The Particularisation of Error within the 'Culture of Fact', 1600-1650

Edwina L.N. Penge

University College, Oxford

48, 972 words

M.Litt Thesis Submission in English Language and Literature

University of Oxford

Edwina Penge
University College

MLitt. English Language and Literature
Michaelmas Term 2014

The Particularisation of Error within the 'Culture of Fact', 1600-1650

An Abstract

Barbara Shapiro's *A Culture of Fact* argued that a fact-orientated culture emerged in seventeenth-century England. Fact, formerly a legal category, was absorbed by a range of other discourses and became a crucial component of the epistemological shifts of the period. The question of how the culture of fact altered the articulation of the related concept of error has not been investigated.

This thesis analyses the changing concept of error against the emergence of the culture of fact, arguing for a shift from the personified and allegorised representation of error to a status as the particularised counterpart and opposite to the establishment of fact. The epistemological, religious, and cultural contexts informing notions of error and its particularisation are established. This particularisation is exemplified in the introduction by an account of the incorporation of the language of fact into the titles of texts concerning error. The chapters build on the critically established narrative of the permeation of evidential concerns surrounding matters of fact into drama, pioneered by Lorna Hutson, to examine plays and non-dramatic literary texts which offer perspectives on error as a mistake in matter of fact. Plays engage with the contexts of error, the conventions of fact, and stage how mishandling these conventions results in error. Poems by Spenser and Fletcher, and masques by Middleton and Campion reflect the shifting status of Protestant Truth, a key context of error, and its consequences for the representation of error. Jonson addresses error in forms scrutinised by seventeenth-century *cultura animi* authors and considers how they engender factual errors; whilst Ford and Brome, reacting to specific medical subgenres of error writing, conceived of error's utility in a curative theatre. These playwrights unite a cultural concern with error as a specific sense of being mistaken in matters of fact with drama's historical prerogative to exploit error in plots which may reflect a seventeenth-century recognition of error's utility in the pursuit of fact.

Contents

Acknowledgements i
Abbreviations ii

Introduction 1

Chapter 1:
Allegorical Depictions of Error 32

Chapter 2:
The Particularisation of Error in Drama I: Jonson and the *Cultura Animi* Tradition 76

Chapter 3:
The Particularisation of Error in Drama II: Diagnostic and Curative Errors in Two Caroline Plays 117

Conclusion 153

Numbered Appendix of Titles 163
Bibliography 171

Abbreviations

ELH	*English Literary History*
ELR	*English Literary Renaissance*
CBJ	Ben Jonson, *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson*, ed. David Bevington et al 7 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).
CHSP	*Cambridge History of Seventeenth-Century Philosophy*, ed. Daniel Garber and Michael Ayres, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).
CPW	John Milton*, Complete Prose Works of John Milton*, ed. D.M. Wolfe et al, 8 vols. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953–1982).
JHI	*Journal of the History of Ideas*
OED	*Oxford English Dictionary*. Consulted at www.oed.com.
OFB	*The Oxford Francis Bacon*, 15 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985-).
PMLA	*Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*
PWD	René Descartes, *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes,* ed. and tr. John Cottingham et al, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984-85).
SEL	*Studies in English Literature 1500-1900*
WFB	*The Works of Francis Bacon*, ed. James Spedding et al, 14 vols. (London: Longman, 1857-74). Cited were remaining volumes of the OFB are not yet published.

Introduction

This thesis addresses the particularity and particularisation of error between 1600 and 1650. The endeavour to identify and avoid error is a perennial concern. However, my contention is that, in the period under consideration, several factors combined to make it particularly salient, and indeed to effect a shift from a largely generalised and personified error, towards a concern with errors as particular mistakes in matters of fact: indeed, we might call this, as in my title, the particularisation of error. This argument is a counterpart to the work of Barbara Shapiro, who identified the seventeenth century as the period of the emergence of a 'culture of fact'.[1] This saw fact, once a legal category, become a common way of articulating a wide variety of occurrences and events, natural and human.[2] Shapiro's work ranges across a variety of discourses, to show how legal procedures for the investigation and establishment of facts permeated other arenas – including natural history and philosophy, travel reporting, news writing, and history. In addition, my argument builds upon the critically established narrative of the permeation of such evidential concerns surrounding matters of fact into drama pioneered by Lorna Hutson.[3] My chapters consider plays which exemplify this process and offer perspectives on error as a mistake in matter of fact. Often these plays present an affective root to the factual errors they stage; accordingly, I also bring Sorana Corneanu's insights into seventeenth-century *cultura animi* analyses of error as a cognitive-affective

---

[1] Barbara Shapiro, *A Culture of Fact: England, 1550-1720* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000).
[2] Ibid., p. 63.
[3] Lorna Hutson, *The Invention of Suspicion: Law and Mimesis in Shakespeare and Renaissance Drama* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007). Hutson is explicit about her "intellectual debts" to Shapiro. See p. vii.

distemper to bear.[4] In this thesis, I analyse the changing concept of error against the emergence of the culture of fact, and argue that error increasingly appears not as a personified figure but as the particularised counterpart and opposite to the fact.

The double claim of this thesis is that, first, error articulated as a specific sense of being mistaken in matters of fact was a significant concern c.1600-1650; and secondly, that this concern is addressed in complex and perspective-altering ways by the vernacular texts considered in the following chapters. I argue that print culture is crucial to the particularisation of error, and draw on a range of texts, including plays, masques, poems, heresiographies, works of natural philosophy, polemical pamphlets, and medical and moral philosophical treatises. This thesis is thus an active combination of cultural history and literary investigation, pursuing the cultural trend of the particularisation of error through the evidence available in literature, especially drama.

Recent critical works on error by Seth Lerer, David W. Bates, François Rigolot, and John Roberts have suggested error's productivity and utility, practical and pleasurable, in relation to, respectively: academic professional identity; Enlightenment philosophy; French Renaissance literature; and, most diversely, the development of the Western philosophical subject, philosophy of science, political praxis, and art.[5] Nicholas Rescher's philosophically rigorous analysis of error,

---

[4] Sorana Corneanu, *The Regimens of the Mind: Boyle, Locke, and the Early Modern Cultura Animi Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011). Corneanu sees her approach as qualifying the seventeenth-century English history of epistemology to which Shapiro has contributed. See p. 97.

[5] Seth Lerer, *Error and the Academic Self: The Scholarly Imagination, Medieval to Modern* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002); David Bates, *Enlightenment Aberrations*: *Error and Revolution in France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002); François Rigolot *L'erreur de la*

encompassing thought from the ancient Greeks to Bertrand Russell, deems error to be a "counterproductive act".[6] This means an error thwarts an agent's intentions though not always its interests; indeed the error may have "engendered splendid consequences".[7] This thesis, in part, reprises this theme of productivity and error within its context of the emergence of the culture of fact; it does so in terms of the perceived proliferation of error, and of error's potential instructional and curative utility.

The present introduction will include an exploration of the contexts of error, with a particular focus on error in print culture and in the titles of printed works concerned with the extirpation of error. However, given the potentially amorphous concept of error, we must begin with definitions. The particularisation of error necessarily rests on the distinction between *an* error and generalised error. Generalised error is conceived as a state or condition of error within which one might comprehend particular cases of error and mistakenness. The period's generalised notions of error were shaped by a series of contexts to be addressed shortly. *An* error is a specific sense of being mistaken in matters of fact; it is a deviation (actual or perceived) from, or inaccurate representation of, the facts. Rescher notes that error entails "conflict with the actual facts, and were there no actual matter of fact there would be no error either. For error to be possible, there must be something distinctively objective and real to be wrong about."[8] Rescher's is a serviceable modern definition of error, but

---

Renaissance (Paris: Champion, 2002) and Rigolot, "The Renaissance Fascination with Error," *Renaissance Quarterly* 57:4 (2004), pp. 1212-1234; John Roberts, *The Necessity of Errors* (New York: Verson, 2011).

[6] Nicholas Rescher, *Error: On Our Predicament When Things Go Wrong* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2007), p. 2.

[7] Ibid., p. 8.

[8] Ibid., p. 80.

not appropriate to the seventeenth-century due to its anachronistic understanding of fact.

A concept and discourse of 'actual matter of fact' was emerging in the seventeenth century. Since conceptions of error are significantly bound to concepts of fact, it is necessary to clarify 'fact' and **'**matter of fact'**.** This is not altogether simple. The sixteenth-century English Common Law definition of fact, for example, differs from its meaning in late seventeenth-century scientific discourse. In the former context, as Barbara Shapiro writes, fact "did not mean an established truth but an alleged act whose occurrence was in contention";[9] whereas, in the latter, facts were "objectively knowable truths".[10] For "most of the seventeenth-century", however, the terms fact or matter-of-fact "implied [...] not something already worthy of belief or true but rather a matter capable of proof".[11] In this evolving context of fact, an error was a belief held in ignorance of or in opposition to available proofs and evidence; error was not yet a contravention of objectively knowable truths, although it was progressing in this direction.

In all seventeenth-century discourse of fact, an error was a deviation from the truth of fact. If the concept of fact was qualified by the discourse in question then so too must be the concept of error. In a legal context, an error was a specific sense of being mistaken about facts conceived as purported human actions or events. The error may result from: mishandling of the conventions of fact; ignorance of or opposition to available proofs; inadequate evidence, false testimony, or the partisan rhetorical

[9] Shapiro, *Culture*, p. 15.
[10] Hutson, *Suspicion*, p. 77.
[11] Shapiro, *Culture*, p. 110.

presentation of the matter of fact. Thus in identifying error, partisan bias and the abuse of the conventions of factual discourse or the language of fact had to be avoided. In religious polemic, an error may be articulated with appeals to the conventions of fact or using the language of fact. Indeed, both sides of a dispute might marshal the language of fact to support their cause and accuse the other of abusing it (see chapter 1). But who was in possession of the facts in such a scenario as this, where to a modern ear it seems impossible to talk of matters of fact? Moreover, in establishing these 'facts' had these people executed the conventions of fact (such as systems of proof, witness testimony) rigorously and without bias?

The potential misuse of factual conventions brings us to another inadequacy with Rescher's definition. It does not address the 'who' and 'how' of establishing facts; one cannot assume that fact production is objective. To quote Shapiro: "[p]artisanship, superstition, an inferior education, or human weakness might impair the ability of the observer"; moreover, "Christian teachings about human fallibility and Baconian idols underscored this sensitivity to error in reporting 'matter of fact'".[12] Thus it is extremely difficult to say whether some errors identified by authors were errors or not; not only due to the lack of information as to whether these authors accurately executed the conventions of fact, but because they stretch the application of the concept of fact far beyond its simple legal application. For instance, whether the Anabaptist rejection of infant baptism is an error depends on what you mean by fact. Nonetheless, an error has been specified by the author. The topic of man's fallibility brings us to the first of the early modern contexts in which we may place the reality of early-to-mid seventeenth-century error.

[12] Ibid., p. 64.

Contexts of error

There are seven contexts of error to which I give particular attention; these are threaded through the chapters which follow. The primary is epistemological; it is the narrative of the rise of evidence and matter of fact which our definition of an error has elucidated. The remaining contexts are: the Fall; melancholy as the predicament of fallen humanity; the 'Reformation of error'; the Protestant ideology of Truth; doubt, and seventeenth-century print culture. I address these contexts in this order. The discussion of the last of these contexts will be proportionally the most extensive and evidence-laden.

The Fall

The early modern reality of error was inextricably linked to the myth of the Fall. Edenic man's sin was "the prime Fundamentall Cause, the Gate by which Errour came first into the World".[13] The serpent in Eden became a common analogue for early modern allegorical depictions of error (see chapter 1). The Fall explained how man came to be in possession of fallible faculties and deceivable senses, how, in short, he came to be subject to error. Peter Harrison has demonstrated the prevalence of belief in both literal understandings of the Fall and the notion of man's impaired post-lapsarian faculties.[14] Protestantism's emphasis on the erroneous nature of man, in particular Calvinist thought on the doctrine of original sin, fed convictions that the

---

[13] Edward Reynolds, *A Treatise of the Passions and Faculties of the Soul of Man* (London: 1647), p. 483.

[14] Peter Harrison's, *The Fall of Man and the Foundations of Science* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007)

Fall had had grave consequences for man's reason.[15] Early modern readings of Genesis 1-3 yielded a range of theologies and controversies, with differing appraisals of man's physical and cognitive abilities.[16] Augustinian anthropology, reaffirmed by the Reformation, characterised man as a depraved and intellectually limited being; the Fall had irreparably corrupted man's natural abilities. Man's "mutable nature deviated by its own choice and [...] Error is its punishment", Augustine wrote.[17] More optimistic was the belief that Adam lost his supernatural abilities but not his natural ones, including reason.[18] The first, Augustinian, anthropology conferred a life sentence of error; the second suggested man might apply his remaining abilities to achieve some reprieve. The recovery of our pre-lapsarian abilities and Adamic knowledge, a core aspiration of seventeenth-century intellectual endeavour, would redeem man both from his general state of error and from errors as a specific sense of being mistaken in matters of fact. Indeed, the cultivation of fact was the means of man's redemption; Joanna Picciotto's study of the ethos of *imitatio Adami* in the seventeenth-century suggests that the "restoration of paradise" was "identical to the formation of a cumulative culture of works and words, organised around the production and cultivation of facts".[19] Through the nurturing of facts, man might achieve the restoration of his Adamic knowledge and abilities; facts might offset man's primary error in the narrative of the Fall.

---

[15] Ibid., ch.2.
[16] Helpfully summarised in William Poole's, *Milton and the Idea of the Fall* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).
[17] St Augustine, *Confessions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 4.10.26.
[18] Harrison associates this line of thought with Thomas Aquinas. *Fall*, p. 43.
[19] Joanna Picciotto, *Labors of Innocence in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2010), p. 58.

Melancholy

The Fall rendered man's faculties error-prone and his intellect vulnerable to the negative effect of the passions. The passions pervert objective apprehension, leading man into many and varied forms of error with regard to the world and his place within it. A complex relationship between errors of judgement and the passions was understood in the period, as was the need to curtail "error [...] as a member of the cognitive-affective distempers" to ensure pure cognition.[20] Chapter 2 enlarges upon approaches to the cultivation of the mind intended to curtail errors of judgement with regard to matters of fact. The minds of melancholy men were particularly susceptible to errors of judgement; however, melancholy was the predicament of fallen humanity (according to Robert Burton) rendering all mankind predisposed to err.[21] Early modern physicians stressed the pervasiveness of melancholy "in these our miserable times".[22] In his study of error in the French Renaissance, François Rigolot introduces melancholy as the mood of the age when opening his chapter on 'Erreurs Populaires'.[23] Melancholy and error were perceived to be intimately, even causally, linked in the period; I explore this connection further in chapter 3, which deals with two plays where entire families, courts, and countries have been touched with this peculiarly early modern affliction.

---

[20] Corneanu, *Regimens*, p. 5.

[21] Burton "could not have been clearer that the origins of the confused and debased condition of the melancholy that afflicted all humanity were to be traced to the sin of Adam": Angus Gowland, *The Worlds of Renaissance Melancholy: Robert Burton in Context* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 27.

[22] Du Laurens, *Discourse of the Preservation of the Sight; of Melancholike Disease; of Rheumes, and Old Age* (London: 1599); Mercuiale, *Medica practica ... libri V* (Lyon: 1617); Chiondini, *Consultationes Responsiones et consultationes medicinales* (Venice: 1607). Gowland, *Worlds*, p. 1. Chiodini stated in his *Responsiones* that "in our times scarcely anyone can be found who is immune from its [melancholy's] contamination". Quoted in Gowland, "The Problem of Early Modern Melancholy", *Past and Present* 191 (2006): pp. 77-120, p. 78.

[23] "Devant les imperfections du monde et les insatisfactions des êtres humains la Renaissance a été prise de mélancolie." François Rigolot, *L'erreur*, p. 109.

The 'Reformation of error'

Reformed faith problematized man's relationship with error as sin. Calvin articulated the easy conflation of error and sin when citing Psalm 19, which asks "Who can his errors understand?"[24] Sin is an error (in the general sense, not as a mistake in matter of fact) and, as Calvin uses the psalm to argue, man cannot possibly know all of his sins. Reformation authors both emphasised the scale of man's sin and complicated his agency in regard to them. Man could not understand his sin/error nor could he prevent himself from further sin, given the first motions of involuntary thoughts were also sins in reformed theology. If man was incapable of comprehending his sinfulness, voluntary or involuntary, he would be unable to catalogue his sins, yet Protestantism required one to "enumerate and seek forgiveness for their *particular* faults".[25] This was a significant conflict, based on the particularisation of error, at the heart of post-Reformation man's relationship with sin as error.

Further difficulty resulted from Protestantism altering how individuals atoned; with the traditional means for attaining forgiveness removed, the reassuring attainability of penance was compromised. To complicate how one achieves absolution might reasonably lead to man being defined by those errors he has difficulty 'off-loading'. The English Reformation removed key figures who mediated man's relationship with his errors. The late fifteenth-century morality play, *Everyman*, affirms that "No remedy we find under God / But all only priesthood" (745-46) which is "cure / For

[24] John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion,* tr. Ford Lewis Battles, ed. John T. McNeill, 2 vols. (London: S.C.M. Press, 1960), 1.641.

[25] Darryl Gless, *Interpretation and Theology in Spenser* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 39. Emphasis added.

man's redemption" (717-18).[26] Formerly, priests interrogated man's sin using Penitentials[27] and manuals of confession;[28] the latter emphasised priests' forensic duty.[29] When assessing sin, confessors were aided by circumstances or the rhetorical topics of enquiry:[30] "Quis, quid, ubi, quibus auxiliis, cur, quomodo, quando".[31] But reformers rejected this meticulous analysis of sin.[32] The forensic analysis of sin was lost, leaving man to its subjective appraisal and at risk of hypersensitivity to it (in other words, despair). Spenser's Despair, echoing reformed authors, expresses the inevitability of man's error and his hapless accumulation of it;[33] he proffers an end to sin when he expresses suicide as the curtailment of wandering (*error, erroris*). When he meets Despair, Redcrosse's hypersensitivity to his errors overwhelms him: his errors have become the formative feature in his subjective assessment of self.[34]

---

[26] *Everyman and Medieval Miracle Plays,* ed. A.C. Cawley (London: Dent, 1993).

[27] Up to the 12th century, Penitentials "fixed the nature, importance, and length of penance [...] this was the so-called tariff systems of penance": *Encyclopaedia of the Middle Ages*, ed. Andre Vauchez, 2 vols. (Cambridge: James Clarke, 2000), 1.351. "Penitentials continued to appear occasionally in various parts of Europe until the sixteenth-century": *Mediaeval Handbooks of Penance: A Translation of the Principal Libri Poenitentiales and Selections from Related Documents*, ed. and tr. John T. McNeill and Helena M. Gamer, 2nd edn (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), p. 49.

[28] Instructions for priests were given in confessors' *summae* and general priests' manuals; for examples see *Handling Sin: Confession in the Middle Ages*, ed. Peter Biller and A.J. Minnis (York: York Medieval Press, 1998), pp. 9-10.

[29] Ronald K. Rittgers, *The Reformation of the Keys: Confession, Conscience, and Authority in Sixteenth-Century Germany* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2004), p. 36n.76.

[30] D.W. Robertson Jr., "A Note on the Classical Origin of "Circumstances" in the Mediaeval Confessional", *Studies in Philology* 43 (1946): pp. 6-14.

[31] "Constitutions of Alexander de Stavensby" (1237), David Wilkins, *Concilia Magnae Brittania et Hiberniae* (London: 1737), I, p. 645. For variations see Robertson Jr, "A Note", p. 7.

[32] McNeill and Gamer, *Handbooks*, p.414. Luther deemed the "troublesome business of circumstances" detrimental to the act of confession. Martin Luther "A discussion on how confession should be made", *Church and Ministry*, *Luther's Works*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan and Helmut T. Lehmann, 55 vols. (St Louis: Concordia, 1955–1986), 39.37.

[33] "The longer the life, I wote the greater the sin, / The greater the sin, the greater the punishment / [...] For he, that once hath missed the right way, / The further he doth goe, the further he doth stray." Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene* (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth, 1999), 1.9.43.1-9.

[34] Despair's speech in Redcrosse's "conscience made a secret breach, / Well knowing true all, that he did reherse /And to his fresh remembrance did reverse / The ugly vew of his deformed crimes" (1.9.48.1-7).

In *The Reformation of the Subject*, Linda Gregerson distinguishes error as a "constitutive feature" to the formation of subjectivity in both *The Faerie Queene* and *Paradise Lost*.[35] Much of Redcrosse's tale, especially his struggle to extricate himself from error/Errour, speaks of similar difficulties experienced by post-reformation man. For these poets, error was a means to "train the reader in interpretive mobility".[36] Error is thus used to correct and pre-empt error; chapter 3 considers the use of this paradigm in selected Caroline drama.[37]

Protestant Truth

Protestantism's ideology of Truth, a further context shaping notions of generalised error, determined the ideological and iconographical representation of error in late-sixteenth and early seventeenth-century England. Protestant Truth moulded in error a potent figure of satirical anti-Catholicism; however, such depictions of generalised error, often allegorical, suffered with the decline of realism and the growth of nominalism which was in part fuelled by the advance of empiricist epistemology.[38] The effect of Protestant Truth on representations of error is the subject of chapter 1, where I illustrate how the potent figuration of generalised error shaped by Protestant Truth was caught up in the shift toward more particularised depictions of error.

