THE GLASS

Editorial

Names count for a lot in the Bible. Adam in Genesis 2 is allowed under God to come up with names for the living creatures which God had created: naming is a devolved function, with connotations of authority conferred from above, exercised over creatures below.

Parents choose names that fit the circumstances of their child's birth. Re-namings reflect a new phase of a person's life. Benjamin meant 'son of suffering'. Simon was re-named or nicknamed Cephas or Peter; and Jesus nicknamed, humorously perhaps, two other disciples, James and John, as 'Boanerges', sons of thunder. A home town could in NT times supply a kind of surname, as with Joseph of Arimathea. With Jesus the quasi-surname was the messianic title in Greek: Jesus Christ. In a multilingual culture an individual might bear two names, John Mark for example had semitic and Roman names.

In prophecy and poetry names might acquire symbolic function, as when Babylon becomes a code word for Rome, or Jerusalem for heaven.

For God the name Yahweh was written out of pious respect YHWH, the tetragrammaton. The short form Yah is used in the praise formula 'halleluyah'. On his way to seek reconciliation with Esau Jacob wrestled at night with some one who asked him his name and re-named him Israel, meaning perhaps 'he struggled with God'. He in his turn asked the name of his antagonist, but it was not vouchsafed. Yet God blessed him and 'Jacob called the place Peniel (meaning 'face of God') saying, "It is because I saw God face to face, and yet my life was spared."'

Jesus, or Joshua, means Yahweh saves, and other titles were accorded, such as Saviour, Bridegroom, Lamb, and more abstract ones such as Alpha and Omega, and righteousness, each one delivering a package of argument, interpretation or doctrine. In the gospels we come across Son of Man (from Daniel and Ezekiel), the Anointed, Son of David, Servant and Emmanuel. An innovation is the Johannine logos, the Word.

In Hebrew *šem*, name, can also mean report or renown, and God's name is often a metonym for God himself. His name is not to be taken in vain, it is to be magnified in worship. In Acts forgiveness may be through Jesus' name. To the Christians in Philippi Paul wrote that after Jesus' death

> God exalted him to the highest place
>   and gave him the name that is above every name,
> that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
>   in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
> and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord,
>   to the glory of God the Father.

Although differentiated for our benefit, the Father and the Son are one and the same.

Roger Kojecký

'First written for the consolation of one: but now published for the generall good of all': The general appeal of Robert Southwell's sermon *The Triumphs over Death*

Mike Nolan

John Trussell, an Elizabethan poet, edited Robert Southwell's sermon, *The Triumphs Over Death*,[1] for printing in 1595, the year of the Jesuit priest's execution. The title page states that it was 'first written for the consolation of one: but now published for the general good of all', and in an introductory poem to the first printed version, Trussell reiterates what had been written on the title page: 'I publish this to pleasure all.' This emphasis on 'all' is curious as Southwell had been imprisoned for three years prior to his execution as a Catholic priest and, as he also belonged to the despised order of Jesuits he was, according to the law, demonstrably a traitor, and the 'one' who was to be consoled was Philip Howard, a high profile recusant languishing in gaol for his refusal to abjure his Catholicism. Hardly the most auspicious background upon which to base a sales pitch to a majority Protestant reading audience. And indeed Trussell was very conscious of the possible disjuncture between author and audience so he addresses the question in his prefatory poem, 'To the Reader', asking that 'impartial eyes/Might reading judge, and judging praise', and then he admonishes

> Bible-bearing hypocrites,
> Whose hollow hearts do seem most holy wise,
> Do for the Author's sake the work despise. (sig. A3v)

His request is: 'I wish them weigh the words and not who writes.' And it seems that people did. He asked for a 'well disposed eye' for 'Our Second Ciceronian' as he called Southwell, and that is what he got. The sermon was popular among Protestant readers and the influence of Southwell's prose and verse can be traced in the works of writers, poets and playwrights – Ben Jonson and Shakespeare among a list that also includes Thomas Lodge and Thomas Nashe. One measure of his popularity is that his poem, *St Peter's Complaint* enjoyed a best seller success similar to Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis*.[2] So why was it that a Catholic priest's words could so readily engage with many people from a different, and in this period oppositional, outlook on faith, who would respond positively to a work such as *The Triumphs Over Death*? This is what I will be endeavouring to explore here.[3]

Robert Southwell, born in Norfolk in 1561, had been educated in France and in Rome, before returning to England in 1586 as a priest, at a time when simply being

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[1] Robert Southwell, *The Triumphs Over Death,* London, 1595. All references in the text will be to this edition. Spelling has been modernised.

[2] F. W. Brownlow, *Robert Southwell,* New York, Twayne, 1996, p. 125. There were 15 editions of Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis* published by 1640. St Peter's Complaint had 15 editions by 1636.

[3] Alison Shell examines this question in some detail in Chapter 2 of her book *Catholicism, Controversy and the Literary Imagination 1558-1660,* Cambridge UP, 1999.

a Jesuit was deemed to be treason after the Act of 1585.[4] He spent six years under cover, and as he wrote: 'I am devoting myself to sermons, hearing confessions and other priestly duties.'[5] What also occupied him was a quite prolific, considering his circumstances, written outpouring of sermons, poems, epistles, and of course his 'An Humble Supplication to Her Majestie', a petition intended for Elizabeth, pleading for a relaxation of provisions against Catholics in her realm. He was captured in 1592, tortured and imprisoned for three years, and then finally tried and executed by being hanged, drawn and quartered in 1595. These facts are important, but it is Southwell the writer that interests me here, rather than Southwell the Jesuit martyr – the man whose gifts for communicating his thoughts to others, in ways that challenged, excited, moved, persuaded and comforted, were exceptional. He may be the sum of his experiences, many of which were affected by the partitions of religious controversy and division, but much of his writing, and this sermon in particular, transcends barriers and appeals to a unity of Spirit, in the Unity of God.

Philip Howard, earl of Arundel, for whom ostensibly, *The Triumphs Over Death* was written, was charged with treason in 1589, and imprisoned in the Tower until his death in 1595, just months after Southwell's execution. In prison, he was deeply affected by the death of his sister, Margaret, who was married to Robert Sackville, second earl of Dorset, and Southwell, learning that Howard was inconsolable and in deep depression due to the loss of Margaret, wrote what we know as *The Triumphs Over Death*.[6] While the sermon was written with Howard in mind, Southwell had also intended it for a wider audience.[7] As with other of his works, Southwell sought to address many through the apparent focus on one.

In a way, the paradox of Catholic writing finding a place in what appears to be a vehemently anti-catholic environment is not necessarily counter-intuitive. Although there was a fierce pamphlet war over doctrinal and not so doctrinal differences between Papists and Non-Papists, one example from a pamphlet entitled *The Abuses of the Romish Church anatomized* will give some sense of the sectarian skirmishing:

> If that I must in order tell
> What virtues 'long to Monkish Cell
> He is not fit for Cell or Coven
> That's not a Glutton or a Sloven.[8]

There were also many instances of works of both persuasions being modified and re-configured for their particular markets. Catholic texts were adapted for Protestant readers by having references to the Eucharist removed, or the rôle of the Virgin Mary downplayed, and likewise some Protestant texts were adjusted to suit a Catholic readership. As Arthur F. Marotti has indicated, if the quality of the writing demanded attention and there was an appeal to a common 'Christian language of devotion', then differences in dogma could be temporarily set aside. 'Confessional lines were often blurred, as Protestants, for example, found value and practical use in Catholic

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[4] *Act Against Jesuits and Seminarists* (1585) 27 Elizabeth, Cap. 2.

[5] Brownlow, op.cit., p. 11.

[6] The title was most probably supplied by Trussell for publication and was not used by Southwell himself as the manuscripts were untitled.

[7] Ibid. p. 51.

[8] Anon. *The Abuses of the Romish Church Anatomized*, London, 1623.

devotional texts.'[9] And so Jesuit Robert Persons's work, *The First Book of Christian Exercise, Appertaining to Resolution* (1582), was slightly amended by Edmund Bunny (1585) to appeal to Protestant readers. Then there is the curious case of Mary Sidney, devout and prominent Protestant, in 1590 publishing two works together in one quarto, both translations from French – Philippe de Mornay's *Discourse on Life and Death* and Robert Garnier's play *Antonius*. Side by side there was Mornay, staunchly Protestant and Garnier, notably Catholic (and associated for a time with the Catholic League). Through a process that could be part amelioration, part assimilation, a common core of meaning was established that could speak directly to the faithful across the divides.

Nonetheless, this could also be seen as largely opportunistic accommodation – a sort of Renaissance 'don't ask, don't tell' understanding. After the necessary adjustments, the particular works I have referred to could pass as Protestant or Catholic, depending on the audience. *The Triumphs Over Death* in 1595, however, is presented, and Trussell makes this clear in his acrostic poem, as being authored by a priest executed for treason. There is no dissimulation here, hence the editor's plea that readers 'weigh the words, and not who writes'. There is something, then, about the text that did not require editing or re-working in order for it to be accepted in the reading market place. And it is this something that I would now like to investigate.

Our first point of engagement with *The Triumphs Over Death* is with the exposed self. Both the mourner and the comforter meet in the experience of the pain of great loss; the writer speaks directly to that pain; 'her decease cannot but sit near your heart whom you had taken so deep into a most tender affection in its rawest state' (sig. B1). On the first page the words 'love' or 'loving' occur seven times, to emphasize the rôle of love in ameliorating the anguish associated with loss. From the opening words, the sermon is oriented to the intense suffering of one, but this one is assured that he is part of a suffering community and that comfort can be drawn from an understanding of the pain shared.

> If it be a blessing of the virtuous to mourn, it is the reward of this, to be comforted; and he that pronounced the one, promised the other: I doubt not but that Spirit, whose nature is Love, and whose name, Comforter, as he knoweth the cause of your grief, so hath he salved it with supplies of grace, pouring into your wound no less oil of mercy than wine of Justice....I thought it good to show you by proof that you carry not your cares alone. (sig. B1)

The use of multiple and shifting perspectives – the address to one, but the sermon for all, the suffering of one, but connected to a world of suffering, the movement from the particular to the general throughout the writing – is a feature of other examples of Southwell's prose – *The Epistle of Comfort* and *An Humble Supplication* – and it has the effect of allowing the reader to imagine that they are being addressed personally. Trussell's secondary title 'A Consolatory Epistle for troubled minds in the affects of dying friends' appearing just above the text alludes to this. Southwell could not assume that Howard in the Tower would be able, necessarily, to have access to the epistle, and seems to have intended it for wider distribution from the outset. The opening words, then, act as an invitation to the general reader to be part of a sharing of our exposed selves in the face of death and mourning. The particular suffering of one resonates as a marker of our general suffering and we are drawn by the promise of

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[9] Arthur F. Marotti, *Religious Ideology and Cultural Fantasy,* University of Notre Dame Press, 2005, p. 204.

the comfort that can be offered. Southwell's didactic purpose is not primarily doctrinal but pastoral, and the proposition that troubled minds can be comforted in the action of the Spirit was an open invitation for all Christians to read and find solace.

Part of the key to understanding the appeal of *The Triumphs Over Death* beyond a strictly Catholic readership lies with the quality of the writing itself. The poet permeates the prose. The sermon is in no danger of becoming prosaic as the writing is dynamic in its scope, rich in its imagery and quite sensual in its imaginative appeal. In endeavouring to demonstrate to Howard how destructive excessive grief can be, Southwell talks of those who

> make it their happiness to seem most unhappy, as though they had only been left alive to be a perpetual map of dead folk's misfortunes.

He continues with this theme:

> Yea disquiet minds being ever bellows to their own flames.… Some are so obstinate in their own will, that even time, the natural remedy of the most violent agonies, cannot by any degrees assuage their grief; they entertain their sorrow with solitary muses, and feed with sighs and tears, they pine their bodies, and draw all pensive consideration to their minds, nursing their heaviness with a melancholy humour, as though they had vowed themselves to sadness, unwilling it should end till it had ended them. (sig. B2).

Southwell's aim is positive, to lead afflicted minds out of mourning through confronting the reality of our mortality. It is self-love to try to grasp at what is beyond your grasp, to mourn the loss of that which has passed. He has no time for mourning that accepts no morning; that seeks to dwell in a perpetual and self-inflicted darkness, and so the comfort offered is sincere and all-encompassing, but it rejects what it sees as self-indulgence or a denial of the fact that all life is finite. The sermon is devoid of platitudes and is in some places very hard edged; he refuses 'to yield Reason to Passion'. This makes the writing very accessible as consolation is freely offered; however there is an underlying toughness: 'Our tears are water of too high a price to be prodigally poured in the dust of any graves' (sig. C3r). The point of accessibility is through contact with an imagination that has endured, but has not been diminished by, the trials associated with endurance. Early nineteenth century writer and antiquarian Joseph Haselwood was perhaps excessive in his praise of Southwell:

> In what a beautiful strain of panegyric are these Triumphs! The pen of the master and the gift of the muse flow in unison to delineate the character of the deceased Margaret[10]

but this is the work of a skilled communicator, who speaks to, rather than at, the reader. The sermon is not delivered from on high.

It seems that it wasn't just a more general reading public that took Trussell's advice and read the work with a dispassionate eye, for there is evidence of his influence also on poets and playwrights of the period. Ben Jonson was the most explicit in his acknowledgement of Southwell's qualities as a poet when he told William Drummond that he would have been content to destroy many of his own poems to have written Southwell's *The Burning Babe*. And it appears that he was familiar with *The Triumphs* as his poem, *On My First Son*[11] attests. A couplet in the poem:

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[10] Samuel Egerton Brydges, *Censura Literaria* Vol. III, London, 1808, p. 296.

[11] Ben Jonson, *The Complete Poems*, Penguin, 1981, p. 48.

> Seven years tho' wert lent to me, and I thee pay.
> Exacted by thy fate, on the just day. (lines 3-4)

has echoes of:

> Think it no injury that she is now taken from you, but a favour that she was lent you so long. (sig. C2).

And it is these echoes of Southwell that appear in many of the works of other authors of this period. John Klause[12] has demonstrated with close analysis of Southwell's and Shakespeare's writings that the dramatist had read, was familiar with and had responded to the works of the priest poet in his plays and poems. Here, I am not so interested in line comparisons to establish a direct linking between the two writers, as I am in the rhetorical devices used by Southwell which are reminiscent of Shakespeare, that reading Southwell here, one is conscious that what one is reading is recognizable and that the experience for the non-partisan or even the partisan reader is pleasurable. Part of this pleasure stems from the framing devices that utilize dramatic elements, which allow us to visualize what is being described as part dramatic spectacle. An image of the dying Margaret is vividly presented:

> She made open profession that she did die true to her religion, true to her husband, true to God and the world. She enjoyed her judgement as she breathed, her body earnestly offering her last devotions, supplying in thought what faintness suffered not her tongue to utter: in the end, when her glass was run out, and death began to challenge his interest, some labouring with too late remedies to hinder the delivery of her sweet soul, she desired them eftsoons to let her go to God, and her hopes calling her to eternal kingdoms, as one rather falling asleep than dying, she most happily took her leave of all mortal miseries. (sig. B3v - sig. C1).

The moment becomes tangible, and in the telling the pain of loss becomes universal as we all, writer, Howard and the reader, become witnesses to, and attentive watchers of the playing out of a life. The narrative also serves, on a practical level, to allow Howard, who of course, being in gaol, could not have been present at his sister's death, to experience the scene of his sister's last moments as if one were viewing a scene from a play. In Shakespeare there are many such scenes as, for example, in *The Merchant of Venice* Salerio speaks of the sad parting of Bassanio from Antonio which occurs offstage. Through the character's words we 'see' the incident that is being replayed for us. Southwell is employing a similar dramatic technique to comfort the grieving, to permit, to use a twenty-first century term, 'closure'. Southwell is presenting the drama of the Soul – the scene, so affecting in its visual simplicity, absorbs the reader, involving them in the action.

In this section of *The Triumphs Over Death*, we have an example of a technique that Southwell uses throughout the sermon. He presents here a scene which engages our interest and emotions, then he delivers the lesson or the teaching: 'So blessed a death is rather to be wished of us than pitied in her.' (sig. C1). The teaching is thus encased in the described experience and the teaching becomes palatable because it is part of a narrative which speaks of the deceased person as if still living. And in a sense they are, as Southwell notes, since it is in talking about the dead instead of placing a prohibition on mentioning them, that they may be present among us. '[Margaret's] soul,' he says,

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[12] John Klause, *Shakespeare, the Earl and the Jesuit,* Fairleigh Dickinson UP, 2008.

'triumpheth with God, whose virtues [sic] still breatheth in the mouths of infinite praises, and liveth in the memories of all.' (sig. C1). The power of the sermon-giving is to ground the moral instruction in the modelling of relationships that are coherent and relevant to the receiver of the sermon. The connectedness of the people of God to God and to each other requires a response that is consistent with the nature of these relationships. For Southwell, excessive grief disrupts these relationships by turning the self inwards, being 'unnatural to ourselves' by entering 'into such labyrinths that neither wit knoweth, nor careth how long or how far they wander in them.' (sig. B2).

Another effective device that Southwell makes great use of throughout the sermon is reconciled and unreconciled opposites. He positions opposites, in the first case, that are reconciled as they have a necessary connection, for example: 'Your grief is no less than your love was' (sig. B1). Grief and love can be opposites but are connected as, in Howard's case, his love is causing him to grieve. Southwell reconciles these in the statement – the love and the grief are of equal measure. If we understand the relationship between them then grief cannot exceed the love. In grieving excessively, Howard is disturbing the balance by diminishing the love as he accentuates the grief. The necessary connection has been broken by allowing Reason to be made a prisoner to Passion. Another example is: 'Her death to time was her birth to eternity' (sig. D3r). Death and, in this case, re-birth are reconciled and the one must lead to the other. There is no re-birth without death. There is the double opposite here as time, which is finite, is opposed to eternity which is beyond the limits of time. This then allows Southwell to prove that Margaret is now unrestrained by time and that grieving is understandable but wasted energy. There are also unreconciled opposites such as: 'She carried a heavenly treasure in an earthly vessel' (sig. E2). Here the contrast highlights the inadequacy of the vessel to hold the treasure; the conceit is that her worth has outstripped the capacity of the mortal body to contain such richness. The use of a device which is essentially poetic infuses the prose with a particular dynamic energy, a feature that was perhaps recognised by Francis Bacon when, commenting on the appeal of the priest's writing, he said that it was 'worth the writing out for the art.'[13]

A fellow Jesuit poet, some centuries after Southwell, wrote of loss and sorrow, referring to a different Margaret.

> Márgarét áre you gríeving
> Over Goldengrove unleaving?
> Leáves líke the things of man, you
> With your fresh thoughts care for, can you?
> Ah! ás the heart grows older
> It will come to such sights colder
> By and by, nor spare a sigh
> Though worlds of wanwood leafmeal lie;
> And yet you will weep and know why.
> Now no matter child, the name:
> Sórrow's springs áre the same.
> Nor mouth had, no nor mind, expressed
> What heart heard of, ghost guessed:
> It ís the blight man was born for,
> It is Margaret you mourn for.

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[13] Op.cit., Shell, p. 60.

It is the last line in Gerard Manley Hopkins' *Spring and Fall*[14] to which I'd like to draw attention. The immediate cause of Margaret's sorrow is the falling of the leaves, but the ultimate line sees that the autumnal shedding is symbolic of her inner mourning. Likewise, *The Triumphs Over Death*, which deals ostensibly with the grief suffered by one man, reflective of the suffering of many, is shadowed by the trauma of loss experienced by the author Robert Southwell. The work can appeal to those minds afflicted by loss because he was similarly afflicted; the comfort he is offering is not removed from his experience – it is very much a part of it. At fifteen he had left his family in England to enter the Jesuit school in Douai. He had grown up with a sense of the loss of the Catholic faith, and because of his decision to become a Jesuit priest and to return to England as part of the Jesuit mission there, he knew his life would be forfeit if he were to be captured. He spoke in one letter of being in a recusant house and having to hide in a wall cavity for hours with only a thin wall between him and his would-be captors, hearing their movements around him as they searched the house, smashing woodwork looking for priest holes.[15] He knew it was only a matter of time before he would be captured and because of his proven facility with words, like Campion before him, he would be considered to be a prize when eventually captured. His familiarity with Seneca's *Consolation for Marcia* and *Consolation of Helvia*, as F. W. Brownlow[16] opines, meant perhaps that *The Triumphs Over Death* could be read as an example of Christian stoicism. And this would be consistent with much of the tone of this sermon. Thus, in many of his words to Howard, we can sense the author reflecting on his own perilous situation and endeavouring to meet the challenge of facing death with as much courage and stoicism as he can muster:

> The terms of our life are like the seasons of the year, some for sowing, some for growing, and some for reaping, in this only different, that as the heavens keep their prescribed periods, so the succession of times have their appointed changes. But in the seasons of our life, which are not to the law of necessary causes, some are reaped in the seed, some in the blade, some in the unripe ear, all in the end, this harvest depending upon the reaper's will. Death is too ordinary a thing to seem any novelty, being a familiar guest in every house. (sig. D2).

There is an experiential core at the heart of the text that appeals to the reader through its almost subliminal urgency. The writer is living the pain about which he is writing, and this is evident in the reading. There is a point in the sermon where the shadowed narrative becomes quite apparent as the tone shifts in the second half of the text. Within the one sentence is the phrase 'sentence of death', followed by the words 'prisoners', 'ward', 'gaoler' and 'execution'. And on the next page we have a reference to 'this deaf and implacable executioner.' On the previous page there is a shift in personal pronouns from 'your' to 'our' and 'we', 'our eager hopes', 'we must', 'our death', 'our tears', 'we received'. The sermon is focusing on the intimate connexion that exists between us all because of our shared experience in our proximity to death, and for Southwell this reality of death was a constant companion. Through the examination of his own experience of loss, combined with the anticipation of the loss of his own life, Southwell establishes a core of experiential reference points that leads his readers to

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[14] Gerard Manley Hopkins, *Poems and Prose*, Penguin, 1985, p. 50.

[15] Christopher Devlin, *The Life of Robert Southwell, Poet and Martyr,* New York, Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, 1956, p. 125.

[16] Brownlow, op.cit., p. 56.

assess and acknowledge their own experiences of loss in the light of what is presented in the text. To a certain extent there is an intuitive injured self present in the writing that enables him to recognize the potential for analogous recognitions of loss in his audience and to speak to these.

