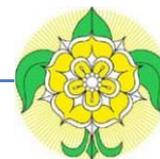


The Mystery of Francis Bacon's Name



The importance of Francis Bacon's name and the mystery or mysteries connected with it.

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Sir Francis Bacon, Baron Verulam of Verulam, Viscount St Alban

Francis Bacon's names and titles relate specifically to the Dionysian-Orphic Mysteries, as also to the Christian, Freemasonic and Rosicrucian Mysteries. His names are good names,¹ meaningful names, for he lived what they mean in a full initiatory way.

Bacon

The Bacon surname and heraldic crest (a boar) provides a direct link to the Dionysian Mysteries, for 'Bacon' is spelt 'Bacco' on title pages of Italian translations of his works, and Bacco was another way of spelling Bacchus, the Roman name for Dionysus ('Son of God').

Bacchus/Dionysus is also known as Dionysus-Zagreus because he starts off as Zagreus, the child of Persephone.² Persephone represents the human psyche. She dedicates herself to a life of love, of service, and as a result is impregnated by divine love (Zeus). By means of her act of love, and praying to see the child's father (Zeus) in all his glory, Persephone is set on fire, consumed in flame, and out of this flame is born her child of light, Zagreus. Zeus holds this child for a further month in his 'thigh', and eventually Zagreus is born again in the 'second-birth'.

The young Zagreus is then attacked by the Titans sent by Hera, and anything of him that is not sufficiently strong and pure is torn to pieces and devoured by them. Pallas Athena, however, is sent by Zeus to rescue Zagreus' heart, his purest and strongest part. She not only rescues it, she also raises it up and in the process, with the help of Apollo and Zeus, gives it a new, beautiful and shining form.³ In this way Zagreus becomes Bacchus/Dionysus.

Dionysus' father, Zeus, took on the metaphorical form of a bull in order to father the child on Persephone. (This is paralleled in the Egyptian myth of Osiris and Isis, symbolised as bull and cow respectively, whose child is Horus.) When born as Zagreus, the child's metaphorical form is that of a bull, and it is as a bull calf that he is torn to pieces by the Titans.

In the Eleusinian version of the Dionysian Mysteries, Dionysus is represented as a boar, and as a boar he is sacrificed and then resurrected in his greater form. For this reason, Christmas used to be celebrated by killing and eating a boar, whose head was ritually carried to the table on a platter with an apple in its mouth.

The heraldic crest of Francis Bacon (inherited from Sir Nicholas Bacon) is a boar, with which bacon is associated; for bacon is derived from the flesh of a sacrificed boar. For this reason, in the Shakespeare play, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, Mistress Quickly says "Hang-hog is latten for Bacon," for the hog (boar) becomes bacon when cured and well hung (to be smoked) above a fire.⁴

Related to this is the Greek story of Hyacinth, the beloved of Apollo, who was accidentally slain by the god of light. In the symbolism of this story, Hyacinth is represented as a boar

which, in searching for truffles with its snout, imprints the ground with the letters 'AA'. When Hyacinth died, Apollo made a flower, the hyacinth, from his spilled blood, whilst sighing "Ai, Ai," in grief. The accompanying tears shed by Apollo stained the flower's petals with the sign of his grief, which sign is the 'AA' cipher signature of the Mysteries. 'AA' or 'Ai, Ai,' is the Egyptian name for Thoth, whom the Greeks referred to as Hermes Trismegistus.

Besides its association with the boar, the letter A is particularly equated with the bull, as the form of the letter is derived, like the Greek *Alpha* (A, α) and Hebrew *Aleph* (א), from the Phoenician *Ālep* (𐤀), which itself is derived from the Egyptian hieroglyph depicting the head of an ox or bull. Another associated hieroglyph is that of the Egyptian plough that is drawn by the ox, which likewise has this 𐤀 shape. The astrological sigil for Taurus (♉) has the same derivation.

Pallas Athena is the Tenth Muse, the Muse of muses, the great inspirer and goddess of poetry and the arts. Dionysus/Bacchus, inspired by Athena, is the author or patron god of sacred drama, otherwise known as the mysteries.

Francis

'Francis' means 'Free'. The word 'free' is derived from Sanskrit *fri* (or *pri*), meaning 'love'. 'Free' is part of the title given to each great initiate of the Dionysian Mysteries who, when resurrected, was hailed (in Latin) as "Liber Bacchus!" meaning "Bacchus the Free!" This in fact means 'Bacchus the Love'. It also means someone who is freed from earthly attachments such as fear, greed, selfishness, need for fame and fortune, and such like, for it is love that sets us free of such things. It means someone who has become all-loving in an entirely selfless way, who has full faith in the power and support of love, and who fulfils the Great Commandments, 'Love God (Who is Love) and love your neighbour as yourself.'

Francis Bacon

The name 'Francis Bacon' can be understood as meaning 'Bacchus the Free' or 'Bacchus the Love'. This name ('Francis Bacon') in fact provides an even more profound and accurate description of Bacchus/Dionysus, 'Son of God', for God is Love. In the Orphic Mysteries this is exactly how God (i.e. Eros, the First-born) is described.