---

[35] Linda Gregerson, *The Reformation of the Subject: Spenser, Milton and the English Protestant Epic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 243. Jacques Lacan, centuries later, favoured the derivation of subjectivity in error. See Lacan, "Truth emerges from the Mistake," *The Seminars of Jacque Lacan. Book 1, Freud's Papers on Technique 1953-54*, ed. Jacques-Alain Miller (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), tr. John Forrester, pp. 261-72.
[36] Gregerson, *Subject*, p. 234.
[37] Although this paradigm seems implicit in Gregerson's study, it is not overtly stated.
[38] Stephen M. Fallon, "Milton's Sin and Death: The Ontology of Allegory in *Paradise Lost*", *ELR* 17 (1987): pp. 329-50, p. 337.

Doubt

The Reformation unsettled the philosophical authorities that had formerly sustained religion and, accordingly, 'new-old' philosophies including Scepticism came to the fore.[39] Consciousness of man's post-lapsarian intellectual weaknesses translated into concerns about cognitive and epistemological issues of doubt and scepticism and so to epistemological and methodological means of attaining certainty, essentially freedom from error, in a fallen world. Epistemological uncertainty can be understood as a state resulting from the suspicion of error. Such suspicion was elicited in many quarters: chapter 3 notes it amassing around the issue of the utility of received medical knowledge; whilst chapter 2 records suspicion of factual inaccuracy in news publications eliciting doubt in readers. Pyrrhonist scepticism, which argued that certain knowledge is unobtainable and that contentment arises from the suspension of all judgement, was revived by Henri Etienne's 1562 translation of Sextus Empiricus' *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*.[40] Academic scepticism was passed down from the Middle Ages.[41] Scepticism's absolute suspension of judgement, or *epochē*, offered protection from error:

> One error cajoles this man, another that, a third cajoles me.
> In the midst of these questions, while your mind is tossed on the billows of error, I have a safe haven, since "I don't know" settles each and all.[42]

[39] See Stephen Menn, "The Intellectual Setting", *CHSP*, ed. Daniel Garber and Michael Ayres, 2 vols. (Cambridge: 1998), 2.53-55.

[40] Etiennes' translation influenced Montaigne's *An Apology for Raymond Sebond*, the "first mayor result of the revival of ancient Pyrrhonism in modern thought". José R. Maia Neto, "Academic Scepticism in Early Modern Philosophy", *JHI* 58 (1997): pp. 199-220, p. 201.

[41] For instance: Lactantius' *Divinae Institutiones*, Augustine's *Contra Academicos*, and Cicero's *Academia*.

[42] Part of an act verse originating in Cambridge, entitled *Scepticorum Epochē, est retinenda* (c.1605), Bodleian G.Pamph. 1688 (6, fol. 31). Quoted and translated in William Hamlin, *Tragedy and Scepticism in Shakespeare's England* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), p. 83.

The early seventeenth-century saw several epistemological works reacting against scepticism;[43] they argued that despite error's existence man's faculties normally arrive at the truth and, furthermore, that the circumstances which engendered error, can be identified and compensation for these circumstances made.[44] Scepticism's assertions of doubt about the possibility of knowledge led men of science, such as Descartes and Bacon, to reconceive of man's sources of knowledge and pursue those which may be invulnerable to doubt.[45] If successful, they could avoid the errors and uncertainty which foster scepticism; thus scepticism furthered discourse on error.

Print culture and the particularisation of error

This subsection bolsters the claim that error was a historically specific concern of the early-to-mid century. By surveying the use of 'error' in book titles of the period, I establish the variety and abundance of texts concerning error and of texts which characterise error as a problem distinct to the period. This confirms the cultural and print context of the particularisation of error which forms the basis on which the consequences of these cultural circumstances for drama rest.

In 1605 Francis Bacon advised that "a *Kalender of popular Errors*", comprised of those "detected and convicted" errors of "naturall Historie such as passe in speech", be compiled.[46] The culmination of Bacon's petition was Thomas Browne's *Pseudodoxia Epidemica* (1646). The intervening years saw the considerable particularisation of

[43] Michael Ayres, "Theories of Knowledge and Belief", *CHSP*, 2.1008. See Richard Popkin, *The History of Scepticism from Erasmus to Descartes* (New York: Humanities Press, 1964) and Charles B. Schmitt, "The Rediscovery of Ancient Scepticism in Modern Times", *The Sceptical Tradition*, ed. M. Burnyeat (Berkley: University of California Press, 1983).
[44] See Ayres, "Theories of Knowledge", p. 1008.
[45] Charles Larmore, "Scepticism", *CHSP*, 2.1145.
[46] Francis Bacon, *The Advancement of Learning*, ed. Michael Kiernan, *OFB* 15 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), 4.91.

error in print. Searching the *English Short Title Catalogue* and Oxford University Library Catalogue for the title keyword 'error' uncovered a significant number of such texts, whose titles are revealing of the cultural prominence of particularised error.

The variety of these texts prevents their unification into anything resembling a practicable discourse of error. The errors documented are navigational, medical, mathematical, legal, religious, chorographical, alchemical, lexical, botanical, astrological, astronomical, and agricultural, as well as errors of carpentry, equitation, conduct, and antiquity.[47] This suggests an artisanal debate on error, and that each discipline saw a duty and requirement to detect errors within its particular compass. The search underscores how the varied forms and contexts of error were communicated via specialised genres of error literature, including: medical error treatises, sermons, controversial literature, Parliamentary ordinances, heresiographies, conduct books, religious recantations, moral philosophical treatises, works of professional methodology, satire, works of learned authors refuting the errors published by their peers within a specific field of study.[48] François Rigolot's belief that errors "were never more often tracked down and evaluated" and had "never [….] ultimately enjoyed so many manifestations" as during the Renaissance is difficult to validate without data for other periods.[49] We might also wonder whether the profusion of texts is simply a consequence of the general increase in all print

---

[47] For examples, see numbered appendix of titles [1], [2], [3], [4], [5].
[48] For an example of heresiography see numbered appendix of titles [9]; retractions of blasphemies [10]; sermons [11].
[49] Rigolot, "Fascination," p. 1219. Rigolot, *L'erreur,* p.7.

materials. I will argue here, however, that increased print output and concern with error are in fact causally related.

As is well known, under Elizabeth I the English print industry grew steadily. A 30% growth in output occurred in the 1570s and again in the 1580s; by the 1590s the average yearly output of 1558 had doubled. In the 1590s the English publishing trade developed substantially not only in output but in the forms this output took.[50] The production of texts increased further in the seventeenth-century. Ann Blair, Brian Ogilvie, and Daniel Rosenburg have studied the acceleration in the production and consumption of (primarily scholarly and scientific) texts in this period.[51] Blair has noted a perceived "overabundance of books".[52] A phenomenal output of materials, scholarly and popular, was seen during the breakdown in censorship in the wake of the outbreak of civil war in 1642: "20,000 books, pamphlets, broadsides and newspapers: sermons and scriptural commentaries mixed with satires and fictions, political theory and manifestos".[53] Conservative authors of the English Revolution used the image of Babel, notorious for its confusion of voices, to describe the press.[54]

A concern about error was, in part, a corollary of this extremely active print culture. The emergence of print prompted concerns including alarm that it would both

---

[50] See Andrew Pettegree, *The Book in the Renaissance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), p. 259, pp. 339-340.

[51] On how the "production, circulation and dissemination of scientific and scholarly texts accelerated tremendously" c.1550-1750 see Daniel Rosenberg, "Early Modern Information Overload," *JHI* 64 (2003): pp. 1-9, p. 2. See also Ogilvie and Blair's contributions to this issue of *JHI.*

[52] Ann Blair, "Reading Strategies for Coping with Information Overload c.1550-1700," *JHI* 64 (2003): pp. 11-28, p. 15. See also *The Copious Text*, a special issue of *Renaissance Studies* (28.2 (2014).

[53] James Holston, "Introduction", *Pamphlet Wars: Prose in the English Revolution*, ed. James Holstun (London: Frank Cass, 1992), p. 1.

[54] Sharon Achinstein, "The Politics of Babel in the English Revolution", in *Pamphlet Wars*, pp. 14-44, p. 18.

multiply errors and spread them far afield.[55] Was this fear coming to fruition c.1600-1650? As we shall see, authors of this period conveyed the perception that error was rife and targeted textual examples of error in circulation. The increased discourse on error was a consequence of several complex factors; these include, by no means exclusively: the interaction of humanism's competitive culture of correction with the printed text; a climate of religious controversy; the culture of fact and concerns with methodology; and the increasing specialisation of print culture.

Humanist culture, which aimed to restore ancient texts that had been corrupted by transmission, instilled in its followers an ethos of correction in manuscript. Humanism's concern with the eradication of textual error, in classical and contemporary publications, persisted after the invention of printing. Within the competitive humanist culture there was considerable fear about the cost of errors upon one's reputation.[56] Critics have emphasised humanism's relationship with the errata list.[57] From early in the sixteenth-century, these lists were common means to remedy printed errors. They dealt with spelling errors, incorrect punctuation, and missing, superfluous, or confused letters. Equipped with these lists, readers could correct their copies of a text. Errors might also be identified within the print house by

[55] Blair, "Reading Strategies", p. 24. On reactions to the printing press see Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, *Divine Art, Infernal Machine* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), on printing's potential to multiply error p. 16, p. 113, p. 254n82.

[56] On humanism's fear of error see Ann Blair, "Errata Lists and the Reader as Corrector", *Agents of Change*: *Print Culture Studies after Elizabeth L. Eisenstein*, ed. Sabrina Alcorn Baron et al. (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press in association with the Centre for the Book, Library of Congress, 2007), pp. 21-41.

[57] In addition to Blair's "Errata" see Seth Lerer, "Errata: Mistakes and Masters in the Early Modern Book", *Academic*, pp. 15-54. For Lerer, errata lists were a "site of humanist erudition and early modern subjectivity" (17). The admission of error became a defining element in the construction of authorial and readerly self (28).

the learned and often invisible figure of the corrector.[58] These men protected readers from errors and saved face for authors who risked humiliation and the mockery of their peers if their mistakes appeared in print. The reader formed by humanist culture was wary of error.[59]

Errata lists engaged the reader in the policing of textual errors. Although authors and printers expected correction, they could not control it; as Lerer quips, there "is nothing like an errata sheet to prompt the reader to see yet more errors".[60] However, whilst the reader remained a reader, their corrective agency was limited; it was at best occasionally, Blair concludes, that the reader as corrector had an impact upon later editions.[61] For a reader trained to correct errors, whether out of habit, self-respect, or concern for their reputation, a logical progression given this inefficacy would be for the corrective reader to turn corrective author.

Since the sixteenth-century, animadversions, a mode of polemical confutation where one quotes and repudiates one's opponent, was a particularly popular genre with corrective authors.[62] 1640-1660 saw the proliferation of printed animadversions;[63] there emerged several distinct sub-genres and complex typographical registers to identify the voices within the text – generally the target author's voice and that of his

---

[58] On the corrector's tasks see Anthony Grafton, *The Culture of Correction in Renaissance Europe* (London: British Library, 2011), pp. 10-22.
[59] This reader "corrected errors out of habit", "self-respect", and "lest others think that they had not noticed the error". Blair, "Errata", p. 37.
[60] Lerer, *Academic*, p. 18.
[61] Blair, "Errata", p. 41.
[62] Joad Raymond, *Pamphlets and Pamphleteering in Early Modern Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 36.
[63] Marcus Nevitt, *Women and the Pamphlet Culture of Revolutionary England, 1640–1660* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), p. 38.

antagonist.[64] Rationalizing the genre's copiousness, Joad Raymond identified at least seven modes of animadversion.[65] Animadversions often articulate their opposition toward other texts in terms of error and in language evoking the interest of factual discourse in investigation, discovery, and the presentation of evidence to prove or disprove a matter of fact. For instance, in his *Sion-Colledg Visited. Or, Some Briefe Animadversions upon a Pamphlet Lately Published* (1648), John Goodwin "detected and laid open" the "blacke brand of infamous and pernicious errors" contained within the offending pamphlet.[66] Thomas Wise's *Animaduersions upon Lillies Grammar* (1625) is a text "[w]herein, many difficult knots in the English Rudiments, an[d] Lillies Grammar are unloosed" and "many errors and incogitancies discovered". Daniel Cawdrey's *Vindiciæ Clavium* (1645) presents animadversions upon John Cotton's *The Keyes of the Kingdome of Heaven* (1642); in his attempt to disprove Cotton's tract, he targets the "weaknesse of his proofes" and the "contradictions to himselfe, and others".[67] Corrective authors falling afoul of other corrective authors contributed to the proliferation of this genre and saw, to borrow the title of an anonymous 1642 tract, animadversions animadverted.[68]

The results suggest that the largest body of error-corrective authors were sectarian and controversialist writers who identified religious errors. Intense religious controversy instilled concerns about error which resulted in a desire to "manifest

---

[64] Raymond, *Pamphleteering*, p. 212.
[65] Ibid, pp. 211-212.
[66] For full title see numbered appendix of titles [27]. Browne credits his animadversions, *A Key to the Kings Cabinet* (London: 1645), with "detecting the malice and falshood of their blasphemous observations".
[67] For full title see numbered appendix of titles [28].
[68] For full title see numbered appendix of titles [30]. One dialogue between animadversions was Milton's *Animadversions upon the Remonstrants Defense against Smectymnuus* (London: 1641) which became the target of Joseph Hall's *A Modest Confutation* (London: 1642), to which Milton would in time reply.

religious orthodoxy" that "motivated readers to correct errors of doctrine or formulation encountered in reading".[69] The identification and correction of religious heterodoxy was an essential part of the medieval cultural history of error. In an age of accessible print and increased literacy the printed word became a focal point of the corrective endeavour for those desirous of defending religious tenets. Books were deemed to have the capacity to produce error, resulting in faction and apostasy.[70] The rise of exegetical and discursive freedom, fed by Reformed religion championing the individual's understanding of God's word and the precedence of the enlightened individual (central to the mid-seventeenth century radical fervour for the liberty of conscience), was perceived to create and spread error.[71] These freedoms increased the interpretation of scripture by laymen; *The Schismatick Stigmatized* (1641) records "Shooe-makers, Coblers, [and] Taylers" preaching.[72] "[P]rivate enterprise" in exegesis by the "unschooled" leading to "error", "heresies", and "obstinately held opinions", was, G.R. Evans notes in her discussion of authority in Reformation debate, an historical problem evident since the days of the early Church.[73] In the 1640s the combination of exegetical and discursive freedom with breakdown in censorship

---

[69] Blair, "Errata", p. 37.

[70] See James Joseph Kearney, *The Incarnate Text: Imagining the Book in Reformation England* (Philadelphia, Pa: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), p. 32. The "production of faction and apostasy" in *Dr Faustus* depends upon the "theatrical display of the book as an icon and cultural wariness about its capacity to generate error" see Anthony B. Dawson, "Props, pleasure, and idolatry", *The Culture of Playgoing in Shakespeare's England*, ed. Anthony B. Dawson and Paul Yachnin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 131-1, p. 147.

[71] A "very large proportion" of "practicall errours" had "suck't their poison" from "that specious venerable name of Conscience", Henry Hammond, *Of Conscience* (London: 1644), p.1. Thomas Edwards "shared" the "rising orthodox alarm about separatism and error, […] and liberty of conscience", Ann Hughes, *Gangraena and the Struggle for the English Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 164.

[72] Richard Carter, *The Schismatick Stigmatized* (London: 1641), p.7. John Taylor's rhymes aim to keep people in their stations, "A Preachers work is not to gelde a Sowe, / Unseemly 'tis a Iugde should milke a Cowe: / A Cobler to a Pulpit should not mount, / Nor can an Asse cast up a true account." *A Swarme of Sectaries and Schismatiqves* (London: 1641), p. 2.

[73] G.R Evans, *Problems of Authority in Reformation Debates* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 71.

made for a particularly strong reaction in terms of the production of discourse on error.

The results of the catalogue search suggest that religious controversy was a strong motivation, turning corrective readers into corrective authors in the mid seventeenth century – a time when collections of religious errors emphasised the here-and-now immediacy of error. The anonymous *Hell Broke Loose* (1646) calls itself "A catalogue of many of the spreading errors, heresies and blasphemies of these times". The nonconformist clergyman, William Lyford, composed "A discovery of the errors ... of these times" in *The Plain Mans Senses Exercised* (1655) as did Thomas Edwards in the three parts of *Gangraena* (1646). Richard Sherlock's *The Quakers Wilde Questions* (1655) describes the errors it recounts as "all very seasonable for the times" whilst Claudius Gilbert proffered *A Soveraign Antidote against Sinful Errors* (1658) which were "the epidemical plague of these latter dayes". Parliament confirmed perceptions of the prevalence of error with an ordinance of February 1647:

> That Wednesday being the tenth day of March next, be set apart for a day of publike humiliation for the growth and spreading of Errors, Heresies, and Blasphemies, to be observed in all places within the Kingdome [...][74]

Zachary Crofton's *Fraterna correptio* (1654) was preached on this very "day of humiliation for the error, heresies, & schisms of our times and nations"; Christopher Love's sermon *Englands Distemper* (1645) identifies "division and error" as the cause of the nation's malaise. These titles suggest that religious errors were deemed abundant and show us corrective authors zealously pursuing them. In addition,

[74] *Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum, 1642-1660*, ed. C.H. Firth et al (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1911), pp. 913-914.

publication data concerning reprints and extended editions, suggests that one catalyst for the production of error texts was their popularity.[75] The appearance of further error texts would only corroborate perceptions of error's prevalence.

Further indication that error was a notable concern for readers may be drawn in the results of keyword searching. Titles are a succinct expression of a text and, as the first interaction a reader may have with it, must recommend it to the reader. The wording reflects writers' and publishers' opinions about readers' interests. The search results reveal trends in the titular invocation of error which suggest that error was of especial interest to readers. Sensational adjectives are frequently used: errors are "manifold", "epidemical", "foule", "diuers", "abominations", "notorious and intricate", "dangerous", "intolerable" and "irreligious", "most palpable and grosse", "cursed", and "sundrie great errors".[76] As well as sensationalising and castigating, titles often tally the errors their texts identify; tallying reinforces the argument for particularisation. *Herberts Careful Father and Pious Child* (1648), an aid to learning the catechism by William Herbert, communicates "above 600 errors, heresies, and points of Poperie". George Fox's *For the Pope, Cardinals and Jesuites* (1661) is a "discovery of 74 errors which they walk in". Novelty as well as number was important; texts advertised the newness of the errors recounted, like Anthony Norwood's *New Errors Made Palpable by an Old Light* (1652) or the anonymous *A Retort: Or, New Errors Extracted, and Old*

[75] *Gangraena* was an "ephemeral best seller", Hughes, *Struggle*, p. 2. At the close of its second book Edwards boasted that the first was "in the Presse the third time within lesse then two months". Edwards, *Gangraena*, II, p.38. Other popular religious error texts that saw multiple editions: Ephraim Pagitt's *Heresiography* (London: 1645) (six editions in seventeen years); John Warres' *Touchstone of Truth: wherein* [...] *Error* [is] *Confuted* (London: 1621, 1624, 1630, 1634).

[76] For these sensational adjectives in the full titles of error texts see numbered appendix of titles: [14]; [15] and [16]; [17]; [18]; [19] and [20]; [21]; [22]; [23]; [24].

Ones Refined (1647); and the second and third parts of *Gangraena*.[77] This suggests a demand by the reading public for up-to-date accounts of the errors currently at large in society, and particularly religious error.

Texts concerning religious error were not alone in characterising error as a here-and-now problem. Errors were "alive and epidemicall" in society according to Browne; his wording portrays error, much like Edward's *Gangraena*, as a contagious infection.[78] Several of the specialised genres of error literature that emerged, or found new prominence, c.1600-1650, have roots in collections of religious error. The phrases "vulgar errors", "vulgar beliefs", "vulgar opinions" occur frequently in the search results; each nods towards the vulgar or popular error tradition. Natalie Zemon Davis has suggested a theological origin of the longstanding popular errors tradition in collections of religious errors and superstition.[79] In the early-to-mid seventeenth century, however, the tradition in English branched out, notably into medicine but also into natural history.

In the late-sixteenth and early-seventeenth centuries, learned medicine recorded its methodological consciousness of error in texts concerned with the identification and avoidance of medical errors. Ian Maclean credits the Italian physician Niccolò Leoniceno with setting "the trend of 'error' literature" with his 1490s attack on Pliny.[80] In *Methodi vitandorum errorum omnium qui arte medica contingunt* (1603),

[77] For full titles see numbered appendix of titles [41], [42].
[78] Thomas Browne, *Pseudodoxia Epidemica*, ed. Robin Robbins (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), 3.1, p. 163
[79] Natalie Zemon Davis, "Proverbial Wisdom and Popular Errors", *Society and Culture in Early Modern France* (London: Duckworth, 1975), pp. 227-267, p. 229, p. 258.
[80] Ian Maclean, *Logic, Signs and Nature in the Renaissance: The Case of Learned Medicine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 21. Maclean places Leoniceno's medical humanism at the vanguard whilst Davis believes Laurent Joubert pioneered a form of medical

Santorius Sanctorius, professor of the theory of medicine at Padua, wrote that "infinite errors can be made" in "curative medicine".[81] Laurent Joubert's *Erreur populaires au fait de la médicine et regime de santé* (1578), reprinted several times and issued in Latin translation at Antwerp in 1600, Scipione Mercurio's *De gli errori populari d'Italia* (1603), and James Primrose's *De vulgi in medicina erroribus* (1638) identify many medical errors. My search identified further examples of medical error literature. *Deliramenta Catarrh* (1650) and *Oriatrike, or, Physick Refined* (1662) are translations of works by the Flemish physician Jean Baptista Van Helmont that acknowledge the popular errors tradition in their full titles.[82] Further works concern the "manifold errors and abuses of ignorant vrine-mongring empirickes, cozening quacksaluers, women-physitians" and the "manifold errors used hitherto of the apothecaries".[83] Another medical error subgenre emerged in the early modern period which sought to reconcile authoritative medical texts and expunge error from the corpus of received knowledge.[84] Specialised works of 'popular' medical errors were largely circulated amongst physicians and educated surgeons.[85] One such reader was the Norwich physician Thomas Browne. He mentions Joubert, Mercurio, and Primrose by name and defines the scope of his largely natural historical taxonomy of

---

error writing with ultimately theological origins. Their disagreement results from their respective emphases (on learned medicine and the *Erreur populaires* tradition); each tells one part of the story of the emergence of early modern medical error literature.

