/renascence-editions/montaigne/2xvi.htm>> [accessed 18 November 2018], emphasis added.

⁶⁶ Michel de Montaigne, 'Montaigne's Essays', trans. by John Florio (1603), *Renascence Editions* <<http://www.luminarium.org/renascence-editions/montaigne/1xli.htm>> [accessed 18 November 2018], emphasis added.

⁶⁷ 'Montaigne's Essays' (1603), <<http://www.luminarium.org/renascence-editions/montaigne/1xli.htm>> [accessed 18 November 2018].

Greenblatt believes that Shakespeare would not have accessed Montaigne's *Essais* before the publication of Florio's English translation in 1603,⁶⁸ and Shakespeare's *1 Henry IV* was first performed in 1596-8.⁶⁹ Shakespeare's borrowings from Florio's English translation after 1603 (most notably for *King Lear* and *The Tempest*) are explicit and confirmed,⁷⁰ and they do not rely on Montaigne's original French (first published in 1580).⁷¹ Greenblatt asserts that Montaigne's French was sometimes so difficult that even Florio resorted to guesswork,⁷² suggesting that Montaigne's essays in French were therefore inaccessible. Greenblatt asserts, then, that Shakespeare and Montaigne were working at roughly the same time and in the same intellectual climate, so any parallels between their work prior to 1603 are incidental.⁷³ But can all of Montaigne's 107 essays be deemed inaccessible to the English until Florio gave them access after 20 years of waiting? Surely there are many 'reading-room' scenarios – a playwright's shared lodgings at the Inns of Court; some stately library of a wealthy patron – which (however difficult to prove) could have made the essays known by some translation? Nevertheless, some other parallels can be drawn between Falstaff's catechism and a source that Shakespeare was known to use – the writings of Samuel Daniel.

Giuseppe Borgese notes a strong correlation between Daniel's poem 'A Pastoral' and Falstaff's catechism, where 'A Pastoral' was first published in Daniel's collection *Delia* (1592). Borgese refers to the following passage in particular:

- 1 O happy, golden age!
- 2 Not for that rivers ran
- 3 With streams of milk, and honey dropped from trees;
- 14 [...] But only for that *name*,
- 15 That idle *name* of wind,

⁶⁸ Stephen Greenblatt, 'Shakespeare's Montaigne', in *Shakespeare's Montaigne: The Florio Translation of the Essays, A Selection*, ed. by Stephen Greenblatt and Peter G Platt (New York: NYREV, Inc., 2014), pp. ix-xxxiii (pp. ix, xxxi).

⁶⁹ Gary Taylor, et al., pp. 1276-8.

⁷⁰ Greenblatt, pp. ix, xxxi; Burrow, p. 34.

⁷¹ Greenblatt, pp. ix.

⁷² *Ibid*, pp. x.

⁷³ *Ibid*, pp. xxxii.

16 That idol of deceit, that empty sound,
 17 Called *Honour*, which became
 18 The tyrant of the mind,
 19 And so torments our nature without ground⁷⁴ (added emphasis)

Again, the association with this source immediately draws attention to the topic of ‘names’ (14, 15), despite Falstaff never mentioning names. Daniel’s reference to ‘Honour’ as a mere ‘name’ (14) and an ‘idle name of wind’ (15), and an ‘empty sound’ without any ‘ground’ (17, 19), has clear correlations to Falstaff’s ‘honour’ as a mere ‘word’ whose only substance is ‘air’. Shakespeare was also known to borrow extensively from Daniel’s work, certainly from his sonnets, his *Complaint of Rosamond*, and his *Civil Wars* (1595).⁷⁵ Yet complicating ‘A Pastoral’ as a likely definitive source for the catechism is Borgese’s observation that Daniel’s lines are not entirely his own, but a direct translation of a section of the Golden Age chorus in Tasso’s Italian-language play *Aminta* (1573).⁷⁶

Robert Law has demonstrated Shakespeare’s many ‘borrowings’ from Daniel’s *Complaint of Rosamond* for his narrative poem *The Rape of Lucrece* (1594),⁷⁷ and I suggest that Daniel’s *Rosamond* is an even more likely source for Falstaff’s catechism than ‘A Pastoral’. Following Rosamond’s assertion in the poem that,

258 *Fame* (whereof the world seems to make such choice)
 259 Is but an *echo*, and an *idle voice*. (added emphasis)

⁷⁴ G.A. Borgese, ‘The Dishonor of Honor: from Giovanni Mauro to Sir John Falstaff’, *Romanic Review* 32.1 (1941), 44-55 (p. 49).