The Orphic Mysteries are the Dionysian Mysteries, the name-change being derived from Orpheus, the renowned instaurator and exemplar of the Dionysian Mysteries.⁵ These are the Mysteries that Jesus Christ adopted, taught, embodied and enacted in order to instaurate the Hebraic Mysteries, revealing to the Jews that God (Elohim/JHVH) is love and that their Torah or sacred teachings should be interpreted in this light. As Jesus said, God is love: love God and love each other—these are the two Great Commandments that sum up all the law (Torah) and prophets. It was these instaurated mysteries and teachings which then became known as the Christian Mysteries and teachings.

Orpheus was considered to be an incarnation or manifestation of Dionysus. He is said to have introduced the use of the rose to symbolise the Orphic adepts or *epopts* (seers), who then formed the Society of the Rose. The *eumolpoi* ('sweet singers'), who were the chief celebrants or hierophants of the mysteries, were symbolised as swans.

The swan symbolises the resurrected and ascended form of Orpheus-Dionysus which, in the sky, is represented by the Cygnus constellation. Cygnus, the Swan, is also known as the Northern Cross.

The symbolism of the rose, the swan and the cross was likewise applied to Jesus Christ, whose natural father, Joseph of Nazareth, is symbolised in Christian Catholic tradition by an ox (bull). Both Joseph and Jesus were said to have borne the title *ben panthera*, 'son of the panther,' which was one of the titles of Bacchus-Dionysus.⁶

Dionysus is renowned as the god of drama, or theatre. His festivals, celebrated and enacted as sacred mysteries, were the driving force behind the development of Greek theatre which, unlike the mysteries, did not require initiation on the part of the spectator. Then, from Greek and Roman classical theatre developed Western medieval, renaissance and modern theatre.

The mysteries were also continued into medieval, renaissance and modern times, with the medieval Christian mystery plays performed theatrically for the education and entertainment of the general public, the Christian Church performing the mysteries in a more sacred and mystical way, and the mystery schools both enacting and being the guardians of the more esoteric mysteries, science, initiations and teachings.

One of these mystery schools, Freemasonry, is to a large extent derived from the Dionysian Artificers, initiates of the Dionysian Mysteries, whilst at the same time blended with and using the symbolism of Solomon's Temple from the Hebraic Mysteries. A free-mason, in the speculative sense, is a builder of love (or loving builder), trained in morality and dedicated to charity (works of love) and the building of a philosophical and spiritual temple.

Baron Verulam of Verulam

This mystery and theatre association is to be found, pointedly, in Francis Bacon's first aristocratic title, Baron Verulam of Verulam, which hints at the mystery of Shakespeare. Bacon was given this title by King James I on 12 July 1618. Normally the title would have been simply Baron of Verulam, referring to the place, the Roman town of Verulamium; but by adding the extra 'Verulam' it provides a description of the title-bearer, Francis Bacon. The word 'Verulam' is derived from Latin *veru* ('javelin') and *lam* ('thrash'), which has the same or similar meaning as 'Spear-shaker'. Thus, Francis Bacon's title can be seen as describing him as Francis Bacon, Spear-shaking Baron of Verulam, or Francis Bacon, Baron Shakespeare of Verulam.

'Spear-shaker' is a synonym for St George, the Red Cross Knight, whose symbols are the red (or gold) cross and the rose. In terms of the mysteries, this is emblematic of a Rosicrucian, a member of the Society of the Golden and Rosy Cross, who 'shakes' his spear of light at—and pierces in order to transmute and illumine—the dragon of ignorance and vice.

'Spear-shaker' is also an epithet for Pallas Athena, whose Greek name *Athene* means 'Virgin Mind' or 'Pure Intelligence'. Plato (in *Cratylus*) derives 'Pallas' from *pallein*, meaning 'to brandish', in reference to the goddess brandishing (i.e. shaking) her spear of light at dark ignorance. Besides being the Tenth Muse, the Muse of all muses, inspirer of great poets, artists, writers and heroes, Athena is the goddess who rescues the heart of Zagreus and raises it up to become Bacchus/Dionysus in the Dionysian Mysteries. Thus raised, Dionysus is symbolised as a swan.

The Gemini ('Heavenly Twins'), Castor and Pollux, the mortal and immortal twins, were also known as 'Spear-shakers'. Born of Leda and the Swan, they were symbolised as swans.

For all these reasons, Shakespeare is said to have been born and died on St George's Day, is described (by Ben Jonson) as the sweet Swan of Avon and shaker of his lance against the eyes (i.e. dragons) of ignorance, declares that his muse is Pallas Athena, and uses the symbolism of the Gemini to sign his works and monument.

