

## COMMUNICATION

### THE PHILOSOPHY OF FRANCIS BACON IN EARLY JACOBEOAN OXFORD, WITH AN EDITION OF AN UNKNOWN MANUSCRIPT OF THE *VALERIUS TERMINUS*\*

RICHARD SERJEANTSON

*Trinity College, Cambridge*

ABSTRACT. *At some point in or shortly after 1607, the opening passage of Francis Bacon's earliest surviving philosophical work, Valerius Terminus of the interpretation of nature – the first version of what ultimately became Bacon's Instauration magna – was copied into the natural philosophical notebook of Edmund Leigh (c. 1585–1658), a Bachelor of Arts at Brasenose College, Oxford. Whereas contemporary scribal copies of Bacon's political, religious, and legal writings are common, copies of his unpublished philosophical writings are rare, and tend only to be found in unique exemplars with a direct Baconian association. As such, the Valerius Terminus has hitherto only been known from a single manuscript, with corrections in Bacon's hand, that was first printed in 1734. The discovery of a 'user' copy in a student notebook is therefore significant for what it suggests about the circulation of Bacon's earliest philosophical ideas. This significance is enhanced by the fact that the new copy appears to record an early draft of Bacon's work.*

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This communication, which reports the discovery of an unknown manuscript of one of Francis Bacon's earliest philosophical writings, also has the more general purpose of offering an assessment of the manuscript's implications for our understanding of the attraction of Bacon's ideas in the milieu of the early seventeenth-century universities. As such, it contributes to two broader areas within the field of early modern manuscript studies. The first area concerns the circulation of Bacon's writings, and in particular the differential ways in which diverse genres of writing by this notable polymath were copied, transmitted, and read in manuscript. Although we now possess several penetrating studies of Baconian manuscripts,<sup>1</sup> the foundational question of the dynamics of their

*Trinity College, Cambridge, CB2 1TQ rws1001@cam.ac.uk*

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<sup>1</sup> Angus Vine, 'Francis Bacon's composition books', *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society*, 14 (2008), pp. 1–32; Vine, 'Commercial commonplacing: Francis Bacon, the waste-book, and the ledger', *English Manuscript Studies, 1100–1700*, 16 (2011),

circulation has not yet been treated as systematically as it has been for contemporaries such as Philip Sidney and John Donne.<sup>2</sup> A second area concerns the broader history of annotation, and specifically the phenomenon of the university notebook.<sup>3</sup> Such manuscripts have been an evidentiary staple for the history of the English universities for some time.<sup>4</sup> But in default of detailed case-studies,<sup>5</sup> we still lack a general typology of how university students in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England conceived, constructed, and used these documents. As well as shedding new light on Francis Bacon, this study also offers a contribution towards that broader goal.

## I

In the two decades before the lavish folio publication of his *Novum organum* in 1620, Francis Bacon (1561–1626) developed the ideas for his ‘Great Instauration’ (*Instauratio magna*) of human knowledge across a range of preliminary and often abortive unpublished writings. One of these preliminary tracts, indeed probably the earliest of them all, is the manuscript treatise in English entitled *Valerius Terminus of the interpretation of nature with the annotations of Hermes Stella*. Though these two pseudonyms have so far resisted straightforward interpretation,<sup>6</sup> and though it is unfinished, this rich work adumbrates several of the key preoccupations of both Parts I and II of Bacon’s mature vision of the *Instauratio*. The early chapters of the *Valerius Terminus*, in particular, are concerned with the nature of knowledge: with its scope, its impediments, and—in the case of the first chapter, which is one of the few that was finalized—with its ‘limites and end’. Bacon’s treatise thus opens with a powerful

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pp. 197–218; Alan Stewart, ed., with Harriet Knight, *The Oxford Francis Bacon, 1: Early Writings, 1584–1596* (Oxford, 2012).

<sup>2</sup> H. R. Woudhuysen, *Sir Philip Sidney and the circulation of manuscripts* (Oxford, 1996); Peter Beal, ‘John Donne and the circulation of manuscripts’, in J. Barnard et al., eds., *The Cambridge history of the book in Britain* (Cambridge, 2002), pp. 122–6.

<sup>3</sup> See further Ann Blair and Richard Yeo, eds., ‘Note-taking in early modern Europe’, *Intellectual History Review*, 20 (2010), pp. 301–432, and, for a parallel Parisian case-study, Ann Blair, ‘The teaching of natural philosophy in early seventeenth-century Paris: the case of Jean-Cecile Frey’, *History of Universities*, 12 (1993), pp. 95–158.

<sup>4</sup> W. T. Costello, *The scholastic curriculum at seventeenth-century Cambridge* (Cambridge, MA, 1958); Hugh Kearney, *Scholars and gentlemen: universities and society in pre-industrial Britain, 1500–1700* (London, 1970); Margo Todd, *Christian humanism and the puritan social order* (Cambridge, 1987); Mordechai Feingold, *The mathematician’s apprenticeship: science, universities and society in England, 1560–1640* (Cambridge, 1984); Nicholas Tyacke, ed., *Seventeenth-century Oxford* (Oxford, 1997).

<sup>5</sup> An exception is the intensively studied notebook of the undergraduate Isaac Newton: Cambridge University Library (CUL), MS Add. 3996; see J. E. McGuire and Martin Tamny, eds., *Certain philosophical questions: Newton’s Trinity notebook* (Cambridge, 1983), and Jed Buchwald and Mordechai Feingold, *Newton and the origin of civilization* (Princeton, NJ, 2013), pp. 8–43. Another is the notebook of George Palfrey: see n. 30, below.

<sup>6</sup> But see further the discussion in Sophie Weeks, ‘Francis Bacon’s Science of Magic’ (Ph.D. diss., Leeds, 2007), p. 3 n. 8.

defence of the human ‘thirst of knowledg’ which sees it as arising, not from Lucifer’s transgressive presumption, but rather from a legitimate ‘emptines or want’ in nature and from a holy ‘instincte from god’.<sup>7</sup> As such, the *Valerius Terminus* has played an important role in assessments of the intellectual development and philosophical significance of this prominent author.<sup>8</sup>

For a variety of reasons the *Valerius Terminus* has usually been ascribed a date of c. 1603.<sup>9</sup> Nonetheless, it should be acknowledged that we do not yet know precisely when – or, rather, over what period – Bacon composed the treatise. One mark of its relatively early date may be that Bacon wrote it in English; all the other versions of what became the *Instauratio magna* are written in Latin.<sup>10</sup> Another clue suggesting an early date is Bacon’s adoption of the authorial persona of ‘Valerius Terminus’;<sup>11</sup> in other versions of the *Instauratio*, including the *Novum organum* itself, Bacon tends to write in the magisterial third person (‘Franciscus Bacon sic cogitavit’). But possibly the most telling indication of when the treatise was conceived is that, unlike most of what Bacon wrote in English from April 1603 onwards, the *Valerius Terminus* is not addressed directly to the new King James.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>7</sup> British Library (BL), MS Harley 6463, pp. 1–17 (i.e. ch. 1; quotations from pp. 1, 8). Cf. Francis Bacon, ‘Valerius Terminus’, in James Spedding, R. L. Ellis, and D. D. Heath, eds., *Works* (7 vols., London, 1857–64), III, pp. 215–52, at pp. 217–20.