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 50; D.S. Kastan (ed.), *King Henry IV Part 1 [Arden Third Series]*, by William Shakespeare (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), pp. 340, 343; Robert A. Law, ‘Daniel’s “Rosamond” and Shakespeare’, *Studies in English*, 26 (1947), 42-8.

⁷⁶ Borgese, pp. 47-49, 51. William Elton argues that ‘libertine naturalism’ of Edmund’s famous soliloquy from *King Lear* (‘Thou, Nature, art my Goddess...’) is a result of the ‘Epicurean libertinism’ first modelled by the Golden Age passage in Tasso’s *Aminta*, suggesting that educated readers of Daniel’s verse would probably have recognised Daniel’s artful borrowing from Tasso’s *Aminta*, William Elton, *King Lear and the Gods* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1988), pp. 126-7.

⁷⁷ Law, 42-8.

Where ‘fame’ is a type of honour rendered here as insubstantial, the following lines continue:

260 Then why should this respect of *honour* bound us,
261 In the *imaginary lists* of reputation?
262 *Titles* which cold severity hath found us,
263 *Breath of the vulgar*, foe to recreation:
264 Melancholy’s *opinion*, customs relation;
265 Pleasure’s plague, beauties scourge, hell to the fair,
266 To leave the sweet for Castles in the *air*. (added emphasis)

The heroine notes that her amorous restraint, her ‘honour’ (260), and its positive or negative ‘fame’ (258) – like an *airy* ‘echo’ or opinion (‘an idle voice’) (259) – which nullifies the impulses she considers to be ‘sweet’ (266), are but ‘imaginary’ forms of restriction controlled by the ‘Breath of the vulgar’ (263), who act as ‘foe[s] to recreation’ (263) and serve as ‘Melancholy’s opinion’ (264) or ‘Pleasure’s plague’ (265), and all for the sake of hypotheticals, or ‘Castles in the air’ (266). These sceptical sentiments about the phenomenology of ‘honour’ are certainly in keeping with Falstaff’s construal of honour as nothing but ‘Air’, which is rarely won because ‘Detraction will not suffer it’ (135, 138). Borgese notes that the relevant ‘honour’ in Tasso’s *Aminta* (Englished in Daniel’s ‘A Pastoral’, but surely also drawn on here in *Rosamond*) was not a ‘military honour’ but an honour whose references are ‘chiefly to sex’.⁷⁸ In the next stanza of *Rosamond*, however, we may observe how this amorous honour might have been construed as a ‘military honour’ for Falstaff’s catechism.

Rosamond continues her assertions about the fictionality of honour against the tactile realities of physical attraction:

267 Pleasure is felt, *opinion* but conceived,
268 *Honour*, a thing without us, not our own:
269 Whereof we see how many are *bereaved*,

⁷⁸ Borgese, p. 48.

270 Which should have reaped the *glory* they had sown,
 271 And many have it, yet unworthy known.
 272 So breathes his blasts this many-headed beast,
 273 Whereof the wisest have esteemed least. (added emphasis)