Viscount St Alban

A week before and in celebration of Francis Bacon's 60th birthday on the 22nd January, and in celebration of over three years of faithful service as Lord Keeper and Chancellor, Francis Bacon was created Viscount St Alban by the King. Noticeably and uniquely, this title is named after the saint and not the place, St Albans, thereby equating Francis Bacon with St Alban, as a second St Alban. Normally such a title would be Viscount of St Albans, which some people erroneously believe to be the case. Once he was created Viscount St Alban, Bacon signed his letters as "Fra. St. Alban".

The 3rd century protomartyr St Alban is the first recorded British Christian martyr, whose home was the Roman town of Verulamium and whose place of martyrdom, on a hill outside and overlooking Verulamium, is marked by St Albans Abbey (now a cathedral).

Like the original St Alban, Francis Bacon gave his life for others, but in his case the martyr's death was psychological rather than physical. Instructed by the king to offer no defence to the trumped-up charges of corruption being made against him, but to plead guilty, Bacon was impeached as Lord Chancellor and thereby not only lost his position in state and society but also his good name and reputation. Moreover, this sacrifice (or, in his words, "oblation") of his good name for the sake of the king and country still continues because of him being unjustly slated as a corrupt chancellor, which has led to the ever-increasing slandering of his name and either a dismissal or a misreading of his life and works. In other words, he is still being martyred.

St Alban is reputed to have been the founder and first Grand Master of English (originally British) Freemasonry. In the 18th century, with the founding (or refounding) of the London Grand Lodge (later to become the United Grand Lodge of England), this Craft legend was adopted and applied to modern Speculative Freemasonry, with certain additions pointing to the second St Alban as founder of the new Speculative Freemasonry.⁷

There are many clues that Speculative Freemasonry was founded in England in Francis Bacon's time. The Shakespeare plays are full of Masonic allusions, words and phrases, and both the Shakespeare First Folio and the Shakespeare Monument at Stratford-upon-Avon bear the symbolic marks and cipher signatures of Freemasonry—and particularly of Royal Arch Freemasonry, the entrance to the Rosicrucian degrees—confirming why Francis Bacon was created Viscount St Alban and not Viscount of St Albans.

Bacon was a master of disguise and double entendre, and so his signature, "Fra. St. Alban," could equally mean 'Francis St Alban' or 'Frater (Brother) St Alban', exactly like the signature, "Fra. R.C." or "Fra. C.R.C.", of the founding father of the Rosicrucian Fraternity, as given in the first Rosicrucian manifesto, the *Fama Fraternitatis Rosea Crucis*.⁸

That 'Fra' can mean both 'Francis' and 'Frater' is given special significance by Dr John Wilkins, Bishop of Chester and founding member and Secretary of the Royal Society, which acknowledged Francis Bacon as its "Instaurator". When speaking of the ever-burning lamps of the ancients in his *Mathematical Magic*, Wilkins writes: "Such a lamp is likewise related to be seen in the sepulchre of Francis Rosicross, as is more largely expressed in the confession of that Fraternity."⁹

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Endnotes

¹ See FBRT essay, *The Good Name*, by Peter Dawkins (FBRT website: www.fbrt.org.uk)

² In other versions of the myth, the mother (Persephone) is called Semele.

³ Esoterically understood, Athena is the higher self or higher mind of Persephone.

⁴⁴ *Merry Wives*, 4.1 (1623 Shakespeare Folio).

⁵ For this reason it is sometimes said, misleadingly, that Orpheus was the founder of the Dionysian Mysteries, when in fact he was the refounder, reformer and reinterpreter (i.e. instaurator) of the ancient Mysteries.

⁶ See article by Andrew Collins, *Jesus - Son of the Panther and the Cult of Bacchus-Dionysus*.

⁷ See *The Constitutions of the Free-Masons* (published 1723), edited by James Anderson, to the order of John Theophilus Desaguliers and approved by a Grand Lodge committee under his control. John Theophilus Desaguliers was a fellow of the Royal Society and a founder member of the London Grand Lodge (later the Premier Grand Lodge of England and then the United Grand Lodge of England) founded in 1717. Desaguliers became the third Grand Master in 1719. Anderson drew on the legendary history of Freemasonry as outlined in the Matthew Cooke Manuscript (dated to c.1450), which describes Freemasonry being brought to England in St Alban's time: "And soon after that came St. Adhabelle into England and he converted St. Alban to Christianity. And St. Alban loved well masons and he was the first to give them charges and customs in England..."

⁸ The first Rosicrucian manifesto, the *Fama Fraternitatis Rosae Crucis oder Die Bruderschaft des Ordens der Rosenkreuzer* ('The Fame/Report of the Rose Cross Fraternity or a Discovery of the Most Noble Order of the Rosy Cross'), existed in manuscript in 1610 and was published in Cassel in 1614. Michael Maier, in discussing the Laws of the Fraternity of the Rosy Cross in his *Themis Aurea* (1656), confirms that 'R.C.' not only refers to the rose and cross, prime symbols of the fraternity, but is also specifically intended to denote "the name of their first Author".

⁹ The *Confessio Fraternitatis Rosea Crucis* or simply *Confessio* ('Confession'), printed in Kassel, Germany, in 1615, was the second of the anonymous Rosicrucian manifestos.