<sup>8</sup> See esp. Benjamin Farrington, *The philosophy of Francis Bacon: an essay on its development from 1603 to 1609* (Liverpool, 1964), pp. 38–44; Benjamin Milner, ‘Francis Bacon: the theological foundations of *Valerius Terminus*’, *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 58 (1997), pp. 245–64; Stephen Gaukroger, *Francis Bacon and the transformation of early modern philosophy* (Cambridge, 2001), pp. 77–8, 155–6; Peter Harrison, *The fall of man and the foundations of science* (Cambridge, 2007), pp. 27, 169–73; Dana Jalobeanu, ‘Bacon’s brotherhood and its classical sources’, in C. Zittel et al., eds., *Philosophies of technology: Francis Bacon and his contemporaries* (Leiden, 2008), pp. 197–230; Laura Georgescu, ‘Francis Bacon: the theological foundations of natural philosophy’, *Studii de Știința și Cultură*, 23 (2010), pp. 74–87; 22 Rhodri Lewis, ‘Francis Bacon, allegory and the uses of myth’, *Review of English Studies*, 61 (2010), pp. 360–89; Anna-Maria Hartmann, ‘Light from darkness: the relationship between Francis Bacon’s *prima philosophia* and his concept of the Greek fable’, *Seventeenth Century*, 26 (2011), pp. 203–20; Sorana Corneanu, *Regimens of the mind: Boyle, Locke, and the early modern cultura animi tradition* (Chicago, IL, 2012), pp. 26–9, 34–7.

<sup>9</sup> I am not aware that James Spedding’s characteristically careful and perceptive discussion of the date of *Valerius Terminus* has yet been superseded (Bacon, *Works*, III, pp. 206–13).

<sup>10</sup> The exception to this generalization is the abandoned English treatise *Filum labyrinthi siue formula inquisitionis* (BL, MS Harley 6797, fos. 139r–146v; Bacon, *Works*, III, pp. 496–504), effectively a translation of the opening portion of the Latin *Cogitata et visa*.

<sup>11</sup> The full title also promises annotations by a different fictional persona, ‘Hermes Stella’, but as Bacon himself noted: ‘None of the Annotations of Stella are sett down in these fragments’ (BL, MS Harley 6463, fo. 1\*v).

<sup>12</sup> A list of the writings Bacon addressed directly to James in the aftermath of his accession would include: *A brief discourse touching the happie union of the kingdomes* (1603); *Certaine considerations touching the better pacification and edification of the Church of England* (composed, 1603; published illicitly, 1604); *Of the proficience and advancement of learning* (1605); ‘Of the true greatnes of the kingdome of Brittainē’ (c. 1607?); ‘Certain considerations touching the plantation in Ireland’ (1609).

Hitherto, the *Valerius Terminus* has been known from a single manuscript, now among the Harleian collections of the British Library (MS Harley 6463). Though it is in a scribal hand, this manuscript was evidently produced under Bacon's direction, for it is prefaced by a table of contents in his own hand, which also appears throughout the manuscript making corrections and additions to the scribally copied text.<sup>13</sup> However, the *Valerius Terminus* was never printed in Bacon's lifetime, nor did it appear in any of the posthumous collections of his writings that were published across the seventeenth century.<sup>14</sup> The Harleian manuscript was first printed by the historiographer royal Robert Stephens in 1734, and its text has been the one used by all subsequent editors of the treatise.<sup>15</sup> It is, moreover, the only item presently recorded for the *Valerius Terminus* in Peter Beal's invaluable catalogue of surviving Bacon manuscripts.<sup>16</sup>

Both in Bacon's lifetime and following his death his political, legal, and religious writings circulated widely in manuscript, even when they already existed in print.<sup>17</sup> This pattern of circulation contrasts sharply, however, with that for Bacon's unpublished philosophical writings. These were all unprinted in his lifetime and seem to have had a very limited circulation in manuscript. Most are only witnessed by a single exemplar, and several more are only known from the edition of philosophical writings that Isaac Gruter published in Amsterdam in 1653 from a cache of authorial manuscripts obtained from Bacon's executor, Sir William Boswell (d. 1650).<sup>18</sup> In its status as a treatise contained in a unique scribal manuscript containing its author's own hand, therefore, the *Valerius Terminus* has hitherto shared a clear pattern with Bacon's other earlier philosophical writings.

There is clear evidence, moreover, that Bacon consciously regarded his unpublished philosophical speculations as being for restricted circulation only. In a note referring to his fragmentary Latin treatise *Temporis partus masculus* (part of which appears immediately after the *Valerius Terminus* in the same Harleian manuscript), for instance, Bacon wrote that it was 'destined {for}

<sup>13</sup> BL, MS Harley 6463, pp. 1–70.

<sup>14</sup> Francis Bacon, *Remaines* (London, 1648); Bacon, *Resuscitatio*, ed. William Rawley (London, 1657); Bacon, *Baconiana*, ed. Thomas Tenison (London, 1679).

<sup>15</sup> Robert Stephens, ed., *Letters and remains of the Lord Chancellor Bacon* (London, 1734), pp. 398–450; see also p. vii. Modern editions of the *Valerius Terminus* include the German translation by Franz Träger (Würzburg, 1984) and the French translation by François Vert (Paris, 1986).

<sup>16</sup> Peter Beal, *Catalogue of English literary manuscripts (CELM)*, unpublished database at [www.celm-ms.org.uk](http://www.celm-ms.org.uk) (consulted July 2009). I am grateful to Dr Beal for granting me pre-publication access to his remarkable catalogue, which expands upon his earlier *Index of English literary manuscripts*, I: 1450–1625, Part I: *Andrewes–Donne* (London, 1980), pp. 17–52 (*IELM*); the Harleian MS of *Valerius Terminus* is item \*BcF 285 in both.

<sup>17</sup> Evidence for this circulation is extensively documented in *IELM/CELM*.

<sup>18</sup> Francis Bacon, *Scripta in naturali et universali philosophia*, ed. Isaac Gruter (Amsterdam, 1653). See further Graham Rees, 'Introduction', to Graham Rees, ed., *The Oxford Francis Bacon*, VI: *Philosophical studies, c. 1611–c. 1619* (Oxford, 1996), pp. lxx–lxxxv.

to be 'traditionary' separate' and not public'.<sup>19</sup> Evidently, it was not intended for a general readership. We might even suggest that Bacon's conviction that knowledge should be exclusive required him to treat his manuscripts in this way: in his unpublished *Proœmium de interpretatione naturæ* he wrote that the discoveries of his natural philosophy would be 'more vigorous and better secured' if they were 'confined among proper and selected' people.<sup>20</sup>

This is not to suggest that Bacon did not circulate his philosophical writings at all. In a surviving private memorandum from July 1608 he proposed to himself 'Imparting my Cogitata et Visa w<sup>th</sup> choyse, ut videbitur'.<sup>21</sup> Bacon had already sent a copy of this Latin philosophical treatise to the proper and selected Sir Thomas Bodley for his comments, and he sent it on afterwards to Lancelot Andrewes, who had previously also served as the pre-publication 'Inquisitor' of the *Advancement of learning*.<sup>22</sup> Bacon was also in the habit of sending drafts of his writings to his close friend Tobie Matthew.<sup>23</sup> Yet, in one letter to Matthew, Bacon requested him to 'take care, not to leave the Writing, which I left with you last, with any man so long, as that he may be able to take a Copy of it; because, first, it must be censured by you, and then considered again, by me'.<sup>24</sup> By contrast with the broad manuscript circulation of his political, ecclesiological, and legal writings, therefore, Bacon seems to have maintained a rather close guard over his unprinted philosophical compositions, and to have permitted only limited access to them.

## II

Yet, Bacon's control over the circulation of his philosophical writings was clearly not absolute, for a hitherto unknown copy of part of the *Valerius Terminus* has now come to light. Though only a relatively brief extract, the copy is of interest both for what it tells us about contemporary interest in Bacon's early philosophy, and for the light it sheds on the evolution of this important early work.

This newly discovered copy of Bacon's *Valerius Terminus* is contained in Cambridge University Library, Additional Manuscript 102, fos. 28v–29r.<sup>25</sup> It consists of the first 800 words or so of Bacon's treatise; that is, from what in the

<sup>19</sup> BL, MS Harley 6463, fo. 1\*v. (On the transcription conventions used here, see the 'Textual note' at the end of this article.)

<sup>20</sup> Bacon, *Scripta in naturali et universali philosophia*, sig. x2v: 'intra legitima & optata ingenia clausa'.

<sup>21</sup> James Spedding, *Letters and life of Francis Bacon* (7 vols., London, 1861–74), iv, p. 64.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, iii, pp. 363–6, iv, p. 141, iii, p. 256.

