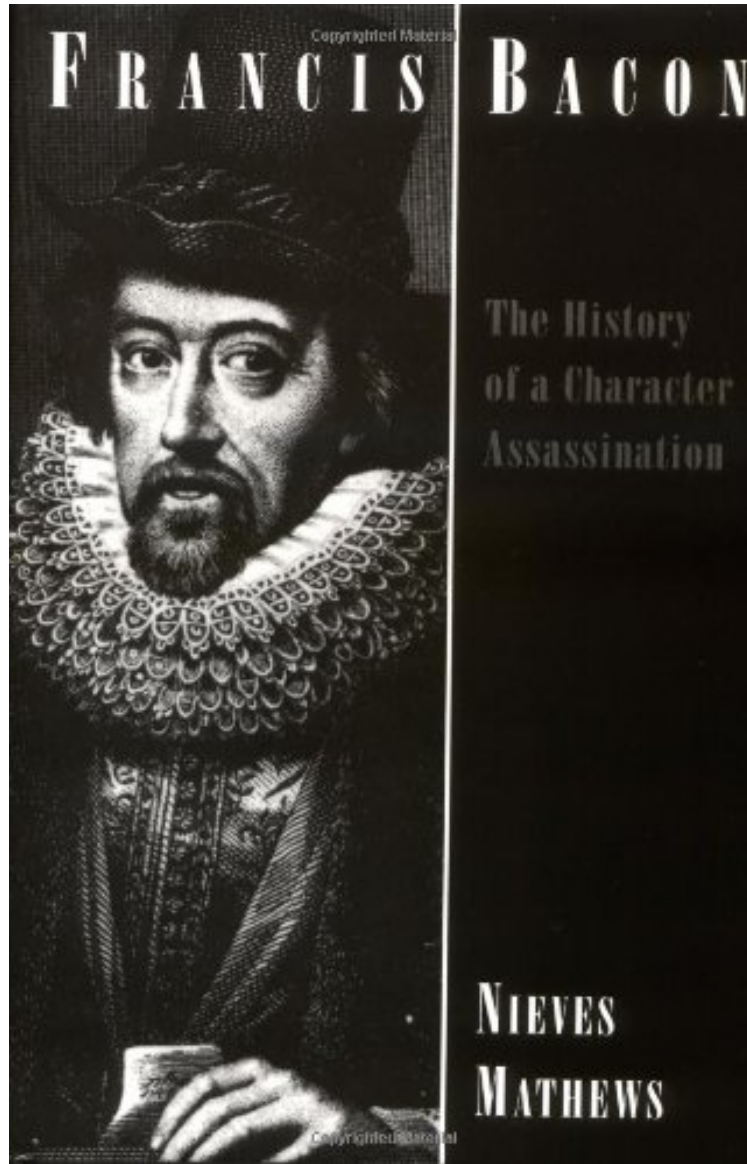


[Free pdf] Francis Bacon: The History of a Character Assassination

Francis Bacon: The History of a Character Assassination

Nieves Mathews

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Nieves Mathews : Francis Bacon: The History of a Character Assassination before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Francis Bacon: The History of a Character Assassination:

8 of 21 people found the following review helpful. MORE INTERESTING THAN ITS SUBJECT IS ITS WRITER By Constance Cumbey Nieves Hayat de Madariaga Mathews told us in her 1996 book about her subject, Sir Francis Bacon. Of much more interest is what she, the biological mother of Luis and Javier Solana, told us about herself in that very book: 1. Her spiritual teacher was Osho. This is a name better known to American audiences, particularly

