

The Ben Jonson Journal
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ANTHONY LOW

Sin, Penance, and Privatization in the Renaissance: Redcrosse and the True Church /

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As Leo Miller suggests, the Reformation put many basic theological and legal principles into a state of contention and uncertainty for as long as a hundred years, not only among the radical sectaries but within the major denominations.[1] Countries did not, ordinarily, change their allegiance from Catholicism to Protestantism without open debate on many fundamentals of belief and culture, and authoritative resolution of those debates was not always immediately forthcoming or unquestioned. [2] Although Protestant leaders spoke with ringing certainty on some points--notably on their opposition to the papacy--for the most part, after the authority of one universal Church came into question, everything--to use an apt late-modern phrase--was "put up for grabs." Recent historians of the Reformation remind us that the form that the Reformation eventually took in Europe and in England was not historically inevitable.[3] Many seemingly accidental contingencies were involved, including the fact, awkward for all concerned, that when things settled down after the Thirty Years' War--as was also the case in England during the sixteenth century--most countries turned Protestant or Catholic according to the beliefs and political interests of their rulers. In England, a complicated process of imposition from above encountered various attitudes from below: enthusiastic support, widespread popular resistance, and open revolt. Altogether the process involved many economic, political and cultural forces as well as honest differences of religious opinion. Increasing interest among historians in the practices and beliefs of ordinary people has brought such issues to the fore, although populist sympathizers are often reluctant to set aside long-established Whig views to reconsider the facts impartially.[4] So much was at stake that, after four hundred years, impartiality is still hard.

Over the fifteen centuries leading to the Reformation, the rite of penance was an exceptionally useful indicator of the relative balance between public and private concerns.[5] In this essay, I shall consider what happened to the whole constellation of practices and beliefs integrated in the rite or sacrament of penance in the early and medieval Church--ideas of sin, reprobation, excommunication, repentance, reconciliation, forgiveness, and absolution--when they were cut loose from that rite. I shall also consider some implications these changes had for attitudes toward the Church. Over the years, many scholars have tried to explain to modern readers, to whom these religious concerns resemble a foreign language, what Spenser and his contemporaries meant by them. What I should like to attempt, instead, involves a thought experiment of a different order. Namely, how might Spenser's resolutely Protestant treatment of these various topics, which had formerly been connected and subsumed under the rite of penance, have appeared to a late medieval observer or interpreter who took penance for

granted? That is, how might they appear if they were viewed from a vantage point in the past instead of the future? The aim of such an experiment is not just to be different or perverse. Rather, a deliberate reversal of historical perspective may help us to see more clearly how the balance between the social and the private actually shifted in the English Reformation and the Renaissance, and what may have been some of the causes and consequences of this change. Having huge territories to cover, we shall concentrate in depth on one significant and representative literary exemplar: Spenser's Red Cross Knight in Book I of *The Faerie Queene*, and refer briefly to *Everyman* as an exemplar of late medieval antecedents.

RICHARD DUTTON

"Discourse in the players, though no disobedience": Sir Henry Herbert's Problems with the Players and Archbishop Laud, 1632-34 / 37

What remains of Sir Henry Herbert's office-book is one of the indispensable points of departure for anyone interested in the dramatic censorship of the whole early modern period: for the simple reason that virtually nothing has survived from the office-books of his predecessors as Master of the Revels, Edmond Tilney and Sir George Buc.[1] Yet the gravitational pull of Shakespeare and his immediate contemporaries remains so strong in the study of the period's drama that Herbert is almost always called upon as a bit player rather than a major character. So it is that both Janet Clare's *"Art made tongue-tied by authority"* and my own *Mastering the Revels* frequently invoke Herbert's example, even though we both confine our studies to the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods, ending virtually as his term of office was beginning. [2] For the most part (and despite Herbert's own stated view "that in former time the poetts tooke greater liberty than is allowed them by mee," which I shall consider shortly), we both followed general precedent in assuming that Herbert's standards and practices were broadly comparable with those of his predecessors. In all this the occasion never arose to take an overview of Herbert's own career, or to consider how some of the entries in his office-book might have reflected very specific or local circumstances. This essay aims partly to rectify that omission.