<sup>23</sup> See *ibid.*, iii, p. 256, iv, pp. 132–3, 135–6, 137, 139.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, iv, pp. 8–9.

<sup>25</sup> This copy was identified by the author in October 2012. The provenance of the manuscript remains uncertain: *A catalogue of the manuscripts preserved in the library of the University of Cambridge* (5 vols., Cambridge, 1856–67), v, p. 569, merely describes the early Additional Manuscripts as those 'which have previously had no shelf-mark'.

Harleian manuscript is the opening portion of the first chapter. The extract is copied into a single opening of two pages, and breaks off with the catchword at the end of the second page, in the middle of a sentence (fo. 29r). Thirteen further blank pages follow this fragment, which may offer an indication of how long the extract was that the scribe expected to copy. The abandonment of his task does not necessarily mean that the scribe lost interest in transcribing the work: it is possible that, having started the job, he then decided to copy it out in full into a separate notebook. The extract is entitled '*Valerius Terminus of the interpretation of nature with the annotations of Hermes Stella*', precisely as in the Harleian version. Bacon's name, however, is not attached to the treatise, which is no doubt why it has evaded identification for so long.

The manuscript into which this extract is copied is a substantial quarto paper-book of 293 folios, with margins ruled in ink, which survives in its original full leather binding with vestigial green silk ties. The *Valerius Terminus* fragment is the only extended appearance of English in the document, which otherwise consists almost entirely of notes in Latin on natural philosophical, astronomical, mathematical, natural historical, and medical topics. Overall, the notebook gives the strong impression of being the work of a student pursuing the studies of the arts course at a high level (i.e. perhaps undertaking MA rather than BA work) at one of the two English universities. Indeed, as an evidently university-related document, the manuscript has previously been found of interest for the light it sheds on English academic studies of the period.<sup>26</sup>

In respect of its handwriting, the notebook contains a variety of visually distinct stints, almost all of which nonetheless appear to be the work of a single scribe. The English *Valerius Terminus* alone is copied in a secretary hand, with italic used for emphasis and titles.<sup>27</sup> For the Latin written throughout the rest of the volume the scribe uses an italic hand that varies considerably in its degree of formality. Some of the earlier material is copied in very regular and sometimes beautiful fashion, including the use for titles of an elegant humanist minuscule script.<sup>28</sup>

The notebook does not appear to have been compiled consecutively. Although there is a fair degree of natural chronological progression throughout the volume, any one page may nonetheless contain material from different periods of composition. But the earlier pages of the manuscript do generally

<sup>26</sup> Feingold, *Mathematician's apprenticeship*, p. 100; Mordechai Feingold, 'The occult tradition in English universities of the Renaissance: a reassessment', in B. Vickers, ed., *Occult and scientific mentalities in the Renaissance* (Cambridge, 1984), pp. 73–94, at p. 78.

<sup>27</sup> For this reason it is difficult to be absolutely confident that the copy of the *Valerius Terminus* was made by the same scribe as the one whose hand is found elsewhere throughout the volume.

<sup>28</sup> Presentation manuscripts of some of Bacon's writings also exist with this mixture of humanist minuscule titles and formal italic text, although none is in the same hand as this one. See Queen's College, Oxford, MS 280, pp. 205–33 ('*Cogitata et visa*', c. 1607); and Huntington Library, San Marino, MS EL 1721, and National Library of Ireland, MS 2582 ('*Certaine considerations touching the plantation in Ireland*', 1609).

seem to have been copied earliest in time, and they principally record the author's reading. In the fifty or so pages that lead up to the copy of the *Valerius Terminus* there are notes from printed books by the following authors, among others: Pietro Pomponazzi (*De incantationibus*, 1556); Julius Caesar Scaliger (the *Exotericae exercitationes* against Cardano, 1557); John Dee (*Monas hieroglyphica*, 1564); Juan Huarte (*Examen de ingenios*, 1575); Francisco Vallès (*De sacra philosophia*, 1587); Giambattista Della Porta (*Magia naturalis*, 1558 onwards); Girolamo Provenzale, *De sensibus* (1597); Martin Delrio (*Disquisitiones magica*, 1599); Euclid (*Optica & Catoptrica*, translated by Jean Péna, 1599); Guido Panciroli (*Res memorabilia*, 1599). The most modern treatise to appear is Girolamo Fabrizio d'Acquapendente's *De locutione* of 1603.<sup>29</sup> Elsewhere, the manuscript also contains later dateable materials (in a less meticulous hand), including a note on the front pastedown to John Selden's *De diis Syris*, first published in 1617.

Notes taken directly from printed books are by no means the only items in the manuscript, however. It also contains systematic analyses of philosophical subjects, in particular of the soul (fos. 12r–17v, 22r–23v); this was a prominent part of MA-level natural philosophical study in the seventeenth-century English universities.<sup>30</sup> Moreover, another of the items immediately prior to the copy of the *Valerius Terminus* is a rather rare kind of document: a transcription of a disputation, complete with contributions from both Respondent and Opponent, on whether the imagination is able to produce real effects (*An Imaginatio possit producere reales effectus?*) (fos. 8r–11r).<sup>31</sup> This general subject was, as it happens, a subject of great interest to Francis Bacon.<sup>32</sup> But it seems much more likely that its presence here should be connected to the visit King James made to Oxford in 1605, when precisely this natural philosophical *quaestio* was disputed before him.<sup>33</sup> A further hastily-written question briefly considers the morality of the theatre (*An Ludi scaenici sint liciti?*) (fo. 25r–v).

<sup>29</sup> In establishing this list on the basis of the author's rather cryptic references I have benefited from the fine new *Universal short-title catalogue* [www.ustc.ac.uk](http://www.ustc.ac.uk). Dates are of first publication, which is not necessarily the edition that was being read.

<sup>30</sup> See the parallel instance of the notebook kept by the MA student George Palfrey at Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, in the earlier 1620s (C.J. Cook, ed., *The Palfrey notebook: records of study in seventeenth-century Cambridge* (Woodbridge, 2011)); the students share an interest in Franciscus Toletus's *Commentarius de anima*.

<sup>31</sup> On the structure of disputations see Costello, *Scholastic curriculum*, pp. 14–31. Cook, ed., *The Palfrey notebook*, pp. 138–40, 150–2, also records disputations, though in a more telegraphic fashion.

<sup>32</sup> Francis Bacon, *De dignitate et augmentis scientiarum* (London, 1623), sigs. 2F1r–2F2r; Bacon, *Sylva sylvarum* (London, 1626/7), sigs. 2I1v–2L3v. See further Sorana Corneanu and Koen Vermeir, 'Idols of the imagination: Francis Bacon on the imagination and the medicine of the mind', *Perspectives on Science*, 20 (2012), pp. 183–206.

<sup>33</sup> John Nichols, *The progresses . . . of King James the first* (4 vols., London, 1828), I, pp. 536–7. It should be noted that the thesis 'Imaginatio producit reales effectus' was also disputed at the philosophy tripos in Cambridge in 1609; see J.J. Hall, *Cambridge Act and Tripos verses, 1565–1894* (Cambridge, 2009), p. 134.

The item immediately preceding the copy of the *Valerius Terminus* in the manuscript is an analysis of the intellectual powers of angels, in which Thomas Aquinas serves as an authority and the more recent views of the Jesuit Francisco Suárez are rejected (fos. 26r–28v). Furthermore, the item immediately following the *Valerius Terminus* (after the thirteen blank pages) is a ‘Digression on laughter’ (*Digressio de risu*) which is concerned to adjudicate the different views of Cicero (‘refuted’), modern authors (‘demolished’), and Aristotle (‘approved’) on the subject (fos. 36r–38v).<sup>34</sup> One of the most striking (and attractive) aspects of seventeenth-century English university life was the very high value it placed on wit and humour;<sup>35</sup> it is therefore interesting to find the phenomenon being investigated so systematically – albeit, dare one say it, earnestly – here.