In the last pages there is another tonal shift which is also accompanied by a shift in intensity as if the author is increasingly aware of the tyranny of time passing. Having postulated that grief cannot be fully assuaged except through an understanding that mourning is a process and not an end, through acceptance of our mortality that is the common experience of all humankind, and through the recognition that God's will ordains that even his son Jesus had to die, Southwell arrives at surrender. Grief is real and a necessary corollary of loving, but ultimately a relationship with God for a Christian requires trust, and the ultimate trust is surrender to God's will. Following the process Southwell outlines in the sermon, the end result is complete obeisance. Such trust entails 'a resolute virtue [which] in the deepest affliction is most impregnable.' (sig. D3v). Those who cannot reconcile their grief to their love for the one who has died carry with them the fear of losing that which they believe they possess. But, 'They evermore most perfectly enjoy their comforts that least fear their contraries for a desire to enjoy, carrieth with it a fear to lose.' (sig. D3v). Trust disables fear, and trust in God is the foundational perspective which must govern all other perspectives.

Before there can be surrender, there must be acceptance of life and death – 'none can escape that is common to all.' In an analogy that could be seen as Southwell's most obvious declaration of Christian stoicism, he states:

> God casteth the dice, and giveth us our chance; the most we can do, is , to take the point that the cast will afford us, not grudging so much that it is no better, as comforting ourselves it is no worse. (sig. D3v).

A sixteenth century glass half full – half empty dichotomy! For the afflicted mind, comfort lies in perceiving the suffering outside the sufferer – that everyone is connected in their individual suffering, which takes us back to his assurance in the opening page, 'you carry not your cares alone' with the meaning here – that all humanity grieves – all people carry cares. And for the well disposed eyes of the Renaissance reader, these are ideas that transcend partisanship.

Southwell expects the receiver of comfort to be active and not passive in their receipt of solace. To submit to the will of God requires an active surrender and so grieving, while necessary and natural, must be ultimately life affirming:

> The cross of Christ and rod of every tribulation seeming to threaten stinging and terror to those that shun and eschew it, but they that mildly take it up and embrace it with patience, may say with David, thy rod and thy staff have been my comfort (sig. D3v).

And he continues with a wonderful anthropomorphism:

> In this, affliction resembleth the crocodile; fly and it pursueth and frights, followed, it flyeth and feareth, a shame to the constant, a tyrant to the timorous. (sig. D3v).

Once more, these lines seem to reflect as much Southwell speaking to his own position as a man who has surrendered his life in the service of God as he is addressing through Howard a contemporary English reader. The pain of loss is also as much a reflection of anticipated suffering as it is of suffering present and past. Therefore on the last

pages of *The Triumphs Over Death* he explains what for him is the full extent of his surrender, and here Southwell writes of what is closest to him: 'Let God strip you to the skin, yea to the soul, so he stay with you himself' (sig. E2). Total abandonment of self in total surrender to God. There are resonances of this in John Donne's first Holy Sonnet: 'I resigne/My selfe to thee, O God.'[17] A reader of Southwell's sermon in 1595 would have been well aware of the fate of the author, and have known of the reports of his steadfastness in the face of such a death. Authenticity is a provocative term, but it is highly likely that a general reading audience would have associated it with Southwell's words in *The Triumphs Over Death*. The manner of his death was an obvious witnessing to the authenticity of his sermon.

Robert Southwell was a clergyman denied a pulpit, but not denied a voice. In *The Triumphs Over Death* he used Philip Howard's situation to deliver a sermon to diverse congregations and his words were accepted by many whose religious affiliations were antagonistic to his own. That he found such acceptance can be attributed to the natural poetic rhythms in the text, which engage the reader on an imaginative level; to the inclusive way he deals with a topic which is intrinsic to all religious persuasions; to the richness of his prose, which was recognised by fellow writers of this period; and to the deeply experiential nature of his contact with the topic – this was a man who was prepared to practise what he preached and who knew intimately the scars of loss, and the ache of grieving.

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[17] John Donne, *John Donne: Selections From Divine Poems, Sermons, Devotions, and Prayers*, Mahwah, Paulist Press, 1990, p. 78.

Wuldorfæder and *Heafonrices Weard*: Names for God in Old English Poetry

Samuel Cardwell

I SUSPECT THAT THE VAST MAJORITY OF PEOPLE WHO FIRST LOOK INTO OLD ENGLISH POETRY do so in the hope of finding grizzled warriors doing grim battle with dragons and giants before going home to guzzle mead in their glittering halls. Many of us first come to the medieval via medievalism, whether through Tolkien or William Morris or *Noggin the Nog*. There is plenty of the warrior-aristocracy to be found in the surviving corpus of Old English literature, in *Beowulf*, in *The Battle of Maldon* and *The Wanderer*, and more obliquely elsewhere. It does not take long, however, before one realises that the concerns of the warrior-aristocracy – glory, reputation (*dom*), fate (*wyrd*), gift-giving – represent only one strand of Anglo-Saxon poetic thought and not necessarily the most important one. The poets, or at least those poets whose work has survived, spent a lot more time talking about God than they did about Ingeld.[1]

The Problem of Naming God

When Anglo-Saxon poets started to write about the God of the Bible, they very quickly came upon an age-old problem. How can one possibly hope to name God without reducing him to a stereotype and diminishing his glory, perhaps even breaking the third commandment in the process?[2] At the same time, how can one worship God without naming him; how can the Church 'exalt his name together' (in the words of Psalm 34:3) without knowing what that name is? The church fathers struggled with this issue. Origen's *Libellus de Oratione* ('On Prayer'), contemplating the words 'hallowed be your name' in the Lord's Prayer, states:

> Now a name is a designation that sums up and describes the particular quality of the one named. For example, Paul the Apostle has a certain quality all his own.… In the case of God, however, who is Himself unchangeable and always remains unaltered, there is always a single name – that, we may say, spoken of Him in Exodus, 'I AM' or something that would have the same significance. Since, then, all of us suppose something about God and have some ideas about Him, but not all of us understand what He is … it follows that we are rightly taught that the idea about God in us is holy, so that we may see the holiness of the One who creates, exercises His providence, judges, chooses, abandons, welcomes, turns away, thinks worthy of a prize, and punishes each according to their worth. For in these activities and those like them, so to speak, the special quality of God is characterized, which is what I suppose the "name"

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[1] Echoing Alcuin's famous complaint 'quid Hinieldus cum Christo' (ed. Ernst Duemmler, *Epistoli Karolini Aevi II*, Monumenta Germaniae Historiae, Berlin, Weidmann, 1925, 183; see Mary Garrison, 'Quid Hinieldus cum Christo', in Katherine O'Brien O'Keefe and Andy Orchard (eds), *Latin Learning and English Lore*, i, University of Toronto Press, 2005, pp. 237-59. Oral heroic/'secular' poetry undoubtedly predates the conversion to Christianity and almost certainly continued to be performed in a 'courtly' setting throughout the Anglo-Saxon period. However, we retain nothing that has not passed through the monastic scriptorium, which has the effect of skewing our perception of Anglo-Saxon culture towards a thoroughly Christianised viewpoint.
[2] Carolin Maud Esser, *Naming the Divine: Designations for the Christian God in Old English Poetry*, unpubl. PhD dissertation, University of York, 2006, pp. 1-2.

of God means in the scriptures.[3]

That is the only name that God has who is the great and infinitely mysterious YHWH of Exodus 3:14; however, it is possible, and indeed necessary, to describe God by means of his individual attributes and actions ('creator', 'judge' etc.).[4] Pseudo-Dionysius, the pioneer of 'negative theology' (in which God can only be described by what He is not), approached the question in a similar way, arguing that 'as cause of all and transcending all, he is rightly nameless and yet has the names of everything that is'.[5] Origen and Pseudo-Dionysius represent one strand, Greek and mystical, of patristic thought surrounding the name of God. It is not clear to what extent this strand of thought was consciously adopted in Anglo-Saxon England. Origen's works, translated into Latin by Rufinus and Jerome, were certainly widely known by scholars, although the *Libellus de Oratione* is not listed in Lapidge's catalogue of works known in Anglo-Saxon England.[6] The work of Pseudo-Dionysius was not known in the West, except second-hand via Gregory the Great, until the ninth century, and was neglected until the twelfth century.[7]

The work of Augustine, which certainly was known in Anglo-Saxon England, and indeed formed the basis for all early medieval theology, also considers the naming problem.[8] Augustine was, among his many other talents, one of the first great philosophers of language. For Augustine, all human language is flawed, a product of the Fall; words are merely signs, necessarily limited, which imperfectly represent that which is signified. In the world to come, according to Augustine, we will be silent because our true thoughts will be transparent. When it comes to understanding God, language is particularly limited; it is only through divine 'illumination' or revelation that we can hope to understand anything at all. In *De doctrina Christiana*, Augustine writes:

> Et tamen deus, cum de illo nihil digne dici possit, admisit humanae uocis obsequium, et uerbis nostris in laude sua gaudere nos uoluit.

> 'And yet God, although nothing worthy of His greatness can be said of Him, has condescended to accept the worship of men's mouths, and has desired us through the medium of our own words to rejoice in His praise'.[9]

Human language cannot hope to describe God, much less to encompass him; but by

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[3] Origen, *Libellus de oratione*, 24.1 (ed. Jacques Paul Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, xi. p. 491; trans. Rowan A. Greer, *Origen*, Mahwah, NJ., Paulist Press, 1979, pp. 129-30).

[4] John Goldingay, *Old Testament Theology*, i, Downers Grove, Il., InterVarsity Press, 2003, pp. 336-7.

[5] Pseudo-Dionysius, *De divinis nominibus*, 596C (ed. Beate Regina Suchla, *Corpus Dionysiacum*, Berlin, De Gruyter, 1990-1; trans. Colm Luibheid, *Pseudo-Dionysius*, New York: Paulist Press, 1987, p. 56).

[6] Michael Lapidge, *The Anglo-Saxon Library*, OUP, 2005, pp. 322-3.

[7] Jean LeClercq, 'Influence and Noninfluence of Dionysius', in Lubheid, *Pseudo-Dionysius*, pp. 25-33.

[8] John M. Rist, *Augustine: Ancient Thoughts Baptized*, CUP, 1994, pp. 23-40.

[9] Augustine, *De doctrina Christiana*, 1.6 (CCSL 32.10.10; trans. D. W. Robertson, *On Christian Doctrine*, Indianapolis, Bobbs-Merrill, 1958, p. 10); Manish Sharma, ''The Economy of the Word in the Old English *Exodus*', in Michael Fox and Manish Sharma (eds.), *Old English Literature and the Old Testament*, University of Toronto Press, 2012, p. 174.

his grace, God receives and delights in our imperfect praise. Of course, the scriptures themselves legitimise this by using a variety of names as designations for God, from the *El-Shaddai* by which God was known to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob before He revealed his covenant name to Moses (Exodus 6:2-3), to the New Testament designations Θεός and Κύριος; these names are the means by which God condescends to be spoken of.[10]

The Anglo-Saxon poets may or may not have engaged directly with the patristic discussions surrounding God's name. However, some poets were clearly conscious of the problem of naming God. In *Elene*, Cynewulf, the most Latinised of Old English poets, writes:

> Ongit, guma ginga,   godes heahmægen,
> nergendes naman.   Se is niða gehwam
> unasecgendlic,   þone sylf ne mæg
> on moldwege   man aspyrigean.

> 'Consider, young man, the high power of God, the redeemer's name. It is inexpressible to any man, nor can any man himself discover it on the earth's path'.[11]

For Cynewulf, as for Origen and Pseudo-Dionysius, the true name of God is *unasecgendlic*, unutterable or inexpressible, shrouded in eternal mystery. The influence of Augustinian language-theory can be seen elsewhere in Old English poetry. Manish Sharma has recently written on how the Old English *Exodus* can be read as a 'culturally determined response' to the 'available and influential linguistic model' of Augustine.[12] This is particularly noticeable in the passage where the anonymous poet paraphrases and expands upon Genesis 22:15-17 ('by my own self have I sworn, saith the Lord: because thou hast done this thing, and hast not spared thine only begotten son for my sake, I will bless thee'). The poet writes:

> Hu þearf mannes sunu   maran treowe?
> Ne behwylfan mæg   heofon and eorðe
> His wuldres word,   widdra and siddra
> þonne befæðman mæge   foldan sceattas,
> eorðan ymbhwyrt   ond uprodor,
> garsecges gin   ond þeos geomre lyft.
> He að swereð,   engla Þeoden,
> wyrda Waldend   and wereda God,
> soðfæst sigora,   þurh His sylfes lif…

> 'In what way does the son of man need a greater pledge? Heaven and earth cannot encompass his word of glory, which is more ample and spacious than the earth's expanse, the circuit of the world and heaven above, the vastness of the sea, and this sorrowful air can contain. He will swear an oath on his own life, the Prince of angels, the Ruler of the workings of Providence, the God of hosts, the Lord of victories fixed in truth'…[13]

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[10] Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1938, repr. 1996, pp. 47-51.

[11] 'Elene', lines 464-7 (ed. P. O. E, Gradon, *Cynewulf's Elene*, Methuen, 1958, all translations mine unless otherwise noted); Esser, *Naming the Divine*, p. 3.

[12] Sharma, 'The Economy of the Word', p. 193.

[13] 'Exodus', lines 427-34 (ed. Peter J. Lucas, *Exodus*, Methuen, 1977, pp. 129-30; trans. Sharma, 'Economy of the Word', pp. 183-5).

This reflects Hebrews 6:13 ('when God made a promise to Abraham, since he had no one greater by whom to swear, he swore by himself'), while simultaneously drawing on ideas of language. God's 'word' cannot be fathomed or encompassed by his creation; he is *soðfæst*, 'fixed in truth', while creation is changeable. God swears by 'his own life' ('I AM') because there is nothing greater. At the same time, the poet strains for some way of describing this indescribable God through poetic variation – God is *engla þeoden, wyrda waldend and wereda god*. This juxtaposition of description and the indescribable is, for the poet as for Augustine, paradoxical but necessary.

Apposition, Variation and Meaning

In order to describe God, the Anglo-Saxon poets therefore employed a proliferation of designations *for* God, each of which expresses one or two aspects of God's nature and character; Carolin Esser has counted almost 900 separate designations, generally compound nouns based around approximately 100 'central terms'.[14] Old English poetic diction was uniquely suited to creating this proliferation of subtly distinct names for God. One of the key features of Old English poetry is what Fred C. Robinson has described as the 'appositive style' – that is, the use of synonyms placed in apposition in order to create poetic variation. Robinson was writing specifically about *Beowulf*, but his analysis can be applied to Old English poetry generally. He writes: 'what is essential, apparently, is that the two elements in an appositive construction be the same part of speech, have the same referent, and be not connected except by syntactic parallelism within the sentence in which they occur'.[15] A straightforward example of this use of variation being applied to God in *Beowulf* can be found in the passage where the poet describes the pagan Danes turning hopelessly to idol-worship in the wake of Grendel's attack on Heorot:

> Metod hie ne cuþon,
> dæda Demend,   ne wiston hie Drihten God,
> ne hie huru heofena Helm   herian ne cuþon,
> wuldres Waldend.
>
> 'They did not know the Creator, the Judge of deeds, nor did they know the Lord God, nor indeed how to praise the Helm of heaven, the Ruler of glory'.[16]

Five different designations for God are woven together, all in the nominative case. This use of poetic variation is to some extent a natural consequence of Old English poetry being built around the use of alliteration, as opposed to the use of stress and rhyme (as in most post-Chaucerian English poetry) or syllabic measurement (as in classical Greek and Latin). This necessitated the use of a rich poetic vocabulary of alliterating synonyms, particularly for key concepts such as 'man', 'sword', 'sea' and, of course, God. In this passage, one can see how *Demend* and *Drihten* alliterate with each other and with *dæda*, as does the string *hie huru heofena Helm herian*. In the same way, *Metod* alliterates with *modsefan* in the preceding half-line, as does *wuldres Waldend* with *wa* in the last line.

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[14] Esser, *Naming the Divine*, pp. 3-4, cf. Appendix A: Designations for God, pp. 239-47.

[15] Fred C. Robinson, *Beowulf and the Appositive Style*, University of Tennessee Press, 1985, p. 3.

[16] 'Beowulf', lines 181b-84a (ed. R. D. Fulk, Robert E. Bjork and John D. Niles, *Klaeber's Beowulf and the Fight at Finnsburg*, 4th edn., University of Toronto Press, 2008, p. 9).

Alliteration offers a practical reason for the use of poetic variation in Old English poetry. However, all great poets turn the apparent limitations of a restricted form into an opportunity to play with language and create new meaning. The Old English *Exodus* is a 590-line heroic retelling of the Israelites' flight from Egypt, preserved in the Junius manuscript (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS. Junius 11) alongside *Genesis*, *Daniel*, and *Christ and Satan*. It is one of the richest – and most interpretatively difficult – of Old English religious epics.[17] Its most recent editor, Peter Lucas, holds it alongside *Beowulf* and *The Dream of the Rood* as 'one of the three outstanding poems' in Old English on account of the 'sheer brilliance of its writing' – though it must be said that many scholars see bafflement where he sees brilliance.[18] God, far more so than Moses, is the central hero of the *Exodus* – Moses is essentially a mouthpiece for God, who is consistently represented as the hero/king responsible for all the major events of the epic.[19] The *Exodus* contains no fewer than thirty distinct designations for God – simplexes, compounds and adjectival constructions. The table lists each of the names used by the author of the *Exodus* along with an English translation.

At a glance, we can see that these designations range from the simple (*God, Drihten, Metod, Frea, Waldend*) to the baroque. What is particularly interesting is the way in which the author uses names to highlight the themes of the poem. The poet introduces God with the following lines:

> Þone on westenne   werode Drihten,
> soðfæst Cyning,   mid his sylfes miht
> gewyrðode,   and him wundra fela,
> ece Alwalda,   in æht forgeaf.

> 'The Lord of Hosts, Righteous King, honoured him [Moses] in the wasteland with His own power, and to him the eternal All-Ruler granted many wonders into his possession'.[20]

Two of the overarching themes of the poem (and indeed of the Old Testament) are: a) that God has power over great movements of peoples, both the Hebrew exiles (who are consistently represented as an army on the move) and their Egyptian pursuers; and b) that God faithfully holds to his oaths. In these first verses the poet affirms both of these as divine characteristics – God is both *weroda Drihten* and *soðfæst Cyning*, both

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[17] The debate surrounding *Exodus* primarily surrounds differing understandings of the poet's use of allegory (J. E. Cross and S. I. Tucker, 'Allegorical Tradition and the Old English Exodus', *Neophilologus*, 44 (1960), pp. 122-127; Maxwell Luria, 'The Old English *Exodus* as a Christian Poem: Notes Towards a Reading', *Neophilologus*, 65 (1981), pp. 600-606; Lucas, *Exodus*) and corresponding resistance to the allegorical reading (e.g. 'Edward Burroughs Irving, Jr (ed.), *The Old English Exodus*, Yale University Press, 1953, pp. 28-35).

[18] Lucas, *Exodus*, p. 45. Earl writes that 'the only critical judgement concerning the Old English *Exodus* which has not been debated is that it is an extraordinarily difficult poem' (James W. Earl, 'Christian Tradition in the Old English Exodus', *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen*, 71 (1970), pp. 541-70, repr. in Roy Liuzza, *The Poems of MS Junius 11: Basic Readings*, Routledge, 2002, pp. 137-72, 137).

[19] Irving, *Old English Exodus*, p. 30 ('it is remarkable … that the role of epic hero and king has been filled by the person of God himself'); Lucas, *Exodus*, pp. 63-4 ('the true "hero" of the poem is God … in no other OE poem is God's power so dynamically presented').

[20] *Exodus* lines 8-12 (ed. Lucas, *Exodus*, p. 76).

Designation for God in *Exodus*	Modern Translation
weroda Drihten	Lord of hosts
soðfæst Cyning	righteous King
ece Alwalda	eternal All-Ruler
God	God
sigora Waldend	Ruler of victories
Frea	Lord
weroda God	God of hosts
witig Drihten	wise Lord
Metod	Creator
halig God	holy God
witig God	wise God
mihtig God	mighty God
wuldres Aldor	Prince of wonders
Liffrea	Life-Lord
ecea Abrahames God	eternal God of Abraham
frumsceafta Frea	Lord of created beings
se Agend	the Possessor
Heofoncyning	Heaven-King
beorht Fæder	bright Father
Cyning alwihta	King of all creatures
Waldend	Ruler
engla Þeoden	Prince of angels
wyrda Waldend	Ruler of fates
se mihtiga	the [God] of the mighty ones
heofonrices Weard	Guardian of the heavenly kingdom
[Flodweard]	Flood-guardian
[lifes Wealhstod]	Interpreter of life
[banhuses Weard]	Guardian of the 'bone-house' [body]
weroda Wuldorkyning	Wonder-King of hosts
engla Drihten	Lord of angels

Notes **[Flodweard]:** Lucas, *Exodus*, p. 139 emends MS reading *flodwearde* and understands this as a designation for God. This reading is supported by Nicholas Howe, *Migration and Mythmaking in Anglo-Saxon England*, Yale University Press, 1989, p. 106; the alternative reading (supported by Irving) is that *flodwearde* refers to the 'sea-wall' formed by the parting of the Red Sea.
[lifes Wealhstod]: Irving, *Old English Exodus*, p. 98 understands both *lifes wealhstod* and *banhuses weard* as references to 'the intellect, which inhabits the body'. However, Lucas understands both as references to God.

a lord of hosts/troops/armies and a king who is 'fixed in truth'. The poet has more to say about God and his people than this, but these are two of the central messages he wishes to communicate, which is why he signposts them in the first dozen lines of the poem.

Elsewhere, the poet occasionally turns to more unusual words for God in order to accentuate or comment on aspects of the divine character at crucial points in the narrative. As he parts the Red Sea, Moses speaks to the Israelites, assuring them that the miracle is a sign of God's protection and love:

>   Ic wat soð gere
> þæt eow mihtig God   miltse gecyðde,
> eorlas ærglade.   Ofest is selost
> þæt ge of feonda   fæðme weorðen,
> nu se Agend   up arærde
> reade streamas   in randgebeorh.
> Syndon þa foreweallas   fægre gestepte,
> wrætlicu wægfaru,   oð wolcna hrof.