[81] Quoted in *The Western Medical Tradition: 800 BC to AD 1800*, ed. Lawrence Conrad et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 259.

[82] *Deliramenta Catarrh*, or *Errors of Physicians Concerning Defluxions*, concerns "vulgar opinion of defluxions"; *Oriatrike* refutes "common errors".

[83] Pieter van Foreest, *Arraignment of Vrines* (London: 1623). See also Noah Biggs, *Matæotechnia Medicinæ Praxeōs, The Vanity of the Craft of Physick, or, A New Dispensatory: Wherein is Dissected the Errors, Ignorance, Impostures and Supinities of the Schools [...]* (London: 1651).

[84] This specialist error subgenre was inspired by Pietro d'Abano's *Conciliator* (Venice: 1476). See numbered appendix of titles [35], [36], [37] for sixteenth-century examples. On this "excision of accumulated, unauthorised error" see Gowland, *Worlds,* pp. 37-38.

[85] Davis, *Society*, pp. 258-267.

vulgar error in contrast to their works of "vulgar Errors in Physick" which, he believes, have "little conduced unto the generality of our doctrine", that is, the doctrine of error.[86] Medicine thus demonstrated its methodological consciousness of error, and an awareness of the textual accretion of error, in texts which aimed to provide authoritative descriptions of practice. I discuss medicine as a discourse of fact further in chapter 3.

This subsection's analysis of titles and print culture has shown that there was a proliferation of works aimed at the identification and eradication of error which, in turn, suggests an increased preoccupation with error. Moreover, these texts whether within their disciplinary specialism, or in more general terms, enumerate errors as specific instances, thus supporting the argument for the particularisation of error within the culture of fact.

The 'language of fact' in the titles of error texts

Although the texts revealed by my title keyword search differentiate error from generalised incidence of the concept, they do not always necessarily define error as I have, as a specific sense of a mistake in matter of fact. They do, nevertheless, use the language of fact to introduce and interrogate the errors which they present. I now further my discussion of print culture and the particularisation of error by tracing the incorporation of the language of fact (especially judicial vocabulary) into the titles of texts concerning error. I emulate Shapiro's practice of making effective use of the analysis of keywords and phrases of the language of fact in titles, as well as texts, to

[86] Browne, *Pseudodoxia*, "To the reader", p. 3.

demonstrate the overarching trend of the diffusion of conventions of fact into discourses including historiography, chorography, and news writing.[87] This documentary material sets the scene for the detailed analysis of texts in the chapters which follow and provides valuable context and foundation for my own readings. I follow here the temporal order most natural to the evaluation of legal matter of fact, that is, proceeding from initial detection, through enquiry, the laying out plainly and impartially of information pertaining to the fact, to indictment, and the presentation of proofs.

Several titles refer to the 'detection' or 'discovery' of error. Richard More's *The Carpenters Rule* (1602) contains "a detection of sundrie great errors" committed by carpenters; Michael Barrett's horse riding manual, *An Hipponomie* (1618), promises that "many errors of this art" shall be "manifestly detected". Elsewhere, Thomas Wright credits his *Certaine Articles or Forcible Reasons* (1600) with "Discovering" the "notorious and intricate errors of the Protestants religion" whereas Roland Willet's *Merry Jests, Concerning Popes, Monkes, and Friers* (1617) advocates humour as the means "Whereby is discouered their abuses and errors". Like other discourses of fact, specifically seventeenth-century newsbooks, these works emphasise discovery, the assiduous searching out of the truth (or in this case of purported error) for their reader's benefit.[88]

Once detected the matter of error must be investigated; titles commonly include terms of observation and investigation. Browne's *Pseudodoxia* styles itself as a series

---

[87] For instance see the allusion to the conventions of fact and the use of the language of fact in news writing. Shapiro, *Culture*, pp. 91-93.
[88] See Shapiro on newsbooks' use of this technique, *Culture*, p. 93.

of "enquiries" into presumed truths. G. Jonson offers "a short examin[e] of the manifold errors published by W. Lilly" in his *The Spurious Prognosticator Unmasked* (1660). To enquire and examine suggests investigation and observation. The law was not the exclusive idiom of observation. Noah Biggs and Stephen Proud-love borrow the language of dissection and anatomisation to articulate the detail of their investigations into presumed errors. Biggs' *Matæotechnia Medicinæ, The Vanity of the Craft of Physick* (1651) styles itself a work "wherein is dissected the errors, ignorance, impostures and supinities of the [medical] schools". Proud-love's attack on London's false prophets, *Truth's Triumph over Errour* (1653), first "discovered" these men and then "Themselves and [their] falshoods opened, anatomized, and dissected". Anatomy was an art of detection which searched for observable signs that might further medical knowledge. Errors are regularly referred to as being 'laid out' in a text. Jeremy Shakerley's mathematical treatise, *The Anatomy of Urania Practica* (1649), is a short discourse "laying open the errors and impertinencies" of Vincent Wing's and William Laybourne's *Urania Practica.* This phrase recurs in the titles of texts by the Puritan preacher George Gifford and again in the *Theomachia Autexousiastikē* (1643) of the nonconformist church leader John Owen, a work "Wherein the maine errors of the Arminians are laid open". This common phrase suggests dissection and discovery but also the candid revelation of the matter pertaining to the error.

In accordance with all discourses of fact privileging impartiality, these discoveries of and enquiries into presumed errors should be unprejudiced. Whether or not they indeed are, claims to impartiality are made. Thomas Ingmethorp's *A Sermon vpon the words of Saint Paul* (1619), which contested "the Popes soueraigntie ouer princes,

amongst other errors" did so by means of "cleare euidence and strong proofe auerred" which was "not blinded with partialitie and preiudicate opinion". Of course, impartiality may have been more enunciated than accomplished; for instance, the pro-royalist newsbook *Mercurius Pragmaticus* advertised itself as "impartially communicating publique affairs, and gently correcting domestick errors".[89] Claims to impartiality were particularly common in news books.[90]

Terms associated with legal discourse recur. Samuel Bolton's "curb" of the "wantonnesse of men's spirits in the entertainment of opinions", *The Arraignment of Errour* (1646) and Van Foreest's *Arraignment of Vrines* utilise the formal legal term of indictment, dating from the sixteenth-century, to present their accusations of error.[91] Many of the identified titles emphasise the provision of proofs. Heinrich Bullinger's *The Hope of the Faithfull* (1572) which concerns "confuting the cheefe errors" surrounding Christ's resurrection provides "evident probation" of eternal life and everlasting damnation. Bullinger uses 'probation' in the sense of "[t]he action of proving, or showing to be true; proof, demonstration; an instance of this, a proof, a demonstration".[92] Samuel Eaton's *A Vindication, or Further Confirmation of Some Other Scriptures* (1651), which includes a "discourse concerning" the "spreading of error", intends to "prove" Christ's divinity and provides "probation or demonstration" of the "damnableness" of those who deny it. Authors also claim to 'confute' the errors, as in Alexander Mingzeis' *A Confvtation of the New Presbyterian Error* (1648) and Benjamin Woodbridge's *Justification by Faith: Or, a Confutation of*

[89] *Mercurius pragmaticus,* ed. Thomas Lock (London: 16-25 May 1653).
[90] For instance, *The Kingdomes Faithfull and Impartiall Scout* (London: February 1648), *The Impartial Scout* (London: June 1650 onwards), *The Impartial Intelligencer* (London: June 1653 onwards).
[91] OED 'arraignment', n..
[92] OED 'probation', n., II. 4.a. This usage dates back to the 1450s.

that Antinomian Error, that Justification is Before Faith (1653). To confute may mean to confound or silence one's opposition, but sixteenth and seventeenth-century usage privileges the use of proof in this process;[93] this is the case in James Warre's full title for *The Touch-stone of Truth* (1630), wherein "veritie, by Scripture is plainely confirmed, and error confuted".

Several titles appeal to a principal method for corroborating matters of fact, testimony. Abiezer Coppe offers "a sincere and zealous testimony" in *Copp's Return to the Wayes of Truth* (1651), his "protestation against severall errors". John Biddle's *A Testimony of the Ministers in the Province of Essex* (1648) is a testament "against the errors, heresies, and blasphemies of these times"; the ministers of Wiltshire offer their "concurrent testimony" against the same target.[94] Testimony may be personal or textual; Nicholas Gibbons' "expositions" in his *Questions and Disputations Concerning the Holy Scripture* (1601) are "approued by the testimony of the Scriptures". The Bible is a commonly presented proof. The argument of Richard Farnworth's review of the truth and errors of Quaker principles is "proved by several Scripture examples", while T.C.'s *A Glasse for the Times* containing "a briefe collection of the errors of our times", provides "proofes of Scripture by way of confutation".[95] In the seventeenth-century, legal approaches to evidence were adopted in issues relating to faith; the facts of Scripture were dependent upon witness testimony and authors including Hugo Grotius, Seth Ward, and Edward Stillingfleet argued for

---

[93] See OED, 'confute', n., 1.a. and 2.
[94] *The Concurrent Testimony of the Ministers in the County of Wiltes … against the Errors, Heresies, and Blasphemies of these Times, and the Toleration of them* (London: 1648).
[95] Richard Farnworth, *The Spirituall Man Iudgeth all Things* (London: 1655)

validity of this scriptural testimony.[96] These titles invoke the fact of scriptural testimony to quash religious errors.

Alone, the above titles can demonstrate that this period's discourse on error is intimately linked with the development of the culture of fact. Furthermore, they suggest the generality, in Browne's sense of comprehensive interdisciplinary scope, and the particularity of the period's discourse on error (that is, its tendency to distinguish incidences of error, differentiating them from one another by attention to circumstances and causation). The titles suggest that the conventions and the language of fact provided authors with a persuasive register in which to articulate perceived errors. By themselves these titles struggle to prove that particularised error was decidedly early modern for the simple reason that the massive increase in printing during the period makes it difficult to discern a statistically significant increase in discourse on error. However, when considered together with the contexts of error we have discussed – the contexts of the rise of evidence and matter of fact, of the Fall, of melancholy, of the 'Reformation of error', of the Protestant ideology of Truth, of doubt, and of seventeenth-century print culture – then the evidence in favour of an increase in discourse on error in this period is compelling.

The cultural history of error through the lens of drama

The contexts informing early-to-mid seventeenth-century notions of error have been established and the incorporation of the language of fact into the titles of texts concerning error demonstrated. The following chapters study the cultural history of error through the lens of drama. Building upon the critically established narrative of

[96] See Shapiro's discussion of 'facts' and religion, *Culture*, pp. 168-188.

the permeation of evidential concerns surrounding matters of fact into drama, largely pioneered by Lorna Hutson, the chapters consider plays and non-dramatic texts which offer perspectives on error as a mistake in matter of fact. The plays themselves suggest that studying cultural history of error though the lens of drama is a viable approach in several ways. (a) They engage with the identified contexts of error. (b) Certain of the plays have absorbed the forensic procedures of the legal discourse of fact and stage how the mishandling of these procedures result in error. (c) Certain of the plays address error as "a member of the cognitive-affective distempers" (a form of error placed under considerable scrutiny in the period) and consider how it engenders error as a mistake in matter of fact.[97] And, (d), certain of the plays react to specific methodological subgenres of error writing with interesting and somewhat surprising results; these particular plays unite a cultural concern with error with drama's historical prerogative to exploit it in the creation and resolution of plots.

Chapter 1, concerning the context of the Protestant ideology of Truth, considers the consequences of this context for the ideological and allegorical representation of error in early seventeenth-century literature. The chapter transitions us from a potent figuration of generalised error, with sensitivity to its sixteenth-century construction, to the seventeenth-century context of the particularisation of error.

The following two chapters have a shared interest in affective distempers, symptoms of fallen humanity, which engender errors as mistakes in matters of fact. Chapter 2 concerns two important scholarly areas in which error is central, that of forensic rhetoric and the way it has been recently brought to bear on drama by Hutson, and

[97] Corneanu, *Regimens*, p. 5.

the *cultura animi* tradition of rectifying ill tendencies of the passions and mind, explored in Corneanu's recent critical work. It considers how these two informing contexts of early modern error literature which particularised error informed selected plays by Ben Jonson.

The final chapter concerns melancholy and errors in treating it. Medicine, another discourse of the emerging culture of fact, recorded its methodological consciousness of error. Yet this chapter identifies the use of deliberate error by stage physicians in the diagnostic and curative devices which reproduce or amend thought on melancholy and error found in Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621). The playwrights of this chapter reacted to the concern with medical error. They also reacted to a medical methodological shift which privileged observation and experience in the practice of medicine – two practices which were integral to the emerging culture of fact and to its natural philosophical execution. Whilst discourse on error identified the particularised incidence of error (specific by virtue of the attention given to the circumstances of the identified error), these playwrights suggest that error in highly particularised forms, crafted to rather than by circumstance, may have untapped utility. Whether this notion is dramatic whimsy or a valuable lesson for those pursuing the reparation of man's oldest error, the Fall, via the cultivation of fact, is considered in the afterword of this project.

Chapter 1

Allegorical Depictions of Error

"It is clear that error is only definable in terms of truth."
Jacques Lacan, "Truth emerges from the Mistake"[98]

Andrea Mantegna's drawing, "Virtus Combusta" (c.1490), is an allegory of the fall of ignorant humanity. The drawing exists in two parts: Mantegna's original top half (Fig. 1) and his lost foreground which survives in an engraving by Giovanni Antonio da Brescia (Fig. 2). At the centre of the upper portion is Error, a man with asses' ears; he leads a woman with gaping eye-sockets towards a precipice. Lust, Fraud, Ignorance, Ingratitude, and Envy, stark sandstone-hued figures against the black background, gather at her demise. A bonfire of laurel leaves supplies a little light and symbolises the destruction of virtue and merit. The woman is surrounded; to her left is Error, to her right Lust plays upon a pipe, whilst Fraud, behind her, prevents her flight. Her only path is forward and over the precipice.

Fig. 1 Mantegna, "Virtus Combusta". © Trustees of the British Museum.

[98] Lacan, "Mistake," p. 263.

The top half of Mantegna's picture depicts the downward trajectory of humanity. The bottom half provides a counterpart figure which, through its contrast with the figure of Error, further defines it. Da Brescia's engraving depicts Mercury helping a man from a pile of bodies into which the blind woman is about to fall. Mercury's winged sandals are made of laurel leaves, signifying that his flight is powered by virtuous knowledge. Man, Mantegna implies, may rise from this ebb of humanity by means of virtue and reason. Mercury is the counterpart figure to Error.

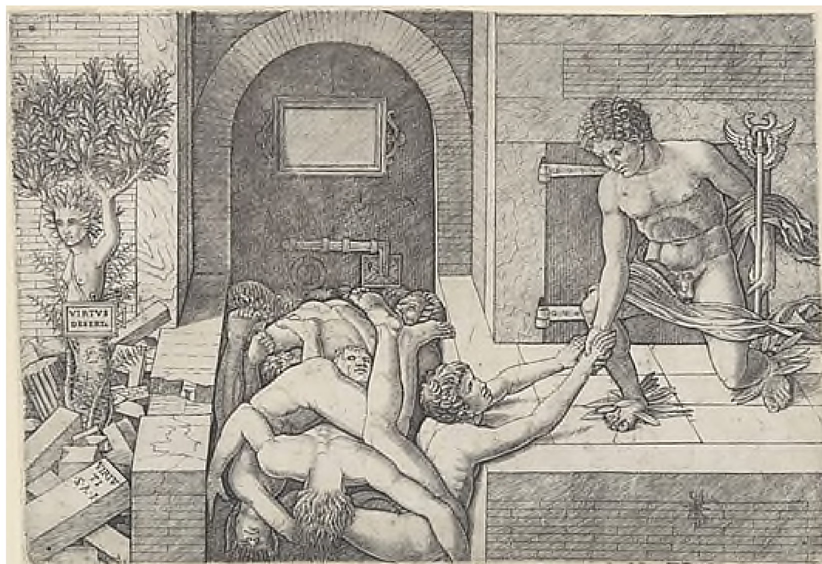

Fig. 2 Giovanni Antonio da Brescia, "Virtus Deserta". © Trustees of the British Museum.

Mantegna's allegory accentuates two essential features in the allegorical depiction of error, features which aid error's identification and definition. Firstly, the figure of error must impersonate one chosen guise of error, though this figure may be accompanied by associates. In the incomplete version of 'Virtus Combusta', the guise of error represented is, given the ears, the folly of being misled by false information or witness.[99] Error is flanked by personified impediments to virtue and knowledge. Secondly, and most significantly, the presence of a counterpart figure is necessary for

[99] Compare Error with the ass eared judge of Mantegna's "The Calumny of Appelles" who, flanked by Ignorance and Suspicion, reaches out to receive Slander.

the allegorical depiction of error, for, as Gordon Teskey notes in "Imagining Error in Spenser and Milton", often "we know something only by the negative process of eliminating the things it is not."[100]

By means of its two halves, Mantegna's drawing illustrates the necessary presence of a figure that answers the figure of Error, one which completes Error by virtue of having the qualities which Error lacks. The figure which error needs is one of truth; but as my epigraph from Lacan implied, the relationship between truth and error is asymmetrical. John Fletcher condensed this asymmetry in *The Perfect-Cursed-Blessed Man* (1628): there "Must needs be God [...] Maintaining Truth, and Errours all opposing" (47-52). Truth is one, errors multiple; although truth may be defined in terms of many things, error is defined by its deviation from truth.[101]

The Introduction set definitions of an error and of generalised error. An error was defined in terms of the evolving culture of fact; generalised error was deemed to have been shaped by a series of identified contexts which also informed the definition of an error. This chapter concerns one of those contexts, the ideology of Protestant Truth, and its consequences for the allegorical representation of error in early seventeenth-century literature.

In the preface to his study of Enlightenment error, David W. Bates notes that were one to rewrite the history of philosophy as the history of error, one would need to

[100] Gordon Teskey, "From Allegory to Dialectic: Imagining Error in Spenser and Milton," *PMLA* 101 (1986): pp. 9-23, p. 16.

[101] On the asymmetry of truth and error/falsehood, compare Godfrey Goodman: "Vna est recta linea, curuae infinitae: there is but one straight and direct passage, there are many infinite by-waies, and pathes: there is but one truth [...] but there are diverse and infinite falsehoods", *The Fall of Man, or, the Corruption of Nature* (London: 1616), p. 14.

"demonstrate how 'truth' is really parasitic on its supposed negation".[102] Truth, in Bates' assessment of the "temporalized epistemology" of truth in the Enlightenment, "relies on the specificity of error for its realization".[103] In other words, generalised truth required a counterpart of specified, particularised, error. To study error within any given period one must appreciate the "temporalized" interdependence of truth and error in that period. If, at a given time, there is culturally dominant concept of truth whilst the extant concepts of error are relatively insignificant, then the reliance of error upon truth for definition would be greater than truth's dependence upon error. In early modern England, truth became a figurehead of reformed religion; this construct was a powerful personification of truth in Protestant guise used for polemical purpose. The ideology and iconography of Protestant Truth was well-defined, frequently reproduced in word and image; it was visually recognisable and relied upon memorable commonplaces and Biblical mottos (*Veritas de terra orta est*, *Veritas temporis filia*).

The present chapter will establish the dominance of Protestant Truth before charting its demise in the seventeenth-century. I argue that from this demise ensued the decline of representations of Protestant Truth, counterpart representations of error, and alterations to the means for representing and purging error evinced by literary texts. Moreover, I suggest that the demise of the ideological and representational presence of Protestant Truth was a result of factors including political circumstances; hermeneutic and ontological shifts; epistemological developments (namely the permeating consciousness of the discourses, and the language, of fact); and an

[102] Bates, *Enlightenment*, p. viii.
[103] Ibid.

appreciation of the elusive and fragmented nature of truth. This chapter traces a modification in the representation of error, from personified figures of largely sixteenth-century construction to the particularisation of error within an early-mid seventeenth-century context. This is not an uncomplicated evolution. Taking the rise and evolution of Protestant Truth as a start-point and Thomas Edward’s *Gangraena* (1646) as an endpoint I analyse various and complex representations of truth and error. These representations, forged within a shifting and religio-politically turbulent context, are often confused between allegorical personifications and particular instances of error as a mistake in matter of fact. Nonetheless, we can see a general trajectory from allegory to particularisation.

Protestant Truth

This subsection establishes Protestant Truth as a dominant, much reproduced definition of truth within the period. This does not mean that truth was exclusively Protestant; she was a potent signifier of religio-political legitimacy, invoked by Protestants and Catholics alike, within a period of religious dispute and oppression. Early in the Reformation, Protestantism claimed Truth as a figurehead. In 1521, John Knoblouch of Strasburg, publisher of works by Luther, Melanchthon, and Erasmus, chose as his

Fig. 3 Printer's mark of Knoblouch.
© Trustees of the British Museum.

printer's mark an illustration of Psalm 85 verse 12: *Veritas de terra orta est* (Fig. 3). Truth is presented at the mouth of a cave pleading for aid. Variations on this posture of Truth reappeared throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth-centuries and prominent Protestant and Catholic political figures in England aligned themselves with this portrait.

