

A note on Lucy's work by Andrew Gurr

Andrew Gurr is best known for his books on Shakespeare and his contemporaries and the theatre of that historical era. He was chief academic advisor to the project to rebuild the Globe Theatre in London. He has also authored a range of articles, and has edited several of Shakespeare's plays and several plays in the John Fletcher canon.

Since medieval times the stories about King Arthur have been the most well-known of all English myths. Rewriting them in blank verse is a temptingly traditional way to transform familiar stories into modern drama. All too easily, it can become regrettably ponderous, a pseudo-Shakespearean pattern of speech. That temptation is avoided beautifully and effortlessly throughout in King Arthur. In this modernised version, we are made to adapt our expectations from what we recall of the legend. Instead, we focus on the modernity of the problem, where Arthur proposes to democratise his court. The twists this version of the myth sets out contrast intriguingly with our usual conclusions about the Camelot story. As a modern dramatic recasting of one of the oldest and most popular of British legends, it makes the ancient myth thoroughly modern.