> 'I well know it to be true that mighty God has made known to you his mercy, bronze-clad earls. Haste is best, so that you might escape from the clutches of your enemies, now that the Possessor has raised up the waters by his wisdom as a protecting shield. So the bulwarks are fairly raised up, the wondrous sea-passage, up to the roof of the clouds'.[21]

The use of *Agend* ('possessor' or 'owner'), emphasises God's complete control over the power of the sea. Lucas notes that '*Agend* reminds us that the sea is not just a natural phenomenon but a possession of God's, one which He uses as a weapon against the Egyptians'.[22] Towards the end of the poem, as the sea-walls crash onto the pursuing army, the poet uses (at least according to the most recent editor) another word to describe God's relationship to the sea: *Flodweard* or 'flood-guardian'.[23] Here, rather than applying a commonplace designation to a specific purpose, the poet creates a new expression of his own, one which characterises God as a strong warrior, using the flood as his weapon. Much more could be said about the use of names in the *Exodus* and other Old English poems; I hope I have shown some of the subtle and thoughtful ways in which poets used variation to produce meaning.

Classical and Pagan Transformations
We have seen how Old English poets used a rich range of designations for God in order to reflect on different aspects of His character. It is worth asking, however, to what extent this differs from the practice of Christian Latin poets of the late antique/early medieval period. There is a large corpus of such material to work with: from late Roman (or Spanish or Gaulish or African) *literati* such as Juvencus, Sedulius and Fortunatus, through the riddling Irish and Irish-influenced poets of the sixth and seventh centuries, to the poetry of the Carolingian Renaissance.[24] Their modern reputation has perhaps

[21] 'Exodus' lines 291b-298 (Lucas, *Exodus*, p. 116).
[22] Lucas, *Exodus*, p. 116.
[23] See See Notes to table on page 17.
[24] See Roger P. H. Green, *Latin Epics of the New Testament*, OUP, 2006; James Carney, *Medieval Irish Lyrics*, University of California Press, 1967; Peter Godman, *Poetry of the Carolingian Renaissance*, Duckworth, 1985.

suffered from being somewhat derivative of Virgil without ever attaining to the same eloquence or pathos of their inspiration. However, they represent the highest-prestige literature of the era, the means by which educated authors demonstrated the depths of their erudition. How, then, did Christian Latin poets talk about God and how did this differ from vernacular Anglo-Saxon techniques?

It is certainly not unheard of for Latin poets to use appositional variation in a manner not dissimilar to the signature Old English style. Three examples from different contexts demonstrate this. Sedulius (5th century) addresses God as *omnipotens aeterne Deus, spes unica mundi* ('omnipotent, eternal God, only hope of the world') in the *Carmen Paschale*.[25] The Hiberno-Latin *Altus Prosator* invokes the *altus prosator, vetustus dierum et ingenitus* ('high creator, ancient of days and unbegotten').[26] And the ninth-century Carolingian hymn *Veni Spiritus Sanctus* by Rabanus Maurus includes the stanza:

> Qui diceris Paraclitus,
> altissimi donum Dei,
> fons vivus, ignis, caritas,
> et spiritalis unctio.

> 'He is called the Comforter, gift of the most high God, fount of life, fire, love, and spiritual anointing'.[27]

However, such usage is quite rare and seems to be limited to hymns and hymn-like passages within longer works, particularly when a poet wishes to invoke or address God directly. In narrative poetry, such use of apposition is rare indeed. The late antique epics of Sedulius (*Carmen Paschale*), Juvencus (*Evangeliorum Libri*) and Arator (*De Actibus Apostolorum*), written in imitation of Virgil, mostly avoid more elaborate designations for God, generally preferring the simple *deus* and *dominus*.

This is a distinct point of difference between Latin and Old English. Medieval Latin poets possessed a rich vocabulary of words to describe God, but outside of invocatory passages tended to dwell more on verbal relationships between God and his creation – at the risk of oversimplification, one might say that they were more interested in what God does than who he is. In contrast, Old English poetry frequently uses appositive synonyms to break up (or rather enhance and embellish) narrative passages. This, of course, is not only the case for passages that mention God, but can be seen throughout the corpus, for example at the beginning of *Beowulf*:

> Oft Scyld Scefing   sceaþena þreatum,
> monegum mægþum   meodsetla ofteah…

> 'Often Scyld Scefing deprived many peoples, bands of enemies, of their mead-

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[25] Sedulius, *Carmen Paschale*, line 60 (ed. Carl P. E. Springer, *Sedulius: The Paschal Song and Hymns*, Atlanta, Society of Biblical Literature, 2013, p. 4).

[26] 'Altus Prosator', line 1 (ed. Thomas Clancy and Gilbert Márkus, *Iona: The Earliest Poetry of a Celtic Monastery*, Edinburgh UP, 1995). This poem has traditionally been attributed to St Columba; Stevenson has challenged this attribution but she accepts that it was probably written on Iona in the seventh century (Jane Stevenson, 'Altus Prosator', *Celtic* 23 (1999), pp. 326-368: 364).

[27] 'Veni Spiritus Sanctus', lines 5-8 (ed. Godman, *Poetry of the Carolingian Renassance*).

benches'.[28]

Sceaþena þreatum (bands of enemies) is further expanded upon or explained by *monegum mægþum* (many peoples/nations). In the same way, the following passage from 'Daniel' shows how variations on the names for God could be used to embellish a narrative (in this case the story of the Fiery Furnace):

> Wæron hyra rædes rice, siððan hie rodera waldend,
> halig heofonrices weard, wið þone hearm gescylde.

> 'Their counsels were mighty, after the ruler of the skies, the holy guardian of the heavenly kingdom, had shielded them from harm'.[29]

This is what you might call the 'signature style' of Old English poetry, interlocking half-lines playing with subtle variations on themes. Scholars, particularly looking at *Beowulf*, have expounded upon this basic building block in numerous ways, including John Niles' analysis of 'ring composition' (or chiastic design) and John Leyerle's idea of 'interlace structure', which sees Old English poetry as the 'literary counterpart for interlace designs' in Anglo-Saxon art and craftsmanship.[30] This use of interlace structure or ring composition, added to the metrical demand for alliteration, acted as further incentive for Anglo-Saxon poets to play with apposition and parallelism as a means to contemplate the divine.

One area in which the composers of Latin Christian epics prefigured the Anglo-Saxons is the appropriation of pagan names for the gods. The great project of these authors was to integrate the pagan literature of Virgil into the new Christian worldview, legitimising and (in a sense) redeeming the inheritance of the Augustan golden age. They not only repurposed Virgil's dactylic hexameters towards Christian devotion, they even turned the names of pagan gods into designations for the true God. For instance, Juvencus, Sedulius, Avitus and Arator all applied the classical epithet for Jupiter *tonans* ('thunderer') to God, with Juvencus being the first so to do.[31] Incidentally, this use of *tonans* makes its way into Anglo-Latin literature, appearing in Alcuin of York's poetic paraphrase of Bede.[32] In the same way, it seems almost certain that pre-existing designations for the pagan Germanic gods made their way into Christian Old English poetry. Unfortunately, no verifiably pagan Old English literature survives for comparison. *Beowulf*, although it is set in the pagan past, is a thoroughly Christian work of art – the God of Beowulf and Hrothgar is the God of the Bible as viewed from the imagined perspective of wise pagans, who understand something of the nature of God through natural revelation. This is a rich, sophisticated,

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[28] *Beowulf*, lines 4-5 (Fulk et al, *Klaeber's Beowulf*, p. 4).

[29] 'Daniel', lines 456-7 (R. T. Farrell, *Daniel and Azarias*, Methuen, 1974, p. 75).

[30] John D. Niles, 'Ring Composition and the Structure of *Beowulf*', *PMLA*, 94 (1979), pp. 924-935; Leyerle, 'The Interlace Structure of *Beowulf*', *University of Toronto Quarterly*, 37 (1967), pp. 1-17: 1. Ring composition, which draws on classical (particularly Homeric) theory, has also been applied to the Old English *Exodus* in Phyllis Portnoy, 'Ring Composition and the Digressions of *Exodus*: The "Legacy" of the "Remnant"', *English Studies*, 82 (2001), pp. 289-307.

[31] Martin Irvine, *The Making of Textual Culture: 'Grammatica' and Literary Theory 350-1100*, CUP, 1994, p. 369.

[32] Alcuin, *Versus de patribus*, line 75 (ed. Peter Godman, *The Bishops, Kings and Saints of York*, OUP, 1982, pp. 10-11).

even playful Christian imagining of the pagan past; it tells us nothing about paganism itself.

Other literary evidence for Anglo-Saxon paganism is extremely thin: shadows, glimpses and faint echoes through charms and runic inscriptions.[33] An extremely rough idea of the sorts of names the Anglo-Saxons *might* have used for their gods can be gleaned from Old Norse sources, with the usual health warnings about using thirteenth-century post-pagan Scandinavian sources as evidence for fifth-century pre-Christian English beliefs. Both Old English and Old Norse are, of course, fond of kennings, those riddling compound nouns that obliquely describe an object (for example, 'sea' becomes 'whale-road'). Old Norse Skaldic poetry takes the art of kennings to an extreme level of elaboration and impenetrability; searching for 'God' in Tarrin Wills's database of kennings throws up such obscure treats as *ríkr rakkr dróttinn fróns solar* ('the mighty, bold lord of the land of the sun') and *hildingr hárar þekju éla* ('the warlord of the high thatch of snowstorms').[34] I will leave it to far more qualified (and patient) minds to study the skaldic material.

Eddic kennings for the gods are more relevant, being almost certainly of greater antiquity than the skaldic material. The Elder Edda is a collection of mythological and heroic poems, preserving deep cultural memories, later given a prose framework by Snorri Sturluson in the so-called Prose Edda.[35] Looking at names for pagan gods in Eddic sources, there are some similarities with Old English. Norse names take the same two-element compound form as Old English, a token of their shared linguistic and cultural heritage as much as anything. Amongst the names for Odin in Eddic poetry, one finds many elements which are cognate with designations for God in Old English. For example, *Sig* ('victory'), *drotinn* ('lord'), *faðr* ('father'), *guð* ('God') and *bragi* ('chieftain') all have close Old English cognates (sigor, drihten, fæder, god and brega respectively) that appear frequently either as compounds or simplexes for God. Of course, many of the names for the gods have specific, sometimes rather uncomfortable, mythological connotations and would never have been applicable to the Christian God – Odin is known as 'killer', 'ruler of treachery', 'god of the hanged' and so forth (although one can imagine 'the hanged God' being applied to Christ). However, there are few if any direct equivalents of the most significant designations for God – no Norse cognate for *wuldorfæder* or *heofonrices weard*. It is easy to jump to conclusions, and I am not qualified enough as a philologist or a Nordicist to make any firm suggestions. But I would like to suggest that – while many or most of the elements of the old pagan names for the gods survived into Christian poetry, along with the general diction of the old poetry – the old language was not applied to God wholesale in a syncretic fashion. Rather it was utterly reconfigured to express an entirely new way of thinking about the divine.

A close reading of Bede's account of Cædmon in the *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum* ('Ecclesiastical History of the English People') reinforces this argument. Cædmon, transmitted through Bede's Latin and reconstituted into Old English by later translators, is the closest we can get to the beginnings of Christian poetry in English. His famous creation hymn is the earliest attested piece of English poetry. This

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[33] The only references to Woden in Old English literature are in the 'Nine Herbs Charm' and *Maxims I* (Karin Olsen, 'The *Lacnunga* and its Sources: The *Nine Herbs Charm* and *Wið Færstice* Reconsidered', *Revisita Canaria de Estudios Ingleses*, 55 (2007), pp. 23-31).

[34] University of Aberdeen Skaldic Project at *http://www.abdn.ac.uk/skaldic/db.php*

[35] Ursula Dronke (ed. and trans.), *The Poetic Edda*, Vol. 2: Mythological Poems, OUP, 1997.

is its text, in Northumbrian dialect, as written down by the scribe of the Moore Bede (Cambridge, University Library, Kk. 5. 16), traditionally dated to within a decade of Bede's death:

> Nu scylun hergan   hefaenricaes uard,
> metudæs maecti   end his modgidanc,
> uerc uuldurfadur,   swe he uundra gihuaes,
> eci Dryctin,   or astelidæ.
> He aerist scop   aelda barnum
> heben til hrofe   haleg scepen;
> tha middungeard   moncynnæs uard,
> eci Dryctin   æfter tiadæ
> firum foldu   frea allmectig.

> 'Now we must praise the Guardian of the heavenly kingdom, the might of the designer and his mind, the work of the glory-father, as he, the eternal Lord, established the beginning of all wonders. He first made for the children of men, heaven as a roof, the holy creator. Then the Guardian of mankind, the eternal Lord, after a time made the middle-enclosure as a land for men, the Lord almighty'.[36]

According to Bede, Cædmon was a simple cowherd and lay brother at Whitby abbey:

> Siquidem in habitu saeculari usque ad tempora provectioris aetatis constitutus nil carminum aliquando didicerat. Unde nonnumquam in convivio, cum esset laetitiae causa decretum ut omnes per ordinem cantare deberent, ille ubi appropinquare sibi citharam cernebat surgebat a media cena et egressus ad suam domum repedabat.

> 'He had lived in the secular life until he was well advanced in years, and *had never learned any verses*; therefore sometimes at feasts, when it was agreed for the sake of entertainment that all present should take a turn at singing, when he saw the harp coming towards him, he would rise up from the table in the middle of the feast, go out, and return home'.[37]

So, Cædmon was, on the one hand, not a secular poet himself. On the other hand, he was clearly brought up in an environment filled with vernacular poetry and music; his mind was shaped by the old songs. Fry writes that he chooses to explain the Cædmon narrative 'in terms of unconscious absorption of formulaic diction … indeed, sung narratives seem to have formed the main entertainment of all levels of Anglo-Saxon society, from king … to cowherd'.[38] Bede goes on to tell of how an angel appeared to Cædmon one night and commanded him to 'sing about the beginning of created things'.

> Quo accepto response, statim ipse coepit cantare in laudem Dei Conditoris versus quos numquam audierat.

> 'Thereupon Cædmon began to sing verses which he had never heard before in praise of

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[36] Richard Marsden, *The Cambridge Old English Reader*, CUP, 2004, p. 80.

[37] Bede, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, 4.24 (ed. and trans. Bertram Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors, *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, OUP, 1969, pp. 414-17.

[38] Donald K. Fry, 'Cædmon as a Formulaic Poet', *Forum for Modern Language Studies*, 10 (1974), pp. 227-47: 233.

God the Creator'.[39]

The ninth-century Old English translation of Bede paraphrases this as:

> Ongan he… singan in herenesse Godes Scyppendes þa fers 7 þa word þe he næfre gehyrde.

> 'He began to sing in praise of God the Shaper verses and words which he had never heard'.[40]

At the very least, Bede suggests that Cædmon had never before heard vernacular poetry turned towards God. However, it also seems to imply that the words he used were themselves innovative. At the same time, it is as certain as anything can be certain that the oral-formulaic diction of secular Old English poetry was the basis for Cædmon's divinely-inspired poetics. It may be that Cædmon simply repurposed old words for pagan gods and heroes, but it seems probable that he crafted entirely new designations out of the old diction, some of which went on to become commonplaces as Christian vernacular poetry developed into a rich tradition in its own right. In a sense, Cædmon and his successors did for their vernacular traditions what Augustine did for Plato or what Juvencus and Sedulius did for Virgil – not so much a derivative 'rebranding' of pagan poetry, but a comprehensive transformation (a 'conversion', if you like).

Thoughts on the Trinity

Before I finish, I wish to sketch out some thoughts on the representation of the Trinity in Old English poetry. We may fairly imagine that of all the new beliefs and doctrines that came to England with Augustine and Aidan, the mystery of the Trinity would have been among the most difficult, not only to grasp but then to express in verse. We can see Cynewulf grappling with Trinitarian doctrine at the end of *Juliana*:

>   Bidde ic monna gehwone
> gumena cynnes,   þe þis gied wræce,
> þæt he mec neodful   bi noman minum
> gemyne modig,   ond Meotud bidde
> þæt me heofona Helm   helpe gefremme,
> meahta Waldend,   on þam miclan dæge,
> Fæder, frofre Gæst,   in þa frecnan tid,
> dæda Demend,   ond se deora Sunu,
> þonne seo þrynis   þrymsittende
> in annesse   ælda cynne
> þurh þa sciran gesceaft   scrifeð bi gewyrhtum
> meorde monna gehwam.

> 'I ask each person of the human race who recites this poem that he necessarily and thoughtfully remember me by my name, and ask the Lord that the Protector of the heavens grant me help, the Wielder of virtues, on that great day, the Father, the Spirit of comfort, in that dangerous time, the Judge of deeds, and the dear Son, when the Trinity,

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[39] Bede, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, 4.24 (Colgrave and Mynors, *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, pp. 414-17.

[40] Cited by Fry, 'Cædmon as a Formulaic Poet', p. 234.

sitting mightily in Unity throughout that bright creation, will inscribe for every kind of people a reward for each person according to their deeds'.[41]

The Trinity itself is referred to here, the *þrynis … in annesse* or 'threeness in oneness'. However, the identities of the three persons are intriguingly jumbled up. The Father and the Son are mentioned, and the *frofre gæst* refers to the Holy Spirit, but the other names are placed into such a confusion of apposition that it is difficult to say who exactly the 'Judge of deeds', the 'Protector of the heavens', the 'Wielder of Virtues' or even the *Meotud/Metod* are – not least because Cynewulf asks us to pray to the *Meotud* for the aid of all three persons. Either Cynewulf is on uncertain ground or, perhaps more likely, he wishes to conjure an image of the three persons of the Trinity in such a perfect relationship of eternal unity that their individual roles (though important) become indistinct.

The idea of one all-powerful all-loving Father is perhaps relatively easy to describe – I have, in any case, already discussed names for the Father in poems such as the *Exodus*; Jesus as God's Son is more difficult, but the idea of God coming to earth to fight against evil did allow poets to apply their well-developed vocabulary of warrior-heroes. The *Dream of the Rood*, perhaps the greatest of all Old English poems, deals expertly with Christ's humanity and divinity as it reflects on the paradox of the cross. Christ is *frea mancynnes* (line 33), 'mankind's Lord', the Lord both *of* mankind and *from* mankind. He is the *geong hæleð þæt wæs god ælmihtig* (line 39), 'the young hero that was God Almighty' – a description of a human warrior is juxtaposed with a designation which speaks of God's majesty and omnipotence. Little elaboration is required. In this instance the poem would not be well served by dozens of apposite kennings, each reflecting a single aspect of Christ's nature. All we need to see is God on the cross. Other poets reflect on the nature of Christ in different ways. For instance, the author of *Christ and Satan*, needing to differentiate between the Father and the Son reaches for designations like *wuldres Bearn* ('child of glory') and *sunu Meotodes* ('son of the Creator').

While the Father and the Son can both be anthropomorphised, for good or for ill, the Holy Spirit is something of a challenge. He is almost always referred to by the simple translation *halig gæst*, or variations such as *frofre gæst* or *heahgæst hleofast* ('protecting High Spirit'). He is most commonly represented as a comforter or protector, as when Cynewulf describes Juliana having the Holy Spirit as a 'constant companion' (*singal gesið*) in prison.[42] In *Christ and Satan*, the poet does perceive a role for the Spirit in creation:

> Swa se wyrhta   þurh his wuldres gæst
> serede and sette   on six dagum
> eorðan dæles…

> 'So the Maker, through his Spirit of glory, planned and put into place the portion of the Earth in six days'.[43]

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[41] Cynewulf, *Juliana*, lines 718b-29a (ed. Rosemary Woolf, *Juliana*, Methuen, 1955, p. 55; trans. Andy Orchard, 'Beowulf', in Malcolm Godden and Michael Lapidge (eds), *The Cambridge Companion to Old English Literature*, 2nd ed., CUP, 2013, p. 155).

[42] Cynewulf, *Juliana*, line 242 (ed. Woolf, *Juliana*, p. 31).

[43] *Christ and Satan*, lines 14-16a (ed. Merrel Dare Clubb, *Christ and Satan: An Old English Poem*, Yale

Again, the designation is a simple variation of *gæst*. While I do not want to generalise, it seems reasonable to suggest that the Anglo-Saxon poets struggled to consider the Holy Spirit with the same subtlety and sensitivity of diction that they offered the Father and the Son.

In this paper, I have shown that Old English poets dealt thoughtfully and skilfully with the issue of naming God. Some poets, such as Cynewulf and the author of the *Exodus*, engaged with the problem of how to name an infinite God without diminishing his greatness. They applied the art of appositional variation to the divine, using traditional poetic diction to reflect on God's character. I have also suggested that, while Anglo-Saxon poets did respond to both the pagan and the late antique inheritance (the former having been superseded by the Gospel, the latter brought to England alongside Christianity), Old English Christian poetry was neither merely a 'rebranding' of paganism nor a wholesale adoption of Latin poetics. Rather, they transformed the poetics of their pagan ancestors into a new poetry, one which grappled faithfully and at times masterfully with the nature of God.

University Press, 1925, p. 5).

Richard Sibbes and the Performance of the Plain Sermon

Chin Hwa Myatt

Before the last two decades, early modern preaching has largely been categorised in criticism in terms of the so-called metaphysical and plain styles. There has been greater interest in the metaphysical style,[1] which is largely characterised by wit, classical learning, and rhetorical ostentation to the point of theatricality.[2] In contrast, the 'plain' or 'Puritan' sermon has been characterised as almost entirely stripped of rhetorical ornament[3] (and by implication, dry and dull) and so in line with Puritan antitheatrical prejudice.[4] However, recent scholarship has drawn attention to the performance and reception of sermons,[5] with Arnold Hunt redefining all early modern sermons as 'a dramatic, almost theatrical performance in which the preacher would have used expressive gestures and varied the pitch and tone of his voice in order to convey emotion.'[6] Moreover, there has been a growing recognition of the rhetorical and performative nature of the plain sermon[7] with Bryan Crockett observing that the '"plain style" … has a theatrical dimension.'[8]

In the light of this criticism, I would like to consider Richard Sibbes (1577-1635), whose sermons are not only typical but considered among his contemporaries to be near the pinnacle of the plain style of preaching. Not only was Sibbes strongly connected to a network of preachers who advocated plain preaching, but like them, he adopted variations of what Perry Miller identified as the typical 'Puritan' sermon style of 'doctrine, reasons, and uses'.[9] The term 'Puritan', however, as Mark Dever has shown,[10] must be carefully defined when applied to Sibbes. Like many of his fellow conforming Church of England ministers, Sibbes emphasised the importance of inner

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[1] See, for example, W. Fraser Mitchell, *English Pulpit Oratory from Andrewes to Tillotson*, MacMillan, 1932, and Horton Davies, *Like Angels from a Cloud: The English Metaphysical Preachers, 1588-1645*, San Marino, CA, Huntington Library, 1986.

[2] Mitchell, pp. 9-10.