JAMES FITZMAURICE

William Cavendish and Two Entertainments by Ben Jonson / 63

The friendship that was shared between William Cavendish, later duke of Newcastle, and Ben Jonson is well documented, as is their relationship of patron and client. Anne Barton, who is one of the few scholars to admire William's drama, has shown how the patron learned playwrighting from his client's example.[1] Very little has been written, however, about how William participated in the writing and staging of two entertainments composed by Jonson in the 1630s, entertainments performed at William's homes in the midlands--Welbeck Abbey and Bolsover Castle. These pieces are often mentioned by those who study William's wife Margaret, who is sometimes saddled with the epithet "Mad Madge of Newcastle." Margaret claimed that the Welbeck and Bolsover entertainments cost a total of £15,000.[2] That perhaps-inflated figure--taken together with Clarendon's condemnation of William's penchant for luxurious living--has contributed to the couple's relegation to a limbo reserved for aristocrats who dabble in writing.[3] Such people, it is often said, have friends who are writers, want to write well

themselves, but are no more than mediocre amateurs.[4] When Virginia Woolf praised Aphra Behn as a woman who wrote to make money, there was, no doubt, a good deal of oblique blame for the likes of the wealthy Newcastles, who did not.[5] Margaret Cavendish is beginning to be read seriously these days, but she is still widely seen as Woolf saw her, a pampered aristocrat and a literary curiosity rather than a writer of any real merit.

JEAN MACINTYRE

Queen Elizabeth's Ghost at the Court of James I: *The Masque of Blackness, Lord Hay's Masque, The Haddington Masque, and Oberon* / 81

When James VI of Scotland succeeded Elizabeth I as James I of England, he inherited his crown from a queen who during her long reign had been refashioned into "too fair Cynthia, the miracle of nature, of time, or fortune,"[1] "a fair virgin throned by the west . . . the imperial votaress," Phoebe, Diana, Oriana, "the mortal moon." After her death, the goddess/queen becomes in Jonson's masques and those by others a far more troubled figure. Elizabeth is symbolically invoked to authorize James's pacifism and his controversial attempts to unite England and Scotland by act of Parliament or by intermarriage. At the same time, the iconic virginity emphasized in her lifetime ran so counter to Jacobean emphasis on the marriage of courtiers and countries that its power had to be downgraded, whether by direct rejection in masques celebrating courtiers' weddings or, in *Oberon*, by mockery.

MATTHEW STEGGLE

Valeat res Iudicra: An imitation of Horace in Jonson's "Ode to Himself" / 101

For Ben Jonson, Horace was not simply a repository of classical poetry for imitation: he was a literary role-model, indeed something of a personal hero. In making this assertion, one need not fear being accused of originality, since it has already been made by numerous commentators, among whom the first and loudest is Jonson himself. The purpose of this article, however, is to reveal another, rather surprising example of Jonson's imitation of Horace, and to discuss how critical perception of Jonson's "Ode to Himself" should be altered by the observation that it is in many ways a reworking of Horace's *Epistles* 2.1.[1]

JOHN C. BRIGGS

Catharsis in *The Tempest* / 115

What is the form, function, and meaning of catharsis in *The Tempest*? Is it possible to consider such a question, given the vexed history of attempts to identify and explain catharsis? Given the present state of criticism, divided as it is between extremes of stigmatizing the power of art as manipulation and taking that power for granted as something to be exploited, might it not be helpful to return to Shakespeare's drama of storm and reconciliation--a work that invites reconsideration of the meaning and function of catharsis?

Aristotle's well-known and enigmatic definition of catharsis in the *Poetics* does not specify whether the phenomenon occurs within audiences, characters, or plots, or within some combination of all three. We know that in tragedies it is

supposed to be a movement of pity and fear. But *The Tempest*, which Shakespeare's contemporaries placed first among the Folio's comedies, does not obviously turn upon such passions. Aristotle's treatise on comedies, if it ever existed, might have offered a definition of comic catharsis involving a combination of different passions. There is of course no direct evidence that Shakespeare knew the *Poetics*, despite occasional suggestions, most notably in the work of A. C. Bradley, that there are parallels between Aristotelian theory and the innermost workings of Shakespeare's tragedies. *Catharsis* is not in Shakespeare's canonical vocabulary

JENNIFER J. DONAHUE

Elizabeth Drury as Testimony: A Thomistic Analysis of Donne's *Anniversaries* / 133

Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distill as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass: Because I will publish the name of the Lord: ascribe ye greatness unto our God.