Most of the remaining materials in the notebook appear to post-date the copy of *Valerius Terminus*. They consist of numerous headings for disputed *questiones* of a natural philosophical nature (taking the form *an ... sit*) with occasional more extensive sub-notes (fos. 41v–83r); notes on natural history (probably made rather later, fos. 47r–48v, 101v–105r); numerous numbered paragraphs (371 in total) of answers to solved questions (taking the form *cur ...*), again mostly on natural philosophical subjects (fos. 113v–161r); a few sides of notes, probably written a little earlier in the life of the notebook than their placement over half-way through it might suggest, on the metaphysics of being (fos. 161v–164r); various more miscellaneous notes amidst many blank leaves (fos. 164v–254v), including lists of proofs for the Copernican thesis of the motion of the earth and William Gilbert’s thesis (published in 1600) of the earth as a magnet (fos. 241v, 242r);<sup>36</sup> and finally some sustained *collectiones* (i.e. notes) from Alessandro Piccolomini’s *Anatomicæ prælectiones* (1585) (fos. 249r–292v).

Within the context of the notebook as a whole, and particularly in the earlier portion in which it is found, the appearance of Bacon’s treatise is unusual in three prominent respects. First, it is the only item in English.<sup>37</sup> The dominance of Latin elsewhere in the notebook is a strong marker of its ‘scholastic’ nature. (To use that much-abused word in the strict sense of ‘studies pursued for the university schools’). Secondly, and in notable contrast to most of the rest of the material in the volume, the scribe set himself to copy Bacon’s work in full, rather than extracting selected passages. Lastly, unlike the great majority of the material around it that is copied from printed books, the proper author – as

<sup>34</sup> On this kind of neo-classical debate on laughter, see Quentin Skinner, ‘Why laughing mattered in the Renaissance’, *History of Political Thought*, 22 (2001), pp. 418–47.

<sup>35</sup> See further Mordechai Feingold, ‘The humanities’, in *Seventeenth-century Oxford*, p. 303.

<sup>36</sup> See further Feingold, *Mathematician’s apprenticeship*, p. 100.

<sup>37</sup> The very few other appearances of the English language in the manuscript are fragmentary in nature: see the front paste-down (not, I think, in the hand of the main scribe); fo. 236r; and the penultimate leaf, fo. 293v.



opposed to the obvious pseudonym of ‘Valerius Terminus’ – is not identified. It is possible that the scribe was ignorant of Bacon’s authorship of the treatise.

Overall, the portrait that emerges from the notebook as a whole is a rather characteristic one. It is of a student of the natural philosophy of the Arts course, possibly one who later came to teach the subject himself, who also pursued an early medical interest.<sup>38</sup> Notwithstanding an initial appearance of miscellaneity, the notebook is quite tightly focused on its task of providing its author with material for use in the disputations, declamations, and philosophical verses that were the staple forms of exercise and examination in the early seventeenth-century English universities.<sup>39</sup> The compiler’s notes from Charles de Bovelles’s early sixteenth-century treatment of physics, for instance, seem to have been put to the service of making a philosophical declamation, since later on in the notebook there appears the opening *captatio benevolentiae* of an oration ‘in praise of sight’ that draws upon this material.<sup>40</sup>

It is in the context of these scholastic exercises, therefore, that we should understand the presence of Bacon’s *Valerius Terminus* in the notebook. Notwithstanding its somewhat outlying status in the volume, the compiler of the notebook seems to have found Bacon’s reflections on the licitness of human knowledge both attractive and useful enough to plan an extensive copy of his work – albeit that this plan was not ultimately followed through. In the hands of this student, therefore, Bacon’s treatise is not serving as the kind of bitter critique of the Aristotelianism of the schools with which the new philosophers’ writings in general, and Bacon’s in particular, would later become associated. On the contrary: the *Valerius Terminus* appears here to be providing an attractively eloquent source for the kind of intellectual self-justification that was as characteristic an aspect of early modern English university life as it is of Bacon’s own consciously extra-scholastic writings on the advancement and restitution of learning. Moreover, a good number of the authors who appear in the manuscript – including Scaliger, Huarte, Della Porta, and Panciroli – were also of great interest to Bacon as well.<sup>41</sup> Evidently, the student compiler of

<sup>38</sup> On the intellectual trajectory implied here, see further Richard Serjeantson, ‘Becoming a philosopher in seventeenth-century Britain’, in P. Anstey, ed., *The Oxford handbook of philosophy in seventeenth-century Britain* (Oxford, 2013), pp. 9–38.

<sup>39</sup> On the formal exercises of early modern English university study, see further Costello, *Scholastic curriculum*, esp. pp. 7–35.

<sup>40</sup> CUL, MS Add. 102, fos. 19r–20v (deriving from Charles de Bovelles, *Elementorum physicorum libri decem* (Paris, 1512), sigs. G6v–H1v); see also fo. 46v for the preface to an oration *in laudem visus* drawing on this material.

<sup>41</sup> Bacon, *Sylva*, sig. Z2r (vii. 694) (Scaliger); G. T. Olivieri, ‘Galen and Francis Bacon: faculties of the soul and the classification of knowledge’, in D. R. Kelley and R. H. Popkin, eds., *The shapes of knowledge from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment* (Dordrecht, 1991), pp. 61–81 (Huarte); Graham Rees, ‘Bacon’s *Sylva sylvarum*: prelude to remarks on the influence of the *Magia naturalis*’, in *Giovan Battista della Porta nell’Europa del suo tempo* (Naples, 1990), pp. 261–72 (Della Porta); Spedding, *Letters and life*, iv, p. 65 (Panciroli).

this academic notebook and the intellectually ambitious lawyer who had taken 'all knowledge for [his] province' shared a common intellectual culture.<sup>42</sup>

### III

In fact, however, we do not have to work entirely from internal evidence in assigning an identity to the compiler of our manuscript, for the front of the volume (fo. 2r) contains the elegant italic signature of its owner: 'Edmundus Læus', and also a date: '1607'.<sup>43</sup> Can this 'Læus' be identified?<sup>44</sup> We have seen that the contents of the manuscript are consistent with it being the work of a student at one of the two English universities, and this conjecture provides the means for discovering his identity. There was no likely student at Cambridge during this period with the name of Edmund Lee.<sup>45</sup> But there is a unique candidate from Oxford: one Edmund Leigh.<sup>46</sup>

Edmund Leigh, from Lancashire, matriculated as a 'plebeian' from Brasenose (a college with strong Lancashire and Cheshire connections)<sup>47</sup> on 24 October 1600 at the recorded age of fifteen, and was therefore probably born in 1584 or 1585.<sup>48</sup> Like other matriculants, he indicated his subscription to the Articles of Religion with his signature, in a youthful secretary-hand.<sup>49</sup> He was elected to a Nowell scholarship in January 1601, and went on to take his BA in 1604 and then his MA (curiously late) in July 1611, having previously become a founder's fellow in March of that year. His surname dutifully appears (in a scribal hand) among those other members of Brasenose 'who took or were to take the Oath of Allegiance' in July 1610.<sup>50</sup> But he had arrived at Oxford just too soon to sign the first Admissions Register of the Bodleian Library, a volume that is otherwise a treasure-trove for those seeking to match seventeenth-century signatures.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>42</sup> Quotation from Spedding, *Letters and life*, 1, p. 109 (Bacon to Lord Burghley, n.d., c. 1592).

<sup>43</sup> In fact the 'e' in the surname of the signature is both caudate (indicating the diphthong *æ*) and carries a dieresis (indicating that the two syllables should be pronounced separately), but it has not proved typographically possible to represent this here.

<sup>44</sup> The online manuscript catalogue of the CUL, *Janus* ([janus.lib.cam.ac.uk](http://janus.lib.cam.ac.uk), consulted Oct. 2012), assigns the volume to an 'Edmund Lee'; as we shall see, however, this is not quite correct.

<sup>45</sup> Or Lea, Ley, Legh, Leghe, Leigh, or Leighe. See *A Cambridge Alumni Database (ACAD)* ([venn.lib.cam.ac.uk](http://venn.lib.cam.ac.uk) (consulted Oct. 2012)).