[3] Perry Miller and Thomas H. Johnson (eds), *The Puritans*, rev. edn, 2 vols., New York, Harper & Row, 1963, I, p. 67.

[4] Jonas Barish, *The Antitheatrical Prejudice*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1981, pp. 80-96.

[5] See especially Peter McCullough, Hugh Adlington, and Emma Rhatigan (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of the Early Modern Sermon*, Oxford University Press, 2011, and Arnold Hunt, *The Art of Hearing: English Preachers and their Audiences, 1590-1640*, Cambridge University Press, 2010.

[6] Hunt, p. 90.

[7] See especially Mary Morrissey, 'Interdisciplinarity and the Study of Early Modern Sermons', *Historical Journal*, 42 (1999), 1111-1123, and David Parry, '"A Divine Kind of Rhetoric": Puritanism and Persuasion in Early Modern England', unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Cambridge, 2011.

[8] Bryan Crockett, 'Thomas Playfere's poetics of preaching', in Lori Anne Ferrell and Peter McCullough (eds), *The English Sermon Revised*: *Religion, literature and history 1600-1750*, Manchester University Press, 2000, pp. 59-83 (p. 65).

[9] Perry Miller, *The New England Mind: The Seventeenth Century*, Boston, MA, Beacon Press, 1961; repr. 1965, p. 334.

[10] Mark Dever, *Richard Sibbes: Puritanism and Calvinism in Late Elizabethan and Early Stuart England*, Macon, GA, Mercer University Press, 2000, p. 6.

reform, or the renewal of the heart, before the reform of outer forms of religion.[11] Hence, the trait of sincerity has also been associated with his sermon style.

Now if the so-called metaphysical preachers are accused of theatricality and, by implication, insincerity, can the performative aspect of the plain sermon, as identified by Crockett, lay the plain style open to the same criticism? And what would it mean at once to perform and be sincere? A tension between sincerity and performance haunted not just the most theatrical of spaces in London – the professional stage – but also, I want to argue, the stage of the pulpit. Through an exploration of Sibbes's sermons, I will suggest how this apparent tension between sincerity and performance is resolved in his preaching.[12]

'Heav'n and Hell as on a Stage': Preachers on the Stage

Sibbes was born in Tostock in 1577 and attended the renowned Edward VI Free School at Bury St Edmunds before moving to St John's College, Cambridge.[13] After graduating with a BA in 1599 and an MA in 1602, he obtained a variety of college posts, including the Lady Margaret chaplain, the senior dean, and the lector domesticus of John's. He was ordained as a deacon and priest in 1608 and was elected as the college preacher. In 1610, the minister, churchwardens, and twenty-nine parishioners of Holy Trinity Church established a public lecture for the town to be held in the church on Sunday afternoons and offered this position to Sibbes. As a result of the crowds his preaching attracted, a new gallery was built to accommodate the listeners. In 1617, Sibbes turned his path towards London, and he was chosen as the preacher of Gray's Inn, where the likes of Francis Bacon and George Herbert may have been his auditors.[14]

When Sibbes first came to Cambridge, and later, in his time in London, he would have been exposed to the preaching styles of those Horton Davies calls metaphysical or witty preachers in his book, *Like Angels from a Cloud: The English Metaphysical Preachers, 1588-1645*. Thomas Playfere, the Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity from 1596 onwards, was preaching at St John's College when Sibbes first came up to Cambridge. Playfere was known for his extravagant use of rhetorical devices. John Hoskins, the author of *Directions for Speech and Style* (1599) warns of the overuse of the antimetabole, or the inverted sentence, and mentions how Playfere 'did wrong to tire this poor figure by using it thirty times in one sermon.'[15]

Another preacher renowned for his remarkable learning and dazzling wit was the formidable Lancelot Andrewes, who was the Master of Pembroke College,

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[11] J. I. Packer, *A Quest for Godliness: The Puritan Vision of the Christian Life,* Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1990, p. 38.

[12] *The Complete Works of Richard Sibbes*, ed. Alexander B. Grosart, 7 vols., Edinburgh, James Nichol, 1862-64; repr. Edinburgh, The Banner of Truth Trust, 1973-83. All subsequent references will be to this edition and will be given within the text.

[13] A succinct biography of Sibbes can be found in Dever, 'Sibbes, Richard (1577?-1635)', *Oxford Dictioanry of National Biography* <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/25498>, [accessed 20 August 2006]

[14] Janice Knight, 'Richard Sibbes', in Clayton D. Lein (ed.), *British Prose Writers of the Early Seventeenth Century*, Dictionary of Literary Biography, 151, Detroit, CO, Gale Research, 1995, pp. 285-93 (p. 288).

[15] John Hoskins, *Directions for Speech and Style*, ed. Hoyt H. Hudson, Princeton University Press, 1935, p. 15.

Cambridge, from 1589 to 1605,[16] during which time Sibbes was also at Cambridge. His eloquence drew attention even from literary quarters: the pamphleteer and playwright Thomas Nashe (1567-1601) calls Andrewes 'the absolutest Oracle of all sound Deuinitie here amongst vs.'[17] Andrewes was known to isolate single words, even syllables of Scripture, for he believed they were 'hable to strike any man into an extasie'.[18] However, the poet George Herbert, who espoused a 'naturall, and sweet, and grave' form of communication in *A Priest to the Temple* (1652), disapproves of this method of 'crumbling a text into small parts' so that 'the words apart are not Scripture, but a dictionary, and may be considered alike in all the Scripture.'[19]

When Sibbes took up his readership in divinity at Gray's Inn in 1617, John Donne had held the same position in the neighbouring Lincoln's Inn since the previous year. Donne was noted not only for his eloquence as a preacher but also for his passion and zeal. The biographer Izaak Walton states of him, 'A Preacher in earnest; weeping sometimes for his Auditory, sometimes with them … like an Angel from a cloud, … inticing others by a sacred Art and Courtship to amend their lives.'[20] This 'inticing' presence is also a very theatrical one, as the preacher performs 'for' and 'with' his audience. Walton suggests it was the spectacle of the 'weeping' and 'holy' preacher that was to lure the hearers into greater godliness, rather than his words. Yet for Donne, a sermon's rhetorical eloquence is of prime importance, not least because he holds that God Himself is 'a *figurative*, a *metaphoricall God*'.[21]

Such flashes of rhetorical and dramatic brilliance were not appreciated by all. The nonconformist divine Richard Baxter (1615-1691), writing later in the seventeenth century, condemns displays of 'phantastick wit' and 'rhetorical jingling' for their trivializing of the Word. He writes of the kind of witty preaching epitomised by Andrewes's style, 'I felt no life in it: methought they did but *play* with holy things' [my emphasis].[22] Elsewhere, he rails against player-like preachers:

> What Statues, or what Hypocrites are they,
> Who between sleep and wake do Preach & Pray?
> As if they feared wakening the Dead!
> Or were but lighting sinners to their Bed!
> Who speak of Heav'n and Hell as on a Stage!
> And make the Pulpit but a Parrot's Cage?
> Who teach as men that care not much who learns;
> And Preach in jest to men that sin in earns.[23]

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[16] P. E. McCullough, 'Andrewes, Lancelot (1555-1626)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/520>, [accessed 25 August 2006].

[17] *The Works of Thomas Nashe*, ed. Ronald B. McKerrow, 2nd edn, rev. by F. P. Wilson, 5 vols., Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1958, III, 105.

[18] Lancelot Andrewes, *XCVI Sermons*, ed. William Laud and John Buckeridge, 1629, p. 113.

[19] *The Works of George Herbert*, ed. F. E. Hutchinson, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1959; first pub. 1941, p. 235.

[20] Izaak Walton, *The Lives of John Donne, Sir Henry Wotton, Richard Hooker, George Herbert, and Robert Sanderson*, Oxford University Press, 1927, p. 49.

[21] John Donne, *Devotions Upon Emergent Occasions* [1624], ed. Anthony Raspa, Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1975, pp. 99-100.

[22] Frederick J. Powicke, *A Life of the Reverend Richard Baxter, 1615-1691,* Jonathan Cape, 1924, p. 283.

[23] Richard Baxter, *Poetical Fragments by Richard Baxter, London 1681,* Farnborough: Gregg, 1971, p. 40.

According to Baxter, preachers who have no concern for salvation, who '[fear] wakening' those that are spiritually 'Dead', and who 'play with holy things', like heaven and hell, are no better than actors. Baxter's image of the 'Parrot's Cage' helps suggest that, instead of mediating and interpreting God's truth to sinners, the preacher only preaches what his audience wants to hear, repeating back, like a parrot, their words and desires. The service, or rather, entertainment, such a pulpit provides is no different, then, from that of the stage. And worse still, he sees such preaching as hypocrisy. Patrick Collinson makes the observation that the pulpit and the stage were competing in the same market, or 'leisure industry', in which people gadded to sermons the way they gadded to plays and dances.[24] Indeed, during Lent, sermons replaced plays for eager Londoners to watch and consume.[25] Yet the auditory is no less liable to hypocrisy, for, as Baxter claims, 'as they deal liker to Players than Preachers in the Pulpit so usually their hearers do rather come to play with a Sermon than to attend a Message from the God of Heaven about the life or death of their Souls.'[26] The affinity between theatricality and hypocrisy does not go unnoticed by Samuel Crook (1575-1649), the Church of England clergyman educated in Cambridge, who noted how the idea of the theatre was etymologically connected to insincerity and hypocrisy.[27] Indeed, critics in the late twentieth century have tended to pit Puritans against the theatre and all that is theatrical. Jonas Barish lumps figures like Stephen Gosson, Philip Stubbes, John Rainolds, and William Prynne under the broadly categorised 'Puritan' attack on the theatre.[28] It is perhaps not surprising such views have endured when the Long Parliament, which largely consisted of men of Puritan persuasion, closed the theatres in 1642.

'Words of delight': the plain style

In contrast, the style that appealed most to Sibbes was the 'plain' style as advocated by William Perkins, who was preaching at Great St Andrews when Sibbes was an undergraduate. It was a sermon preached in this plain style by Perkins's successor Paul Baynes that, according to the biographer Samuel Clarke, had been instrumental in Sibbes's conversion.[29] Perkins was a fellow of Christ's College and a prolific writer, whose works were so popular that they appeared in English, Latin, Dutch, Spanish, Welsh, and Irish. Sibbes himself went on to advocate the plain style from 1625 to 1633, during which he became part of a group of twelve Londoners who formed themselves into an unincorporated group of trustees to 'raise funds with which to acquire ecclesiastical revenue in the hands of laymen to be used for the maintenance and relief of a godly, faithful, and painstaking ministry', especially in borough towns.[30] After

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[24] Patrick Collinson, *The Religion of Protestants: The Church in English Society, 1559-1625*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1982, p. 220.

[25] Peter McCullough, *Sermons at Court: Politics and Religion in Elizabethan and Jacobean Preaching*, Cambridge University Press, 1998, p. 134.

[26] Powicke, p. 283.

[27] 'The names of *hypocrisie*, and *Hypocrites* are borrowed from the Greek, In which tongue they primarily signifie the profession of a *Stage-player*, which is to express in speech, habit and action, not his own person and manners, but his whom he representeth.' Samuel Crook, *Ta Diaφeronta, or Divine Characters in Two Parts*, 1658, p. 6.

[28] Barish, pp. 80-96.

[29] Samuel Clarke, 'The Life of Doctor Sibs, who dyed Anno Christi 1635', *The Lives of Thirty Two English Divines*, in *A General Martyrologie*, 3rd edn, 1677), pp. 143-45 (p. 143).

[30] Isabel M. Calder, *Activities of the Puritan Faction of the Church of England, 1625-33*, S. P. C. K.,

eight years, they had collected six thousand pounds and funded eighteen preachers in eleven counties.

The plain preaching that Sibbes thought so necessary finds seminal explanation and description in Perkins's *The Arte of Prophecying*, which was first written in Latin in 1592 and translated into English in 1606. Seen as the definitive Puritan preaching manual,[31] the work puts forth a relatively simple method of preaching in which the emphasis is on the 'naturall sense' of the Scriptures and the practical relevance and usefulness of the sermon. The few doctrinal points that are to be gleaned from the text are to be 'profitable' and, ideally, applied to the lives of the hearers. Moreover, the whole sermon is to be delivered 'in a simple and plaine speech'.[32] It is this last phrase that has divided critics.

On the one hand, 'plain' has been taken to mean rhetorical minimalism. For Perkins, the preacher is to conceal his learning and rhetorical arts from the auditory. On the other hand, some critics make greater allowances for limited amounts of eloquence by emphasising that these preachers modelled their style on the Bible.[33] A large part of the confusion derives from the works of these preachers themselves. The literary theory of plainness as linguistic austerity is not matched by the actual content and style of the sermons themselves, which are often richly filled with imagery. Indeed, an examination of what Perkins actually writes about preaching reveals the figurative richness that he identifies in the Bible, and thus, indirectly, sanctions in preaching. The Bible is to be read in a very literary way and thus can be expounded in a similar fashion.

In addition to the figurative element of the plain style, David Parry has argued for the influence of the classical rhetorical tradition on Puritan sermons and has emphasised Sibbes's use of the mode of pathos, or emotion, to appeal to the affections of his hearers.[34] For Sibbes, then, sermons share a chief end with rhetoric – *movere* ('to move'). Sibbes expounds on how to reach the heart, which he identifies as comprised of 'the will and affections' (VI, 403). In his preface to John Smith's *An Exposition of the Creed* (1632), he explains how 'witty things only, as they are spoken to the brain, so they rest in the brain, … but the heart … that is the mark a faithful teacher aims to hit.' To reach the heart, Sibbes details how the preacher must study 'lively representations to help men's faith by the fancy' and, like Christ and Solomon, 'find out pleasant words, or words of delight' (I, ci). These 'lively' representations are the preacher's way of creating a visual theatre for the effect of producing virtue in his hearers. Sibbes here is indirectly influenced by Augustine's emphasis on the affections and the will. The fourth book in Augustine's *On Christian Doctrine*, a preacher's rhetorical manual, places a crucial part in adapting classical rhetoric for Christian purposes. Augustine was not so much interested in the rules of rhetoric as he was with its function, which he shifts from the persuasion to new knowledge to the moving of the will.

1957, p. vii.

[31] Mitchell, p. 99.

[32] William Perkins, *The Works of that Famovs and worthy Minister of Christe in the Vniversitie of Cambridge, M. William Perkins*, 3 vols., 1631, II, 673.

[33] For example, Barbara Kiefer Lewalski states, 'This appeal does not lead to artlessness or to the abnegation of art in the presentation of sacred subject matter, but rather to the development of an art whose precepts may be derived, and whose stylistic features may be imitated, from the scriptures.' (Barbara Kiefer Lewalski, *Protestant Poetics and the Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric*, Princeton University Press, 1979, p. 219.)

[34] Parry, 'A Divine Kind of Rhetoric' (see note 7), p. 34.

Though he does not explicitly mention gestures to accompany the plain sermon, Sibbes speaks of the performative decorum of preaching to souls in different states. In *The Bruised Reed and Smoking Flax* (1630), one of his most popular works, which saw six editions within thirty years, and that Baxter testifies as having 'opened more the love of God' and provided 'a livelier apprehension of the mystery of redemption' than all the other books he had read,[35] Sibbes devotes a chapter to how divines are to conduct themselves before a congregation of young believers. Besides focusing on the content of the sermons, he encourages them to 'not be over-masterly' (I, 53), but lowly and merciful, to be moved by the 'spirit of mercy that was in Christ' (I, 53) instead of having 'overmuch austerity', by which 'carriage many [hearers] smother their temptations, and burn inwardly' (I, 54). The resulting picture is that of an impassioned yet gentle figure, whose movements and tone are not restrained to the point of austerity. Sibbes sets the best style within the 'just bounds of mercy and severity' and concludes by recommending moderation. He states, 'It is a way of prevailing, as agreeable to Christ, so likewise to man's nature, to prevail by some forbearance and moderation' (I, 55). The preacher's model, then, for Sibbes, is Christ.

The same principle of moderation is found in Perkins's more detailed recommendations of how a sincere preacher should carry himself. Perkins explains the preacher 'must bee … temperate … and hath his outward fashions and gestures moderate and plaine.' A plain performance is characterised by a voice that 'ought to be so high, that al may hear' while 'the trunke or stalke of the bodie' must be 'erect and quiet'. Even the preacher's eyes must be instructed, for the 'lifting vp of the eye and the hand signifieth confidence' with the 'casting downe of the eyes signifying sorrow and heavinesse.'[36] The performance of the preacher parallels that of the actor. Perkins's balanced instructions and call to decorum evoke Hamlet's instructions to the players. Hamlet forbids the players from over-exerting themselves in their speech and their gestures:

> Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you – trippingly on the tongue …
> Nor do not saw the air too much with your hand, thus, but use all gently; for, in the very torrent, tempest and, as I may say, the whirlwind of your passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance that may give it smoothness.[37]

Hamlet's appeal to moderate speech corresponds to Perkins's advice on moderating the pitch of the voice. Excessive acting, as exemplified in the hand's sawing of the air, is condemned both by Hamlet and by Perkins, who recommends 'moderate and plaine' gestures. Yet the emphasis on moderation, it seems to me, does not make this type of delivery any less performative or theatrical. Kate Armstrong has drawn attention to how the grandiloquent and plain styles of preaching correspond to Cicero's Asiatic and Attic styles, respectively, where '[the] crucial factor in delivery, regardless of the style chosen, is that it should be appropriate and dignified.'[38] As Hamlet puts it,

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[35] Baxter, *Reliquiae Baxterianae* (London, 1696), part I, 3-4.

[36] Perkins, II, 672.

[37] William Shakespeare, *Hamlet* [1604-5], ed. Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor, Arden Shakespeare, 2006, III. 2. 1-2, 4-8.

[38] Kate Armstrong, 'Sermons in Performance' in Peter McCullough, Hugh Adlington, and Emma Rhatigan (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of the Early Modern Sermon*, Oxford University Press, 2011, pp. 120-36 (p. 131).

performing with decorum actually hits closer to 'the purpose of playing'[39] which is to evoke the appropriate emotions from the audience.

'Labour to be earnest': performance and sincerity

But besides the appeal to the imagination through 'words of delight' and the use of appropriate gestures to move the heart, Sibbes suggests that these methods would be of no use without the preacher himself being moved. The preacher's performance must be *sincere*. This principle derives from classical sources such as Horace and Cicero and is reiterated by Augustine in his *On Christian Doctrine* and, later, by Perkins in *The Arte of Prophecying*. Perkins borrows Cicero's analogy when he states, 'Wood that is capable of fire, doth not burne, unlesse fire be put to it; and he must first bee godly affected himselfe, who would stirre up godly affections in other men.'[40] If one's auditors' affections depend on the preacher's own, then it is of great priority for the preacher to stir himself up. Sibbes explains in *Bowels Opened* how and why anyone who would convert others should move himself:

> labour to be earnest. If we would kindle others, we must be warmed ourselves; if we would make others weep, we must weep ourselves. Naturalists could observe this. … Let us labour to be deeply affected with what we speak, and speak with confidence as if we knew what we spoke. (II, 167)

The end of sincerity requires much effort. The verb, 'labour', is repeated twice; sincerity does not come naturally or spontaneously but after much work. We need to '[warm] ourselves' and 'weep ourselves'. It is, then, not only the imagination of the auditors that needs to be kindled but the also the speaker's own fancy. Sibbes is aware that this idea is not new but obvious to pagan authors, or 'Naturalists'. The performance of a preacher, let alone a classical orator, would be inadequate if he did not perform with sincerity.

To modern ears, the concepts of performance and sincerity might not sit too well with each other. Sincerity flows from within and indicates an integrity between one's inner and outer beings. Performance concerns itself with the outward role which could perhaps be separated from, at odds with, or even opposed to that which is within. Indeed, according to Lionel Trilling in his seminal work, *Sincerity and Authenticity*, in the word, 'role', 'the old histrionic meaning is present whether or not we let ourselves be aware of it, and it brings with it the idea that somewhere under all the roles there is Me, that poor old ultimate actuality, who, when all the roles have been played, would like to murmur "Off, off, you lendings!" and settle down with his own original actual self.'[41] If an 'original actual self' exists, the assumption is that this inward being is true[42] and real, while the role is performed and perhaps even false. The anxiety of performance is clearly felt by Hamlet, who laments how a player's passion can be founded upon 'nothing',[43] while no 'forms, moods, shapes of grief' can 'denote [him] truly'.[44] For Hamlet, '[that] within which passeth show' is in direct opposition to

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[39] *Hamlet*, III. 2. 20.
[40] Perkins, II, 671.
[41] Lionel Trilling, *Sincerity and Authenticity*, Oxford University Press, 1972, p. 10.
[42] Katharine Eisaman Maus, *Inwardness and Theater in the English Renaissance*, The University of Chicago Press, 1995, p. 5.
[43] *Hamlet*, II. 2. 492.
[44] *Hamlet*, I. 2. 82, 83.

'actions that a man might play'.[45] Applied to the plain, sincere preacher, in labouring to be earnest, the preacher could be only giving an impression, not the reality. Indeed, when Sibbes states, we should 'speak with confidence *as if* we knew what we spoke' (II, 167; my emphasis), the words, 'as if', raise questions about what we really know. Does speaking with confidence mean speaking that which is not within? The sincere preacher, then, can become just as liable to the criticism Baxter levelled against the witty preacher: hypocrisy.

However, Sibbes's sermons suggest that one can avoid hypocrisy in one's preaching precisely by labouring for sincerity. These efforts are grounded in the Reformed doctrine that God has first worked in one's heart to render such efforts effective. Sibbes's meditations on how sincerity might be learned and performed can be found in his sermon series, 'Josiah's Reformation', which was first published in 1629. It expounds upon the example of the repentance of Josiah, the King of Judah, and consists of four sermons: 'The Tender Heart', 'The Art of Self-Humbling', 'The Art of Mourning', and 'The Saint's Refreshing'. The repeated word, 'art', assumes there is a skill and a method to the business of repentance. In 'The Tender Heart', Sibbes emphasises how we can make our hearts tender only because God has made them tender:

> One thing is the cause of another, but all come from the first cause. So tenderness of heart may be some cause of removal of judgment; but God is the cause of both, for they all come from the first cause, which is God. So that these words do rather contain an order than a cause. (VI, 31)

God is the main and 'first' cause of everything, including tender hearts. Sibbes clarifies how it is not that tender hearts *cause* God to have mercy on us – that would credit the heart with procuring grace, which would result in this not being grace, but a reward. Rather, there is an *order* by which things happen: a tender heart is followed by the flow of God's mercy. As Sibbes puts it, 'A tender heart is made tender *by him that made it*' (VI, 33). The emphasis on order, not causality, is due to Sibbes's view of the self as depraved and inherently hypocritical since the fall. In his *An Exposition of 2nd Corinthians Chapter One* (1655), Sibbes states of the child, 'It is one of the first things he learns, to dissemble, to double, to be false' (III, 237). According to this sobering perspective, if 'naturally we are all hypocrites' and 'look to shows', we cannot produce or act out sincerity, which 'is from God' (III, 240).