Fig. 4 Woodcut from Marshall's *Goodly Primer*. Reproduced with permission from the Master and Fellows of Emmanuel College, Cambridge. Image published with the permission of ProQuest. Further reproduction is prohibited without permission.

Protestant Truth appeared in poetry, drama, coin design, and woodcuts; she was also present, more overtly, in news reports, as we see in chapter 2.[104] Woodcuts of Truth appeared in emblem books.[105] Early English emblem books amended Catholic examples to fit the Protestant programme; the reformation of Truth is an excellent case in point of how Catholic iconography was reformed to create the Protestant, cultural artefact of Truth. One example of a wholesale reworking of Catholic iconography appears in William Marshall's *Goodly*

[104] On the early modern usage of *veritas filia temporis* see Fritz Saxl, "Veritas filia Temporis," *Philosophy and History*, ed. R. Klibansky et al (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1936), pp. 197-222.
[105] On the popularity of emblem books in Protestant, northern Europe see Huston Diehl, "Graven Images: Protestant Emblem Books in England", *Renaissance Quarterly* 39.1 (1986): pp. 49-66, p. 50.

Prymer in Englyshe (1535) (Fig. 4). Marshall's woodcut warrants discussion for its insistent Protestantism (resulting from its reworking of the Harrowing of Hell) and for its confusion of allegorical personification with an individual instance of perceived theological error.

Marshall depicts Truth emerging from a cave; winged Time reveals her, whilst bat-winged Hypocrisy hovers, vomiting. The parallels with depictions of the harrowing are apparent (Fig. 5).[106] Hypocrisy imitates the bat-winged horn-blowing demons of Mantegna's and Dürer's depictions of Christ's descent.[107] Like Christ, Time releases individuals from subterranean imprisonment; he reveals Truth, formerly suppressed by Hypocrisy, to the world. In Mantegna's and Dürer's

The image of Andrea Mantegna's "Descent into Limbo" originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

The image was sourced at: http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O158509/descent-into-limbo-print-mantegna-andrea/

Fig. 5 Mantegna, Descent into Limbo c.1475.

[106] On reminiscences of the Harrowing of Hell see Clifford Davidson, "The Iconography of Illusion and Truth in *The Winter's Tale*", *Shakespeare and the Arts*, ed. Cecil Williamson Cary (Washington: UP of America, 1982), pp. 73-91, p. 76. Also Tibor Fabiny, "'Veritas Filia Temporis' The Iconography of Time and Truth and Shakespeare," *Shakespeare and the Emblem: Studies in Renaissance Iconography and Iconology*, ed. Tibor Fabiny (Szeged, Dept. of English, Attila József University, 1984): pp. 215-271, 220 and Saxl, "Veritas", p. 206.

[107] For discussion of these works and their use of figures etched against a black space, see Brian Cummings, *Mortal Thoughts: Religion, Secularity, and Identity in Shakespeare and Early Modern Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 34-41.

depictions, Christ is framed by a black doorway; his back to the viewer, he approaches Hell's threshold. Marshall presents Truth, facing forward, exiting a similar portal. Christ enters a realm of death whilst Truth is recalled to life. Marshall's image depicts, as Tibor Fabiny perceived, Protestantism delivering "Christian truth from the captivity of Roman hypocrisy".[108] One such Roman 'pretence', from which Truth must be freed, was the doctrinal error of limbo's existence and Christ's descent into hell.[109] Thus Marshall's reworking of the harrowing leads to a figuration of Truth that is confused between allegorical personification and an allusion to an individual instance of what Protestantism held to be an error.[110]

Truth's alignment to the Protestant agenda was not unchallenged; truth became a site of ideological conflict as England swung from Catholicism, under Mary Tudor, back to Protestantism under Elizabeth I.[111] Elizabeth associated herself with Truth, a legitimising attribute of the elect ruler, to suggest that her reign was England's timely reward after Mary's rule; this association is evident in art and literature, including the

---

108 Fabiny, "Veritas", p. 220.

109 Whilst Catholics held that Christ descended, reformed theology largely maintained that "there had been no local or spatial descent". Peter Marshall, "The Reformation of Hell? Protestant and Catholic Infernalisms in England, c. 1560–1640," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 61.2 (2010): pp. 279-98, p. 297. On the Decensus Controversy see also David Bagchi "Christ's Descent into Hell in Reformation Controversy," *Studies in Church History* 45 (2009): pp. 228-47.

110 Other examples which confuse allegorical personification and particular instances of what Protestantism held to be an error: *A Game at Chess* (London: 1624), where Ignatius Loyola addresses Error as "Father of Supererogation"; Phineas Fletcher's *The Locusts, or Apollyonists* (Cambridge: 1627) which presents Error hawking indulgences. Thomas Middleton, *A Game at Chess*, ed. T.H. Howard-Hill (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993), Induction, 36; Phineas Fletcher, *The Poems of Phineas Fletcher*, ed. Alexander B. Grosart, 4 vols. (Blackburn: C. Tiplady, 1869), vol. 2. *Locusts*, III.30. 2-6.

111 On Mary's use of *Veritas filia temporis* see Saxl, "Veritas", p.207. Truth (iconographically identical to Knoblouch's and Marshall's Truth) appeared in Nicholas Udall's *Respublica* (1553) which was performed at Mary's Christmas revels.

pageant for her coronation entry to the city.[112] At that time, Elizabethan Protestantism was nascent.[113] The 1559 Settlement saw the official religious position at the time of Edward VI's death largely reinstated;[114] and further consolidation of Protestantism followed.[115] This saw Truth claimed more vigorously by English Protestants, both conservatives and those who felt that Elizabeth did not go far enough.

My next example, from Geoffrey Whitney's *A Choice of Emblems* (1586), speaks of an optimistic English construction of Truth. Whitney lifted his emblem from the *Emblemata* (1565) of Hadrianus Junius; these emblematists' attitudes to Truth are at odds.[116] Whilst Junius' verses speak pessimistically of Truth overwhelmed, Whitney's expect victory; "Dispaire not then", he counsels, "thoughe truthe be hidden ofte, / Bycause at length, shee shall bee sett alofte."[117] Truth's occlusion is explained in Peter Pett's allegorical poem, *Time's Journey to Seeke His Daughter Truth* (1599); Truth, who lived in England under Henry VIII and Edward, left during Mary's reign only to return when Elizabeth ascended the throne. The integration of the ideology of Truth

---

112 See Anon, *The Royall Passage of her Majesty from the Tower of London, to her Palace of Whitehall, with all the all Speeches and Devices, both of the Pageants and Otherwise* (London: 1604).

113 See Susan Frye, *Elizabeth I* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp.45-46. Frye argues, however, that the text of Elizabeth's entrance to the city was "neither Catholic nor right-wing Protestant", p. 45.

114 See Diarmaid MacCulloch, *The Later Reformation in England, 1547-1603* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1990), p. 30.

115 This resulted from a great many factors including: a leadership committed to Protestant reform; reform of the ministry; removal of Catholic activists from the clergy; traditional religious practices dying out with the older generation. See Susan Doran, *Elizabeth I and Religion* (London: Routledge, 1994) and MacCulloch. For a discussion of "Protestantizing the People" see Peter Marshall, *Reformation England, 1480-1642* (London: Arnold, 2003), pp. 145-154.

116 See Donald Gordon, '"Veritas Filia Temporis": Hadrianus Junius and Geoffrey Whitney," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 3 (1940): pp. 228-240.

117 Geoffrey Whitney, *A Choice of Emblems* (Leyden: 1586), p. 4.

with Elizabethan discourses of national identity saw Truth's Englishness become apparent. Truth became a native of reformed England. Una, Spenser's representation of truth, finds succour at the court of the Faerie Queene; in the anonymous *The Masque of Truth* (1614), Truth resides in Jacobean England. At the height of Elizabethan Protestantism, the consequences of this dominant Protestant cultural entity for representations of error were straightforward. Error must be foreign, Catholic, Satanic, a persecutor of the 'true' Protestant Church, and an embodiment of vice and sin.

Spenser, I will argue, supplied the touchstone early modern English figuration of error for subsequent literary representations. It is to this archetype of error in poetry, moulded in light of the ideology of Protestant Truth, that we must first turn so we may then appreciate how the seventeenth-century ideological and allegorical representation of error differs from it. My assessment of divergence will be accompanied by the identification of factors which destabilised this potent figuration of generalised error.

Protestant Truth and the ideological and allegorical representation of error: Spenser's Errour and its progeny 1600-1642

In this subsection I show Protestantism sculpting a potent figuration of generalised error. As Protestant Truth represented the 'true' religion and by extension the 'true' church, error, consequently, became a polemical figure of the "Romish Church", the church which Milton would later call the "Mother of Error" in his *Of True Religion*.[118] I reflect upon Spenser's Errour, to borrow Milton's phrase, as the "Mother of Error"; I

[118] John Milton, *CPW*, ed. D.M. Wolfe et al, 8 vols. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953–1982), 8:419-21.

examine this archetype of generalised error in poetry so as to demonstrate a further example of the association of error and Catholicism and to introduce the literary progeny Errour spawned.

Errour's femininity, motherhood, and fecundity dominate Spenser's description. The following quotation establishes Errour's key attributes.

> Halfe like a serpent horribly displaide,
> But the other halfe did woman shape retaine
> [...]
>
> Her huge long taile her den all overspred,
> Yet was in knots and many boughtes upwound,
> Pointed with mortall sting. Of her there bred
> A thousand yong ones, which she dayly fed,
> Sucking upon her poisonous dugs, [...]
> Soone as that uncouth light upon them shone,
> Into her mouth they crept, and suddain all were gone.
> (I.14.7-8; I.15.2-9)

Biform Errour may resemble depictions of the serpent in Eden, yet Spenser's accentuation of Errour's monstrous progeny distinguishes her from this biblical analogue.[119] The Wandering Wood recalls not Eden, but Lydgate's forest-labyrinth in *Pilgrimage of the Life of Man* (1426) where Heresy, frequently defined as an error born of the intellect, is encountered.[120] Critics have aligned Errour with mythological serpent-women who were Renaissance symbols of circuitous rhetoric: the Echidna, of

---

119 See Joan Larsen Klein', "From Errour to Acrasia," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 41.3 (1978): pp. 173-199, p. 175 for a discussion of Errour and the biform Edenic serpent.

120 John M. Steadman, "Spenser's Errour and the Renaissance Allegorical Tradition," *Neuphilologische Mitteilung* 62 (1961): pp. 22-38, p. 33. Steadman quotes Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia* (Padova: 1618) describing heresy as "errore dell'Intelletto", p.243. *Iconologia* was a Catholic source widely used by English allegorists, poets, and playwrights. Curtis Perry, *The Making of Jacobean Culture: James I and the Renegotiation of Elizabethan Literary Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 116.

Hesiod's *Theogony*, and Chimera.[121] Errour's "knots and many boughtes upwound" may signify intellectual error. The alignment of Errour with Echidna, mother of the Sphinx, Chimera, Cerberus, and the Lernean Hydra, is also apt since Errour "spawns a monstrous progeny with baneful propensities".[122] The theme of monstrous progeny is repeated in early modern viper-lore, to which critics established Spenser's debt.[123] Errour's "mortall sting", the way she shelters her young within herself, and the matricidal violence of her offspring, reflect superstitions about female vipers. Post-Reformation religious thought identified vipers with the persecutors of the church.[124] Spenser thus unites classical, 'zoological', and reformation invective traditions concerning vipers and female serpents to designate Errour as religious error and mother of heresy.

It is well-known that, through Errour, Spenser targeted the Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation which was satirised by Protestant polemic under Edward VI.[125] John King recognises in Errour the false feeding and deviant motherhood that polemicists attributed to the Roman Church and Mass.[126] Using language of ingestion

---

121 See Steadman, "Allegorical", p. 24-5 and J.D. Pheifer, "Errour and Echidna in *The Faerie Queen*: A Study in Literary Tradition", *Literature and Learning in Medieval and Renaissance England*, ed. V.J. Scattergood (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1984), pp. 127-74.
122 Pheifer, "Echidna", p. 129.
123 See Pheifer's "Echidna", Klein's "Acrasia", and John M. Steadman, "Sin, Echidna and the Viper's brood," *Modern Language Review* 56.1 (1961): pp. 62-66.
124 On the origins of this identification see Pheifer, "Echidna", p. 147. On the attribution of viperish tendencies in reformation invective see Antoinina Bevan Zlatar, *Reformation Fictions: Polemical Protestant Dialogues in Elizabethan England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 158-9.
125 For example, Luke Shepherd, *Pathose, or an Inward Passion of the Pope for the Losse of hys Daughter the Masse* (London: 1548?).
126 See John N. King, "Milton's Cave of Errour: A Rewriting of Spenserian Satire," *Worldmaking Spenser*, ed. Patrick Cheney (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2000), pp. 148-155. Motherly false feeding is, for example, a theme of William Punt's *A New Dialoge Called the Endightment agaynste Mother Messe* (London: 1548) in which Messe debates theology with Veritie.

and egurgitation, Spenser characterises Errour as a feeder of unpalatable fare. “[D]ayly”, as frequently as Mass is taken, Errour feeds her young “poisonous” sustenance. Errour’s relationship with her brood is conceived of orally: they enter and exit her mouth and they have a “thurst” (I.26.4) which they quench (“Sucking” (I.15.6), “sucked” (I.265.8), “drunke” (I.26.7)).

This oral fixation is repeated by those “thousand yong” who flow out of Errour’s mouth; these “loathy frogs and toades” are mixed in a “vomit full of books and papers” (I.i.20.6-7).[127] Her spawn signify persecutors of the Church; but given Spenser’s use of the Geneva Bible gloss of the frogs that emerge from the Dragon’s mouth in Revelation 16:13, they are, specifically, ambassadors of Rome.[128] This “spawne of serpents small” are dyed “blacke as [the] inke” of the printed materials of Catholic ideological dissemination (I.i.22.6-7). I noted in the Introduction print culture’s role in the particularisation of error. Spenser characterises Errour in relation to print culture, specifically partisan print, intimating that it contributed to the general difficultly in differentiating ‘truth’ from the propensity for error in theological debates which Errour represents. Errour’s fecundity it not just reproductive and allusive: she is dangerously ideologically self-propagating.

This elaboration of Errour’s key attributes confirms the well-recognised association of Errour, and error, with Catholicism. Spenser formed a creature in intense ideological and iconographical competition with Protestant Truth and endowed her with deviant and prolific motherhood, as a faculty of her serpent-woman form, so as

[127] C.f. Revelations 12:15.

[128] See Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, ed. A.C. Hamilton (London: Longman, 1977), p. 35.

to enumerate errors of the Church of Rome (transubstantiation and the persecution of the Protestant Church). To achieve this, Spenser conjures an amalgam of misogynistic, classical, 'zoological', and theological allusions and serpentine analogues. Errour's resemblance to Echnida and Chimera suggests that she also signifies the propensity for error in learned, rhetorical and theological debate; allusions to unwholesome feeding and Errour's spawn as emissaries of Rome identify Errour as a specifically Catholic propensity for theological error in such debate.

Errour spawns multiple dragons, including Duessa's seven-headed serpent and the dragon of Canto xi, which draw more heavily upon apocalyptic imagery.[129] These 'dragonlets' emulate and enlarge upon Errour, rather than reiterate her; thus the "mother dragons", as Marshall Grossman perceptively notes, "are corporate representations that function as the source and sustenance of error and sin in the multiple substantive forms in which they are encountered in the sensible realm".[130] As a "corporate" representation, Errour became a "source and sustenance" for several inter-textual progeny. In a nice irony, Errour spawns these progeny in an extra-textual expression of the fecundity Spenser attributed to her. I now trace these literary progeny and their adherence to, or divergence from, Errour's key attributes.

---

[129] "Duessa-Fidessa is the Whore of Babylon as the papal Antichrist riding the seven-headed beast of Rome and the sins (Rev 17)", A.C. Hamilton, *The Spenser Encyclopedia* (London: Routledge, 1990), p. 687.

[130] Marshall Grossman, "Reading, Death and the Ethics of Enjoyment in Spenser and Milton," *Imagining Death in Spenser and Milton*, ed. Elizabeth Jane Bellamy et al (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), pp. 116-130, p. 121.

Fletcher

Attributes of Spenser's Errour persisted in seventeenth-century representations of error and sin. This subsection begins by considering the continuity, and qualification, of Errour's attributes in Phineas Fletcher's *The Purple Island* (written c.1608 but modified until c.1621) before concluding by assessing his figure of Truth. Error and Duessa imprinted themselves upon Fletcher's "Protestant consciousness", for there are two ectypes of Errour in this poem.[131] The first is accompanied by vices, including Ignorance, Superstition, Idololatros, Pharmacus, Haereticus, and Hypocrisie, all of which had an "explicit applicability" to Roman Catholicism conceived from an English Protestant ideological posture.[132] These vices are pictured entwined in a pyramid of serpents and papal regalia in *The Popes Pyramides* (1624) (Fig. 6); in Fletcher's poem, they fill the ranks of the Dragon's army in canto 7.

Fig. 6 *Popes Pyramides* (detail). Reproduced with permission from the Society of Antiquaries of London. Image published with the permission of ProQuest. Further reproduction is prohibited without permission.

Idololatros, Pharmacus, Haereticus, and Hypocrisie are escorted by their nurse,

[131] Joan Grundy, *The Spenserian Poets* (London: Edward Arnold, 1969), p. 187.
[132] Peter Mitchell, *The Purple Island and Anatomy in Early Seventeenth-Century Literature, Philosophy, and Theology* (Madison, N.J.: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2007), p. 622n.268. On this group of vices as a "paradigm of anti-Catholic iconographical discourse" see Alison Shell, *Catholicism, Controversy and the English Literary Imagination, 1558-1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 35.

Ignorance. Mantegna's "Virtus Combusta" depicted Ignorance seated upon a globe and holding a rudder, signifying that ignorance steers the world; she was attended by Envy and blindfolded Avarice. Fletcher's Ignorance is blind; she, with "erring footsteps reel'd", despite the support of her daughters, Errour and "Owl-ey'd *Superstition*", who are "dull and beetle-ey'd" (*P.I.* 7.41.1; 7.43.1; 7.41.4).[133] Whilst Fletcher replicates the notion of Ignorance served by short-sighted vices, he indicates, like Richard Bernard in *The Isle of Man* (1627), a matrilineal relationship between Error and Ignorance.[134]

Fletcher's Errour, recalling the prolific motherhood of the Spenserian archetype, "multiplies / Her num'rous race in endlesse progenies" (7.41.5). Errour is "often got with childe" (7.42.4, 5); no father is specified, suggesting that other quality attributed to anti-Catholic female figurations, "whoordome".[135] Once spawned, Errour's self-replicatory offspring are as sexually prolific as their dam, they "flie about & spread their seed" (*P.I.* 7.42.5). From these germinate "hate, pride, schisme, warres & seditions" (7.42.6). Errour comes "Before" (7.42.1) Idololatros, Pharmacus, and Hypocrisie, and Haereticus; causation, that Error begot these vices, is suggested. One of Error's 'sons', the heretic, one who stubbornly adheres to false beliefs despite correction, bears the motto "*Rather thus erre, then be amended*" (7.34.6, 7). Fletcher not only upholds the common association of religious error and heresy with

---

133 *Novembris Monstrum, or, Rome Brovght to Bed in England* (London: 1641) depicts Errour and Superstition as Ignorance's "maides" (222.4); all three are "drest" in "whores attyre like puppet Rome" (222.3). Superstition was a criticism frequently levelled at Catholicism.
134 Error is "the sonne of Ignorance", Richard Bernard, *The Isle of Man* (London: 1627), p. 29.
135 Punt, *Dialoge*, C3r. Error and Duessa "reappear several times, in association with the "whore of Rome", in *The Apollyonists*", Grundy, *Poets*, p. 187.

Catholicism, but he maternalises it, thus perpetuating the Spenserian theme of error's undesirable offspring.[136]

The second ectype manifests itself during the battle of virtues and vices when the Dragon of the apocalypse, in a Spenserian parallel, vomits up Hamartia, or Sinne (*P.I.* 12.27.margin*). Perverse reproductive practices – bastardy, incest, rape, and cannibalistic nativity – were commonly used to describe error's genesis and ideological dissemination. Thomas Dekker characterises "*Error* and *Schisme*" as the "Two Bastards" of Religion; these illegitimate offspring sire further unwholesome progeny, since from them "did rise, / Opinions, Factions, black leav'd Heresies".[137] Hamartia is the bastard offspring of Eve and the Dragon (Satan); she variously signifies original sin, which made man mortal, the sins of the flesh, and the "body of sin" of Romans 6:6.[138] *Iter Boreale*, from Richard Corbett's *Certain Elegant Poems* (1647), also conceives of a fecund maternal figuration of error in terms of the origins of mortality: "Of mortall men, foule error is a mother, / And pregnant once doth soone beget another." (291-292)

Hamartia's form is deeply reminiscent of Errour: a "woman seem'd she in her upper part" whilst below the waist her "knotty tail" was "pointed with a double sting" (*P.I.* 12.27.5; 12.28.3, 5). However, Fletcher's allegorical figuration of anatomy differentiates Hamartia. The anatomical cantos describe the human body according to

[136] On the frequency of this association see Howard-Hill, *Chess*, p. 68.
[137] Thomas Dekker, *Dekker, his Dream* (London: 1620), B2.
[138] Mitchell discusses what Hamartia signifies: pp. 458-59.