--Deuteronomy 32:1-3[1]

In "An Anatomy of the World," John Donne makes a clear allusion to the song of Moses given to the Israelites in Deuteronomy 32. Writing of Elizabeth Drury's death, he explains:

Vouchsafe to call to mind, that God did make
A last, and lasting'st piece, a song. He spake
To Moses, to deliver unto all,
That song: because he knew they would let fall
The Law, the prophets, and the history,
But keep the song still in their memory.[2]

With this allusion, Donne grounds his rhetoric of the *Anniversaries* in this song. Biblical scholars attribute Deuteronomy to the age of King Josiah (621 B.C.E.), and they see the chapters which follow, chapters 5-26, as "supplemental material which emphasizes faithfulness to the commandments as the basis of a satisfying life for God's people." [3] Given to the tribes as a record against them, the song was to serve as a reminder of the Israelites' fallen condition, and by extension it was to point to their unending need for God's merciful protection against their fallen state.

Donne's allusion to this song in the first *Anniversary* poem underscores the parallels between its function and the stated purpose for the *Anniversaries*. If they both fundamentally inform the reader/hearer of his doom, they likewise direct the reader to the hope that is depicted in the Judeo-Christian God. In this context, the song, which scholars believe to be an appended psalm possibly older than Deuteronomy itself, [4] functions as the focus of mediation on truths which lead to hope, a characteristic which Donne duplicates in both of his *Anniversaries*.

SANDY FEINSTEIN
Milton's Devilish Sublime / 149

In Milton, the sublime has typically been identified with classical and neoclassical traditions. From its earliest treatment, we are reminded that "this context of the word 'sublime' from 1650 to 1760 shows, if nothing else, that the concept formulated by Longinus meant many things to many people in the eighteenth century." [1] It also means many things to many people in the twentieth century, as Leslie Moore has observed: "'Sublime,' as recent critics have noted, is a slippery term; we think we know what it means, but we admit uncertainty." [2] For Theodore Wood, the meaning varied in the eighteenth century; for Moore, the "eighteenth century knew what 'sublime' meant and found in *Paradise Lost* its perfect illustration." [3] At any rate, ever since the eighteenth century, scholars have tried to define the sublime as an aesthetic concept and as a poetic idea embodied by Milton's poem. [4]

As the philosopher Jean-Luc Nancy declares, "the sublime is in fashion." [5] The sublime was in fashion in the seventeenth century as well, but not as a philosophic or aesthetic concept. It was common, if not exactly a "fashion," as an alchemical and chemical process. Milton's use of the word, which includes its "common" scientific denotation, predates its eighteenth-century aesthetic connotations; though, as frequently as he is cited as an exemplary illustration of the compelling aesthetic idea, he may be partly, if inadvertently, to blame for our "slippery" understanding of the term. For while many critics have discussed the sublime in Milton, [6] and others have written of later uses of the concept informed as much by Kant and Burke as Longinus, [7] few have examined Milton's very eclectic use of the word as both adjective and verb reflecting the seventeenth-century scientific process as well as the later philosophic theories.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC AND EDITORIAL STUDIES

MICHAEL E. CORNETT

Working the Early Modern British Archive: Some Problems and Solutions of Access with a Checklist of Microfilm Sources / 167

The Material Archive: Finding What Is Known

The following, I am afraid, is an all-too-typical scenario from the trenches of humanities research. You are working on the rise of psalm-singing in England and its connection with the Elizabethan lyric. You therefore need to consult a manuscript of the *Book of Common Prayer* (dated 1561) that contains a treatise on the singing of the *Sternhold and Hopkins Metrical Psalms*: it is Oxford, Christ Church MS 150. Your dean or department head, you are unusually certain, will not finance a trip to Oxford; nevertheless, research must continue. Microfilm of the manuscript is required. Where can you obtain it?