In 'The Art of Self-Humbling', Sibbes, then, proceeds to explain how we can humble ourselves as God humbles us. Josiah, the ancient king of Judah and the main character of these sermons 'was both the agent and the patient, the worker and the object of his work: it came from him, and ended in him' (VI, 45). Sibbes's theology embraces a pluralistic view of causation, in which both doctrines of predestination and human responsibility can rest alongside each other. Thus, Josiah can be both the agent and patient of action. In Josiah's subjective perspective, he will feel that humility 'came from him, and ended in him', but in the spiritual reality of the divine perspective, Josiah is the 'patient' and 'object of his work'. Yet Josiah can only obtain the latter perspective by stepping outside of himself and reflecting on the divine work in him. Hence, Sibbes calls God's actions of grace '*reflected actions*' (VI, 46).

The issues raised by the relationship between the active and passive actions of

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[45] Ibid., I. 2. 85, 84.

humbling oneself are similarly raised in the performance of plain preaching. The preacher, as the agent, moves himself, preaches, and subsequently moves, even converts, his listeners. On this immediate level, the preacher's every action – his methods of image-making and gestures – is artfully contrived and performed. However, on the principle of reflected action, Sibbes's preacher realises that God 'doth work them in us and by us' (VI, 46), for, 'if it were not the Spirit that persuaded the soul, when the minister speaks, alas! all ministerial persuasions are to no purpose' (IV, 219). The preacher's affections are stirred as a result of the softening work of the Spirit. He is to preach in the power of the Spirit, and listeners' hearts are to be moved by the Spirit.

Consequently, since the Spirit, and not inwardness, is the ultimate source of sincerity, the preacher is liberated to give very specific instructions on how to cultivate affections, for without God's work, such labours would be futile. Moreover, Sibbes states, 'God through the use of means softens [the heart] by his word.'[46] Hence we are encouraged to actively use such divinely appointed means to generate specific affections. In 'The Tender Heart', Sibbes gives his auditors nine instructions on how to preserve their tenderness. The instructions range from hearing 'what God's word says of our estate by nature, of the wrath and justice of God, and of the judgment that will shortly come upon all the world'[47] to taking '*heed of the least sin against conscience*'.[48]

While most of these means cater to the inner being, Sibbes also gives guidance on fashioning the outer self with actions that signify humbling. He has no qualms, like Hamlet, concerning 'forms, moods, shapes of grief' that might compromise one's sincerity; rather, forms such as humble speech, the rending of clothes, and weeping, facilitate and encourage true tenderness. First, then, in 'The Art of Self-humbling', Sibbes insists on the need for the provision of confessional words. He states, 'This speech, which is a part of humiliation, is called a confession of our sins to God; with it should be joined hatred and grief afflictive, as also a deprecation and desire that God would remove the judgment which we have deserved by our sins' (VI, 47). While speech should never be divorced from feeling, one should not dismiss the power of performing a pattern of speech. Sibbes also provides his audience with different types of outer carriages that they can adopt, allowing for variation according to national and social decorum and the individual personality. In 'The Art of Mourning', he explains how it was the national custom in Josiah's time to rend clothes when in sorrow, for, 'in their sorrow they thought themselves unworthy to wear any' (VI, 60). Knowing that this custom does not chime well with the customs of seventeenth century England, he translates the practice into an inner one, in which 'the rending of clothes shews the rending of the heart before' (VI, 60). The inner and outer actions are interchangeable as if, in the regenerated heart, what one does outwardly coheres with the inward self.

The same principle applies to tears. Sibbes's explanation of how tears are produced is a methodological process that proceeds from the passions to the physical body: 'tears are strained from the inward parts, through the eyes; for the understanding first conceiveth cause of grief upon the heart, after which the heart sends up matter of grief to the brain, and the brain being of a cold nature, doth distil it down into tears; so that if the grief be sharp and piercing, there will follow tears after from most' (VI, 64). There

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[46] Richard Sibbes, *Josiah's Reformation* [1629], Edinburgh, The Banner of Truth Trust, 2011, p. 12.
[47] Ibid., p. 16.
[48] Ibid., p. 18.

is a clear passageway between the 'inward parts' and the physical tears, and, as the former is ignited, so the latter is unleashed. Besides the fact that redemption rescues us from hypocrisy, Sibbes believes that it is only apt that repentance should involve both the inner and outer beings when, as he puts it, 'the soul and body go together in the acting of sin' (VI, 62).

Hence, for Sibbes, the 'problem' of sincere feelings and preaching is not primarily in the potential disjunction between inner and outer parts of the self but in man's inherent inability to be sincere without the workings of divine grace. Once this problem is dealt with, Sibbes can relentlessly practise himself, and exhort his hearers to perform, what they already are and have become. While Sibbes's views on the role of the imagination, the importance of sincerity, and the work of the Holy Spirit are representative rather than innovations of the plain preachers, his sermons help illuminate how contemporary readers might respond to the implications of the theatrical potential of the plain sermon. We may be more troubled than Sibbes's contemporaries by the notion of sincerity, as, according to Trilling, 'the word itself has for us a hollow sound and seems almost to negate its meaning […] because it does not propose being true to one's own self as an end but only as a means.'[49] While being true to oneself regardless of one's social circumstances of life might be considered authentic, being true for the sake of avoiding falsehood to others and to God can be judged negatively as role-play. However, Sibbes's sermons show how cultivating sincerity is essential for the preacher, not only for the persuasion of others but also for the salvation of himself and his hearers.

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[49] Trilling, p. 9

Seven Songs for Jarmila

David Barratt

Dedicated to Madame Jarmila Urbanova

1. *Fate*

At the tea-dance he made straight for you
Despite fiancé, escort, courtesy.
And without courtesy Fate whispered
'Your husband,' your master, your lord.

Years later, you wondered if this were
A trick; after the bondage, mastery,
Manipulation. After your two sons.
After *Arbeit macht frei*.

Like the two-edged sword,
What defends, cuts; what frees, binds.
Fate laughed his wordless joke.
Then one day, he quietly died.

2. *Aunt Olga*

Your nourisher, family's provider,
What were the songs she taught you?
'Do not lie in your heart
To please the priest.'

Whilst the door remained yet closed
To you for the risen Christ;
She, Jewess, could believe,
Even as one of the infirm

On the train *nach Osten*.
Your Bible lay inside her case
For her captors to see and wonder.
Still on the willow hangs the lyre.

3. *The Knock at Night*

Your husband sick, unfazed;
Polite greetings from concierge
And well-heeled Gestapo *offizier*.
Polite goodbyes.

Later you found out, much later,
From that night, you were
The one Jarmila Urbanova not shot.
That fair hair, those blue eyes,
They saved you.

4. *Still Birth*

Soul from body, soul from body
Untimely ripped the broken corpse.
Opposite, the swastika's raised –
Defeat and dying hand in hand.

No births for you, the doctor said,
Dying later in the prison camp.
Too late the muted messenger –
Your puling infant nearly died.

Ailing, gasping, he survived,
Alienated to maturity and wife.
How much he turned I could not see.

My son! My Israel!
Where is the Promised Land?

5. *Victory*

After the Allied bombings
You fled Prague for the farm.
You waited there to see
The hated victor humbled.

You wanted Vit to witness all,
But first you wanted your revenge.
And then you wanted, O so much!
To live and to be free.

But life's freedom comes in mercy;
So when '*Ich habe Durst*'
The captured soldier cried,
You gave him milk, not vinegar.

6. *The Cottage under the Hills*

You saw that year a turning point:
After five succeeding summers
Full of sickness, you saw the cycle break,
And visited the monastery,

From whence your way to the cottage
Became your way to faith, a gift;
And grace under the quiet hills.
O do not take that grace for nought!

7. *Memoirs*

O do not take that grace for nought,
But let her voice be heard!
Sing out the century's agony:
Lost father, lost son, stolen
Friends, aunt, Spring betrayed,
The broken priest, the lies.

But let the better times
Guide the bitter to the last
Mosaic piece, the last page,
Your blinding to the last binding,
The last word,
Atoning Europe's legacy.

Easter 2001

Although I never met Madame Jarmila Urbanova, I feel I got to know her when, through a mutual friend in Prague, I agreed to edit the English version of her memoirs with a view to publication in the UK. She had lived a remarkable, if not untypical life for someone born in Czechoslovakia before World War II. She had been well brought up, having a Jewish nanny. She earned her own living, then married. Her son, Vit, was born just as the Nazis marched into Prague, she nearly dying in childbirth. She lost her

nanny to the death camps, and was nearly arrested herself: someone of the same name had been in the resistance. After World War II, she adapted to the communist regime, became a librarian, then tour guide as her English was very proficient, and gradually found her way to faith within the Catholic church. Sadly, she became alienated from Vit and his wife: the memoirs were first written to introduce herself to her granddaughter, whom she had never seen. She lived to see the fall of the Iron Curtain, which is when I began a correspondence with her. Even though the publication venture failed, I was moved to write the above poetry cycle.

David Barratt

Book Reviews

Rowan Williams, *The Edge of Words: God and the Habits of Language*, Bloomsbury, 2014, xiii + 204 pp, £20, 9781472910431

In his essay 'Language' in the aptly titled *The Last Word* Thomas Nagel, one of the many thinkers about words whom Rowan Williams has warmly cognized, declares, *tout court*, that 'Language is in itself an important subject for philosophy, and the investigation of language is often the best place to begin when clarifying our most important concepts'. Not least among the good things about Rowan Williams's *The Edge of Words* is that he makes that claim about philosophy ring true for theology.

What's demonstrated here with repeated force is how language works ordinarily for epistemology, our knowledge of things, and also for anthropology – for knowledge of the selfhood, the being, of the human users of language. But also, what's claimed, and it's the grandest persuasion hereabouts, is that these ordinary functions of language are at the least a kind of crypto-ontology, one which indeed suggests, makes way for, the actually ontological; and if for the ontological then for the theological. God talk, then, not as different from ordinary language work, but as an inevitable consequence of language's regular and ordinary doings.

The line is that the utterly ordinary, and patently material (bodily, communal) practices of language (and there's immense stress in this book on these materialities) imply a beyondness of language that's not just the regular material, worldly, referential outside of language use and users, what Raymond Tallis (one more of Williams's admirees) calls 'everyday transcendence', but also an otherness that can be taken as what is meant by the 'sacred', and, more, even as the theological – 'God'. An extra-ordinary transcendence contingent on linguistics' ordinary ways and assumptions.

These are familiar enough, even old suggestions, but they're ones very carefully nuanced here. Even painfully nuanced, for Williams is a very painstaking argufier, certainly not a cheap and cheerful philosopher of language and theologian. There are a few outbursts of joy, especially when he's talking about the poetry he likes. But even the glories of the aesthetic that he so glories in are sobering ones: it's the audience's sobered silence at the end of a play or performance of music before the applause breaks out that he feels the aptest response to a great work of art.

He's never glum, but he is a very serious, even dogged, clearer of the air and the ground. His opening shots, actually a lengthy barrage, are reserved for the 'natural theology' that he might be thought by the slipshod as snuggling up to. His take on the ontology of ordinary language must not be confused with the jaded simplicities of 'natural theology'. Not dissimilarly, his final chapter on what silence might mean (very Eastern Orthodox this, drawing on Williams's long-held interests) – what's signified when language pauses, or stops, blanks out, becomes indeed aporetic (aporia, that main Derridean condition is named, just once, though not, alas, attributed to Derrida, who deserves much more consideration than he gets) – brushes aside any resort to 'mystery' or any sliding passage along a *via negativa*, Williams refusing any cohabiting, at least openly, with that well-worn apophatic deity, a 'God of the gaps'.

The strength of Williams's extended Gifford Lecture ruminations about what language is about and implies (rooted in earlier lectures and seminars and the great amount of earlier published work constantly alluded to here) is his well-schooled knowing about the paradoxical way language (in his lovely mixed metaphors) all at

once feeds on 'the iron rations of description' while constantly 'playing away from home'. Language on this (good) model refers, points, describes, makes out, and also defers doing those things. The signs of things are also arbitrary (Williams goes in for Saussure's classic metaphors). What words refer to is not as fixed as might seem. Modality (not a word Williams uses for what he talks about) – what *might*, *could*, *should*, even *ought to* be – is as normal in language as what *is*. It's intrinsic to discourse – for narratives, for parables – that it goes on (one of Williams's strongest discussions). The ways of words are *strange*, *weird*, *divisive*, *plural*; they're *excessive*, *extreme*. Bakhtinian polyphony is to be admired, and is admired. Williams is enamoured of George Steiner's insistence that 'speech can bear false witness'. Meaning *spills* and is everywhere spilled, but profitably. (The lovely mishearings of folk etymology – examples taken from Walker Percy – are productive errors.) Playing at home, to rework Williams's metaphor, that is describing, representing, mirroring, is also always, one might say, an away game. Freud's *heimlich*, or *heimelig*, the homely, is also and always on this sort of reckoning *unheimlich* – unhomely, uncanny even.

Such linguistic extremity – a main topic, and perhaps Williams's most telling – is, it's alleged, and convincingly, the ordinary push and mode of language. The regular, common-or-garden, linguistic distortions of the poetic (what ancient rhetoricians dubbed *catachresis*: *abusio* in Latin) are all akin to the customary distortions of ordinary speech. 'Extreme or apparently excessive speech is not an aberration in our speaking'. '"Extremity" in language works by pushing habitual or conventional speech out of shape – by insisting on developing certain sorts of pattern (rhyme, assonance, metre), by coupling what is not normally coupled (metaphor, paradox), by undermining surface meanings (irony) or by forcing us to relearn speaking or perceiving (fractured and chaotic language, alienating or puzzling description).' Illustrations are, of course, abundant in the literature Williams draws keenly on – *Beowulf*, Shakespeare, Swift, Dickens, Christina Rossetti (though he rather muffs the shot about the excesses of her *bouts rimés*), David Jones, William Golding, Ian McEwan, Russell Hoban, Eisteddfod winner Waldo Williams (well, this reader is Welsh). He's rightly impressed by the Shakespearian scholar Stanley Cavell, and not least Cavell's brilliant *Disowning Knowledge in Seven Plays of Shakespeare* (so handy for Williams in its discussions of Othello's epistemic failures and the eloquent silence of Ophelia).

Literature for Williams is the sharpest case of how language makes 'the phenomena of the world "give more than they have."' 'Part of our linguistic practice is to *put pressure* on what we say in order that we may come to see more than our initial account delivers.' Seeing *more* is, here, the faith, the *stake*, of all our linguistic practice, and – Williams's repeated contention – that *more* is the gateway into transcendent otherness, if not the transcendent other itself. This is the *as if* of Christian faith (not at all the same thing, Williams is careful to insist, as Don Cupitt's 'God' as 'useful fiction'). This is the faith of language that's parallel, Williams suggests, to the medieval idea of the world itself as allegorical of the divine. A matter, of course, of faith in a divine other, but a faith, the argument is, that is the essence of all linguistic activity, individual, interpersonal, communal. It's the faith of all linguistic use and encounter, the faith of all reading, as Stanley Fish has put it smartly elsewhere, appropriating, with apt force for all the discussion here, the Biblical Book of Hebrews: faith that is 'the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen'. Of course, a contention based on aggregated suggestion, not on actual proof. The case, which Williams impressively dwells on, that Jesus is known biblically as a set of accumulated

metaphors (door, shepherd, way, and so forth), is very suggestive for the alleged ontological, even theological, implications of the 'excessive' metaphoric *per se*, but only suggestive. Williams well knows, as he admits, that 'the question about how extreme language, used in varying degrees in such a range of literary conventions, moves us in the direction of theological questions' will, and must, remain as a question.

Which does not of course block, or embargo, the move; only give it pause. This *aporia*, this blocked passage, is not at all absolute. The (Old Testament) Shibboleth – one of Derrida's great cases of the aporetic paradoxical – the actually unsayable, is also actually sayable. Once believe in the *logocentricity* of language, as Williams does, and you have to recognise the *theologocentricity* that arguably sustains it. Here lie Derrida's most insightful formulae and assumptions. The Derridean run, or crossover, makes a neat summary of Williams's contentions: the consummated marriage, not just the promise of an engagement, of the theological, the *theologocentric*, and the ordinary *logocentric*. Which is why non-believing (in every sense) linguisticians and critics spurn the *logocentric* in the first place. And why Williams's kept-up analysis of language's ordinary ways won't let us do any such thing.

Hugh Kenner once criticised the poet Geoffrey Hill by saying that 'language should not be agonised over by Christianities'. Geoffrey Hill, master of the 'sad and angry consolations' of his poetic, and always theological agonisings about language, keeps on proving Kenner wrong. Rowan Williams does so, even more.

Valentine Cunningham

David Loewenstein and Michael Witmore (eds.), *Shakespeare and Early Modern Religion*, **Cambridge University Press, 2015, xi + 317 pp., £65, 9781107026612**

Shakespeare and Early Modern Religion is 'a cross-disciplinary volume that illuminates Shakespeare's plays and the early modern religious beliefs that circulated in Shakespeare's England'. As noted by the editors' introduction and a valuable 'Afterword' by Brian Cummings, it contributes to a resurgence of interest in Shakespeare and religion that forms part of the larger 'religious turn' in early modern studies.

The volume is split into two uneven parts – Part I contains three chapters, the first of which, by David Bevington, briefly surveys the limited biographical data on Shakespeare's religious affiliations and the ambivalent evidence of the plays, followed by two chapters by historians Peter Marshall and Felicity Heal. These helpfully synthesise much recent scholarship in English religious history, focusing on religion in London and in Shakespeare's home county of Warwickshire, though their engagement with Shakespeare himself is limited. Part II contains the remaining eleven chapters of the book, providing creative and stimulating readings of particular Shakespeare plays in the light of particular early modern religious contexts. Commendably, the essays range beyond the usual suspects of predestination and eucharistic controversy, though these topics are, rightly, still represented.

The editors assert that 'this volume explores Shakespeare's creative engagement with early modern religious culture, but it does so without assuming that Shakespeare can himself be aligned with any specific doctrinal beliefs, religious group, or confession.' This strikes me as a wise decision. As several contributors note, the biographical data are insufficient to establish Shakespeare's private convictions or ecclesiastical affiliations with certainty, and, as Marshall and Heal indicate, the

Protestant/Catholic divide was not as sharply binary at the time as one might assume. It is nevertheless demonstrable that Shakespeare's plays contain both Catholic and Protestant resonances, as well as allusions to Christian narratives and themes that cross the confessional divide. The play referenced by several contributors in this connection is *Hamlet* – as David Bevington notes (building on earlier work by Stephen Greenblatt), its central character is a student at Lutheran Wittenberg confronted by a ghost from Catholic Purgatory, and he wavers between Calvinist views of providence and a 'secular' scepticism represented by his friend Horatio.

Providence is a recurring theme, with Alexandra Walsham's *Providence in Early Modern England* featuring often in the footnotes. Several contributors concur that Hamlet, although flirting with scepticism *en route*, comes finally to believe in an overruling 'divinity that shapes our ends, / Rough-hew them how we will'. It is noted that Hamlet's remark that 'There's a special providence in the fall of a sparrow' not only echoes the words of Jesus in Matthew 10:29, but has close verbal parallels with Calvin's *Institutes*.

By contrast, David Loewenstein argues that *King Lear* is an anti-providentialist play, Shakespeare's experiment (whatever his own beliefs) in depicting a godless universe. Loewenstein rightly notes that supernatural powers are frequently invoked in the play but appear not to intervene to prevent the horrors on stage. Although I would agree with Loewenstein's footnote stating that 'Shakespeare's tragedy, despite its biblical allusions and apocalyptic overtones, refuses any kind of clear-cut Christian reading', the operative term here for me is 'clear-cut'. The providentialism that *King Lear* excludes is a naïve providentialism, in which the righteous are always visibly vindicated and the wicked punished in this life, but naïve providentialism is not the only variety on offer: both the Biblical narrative and historic Christian theology allow for God's purposes to be accomplished 'under the appearance of the contrary' (Luther) in which evil seems to triumph for a time.

Luther plays a key role in Ewan Fernie's chapter 'Another Golgotha', a reading of *Macbeth* (and, more briefly, Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*) in the light of the theology of evil, which I found a disturbing read, but fruitfully so. Fernie notes the paradox of Luther's insistence that salvation is found in and through the depths of sin and despair of self, but offers the haunting observation that 'Protestantism can short-circuit, stopping in the midst of sin'.

I particularly enjoyed Adrian Streete's account of *Measure for Measure* as intertwining competing yet converging motifs in Calvinist theology and the classical scepticism of Lucretius, both of which are concerned with the potential gap between appearance and truth. Peter Lake similarly argues that *Julius Caesar* presents a classical republican philosophy, but ultimately finds it wanting.

Richard McCoy, recapitulating some of the ideas in his monograph *Faith in Shakespeare*, suggests that *The Winter's Tale* extols a 'poetic faith' (a phrase borrowed from Coleridge) analogous to but distinct from religious faith. Though arguing for a more 'secular' reading of Shakespeare's late plays than some scholars, McCoy makes a plausible case that the Reformed/Anglican view of the sacraments as signs made efficacious by the faith of the receiver is analogous to theatre making things truly though not literally present to a committed audience.

One lesser-studied play whose prominence in this collection might surprise is *Henry VIII* (believed by many scholars to be co-authored by John Fletcher), though its

obvious relevance to the history of the English Reformation make it a worthy focus for two consecutive chapters by Paul Stevens and Michael Davies. Stevens's chapter, which also discusses *Hamlet*, is an ambitiously wide-ranging engagement with current debates about the 'secular' and the 'post-secular' (including an unexpected excursus into Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park*), arguing that, in a period often identified as giving rise to the secular West, *Henry VIII* embodies a Protestant understanding of divine presence in the world through the word, signified through verbal resonances with the Book of Common Prayer. (Stevens's current preoccupation with the 'post-secular' debate is also apparent in his contribution to *The Cambridge Companion to Paradise Lost*, reviewed in this issue by Roger Pooley, and I, for one, eagerly anticipate Stevens's monograph in progress on these themes.)