Vesalian designs;[139] they metaphorically figure man as microcosm in the form of an island realm.[140] The allegorised description of the Protestant body is afforded "a guise of medical and empirical impartiality" by the anatomical discourse of Fletcher's marginalia.[141] Despite her textual proximity to the adopted factual discourse of anatomy, Hamartia is not a factual construct; she remains an allegorical creature of polemic. Fletcher's use of anatomy confers objectivist credence upon his explanation of the Protestant body (almost as if he had observed its dissection) but not upon Hamartia. She does not have a localised anatomical position within the Protestant body for she is not part of it; she remains a generalised representation external to the Protestant body. Yet the discourse of anatomy does differentiate Hamartia by imbuing the threat she poses with somatic immediacy. Having dissected man, Fletcher concludes that "[t]he way to God is by our selves".[142] But so too is the way to sin; the autological study Fletcher counsels reveals the body to be the epicentre of spiritual war in which Hamartia is a grave enemy. Hamartia lacks a localised anatomical position within the Protestant body but her Spenserian serpent imagery is given anatomical resonance. As Peter Mitchel notes, Hamartia's "viperous locks" (12.30.1) and "adder chains" falling in "thousand knots, and wreath infolded round" (12.30.4-5) resemble the structure of the intestines.[143] Hamartia thus represents the

---

[139] See Thomas Healy, "Sound Physic: Phineas Fletcher's The Purple Island and the Poetry of Purgation," *Renaissance Studies* 5 (1991): pp. 341-52, p. 341.
[140] On Fletcher describing man in microcosmic terms see R.G. Baldwin, "Phineas Fletcher: His Modern Readers and His Renaissance Ideas," *Philological Quarterly* 40:4 (1961): pp. 462-475, p.471. Error appears in Bernard's contemporaneous microcosmic take on man, *The Isle of Man* where he faces "iudiciall triall, according to the lawes of England" p. 29.
[141] Healy, "Physic", p. 345.
[142] 'To the Reader', *The Purple Island* (Cambridge: 1633).
[143] Mitchel, *Anatomy*, p. 458.

threat of corruption within the allegorical conflict between the virtuous and vicious body.[144]

To protect the Protestant Isle of Man, Fletcher desired an assertive policy of Protestant nationalism, a glorious isolation akin to quarantine, and a more forceful foreign policy with regards to continental Catholicism. This policy is embodied by the Prince who wins the poem's apocalyptic battle. Yet the disparity between this deific and militantly Protestant incarnation of James I and the reality of James' reign was stark in the poem's Caroline publication context.[145] Hamartia and her brethren had not been medico-spiritually expelled from England as Fletcher's pseudoscientific allegory had envisioned.[146] Fletcher's poem evokes a period when a 'golden age' of English Protestantism, and the reinvigoration of the cultural dominance of Truth, seemed conceivable. Such nostalgia, fuelled by disappointment at James' eirenic foreign policy, emerged prior to the poem's publication. It clustered around the short-lived Henry, Prince of Wales, an "obdurate Protestant" whose pleasure in military display recalled the cult of Elizabethan chivalry; Henry became a figurehead for advocates of militant Protestant policy and was a surely a better fit for the role of Fletcher's champion of Truth.[147]

To create Hamartia in *The Purple Island's* rekindling of militant Protestantism, Fletcher utilised the pre-existing polemical iconography and ideology of error and upheld the oppositional definition of error and Protestant Truth. This is most evident

---

[144] Hamartia's corrupting threat to the Protestant body is quite apparent; for an elaboration on Hamartia's "appetitive" role in the "struggle between […] Man as virtuous *sōma* (body)" and "fallen man as vicious *sarx* (flesh)" see Mitchell, *Anatomy*, pp. 460-461.

[145] The ideas directing Fletcher's poetry are associated with Spenser's era, see Baldwin, "Fletcher", p. 469.

[146] On Fletcher's "distinctly militant Protestant purgation" see Healy, "Physic", p. 351.

[147] Charles Carlton, *Charles I: The Personal Monarch* (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 10.

when Truth and error appear together within allegorical literature. The grotesque body of Hamartia juxtaposes Eclecta's beauty. In appearance and plot function, Eclecta approximates Una; she is a woman in a chivalric context possessing heavenly beauty (12.70.1) which evinces her purity; her "ivorie" (12.79.2) complexion recalls Una's extreme whiteness (*F.Q.* i.4.2-3). Yet these allegorical women differ; Una is a monolithic concept of truth, whereas Eclecta is less singular. Eclecta is understood as the elect.[148] However, it has gone unnoticed that her name, in its relation to 'eclectic' and 'eclecticism', can also denote choice and plurality.[149] This implication, whether intended by Fletcher or not, complicates the model of singular truth, contrasted with multiple error, that was discussed above. Did Fletcher, whose works, such as *The Apollyonists*, "haunted" Milton's career, anticipate the fracturing of truth in Milton's prose which I address next?[150]

Milton

Paradise Lost (1667) contains an important rewriting of Spenser's Errour. I do not explore the full valences of error's significance in *Paradise Lost*, since others have done so and the poem falls outside of my chronological period of interest.[151] Rather, I briefly address how Milton's rewriting continues the Spenserian tradition and the ways, and reasons for, Milton's departure from it. These deviations, in part, result

---

[148] See, for instance, Mitchell, *Anatomy*, p. 183.
[149] From the Greek *ἐκλεκτικός* selective, *ἐκλέγειν* to select. See *OED* s.v. eclectic, adj. and n.
[150] David Quint, *Epic and Empire: Politics and Generic Form from Virgil to Milton* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), p. 269.
[151] On Milton playing with the word pre- and post-Fall, see Arnold Stein, *Answerable Style: Essays on Paradise Lost* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1953), pp. 66-67 and Christopher Ricks, *Milton's Grand Style* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), pp.110. On error's significance in relation to allegory and dialectic see Teskey "Imagining". On error and moral and spiritual wandering in the poem's topography see Isobel Gamble MacCaffrey, *Paradise Lost As "Myth*" (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1967), p. 90. Also on wandering see Stanley Fish, *Surprised by Sin: The Reader in Paradise Lost* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), pp. 130-141.

from the decline of Protestant Truth and the fractured status of Truth/truth which Milton appreciated; the rest of this subsection, therefore, focuses on Milton's earlier mythological conceptualisation of fractured or absent Truth/truth and gigantean error.

Milton's "Error-Sin" reproduces Errour's iconographical and polemical traits.[152] The classical serpentine analogues reappear.[153] Sin is another biform creature with a sting in her tail and perverse reproductive habits who is cannibalised by her young (ii.650-53, 781-800). Contrastingly, in Milton's rewriting of Errour in Sin and Death the physicality of Spenser's original is lost. Death, enlarging upon Hamartia's "shapeless shape", (*P.I.* 12.31.5) is one "that shape had none / Distinguishable" or substance beyond that which "shadow seemed" (*P.L.* 667-669).[154] Sin refers to herself being grasped semiologically: they "called me *Sin*, and for a Sign / Portentous held me" (760-61). Sin and Death are distinguished by their vague ontological status; they have a privation of entity derived from Augustine's ontology of evil.[155] This privation resulted not just from Truth's dominance weakening, but from the hermeneutic and ontological developments centring upon the decline of allegory. Although

---

152 Mindele Anne Treip, *Allegorical Poetics and the Epic* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1994), p.137. On Milton's debt to Spenser: Maureen Quilligan, *Milton's Spenser: The Politics of Reading* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983), p. 80; John M. Patrick, *Milton's Conception of Sin as Developed in Paradise Los*t (Logan: Literary Licensing, LLC, 1960), p. 39.

153 The "Scylla" (ii.660) analogue comes to the fore. Sin's "Hell-hounds" (654) are another parody of the Mass. See John N. King, "Milton's Sin and Death: A Rewriting of Spenser's Den of Error," *Form and Reform in Renaissance England*, ed. Amy Boesky et al (London: Associated University Presses, 2000), pp. 306-320, p. 312. John Milton, *Paradise Lost,* ed. John Leonard (London: Penguin, 2000).

154 Fletcher's influence on Milton: H.E. Baldwin, "Milton and Phineas Fletcher," *Journal of English and Germanic Philosophy* 33 (1934): pp. 544-46; H.E. Cory, "Spenser, the School of the Fletchers, and Milton," *University of California Publications in Modern Philology* 2 (1912): pp. 362-67.

155 For further discussion see Stephen M. Fallon, "Milton's Sin and Death: The Ontology of Allegory in *Paradise Lost*," *ELR* 17 (1987): pp. 329-50, p. 330. On error's "negation" of existence in *Paradise Lost*, see Teskey, "Imagining", p. 9.

Protestantism appropriated Catholic iconography, it attacked the interpretive practices of Catholicism's symbolist mentality. Protestant reformers pioneered *sola scriptura* and the sixteenth-century denial of allegory.[156] The disavowal of allegory altered how scripture was read; moreover, it destabilised the symbolic conception of reality and, hence, the representation of personifications, in allegories external to scripture, as real. This hermeneutic shift contributed to the decline of allegorical personifications.[157] Ontological changes, Stephen Fallon suggested, also undermined allegorical personification. He argues that realism, with which allegory was more naturally allied, was displaced by seventeenth-century nominalism and its championing of the sole reality of the particular.[158] As a consequence allegory also became ontologically outmoded. These hermeneutic and ontological developments rendered personified Sin and Death less tangible.

The indeterminacy of Milton's figures of error also reflects the decentring of Protestant Truth as the dominant cultural concept of truth. This decentring is in turn related to the factual historicity of man's first disobedience. The events of the Fall were facts; early modern historians, as successors of the Christian tradition of

---

[156] See Peter Harrison, "The Bible and the Emergence of Modern Science," *Science and Christian Belief* 18.2 (2006): pp. 115–12, p.122. The reality of Reformation hermeneutics was that Protestant literalism was "nowhere near as literal as it want[ed] to appear"; its disavowal of allegory, as Brian Cummings has demonstrated, was context specific. Such ambiguity and the consequent complexities of the interpretative process possibly generated engagement with allegory in Protestant thought and literature; indeed, by "working out a position on allegory", authors simultaneously "disturbed" and "drawn towards" it, "were participating actively in protestant culture". Cummings, "Protestant Allegory", *The Cambridge Companion to Allegory*, ed. Rita Copeland et al (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 117-190, p. 185.

[157] Allegory did not vanish altogether, as *The Pilgrim's Progress* (London: 1678) evidences. Thomas H. Luxon argues that allegory persisted as typology. Luxon, *Literal Figures: Puritan Allegory and the Reformation Crisis in Representation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), p. 22.

[158] Fallon, "Ontology," p. 332.

historiography, were committed to the truth of the principal scriptural events.[159] In *Paradise Lost* Milton's "conviction" was that he was "portraying fact".[160] Hence critics like Phillip Gallagher demand we interpret Sin and Death as part of the "absolute historicity" of the Bible and of Milton's poem.[161] Gallagher hinges his reanalysis of Sin and Death upon the incongruity of allegory operating within a work of historicity. Sin and Death are articulated via myth and allegory, which along with fable, historical matters of fact precluded.[162] The episode of Sin and Death's conception is the "imaginative embodiment of a moral truth" occurring within a work which was self-consciously detailing the historical fact of the Fall.[163] The clash between Milton's literal historicity and the poem's use of allegory is, I believe, a collision between the local, or particularised, truths of historical fact and the "image of truth made visible" that allegory affirms.[164] What we witness is the competition of coexisting concepts of truth. The ascendency of Protestant Truth, and its primacy in moulding generalised representations of error, was thus challenged by more particularised notions of truth – specifically those associated with the discursive construction of fact.

Spenser's Truth was Protestant Truth; this simplified our deconstruction of Errour. Milton's ability to entertain alternative, indeed conflicting, concepts of truth has complicated the analysis of Sin and Death for a succession of critics. His figures of error 'exist' within a competition of discourses of truth: the Truth of Protestantism,

---

159 Shapiro, *Culture*, p. 35.
160 MacCaffrey, *Myth*, p.21. See also Malcolm Kelsall, "The Historicity of Paradise Regained," *Milton Studies* 12 (1978): pp. 235-251.
161 Philip J. Gallaher, "'Real or Allegoric': The Ontology of Sin and Death in *Paradise Lost*", *ELR* 6 (1976): pp. 317-335, p. 326.
162 Shapiro, *Culture*, p. 40.
163 Robert C Fox, "The Allegory of Sin and Death in *Paradise Lost*", *Modern Language Quarterly* 24 (1963): pp. 354-64, p. 362.
164 Frye, *Elizabeth*, p. 35.

the 'truth of poetry', and the 'truth of history'. The first afforded Truth ideological and iconographical attributes; the second had the "ability to capture universal moral truth", in part, by the luxury of disregarding the "epistemological questions of evidence, error, or partiality" upon which the truth of history turned.[165] In the episode recounting the generation of Sin and Death, we find indication of Milton's appreciation of the plurality of the concept of truth in his time; he articulates this plurality most clearly when he conceives of truth's fragmentariness in *Areopagitica* (1644). In this tract, Milton uses the myth of Isis and Osiris to illustrate the state of truth in the 1640s. Truth "came into the world with her divine Master"; however, upon his ascension "a wicked race of deceivers" "hewd" Truth "into a thousand peeces".[166] Ever since, Truth's friends, emulating Isis, have been unable to find all of her remains. Milton casts himself as champion of Truth. Rather than a crusader for a unified figure of Truth, like Una, this soldier pursues and reassembles Truth in a scholarly fashion. This difficulty in locating the whole truth is also appreciated by the readers of news in the following chapter.

According to *Areopagitica*, Truth has "fled away" to "heaven".[167] In the fourth of Milton's *Prolusions* (written 1628-1632), Truth is a "saving divinity" mitigating "the effects of Error's dissemination throughout the world".[168] But where had Error originated; had "Error escaped from Pandora's box, or from the depths of the Styx", or is he "one of the sons of Earth who conspired against the gods"?[169] Three geneses are suggested: divine, hellish, and earthly. Pandora, fashioned by the gods as a trap for

---

[165] Shapiro, *Culture*, p. 41.
[166] Milton, *CPW*, 2:549
[167] Ibid., 1:250.
[168] Stella Revard, "Milton and Myth", *Reassembling Truth: Twenty-first Century Milton*, ed. Charles W. Durham et al (London: Associated University Presses, 2003), pp. 23-47, p. 39.
[169] Milton, *CPW*, 1:249.

Prometheus and Epimetheus, was overcome by curiosity and looked inside a box that it was forbidden to open; thus evil entered the world.[170] According to the *Mythologiae* (first published 1567) of Natalis Comes, Zeus gives Pandora the box to deliver to Prometheus and Epimetheus.[171] If Error escaped from a box that originated with Zeus, it is divine; if it came from the Styx, it is Satanic. However, if Error was one of the "sons of Earth", the giants who contended with the gods, then Error was an earthly problem of momentous proportions. "[E]ven an indifferent observer", Milton writes, may perceive Error's resemblance to Typhon and the Antaeus; Error's earthly origin is thus underscored.[172] Antaeus, the giant son of Terra, drew his strength from the earth. Milton uses this myth to imply that Error is strengthened by interaction with the world and, metonymically, its inhabitants. Typhon, a gigantic, fire-breathing figure with vipers coiled about his thighs, was created by Earth.[173] His birth was also viperish; he "with a blow broke through his mother's side".[174] In turn he fathered Chimera, Cerberus, and the Lernaean Hydra by Echidna. Despite associations with analogues of Spenserian Errour, Milton principally compares Error to these giants to emphasise its "portentous size" and that Error is empowered by "hapless man" amongst whom he has "a strong and active body of supporters".[175]

---

[170] On Prometheus' story as a Grecian myth of the Fall see Thomas Keightley, *The Mythology of Ancient Greece and Italy* (London: Whittaker & Co., 1838), pp. 289-290. Early modern thinkers often viewed classical myths as shadows of scriptural truth (for instance, Alexander Ross in his *Mystagogus Poeticus* (London: 1647)). On this view see Mandy Green, *Milton's Ovidian Eve* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), pp. 5-8.
[171] Natalis Comes, *Mythologiae* (Padua: 1616), p. 165. In Hesiod's accounts the jar originates with the brothers. Hesiod, *Theogony, Works and Days, Testimonia*, ed. Glenn W. Most (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2006), *Theog*. pp. 49-51; *Works,* pp. 93-95.
[172] Milton, *CPW*, 1:249.
[173] Apollodorus, *Library*, tr. Robin Hard (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 1.6.3.
[174] Plutarch, *Moralia*, ed. Frank Cole Babbitt, 15 vols (London: Heinemann, 1927-), 5:355-356.
[175] Milton, *CPW*, 1:250.

Milton's mythologizing of error presents a creature so potent that Truth is "menaced by him".[176] Error is like the giants in scale but he also wars against the gods, specifically divine Truth, recalling the gigantomachy. Truth, not just Protestant Truth, had a rival. Error now "fights on equal terms against the goddess Truth"; he emerges "richer", "after being wounded he is sound and whole", and paradoxically, "after being vanquished he is triumphant".[177] Empowered Error replicates the invulnerability, perhaps even the immortality, of the ancient gods and it is earth, that is to say, man, as Milton's use of the myth stresses, which has endowed Error with this great potency. In what Bates terms the "temporalized epistemology" of truth and error, where they rely upon one another for definition, the dominance of truth (achieved by Protestant Truth) was perhaps edging towards the "parasitic" relationship of truth upon its supposed negation which Bates identifies with the Enlightenment.[178] In summary, Milton's figures of error are, to differing degrees, indebted to the ideological and representational tradition of the figuration of generalised error; however, the primacy of the Protestant ideology of Truth in moulding figures of generalised error was weakened, in part due to Milton's perception of the fragmentary and elusive nature of truth. This was an important step in the overall shift – from generalised representations of error towards the articulation of error in particularised terms – with which this thesis is concerned.

The uncertainty of Truth and the liberation of error

Allegorised truth persisted into the seventeenth-century, with some works reproducing the adage *Veritas filia temporis* and others qualifying it. This section

[176] Milton, *CPW*, 1:249.
[177] Ibid.
[178] Bates, *Enlightenment*, p. viii.

considers two 1613 entertainments featuring error which demonstrate the greater variety of ways in which error could be conceived as a result of the destabilisation of Protestant Truth. This process is a broader phenomenon; these entertainments play out against the background of further examples. For instance, Truth appears "thin and naked" (325), like Knoblouch's pleading figure, in Thomas Middleton's *The Triumphs of Truth* (1613); yet she is no helpless damsel but an evangelical force and potent enemy of Error whom she destroys in a pyrotechnic spectacle.[179] The title page of Michael Sparke's *Truth Brought to Light* (1651) presents Truth trampling Error. Contrastingly, Truth is insipid and the significance of Truth and Time diluted in Thomas Heyward's *London Ius Honorarium* (1631).[180] Truth is absent and her existence assumed by virtue of Time's presence in Anthony Munday's *Chruso-Thriambos* (1611) and Middleton's *The World Tossed at Tennis* (1620). Representations of Truth also appeared in Dekker's *The Whore of Babylon* (1607) and Shakespeare and Fletcher's *Henry VIII, or All is True* (c.1612). These dramas play with ideas of historiography to suggest that Truth/truth was certain in the Elizabethan era but that this certainty is unfeasible in the Jacobean age. These examples are important because their adherence to and qualification of Protestant Truth betokens trends concerning the stability of Truth and, indeed, truth which would have ramifications for error's representation. However, I chose to foreground the representations of error in the 1613 entertainments because they are shaped by very

---

[179] Middleton made Truth's iconography "more specifically Protestant in honour of the evangelizing interests of the Lord Mayor", David Norbrook, "The Reformation Masque," *The Court Masque*, ed. David Lindley (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), pp. 94-110, p. 94.

[180] On Heywood's Truth lacking obvious Protestant significance see Sheila Williams, "Two Seventeenth Century Semi-Dramatic Allegories of Truth the Daughter of Time," *Guildhall Miscellany* 5 (1963): pp. 207-20, p. 219.

specific contexts of court immorality and city greed; they are, therefore, more particularised than the representations of error we have thus far encountered.

Error appears in Thomas Campion's *The Somerset Masque*, which was performed before the King and Queen at Whitehall in December 1613. The masque was commissioned by the pro-Catholic Howards, and Error is correspondingly not of the same genealogy as that described above. Error is not defined in opposition to Protestant Truth; instead its significance lies within the composition context. Campion's masque was written for the marriage celebrations of Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset, to Frances Howard, and this event is incorporated into the masque. A company of Knights are ambushed on route to the nuptial celebrations. Squires, addressing the King and Queen, identify the Knights' assailants as:

> Deformed Errour, that enchanting fiend,
> And wing-tongu'd Rumor, his infernall friend,
> With Curiositie and Credulitie […]
> (pp.269-270)[181]

As if summoned, the enchanters appear. Error enters "in a skin coate scaled like a Serpent" with an "antick habit painted with Snakes" and his hair of "curled Snakes" (p.271). Like Spenser's Errour, Campion's Error is serpentine. Contrastingly, Error's snaky attire carries no implication of the deviant motherhood and false feeding which is apparent in Errour and Milton's Sin. Rumour is apparelled in tongues, whilst Curiosity and Credulity (two qualities which I consider in relation to the reception of

---

[181] Thomas Campion, *The Works of Thomas Campion*, ed. Walter R. Davis (London: Faber, 1969).

matters of fact in the following chapter) wear eyes and ears, respectively. An antimasque follows in which Error's reign is represented in chaotic dance.[182]

Error's association with figures covered in eyes, ears, and tongues supports David Lindley's supposition that Campion settled upon Virgil's *Fama*, who spread rumours about Aeneas' relationship with Dido, as a model.[183] In Surrey's translation of the *Aeneid Fama* possesses "As many waker eyes lurk[ing] underneath, / So many mouthes to speake, and listening eares".[184] This Virgilian lineage confines the elemental chaos of Error's dominion, staged in the antimasque, to the "more precisely relevant anarchy generated by false fame".[185] Campion's beleaguered Knights were prevented from celebrating the marriage by an erroneous report that has been fuelled by curiosity and believed by the credulous.