Antelope, Oregon ones as Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh.² Her own fascination with the 'invisible college.' As Javier Solana now holds extraordinary powers over Europe and is about to receive more, his antecedents deserve a more careful review. Nieves Mathews work is perhaps a good launching place.¹⁸ of 23 people found the following review helpful. Nieves Mathews Brings Home The Bacon Restores a Reputation By Julia Bono The corrupt period during the reign of King James in 17th century England saw many villainous characters get into power or plot to get into power. Sir Francis Bacon, visionary philosopher, philanthropist, statesman, scientist, poet, politician and judge had to contend with many of them during his lifetime. Perhaps this is why he intuited at the end, "For my name and memory I leave it to men's charitable speech's in foreign nations and the next ages; and to my own countrymen after some time be past." He seemed to realize that his reputation would grow like that of many other visionaries who were best appreciated well after their death. Sadly, to this day Bacon's rich legacy contends with villains in the form of unjust literary critics, commentators and biographers who have left a deeper stain on his name than any of his contemporaries. Nevertheless, Bacon's star appears to be rising with the publication in 1996 by Yale University Press of Nieves Mathews' book Francis Bacon: The History of a Character Assassination. In one long fell swoop she offers the interested reader a reevaluation of the poignant politically-charged events during Bacon's life by allowing all of the prejudiced detractors and spiteful critics that ever had an ax to grind on Bacon to air their views again and then dismissing them one by one for their lack of objectivity and personal animosity. Ten years in the making this tremendous labour of love provides more than adequate scope for the interested reader with over one hundred pages just in annotated notes alone, rounded out with an extensive twenty-page bibliography. Mathews starts out with an epigram quoted from one of Bacon's chief antagonists, Edward Coke, "The slander of a dead man is a living fault." The humorous irony here is that the insensitive Coke was a menace to anyone living who stood in the way of his political aspirations and Francis Bacon experienced this first hand. Coke had orchestrated Bacon's downfall from the Chancellorship from behind the scenes and he also slandered Bacon with false bribery charges. After Bacon's death, many uninformed commentators on Bacon's life failed to see that he was actually an honest man who was unfairly framed by Coke's influence and so the charges stuck through succeeding generations. The above quote from Coke now serves sentence on all those misguided by Coke who refuse to recognize historical truth from fiction. Much of the later widespread misrepresentation of Bacon as a dishonest, self-serving person originated in 1837 with Thomas Macauley's, "Essay on Bacon." In her book, Mathews points out that Macauley admitted to being motivated by his overzealous need to become famous at the expense of his subject. The book also goes into detail over the agonizing position that Bacon found himself in during the Essex insurrection period. Bacon was forced to prosecute his friend Robert Devereux, the Earl of Essex or face charges himself. The Earl was the victim of his own hot temperament and also suffered from the shrewd traps hatched by Robert Cecil. Essex was eventually found guilty of treason, and was executed. Mathew illustrates how the unfortunate outcome of the trial for Bacon was being unfairly tagged with being opportunistic and disloyal to his friend by later day critics who were ignorant of the facts in the case while dismissing Bacon's own summary report of the trial. Supporters of Bacon who recognize that both he and Essex shared a common bloodline as children of Elizabeth I, will be disappointed that Mathews' book does not go in that direction. She overlooks such clues as the signature carved by Essex over the entrance to his cell at the Tower of London where he used the Welsh spelling Robart Tidir (Robert Tudor) as a message to posterity that he was Elizabeth's son. This bit of history can still be seen in the Beaumont section of the Tower in London and its implications are still deliberately kept secret by the Tower guards since it contradicts the "official" story of Elizabeth's reputation as the Virgin Queen. However, this new book is truly a great contribution toward reestablishing Francis Bacon as both an honest man and an amazingly versatile genius whose prose and style influenced later poets such as Byron and Shelley and writers such as Coleridge and Emerson, in addition to making his mark on literary contemporaries like Ben Jonson. Mathews has also done her research on the Manes Verulamiani, the book of eulogies that was written and published by Bacon's own peers at the time of his death and contains pages of lavish praise which salute him as a highly-esteemed poet and dramatist. This often-overlooked book of eulogies is an important testimony to the fact that Bacon was a great poet and dramatist. It also acknowledges him as being associated with Pallas Athena, the goddess of wisdom who shakes her spear at ignorance. It is her nickname: "The Spearshaker" that is the origin for the word Shakespeare that currently adorns Francis Bacon's most famous literary achievement. Unfortunately, Mathews tiptoes over the Shakespeare Authorship question, perhaps because it is not part of the domain and purpose of her book. However, one cannot help but wonder what she secretly thinks on the matter of Authorship after having spent so many years closely examining Bacon's life.