Davies's focus is narrower, taking as its stimulus one speech in *Henry VIII*, in which the king recounts the purported origins of his conscientious scruples regarding his marriage to Katherine of Aragon in terms that, Davies argues, resemble the Puritan conversion narrative. Davies links debates about the historical veracity of Henry's version of events to the Reformation distinction between 'historical faith' that affirms the truth of events and 'feeling faith' that entails personal experience of their significance. Though this is a fruitful discussion, I think Davies missteps theologically somewhat when he suggests that the priority of 'feeling faith' diminishes the importance of historical veracity. The problem with 'historical faith' for the Reformers and the Puritans is not that it is historical, but that it is merely historical – saving faith presupposes acceptance of the objective historicity of the events recorded in the New Testament, but goes beyond it.

In other chapters, Michael Witmore offers novel angles on early modern 'wisdom literature' and its relationship with chance and contingency, Alison Shell examines *A Midsummer Night's Dream* through anxieties over idolatry, Beatrice Groves explores how the fall of Jerusalem is repurposed in *King John*, and Matthew Dimmock argues that Shakespeare shies away from direct engagement with Judaism and Islam even when referencing them. A few mistakes creep in. The introduction misidentifies the Archbishop of Canterbury in *Henry V* as 'the Duke of Canterbury', a somewhat embarrassing lapse for a volume that aims to give close attention to the details of English religious history.

Shakespeare scholarship, like Biblical studies, suffers from the occupational hazard of what the Jewish New Testament scholar Samuel Sandmel once called 'parallelomania', that is, the over-eagerness to assert that incidental similarities indicate the literary dependence of one text upon another. Some of the inferences made by contributors to this volume seem a bit of a stretch, and I sometimes feel like asking them to show their working. However, stretching can sometimes be good intellectual as well as physical exercise, and some of the chapters where I have quibbles were among the most stimulating for me. This is a volume to which I will certainly return to stretch my own interpretative muscles.

David Parry

Rachel Adcock, *Baptist Women's Writings in Revolutionary Culture, 1640–1680*, Ashgate, 2015, xiv + 218 pp., £60, 9781472457066

This study of the writings of Baptist women in mid-seventeenth-century Britain fills an important lacuna in the existing scholarly literature on early modern women's writing and religious radicalism. Though a substantive amount of work has been done on better known Baptist figures such as Agnes Beaumont, Anna Trapnel and Anne Wentworth, it is illuminating and helpful to have their writings positioned alongside the work of lesser known individuals including Deborah Huish, Katherine Sutton and Jane Turner. Adcock shows that these women contributed to, challenged and established a literary tradition that was rich, divergent, multifaceted, and almost exclusively Particular Baptist in its theological orientation – though she also considers the separatist writers Sara Jones, Susanna Parr and Anne Venn. Adcock demonstrates the significance and reach of these women's texts in 'defining and confirming doctrinal and ecclesiological views and practices'; they were not simply 'dry instances of concerns of little interest beyond the membership of Baptist congregations'. Rather she 'examines how women's works strengthened the resolve of church members in the face both of the evangelising efforts of the Quakers and the persecution of separatists and nonconformists by authorities Presbyterian, episcopal, and royalist', providing evidence for the ways in which these writings 'connect to the central concerns of seventeenth-century radical and revolutionary culture'.

The book makes its case through four lengthy and highly detailed chapters. The first focuses on the popular beliefs about female Baptists which were disseminated by traditional authorities and the established church in the press as, for example, the representation of Mary Champion in a popular 'wonder-story' pamphlet who 'was reported to have cut her child's head off rather than have it baptised'. The virulent stereotypes circulated by heresiographers are set alongside the vindications written by Baptist women in order to produce a more complex understanding of the social, political and religious environment within which these women operated. The case of Agnes Beaumont is central here as she faced a trial for the murder of her father alongside accusations of sexually inappropriate behaviour with the prominent Baptist minister, John Bunyan, and penned her own manuscript defence. Adcock also considers the ways in which prophetesses, such as Anna Trapnel and Elizabeth Poole, were treated both within their own congregations, and in speaking truth to power, demonstrating that such women trod a fine line between being supported by their communities as divinely-inspired conduits of God's word and being stigmatised as 'mad, whorish, rebellious, or heretical'.

The challenges Baptist women writers faced were not simply a result of the difficulties that their separatist ecclesiology presented to the established church and traditional social hierarchies. Adcock's second chapter examines church record books and records of inter-congregational meetings in detail. These show that a close reading of Scripture, particularly 1 Corinthians 11, resulted in a spectrum of views within the Baptist community as to when it was appropriate for a woman to speak within her congregation, how to indicate submission to male leadership, and the relative exegetical and authoritative weight that should be ascribed to Old Testament exemplars (like Deborah or Hannah) and New Testament edicts (on female silence, for example). The broader assumptions of early modern British culture meant that unruly

speech was often assumed to signify unruly sexuality. One of the many strengths of Adcock's study is her thorough analysis of the relevant manuscript material, and this enriches her readings of Baptist women's published writings and enables her to demonstrate the exegetical prowess of her authors, their theological acuity, and the fact that these women were less interested in transgressing gender norms than they were in promoting their cause – though 'undoubtedly Baptist networks allowed women more freedom to step outside their conventional roles'.

The Biblical metaphor of 'mothers in Israel' provided a way for Baptist women to legitimise their contributions to their congregations 'by writing, speaking and publishing works that sought to strengthen, raise up, and evangelise their followers, as well as those outside'. Jane Turner is central to Adcock's argument in her third chapter. She was the first writer to publish a single conversion narrative. This was a significant literary innovation, but, as Adcock demonstrates, Turner's book also functioned as a crucial resource deployed by Baptist ministers to teach and unify congregations in the north of England and Scotland. Adcock clearly identifies how Turner's personal experience of the spiritual confusion that resulted from open-communion Baptist congregational practice, accompanied by her close reading of the New Testament, led her to advocate strongly for closed-communion Baptist churches as a Biblical requirement and pastoral necessity in the face of aggressive Quaker proselytising.

The final chapter examines the contribution of Baptist women to the Fifth Monarchist movement, looking at 'the use of baptismal waters as a literary trope in Baptist women's prophecies, and how these waters were interpreted as both destructive and life-giving'. This adds significantly to the value of Adcock's book as a literary-historical study since, arguably, the most revolutionary contribution made by early Baptists to the widening spectrum of available ecclesiological positions in mid-seventeenth-century Britain was the advocacy (by some) of the full immersion of believers following a persuasive account of their conversion experience. However, Adcock is scrupulous in distinguishing the range of positions adopted by women writers within broader (and at times overlapping) Baptist and separatist spheres of influence (Sara Jones and Jane Turner held radically different views about how the ordinance of baptism should be practised within their gathered congregations, for example). The last chapter also extends the chronological focus of the study, by analysing the written spiritual experiences of Deborah Huish and Anne Wentworth. Adcock argues that the works of both women 'focus on suffering before deliverance, and are interpreted by their followers as allegories for the struggles of the saints in the late 1650s and late 1670s'. I find Adcock's allegorical interpretation of both Huish and Wentworth's accounts of their spiritual experience persuasive, particularly in the terms of the literary culture and tradition of Baptist women's writing that her book delineates so richly. However, the political gaps between the 1650s and 1670s are substantive, and the comparison between Huish and Wentworth would have benefited from the significant political, theological and historical contextualisation she provides for the writings of other Baptist women in earlier chapters. This is a small quibble. One study cannot do everything and, as she notes, 'restrictions of space' prevented her from considering 'the involvement of Baptist women and their writings from the Exclusion Crisis through the Monmouth Rebellion to the Glorious Revolution'.

Baptist Women's Writings in Revolutionary Culture, 1640–1680 is a critical and timely monograph. Its grasp of the theological, literary, political and social complexities

that Baptist women writers had to negotiate within their families, congregations, associations of churches, and the widely variegated landscape of radical religion and social conservatism in seventeenth century Britain is exemplary. It maps the contours, communalities and sharp distinctions that characterised the Particular Baptists as an emerging denomination, but not in the manner of a sectarian history; rather these women are carefully situated in their original contexts and our understanding of seventeenth century British society and culture is the richer for it.

Alison Searle

Louis Schwartz (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Paradise Lost*, **Cambridge University Press, 2014, xv + 216 pp., £18.99 pb. (£54.99 hb.), 9781107664401**

Most of the literary Cambridge Companions have been particularly helpful for teaching, whether for the busy lecturer or the hard-pressed undergraduate, and this Companion is no exception. The editor has assembled an impressive group of Milton experts and got them, in many cases, to write about their own particular specialism within Milton studies while remaining accessible. So we have some miracles of compression here: Joad Raymond's chapter on 'Milton's Angels' comes in at thirteen pages while his OUP monograph is 484 pages long, and Neil Forsyth on Satan is twelve pages here, while *The Satanic Epic* is 400 pages. Not that the curious reader should now skip those impressive longer works, two of the best monographs on Milton in recent years, and an indication of how patient attention to context can illuminate an already well-read text, but if the class is on early tomorrow….

The collection is structured in four parts and, as a companion might be, is designed to sit alongside a reading of the poem. So Part One introduces us to the characters who appear early on. Stephen M. Fallon discusses Milton the narrator, the opposite of the impersonal voice of classical epic, conscious of the heroic nature of the project, and making 'the telling of the story itself into a dramatic story'. Neil Forsyth writes on the dominant and complex figure of Satan. He is particularly helpful on the contextual issues – the apocalyptic fixations of many of Milton's contemporaries, for example, as well as the figure of Satan as an edifice built on a relatively slight Biblical foundation by the early church – but also in close readings of those moments where Satan is revealed as a 'complicated, private, deeply reflective' figure. John Rumrich supplements these perspectives with a chapter on Sin, Death and Chaos, certainly one of the oddest moments in the narrative, and one he negotiates helpfully with an excursus into the function of allegory and the way in which the Sin and Death episode explores questions of providence and responsibility, questions at the heart of Milton's central purpose to justify the ways of God to man. Victoria Silver concludes the section with perhaps the hardest project of all, 'The Problem of God'. Her strategy is to investigate the theological issues involved in representing God, the doctrine of accommodation (God adapting to our level of understanding) and, provocatively, Luther's distinction between *invisibilia*, things that 'the constraints of time and space render imperceptible to us, and what he terms *abscondita* – the "hidden things" of the *Deus absconditus*, which do not appear as such, and which he says observe "a new, and theological grammar".' It's a bold move, and one which enables Silver to link the poem with earlier arguments in Milton's prose works on church government, where he argues that truth emerges through time, through conflict and reformation.

Silver's argument is that we can apply this to the process by which God in *Paradise Lost* finally brings good out of evil. She does not underplay the problems of Book III's portrayal of God and its limited poetic achievement; nor Milton's unorthodox version of the Trinity. But her argument that God's goodness is only convincingly revealed in the later books, with its picture of redemption to come, interestingly outflanks the Romantic arguments about God and Satan based on the earlier books.

Part II, on contexts, deals with the sometimes intimidating level of reference and adaptation in *Paradise Lost* – classical, Biblical, political and cosmological. Slightly out of place (though where it could sit better is difficult to imagine) is a characteristically direct and subtle piece of close reading by John Creaser on 'the line', starting from first principles – what's the difference between reading the poem as prose and as verse? And why doesn't it rhyme? Maggie Kilgour on 'Classical Models' and Jeffrey Shoulson on 'Milton's Bible' both wisely start very far back, with brief summaries of *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*, and the Bible as a collection of books, before going on to the indebtedness to as well as the departures from these foundation texts. I wish I'd had these chapters to recommend when I was teaching Milton; they are particularly well-judged. Paul Stevens on 'The Pre-secular politics of *Paradise Lost*' picks up a concept developed by contemporary Catholic thinkers (he names John Milbank, who is in fact an Anglo-Catholic rather than Roman Catholic, and Charles Taylor, though he actually quotes the cultural historian C. John Sommerville, who has written for IVP!) on 'modernity [as] the transformation of the *saeculum* from a time into a place', with Protestantism as a 'secularizing religion'. His concluding peroration argues, that, on the contrary, *Paradise Lost*, as a great Protestant poem, 'gives the lie to this argument because, for all its faults, it so forcefully presents a vision of human life, including its politics, suffused with the presence of God, the immediate and insistent pressure of Scripture, and the grace it offers. This is what the English, according to Milton, needed to learn if the nation were to flourish and escape tyranny.' Stirring stuff, and an interesting way of getting round the awkward fact that critics, in Milton's own time and since, have found it difficult to agree on what the precise political argument of the poem is. Finally in this section, Karen L. Edwards tackles Milton's cosmology, again using the doctrine of accommodation. For example, she notes that heaven can be conceived as a place of 'opal towers and battlements' where God is in Book II, 'and simultaneously indicates that it cannot be a place'. There is some useful discussion of differences in Ptolemaic and heliocentric ideas of the universe, and wise advice against consulting overly elaborate explanations of Renaissance cosmology while reading the poem.

Part III takes us into the central and concluding books of the poem. William Shullenberger's 'Imagining Eden' tacks between the trial and paradise motifs, emphasising the serious and worrying (georgic) nature of Adam and Eve's task of cultivating wild and fecund Nature; and then notes how quickly it all falls apart as a result of their disobedience. Joad Raymond's bold assertion, that '*Paradise Lost* is a poem made of angels', Satan and Raphael in particular, is part of a wider argument about Milton's following through traditional roles and iconography (scriptural and non-scriptural) into a fresh and provocative synthesis. This will send readers to his longer study, once the urgency of the immediate class has faded. Shannon Miller has the task of exploring gender issues, an area of controversy at least since a 1983 article in *Critical Inquiry* by Christine Froula, discussed here, suggested the poem should be

removed from the canon because of its oppressively patriarchal message. Miller is more temperate, though she doesn't hold back. The chapter is particularly good on the multiple reiterations of Genesis 1 and 2, and how these develop and augment the issues of patriarchy and gender. W. Gardner Campbell writes about temptation, not just that fatal temptation, but the theme that runs through Milton's whole oeuvre, prose as well as poetry. As he puts it, Milton advised living *within* the complexities of temptation. Lastly, Mary C. Fenton enlivens the last two books, often read with little more than grateful exhaustion after the major tussles of the earlier books, to emphasise their importance in balancing the emotional and theological stresses of the poem with joy and regeneration.

The final section consists of just one chapter, William Kolbrener on reception history. He gives much attention to the way the poem was read before the 'scholarly Milton' of the twentieth century, from the classical scholars of the eighteenth century to the radical Romantics, but he is judicious on the waves of theological and atheist, political (broadly conceived) and other, as he sees it, partial readings of the text.

This collection sits helpfully between the encyclopaedic compilations to Milton, like the *Oxford Handbook* and the Wiley/Blackwell *Encyclopaedia*, and the shorter individual author introductions like Thomas Corns' *Regaining Paradise Lost* or Roy Flannagan's *John Milton: A Short Introduction.* Armed with this and a well-annotated edition students should be well equipped to get to grips with this greatest of English epics. It supplements, but in many ways supplants, the earlier *Cambridge Companion to Milton* when it comes to the critical debates.

Roger Pooley

Elizabeth Ludlow, *Christina Rossetti and the Bible: Waiting with the Saints*, Bloomsbury Academic, 2014, vii + 261 pp., £60, 9781472512321

Ever since the publication of G.B. Tennyson's ground-breaking *Victorian Devotional Poetry* (1997), it has become a commonplace of Christina Rossetti studies to consider the poet an inheritor of the Oxford Movement's literary legacy. This line of investigation has proved useful in recovering the poet's devotional work and in challenging criticism that views Rossetti's poetic imagination as incompatible with her Christian faith. However, as Elizabeth Ludlow's *Christina Rossetti and the Bible* points out, this focus on nineteenth century religious contexts has meant that Rossetti's engagement with older devotional classics has been neglected. Ludlow's work is a corrective to this tendency, although it should be pointed out that this monograph's attention to the contemporary rituals, liturgical traditions, significant figures and texts that shaped Rossetti's own worship is one of its more valuable contributions. Though she rounds up the usual Tractarian suspects such as John Keble, Isaac Williams and John Henry Newman, Ludlow also considers the ways in which John Bunyan and George Herbert, along with ancient and medieval writers, such as Augustine, Gregory of Nyssa and Bernard of Clairvaux, inform Rossetti's interpretations of the Bible. Emphasising Rossetti's 'investment in the interface between worship and writing', Ludlow argues that her poetry is expressive of a kind of 'existential waiting' that informs both her 'vision of personhood' and remains 'at the heart of her understanding of what it means to participate with and in the divine life'.

The influence of contemporary liturgical and ritual practice on Rossetti's poetic

imagination is the subject of the first chapter, which also considers her writing in response to individual and communal reading experiences. Her work is read as a response to major controversies of the day involving the doctrines of the Real Presence and the Apostolic Succession. Ludlow argues convincingly that the publication of her poems in Tractarian anthologies, periodicals and individual volumes signals her confident participation in contemporary religious debates. For instance, the publication of 'After Communion' in Robert H. Baynes's anthology suggests that the poem may have been written at Baynes's request. Rossetti's engagement with John Donne, George Herbert, Richard Hooker and Mary Sidney is identified in her lyric poems' incorporation of the Psalms. Joseph Milner's and Sabine Baring-Gould's approach to Augustinian holy aspiration informs Rossetti's sympathetic engagement with the author of the *Confessions*.

Chapter Two, 'Grace, Revelation and Wisdom', presents more detailed readings of Rossetti's earlier poems, foregrounding their publication context in order to emphasise the poet's engagement with important theological ideas surrounding redemption, grace and wisdom that would go on to shape her later exclusively devotional works. Works appearing in *Goblin Market and Other Poems* (1862) are read in dialogue with one another, and are interpreted as meditations not on the escapist relief of death, but on the hope of redemption. The theme of *vanitas mundi* in 'A Testimony', 'Song' and 'A Pause of Thought' provides an intriguing contrast with some of the more confident assertions of youthful artistic identity appearing alongside them in the Pre-Raphaelite journal *The Germ* (1850). The chapter concludes with a consideration of convent poems 'Three Nuns' and 'The Convent Threshold' in the context of Rossetti's engagement with Anglo-Catholic interpretations of the history of virgin martyrs by John Mason Neale, John Henry Newman and Edward Pusey. Ludlow argues that critical focus on Pusey's ascetic masochism has obscured his influence on Rossetti's treatment of the lives of the saints, and on her developing understanding of grace.

The discussion of medieval devotion continues in Chapter Three, 'Developing a Theology of Purpose', where Rossetti's promotion of asceticism and deferred hope throughout *The Prince's Progress* (1866) and *Goblin Market, The Prince's Progress and Other Poems* (1875) is seen as a challenge to Victorian amatory medievalism. The publication of poems from these volumes in important Tractarian anthologies such as *Lyra Messianica* (1864) and *Lyra Mystica* (1865) is not only suggestive of affinity and influence, but also indicates that the poet was taken seriously as a religious writer long before the publication of her own exclusively devotional works.

Chapter Four considers Rossetti's redemptive aesthetic in relation to her sonnet sequences *Monna Innominata* and *Later Life*. Other poems from *A Pageant and Other Poems* (1881) are seen to engage with the resonances of the parable of the prodigal son for a female readership.

The devotional prose works are the focus of Chapter Five, 'Maternity and Vocation', which views Rossetti's writing as a 'counter-cultural response to the Victorian deification of motherhood' and explores her treatment of the Virgin Mary. The critically neglected *Annus Domini* (1874) and *Called To Be Saints* (1881) are here viewed in the context of the Tractarian desire to recover the voices of the Caroline Divines Lancelot Andrewes and Jeremy Taylor.

The work concludes with Chapter Six, '"O hope deferred, hope still"', a consideration of the poet's final volume (*Verses*, 1893), which returns to the theme of

the devotional discipline involved in waiting and keeping vigil. Concentrating on the structure of the volume, Ludlow analyses 'the volume's simultaneous interpretation of the apocalypse in the world, the Communion of Saints and the soul of the individual'.

Christina Rossetti and the Bible distinguishes itself from many other studies of the poet's devotional work by not only acknowledging Rossetti's debt to the Oxford Movement, the metaphysical poets and the female medieval mystics, but also considering their influence on her work. Sustained close analysis of Rossetti's writing in relation to, for example, Augustine, John Bunyan or George Herbert is too rare, and a convincing case is made here for greater attention to the ways in which Rossetti's ideas respond to theirs. Evidence of Rossetti's encounters with devotional classics through Tractarian writing, preaching and thought is persuasive, as is the recognition of the significance of Rossetti's participation in contemporary religious debate through publication in anthologies and periodicals, as well as in the poet's arrangement of poems within her own volumes.

While acknowledging its debt to scholars such as Mary Arseneau, Lynda Palazzo and especially Diane D'Amico, whose ground-breaking *Christina Rossetti: Faith, Gender and Time* initiated the serious recovery of Rossetti's devotional work, this book's confident analysis of Tractarian writing and thought refreshes our understanding of the poet as a religious writer, reader and active participant in the Anglo-Catholic community. Conscientious research into nineteenth century publication contexts, liturgical practices and significant figures supports Ludlow's argument that Rossetti's infamous renunciatory aesthetic 'is not necessarily negative or mournful' but is part of 'the process of re-orientating desire heavenward' (76). Her research also suggests that the work of well-known writers like Edmund Pusey, John Keble and Isaac Williams may be ripe for reassessment on these grounds.

Ludlow's focus on religious contexts means that readings of Rossetti's poems as redemptive are sometimes over-determined. Even the poems Rossetti designated as devotional regularly complicate their own gestures toward resolution, partly because true resolution can only take place in heaven, but also because of Rossetti's Romantic inheritance and her own native scepticism. Arguing that the speaker of 'The Thread of Life' 'emerge[s] triumphant from the "prison" of selfhood' ignores the poem's lingering mysteries, doubts and uncertainties. The sonnet 'Our Mothers, lovely women pitiful' may indeed offer 'solace in the face of separation by death', but its final lines challenge this comfort with their agonising direct address of the dead and their anxieties about 'Whether' the dead can 'bear' to look on the living.

In general, however, Ludlow's theological interpretations of Rossetti's works are convincing, and her conscientious work is a valuable contribution to Rossetti scholarship. This is the most thorough and detailed investigation of the poet's connections with Tractarian writing and thought I have encountered, and it is essential reading for those interested in the ongoing recovery of Rossetti's devotional writing.