The amorous ‘honour’ of chastity takes on a military sense when related to those ‘bereaved’ by the loss of prospective ‘glory’ (269-70) – alluding to the field of battle as much as the field of nuptial conquest – where the *breathing* ‘blasts’ of a ‘many-headed beast’ (272), akin to cannon-fire, helps synonymise the multiple threats against a young lady’s honour with the multiple threats faced by men in battle. Daniel’s ‘Honour’ that is ‘a thing’ that cannot inhere in us thus is always ‘without us’ (and ‘not our own’) (268) – and the assertion that ‘many’ claim honour who are ‘known’ to be ‘unworthy’ (271) – relate also to Falstaff’s scepticism: ‘Who hath it? He that died o’Wednesday. Doth he feel it? No. Doth he hear it? No’ (135-7), and his assertion that ‘Detraction’ won’t allow men to enjoy honour while they live (138-9). In the final couplet, Daniel’s descriptions of honour as a ‘breath’ of airy ‘blasts’ which ‘the wisest’ esteem the ‘least’ (272-3) also corresponds to Falstaff’s scepticism that honour is a mere ‘word’ made up of ‘Air’ (135).

This analysis of sources clearly wanders from the original path of the topics, but it is important to trace such echoes in a bid to examine the moment when lexical and ideological precursors combine with technical considerations during the *fine frenzy* of Shakespeare’s composition. Colin Burrow has suggested that the term ‘authority’ is more suited to the process of identifying ‘sources’,⁷⁹ and the prospective sources for Falstaff’s catechism certainly lend themselves to what Burrow might describe as ‘authority-overload’.⁸⁰ Burrow makes the convincing case that Prince Hal’s soliloquy in *1 Henry IV* (‘I know you all, and will a while uphold/ The unyoked humour of your idleness..’) almost certainly draws on the authority of a passage found in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (pp. 37-39), and Hamlet’s speech (‘Is it not monstrous that this player here..’) can also be traced to an authority in Cicero’s *De Oratore* (pp. 42-44), and King Lear’s brief speech (‘O, reason not the need!’) can be traced back to a passage in Seneca for its ultimate authority (pp. 46-48). So too, where Montaigne, Daniel, and Tasso were all trained in

⁷⁹ Burrow, p. 34.

⁸⁰ *Ibid*, p. 46.

rhetoric, and almost certainly on the same core selection of Roman rhetorical manuals, perhaps the ultimate authority for their several examinations of the *name* of ‘honour’ can be traced back to that exercise found in Cicero’s *Topica* about the conjecture of existence – ‘Is there really any such thing as *honour* or equity, or are these merely matters of opinion?’⁸¹ Certainly Daniel’s re-rendering of Tasso’s Golden Age passage in *Aminta*, which refers specifically to ‘Melancholy’s *opinion*’ (264) and how ‘Pleasure is felt, *opinion* but conceived,/ Honour, a thing without us, not our own’ (267), would suggest that Daniel, at least, was conversant with Cicero’s exercise.⁸²

While this analysis demonstrates that Falstaff’s catechism would have almost certainly been informed by one or a number of existing sources – and Daniel’s *Rosamond* proves quite likely – it is also evident that the exercise in Cicero’s *Topica* could prove to be the main authority informing all these sources. Shakespeare’s technical decision to use a catechism for Falstaff’s speech, however, is unique; as is his technical choice to give Falstaff a form of *partitio* – a ‘leg’, an ‘arm’, and a ‘wound’ (131-2). Falstaff’s question ‘What is honour?’ (133) is also akin to Juliet’s ‘What’s Montague?’ (40), and his question ‘What is *in* that word ‘honour’?’ (134) is again similar to Juliet’s ‘What’s *in* a name?’ (43). Where Juliet’s dialogue is clearly *invented* by considering a theme of names, it appears that Shakespeare drew on existing sources for the philosophical tenets of Falstaff’s catechism, but he also appears to have employed his training in the topics to consider that word ‘honour’, which is used to extend those philosophical tenets to make them his own.

⁸¹ *Topica*, XXI.82, pp. 445-7, emphasis added.