<sup>46</sup> Joseph Foster, *Alumni Oxoniensis: the members of the University of Oxford, 1500–1714* (4 vols., Oxford, 1892), III, p. 897.

<sup>47</sup> J. Mordaunt Crook, *Brasenose: the biography of an Oxford college* (Oxford, 2008), pp. 25, 48.

<sup>48</sup> Andrew Clark, *Register of the University of Oxford, II: 1571–1622, Part 2: Matriculations and subscriptions* (Oxford, 1887), p. 242. Stephen Porter, 'University and society', in *Seventeenth-century Oxford*, p. 56, notes that in 15 per cent of cases the age given at matriculation was not accurate.

<sup>49</sup> Oxford University Archives, SP/38, fo. 100v.

<sup>50</sup> Oxford University Archives, SP/E/6/1, fo. 6r (he evidently corresponds to one of the three appearances of 'Leigh' on this list).

<sup>51</sup> Bodleian Library records e. 533. Leigh's name appears instead in the preliminary list of 'Graduati ex Coll: Æneo n[aso]', again in a scribal hand (fo. 5r). I am grateful to Dr William Poole for drawing my attention to this document.

Leigh pursued a long academic career at Brasenose, with ten years as a student and thirty more as a fellow, at a time when the average tenure of a college fellowship was only a decade.<sup>52</sup> He served as lecturer in Natural Philosophy in 1614,<sup>53</sup> praelector publicus in 1615–16, Greek lecturer in 1617 and 1630, custos jocalium (keeper of the treasures, a post combined with that of library-keeper) several times in the 1620s,<sup>54</sup> chaplain (at a college that still lacked a chapel),<sup>55</sup> and, frequently across the 1620s and 1630s, as junior bursar, senior bursar, and vice-principal.<sup>56</sup> In the course of this career he will have become one of the six senior fellows who, by virtue of the fines they divided among themselves, ‘were able to maintain themselves sumptuously while the juniors lived like beggars’.<sup>57</sup>

Leigh’s religious sympathies are elusive but not entirely out of reach. Brasenose in general was a college of godly sympathies in this period.<sup>58</sup> During the tenure of his fellowship, Leigh presented to his college a thirteenth-century manuscript of the Vulgate.<sup>59</sup> More tellingly, on the death in 1607 of the prominent puritan John Rainolds, president of Corpus Christi College, Leigh was among the several dozen ‘Students of several Colleges and Halls in Oxon, especially such that had sate at his [Rainolds’] feet and were his admirers’, who received books from Rainolds’s library.<sup>60</sup> We have already observed Leigh’s interest in a question that greatly exercised Rainolds: the wickedness of stage-plays.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>52</sup> Porter, ‘University and society’, p. 67. A glimpse into life at Brasenose during Leigh’s period as a student is offered by Edward Bagshaw in Robert Bolton, *Last and learned worke of the foure last things* (London, 1632), sigs. a6r–b6v.

<sup>53</sup> [Charles Buller Heberdon], *Brasenose college register, 1509–1909* (2 vols., Oxford, 1909), II, p. 97, and further G. H. Wakeling, ‘History of the college, 1603–1660’, in *Brasenose College quatercentenary monographs* (3 vols., Oxford, 1909), II, Part 1, monograph XI, p. 22.

<sup>54</sup> [Heberdon], *Register*, II, pp. 88, 95, 92 (s.n. ‘Lea, Edmund’), and further I. G. Philip and Paul Morgan, ‘Libraries, books, and printing’, in *Seventeenth-century Oxford*, p. 678.

<sup>55</sup> Wakeling, ‘History of the college, 1603–1660’, p. 67; John Newman, ‘The architectural setting’, in *Seventeenth-century Oxford*, pp. 136, 171.

<sup>56</sup> Foster, *Alumni Oxoniensis*, III, p. 897; [Heberdon], *Register*, I, p. 92.

<sup>57</sup> H. E. Salter and Mary D. Lobel, eds., *A history of the county of Oxford*, III: *The University of Oxford* (London, 1954), p. 209.

<sup>58</sup> Nicholas Tyacke, ‘Religious controversy’, in *Seventeenth-century Oxford*, pp. 574, 579.

<sup>59</sup> MS Brasenose 2 [consigned to the Bodleian]. A contemporary printed slip at fo. 7v records the gift: ‘... ex dono Edmundi Leigh, S. Theol. Bacc. & ejusdem Collegij Socij’. Cf. STC 3368.5, s.n. ‘Leigh, Edmund’, which records this gift-plate (dating it to c. 1635), but which erroneously has Leigh as ‘b. 1594 or 5’.

<sup>60</sup> Anthony Wood, *The history and antiquities of the University of Oxford*, ed. John Gutch (Oxford, 1796), II, p. 294 (*Annals*, 1608). Bodleian Library, MS Wood D. 10, fo. 89r, records that Leigh received: Ennius, *Quae supersunt fragmenta*, ed. Girolamo Colonna (Naples, 1585/1590/1599); Arsenios Apostolios, ed., *Scholia in septem Euripidis tragædias* (Venice, 1534); Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Diodorus Siculus, Appian of Alexandria, and Cassius Dio, *Fragmenta*, ed. Fulvio Orsini (Antwerp, 1582); and an octavo edition of Silius Italicus (I am grateful to Mordechai Feingold for the reference to this manuscript).

<sup>61</sup> John Rainolds, *Th’ overthrow of stage-playes* (Middleburg, 1599).

As all this suggests, and notwithstanding the medical materials at the end of our notebook, Leigh became a divine. He was ordained a deacon on the last day of February 1613, again subscribing the Articles of Religion, and he went on to take his Bachelor of Divinity degree in 1619.<sup>62</sup> In June 1629, he briefly became perpetual vicar to the Brasenose advowson of Gillingham & Upbery in Kent, but resigned the living eighteen months later, in November 1630.<sup>63</sup> Leigh did ultimately take up a living permanently, however, since he is recorded as having been presented to one in May 1640; and in April 1641 (shortly after the imprisonment of Archbishop Laud, which may perhaps be significant), he resigned his fellowship from an increasingly indebted Brasenose.<sup>64</sup>

The living Leigh had acquired was in the parish of South Moreton, then in Berkshire though now in Oxfordshire, but still only thirteen miles from Oxford.<sup>65</sup> A will proved on 20 October 1658 places 'Edmond Leigh, clerk', as its minister, and other evidence confirms that he had taken up this living in 1640.<sup>66</sup> Leigh, who had resided in celibate Oxford until the advanced age of fifty-five, was clearly long reconciled to the single estate, and indeed no wife or children are mentioned in the South Moreton will. A specific bequest of the great folio volume of the ninety-nine *Sermons* (1629) of the warden of New College, and subsequent bishop of Bath and Wells, Arthur Lake, reinforces the impression of Leigh as a divine of godly sympathies with an Oxford connection.

This disregarded Oxford divine is unquestionably the 'Edmundus Læus' who kept the notebook containing the *Valerius Terminus*: comparison of its signature with Leigh's diaconal subscription of 1613 confirms the identity beyond doubt.<sup>67</sup> When he started the notebook in 1607, Leigh would have been working towards his MA degree, and the reading and studies recorded in the manuscript are entirely consistent with this status. Moreover, the work that he was undertaking, including the copy of the *Valerius Terminus*, would have prepared him very well for his subsequent office as the Natural Philosophy lecturer in 1614. Indeed, some of the later material in the volume may even reflect that function.

<sup>62</sup> *Clergy of the Church of England database (CCEd)*, s.n. 'Leigh, Edmund 1613–1613' [www.theclergydatabase.org.uk](http://www.theclergydatabase.org.uk) (consulted Oct. 2012).

<sup>63</sup> *CCEd*, s.n. 'Leigh, Edmund (1629–1630)' (consulted Oct. 2012), citing Lambeth Palace Library, Abbot's Register, vol. III. See also [Heberdon], *Register*, II, p. 9; A. J. Butler, 'The college estates and advowsons', in *Quatercentenary monographs*, I, monograph VI, p. 48.