Campion's choice of Error's associates indicates his awareness of the rumoured circumstances of Francis Howard's remarriage and the untimely death of Sir Thomas Overbury. These enchanters were chosen to impersonate these reports obliquely. These figures represent a shift away from the use of ennobling myth in court masques towards what Campion calls "enchauntments and several transformations" (p.268) in which we may recognise the quotidian illusions to which we are all subject.[186] The status of Rumor in Campion's masque contrasts with the contemporaneous *Henry VIII* in which Shakespeare does not allow us to simply

---

182 David Lindley, *Thomas Campion* (Leiden: Brill, 1986), p. 217.
183 Ibid.
184 Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, *Poems*, ed. Emrys Jones (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), p. 69.
185 Lindley, *Campion*, p. 219. On Error's associates "allegorically reconstruct[ing] the socio-linguistic networks" which circulate slander see Kevin Curran, *Marriage, Performance, and Politics at the Jacobean Court* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), p. 132.
186 On this shift see Davis, p. xx.

equate rumour with falsehood.[187] Campion, brave to even allude to the rumours, could not represent Rumor as anything other than erroneous.

The entrance of Eternity hastens Error's downfall. Eternity appeals to James' Queen, for "only she / Can all knotted spels unty" (p.272); her royal influence is incited to break Error's enchantment and symbolically quash the Overbury rumour. The Knights are freed and the actual wedding guests should, likewise, feel unimpeded from celebrating the wedding. Campion's masque aims to justify Howard's marriage and to purge the court rumours by means of the symbolic dispersion of Error. He presents a figure of error whose ideology (as well as much of its iconography) is independent of Protestant Truth.

Campion's masque symbolically annuls Error's reign at a court from which Truth had become dissociated. The estrangement of Truth from James' court is perceptible in both the court's rumoured moral corruption in *The Somerset Masque* and the city politics of *Triumphs of Truth*. Middleton's pageant, which celebrated the inauguration of Sir Thomas Myddleton as Mayor, staged an altercation between Truth and Error as a psychomachic struggle for Myddleton's integrity; in *Triumphs* there is an underlying court-city antagonism. Truth favours the city; she finds the mercantile class better fit to further her cause. Truth guides the ship of the Moorish King, who speaks of his former "days of error" (431) and his conversion by "English merchants" (437), up the Thames and into the city. The realignment of Truth's allegiance has consequences for Middleton's representation of error.

---

[187] On Shakespeare's handling of rumour see Pierre Sahel, "The Strangeness of Dramatic Style: Rumour in *Henry VIII*," *Shakespeare Survey* 38 (1985): pp. 146-8.

Middleton's Truth imitates the posture and attire of Truth in *Hymenaei* (1606);[188] Jonson had modelled his Truth on that of Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia*. Error's imagery of darkness and occlusion remains cast in opposition to Truth. He wears "ash-coloured silk" and his "head [is] rolled in a cloud"; about his person are an "owl", a "mole", and a "bat" which are "symbols of blind ignorance and darkness" (245-249). *Hymenaei* does not include a figure of error and Middleton was not inspired by Ripa's, who is a blindfolded pilgrim.[189] Rather, Middleton's Error originates in the vice-figure of the morality play tradition and in the pageant's political context. T.H. Howard-Hill considers Error to "issue from the same conceptual matrix" as Middleton's earlier figure of Error in *A Game at Chess.*[190] But Error is not the same polemical anti-Catholic figure; Howard-Hill ignores the urban contexts which shaped the Error of *Triumphs*.

The pageant recalls earlier forms of drama;[191] Error has been read as a "revival of the sixteenth-century monster".[192] He was, however, shaped by contexts of city, and court-city, politics of which Middleton was aware, as is apparent from the pageant's ambivalent attitude towards the new mayor and its desire to legitimise the wealth of London's merchant classes morally. Error may recall the morality vice-figure, but he is also an up-to-date urban profiteer who attempts to manipulate Myddelton's acumen for business. He addresses Myddleton in the language of commerce. Were

---

188 *Hymenaei*, *CBJ*, ed. David Bevington et al 7 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012) 2:787-812. All further references to Jonson are from this edition.
189 Ripa, *Iconologia* (Venice: 1645), p. 181.
190 T.H. Howard-Hill, *Middleton's "Vulgar Pasquin"* (London: Associated University Presses, 1995), p. 40.
191 On *Triumphs* as a "transplanted mediaeval morality play", see David M. Bergerson, "Middleton's Moral Landscape: *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside* and *The Triumphs of Truth*", *"Accompaninge the Players": Essays Celebrating Thomas Middleton, 1580-1980*, ed. Kenneth Friedenreich (New York: AMS Press, 1983), pp. 133-45, p. 134.
192 Williams, "Allegories", pp. 215-16.

Myddleton to employ the financial services of his minions, Gluttony and Sloth, they would brief the mayor on the “worth of every office to a hair, / And who bids most, and how the markets are” (283-84); moreover, “They'll bring [...] in bribes for measures and light bread" (286). A successful financial consultant, Error boasts that "Both power and profit cleaves to my advice" (292).

The relationship between the mercantile wealth and moral status of the city is critical to understanding this incarnation of Error. According to Error, it is a "beggarly and friendless virtue” that has “impoverished this fair city" (264–265). It was not uncommon for authors of civic pageants to identify the potential for abuse in the mercantile wealth of the city.[193] A contrast is apparent in the description of Liberality and her “cornucopia” out of which “rusheth a seeming flood of gold, but no way flowing to prodigality” (536-538). This is a picture of wealth governed by morality, whereas Error is the patron of ill-gotten gains.

Many, however, favour Error’s fiscal policy; he describes himself as “strong [...] in faction" (303–304); this “faction” threatens London’s unresolved moral status. London is united with many virtues upon the Mount Triumphant; but are Error’s lucrative “Back-ways and by-ways” (310) the alleys of the capital? Although she may be innately virtuous, London’s moral self-determination is compromised; as Truth recognises, “Thick are mists that o’er fair cities rise” (513). In *Triumphs* mists are the work of Error (495-496); the verb “rise” suggests that these “mists”, rather than an external meteorological force, are the fumes of London’s corrupt populace.

---

[193] See Aaron Kitch, *Political Economy and the States of Literature in Early Modern England* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), p. 178.

Truth may instruct the "infectious fog" to "Vanish" from this city "that takes her light from me" (582-523), but the mayor's actions are also closely allied to London's moral health. The pageant tells the mayor that his citizens will be alert for indications of those local, matter of fact instances of financial malpractice which Error allegorically personifies. Truth explicitly warns that

> There is no hiding of thy actions now,
> They must abide the light and imitate me,
> Or be thrown down to fire where errors be.
> (747-749)

Middleton's switch to the plural "errors" signifies the "many ways that to blind Error slide" which all terminate at the "hell-mouth [...] wide" (596-597); the abuse of office is just one of them. The pageant insists that the citizens watch Myddleton for malpractice. This vigilance was perhaps necessary; the Welsh hegemony of the Myddleton clan in London prompted fears that a Myddleton mayor would derive nepotistic profit from his position.[194] At the pageant's close, Myddleton's choice between Truth and Error is removed; his alliance with Truth is assumed, legitimising his new status and the commercial power on which his guild's political authority was based.

Though somewhat qualified, Protestant Truth thus persisted into the seventeenth-century; we have witnessed variously an empowered Truth and Truth becoming a secondary and unrepresented figure invoked by Time's presence. The figures of error in Middleton and Campion's masques remain, despite the qualification of Protestant

---

194 On the Myddleton clan see Ceri Sullivan, "Thomas Middleton's View of Public Utility", *Review of English Studies* 58 (2007): pp. 162-74.

Truth, significantly indebted to the iconographical programme resulting from the successful ideological and representational dissemination of Protestant Truth. However, their representations of error are conceived independently from the ideology of Protestant Truth; there is no implication of Error's 'Catholicism' nor is Error a representation of Protestant polemic's distaste for specifically Catholic doctrine or practices. The ideological and allegorical representation of error was no longer reliant on Protestant Truth.

Errour's afterlife in Protestant polemic

The ideology which shaped Protestant Truth crafted, as we have seen, a potent counterfiguration of monstrous Catholicism. However, these depictions declined towards the mid-century when the immediate threat to religious and political stability came, not from abroad, but from native Protestant sects. Accordingly, the Protestant iconographical programme that had prescribed the ideological and allegorical representation of error was, I argue, redeployed. Religious tracts recycled this programme to conceive of their enemies in terms of the monstrous fecundity of Errour and her literary progeny.

Protestant sects in mid-century England were defined in terms of the embodiment, production, and dissemination of religious error**.** The cultural impact of these sects outweighed their political influence; the vast pamphlet output on the topic of sectarian error suggests that "[c]onceptually, if not physically" sectarianism was a

potent force.[195] The textual proliferation of anti-sectarian writings, and the discursive freedoms that fed it (resulting, in part, from the breakdown in censorship), stirred up the polemical construct of error known as the 'sectarian swarm.' Concentrating on the imagery of the swarm in sectarian and controversialist writing of the 1640s, I suggest that this trope, with its own prehistory in both Catholic and Protestant Reformation polemic,[196] was largely coterminous with the iconographical programme of error that had been shaped by the dominance of Protestant Truth.

It is in mid-century sectarian and controversialist literature that the after-life of Errour and her progeny is most apparent. The sectarian swarm emulates and enlarges upon aspects of Errour rather than reiterating her. The swarm inherits Errour's reproductive capacity; its multiplicity is witnessed in the infestation of sectarian literature with frogs, serpents, locusts, and bees.[197] John Taylor presented sects as a plague "of Vermin [that] swarm like Caterpillars".[198] This multiplicity is coupled with the imagery of uninhibited contact and number which communicates perceptions of the incestuous reproductive excess of sects. The swarm reprises the notion of Errour's unnatural births. Both Taylor and D.P.P return to the image of vipers, to brand their opponents as persecutors of the Church.[199]

---

[195] Kristen Poole, *Radical Religion from Shakespeare to Milton* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 12.

[196] Luther coined the term *Schwärmer* for enthusiasts. For discussion see Michael Heyd, *Be Sober and Reasonable: The Critique of Enthusiasm in the Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries* (Leiden: Brill, 1995), pp. 11-13; John S. Oyer, *Lutheran Reformers Against Anabaptists: Luther, Melanchton, and Menius, and the Anabaptists of Central Germany* (Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1964), pp. 6-40. Philips von Marnix applied the analogy to Catholicism in *Bienenkorb des heiligen Römischen Immenschwarms* (Strasbourg: 1579).

[197] "[L]ike Bees they swarme amongst us", "they are like the Egyptian Locusts," John Taylor *The Anatomy of the Separatists* (London: 1642), p. 2.

[198] John Taylor, *A Swarme of Sectaries and Schismatiqves* (London: 1641), p. 7.

[199] Taylor, *Anatomy*, p. 6; D.P.P, *An Antidote Against the Contagious Air of Independency* (London: 1644), A2r.

In a variation upon generalised depictions of error, the swarm was characterised as contagious. A relatively new word in the period, 'contagious' was employed in medical treatises, in the discussion of communicable diseases, and, elsewhere, in the general sense of something being "injurious, noxious", "pernicious", or "dangerous" to humans, morally or socially.[200] To "hear" an Independent's Sermon was to be "tainted with the contagious air of their Positions".[201] Independent beliefs are portrayed as a miasma which threatened the auditor morally. Thomas Edwards' *Gangraena* conveys the deadly communicability of sectarianism through its titular analogy which compares sectarian error to an infectious ulcerous sore. The recommended treatment for gangrene, wrote Ambroise Paré, was the surgical removal of infected tissues by amputation.[202] Edwards' choice of infectious complaint implies the need for a similarly decisive treatment for sectarian error.

Again the sectarian swarm diverges from previous depictions of generalised error by enlarging on the swarm's discursive nature. Richard Carter's *The Schismatick Stigmatized* (1641) damns sectarian discourse as "chattering and vaine bab[b]ling".[203] The sects' auditory tumult is a "whispering, crooking, and hissing, like Toads, Snakes, Adders, and Serpents, bussing, and hussing like a whole swarme of Bees, Waspes, and, Hornets".[204] This was informed by the excess perceived to have resulted from exegetical liberty and the collapse of censorship; these factors contributed to the

---

[200] See OED "contagious" and its examples of late-sixteenth and early-seventeenth-century usage. The adverbial form "contagiously" appeared in 1615. See OED "contagiously".
[201] Taylor, *Anatomy*, p. 12.
[202] *The Works of that Famous Chirurgion Ambrose Parey*, tr. Thomas Johnson (London: 1634), p. 457.
[203] Richard Carter, *The Schismatick Stigmatized* (London: 1641), p. 4.
[204] Ibid., p.15. Taylor's *Anatomy* notes the "hideous clamour" (6) of separatists.

sects' uncontrolled discursivity as well as to the textual outpourings written by them and about them. The discursive practices attributed to the swarm were conceived of in terms of deviant and prolific fecundity that engenders error. The swarm's wild discursivity is one re-conception of Errour's reproductive excess.

This re-conception is shared by heresiography, a genre involved in the particularisation of error; Edward's subtitle affirms that *Gangraena* is "A catalogue and discovery of many of the errors, heresies, blasphemies and pernicious practices of the sectaries of this time". Although *Gangraena* particularises error, Edwards' representation of religious error is indebted to the iconographical profile of earlier, generalised representations of error. Edwards conceives of his authorial task, "in an age and time when truth has fallen", as something akin to Redcrosse's chivalric quest or the apocalyptic battle fought by Eclecta's Prince.[205] "Tis my lot" he writes "that in my conflicts for Truth, and against Error, I should not enter the field and fight single combats, but encounter with many"; his opponents are familiar: "Gyants", "a three-headed *Cerberus*, the three-bodied monster *Geryon*", "that monstrous Hydra" of sectarianism, and "a great red Dragon having seven heads".[206] An army of error was indeed ready to besiege him. Edwards was so assiduous in his discovery of error he risked being overwhelmed by his materials; in *Gangraena* the typically tightly ordered structure of the heresiography genre resembles the sectarian body of error in terms of disorder and proportion.[207]

---

[205] Thomas Edwards, *The First and Second Part of Gangraena* (London: 1646), "To the Right Honourable the Lords and Commons assembled in parliament", *Gangraena I,* A3r.

[206] "To the Christian Reader", *Gangraena I*, p. 1.

[207] Ann Hughes, "Thomas Edward's *Gangraena* and the heresiography tradition", *Heresy, Literature and Politics in Early Modern English Culture*, ed. David Loewenstein et al (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 137-159, p. 149. On *Gangraena* as heresiography see Hughes, *Gangraena*, pp. 55-129.

In a novel interpretation, Kristen Poole sees Edwards adopt the discursivity of the swarm to transform “division into order” and tame the Hydra.[208] Poole characterises Edwards as exercising “the precision of a meticulous collector” who “effects the breakup of the swarm” by “granting the sects particulars and autonomous ‘heads’”; it is thus that “Edwards translates the swarm into discrete components.”[209] It seems contradictory that Edwards should simultaneously use “tactics” which “resemble the dynamic of the swarm”, a dynamic typified by disorder and muddled multiplicity.[210] Instead, I argue that swarm discursivity is not the only form of discourse informing Edwards’ heresiography. *Gangraena* has more to do with factions than facts; however, Edwards clearly adopts the language of fact as a convenient idiom to justify his text and its intentions. In a *Relation of some stories, and other remarkable passages concerning the Sects and Sectaries*, Edwards says he “will give the Reader some instances both of words and facts”.[211] Edwards argues that the "bringing upon the stage matters of fact" concerning sectaries is “a more sensible practicall way of confutation” than "so many syllogismes and arguments".[212] Here Edwards is an advocate of the wider epistemological shift afoot in this period which sought to replace syllogism and argument with a factual conception of knowing achieved via experientially based argument. Edwards, despite invoking the iconographical profiles of generalised error, moves away from error as fallacy toward defining error in terms of fact. These examples from *Gangraena* are a strong indication of the shift in the way of conceiving of error for which this thesis argues. In the context of this chapter, these

---

[208] Kristen Poole, “Dissecting Sectarianism: Liberty of Conscience, the Swarm, and Thomas Edward’s *Gangraena*,” *Form and Reform*, pp.45-69, p.63. Poole does not explain precisely how Edwards does this and in *Radical Religion*, which reproduces her essay, Poole excludes the suggestion that Edwards adopts the discursivity of the swarm.
[209] Ibid., p. 63.
[210] Ibid.
[211] Edwards, *Gangraena I*, p. 119.
[212] “To the Christian Reader”, *Gangraena I*, A2v.

examples demonstrate the culmination of the transition away from generalised allegorical figurations of error as a result of the destabilisation of the temporalized dependence of error's representation upon Protestant Truth. In the context of the thesis, these examples substantiate the transition away from generalised figurations towards the articulation of error as particular instances of being mistaken in matters of fact.

Further examples of Edwards' 'factual' approach to error are readily come by. *Gangraena* pays very close attention to the circumstances of error, which is telling of Edwards' forensic procedures, as in the case of Lawrence Clarkson, "a Taylor and Blasphemer [who] preached on the Lords day, March eight, at Bow-Church in Cheapside, in the afternoon".[213] Edwards' accounts can be legalistic in their tone and attention to circumstances. One Samuel Oates, a "Dipper and Emissary [sent] into the Countreyes", was, Edwards writes, "bound over to the Sessions at Chenford, where [on] Aprill the seventh, 1646 this Oats appeared" and it was "laid to his charge" that "in March last, in a verie cold season, hee dipping a young woman, shee presently fell sick and died".[214] Edwards' attention to circumstances reinforces the truth of the matter of fact as he relates.

Edward's Truth is "the truth of the facts" rather than a personified ideology; this truth will "not rest upon my bare assertion" but upon "particulars as grounds of proof."[215] Despite these particulars Truth is "one and uniforme"; whereas error, by virtue of its particularity, is both contrary to truth and self-contradictory: "truth though it be

---

[213] Edwards, *Gangraena II*, p. 6.
[214] Edwards, *Gangraena I*, pp. 121-122.
[215] Edwards, *Gangraena II*, p. 45; *Gangraena I*, D1v.

contrary to errour, yet one truth is never contrary to another [...] but many errours are not only contrary to truth, but to errours also".[216] This stance on truth and error, in addition to heresiography's particularising effect, amplifies the asymmetry in the relationship between truth and error identified at the beginning of this chapter. This is a logical consequence of the particularisation of error attendant upon the culture of fact that was occurring both within *Gangraena*, and, as I argue, the larger early-to-mid seventeenth-century cultural context.

Christ's truth and the truth of the scriptures are also invoked by Edwards,[217] but the truth which largely occupies him is the "truth of things contained in *Gangraena*".[218] This is particularly apparent in Edwards' *Justification and Vindication of the truth of the most materiall Passages related in the Book entituled Gangraena* in which Edwards defends his work and against the particular untruths of its detractors.[219] Edwards believed that he was in possession of the facts. He dismisses his critic, Master Saltmarsh, for "not so much as offer[ing] to disprove any one peece of matter of fact throughout my whole Book".[220] The onus lies upon Saltmarsh to "disprove" Edwards' facts. Edwards reveals himself to be well-versed in the popular skills of evidence evaluation used to interrogate matters of fact. Moreover, Edwards shows himself to be aware of what Shapiro has called the "sensitivity to error" surrounding the concept of fact, when he accuses his opponents of fastening upon minor errors in his version of circumstances, so as to undermine his account of the matter of fact in question and obscure the truth of *Gangraena*. Such is their "desperate cause [...]

[216] Edwards, *Gangraena I*, E3r.
[217] "[T]he glory and honour of Christ and his truth", "To the Right Honourable the Lords and Commons assembled in parliament", *Gangraena I,* A3r.
[218] Edwards, *"Preface", Gangraena II, A4v.*
[219] Edwards, *Gangraena I,* p. 19.
[220] Ibid.

wounded as 'tis by *Gangraena*" that the Sectaries opt to write "Books to disprove some matters of fact, taking advantage from some mistakes in circumstances about names, places and such like, to cry it down".[221] Edwards substantiates his arguments about religious error by invoking circumstances; yet his opponents set upon these very circumstances to refute his arguments. The reader should embrace the evidence of circumstances when he provides it; but when his opponents do so, Edwards characterises it as devious misrepresentation. Ironically, Edwards is a victim of his own attentiveness to fact and circumstance.

Edwards accuses certain critics of abusing legalistic approaches to proof. Mr Burroughs and Mr Greenhils, settling upon an error by Edwards, though "no material one", "prosecute it".[222] In doing so, Edwards notes how they exploit their credibility, "knowing that their testimony" given by "two witnesses [...] might wound my Book".[223] Edwards fears that a minor error will undo his treatise, so as "to cause the truth of all matters of fact in it to be suspected, and so to hinder the good intended by me in that Book".[224] Thus the "truth of all matters of fact" comes to the fore in Edwards' conflict with his sectarian enemies, a conflict which resembles a courtroom dispute over local truths more than an apocalyptic battle waged in Truth's name. Like Edwards, the representatives of sectarian error have added the discourse of fact to their arsenal. The ensuing battle, according to Edwards, is between those using the discourse of fact intent upon the truth of fact and those who abuse the conventions of fact to contradict this truth with false facts bolstered by perjury.