⁸² Where Elton suggests Edmund’s soliloquy about his bastardy in *King Lear* (1.2.1-22) is informed by Tasso’s Italian verse (see also note 76), I would suggest it also consciously borrows from Daniel’s Englishing of Tasso in these passages from *Rosamond* (above) – ‘bound’ (260), ‘plague’ (265), and ‘custom’ (264), as much as the heroine’s salacious promotion of lust as *sweet* and natural. Indeed, Edmund’s soliloquy with its ten iterations of ‘base’ or ‘bastard’ and its five iterations of ‘legitimate’ was perhaps also informed by the topic of names. When Edmund asserts ‘Fine word, “legitimate”!’ (1.2.18), he may be quibbling on the verb as much as the noun, where Popes and monarchs could be petitioned to *legitimate* children born outside of wedlock (*OED*) – ‘if this letter speed, / And my *invention* thrive’, says Edmund.

Julius Caesar (1599)

In *Julius Caesar* (1.2), Shakespeare applies similar methods once again to articulate arguments drawn from a theme of names. When Cassius grooms Brutus to join the conspirators against Caesar, he begins by addressing the type of equity that should prevail within the Roman Republic – ‘The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars / But in ourselves that we are underlings’ (139-40). Cassius then draws on an extended comparison of names:

- 141 ‘Brutus’ and ‘Caesar’: *what* should be *in* that ‘Caesar’?
142 Why should that *name* be sounded more than yours?
143 *Write them* together: yours is as fair a *name*:
144 *Sound them*, it doth become the mouth as well.
145 *Weigh them*, it is as heavy: *conjure* with ’em,
146 ‘Brutus’ will start a spirit as soon as ‘Caesar’.
147 Now in the *names* of all the gods at once,
148 Upon what meat doth this our Caesar feed
149 That he is grown so great? (added emphasis)

Shakespeare’s initial method is to parallel the names of ‘Brutus’ and ‘Caesar’, a technique called ‘*synkrisis*’ by Aphthonius in his *Progymnasmata* – comparisons made by ‘setting things side-by-side’ and ‘bringing *the greater* together with what is compared to it’.⁸³ The example provided by Aphthonius was a comparison between Achilles and Hector. Aphthonius recommended comparing the subject’s countries, their ancestors, their parents, and so forth (their adjunctive circumstances), but he did not explicitly recommend any comparison of names, a choice which must have been Shakespeare’s. Once again, Cassius’s question ‘*What* should be *in* that ‘Caesar’?’ (141) is akin to Juliet’s ‘*What’s in a name?*’ (43) and Falstaff’s ‘*What is in* that word ‘honour’?’ (134), suggesting that a similar technique was being applied.

⁸³ Aphthonius, ‘The Preliminary Exercises of Aphthonius the Sophist’, in *Progymnasmata: Greek Textbooks of Prose Composition and Rhetoric*, trans. and ed. by George A. Kennedy (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003), pp. 89-127 (p. 113), added emphasis.

Shakespeare also uses another type of partition, when he explores the qualities of these names within the framework of his extended comparison (143-6). Cicero's sixteenth topic of invention was *comparisons* to things greater, lesser, or equal, and Cicero outlined four traits that might be compared – the quantity, quality, value, or particular relations to things.⁸⁴ Shakespeare's comparison appears to address the *qualities* of the two names, employing the figure anaphora to assist these distinctions – 'Why should that name be *sounded more* than yours?' (142), 'Write *them...* / Sound *them...* / Weigh *them...* [and] conjure *with 'em...*' (143-5). Cassius is making a comparison here of *equal things* (at least notionally), so that Brutus is struck by the obscurity of Caesar's prominence, and the comparison of equal things is aided by five repetitions of 'as' – '*as fair*', '*as well*', '*as heavy*', and '*as soon as "Caesar"*'. Indeed, Cassius's speech begins with a comparison of the *lesser* – claiming that he and Brutus are 'underlings' (139) – then proceeds to this extended comparison of *equal things* (143-6), and then ends on a comparison of the *greater* by asking why Caesar has 'grown so great' (149). This movement from lesser, to equal, to greater, helps to raise the dramatic stakes and amplifies the supposed audacity of Caesar, persuasively suggesting that Caesar's ascendancy should be curtailed.