Beyond his own country Francis Bacon is remembered as a great man, founder of modern science and philosophy, a just judge and a teacher of kings. In England and America, however, he is more commonly seen as a cruel, corrupt and power-hungry politician. Which appraisal is correct? In this re-evaluation of one of Britain's most significant figures, Nieves Mathews examines the charges against Bacon and reveals how distorted facts can be recast as historical truths.

From Publishers Weekly The subtitle of Mathews's book indicates her steadfast intent: she seeks to restore to English essayist and philosopher Francis Bacon (1561-1626) his good name. Bacon's personal reputation, she contends, has

been unduly defamed by historians (in particular, Thomas Babington Macaulay). The crimes traditionally ascribed to Bacon have involved his supposed betrayal of his patron, the Earl of Essex, and his corruption during his tenure as Lord Chancellor. Few will question the thoroughness of Mathews's exhaustive research, especially with regard to the primary sources, which she quotes with sureness and frequency. Indeed, in the first third of the book, scarcely three sentences pass without a quotation. Though this plenitude creates some tortuous passages and risks a lulling effect (many of the quotes could be better placed in footnotes or assimilated more smoothly through paraphrasing), it does fulfill the stated aim of "let[ting Bacon] speak with his own voice." The middle and final portions sustain greater interest in their presentation of Bacon's unjust fall and the survey of his personal reputation in history. If the discussion of the anti-Bacon historians verges on name-calling now and then ("we all know how satisfying it is to human as well as shark nature to see blood drawn"), this rigorous yet heartfelt study should find its audience in those interested in Elizabethan and Jacobean politics and the slippery nature of historical truth. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal

While recognized as a brilliant scientist, lawyer, and philosopher, Bacon (1561-1626) has been maligned as a self-seeker, liar, and crook. Chief among his detractors was Thomas Macaulay, whose opinions have been accepted and repeated uncritically by later writers. Matthews, a Bacon scholar, explores the motivations of Bacon's detractors and uses her knowledge of him and the people and conventions of his time to show where he was either misquoted or quoted out of context to prove a point against him. She demonstrates how writers often used quotes from Bacon to prove opposite opinions of him in a single work, many acknowledging that they could not adequately explain the dichotomy. Matthews makes her case that this would not happen if they researched their subject and sources more carefully. This scholarly study is recommended for libraries with large British history collections. Marilyn Dailey, Natrona Cty. P.L., Casper, Wyo. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc. From the Back Cover

Beyond his own country Francis Bacon is remembered as a great man, founder of modern science and philosophy, a just judge and a teacher of kings. In England and America, however, he is seen more as a cruel, corrupt and power-hungry politician. Which appraisal is correct? In this fascinating re-evaluation of one of Britain's most significant figures, Nieves Mathews examines the charges against Bacon and reveals how distorted facts can be recast as historical truths. In 1621 Bacon fell from power as Lord Chancellor, the highest position in the land. Charged with accepting bribes, he was convicted, fined, imprisoned and exiled from the Court. He died five years later, disgraced and deeply in debt. In this illuminating study of the Jacobean administration - a system which depended on corruption at every level - Nieves Mathews shows Bacon to have been among the least tainted of the King's officials, the scapegoat in a political conspiracy aimed at dislodging the royal favourite. The destruction of Bacon's reputation followed Thomas Babington Macaulay's eloquent 'Essay on Bacon', published in 1837. Macaulay's depiction of a cloven-hearted genius, at once the greatest and meanest of mankind, launched a tireless search among Bacon's biographers for evidence of malice and corruption. Now, with the benefit of recent scholarship, Nieves Mathews portrays a man both single-minded and fallible, with qualities and flaws. Her penetrating reappraisal rescues Bacon from a long tradition of abuse and misrepresentation.