<sup>64</sup> [Heberdon], *Register*, I, p. 92; John Twigg, 'College finances', in *Seventeenth-century Oxford*, p. 775.

<sup>65</sup> *CCEd*, location ID 2058 (consulted Jan. 2013).

<sup>66</sup> The National Archives, Kew, PROB 11/282/322. The proprietor of the advowson was John Holloway, who had last presented to it in 1640 (P. H. Ditchfield and William Page, eds., *A history of the county of Berkshire*, III (London, 1923), p. 504); this 'John Holloway, of the City of Oxon, Gent', is also a beneficiary of Leigh's will.

<sup>67</sup> Oxfordshire History Centre, Oxford Diocesan Papers e. 9 (Subscription Book), fo. 55r.

## IV

It remains unclear how Francis Bacon's early and unpublished philosophical treatise came to be copied into the notebook of a diligent student at Oxford University. We might note that on 14 March 1609, the then principal of Brasenose, Thomas Singleton, was admitted to Gray's Inn – of which Bacon was a prominent member.<sup>68</sup> Alternatively, we might wonder whether it was Bacon's immediately superior legal officer, Lord Chancellor Ellesmere – a former student of Brasenose, and subsequently a generous benefactor to it – who provided the connection between the Inns of Court and Leigh's Oxford college.<sup>69</sup>

However Edmund Leigh obtained his copy of Bacon's treatise, he was not in fact the only Oxford-educated divine to read a manuscript of the unpublished *Valerius Terminus* with interest and attention, for it was also known to the rather more prominent figure of William Twisse (1577/8–1646). Twisse, 'doubtless the most able disputer in England', in the judgment of the Scotsman Robert Ballie,<sup>70</sup> was a few years older than Leigh, and was educated first at Winchester College and then at New College, Oxford (admitted 1596; BA, 1600; MA, 1605; BD, 1612). But if our reconstruction of Leigh's religious sympathies is correct, then he shared them with Twisse, for across the 1620s and 1630s Twisse resisted the Book of Sports and the ecclesiological innovations of his old Oxford acquaintance William Laud, and ultimately became prolocutor of the Westminster Assembly in 1643.<sup>71</sup>

In that same year, Twisse also contributed a preface to the English translation of Joseph Mede's *Clavis apocalyptica*. He began it with the recollection that he had 'lighted some times upon a wittie interpretation' of Daniel 12:4 ('Many shall run to and fro and knowledge shall be increased') 'in a certain *Manuscript*' – Twisse does not name its author – which had glossed the text in these terms: 'That the opening of the world by Navigation and Commerce, and the increase of knowledge, should meet both in one time, or age.' Notwithstanding a doubt he goes on to imply about the 'congruitie' of this interpretation with Daniel's text, Twisse did observe that this reading was

<sup>68</sup> Joseph Foster, *The Register of Admissions to Gray's Inn, 1521–1889* (London, 1889), p. 121.

<sup>69</sup> J. H. Baker, 'Egerton, Thomas, first Viscount Brackley (1540–1617)', *Oxford dictionary of national biography* (ODNB); [Heberdon], *Register*, 1, p. 25. My analysis of the list of over sixty of Egerton's clients given by V. B. Heltzel, 'Sir Thomas Egerton as patron', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 11 (1948), pp. 105–27 (pp. 124–7), identifies six members of Brasenose. Leigh also entered Brasenose at the same time as a young Cheshire gentleman also named Thomas Egerton (Clark, *Register*, p. 242) who, though not a descendant, may have been a kinsman of the lord chancellor.

<sup>70</sup> Quoted in Tom Webster, *Godly clergy in early Stuart England: the Caroline puritan movement, c. 1620–1643* (Cambridge, 1997), p. 174.

<sup>71</sup> A. Gordon, 'Twisse, William, D. D. (1578?–1646)', *Dictionary of national biography*; E. C. Vernon, 'Twisse, William (1577/8–1646)', *ODNB*; N. Tyacke, 'Anglican attitudes: some recent writings on English religious history, from the Reformation to the Civil War', *Journal of British Studies*, 35 (1996), pp. 139–67, at p. 160.

indeed ‘justified by experience’.<sup>72</sup> The point, however, is that – as Charles Webster percipiently realized – Twisse is surely here referring to a manuscript of the unpublished *Valerius Terminus*, the opening chapter of which contains a passage that directly matches his account.<sup>73</sup>

It seems unlikely that Twisse had seen the manuscript of the *Valerius Terminus* that is now in the Harleian collection, which was probably then in the hands either of Bacon’s executors or of his former chaplain, the royalist William Rawley. We can also be sure that Twisse was not using the copy in Leigh’s notebook, for this breaks off before the passage that caught Twisse’s eye. Yet these two divines’ shared interest in Bacon’s theological justification of philosophical knowledge is telling, for as well as being sympathetic to one another ideologically, they were also proximate to each another geographically: Twisse maintained his connections with Oxford (he was present at the 1634 Act),<sup>74</sup> and after Leigh left the university to minister to his flock in South Moreton he would have been only fifteen miles from Twisse’s Berkshire parish of Newbury. A personal connection between these two neighbouring and like-minded ministers is not improbable. But whatever the precise circumstances may be, the new manuscript confirms the hint that Bacon’s unpublished *Valerius Terminus*, circulating in one or more copies, though probably without his name attached, was available and of interest to certain godly but also philosophically minded Oxford divines in the earlier seventeenth century.<sup>75</sup>

## V

But in what form was Bacon’s treatise available to these readers? To answer this, we must turn to consider the text of the new manuscript. It is notable that the text of the new manuscript of the *Valerius Terminus* is similar to, but by no means identical with, the version that we have known hitherto. The differences between the received text and the one newly discovered must therefore be accounted for. Differences between early modern manuscripts of the same text often indicate no more than the carelessness of a particular scribe, or the

<sup>72</sup> William Twisse, ‘A preface’, to Joseph Mede, *The key of the Revelation*, trans. Richard More (London, 1643), sig. A3r.

<sup>73</sup> Charles Webster, *The great instauration: science, medicine and reform, 1626–1660* (2nd edn, Bern, 2002; first publ. 1975), pp. 21–3; Bacon, ‘Valerius Terminus’, in *Works*, III, p. 221 (BL, MS Harley 6463, p. 10). I am most grateful to Mordechai Feingold for recalling my attention to Webster’s research on this point.

<sup>74</sup> Anthony Milton, *Catholic and reformed: the Roman and Protestant churches in English Protestant thought, 1600–1640* (Cambridge, 1995), p. 433.

<sup>75</sup> On Twisse’s philosophical commitments, see further Sarah Hutton, ‘Thomas Jackson, Oxford Platonist, and William Twisse, Aristotelian’, *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 39 (1978), pp. 635–52. It is possible that the very Baconian address ‘To the venerable Artists and younger Students in Divinity, in the famous Vniuersity of Cambridge’ by William Watts (adm. Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, 1606; BA 1611; MA 1614; incorp. Oxford 1618), in *The strange and dangerous voyage of Captaine Thomas Iames* (London, 1633), also draws (sig. S2v) on this passage of the *Valerius Terminus*.

accumulation of errors over a repeated process of professional copying.<sup>76</sup> In other instances, however, they may point to the existence of substantive authorial revision.