It is evident that Shakespeare has considered some theme of 'names' to *invent* the material for this speech, which is consistent with considering the topic of *notatio* (names). In doing so, Shakespeare may also have tried to implement a *partitio*, which he also did with Juliet and Falstaff, and he seems also to have considered the topic of comparisons in some detail. Perhaps it was such a session of brainstorming or *inventio* that prompted Shakespeare's acknowledged interest in conjuring – 'Brutus' will *start a spirit* as soon as 'Caesar' (146).⁸⁵ Gibson and Esra (2014) have defined spiritual conjuring as the 'binding of spirits into obedience [...] by the use of a holy or magical *name*', whereby 'Formal acts of conjuring were [...] carried out [by] a religious or scholarly figure [who] called on powerful *names* in [an] attempt to raise, expel or otherwise control a spirit'.⁸⁶ This idea of 'conjuring' helps Cassius *break the ice*, so to speak, on the otherwise deadly message

⁸⁴ *Topica*, XVIII.68-70, pp. 433-7.

⁸⁵ Where the line again demonstrates *synkrisis* by paralleling these names on its wings, it appears a natural and fitting conclusive statement for the main passage of composition, whilst the lines which follow were probably added as a humorous (but fitting) extension.

⁸⁶ Marion Gibson and Jo Ann Esra, *Shakespeare's Demonology: A Dictionary* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), p. 46, added emphasis.

he is imparting, but Shakespeare's idea of conjuring is also consistent with a playful consideration of names considered alongside the mode of *synkristic* comparisons. Cassius then appears to wink at his own treatment of names by quibbling 'Now in the names of all the gods at once' (147), a colloquial expression related to conjuring, but also perhaps an irresistible pun by Shakespeare and, again, consistent with inventing material by considering the topic of names.

Shakespeare's primary source for *Julius Caesar* was North's translation of Plutarch's *Lives* – principally the lives of Caesar, Brutus, and Antony,⁸⁷ and while the act of Cassius grooming Brutus to join the conspiracy is mentioned there, North's work makes no reference to 'names' or any other content of Cassius's speech to suggest Shakespeare's words were not of his own invention. The closest hint to any prompt for a likely engagement with *names* in North is provided in the 'Life of Marcus Brutus', when Cassius says: 'What, knowest thou not that thou art Brutus?'⁸⁸ Even here, the modest stress on the name of 'Brutus' relates to the nobility of Brutus's great esteem amongst the 'cobblers, tapsters [and] suche like base mechanicall people [of Rome]',⁸⁹ and does not even capitalise on the typical association with Lucius Junius Brutus, the founder of the Roman Republic (c. 549-509 BCE).

All's Well that Ends Well (1605)⁹⁰

In Shakespeare's *All's Well that Ends Well*, there is a speech by the French King that appears inspired by a virtuoso consideration of the topic of names beginning with 'Tis only *title* thou distain'st in her, the which / I can build up...' (2.3.118-145). Stylistic studies by John V. Nance, however, have *confirmed* that the rhymed couplets, staccato rhythms, and lexical choices of this speech belong to Thomas Middleton, not to

⁸⁷ David Daniell (ed.), *Julius Caesar [Arden Third Series]* (London: A&C Black, 1998), p. 79.

⁸⁸ See 'Plutarch's *Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romanes*', trans. by Thomas North (1579), in Daniell (ed.), *Julius Caesar*, p. 335.

⁸⁹ Daniell (ed.), *Julius Caesar*, p. 335.

⁹⁰ Adapted by Thomas Middleton (perhaps in 1621) in Gary Taylor, et al., p. 2274.

(141) and Falstaff's 'What is in that word 'honour'?' (134) and Juliet's 'What's in a name?' (43). Shakespeare doesn't mention 'name', but the repetition of 'mother' (which serves as both a type of name and a common noun) suggests that a similar treatment of names has been used. Indeed, the line 'What's in "mother" / That you *start* at it?' (138-9) alludes again to the process of conjuring, akin to Cassius's previous line, "'Brutus" will *start* a spirit as soon as "Caesar"' (146), which suggests that Shakespeare was again considering names, and drawing on the same (or similar) process of composition.