The default course of action is to purchase film directly from Christ Church Library. It is a solution to this common problem of access, but it is a poor one that will cost some money (around \$60) and much time, easily six months or more for processing the order, assuming the order is processed correctly the first time. There will also be time to put in applying for grant money to cover

the expense, an especially important consideration when having to purchase several rolls of film. If you plan on using the summer to conduct your research, it will be imperative that the manuscript be identified and ordered by early fall; libraries will not be working on your schedule. All this, and you are in the early stages of your project; you don't even know whether anything in the manuscript will turn out to be useful.

You might rely on the expertise and efficiency of Interlibrary Loan, that charter into the wide world of research materials. You confidently submit a request card, including the manuscript shelfmark with the plea, "Can this be obtained on microfilm?" expecting a miracle. Here is what Interlibrary Loan will do. First, make a quick check of the *National Union Catalogue* and then search by shelfmark OCLC's on-line catalogue WorldCat, perhaps even try a boolean keyword search using "Christ Church" and "150." Nothing. (This might have identified some miscellaneous reel of the manuscript but not a copy from a published microfilm collection.) With a stack of specific requests waiting attention, the librarian cannot go fishing in the sea of OCLC, hoping to catch something with the lure of a sharply constructed subject search. It is not even known whether this fish exists in any published collection. The librarian, a very resourceful one, contacts Christ Church Library to find out whether a microfilm reel can be purchased by the patron. It can be, you find out after a month, and so you agree to this arrangement. We are back to our default solution.

There is a far superior answer, however, for this and many similar cases. . . .

KATIE J. MAGAW

Modern Books on Ben Jonson: A General Topical Index / 201

The twentieth century has seen a veritable renaissance of interest in Ben Jonson, especially in the last several decades. On average, more than one book a year devoted exclusively to analysis of Jonson or his writings have been published during the modern period, and in the last twenty years especially, the rate of appearance of new scholarly articles and monographs has rapidly increased. It is now not unusual for several books focused entirely on Jonson (not including editions) to see print every twelve months. Keeping up with this new work has almost become a full-time job, while losing easy contact with all the earlier valuable work has become a growing danger.

Hence this index. It attempts to survey the topical contents of more than a hundred modern books on Jonson, beginning with J. A. Symonds' pioneering monograph of 1886 and ending with a book published in the second half of 1998. Even within this extended period, however, coverage is not complete. A few monographs were obscure, inaccessible, or obviously very minor, while several others contained no indexes of any kind. In other cases, the indexes some books did include were restricted entirely to proper names, whereas the main focus of the present index is abstract nouns --i.e., topics, themes, or ideas, such as "comedy" or "war."

NOTES

FRANCES TEAGUE

Jonson and the Gunpowder Plot / 249

Ben Jonson played a role in the investigation of the Gunpowder Plot, but scholars have been unsure what that role was. He had dinner with several of the conspirators on 9 October 1605; received a warrant on 7 November 1605 from the Privy Council "to let a certaine Priest knowe (that offered to do good service to the State, that he should securely come and goe to, & from th[ei]r LI[ordship]s. w[hi]ch they p[ro]mised in the said warrant vpon their honors"; and reported his failure to find this "certaine Priest" to Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury, on 8 November 1605.[1] While Paul Durst believes that Jonson "was a Cecil spy" who was "gathering evidence against Catholics at the time the Plot was uncovered,"[2] Antonia Fraser thinks he was "unsuspecting" when he dined with the conspirators, a recusant Catholic who was appalled by news of the Gunpowder Plot and offered Salisbury his services to no avail.[3] Other scholars, like David Riggs, lay stress on Jonson's obligation to the Earls of Suffolk and Salisbury, who had intervened to free him from prison after the *Eastward Ho* debacle.[4] In any case, Jonson's letter to Salisbury concludes:

If it shall please yo[u]r Lordsh[ip]: I shall yet make harder triall, and that you cannot in the meane time be prouided: I do not only w[i]th all readynesse offer my seruice, but will p[er]forme it w[i]th as much integrity, as yo[u]r particular Fauor, or his Maiesties Right in any Subiect he hath, can exact.[5]