---

[221] Edwards, *Gangraena II*, p. 36.
[222] Ibid., p. 78.
[223] Ibid. Edwards questions the reliability of witnesses who had "joyned together in the writing printed by *Cretensis" Ibid. This is John Goodwin's Cretensis: or A Briefe Answer to an Ulcerous Treatise, Lately Published by Mr Thomas Edwards, Intituled Gangraena* (London: 1646).
[224] Edwards, *Gangraena II*, p. 78.

Shapiro has shown how post-Restoration religious controversialists adopted the concept of fact and "essentially legalistic approaches to proofs for 'matters of fact'".[225] Given the evidence I present here of Edwards' language of fact, his attention to circumstances, and allusion to the means of proof, there is a strong argument for the earlier absorption of elements of discourses of fact into pre-Restoration controversialist writings. Moreover, *Gangraena* gives further credence to my argument that the way of conceiving of error in this period was changing as a result of the rise of the matter of fact.

*

This chapter studied the ideology of Protestant Truth and its consequences for the ideological and allegorical representation of error in early seventeenth-century literature. I began by delineating Protestant Truth before considering the ideological and allegorical representation of error which resulted from it; Spenser's Errour was taken as the archetype of this in poetry. Tracing the relative indebtedness of subsequent poetic representations of error to Errour identified alterations to the means of representing and purging error. It revealed political, hermeneutic, ontological, and epistemological factors which destabilised Protestant Truth's potent figuration of generalised error. Spiritual and single Truth was, for ideological purposes, foregrounded during the English Reformation and the immediately post-Reformation period. However, the factors which destabilised Protestant Truth resulted in truths, many and local, and (given the temporalized dependence of truth

[225] Shapiro, *Culture*, p. 5, pp. 168-188.

and error upon one other) errors equally particular challenge Truth's occupation of the foreground.

I have outlined a decline, though not an uncomplicated one, in representations of Protestant Truth and counterpart representations of monstrous 'Catholic' error. Nonetheless, Errour found an afterlife in the swarm of sectarian literature where the error moulded by Protestant Truth's iconographical programme coexisted with another notion of error affiliated to the culture of fact. Edwards' authorial persona seeks valiantly to behead the Hydra of sectarian error, but he comes to the fight armed with matters of fact. This curious state of affairs is the culmination of the transition from generalised representations of error, dependent upon Protestant Truth for their ideology and iconography, to particularised error operating with the emergent culture of fact with which this thesis is concerned.

Illustrations

Fig. 1 Andrea Mantegna, 'Virtus Combusta', drawing, c.1490. The British Museum. © Trustees of the British Museum.
http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/highlight_objects/pd/a/andrea_mantegna,_allegory.aspx

Fig .2 Giovanni Antonio da Brescia, 'Virtus Deserta', print, c.1490-1510. The British Museum. © Trustees of the British Museum.
http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=1343971&partId=1

Fig. 3 Printer's mark of John Knoblouch of Strasburg, woodcut, 1521. The British Museum. © Trustees of the British Museum.
http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?assetId=545506001&objectId=1529425&partId=1

Fig. 4 Woodcut from William Marshall's *Goodly Primer in Englyshe* (London: 1535). Reproduced with permission from the Master and Fellows of Emmanuel College, Cambridge. Image produced by ProQuest as part of *Early English Books Online*. www.proquest.com.

Fig. 5 Andrea Mantegna, 'Descent into Limbo', print, c. 1475-1480**,** V&A Collections. © The Board of Trustees of the Victoria & Albert Museum.
http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O158509/descent-into-limbo-print-mantegna-andrea/

Fig. 6 Detail from *The Popes Pyramides* (London: 1624) printed by R. Shorleyker. Reproduced with permission from the Society of Antiquaries of London. Image produced by ProQuest as part of *Early English Books Online*. www.proquest.com.

Chapter 2

Ben Jonson and the Cultura Animi Tradition

This chapter is concerned with two important scholarly areas in which notions of error are central, that of forensic rhetoric and the way it has been recently brought to bear on drama, and the *cultura animi* tradition of rectifying ill tendencies of the passions and mind.

Jonson's interest in curing man's errors or vices is well documented in the extensive critical readings of Jonson as a moralist and satirist. Studies of Jonson's satire have focused upon the generic shift informing his first comical satire,[226] the historical context of this shift, the challenge to civil and ecclesiastical authority it entailed,[227] and the generic components within his satires.[228] Further work has placed Jonson within the larger context of English Renaissance satire and questioned his relative status as a moralist and satirist.[229] Valuable studies of Jonson as a satirist indebted to

[226] See C.R. Baskervill, *English Elements in Jonson's Early Comedies* (New York: 1 The Gordian Press, 1967), ch.3; Raman Selden, *English Verse Satire, 1590-1765* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1978), ch.2; O.J. Campbell, *Comicall Satyre in Shakespeare's Troilus and Cressida* (San Marino: Huntington Library, 1938) ch.1 and ch.2; Alvin Kernan, *The Cankered Muse: Satire of the English Renaissance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959), ch.4.

[227] Ian Donaldson, *Ben Jonson, A Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 153; Campbell believes the 1599 Bishop's Ban on satire generated the genre of comical satire.

[228] See "Introduction," Ben Jonson, *Every Man Out of His Humour*, ed. Helen Ostrovich (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), pp. 11-27; James S. Baumlin, "Generic Context of Elizabethan Satire: Rhetoric, Poetic Theory, and Imitation", in *Renaissance Genres,* ed. Barbara Kiefer Lewalski (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1986), pp. 448-56.

[229] Kernan's remains perhaps the most comprehensive study of satire in the early modern period. Helena Watts Baum's *The Satiric and Didactic in Ben Jonson's Comedy* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1947) suggests Jonson attacked "intellectually undesirable" "vices" not "morally heinous" ones; therefore, strictly, he was not a "moralist", p. 33.

classical authors have also been undertaken.[230] One study, whilst also considering the influence of Lucian upon Jonson, has aligned him with Christian humanist writers who used literature to educate their audience by means of intellectual and moral testing.[231] However, Jonson's interest in curing the defects of the minds of his fellow men has yet to be approached from the context of a theory of error derived from the *cultura animi* tradition, triangulated with the field of forensic rhetoric.

The rise of evidence and 'matter of fact', which I credit with promoting the particularisation of error, was interlinked with the popularisation of evidential concepts and rhetorically informed forensic skills.[232] My intention is to bring some recent critical insights into the *cultura animi* tradition to bear on this development, and, critically, to do this through the lens of Jonson's drama.

That concerns with evidence and matters of fact permeated drama in the period is critically established. I argue, further, that the forensic disposition of sixteenth-century drama is complemented in Jonson by a form of affective self-scrutiny which aids characters' exercise of the logic of fact, and the audience's awareness of the mind's potential to form or imbibe false notions as a result of affective states. Achieving this aim entails identifying scenes where a character's forensic capability

---

[230] Victoria Moul, *Jonson, Horace and the Classical Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Katherine Eisaman Maus, *Ben Jonson and the Roman Frame of Mind* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984); Joanna Martindale, "The Best Master of Virtue and Wisdom: The Horace of Ben Jonson and His Heirs", *Horace Made New: Horatian Influences on British Writing from the Renaissance to the Twentieth Century*, ed. Charles Martindale and David Hopkins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 50-85.
[231] Douglas Duncan, *Ben Jonson and the Lucianic Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979).
[232] See Cynthia Herrup, *The Common Peace: Participation and the Criminal Law in Seventeenth-century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987); Malcolm Gaskell, *Crimes and Mentalities in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Hutson, *Suspicion*; Shapiro's *Culture*.

prompts the cultivation of their mind, or reveals that this growth has occurred. I begin by detailing the centrality of error in these two discourses, shedding a different light on treatments of error, before turning to analyse Jonson's *The Staple of News* (1626) and *The Devil is an Ass* (1616) in light of this contextualisation.

I. Error: the context of forensic rhetoric

The relationship of sixteenth and early seventeenth-century drama to forensic rhetoric is a scholarly area which deals centrally with error. I will briefly note error's presence in early modern comment upon forensic rhetoric, and its tacit presence in recent work on the absorption of forensic rhetorical strategies into drama.

Forensic rhetoric was one of the three Aristotelian subdivisions of rhetoric. It concerned past events, was designed to aid the formulation of arguments of accusation and defence, and its native environment was the court room.[233] It was a significant, though dual-edged, instrument, because it could be used to interrogate matters of fact or duplicitously bolster their credibility. All factual discourses, Shapiro has demonstrated, were "suspicious of rhetoric", often articulating this suspicion in relation to their commitment to impartiality.[234] The rhetorical skills of lawyers could undermine a court's impartiality.[235] T.B. Howell's accounts of the earliest state trials record early modern fears that lawyers may "by art and eloquence" seek to "seduce the minds of the simple and unlearned jury, to credit matters otherwise than they

[233] Cicero's *De Inventione* and Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria* were key texts in the early modern rhetorical curriculum; they concerned the invention of arguments to prove guilt or innocence.
[234] Shapiro, *Culture*, p. 29.
[235] William Lambarde feared this was the case. On the failure of the Elizabethan legal system to provide impartial justice, see Wilfrid Prest, "William Lambarde, Elizabethan Law Reform, and Early Stuart Politics," *Journal of British Studies*, 34 (1995): pp. 468-469. For Lambarde and Sir Edward Coke on the desired "indifference of the court" see Shapiro, *Culture*, p. 27.

be".[236] Manipulation of the passions is a prime source of error in matters of fact. Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, on trial for High Treason in 1554, spoke of the prosecution council's "erroneous doings", asking them to question the morality of forensic rhetoric that uses "implying, inferring, conjecturing, deducing arguments, wresting and exceeding the law, the circumstances" to make "unlearned men" become "enchanted to think and judge those that be things indifferent [...] to be great Treasons".[237] Judge and legal scholar, Sir Matthew Hale, articulated the uneasiness concerning impartiality in terms of the cognitive-affective impact of rhetoric upon the individual: rhetorical skill "bribes [the jury's] fancies and bias[es] their affections".[238] Indeed, the primary reason for seventeenth-century ambivalence towards rhetoric was its sway over the passions.[239]

Error, as being mistaken in matters of fact, is a potential outcome of forensic rhetoric. This observation is tacitly present in recent critical work on the absorption of this rhetoric into drama. James McBain's study of the absorption of legal culture into Tudor drama reveals playwrights expressing concern with the fallibility of the law's

[236] T.B. Howell, *Complete Collection of State Trials*, 34 vols. (London: T. C. Hansard for Longman, 1809–1826), 1.872.
[237] Ibid. Throckmorton identifies the "dubious overlap between legal necessity and rhetorical temptation" when the "urge" to "construct a case was liable to exceed the needs of the 'issue of fact'." Subha Mukherji, "False Trials in Shakespeare, Massinger, and Ford," *Essays in Criticism* 56.3 (2006): pp. 219-240, p. 230.
[238] Quoted in Shapiro, *Culture*, p. 29.
[239] Peter Harrison, "Reading the Passions: The Fall, the Passions, and Dominion Over Nature," *The Soft Underbelly of Reason: The Passions in the Seventeenth-Century*, ed. Stephen Gaukroger (London: Routledge, 1998), pp. 49-78. p. 64. "The association of rhetoric with deception and improper appeals to emotion [...] made an association of law and rhetoric distasteful." Barbara Shapiro, "Classical Rhetoric and the English Law of Evidence", *Rhetoric and Law in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Victoria Kahn and Lorna Hutson (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), pp. 54-72, p. 61.

mechanics.[240] John Heywood's *A Play of Love* (1533), for example, specifically challenges the credibility of the rhetorical use of proverbs, conventionally equated with truth in sixteenth-century law, in legal argument, suggesting that they may be deceitfully used to certify mistakes. The deceitful elaboration of a fact may also be achieved by crafting the circumstances and *narratio* (narration of the fact) acquired from the forensic rhetoric of Cicero and Quintilian. The coherence, and thus the persuasive capacity, of *narratio* depended on the orator's interweaving of circumstances (the "who, what, where, with what help, why, how, when" which inform every matter of fact) and motives.[241] However, the rhetorical amplification of circumstances could be misused, as for instance by Philanx in Sir Philip Sidney's *Old Arcadia*, to impute an illicit affair between Pyrocles and Gynecia, or by Iago to bolster his insinuation of Cassio's adultery.[242] Indeed, mistakes in matters of fact, rhetorically fashioned as credible, were widespread in early modern drama. Some of the most well-known incidents of this kind occur in Shakespeare's mature tragedies; their presence owes much to drama's engagement with forensic rhetoric and the evidential skills that became more widespread with the emergence of the 'culture of fact.'

Lorna Hutson has pioneered the focus on the absorption of forensic rhetoric into late sixteenth-century drama.[243] She identifies the representation of "popular, rhetorically

[240] James McBain, "Early Tudor Drama and Legal Culture, c. 1485-1558" (Unpublished DPhil thesis: University of Oxford, 2007).
[241] See Reinhard Lorichius' advice to "amplify and dwell on the circumstances" of the *narratio*. Aphthonius, *Progymnasmata*, with the commentary of Lorichius (London: 1575), p. 18; translated by Peter Mack in his *Elizabethan Rhetoric: Theory and Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 37.
[242] See Hutson's detailed discussion of Philanx's *narratio*, *Suspicion* pp. 132-133.
[243] Hutson maintains evidential concepts were distributed through society as a result of the participatory nature of the English criminal justice system. See Herrup, *Common Peace*; Gaskell*, Crimes and Mentalities*; Shapiro's *Culture*.

informed law-mindedness" in plays by Shakespeare and Jonson.[244] By adapting forensic strategies of argument, Shakespeare, Hutson argues, created drama of inference and conjecture – two forensic procedures which Throckmorton deemed "erroneous doings" that enchant the mind.[245] The audience makes surmises about characters; these are the "characterological effects of forensic inference".[246] Dramatis personae are also caught up in evidential efforts, whether to persuade others of "highly disputable 'facts'" or to test their "grounds of belief".[247] Not all characters, of course, are equally evidentially savvy, nor are they all psychologically predisposed to forensically informed evidence evaluation; further "characterological effects" are thus derived from staging the interaction of cognitive-affective distempers with episodes of forensic inference.

Hutson examines plots in which forensic rhetoric and the invention of suspicion are used to deceive characters, leading them by means of false inference to err in matters of fact. She emphasises how Jonson's wits temper *narratio* so as to profit by misleading individuals who are "in thrall to subjective delusions".[248] The wits are not only rhetorically law-minded, but they appreciate the dissemination of popular skills of evidence evaluation and, something I elaborate further in part III, how evidence evaluation is upset by cognitive-affective distempers. The wits prime distempered individuals to err in matters of fact by subtly crafting the circumstances of the matter of fact so as to elicit a desired humoral response. So it is that Wellbred embellishes the fact of Dame Kitely's absence, in *Every Man in His Humour* (1616), to tickle

---

[244] Hutson, *Suspicion*, p.15. For a summary of the legal processes staged by Jonson see Lisa Klotz, "Ben Jonson's Legal Imagination in Volpone," SEL 51:2 (2011): pp. 385–408, p. 403.
[245] Howell, *Trials*, 1.872.
[246] Ibid., p. 220.
[247] Ibid., p. 7.
[248] Ibid., p. 307.

Kitely's sexual jealousy, promote his conjecture of Dame Kitely's infidelity, and prompt his immediate exit, thus leaving Wellbred free to escort Bridget to her elopement.[249] The individuals Jonson's wits assist to err are those whose distempers hinder their ability to evaluate matters of fact rationally. It is this underdeveloped topic in *The Invention of Suspicion* that I wish to further by bringing a theory of error that derives from the *cultura animi* tradition to bear.

II. Error: the cultura animi context

The early modern *cultura animi* tradition took an integrated approach to the cultivation of the mind with regard to its cognitive and affective aspects. Sorana Corneanu has identified the particular attention the tradition devoted to the analysis of error as "a member of the cognitive-affective distempers".[250] Such texts viewed error as the consequence of distempered interactions between the affective capacities of the mind and the mental processes of apprehension. Corneanu emphasises that in treatises of the faculties and passions of the soul, the analysis of error was a "noteworthy development"; she hailed their authors' dedication to unravelling the complex relationship between errors of judgement and the passions as a "distinctive feature".[251]

Error was a central theme of early modern investigations of the passions. The Fall, as discussed in the introduction, was invoked in seventeenth-century analyses of the

[249] See Hutson's reading of how Kitely/Thorello's "imaginative suggestibility", rooted in sexual jealousy, is exploited. *Suspicion*, pp. 330-333.
[250] Corneanu, *Regimens*, p. 5.
[251] Ibid., p. 70, p. 20.

negative effect of the passions.[252] The postlapsarian intellect was "slave unto the sense",[253] for masculine reason had succumbed to the feminine passions.[254] Mankind inherited the "first and father cause of common Error", what Thomas Browne called "the common infirmity of humane nature", or man's "deceptible condition", from Adam and Eve.[255] Edenic man was the first to sin and sin was, as Edward Reynolds, author of *A Treatise of the Passions and Faculties of the Soule of Man* (1640), remarked, "the prime Fundamentall Cause, the Gate by which Errour came first into the World".[256] As Peter Harrison has helpfully summarised, seventeenth-century analyses of the negative role played by the passions in the pursuit of truth, having established the Fall as the first cause of error, generally then present "a more specific aetiology of error" focusing upon the identification of "particular mechanisms which distort human knowledge".[257] This indicates two facets of particularisation occurring within this discourse: the rendering of error as distinct from more generalised concepts; and the definition of what gives rise to or constitutes a particular error.

Having identified a precise cognitive-affective aetiology of error, authors would recommend methods to overcome our infirmities. Thomas Wright, author of *The Passions of the Mind in General* (1601), maintained the conventional moral philosophical stance that *nosce teipsum* ameliorates the rule of the passions.[258] Self-mastery, comprised of self-knowledge and the discipline of judgement, was the

[252] Reynolds, *Treatise*, p. 63, p. 542; Browne, *Pseudodoxia*, 1.1., p. 7, 1.3, p. 17; Thomas Wright, *The Passions of the Minde in General* (London: 1601), pp. 2-3; William Ayloffe, *Government of the Passions* (London: 1700), p. 22.
[253] Jean-François Senault, *Natural History of the Passions* (London: 1674), pp. 74f.
[254] See Harrison, "Dominion", pp. 49-78.
[255] Browne, *Pseudodoxia*, 1.1, p. 5.
[256] Reynolds, *Treatise*, p. 483.
[257] Harrison, "Dominion", pp. 71-72.
[258] Wright, *Passions,* p. 11.

"comprehensive concern with the culture of the mind".[259] Regimen literature identified the mind's distempers and aimed to cultivate an untroubled mind with a purity of cognition that rendered it less apt to err;[260] the health and virtue of the conditioned mind, or moral persona, were identical.

How did these analyses particularise error? *Cultura animi* works discussed error in relation to interacting faculties of the mind, pinpointing causes of error in the rule of the passions; the power of the imagination or specific passions which colour our interpretation of the world; assent or the operation of the will, and deficient methodologies. Let us briefly furnish this list with examples.

The passions "trouble wonderfully the soule, corrupting the judgement, and seducing the will", wrote Wright.[261] Error commonly results from the disparity between the actual state of the world and how we perceive it under the influence of our passions. The passions as errors of judgement, a Stoic notion adhered to by Wright, compromise our apprehension of the world by creating a "false conceite in the mind".[262] Passions confuse the mind, compromise our concentration, or skew our attention towards present objects that excite them.[263] The passions project emotions

---

[259] Corneanu, *Regimens*, p. 43.

[260] See John Sutton, "Controlling the Passions: Passions, Memory, and Moral Physiology of Self in Seventeenth-Century Neurophilosophy," *Soft Underbelly*, pp. 115-146, p. 129.

[261] Wright, *Passions*, p. 14.

[262] Ibid., p.94. Jeffrey Barnouw, "Passion as 'Confused' Perception or Thought in Descartes, Malebranche, and Hutcheson", *JHI* 53 (1994): pp. 397-424. The mind is an "inchanted glasse" that does not reflect objects "according to their true incidence": see Bacon, *Advancement*, p. 116.

[263] "Error arises [...] from the temporal focus of the passions", Susan James, *Passion and Action: The Emotions in Seventeenth-Century Philosophy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), p. 168.

upon objects: "fastening too great an Affection on some particular Objects", Reynolds notes, is a "Cause of Errour".[264]

Man's perceptions and self-perceptions were another common aetiology for errors of judgement. "Selfe-opinion is a main Cause of Errour", writes Reynolds.[265] Unbalanced self-opinion promotes errors of self-love and those "proceeding from an error of Humility".[266] Self-love, indicative of the fallen, uncultured mind, has negative consequences for man's habits of judgement.[267] Checking self-love is Peter du Moulin's first step to cultivating the mind and disciplining the judgement in his *Treatise of Peace and Contentment of the Soul* (1657). Moulin recommends humility, yet Reynolds' "error of Humility", when we have "too base a conceit of our owne […] strength", is another cause of errors of judgement.[268]

Errors of judgement were also often blamed on the operation of the imagination, something we return to in chapter 3. Distempered individuals are particularly susceptible to the "Fancie", which is "fruitful in producing Error", hence those "delusions, whereby the Minds of melancholy men" are "peremptorily possessed".[269] Bacon famously cautions against the "seducement" of the imagination;[270] "vain imaginations […] be the clouds of error that turn into the storms of perturbation".[271] The imagination, an autonomous faculty and messenger between the reason and the

---

[264] Reynolds, *Treatise*, p. 494.
[265] Ibid., p. 501.
[266] Ibid., p. 227.
[267] See Corneanu, *Regimens*, pp. 60-63; Pierre Charron, *Of Wisdome, Three Bookes*, tr. Samson Lennard (London: 1608), pp. 152-160.
[268] Reynolds, *Treatise*, p. 277.
[269] Ibid., p. 25.
[270] Bacon, *Advancement*, p. 115.
[271] Bacon, *In Praise of Knowledge*, *The Works of Francis Bacon* (*WFB*), ed. James Spedding et al, 14 vols. (London: Longman, 1857-74), 8:123.

will, was fallible because “in all perswasions that are wrought by eloquence, and other impression” which “doe paint and disguise the true appearance of thinges, the cheefe recommendation vnto *Reason* is from the *Imagination*."[272]

The imagination recommends assent to false appearances; errors of judgement result. Several *cultura animi* definitions of error revolve around the concept and mechanisms of assent.[273] For Reynolds error is "a peremptory and habitual assent".[274] Descartes attributed assent to the will; error arises due to the disparity between the scope of the will and the intellect and, critically, due to the will’s unrestricted operation.[275] To suspend judgement may not prevent errors; for Obadiah Walker error also arises from deferring assent for too long.[276] But how does one determine what deserves assent? Authority was fallible; though it may sway assent in “Law and History”, Browne calls it “a weaker kinde of proof”, preferring natural philosophy’s “scientificall progressions” that “beget a sure rational belief”.[277] The passions must not impede these “progressions”;[278] Corneanu showed how the *cultura animi* tradition of documenting man’s error-prone nature, and providing regimens to ameliorate it, was absorbed into experimental programmes of inquiry.