A few lines later, Shakespeare does engage with names more explicitly when Helena explains to the countess:

152 The Count Rossillion cannot be my brother.
153 I am from humble, he from honoured *name*;
154 No *note* upon my parents, his all noble. (added emphasis)

Helena responds to the countess's affectionate reasoning with an invented counter argument that relies on names as its key source of significance – the family name of Bertram's parents is highly renowned whilst Helena's family name is lowly, suggesting an ill match. Shakespeare works with consonance, assonance, and parallelism to distinguish between 'humble' and 'honoured' names and parents who are 'noble' or of 'no note'. Cicero called his topic '*notatio*', stemming from the Latin word for token (*nota*), 'a mark, sign, or symbol' (*OED*), and although Shakespeare is digging deep for matching 'no-' words, and this 'note' (154) relates to *noteworthiness*, it may also have been prompted by Shakespeare's considering the topic *notatio*. Shakespeare uses zeugma to omit one of the iterations of 'name' – 'I am from humble [*name*], he from honoured *name*' (153), which leans also towards a treatment of '*synkrisis*', placing two names side-by-side, as was apparently used by Cassius (above).

The Countess continues to press Helena for a confession, and soon afterwards she notices Helena's face turn pale:

166 [...] What! pale again?
167 [...] now I see
168 The mystery of your loneliness [...]

169 [...] Now to all sense 'tis gross:
 170 You love my son. *Invention* is ashamed
 171 Against the proclamation of thy passion
 172 To say thou dost not. (added emphasis)

A sense of tender admonishment is conveyed by the Countess, yet the personified use of 'invention' here is telling (170). The Countess has indicated that Helena's flushes have already confessed her love, so that the function of 'invention' itself (the invention of counter arguments) should be ashamed of their own contrivance in light of what her 'passions' have already confessed (187-8). The legal language is also telling, for 'invention' may be taken to mean the general sense of *manufacturing lies*, but as Skinner helps to affirm, this sense of 'invention' is a clear reference to rhetorical *inventio*, or the topical invention of arguments.⁹² Inventing arguments was always related to a rhetorical situation where two or more parties cannot agree, thus relying on claims that are most probable (*probabilis*), competing for consensus where no facts can be established. But here, the countess asserts that the very discipline of *inventio* would be 'ashamed' by continuing to argue for anything *probable* when faced with such ocular proofs as Helena's physiognomy makes patently clear.⁹³

Cicero's tenth topic was 'adjuncts', which concerns the circumstances connected to an action or event in time and place.⁹⁴ Cicero used the example that a person's '*pallor, blush* [or] trembling, and any other *signs of agitation* [can infer] a guilty conscience'.⁹⁵ This example is extended to a romantic scenario by Erasmus in *De conscribendis epistolis* – 'He is *pale*, he sits deep in thought, and frequently changes his mind, therefore he is in love'.⁹⁶ Shakespeare had already given Helena *signs of agitation* by using the figure aposiopesis (the cutting-off of statements) with her distracted speech:

158 You are my mother, madam; would you were –
 159 So that my lord your son were not my brother –

⁹² Skinner, pp. 247-50.

⁹³ Cicero, *De inventio*, I.VII.9, pp. 18-19; Quintilian, 5.10.15-19, pp. 372-5.

⁹⁴ *Topica*, XII.51, p. 419.

⁹⁵ *Topica*, XII.52, pp. 419-21.

⁹⁶ Erasmus (1985), p. 125, emphasis added.

- 160 Indeed my mother! or were you both our mothers
161 I care no more for than I do for heaven,
162 So I were not his sister. Can't no other
163 But, I your daughter, he must be my brother?