Bacon, moreover, was an inveterate reviser of his writings. The *Advancement of learning* (1605) was revised into the *De augmentis scientiarum* (1623); the unfinished manuscript treatise *Of the true greatnes of the kingdome of Brittain* displays several layers of authorial revision and in due course became the essay 'Of the true greatness of kingdoms and estates' (1612); the *Abecedarium novum naturæ* exists in two subtly different forms, one of them a revision; the *De vijs mortis* is a morass of second thoughts; and the *Essays* themselves were transformed from their first hasty and unlooked-for appearance in print in 1597 to being (as Bacon himself put it) 'un Oeuvre nouveau' in 1625.<sup>77</sup> Moreover, we already have clear evidence that the *Valerius Terminus* was subject to extensive revision on the basis of the Harleian manuscript alone, for Bacon himself wrote at the beginning of the treatise the comment (subsequently deleted): '*The first chapter perfited.*'<sup>78</sup>

The Cambridge and the Harleian texts of the *Valerius Terminus* are indeed sufficiently different as to suggest that they record two different states of Bacon's treatise. We may divide the variants (presented in the edition below) between the two versions into three broad kinds. The first kind are those which are obviously errors on the part of the scribe – or, potentially, which already existed in the exemplar he was copying. The reference in the Cambridge text to goodness as being guarded from all 'excesse' of ill is intellectually unsatisfactory: the Harleian text's 'access' is much more plausible theologically. The misreading here can therefore be diagnosed as a memory of the correct 'excess' that the scribe had copied immediately above.

The second class of variants are those which are undecideable per se, that is to say, those which might arise equally either from scribal corruption or from authorial revision. A variant between 'his approaching' (Cambridge University Library (*CUL*)) and 'this approaching' (Harleian MS (*Harl.*)), for instance, is of very limited consequence in regard to sense, and might equally arise either from scribal carelessness or from authorial tinkering. Into this class, too, might be placed the instances of verbal rearrangement, such as 'guide & rule' (*CUL*) vs. 'rule and guide' (*Harl.*).

The third and most interesting class of variants, however, are those which are unlikely to arise from scribal inattention and which therefore suggest authorial revision on Bacon's part. Not all of these cases are clear-cut, but taken together

<sup>76</sup> See further Harold Love, *The culture and commerce of texts: scribal publication in seventeenth-century England* (Boston, MA, 1998).

<sup>77</sup> BL, MS Harley 7021, fos. 25r–42v (*CELM*, BcF \*232); Graham Rees, 'Introduction', to Graham Rees, ed., *The Oxford Francis Bacon*, XIII (Oxford, 2000), pp. lxxii–lxxiii (*Abecedarium*); 'De vijs mortis', in Rees, ed., *Oxford Francis Bacon*, VI, pp. 269–359; quotation from Spedding, *Letters and life*, VII, p. 536 (Bacon to the Marquis d'Effiat).

<sup>78</sup> BL, MS Harley 6463, unfoliated page prior to fo. 1\*r.

they add up to a picture of an author returning to and improving the precision of expression of his treatise. A variant between ‘dominion’ (*CUL*) and ‘kingdom’ (*Harl.*) is unlikely to be owing to scribal error; indeed, it is even possible that it is a change that reflects an intervenient accession of King James to his rich southern realm. If so, this would place the composition of the Cambridge text (though not of course Leigh’s copying of it, which occurred at some point from 1607) before April 1603.<sup>79</sup> Other additions in the Harleian manuscript tend in the direction of greater precision: ‘sollicite’ (*CUL*) becomes ‘most sollicite’ (*Harl.*); ‘creatures’ (*CUL*) become ‘inferiour creatures’ (*Harl.*); ‘fit’ (*CUL*) becomes ‘fittest’ (*Harl.*); ‘position’ (*CUL*) becomes ‘position or firmament, namely’ (*Harl.*). As these instances suggest, revision would seem to be taking place *from* the version recorded in the Cambridge manuscript *to* the version recorded in the Harleian one.

There is further evidence to support the view that the Cambridge manuscript records a version of Bacon’s text that is earlier than that of the Harleian manuscript. A passage at the opening of the *Valerius Terminus* is very similar indeed to one that also appears in Book 1 of Bacon’s *Advancement of learning* (1605). In the Cambridge manuscript this passage asserts that the contemplation of God’s creatures can provide no knowledge of the nature of God himself, but does give rise to ‘admiration’. But in both the Harleian manuscript and the published *Advancement*, the equivalent passage speaks not of ‘admiration’, but instead of ‘wonder’.<sup>80</sup> It would appear from its presence in print that this latter term reflects Bacon’s considered decision on the most appropriate word – and therefore that the Harleian manuscript records the later version of the *Valerius Terminus*.

We have said, furthermore, that the ‘annotations of Hermes Stella’, promised in the title found in both manuscripts, are not extant. But by the time of the Harleian version, they are clearly planned, for at some point after the text had been copied, Bacon went through the manuscript and marked the passages to which each annotation should apply. These indications of the appearance of the commentary are, however, entirely absent from the – therefore presumably earlier – Cambridge version.

Yet, the most striking difference between the two versions concerns the division of the treatise – or, rather, the lack of it. The Harleian text is divided into twenty-three different chapters numbered between one and twenty-six, but not in order, and at very various stages of completion. The Cambridge manuscript, by contrast, lacks the chapter-title that goes with its text in the Harleian manuscript, and indeed does not suggest that the treatise is divided

<sup>79</sup> On this point see also the discussion at n. 12, above.

<sup>80</sup> *CUL*, MS Add. 102, fo. 29r; BL, MS Harley 6463, p. 4; Michael Kiernan, ed., *The Oxford Francis Bacon*, iv: *The advancement of learning* (Oxford, 2000), pp. xxxix–xl, 8, 209. See also Francis Bacon, *Cele două cărți despre excelența și progresul cunoașterii divine și umane*, ed. and trans. Dana Jalobeanu and Grigore Vida (Bucharest, 2012), p. 70 n. 43. I am grateful to Dr Jalobeanu for suggesting this point.



into chapters at all. (It shares this undivided quality with another early philosophical writing by Bacon, the *Cogitata et visa*.) It is this difference above all which confirms that the two scribes were copying from quite different exemplars. It also strongly suggests that the version Leigh was copying was one that had not yet taken on the chapter divisions of the Harleian text. Hence, by extension, the Cambridge text does not seem to have taken on the ambitious scope that Bacon ultimately planned for the treatise in the Harleian version.

It is even possible that a very rough indication of how much Bacon had written at that earlier point may be provided by the blank pages in the Cambridge manuscript, for if its scribe had gone on to fill the thirteen pages left blank for his work then there would have been enough room (at c. 440 words per page) to copy out the whole of the first chapter of Bacon's text (as its c. 3100 words appear in the Harleian manuscript) and then the same amount again.<sup>81</sup> If this is the case, then the circulating copy of the *Valerius Terminus* will have been shorter and quite different from what it later became: a small mustard seed that would eventually multiply into a Great Instauration.

## VI

The date of Leigh's notebook now provides us with an independent *terminus ante quem* of c. 1607 for Bacon's composition of one version, at least, of the *Valerius Terminus*, with vestigial indications that it may record a pre-1603 text. Moreover, for the owner of the notebook into which it was copied – a student of natural philosophy who, notwithstanding his medical reading, probably already suspected that it was his destiny to become a divine – Bacon's treatise seems to have been quite compatible with his MA studies of a wide variety of other printed works of late Renaissance philosophy. This student, the Lancashire scholarship boy Edmund Leigh, may even have found in Bacon's English treatise an example of the kind of oration on the theological lawfulness of human knowledge that he himself might hope in due course to deliver (though in Latin) in the Oxford schools.<sup>82</sup>

Though he did not permit it for the Latin precursors of the *Instauratio magna*, Bacon does seem to have allowed his earliest English philosophical treatise to be made 'publike'.<sup>83</sup> Leigh's manuscript is thus one of the earliest surviving testimonies to the reception of Francis Bacon's philosophy. Nonetheless, the absence of Bacon's name from the copy raises the intriguing possibility that, far from merely being a learned conceit, Bacon's adoption of the persona of 'Valerius Terminus' was deliberately done to conceal his authorship – and that it served this purpose successfully. It seems likely that his treatise's readers

<sup>81</sup> I am grateful to Dr Kathryn Murphy for suggesting this calculation.

<sup>82</sup> We might recall in this connection that the English translation of Bacon's *De dignitate et augmentis scientiarum* published at Oxford in 1640 was made by Leigh's contemporary Gilbert Watts (BA 1611; MA 1614; BD 1623), a fellow of Lincoln College.