In other words, Jonson promises to continue his efforts to locate the priest, offering his own service as a substitute, if that of a priest cannot be obtained. There is no reason to think he stopped his efforts to locate the priest whom the Privy Council needed. The identity of the priest has never been established, but I should like to argue that Jonson continued to search for this man and that it was Father Thomas Wright. Wright had probably converted Jonson to Roman Catholicism.[6] Certainly they were acquainted by 1604, when a new edition of Wright's 1601 book, *The Passions of the Mind* included a sonnet by Jonson, "In picture, they which truly understand." [7]

JEFFREY KAHAN

Re-evaluating Philip Edwards's Argument: Could Burbage Have Played Hieronimo? / 253

In 1959, Philip Edwards overturned much of our orthodoxy concerning the stage history of Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy*. In Appendix F of his edition of the play, Edwards examined the Haslewood elegy, concentrating, as so many of his predecessors had done, on the following three lines:

. . . young Hamlett, ould Hieronymoe
Kind Leer, the Greued Moore, and more beside,
That liued in him; have now for ever dy'de.[1]

These lines had generally been interpreted as references to Richard Burbage in what were apparently three of his most memorable roles: Hamlet, Othello, and Hieronimo--the latter in either Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy* or his *The First*

Part of Jeronimo. Edwards accepted the Haslewood elegy's textual authenticity but questioned its historical accuracy. Edwards argued that Burbage could be plausibly tied to the roles of both Hamlet and Othello but that "the references to Burbage as the great Hieronimo are mistakes." [2] Despite the various editions of the play that have succeeded Edwards's edition, this argument, so central to the play's stage history, has never been refuted. [3] However, there are contentious aspects of Edwards's argument that may warrant reassessment of his conclusions.

THE NEW CAMBRIDGE EDITION OF BEN JONSON

IAN DONALDSON

The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson / 257

In an earlier number of this journal I reported on recent talks concerning the possibility of preparing a new edition of the complete writings of Ben Jonson, designed to supersede the great Oxford edition of C. H. Herford and Percy and Evelyn Simpson ("A New Edition of Ben Jonson?" *Ben Jonson Journal* 2 [1995]: 223-31). I am pleased to announce that Cambridge University Press has now agreed to publish this edition, under the General Editorship of David Bevington, Martin Butler, and myself, and the guidance of David Gants as Electronic Editor. Work has now begun on *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson*, which will be published in both print and electronic format in 2005. . . .

DAVID GANTS

The CUP Ben Jonson: Ruminations on the Electronic Edition / 271

Textual criticism has been a raucous field of contention, particularly in the decades since the end of the Second World War. Anglo-American approaches to scholarly editing have spawned numerous and protracted conflicts between opponents whose use of language frequently resembles that of a religious fundamentalist. One need only recall such titles as *Art & Error*, *Flawed Texts and Verbal Icons*, and *Devils and Angels* to sense the strident binarism that infuses these discussions. By entering this fray, a new edition of Ben Jonson's works faces a host of challenges, not the least of which is the need to arrive at a consensus as to its place within the continuing editorial debate. Additionally, the *Cambridge Ben Jonson* will be published simultaneously in two media--print and digital--thus introducing matters of hypertext theory, database design, mark-up protocols, image reproduction and cost-recovery for Internet delivery into the already volatile mix (see Ian Donaldson's above essay which discusses in greater detail the plan of the edition).

This essay does not venture into that minefield of editorial issues that critics have spent so much intellectual energy explicating: neither final authorial intention nor rationales of copy-text nor modes of readerly reception fall into the domain of this thesis. Instead, it would be useful at this point to pause and indulge in an imaginative leap, a tentative gaze into the dark glass of the future in hopes of identifying some of the uses to which this still-evolving resource will be subjected by readers and scholars of the next century. More specifically, we must begin to ponder guidelines that will inform an edition designed to function fluently within a free-flowing electronic medium. By considering the various ways we employ existing scholarly editions, we can

perhaps develop a feeling for what those who follow will expect of a digital one. In doing so, one can find no better guide than Eliot's opening lines to "Burnt Norton": "Time present and time past/ Are both perhaps present in time future,/ And time future contained in time past."

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