Dinah Roe

Allen MacDuffie, *Victorian Literature, Energy, and the Ecological Imagination*, Cambridge University Press, 2014, ix + 305 pp., £60, 9781107064379

MacDuffie's work is an engaging and effective distillation of the various literary and non-literary manifestations of concern regarding energy generation and consumption from the mid- to late nineteenth century. It features a sustained discussion of the laws of thermodynamics and evolutionary theory, and the particularly widespread influence of the 'heat death' theories in the 1860s that accompanied the notion of the imminent decline of solar energy. His work is relevant to a Christian readership because it demonstrates the serious challenges that confronted natural theology during the Victorian period, as, increasingly, a naïve providential understanding of the relationship between human existence and the natural world came into question. It is extremely relevant in a general sense to contemporary readers, as it raises, within the Anglocentric realm of Victorian England, the current issue of the depletion of natural resources, the complex issue of fossil fuel dependency, and the dilemma of human progress in an industrial environment where exploitation and reduced living conditions were an inevitable consequence. Drawing on the principal theorists and many of the prominent literary figures of the time (from Charles Dickens to H.G. Wells), MacDuffie traces the vexed nature of these issues in a readable and informative fashion.

Much attention is given in the introduction to the concept of energy and the manner in which Victorian thermodynamic discourse reinforced the notion of a 'closed system'. It also highlights Victorian 'anxiety about environmental limits'. An example given is John Ruskin's lecture, 'The Storm Cloud of the Nineteenth Century', which points to the 'ruinous global consequences' of 'energy-intensive practices'. The Introduction also makes the reader aware of the relevance of the concept of the 'Anthropocene', 'a new geological epoch defined by humankind's status as a global "environmental force."'

Chapter One brings together a range of perspectives on thermodynamics, the Victorian attitudes to fossil fuel resources, and the problem of waste. These issues were especially pertinent to the industrialised English city of the time, where the high demand for energy was matched with the problem of decreasing coal supplies and accumulating non-renewable wastage. This discussion is continued in Chapter Two, with some proponents, such as William Thomson, in his *Treatise on Natural Philosophy* (1867), retaining the providential narrative. What the human mind considered waste, Thomson suggested, was simply an incomprehensible transformation. He believed that the human mind, part of the providential order, would find solutions to this apparent dilemma.

In Chapter Three, MacDuffie begins an analysis of literary texts, beginning with *Bleak House* by Charles Dickens (1853). From the death of the sun scene in the first instalment of the novel, it is obvious that Dickens is concerned with energy and entropy. There are frequent scenes depicting 'dying lights; guttering candles; waning embers; "unsteady fire[s]"; and "misdirected energy" of all shapes and varieties'. Dickens' novel, MacDuffie points out, shares a strong correspondence with William Thomson's work on solar heat death. Thus *Bleak House* can be seen as 'an alternative thermodynamic narrative' and one that depicts 'the destabilizing effects of an energy-intensive economy'. Characters exemplify some of the effects of depletion, with Richard's wasting body representing systematic exhaustion in the environment.

But, through all his attempts to portray a social and economic order that may not be sustainable, Dickens continues to adhere to a providential narrative. Those characters 'who put their faith in Providence to support and, yes, sustain them, do eventually find that faith rewarded'. In Chapter Four, staying with Dickens, MacDuffie moves on to consider *Our Mutual Friend* (1865). By the time this novel was published, more than ten years after *Bleak House*, 'the conservation and dissipation of energy, the death of the sun, and other components of the thermodynamic research project have all been firmly ensconced in the public imagination'. The emphasis on energy and wastage is apparent to the discerning reader of the novel, especially in the relationship between Wrayburn and Headstone, MacDuffie suggests.

As formerly mentioned, another respected commentator on energy, resource depletion and pollution was John Ruskin. MacDuffie devotes Chapter Five to his work, giving particular attention to 'The Storm Cloud' lecture, which reveals an intriguing mixture of theological, scientific and apocalyptic work that conflates the natural world and man-made intrusions into it. MacDuffie sees this lecture as an early 'conceptualization of a worldwide ecological crisis' and of mankind's 'unlimited appetite for energy'. This chapter also contains a sustained discussion of Ruskin's aesthetics, and how, for him, fine architecture depicts the physical energy of labour embodied in 'good craftsmanship and work of the fingers joined with good emotion and work of the heart'. MacDuffie demonstrates how Ruskin's ideals conflicted with the harsh realities of industrialisation, wastage and pollution that he had observed.

MacDuffie's treatment of the work of Robert Louis Stevenson in Chapter Six is from a different vantage point. In his treatment of *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1886), he highlights the question of reversibility throughout the novel, an issue central to energy use and the perceived irreversible depletion of resources. As Dr Jekyll is less and less able to control his change from one identity to another, he searches in vain for the chemical needed to stabilise his situation. MacDuffie focuses predominantly on the connection between morality and energy, and mankind as a 'fund of energy' that can be utilised for positive or negative purposes. He makes a good case for *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* presenting 'an individual's inner life and the enclosing limits imposed by biophysical law and a finite material environment'.

Chapter Seven moves on to the works of Joseph Conrad. MacDuffie focuses on *Heart of Darkness* (1899) and *The Secret Agent* (1907). The former indicates how the exploitation or over-utilisation of colonial resources negates any energy benefits for the colonial power, especially when energy is taken up on resources that are used for decorative or cosmetic purposes. His treatment of *The Secret Agent* draws attention to many examples of energy wastage. For Conrad, entropy is inevitable, despite human optimism. Conrad is concluding, MacDuffie suggests, that 'the entire trajectory of humanity's *"progress"* will leave it, in the end, no less vulnerable to the pressures of the natural world and the inexorable dissipation of energy'. His novels embody 'the rhetoric of energy dissipation'.

The final chapter, Chapter Eight, deals with the work of Henry Maudsley and H.G. Wells. Again, the concern is with 'industrial production, improper waste disposal, and overcrowding'. It explores the emergence of degenerationist literature, with particular attention being given to *The Time Machine* (1895). The elitist concept of the 'residuum' is discussed, along with some disturbing conclusions, on the part of a number of late nineteenth century commentators, that energy was associated with the

'higher races'. This was one of several alarming, insupportable approaches to energy that emerged during this period.

MacDuffie should be commended for establishing a detailed and comprehensive coverage of issues surrounding the concept of energy and its application in the mid- to late nineteenth century. While the 'heat death' of the sun is no longer a cause for concern (these earlier predictions were completely inaccurate), nevertheless, many of the issues that are raised by Victorian authors and commentators have significant parallels with contemporary concerns regarding global warming and climate change. MacDuffie's work, then, is more than an excellent overview of a Victorian preoccupation. It is a sound reminder that the interrelationship between mankind and the natural environment deserves our constant attention, and that there is no better way to express those concerns than through literary endeavours.

Peter Stiles

Robert Crawford, *Young Eliot: From St Louis to The Waste Land*, Jonathan Cape/ Random House, 2015, 493 pp., £25, 9780224093880

The undergraduate Eliot was not a swot. He spent a lot of time with a moneyed, 'cool' set, and scarcely scraped a single A grade. It was during his years of postgraduate study that his interests quickened and broadened. Crawford is excellent on the young Anglophile Uruguayan Frenchman Jules Laforgue, whom Eliot discovered in 1909 when he was 20. Eliot ordered from France the newly published *Oeuvres Complètes* in three volumes and devoured them all, poems and prose, and was soon 'almost his reincarnation', admiring Laforgue's 'shocking modernity, born out of and clashing against his deeply felt Christian upbringing'. 'Laforgue's devices, such as snapping off bits of the Lord's Prayer, or mixing Classical mythology with modern tawdriness and boredom, would become Eliotic hallmarks.' In a notebook Eliot jotted words descriptive of a lower-class urban area: 'yellow evening … dirty windows … broken glass … tattered sparrows … the gutter', and was soon deploying 'the calculated awkwardness and dismissive shift of tone that characterise Laforgue's poetry.'

Eliot was shy. Lady Ottoline Morrell was eager to meet him and invited him and Vivien to Garsington Manor, near Oxford, in April 1916. She recorded in her journal, 'I found him dull, dull, dull. He never moves his lips but speaks in an even and monotonous voice.' Prufrock needed time 'to prepare a face' for meeting people, and Eliot was still finding his voice. He did however become *persona grata* at Garsington houseparties, with Bertrand Russell, the Woolfs and others of the Bloomsbury set. Having come from Harvard to Oxford to write a PhD thesis on the philosophy of F. H. Bradley, he had met in London a fellow American, Ezra Pound, who encouraged him in a precipitate decision to abandon philosophy for poetry. 'Prufrock', written earlier in America, disclosed a distinctive talent. Eliot's marriage to a girl he had known for five weeks marked his decision to stay in London, and it was, as he later said, a deliberate burning of his boats.

The 1915 marriage was, Crawford reminds us, 'a disastrous mistake', and Eliot was sometimes angry. He and Vivien married, both of them, on the rebound from rejections. Eliot had declared his love to Emily Hale in Boston, but 'had no reason to believe, from the way in which his declaration was received, that his feelings were returned "in any degree whatsoever."' Vivien's mother had warned off Charles

Buckle, a former suitor of Vivien's, on account of her mood swings and hysteria. She would constantly be ill with neuralgia, neuritis, neurasthenia, headaches, insomnia, tiredness, and was in and out of care homes. Eliot became ill too, and ill-tempered. Yet it seemed that he wrote his best things at such times.

Eliot, who knew 'Mr Apollinax' Russell from Harvard, was in London taken up by Russell, who found Vivien attractive. The young couple lodged in his flat, a *ménage à trois*. Then Russell took Vivien on holiday to Torquay, and his affair with her lasted until 1919. Eliot and Vivien would in subsequent years sometimes go off in different directions, she to London or their place in Marlow, he to Margate or to Lugano or, for psychiatric care, to Lausanne. She was proud of his literary achievement and gave what moral support she could. The title of the journal he edited from 1922, *The Criterion*, was her suggestion.

Understandably, his verse, 'Gerontion' for example, expressed anguish:

I that was near your heart was removed therefrom …
I have lost my passion: why should I need to keep it
Since what is kept must be adulterated?

But the poetry was a mask, with behind it the poet's living, sentient self. So he elaborated, in 'Tradition and the Individual Talent', his theory of impersonality: 'the more perfect the artist, the more completely separate in him will be the man who suffers and the mind which creates.' Understandably too, he wanted to be appraised for what he published rather than for what went on in his personal life, and left instructions that no biography was to be countenanced by his executors. Inevitably a series of memoirs appeared after his death in 1965, and Peter Ackroyd essayed a full biography which appeared in 1984. The Eliot estate would not allow him to quote copyright material, and Ackroyd resorted to ventriloquism, paraphrasing what he could not include verbatim. Lyndall Gordon's biography appeared in two volumes, in 1977 and 1988, with permitted quotation.

Crawford acknowledges the permission he has for his quotations, and deploys them judiciously and not at great length. Himself a poet as well as a literature professor at St Andrews, he reads the documents of Eliot's life vigilant for connections with the published work. When his mother urged the eight-year-old Tom to try Macaulay's *History of England* he preferred the adventure stories of Captain Mayne Reid, where '"the humming-bird" whose "throat glitters" in *The Boy Hunters* re-emerges as the "glitter" of the "hummingbird" in the 1930 poem "Marina".'

In 1919 he considered the sermon as 'perhaps the most difficult form of art', and the same year published his essay on impersonality likening the ideal poet to a piece of platinum acting as the catalyst for the chemical change which produces sulphurous acid without itself undergoing alteration. Poetry was the product of influences which were to be understood not only in historical perspective – 'the existing monuments form an ideal order' – but within cultural, anthropological space as well. After he met James Joyce in Paris in 1921 he proofread some drafts of the Irishman's work in progress, *Ulysses.* He considered it 'the greatest work of the age', and admired how a modern work could be structured on an ancient narrative (modern Dublin based on Homer's *Odyssey*). The method would, he thought, necessarily be followed by others. 'It is simply a way of controlling, of ordering, of giving a shape and a significance

to the immense panorama of futility and anarchy which is contemporary history.' 'Instead of narrative method, we may now use the mythical method.'

In 1921, when his own work in progress was the assembling of a number of verse fragments he had already written, Richard Aldington lent him a recent French book by Jean Epstein, later a film director, *La Poésie d'aujourd'hui: Un nouvel état d'intelligence*. Modern poets such as Baudelaire were associated with 'nervosité' and sometimes with kinds of 'dissociation'. Their poetry had qualities of brevity and incantatory repetition. Poetry had connections with science, with illness. Sometimes it evaded rules of logic and grammar, making it 'difficult'. A poem could be made from a rush of details, might draw on stores of myth, with readers responding to this combined creativity, intelligence and nervous fatigue. Neurasthenic conditions might heighten creativity.

In Paris in early 1922 Eliot showed a nineteen page draft to Pound. They reduced it by about half to 433 lines. Pound's *Cantos* were appearing in print, and they too mixed quotations from several languages. Pound cut a good deal of narrative from Eliot's draft, and the title was now changed from the Dickensian 'He Do the Police in Different Voices' to 'The Waste Land', alluding to the myth of the Fisher King whose pattern was perceived by Jessie Weston in Arthurian legends.

For a time after Eliot settled in London, he corresponded with Emily Hale, but the letters ceased when he married. Their correspondence from those years has not survived, but it resumed in 1930. Twelve boxes of approximately 1,131 archived letters are embargoed at Princeton until January 2020, after which Crawford plans to publish the second volume of his biography. It, like this, will certainly be worth reading.

Note: In the next issue we review Christopher Ricks and Jim McCue (eds.), *The Poems of T.S. Eliot* vols. I and II, Faber, 2015.

Roger Kojecký

Jordan Cofer, *The Gospel According to Flannery O'Connor: Examining the Role of the Bible in Flannery O'Connor's Fiction*, Bloomsbury, 2014, x + 144 pp., £19.99 pb. (£60 hb.), 9781501314278

Of all the ways in which literature in the English language has been developed and extended to reflect contemporary and local circumstances, few are as distinctive and as strange to the UK palate as what has frequently been referred to as 'Southern Gothic'. Among those who might be associated with 'Southern Gothic' we might include William Faulkner, Harper Lee, Carson McCullers, Truman Capote and a host of others. And we would have to include Flannery O'Connor.

In order to read and appreciate these writers it helps to have some acquaintance and even empathy with the legacy, indeed trauma, of the American Civil War upon the southern states, some knowledge of the religious and racial tensions which mark the Deep South and some alertness to the central position that the Bible maintains to this day in the minds of ordinary people. All of these factors are local to and utterly distinctive of that area of the US.

'Southern Gothic' is usually associated with the following characteristics. First there is a primary concern with the geography, history and culture of the South, distinct and particular in every respect and virtually impossible to reproduce unless drenched in that particular world. Second, there is a revelling in grotesque, freak-like

characters, almost caricatures (the deformed or self-mutilated, the violent, outcasts, scavengers, the homicidal, nymphomaniacs, the underdog and so on), not unlike Dickens but worlds apart due to the cultural setting. Third is an acceptance of violence as an inevitability of human existence.

Flannery O'Connor (1925–1964) was from Savannah, Georgia, and wrote two novels, thirty-two short stories and a number of reviews, letters, essays and other reflections upon the writing life. Slightly bizarrely her *Complete Stories* was awarded the 1972 US National Book Award for Fiction, and was named the best of that award in 2009. O'Connor would doubtless have relished her posthumous renown.

Professor Jordan Cofer teaches English at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College. Whilst theologically astute and by no means at all uninformed, the main focus of this book is to examine, as a professor of literature, the way in which Flannery O'Connor's fiction makes use of the Bible in rather remarkable ways. He is right to point out that, although O'Connor has been the subject of much theological consideration, this is the first treatment of her use of the Bible. Though hailing from what we might identify as the 'Bible Belt', O'Connor was a Roman Catholic and her access to the Bible is mediated through that liturgical tradition. We should not expect precisely the same approach to the Bible as is found in her Protestant neighbours – no proof-texting, no attempted straightforward exegesis of texts, but something more organic.

Cofer's first chapter, 'Towards a New Approach to Flannery O'Connor's Fiction', outlines his method. O'Connor, he tells us, uses the Bible in three ways. First she retells the Bible stories in such a way as to breathe new life into narratives which may have become stale and predictable. To a certain degree we may have here what the Russian formalists described as 'ostranenie', defamiliarisation. Second, violence pervades her work. In a way which might make converts to the theories of René Girard blush, O'Connor believes in the reality of redemptive violence in common with a more straightforward reading of the Bible. Third, O'Connor delights in reversals in a manner familiar to readers of the Bible.

In the second chapter, O'Connor's first novel, *Wise Blood*, serves as a lens through which to observe her practice. According to Cofer, the main character, Hazel Motes, is a Paul-like figure, full of violence and violent reversals and contradictions. He points out the recurrent appearance of prophetic figures and false prophets in O'Connor's fiction as well as allusions to Biblical motifs such as the cloud which follows both Hazel and the people of Israel as they make their journeys.

Chapter Three takes us to the short stories, especially 'The Violent Bear It Away' and 'A Good Man Is Hard To Find'. In the latter the Misfit recapitulates the Rich Young Man of the Gospels with a twist obvious even to the casual reader. 'Judgment Day' makes reference once again to Paul. Backwoods prophets share some of the characteristics of the Biblical prophets – social marginalisation, reluctance to take the mantle of prophet and a message not of hope but of violent judgement. In so doing Cofer, by way of O'Connor, refreshes our appreciation of some of the strangeness of the Biblical prophets, stripping away some of the cosy, bourgeois emasculation of such figures with which many of us have been raised. Indeed 'The Violent Bear It Away' recalls Jesus' recorded statement in Matthew 11:12 as a reflection upon the ministry of that curiously alienating New Testament prophet, John the Baptiser, and his Old Testament precursors Elijah and Elisha. We may not like what we read, but its engagement with Holy Scripture can hardly be denied.

Finally, Biblical reversal is dealt with by Cofer in the stories 'Parker's Back',

'Revelation' and 'A Temple of the Holy Ghost'. Reversals are to be expected. The poor are raised up, the dead come back to life, the proud are put down. The ironic reversals in the lives of Moses and Paul are shown to lie behind the violent shifts in O'Connor's stories.

Cofer is justified in shifting the focus of study from O'Connor's troubled views on race or her engagement with contemporary culture. And the concerns lying behind her fiction are not only theological but profoundly Biblical in a way that is thoroughly integrated into her own world and worldview. Cofer demonstrates how Flannery O'Connor's work is profoundly shaped by her reading of the Bible. Her retelling of Biblical stories in the southern context both disturbs and enlightens our reading of them – something which her letters and essays reveal was certainly her intention.

Robert Willoughby

Roger White, Judith Wolfe and Brendan N. Wolfe (eds.), *C.S. Lewis and his Circle: Essays and Memoirs from the Oxford C.S. Lewis Society*, Oxford University Press, 2015, xvi + 266 pp., £20, 9780190214340

The Oxford C.S. Lewis Society was founded over thirty years ago and consciously reflects the university ethos of which many but by no means all in C.S. Lewis's circle of friends were part. The editors had the difficult task of selecting representative talks given to the gatherings which have met weekly through term times over the years. In the earlier days, we are told, a number of those who met included friends or colleagues of the Inklings. The talks were painstakingly transcribed and edited, though in some cases scripts used by speakers existed.

The title and subtitle of this welcome collection succinctly conveys its varied content. It will have an important place in Lewis studies. Though Lewis is the focus, it is difficult to understand him out of the context of his circle. Consequently, some members of the circle are explored. Famously, Lewis's circle included J.R.R. Tolkien, but it also encompassed many others, including the group the Inklings, with whom Tolkien shared the core with Lewis. The mixture of essays and memoirs takes into account the rich context of Lewis's thought, writings, life and friendships.

Because the collection aims to encompass the context of Lewis's life (which ended over 50 years ago), it has a helpful historical dimension. We find that most chapters are based upon talks given to the Society between 1984 and 1999, when memories were strong and many memory-bearers were still alive. Though the collection mainly spans just around half of the Society's existence, at least one talk has been recently revised, which is Paul S. Fiddes's on a theme central to a number in Lewis's circle, the problem of evil, explored in the context of Charles Williams. Two excellent pieces by Walter Hooper carry no date, as they have been revised for publication from various versions. Generally, no talks from the last 15 years of the Society are represented. Some of these have already been published in a journal founded by the Society called *The C.S. Lewis Chronicle*, which has now developed into the *Journal of Inklings Studies.*

This historical focus makes sense as most of the memoirs included are in fact posthumous publications (the last main Inkling, Owen Barfield, died in 1997). As the volume points out, the memoirs are a significant addition to earlier collections, such as *Light on C.S. Lewis, C.S. Lewis at the Breakfast Table,* and *C.S. Lewis Remembered.* There is of course also the rich and essential collection of oral history interviews at the Wade

Center, Wheaton, Illinois. The setting of the talks to the Society (for many years now held in Pusey House, St Giles) gives a relaxed and cohesive mood to many of the talks, even when they delve to great depths. I love Walter Hooper's comment about a note a slightly peeved Lewis made after his first meeting with Tolkien on 11 May 1926: 'Thank God I never showed Lewis's diary to Tolkien!'

Though the collection divides into two parts, Essays and Memoirs, the two are subdivided into two further sections. The Essays are divided into first Philosophy and Theology, and then Literature. The first division of the Memoirs concerns memories of C.S. Lewis by his family and friends, while its second division is taken up with memories of the Inklings (though only one, Walter Hooper's, focuses on the group as a whole). A tribute to the robust arrangement of the book is that the reader can read either the essays or the memoirs first, according to their inclination, with equal reward.

The section on Philosophy and Theology sets the scene by appropriately opening with Alister McGrath, who, as usual, moves easily between the two. Speaking with great lucidity, he demonstrates how Lewis's defence of Christian faith is drawn from a deep knowledge of 'the rich heritage of the Christian church and Western literature', used with a combination of the rational and the imaginative, and explaining Lewis's continuing wide appeal in our period. McGrath is followed by a valuable talk by Elizabeth Anscombe, a leading analytical philosopher of her time, on the revised Chapter Three of Lewis's book, *Miracles* ('The Cardinal Difficulty of Naturalism'), which he rewrote after her critique of the original chapter. Famously, many thought that Lewis had been humbled and even defeated by Anscombe in her first critique, leading him to abandon muscular intellectual defence of the faith. In reality, her talk demonstrates strengths and weaknesses of her analytical approach, just as she reveals strengths and weaknesses in Lewis's case. Both philosophers (for Lewis was also a philosopher) respect each other, and Anscombe celebrates that Lewis's revised case provides 'material for serious discussion': i.e. that it is important, and merits further exploration, even though she remains baffled by what Lewis actually meant in his basic argument against naturalism.