Soon after this, the Countess also notes Helena's blushing – 'look, thy cheeks / Confess it t'one to th' other' (173-4), using forensic language once again. Skinner notes that the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* recommends exploring *signs* of guilt by establishing the circumstantial notions of 'erubescere, expallescere [and] titubare',⁹⁷ noting further that appropriate English synonyms for these in Cooper's *Thesaurus* (1565) are 'erubescere' (to blush or be ashamed), 'expallescere' (to be very pale), and 'titubare' (to stagger in speaking).⁹⁸ Shakespeare has ensured that Helena looks pale, she staggers in her speaking, and she blushes, so that any invention of arguments to the contrary should indeed be 'ashamed' for being so baseless. Skinner attributes this adroit application of *inventio* to an engagement with the *specific topics* of circumstance (as found in the forensic rhetorics), yet I have also shown that Shakespeare's extended sequence could have been *invented* by considering Cicero's tenth universal topic of 'adjuncts' (which grew out of the topics of circumstance), along with the topic of names. Skinner claims that this sequence might be 'Shakespeare's most perfectly forensic one' because the audience already knows about Helena's affections, and they can enjoy 'the spectacle' of the Countess working through this *textbook* sequence for inventing forensic proof.⁹⁹ Skinner does not discuss the scene's initial confrontation about the word 'mother', nor does he examine the topic of names, but his adroit observations help affirm that Shakespeare was using topical invention in the composition of this sequence, and where lexical similarities can be drawn between the 'mother' passage and those passages by Juliet and Cassius (that are clearly concerned with names), this also suggests that Shakespeare was indeed drawing on his training in the topic of names.

⁹⁷ Skinner, p. 202; Anonymous, *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, trans. by H. Caplan (Massachusetts: Harvard UP, 1954), II.V.VIII, p. 72.

⁹⁸ Skinner, p. 202.

⁹⁹ *Ibid*, p. 249.

Conclusion

This paper has examined the treatment of names in four different passages from Shakespeare that share the same type of inquiry – seeking to understand what is ‘in’ a name by exploring the denotative relation between the ‘name’ and the *thing* that is designated by that name. In Juliet’s balcony scene, Shakespeare’s extended treatment of names is supported by the apparent use of other topics such as partition and comparison. A similar treatment of names in 3.3 of *Romeo and Juliet* (which may even reuse material originally invented for the balcony scene) also conform to a poetic consideration of the topic of ‘*notatio*’ (names). Falstaff’s famous catechism on honour can also be seen to share affinities with the treatment of names found in Juliet’s balcony scene. Falstaff’s catechism has a number of possible sources, including Montaigne, Tasso, and Daniel, yet an exercise in Cicero’s *Topica* about the conjectural existence of ‘honour’ could also serve as the ultimate ‘authority’ informing those possible sources. Certainly, if Shakespeare was conversant with Cicero’s topics, he would most likely be conversant with Cicero’s exercise regarding ‘honour’. Yet despite most likely working off sources, Shakespeare’s use of a catechism is unique, as is his apparent use of partition, and his questioning ‘What is in that word “honour”?’ (134) conforms with his other treatments of names and with a consideration of the topics of invention including the topic of *notatio*. When Cassius grooms Brutus to join the conspirators in *Julius Caesar*, he too makes use of a methodical treatment of names and the apparent use of the topic of comparisons (from the lesser, to the equal, to the greater), which is consistent with considering the universal topics. And finally, the Countess sequence in *All’s Well That Ends Well* has previously been proven by Skinner (2014) – at least beyond a reasonable doubt – to be engaging with the method of topical invention to show the Countess establishing demonstrative evidence for Helena’s affections for Bertram. Where Skinner relates this technique to the precepts found in the *Ad Herennium*, with its *specific* forensic topics of circumstance, I show that an almost identical treatment of circumstances can be found in the precepts for Cicero’s *universal* topic of adjuncts. This supportive evidence, when combined with Shakespeare’s handling of the Countess’s treatment of ‘mother’, suggests also that Shakespeare was making use of a broader suite of universal topics including the topic of names. While one cannot assert without conjecture the exact techniques used by a Renaissance poet during composition, it is evident that grammar school students of the period should have been trained on these methods of composition, and these modes of organising the logicity of

one's expressions should also have become habitual through regular practice. The methods used by Shakespeare in these passages are certainly consistent with the techniques of considering the topic of '*notatio*', both individually within each passage and in the patterns shared across the different examples, which themselves cross different genres and different stages of Shakespeare's career – suggesting they were a definitive part of Shakespeare's creative process.