<sup>83</sup> See n. 19, above.

would have been distinctly surprised to learn that its author was his majesty's solicitor-general.

As we have seen, the brief text in Leigh's manuscript sheds some potentially far-reaching light on the evolution of Bacon's treatise. But it is no less notable that this transcription of the *Valerius Terminus* is the first purely 'user' copy to be discovered of an early portion of Francis Bacon's *Instauratio magna*. It is the only unprinted portion of Bacon's philosophical life-work that is known to have escaped from Bacon's study and made its way, unchaperoned, in the acquisitive scribal republic of the earlier seventeenth century. As such, Edmund Leigh's modest scholastic notebook is an unexpectedly momentous document.

*Textual note.* The following edition of CUL, MS Additional 102, fos. 28v–29r is collated against BL, MS Harley 6463, pp. 1–4 (assigned the siglum *Ha*). Roman type is used for the scribe's principal secretary hand; *italic* indicates his use of a display script. Underlining indicates letters supplied by editorial expansion. [Square brackets] in the text appear in the original manuscript; text enclosed in ⟨angle brackets⟩ is editorial; text within ⟨guillemets⟩ has been deleted; `primes` indicate supralinear insertion. **Boldface** indicates where the Cambridge text varies substantively from the Harleian version. In the textual notes, **Sans Serif** indicates the presence of Bacon's own hand in the Harleian manuscript, while a paragraph (¶) indicates a new line. The call-outs in *Ha* for the planned annotations of 'Hermes Stella' are not recorded here.

⟨fo. 28v⟩ *Valerius Terminus of the interpretation of nature with the annotations of Hermes Stella.*<sup>1</sup>

In the divine nature both religion & philosophie hath acknowledged goodnes in perfection, science or providence comprehending all things, and absolute soveraignty or **dominion**.<sup>2</sup>

In aspiring to the throne of power the Angells transgressed & fell. In presuming to come within the oracle of **godes**<sup>3</sup> knowledge man transgressed & fell. But in pursute toward the similitude of Godes goodnes<sup>4</sup> putt in motion or applied, neither man nor spirite hath<sup>5</sup> transgressed or shall transgresse.

The Angell of light that was, when hee presumed before his fall said within himselfe I will ascend and bee like vnto the highest [not *God*] but the *highest*.] To bee like<sup>6</sup> god in goodnes was no parte of his æmulation: knowledge (being by creation an Angell of light) was not the want **that**<sup>7</sup> did<sup>8</sup> sollicite him: onely because hee was a minister hee aymed att a supremacy therefore his clyming or ascension was turned to<sup>9</sup> a throwing downe or precipitation.

<sup>1</sup> Valerius ... Stella] **Of the Interpretacion of nature** (¶) Cap. 1. Of the limites and end of knowledge. *Ha* <sup>2</sup> dominion] kingdome *Ha* <sup>3</sup> godes] *om Ha*

<sup>4</sup> goodnes] goodnes or <lawe> `love` (which is one thing, for <lawe> `love` is nothing els but goodnes *Ha* <sup>5</sup> hath] ever hath *Ha* <sup>6</sup> like] like to *Ha*

<sup>7</sup> that] which *Ha* <sup>8</sup> did] did most *Ha* <sup>9</sup> to] into *Ha*

Man on the other side, when hee was tempted before hee fell had **this suggestion** offered to him,<sup>10</sup> That hee **would**<sup>11</sup> bee like vnto God, but howe? not simply, but in parte *knowing good & evill*. For being in his creation invested with sovereignty of all creatures<sup>12</sup> hee was not **so**<sup>13</sup> needy of power &<sup>14</sup> dominion: But againe being a spirite newly inclosed in a body of earth, hee was **fit**<sup>15</sup> to bee allured with appetite of light & liberty of knowledge. Therefore **his**<sup>16</sup> approaching & intruding into Godes secrettes & mysteries was rewarded with a **farther**<sup>17</sup> removing & estranging from Godes presence.

But as to the goodnes of God there is no danger **of**<sup>18</sup> contending or advancing towardes a similitude thereof, as that which is open & propounded to our imitation. For that voice whereof the heathen & all other errors of religion haue confessed **ever**<sup>19</sup> that it soundes not like man *Love your enemies, Bee like<sup>20</sup> unto your heafo. 29r}venly father who<sup>21</sup> suffereth his raine to fall<sup>22</sup> upon the just & vnjust.*<sup>23</sup> doth well declare that wee can in that point committ no excesse. So againe wee find it often repeated in the ould lawe. *Bee yee<sup>24</sup> holy as I am holy*. And what is holiness elles but goodnes, as wee consider<sup>25</sup> seperate & guarded from all mixture & **excesse** of **ill**:<sup>26</sup> wherefore seeing that knowledge is of the number of those things which are to bee accepted of with caution & distinction: being nowe to open a fountaine, such as it is not easie to discerne, where the issues & streames thereof will take & fall I **haue**<sup>27</sup> thought it good & necessarie in the first place to make a stronge and sound head or bancke to **guide** & **rule**<sup>28</sup> the course of the waters, by setting downe this position<sup>29</sup> *That all knowledge is to bee limited by religion & to bee referred to use & action*.

For if any man shall thinke by viewe & enquiry into these sensible & materiall things to attaine to anie light for the revealing of the nature &<sup>30</sup> will of God, hee shall dangerously abuse himselfe. It is trewe that the contemplation of the creatures of God hath for end as to the nature<sup>31</sup> of the creatures themselues knowledge, but as to the nature of God no knowledge, but **admiration**,<sup>32</sup> which is nothing elles but contemplation broken of, or loosing it selfe.

Nay farther (as it was aptlie said by one of *Plato's* schoole) the Sense of man resembled<sup>33</sup> the Sunne, which openeth & revealeth the terrestriall globe, but obscureth & concealeth the <terrestriall> `celestiall':<sup>34</sup> So doth the sense discover naturall things, but darken & shutt upp divine. And this appeareth sufficiently in that there is no proceeding in invention of knowledge but by

<sup>10</sup> this suggestion offered to him] offered vnto him this suggestion *Ha*

<sup>11</sup> would] should *Ha*      <sup>12</sup> creatures] inferiour creatures *Ha*      <sup>13</sup> so] *om Ha*

<sup>14</sup> &] or *Ha*      <sup>15</sup> fit] fittest *Ha*      <sup>16</sup> his] this *Ha*      <sup>17</sup> further] father *Ha*

<sup>18</sup> of] in *Ha*      <sup>19</sup> confessed ever] euer confessed *Ha*      <sup>20</sup> like] you like *Ha*

<sup>21</sup> who] that *Ha*      <sup>22</sup> fall] fall both *Ha*      <sup>23</sup> vnjust] the vniust *Ha*      <sup>24</sup> yee] you *Ha*

<sup>25</sup> consider] consider it *Ha*      <sup>26</sup> excesse of ill] all accesse of evil (¶) *Ha*

<sup>27</sup> haue] *om Ha*      <sup>28</sup> guide & rule] rule and guide *Ha*

<sup>29</sup> position] position or firmament, namely *Ha*      <sup>30</sup> &] or *Ha*

<sup>31</sup> nature] natures *Ha*      <sup>32</sup> admiration] wonder *Ha*

<sup>33</sup> resembled] resembleth *Ha*      <sup>34</sup> <Correction made in a different ink.>

similitude, and God is only selfelike having nothing in common with any creatures<sup>35</sup> otherwise than in<sup>36</sup> shadowe & trope. Therefore attend his will as **hee**<sup>37</sup> himselfe openeth it, and giue vnto faith that which vnto faith beelongeth For more worthie it is to beleiue than to thinke or knowe, considering that in knowledge (as wee nowe are capable of it) the mind suffreth from **the impression of**<sup>38</sup> inferior natures; but ⟨*catchword*: 'in all'⟩ ⟨fo. 29v⟩

<sup>35</sup> creatures] creature *Ha*

<sup>37</sup> hee] *om Ha*

<sup>36</sup> in] as in *Ha*

<sup>38</sup> the impression of] *om Ha*