In the same section, Stephen Logan, in 'C.S. Lewis and the Limits of Reason', argues that Lewis characteristically employs reason in connection with, and not detached from, our other means of perception, particularly imagination. Bishop Kallistos Ware brings to his audience insights from the Eastern Orthodox Church for help in understanding the particular kind of sacramentalism stressed by Lewis and his friend Charles Williams, at the centre of which was their affirmation of the goodness of God's creation in all its physicality. Following this, appropriately, is theologian Paul S. Fiddes's masterly exploration of Charles Williams on the problem of evil.

The Essay section on Literature is wide ranging. Rowan Williams begins with a reassessment of Lewis's science-fiction novel, *That Hideous Strength,* which he finds 'most interesting and most challenging, though in some ways also most deeply flawed'. He finds defects both of structure and content, such as its uneasy mix of the supernatural and the conventions of a realistic novel (for the latter, Williams senses Lewis has a flair), but nevertheless major strengths which make this one of his favourites of Lewis's books. Among its strengths is one found in all Lewis's work, what might be called 'the phenomenology of evil, or the phenomenology of temptation'. Another is an 'enormously imaginative alliance of the good and the created and the material'. He suspects its weaknesses might come from Lewis trying to emulate Charles Williams. Rowan Williams's assessment is followed by the poet and theologian Malcolm Guite

considering the very centre of Lewis's concerns in his essay, 'Yearning for a Far-off Country'. Guite's poetic sensibility discerns the joint work of reason and imagination in Lewis's perception that the attractive light from another world can cast its 'bright shadow' on every part of our world. Michael Piret, in 'W.H. Auden and the Inklings', which follows, turns his attention to Lewis's circle of friends, taking as his starting point Auden's record of debt to Lewis and Charles Williams in his poem 'A Thanksgiving',

> Wild Kierkegaard, Williams and Lewis
> Guided me back to belief.

The following essay by Tom Shippey presents the only reading I've ever seen of C.S. Lewis's diaries (kept between 1922 to 1927), in which he explores Lewis's attitude to the Oxford English Department, first as a student and then a Fellow in English. This is of great importance, as the attitude of Tolkien and Lewis to the split between the study of English language and literature in the department was to have a huge impact upon the English syllabus. The section concludes with Walter Hooper's informative account of the genesis and development of the Chronicles of Narnia.

The final part of the book, concerned with memories of Lewis and the Inklings, falls into two sections, as mentioned. In the first section, the memories are those of Lewis's family and friends. The first chapter is made up of recollections of the Lewis family by his cousin, once removed, Joan Murphy (née Lewis). Though born 28 years after Lewis, she presents vivid insights into his early life. The memories are then taken over by George Sayer, a student, then friend, then biographer of Lewis. After this, the focus changes to Lewis as a parishioner, attending Holy Trinity Church in Headington Quarry, as remembered by his vicar in later life. Then follows the valuable account by Revd Peter Bide of Lewis's request for him to pray for the healing of Joy Davidman and to officiate in a simple Christian wedding ceremony after the Bishop of Oxford had refused to do so. Poignantly, Peter Bide records his own struggles over the position of the Anglican Church concerning second marriages (Joy was divorced). The section ends with several vivid impressions of Lewis at the Oxford University Socratic Club by its founder and friend, Stella Aldwinckle, a chaplain to women students and a poet.

The final section spotlights several members of the Inklings. They are placed in context by the first chapter, in which Walter Hooper presents a very effective brief portrait of the club – not an easy task because of the informality and very patchy documentation of the group, and the diversity of its members. Owen Barfield's impressions of his great friend then follow. Barfield was concerned to establish clear differences as well as similarities between them, as these he felt were often misunderstood. One important factor to Barfield was that his basic thinking settled into place very early, whereas Lewis developed in many ways over the years. This chapter is of particular importance, as Lewis can't be understood without Barfield, and later without Tolkien and then Charles Williams. John Wain, the poet and novelist, critic and biographer, was a youthful member of the Inklings. Two chapters are devoted to his portraits of a couple of important members of the Inklings, and their relations with Lewis. The first is his brother, Major Warren Lewis, drawing attention to his writings and their considerable literary merit and to his important place in the lives of both his brother and the Inklings. The second chapter concerns Nevill Coghill, who was an undergraduate then English don with Lewis, and a fellow Irishman (though from the south). John Wain considered both as formative in his education, and he concentrates

on their scholarship and Irishness. In fact, through Coghill and Lewis, Oxford gave the Englishman Wain something he valued, which he felt was an Irish education.

The book concludes, fittingly, with a brief account of the Oxford C.S. Lewis Society by Michael Ward, who has had a long association with the Society.

Colin Duriez

John Schad and David Jonathan Y. Bayot, *John Schad in Conversation,* **De la Salle University Publishing House, Manila, Philippines, 2015, 51pp., 9789715556293**

This small volume of conversation between John Schad and David Bayot is punchily short, but always to the point, to many up-to-the-minute critical points in fact; Schadian points, of course, the point or points where the wonderful Schadian critical train – what he calls his 'post-criticism, critical-creative writing, ficto-criticism or just plain "mad-crit"' – has got to. Especially in the book *Someone Called Derrida : An Oxford Mystery* (2007), founding offering in the *Critical inventions* series which Schad edits: that poised, poignant reading of Schad's father's life in its fancied parallelisms and overlaps with the life of Jacques Derrida. A reading obsessed with the 'Envois' of Derrida's *La Carte Postale* – the series of post-cards Derrida addresses to unnamed recipients which Schad professedly came to believe, and reads as being, missives meant for his father. Two fathers, then, on this critical stage. The natural (and spiritual) father John Shad (sic), Oxford graduate, evangelical Presbyterian pastor, bringer-up of Schad and his sister in the way Biblicist Evangelicalism believed a child should go, and to whom something awful and awfully mysterious happened, Schad reckons, at school. A haunted murmuring confessor whose Alzheimered ramblings – reproduced in a long Appendix – are undauntedly quarried by his son as shadowy testimony to a terrible past. And Jacques Derrida, critical father, victimized at school in the Hitler period for being Jewish, and done to intellectual death on his several visits to Oxford, whose *philosophes* would have little or nothing to do with his continental style of philosophizing.

It's an extraordinary palimpsest of readings: Schad wrestling with his father's opaque speaking in snatches of estranged tongues, and getting strong personal messages from Derrida's intense readings of his own fraught life-story. An utterly fetching blend of voices – interpreter John Schad's; the words of his distraught, mentally damaged father; and the purloined letters of Derrida's lore. Schad is travelling, of course, in the formal footsteps of Julian Barnes and W.G. Sebald, and perhaps also of fictionalizing biographer Peter Ackroyd, but especially of Derrida. Walking the formal Derrida way, or *pas*, the writing step or two or more taken, and a way all at once, tantalizingly, challenged, even refused, certainly not taken in any straightforward fashion: the Derridean *ne pas* of the *pas*. Writing as fic that's also fact, or truth. Life writing as old truth, new truth, and truths peculiar to Schad's perceptions and dreamings. And to be sure, no one currently exceeds Schad in the analytical spotting and making of connexions, alliances, coincidences, strange meetings. Here's a kaleidoscope of books, poems, movies, fics and flicks, high and low cultural products, secrets unveiled and unravelled, Oxford's canny and uncanny ways and histories, the history of Oxford philosophy, twentieth century history's worst acts and victim actors, wandering, wondering Jews (was Schad's grandfather Jewish?), Nazi War Crimes trials, all the Esthers scrambled out of the pasts of Schad and Derrida and the Bible, Hamans and

humans and hymens galore. Schad is the Critical Olympiad's gold medallist at finding the stepping stones on which to perform his acrobatic ballet across the sloughs of modern and personal despond. (Who else but Schad, to take just one tiny example, can be depended on to spot that Bruce Montgomery, aka Oxford tec writer Edmund Crispin, did the music for certain *Carry On* films? Schad's a pocket battleship of such mighty revelations.)

The activity defies generic labelling. Critfactfic might do. Something like that. This is a wonderful, even astonishing, critical/personal/historical Blitzkrieg. And all celebrated, revisited, re-read, at Bayot's mainly deft promptings, in this contribution to the *In Conversation* series.

In this conversation Schad preaches up what he practises. A criticism that must get, as he puts it, on the inside of a text; that will take up residence in that awesome (Eliotic) flickering. A criticism eager to uncage the text that the critic is (properly) caged in. In the Cage, then, with Henry James's over-determining post-office clerk. The franker, and sender, of course, though Schad doesn't name her, of Derrida's post-cards. Actually the model for Schad's acclaimed necessary misreading of the text. A tragic personaliser of the enigmatic texts she reads behind her post-office wire, she points a ghostly finger at Schad's devoted personalising of Derrida's 'Envois'. For believing that a text is for you, taking its words as for you – crucial, as Schad insists, to the best reading – is of course a sign of solipsism, and very close to madness. Dementia is the thrusting aspect of what haunts Schad's practice and theory of good reading. The text lives only if you the reader live in and through it; but it's a letter (epistle, post-card, literature) that also killeth. As the Scripture, and Thomas Hardy for one, well know.

Openly Protestant, post-Biblical Schad – son of a Bible bashing wielder of the Biblical Spirit's Sword who was driven not least, as Schad is at pains to demonstrate, by the dilations of the evangelical Crusaders movement, and also disciple of Biblical law-man, Elie/Elijah Derrida – Schad both advocates and demonstrates the importance of intellectual, critical fathers. Being a proper reader is to be a son, to embrace the condition of sonship (*heritage* is *filiation*: 'Envois'). Schad is critic as adopted son – adopting the critical persona of Hamlet and, in imitation of Derrida, of Isaac. He's an Icarus. Difficult filiations indeed; not least because they're ghosted by Big Daddy, Father God. Son Hamlet is cursed to remember his ghostly father. Father Abraham raised his knife over his son Isaac. Icarus fell to his death when the sun melted the wings his father gifted him. Hamlet is never not Melancholy Man (like the great celebrator of Melancholy, Walter Benjamin – one more of Schad's fathers, written elsewhere into Schad's boyhood story, and talked about a bit in these conversations). Literature's oldest panic is knowing how imperilled a thing it is to speak with the voice of the father voice. Perhaps the most arresting stylistic feature of *Someone Called Derrida* is how Schad's sentences are willingly sentenced to blend his voice into his father's and Derrida's. A field of seamless verbal patchworks. Verbal things made out of the fathers' shreds and patches. Constant reminders of the opening of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, and the blur there of Icarus Stephen's voice and person into that of his father Dedalus. 'His father told him that story: his father looked at him through a glass: he had a hairy face. He was baby tuckoo.' He, him, his, him, he, He: son and father at one and in one. Being in your fathers' story; speaking as His Master's Voice: it's comforting, but also disquieting. An infantilizing, infant talk (and as Eliot reminds us courtesy of Lancelot Andrewes, *infans* means not speaking), which cuts worryingly two ways, keeping you down and small, but also cutting the father down

to size. Schad's alzheimered dad is always 'boy'; as Derrida stars almost from the start as 'our [Chaplinesque] Kid'.

'Hell is a city much like London', wrote Shelley in words that haunted Walter Benjamin: hellish because in it there's ''little or no fun done'. And reading on Schad's model is pretty hellish. Certainly there's lots of fun done in Schad's interpretative cage, and along the utterly fetching and catching plethora of aesthetic and human path crossings and criss-crossings, but it's never not haunted by suggestions of madness and crime, by holocaustic memories, persecutions, deaths, and even hell. It's 'always nightfall on the batttlements', in that Hamletian remarking of Derrida's, which so grips Schad.

Catchily, Schad celebrates his critical way as jazzers' improvisatoriness: he works in 'the improvisational spirit, or letter of theory – Derrida, of course, was keen on jazz'. 'Being is being sent': Schad takes warmly in *Someone Called Derrida* to Heidegger's remark as Derrida recalled it. Schad hears in it the postal sendings of the 'Envois', and his father's being sent away, traumatically, to boarding school. What he doesn't note (rare omitting) is that being 'sent' by music, being emotionally carried away, is the desired condition of the jazz fan (Larkin loved it, needed doses of it). The affect-effect of improvised music. At Schad's dad's school, he tells us, it was thought a hellish business. There's a long riff in *Someone* on Satan, Satanism, Hell, and the father's demented invokings of 666, sponsored by the case of the school's 'Rhythm Club' being denounced as 'devil worshippers'. Jazz, as (traditionally) the 'devil's music'. Schad's musico-critical model pops up thus, but oddly Schad fails to ponder its alleged, father-dementing, hellishness. A pity, for it's a possibly telling case of the hellishness always potentially hanging around Schad's critical sonships – of the *Schaden*, harm, injury, damage, always, it seems, contingent on this critic's desired critical *Freuden*, or joys: thoughts ace punster and connector Schad, who reclaimed the old spelling of the family name, of course cannot resist – but a handy critical catch muffed. Muffed, but, happily, quite unusually. Don't ask why; I won't: sent by these critiques as I usually am. But do take it way, dad, as the jazzman said.

Valentine Cunningham

Notes on Contributors

David Barratt with Roger Pooley and Leland Ryken edited *The Discerning Reader: Christian perspectives on literature and theory*, Apollos/Baker Books, 1995. The second edition of his *C. S. Lewis and his World*, retitled *Narnia: C. S. Lewis and his World*, appeared in 2005.

Samuel Cardwell recently completed an M.Phil in Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic at the University of Cambridge. His research interests include the cultural and intellectual history of Northumbria, early Anglo-Latin literature (in particular the works of the Venerable Bede), Old English poetry, and the intersection between scriptural exegesis and early medieval thought.

Valentine Cunningham is Professor of English Language and Literature at Oxford University and Emeritus Fellow in English Literature at Corpus Christi College, Oxford. He specializes in modern literature and literary theory, and he has twice been a judge for the Booker Prize. His books include *Everywhere Spoken Against: Dissent in the Victorian Novel* (1975), *British Writers of the Thirties* (1988), *In the Reading Gaol: Postmodernity, Texts and History* (1994) and *Reading After Theory* (2002). He is a contributor to *Visions and Revisions: The Word and the Text*, 2013 (see 'News and Notes', p. 66).

Colin Duriez is the author of a number of Inklings-related books, including *The Oxford Inklings: Lewis, Tolkien, and Their Circle, Bedeviled: Lewis, Tolkien and the Shadow of Evil, C.S. Lewis: A Biography of Friendship, J.R.R. Tolkien: The Making of a Legend,* and *J.R.R. Tolkien and C.S. Lewis: The Story of Their Friendship.*

Dr Roger Kojecký's *T S Eliot's Social Criticism* describes Eliot's attempts to engage as a Christian man of letters with social issues. The book, revised (2014) for the Amazon Kindle format, contains first publication of a paper on the role of the clerisy contributed by Eliot to an elite discussion group, The Moot. He is among the contributors to the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* and the *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery* (IVP). He is Secretary of the Christian Literary Studies Group and has lectured recently at universities in Krakow, Olomouc, Toronto and Beijing. With Andrew Tate he co-edited *Visions and Revisions: The Word and the Text* (see 'News and Notes', p. 66).

Chin Hwa Myatt completed an M.Phil degree in Renaissance Literature at the University of Cambridge focusing on the sermons of the seventeenth century Puritan preacher Richard Sibbes. Since then she has taught English literature at secondary schools in London and Hong Kong.

Dr Mike Nolan is a lecturer in the Department of Creative Arts and English at La Trobe University, Melbourne. His teaching and research interests include the literature, especially plays, of the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods; French plays of the Seventeenth Century and recovering the voices of French peasants of this period. He has just completed a translation of the casket sonnets attributed to Mary, Queen of

Scots and is currently engaged in a book project examining the connections between Jacobean drama and Film Noir.

Dr David Parry teaches early modern English literature and practical criticism for various colleges of the University of Cambridge. He has published articles and chapters on a variety of early modern writers, and is currently writing a monograph provisionally entitled *Puritanism and Persuasion: The Rhetoric of Conversion and the Conversion of Rhetoric*. He is the Associate Editor of *The Glass* and a member of the CLSG committee.

Roger Pooley is Honorary Research Fellow in the School of Humanities at Keele University and a former Chair of the CLSG.

Dinah Roe is a Senior Lecturer in Nineteenth-Century Literature at Oxford Brookes University. She is the author of *Christina Rossetti's Faithful Imagination* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2006) and has edited and introduced *Christina Rossetti: Selected Poems* (2008) for Penguin Classics. Her biography of the Rossetti family, *The Rossettis in Wonderland* (Haus), was published in 2011.

Alison Searle is an Australian Research Council postdoctoral fellow at the University of Sydney. She is editing James Shirley's *The Sisters* for Oxford University Press and is co-general editor of *The Correspondence of Richard Baxter* (also contracted with OUP). She is writing her second monograph provisionally entitled *Religious Dissent, Performance and the Republic of Letters in Early Modern Britain.*

Dr Peter Stiles tutors and lectures at Excelsia College (formerly the Wesley Institute) in Sydney, Australia. He is an Adjunct Professor of English and Religious Studies at Trinity Western University, Canada, and an Honorary Research Fellow at Morling College, Sydney. In addition he is a visiting lecturer in Australian literature at Houghton College, New York. He completed his PhD in Literature and Theology at the University of Glasgow in 1995. He has published both academic and creative works and his scholarly articles on Elizabeth Gaskell have appeared in journals, conference proceedings, and edited collections. He has experience teaching in both secondary and tertiary settings and has served in the administration of several educational institutions. He is the Australian representative for *Christianity and Literature*, a Fellow of the RSA, a Member of the Australian College of Educators, and a Justice of the Peace (NSW).

Robert Willoughby was for many years lecturer in Biblical Studies and Social Justice at London School of Theology. He is now assistant curate at St Michael's Highgate in Greater London. He is a member of the CLSG committee.

News and Notes

Autumn conference: 'Shaping Ends: Aspects of Apocalypse'

You are invited to attend, or offer to read a paper at the CLSG autumn conference at Oxford on Saturday, 5 November. A call for papers (deadline 31 May 2016) will be sent to members of the e-list and posted on the websites of the European Society for the Study of English (ESSE) and the University of Pennsylvania Calls for Papers. The CLSG website *clsg.org* gives the fullest information and will be progressively updated.

Be a member

We would like your support since we have no source of funds other than members' fees, subscriptions and donations. Forms to begin or renew membership (£16 p.a., concessions £12) are available on *clsg.org*. A secure credit/bank card payment can be made online – see 'Get Involved' on the website. Members receive a printed copy of *The Glass* and other entitlements described on the same webpage.

Keep in touch

Send in news of your publications, appointments and other items likely to interest list members. Even if you are not a CLSG member you are invited to join the email list and receive occasional information about developments relating to Christianity and literature. There is no charge for membership of the e-list. Email the editor to be added.

Contribute to *The Glass*

Members don't need to wait to be asked. For example, send an idea or proposal for an article any time up to 30 April, then write it during the summer months. Send ideas and contributions to the Editor, Dr Roger Kojecký, preferably by email to *editor@clsg.org*.

For book reviews, contact **Dr David Parry**, recently appointed as Associate Editor, *editor2@clsg.org*, who also joins the Committee.

The optimum length for articles is 5,000 words, and for reviews around 1,200 words. Contributors should consult the Style Guidance notes in the Journal section of the website *www.clsg.org*. Submit copy as an email attachment, but a short item, such as a review, can be sent in the body of an email, preferably with HTML formatting preserving italics etc.

Back numbers of *The Glass* are to be found in the UK Copyright Deposit libraries, and the British Library has a virtually complete file at the St Pancras site. Many of them are also in the form of Open Access PDFs in the Journal Archive section of the CLSG website. Similarly, past conference topics and leaflets with details of the speakers and brief bibliographies can be found in the Conference section. While many of the PDFs are read-only, constituent articles are available to current members on request.

CLSG Essays

In 2013 we published a volume of essays, *Visions and Revisions: The Word and the Text* in association with Cambridge Scholars Publishing. Co-edited by Roger Kojecký and Andrew Tate, its dozen essays include contributions by Valentine Cunningham, Sir Michael Edwards and Walter Nash. It appears in hardback and in digital form. Details are on the websites of the CLSG and Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Valete

We record with regret that **Cedric Porter**, a longtime member who regularly attended CLSG conferences, died suddenly in 2015. His most recent contributions to these pages, an article on the pilgrim theme and a poem, were included in the 2014 issue (Number 26).

A similar sad farewell to **Walter Nash** (1926-2015), emeritus professor of Nottingham University, who has contributed extensively in recent years to *The Glass*. His study of rhetoric *Designs in Prose* was published in 1980, and after retiring to the island of Tenerife he produced several collections of poems, commenting in 2012, 'My greatest consolation is in making verse, and I am given to that as others are given to whisky, sherry, or good red wine.' The spirited poems of *Any Day Now: Poems of Late* were reviewed in our issue No. 25 (Spring 2013), and there were plans for another volume, to be called 'The Last of the Light'. It was to include the following:

Ambitions on a Rainy Day

When that I was and a little tiny boy,
with hey, ho, the wind and the rain – Twelfth-Night

Let us create
the forms from which exalted forms may grow,
though stumbling our creation, and too slow
as seasons march along;
sky follows sky, the new moon cannot wait
while song amends our song.

Let's imitate
the sea that shatters seasons into sand
flinging a broken calendar to land.
But no, the ambition's wrong;
the tides are strict, and hold us to our date,
one life's enough for song.

Come, celebrate,
bring wine, and chaplets of the green bay leaf,
before the long predicted shades of grief,
mischance and sickness, throng
faster than instruments can calculate,
let's measure all in song.

Small things and great,
the roses' maytime blaze, my love's caress,
the brief allotment of our happiness,
our hopes, so frail, so strong;
the wind and rain are mimicking our state:
what can console, but song?

Sonnet

Walter Nash

Now gently into your Jerusalem,
my soul, ride, not asking the easy way,
but for the mercy of a quiet day,
far from palms and hosannahs. Far from them
these years, the nimble and foal-footed years,
carry me all too briskly down the road
that leads to suppertime; O Son of God,
comfort this dark foreboding, calm these fears,
grant me quick distractions, each delight
that makes wayfaring winsome, each surprise
of sky and exultant earth; welcoming cries
at friendly doors; such ways my way may go,
closer, to close on You, who alone know
the Gethsemane that bides, come fall of night.

This, numbered XIV, is the last of the section 'In the Winter Season' and last in Walter Nash's sonnet cycle *Recent Intelligence* (Beyond the Cloister Publications, 2009). In a note Nash gave its origin as in an earlier composition 'After Holy Week', commenting, 'Despite the tremor of the closing line, the mood is conciliatory, even cheerful.' See the obituary notice on p. 67.