---

[272] Wright, *Passions*, p. 92. In *Passions,* error “thrive[s]” in the imagination, see Katherine Craik, *Reading Sensations in Early Modern England* (New York: Palgrave, 2007), p. 17.
[273] “Error […] is a false judgment of things, or an assent unto falsity”. Browne, *Pseudodoxia*, 1.3, p.15. See Galen, *The Passions and Errors of the Soul*, 1.2.2, 1.2.6, in *Selected Works*, ed. P.N. Singer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p.145; Bacon, *Advancement*, p. 31.
[274] Reynolds, *Treatise*, pp. 483-95. On “admitting thinges weakely authorized” see Bacon, *Advancement*, p. 26. Reynolds identifies mechanisms of mistaken assent including “Credulity”; “thraldom of judgement unto others”; “How Antiquity is […] honoured; and the “Abuses of Principles”. See *Treatise*, p. 483, p. 485.
[275] See René Descartes, *Meditations* IV, *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes* (*PWD*)*,* ed. and trans. John Cottingham et al, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984-85), 2:39–40.
[276] Obadiah Walker, *Of Education* (Oxford: 1673), pp. 173-91.
[277] Ibid, 1.7, p. 41.
[278] The seventeenth-century model for inquiry was not however wholly one of dispassionate *scientia*. See James, *Passion and Action*, pp. 183-207; on wonder see Lorraine Daston and Katherine Park, *Wonders and the Order of Nature* (New York: Zone Books, 1998) pp. 303-328.

An understanding of the aetiology and mechanisms of the mind's cognitive-affective errors was prerequisite to attaining reliable "Facts of Nature"[279] via observation and experiment. Error as "a member of the cognitive-affective distempers", and a result of these distempers, undermines the pursuit and interrogation of facts; it is thus especially pertinent to a study of error in the emergent 'culture of fact'.[280]

These examples of *cultura animi* analysis of error reveal authors as diverse as Huguenot ministers, rationalist philosophers, Catholic controversialists, and medical writers of antiquity accounting for how specific errors arise from man's general cognitive-affective potential to err. Despite belonging to very different traditions, there is remarkable commonality in their thought. Significantly, Jonson knew many of them, and conceptual affinities and contrasts between Jonson and these authors regarding man's capacity to overcome his error-prone nature will lead us into a discussion of Jonson's comedies.

Jonson and cultura animi authors

If, as I hypothesise, Jonson's response to an era of increasingly particularised error was to stimulate a critical, and self-critical, independence of mind which could liberate individuals from the distempers that engender mistakes in matters of fact or render one susceptible to assent to them, then the *cultura animi* tradition held much to attract him. Jonson wished to correct "all vices and errors taxable to the times" (*The Magnetic Lady* 2.Chor.21), in other words, those deficiencies of character and action with which his generation could be charged. Indeed, his prologues are, to

---

[279] On this phrase and Bacon broadening the application of fact, see Shapiro, *Culture*, pp. 107-112.
[280] Corneanu, *Regimens*, p. 5.

differing degrees, upfront about his "hopes to find no spirit so much diseased, / But will, with such fair correctives [as his plays offer], be pleased" (*Alchemist*, Prologue, 17-18). The plays considered in this and the following chapter are linked by their notions of corrective drama and the significance of specific types of error as a mistake in matters of fact in relation to it. Jonson's corrective agenda has been considered in the context of his use of satire and his debt to the Roman satirists. It has gone unnoticed that this agenda can also be placed in the early modern context of a theory of error derived from the *cultura animi* tradition.

I argue that in articulating his agenda for the cultivation of the mind, Jonson nods to the *cultura animi* and vulgar errors traditions. Jonson shares a desire to modify beliefs and behaviours not only with the Roman satirists but also with *cultura animi* authors, and collectors of vulgar errors. The 1616 *Every Man In* opens with the theme of man's "popular errors" (Prologue, 26); a play is announced that will "sport" with these "human follies" (24) that are made crimes by our fondness for them (24). Heading up the folio, the significance of this prologue should not be underestimated. Jonson acknowledges vulgar error as an impediment to his agenda amid his defence of *The Alchemist*'s reception and his art of composition in general: "I speak not this out of hope to do good on any man against his will" he writes, "for I know" that "the most favour common errors".[281] Here Jonson echoes the socio-psychological standpoint on error whereby the masses are affectively and epistemologically culpable; Jonson's "most" approximate Charron's "Vulgar" and Browne's "people".[282]

[281] Jonson, 'To the reader', *The Alchemist*, *CBJ*, 3.558 ll. 20-23.
[282] "[A]ll that they [the vulgar] […] say, is false and erroneous", Charron, *Of Wisdome*, p. 201.

Though we cannot be certain of all the *cultura animi* works with which Jonson was familiar, we can trace lines of influence in his acquaintance and reading. In the late 1590s, Jonson was in close contact with the Essex circle. Two men with distinct *cultura animi* attitudes were simultaneously associated with the circle: Wright and Bacon. Jonson's ideas on the cultivation of the mind share affinities and distinctions with those of these men.

Jonson was familiar with Bacon, in person and text; reconstitutions of *sententiae* from the *Advancement of Learning* (1605) appear in *Discoveries* along with expressions of Jonson's reverence for the man and his work.[283] During the late 1590s, Jonson was likely working on a Latin translation of Bacon's *Essays*.[284] Jonson also owned a copy of the *Novum Organum* (1620) and a 1624 Paris edition of *De dignitate et augmentis scientarium* which he annotated.[285] In the *Advancement*, *Novum Organum*, and *De augmentis*, Bacon devoted considerable attention to the complex relationship between errors of judgement and the passions.[286] The mind's impediments, and the necessary mental hygiene of its regulation, were topics he returned to throughout his career in natural philosophical writings, moral counsels, and religious meditations, many of which Jonson knew and read.[287]

---

[283] See 'Lord Bacon's Birthday', *Underwood* 51, *CBJ*; Jonson's praise of Bacon, *Discoveries*, 656-679; *Discoveries*, 1481-1483 summarises material from Bacon's *Advancement.*
[284] Donaldson, *Jonson,* p. 378.
[285] David McPherson, "Ben Jonson's Library and Marginalia: An Annotated Catalogue," *Studies in Philology*, 71:5 (1974): pp. 1-106, p. 28.
[286] On the development of Bacon's idols see Corneanu, *Regimens*, p. 20.
[287] See Ibid., p. 15. See Bacon's "In Praise of Knowledge", "A letter to Sir Henry Savill".

Jonson also knew Thomas Wright. Wright may have been the priest who converted Jonson during his 1598 spell in Newgate.[288] For a time Wright experienced the protection of Anthony and Francis Bacon, then respectively secretary and advisor to the Earl of Essex; it is thus possible that Jonson was acquainted with Wright prior to his conversion.[289] Jonson certainly knew Wright's *Passions*, contributing a dedicatory sonnet for its 1604 edition which suggests he had read Wright's work in detail and had a genuine interest in its sentiments.[290]

The sonnet aligns *Passions* with Jonson's corrective agenda and antipathy to error:

> And all your book (when it is thoroughly scanned)
> Will well confess; presenting, limiting,
> Each subtlest passion, with her source and spring,
> […] But now, your work is done, if they that view
> The several figures, languish in suspense,
> To judge which passion's false, and which is true,
> Between the doubtful sway of reason, and sense,
> 'Tis not your fault, if they shall sense prefer,
> Being told there, reason cannot, sense may err.[291]

Jonson anticipates a reader who fails "[t]o judge" the passions figured in the treatise. The author is exonerated; the treatise comprehensively delimits "Each subt'lest Passion". In tone the sonnet echoes 'To the reader' of *The Alchemist* in which Jonson anticipates the readers' failure to receive his work fittingly and where he writes begrudgingly of his desire not to do "good on any man against his will" ('To the Reader', 20-21). This tonal echo aligns Wright's work with his own corrective agenda; an agenda at risk of being unappreciated. Jonson concludes 'To the reader' with

---

[288] See T. Stroud, "Ben Jonson and Father Thomas Wright," *ELH*, 14 (1947): pp. 274-82.
[289] Donaldson, *Jonson*, pp. 139-140.
[290] Jonson studied Wright's treatise "unusual care", Ibid., p. 141.
[291] From Thomas Wright, *The Passions of the Mind in General* (1604), 'To the Author', *CBJ*, 2.501.

resignation; despite his efforts the reader may prove uneducable for "most favour common errors". The theme of man's fondness for error is repeated in the dedicatory sonnet, sealed in the rhyme of "prefer" and "err". A preference for error is indicative of the reader's partiality to "Sense" over "Reason" regardless of Wright's tuition in the fallibility of "Sense". In moral philosophy sense was a common cause of error; to favour it was tantamount to capitulating idly to error. My reading of the sonnet uncovers Jonson's sense of a common agenda with Wright and Jonson's affinity with other *cultura animi* authors' socio-psychological perspectives on error.

The educability of man

Wright and Bacon's work advocating the tempering of the mind is grounded upon a common assessment of the error-prone nature of man's faculties. This is largely where the commonalities end; their analyses of man's errors reach contrasting conclusions concerning man's potential for reformation. These conclusions are two poles between which, I demonstrate in part III, Jonson's *cultura animi* attitude wavers.

Wright's emphasis on error is plain from his chapter titles: "Errors of the last end", "Errors in the meane", "Ignorance and Errors about God", and "Ignorance and Errors about our Souls and bodies". Wright reduces the defects of our wit to two sources: ignorance, when we "know not thinges necessary", and error, when "wee know them falsely".[292] Neither can be wholly prevented, with the result that "from ignorance floweth vice, and from error heresie".[293] Heresy, as a consequence of error, was a

[292] Wright, *Passions*, p. 227.
[293] Ibid.

theme of Wright's *Certaine articles or forcible reasons discovering the palpable absurdities, & most notorious errours of the Protestants religion* (1600). Wright's attitude to the mind's cultivation, via the rectification of error, looks to the vulgar errors tradition, the heresiographical arm of this tradition, and collections of theological errors. His objective is correction, rather than advancement, through the mind's cultivation.

Further evidence of this attitude is found in Wright's opinion of errors resulting from man's limited understanding. Wright is pessimistic that man will ever know God through his creation when we "can[…] not comprise the knowledge of the nature of the last Emet".[294] The understanding of even the "best learned man in the world" contains "more errours than truths".[295] The affective dimension of error as a member of the cognitive-affective distempers held more potential for correction for Wright than the cognitive. The passions may be managed, and channelled to good, but the intellect would ever be a source of failure.

Whilst Wright's handling of error as a member of the cognitive-affective distempers stresses the futility of trying to improve man's understanding, Bacon believed in the educability "not only" of man's "affection, but in his power of wit and reason"; for of God's creatures man was the "most susceptible to help, improvement, impression, and alteration".[296] Bacon therefore sought to rehabilitate the whole mind, not just the passions. "Nothing is so mischievous as the apotheosis of error"; identifying the different sources of error, in his idols, was prerequisite to preventing errors

---

[294] Wright, *Passions*, p. 257.
[295] Ibid.,, p. 258.
[296] Bacon, "Letter to Savill," *WFB*, 7:97,101-13.

ascending to the status of commonly presumed truths.[297] Accordingly, Bacon endowed error with specificity beyond the "homogenised" source of error Descartes articulated.[298] Bacon's efforts to identify the nature of, and complex relationship between, the cognitive and affective components which contribute to error formation were premised upon his belief in man's capacity to attain affective self-scrutiny, self-regulation, and the purity of cognition necessary for the impartiality he desired in a practitioner of natural philosophy.

Whereas Bacon united practical moral philosophy with his 'new logic' in his natural philosophical accounts of the distempers, with a view to scientific progress, Wright's *cultura animi* contribution is largely entrenched in a moral philosophical *status quo*. In part III, I analyse Jonson's plays in light of the contexts of error literature discussed and return to the theme of man's educability to suggest that Jonson's attitude to the cultivation of the mind wavered between Baconian optimism and Wrightian pessimism.

III. Jonson and the informing contexts of error literature: self-mastery and evidence evaluation

The Staple of News (1625): *fact, falsehood, and Protestant Truth*

Europe witnessed a "notable increase" in the quantity and diversity of news publications during the early seventeenth century.[299] London witnessed its first

---

[297] Bacon, *Novum Organum* in *Translation of the Philosophical Works*, *WFB*, ed. James Spedding et al, 14 vols. (London: Longman, 1857-74), 4.66.
[298] Stephen Gaukroger, *Francis Bacon and the Transformation of Early Modern Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 122.
[299] Brendan Dooley, "Introduction," *The Politics of Information in Early Modern Europe,* ed. Brendan Dooley and Sabrina A. Baron (London: 2001), p. 8. Approximately a quarter of titles

printed corantos in 1621 and first newsbooks in 1622. The English appetite for news was stimulated by the involvement of James I's son-in-law, Frederick the Elector Palatine, in the rebellion of the Protestant states of Bohemia against King Ferdinand in 1618. In England, translations of Amsterdam corantos bringing news from the continent proved popular. During the early-to-mid-century "What news?" was so frequently asked it became a satirical refrain, as did the greed of the vulgar for anything approximating news.[300] Jonson's newsmen feed this undifferentiating appetite; the Printer, from *News from the New World Discovered on the Moon* (1620), justifying his fabrications, argues "why should not they [readers] ha' their pleasure in believing of lies are made for them" (*News*, 45-46).

Staple addresses the abuse of truth as a large scale mishandling of facts. Both *Staple* and *News* satirically target a cynical, profit-driven news culture producing erroneous news and the credulity of a public who consume it, for promoting the confusion of information and the proliferation of error in print. News culture disseminated factual errors, mistakes in information resulting from partisanship, failures of observation, or unreliable sources. It traded in fabrications and misinformation which, though distinct from error conceived as a mistake in matters of fact, nonetheless contributed to the confusion of information and the particularisation of error in print.

The Introduction observed that print culture was critical to the particularisation of error. We recall Spenser characterising Errour in relation to print culture, specifically

---

entered into the Stationers' Register, 1591-4, were news publications. G.B. Harrison, "Books and Readers, 1591-4," *The Library*, 4th Ser. VIII (1927), p. 285. There were 450 news publications in England 1590-1610. P.M. Handover, *Printing in London from 1476 to Modern Times* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1960), p. 102.

[300] Joad Raymond, *The Invention of the Newspaper* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005), pp. 1-2. "What news, gentlemen?" (*Staple*, 4.1.36) asks Jonson's news fanatical prodigal.

partisan print, intimating that it contributed to the general difficulty in differentiating 'truth' from the propensity for errors in theological debates. The confusing superfluity of printed news likewise tasked the judgement. Burton noted the "vast confusion" of "Actions, Edicts", "Proclamations", as well as "Currantoes" and "Stories", which tested the reader's ability at interrogating matters of fact on a "daily" basis.[301] The variety of circulating reports was an obstacle to ascertaining a true account of events; it caused information overload[302] and fed apprehension about the quality of information.[303] The expanding news culture nurtured anxieties about erroneous and misleading narratives;[304] Dooley and Raymond have argued it was linked to the growth of scepticism and the emergence of an ideal of impartiality.[305]

Jonson shares the recognition that the news trade disseminated factual errors and misinformation. To start, I look at partisanship – which Shapiro saw underscoring the "sensitivity to error" surrounding the concept of fact – in *Staple*;[306] specifically the unspoken presence of Protestant Truth.[307] As Sabrina A. Baron notes the interests of "publishers of the printed news corantos and the supporters of the Palatine cause […] intersected significantly."[308] Corantos roused support for England's military

---

[301] Robert Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, eds. T.C. Faulkner et al, 6 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989-2000), "Democritus Junior to the Reader", 1, pp. 4-5.
[302] Daniel Rosenburg, "Early Modern Information Overload", *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 64:1 (2003): pp. 1-9, p. 2.
[303] Brendan Dooley, *The Social History of Scepticism* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), pp. 129-30.
[304] Kate Loveman, *Reading Fictions, 1660–1740: Deception in English Literary and Political Culture* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), p. 23.
[305] See Dooley, *Social History* and Joad Raymond, "Exporting Impartiality", *The Emergence of Impartiality*, ed. Kathryn Murphy and Anita Traninger (Boston: Brill, 2013), pp. 141-67.
[306] Shapiro, *Culture*, p. 64.
[307] James Knowles views *News* as "a cultivated refutation of the Protestant associations of 'truth'". *News from the New World Discovered in the Moon*, ed. James Knowles, *CBJ*, 5.425.
[308] Sabrina A. Baron, "The Guises of Dissemination in Early Seventeenth-century England: News in Manuscript and Print," *The Politics of Information*, pp. 41-56, p. 44.

involvement; one critic accuses them of outright "warmongering".[309] As *Staple* shows, within the context of 1620s corantos, the ideology of Protestant Truth, which I have shown limiting error to generalised figurations, promoted particularised error. Act 3 of *Staple* features fantastic reports from mock-corantos:

> Thomas: [*reading*] They write, that the King of Spain is chosen Pope […] and Emperor too [.]
> Pennyboy: Is the Emperor dead?
> Cymbal: No, but he has resigned. […]
> Thomas: [*reading*] And Spinola is made General of the Jesuits.
> Pennyboy: Stranger!
> (3.2.20-27)

According to Jonson's Staple, the "General of the Jesuits", a conflation of the Spanish General Spinola with the martyred Jesuit Father Spinola, is planning to attack Britain:

> Fitton: All his horse
> Are shod with cork, and fourscore pieces of ordinance,
> Mounted upon cork carriages, with bladders
> Instead of wheels, to run the passage over
> At a spring tide.
> Pennyboy: Is't true?
> Fitton: As true as the rest.
> (3.2.89-93)

Fitton's reply indicates the comparative truth of these corantos and anticipates Donald Lupton's statement that "every one can say, its even as true as a Currantoe, meaning that it's all false".[310]

The reports in *Staple* are implausible. The news of Spinola's cork-shod army parodies the magnified threat to England from Catholic nations which was a characteristic of

---

309 Catherine Rockwood, "Know Thy Side: Propaganda and Parody in Jonson's *Staple of News*," *ELH*, 75:1 (2008): pp. 135-149, p. 142.

310 Donald Lupton, *London and the Country Carbonadoed and Quartred into Severall Characters* (London: 1632), p. 142.

contemporary newssheets. The mock-corantos are evidence that the Staple fabricates news or sells falsehoods that they come by;[311] yet modern editors have discovered historical equivalents for Spinola's offensive in accounts of Catholic military strategies.[312] Whether Jonson's mock-corantos are representative or not, his derision for the news items of a partisan and ideological, specifically Protestant, news trade, profiting from distortions and lies, is apparent. Ironically a conception of Truth, or, more specifically, the ideology that shaped a dominant concept of truth, fuelled the dissemination of falsehood on a commercial scale.

Abusing the conventions of fact

News was an emergent discourse of 'fact'. Despite its reputation for the confusion of information and the particularisation of error, Shapiro claimed that by the late 1600s broadside news was characterised by the same conventions for establishing fact used in law and history.[313] To convey its accuracy, news might claim to have been "verified and confirmed"; writers might state that there had been "further enquiry made into particulars" and that events were "attested by several credible persons", or "sensible witnesses".[314] Shapiro identified this phraseology, one which implies adherence to the conventions of factual discourse, as "typical" in the earliest corantos and consistently present in seventeenth-century news reporting. This phraseology, or language of fact, was intended to persuade; its rhetorical force, and appeals to the

---

[311] Further evidence: Staple clerks can "for a need make 'em [news]" (1.5.122); Thomas is recommended to the Staple as one with a "Quick vein in forging news" (1.5.123).
[312] Mark Z. Muggli, "Ben Jonson and the Business of News," *SEL*, 32:2 (1992): pp. 323-340, p. 335. See notes to 3.2.1-220 in: *The Staple of News*, ed. Devra Rowland Kifer (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1975); *Ben Jonson*, ed. C.H. Herford and Percy Simpson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925-52); *The Staple of News*, ed. Anthony Parr (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988).
[313] Shapiro, *Culture*, p. 88.
[314] Quoted in Shapiro, *Culture*, p. 92.

circumstances of factual discourse and forensic rhetoric, could, by "Colours […] and circumstances", "sway the ordinary judgement either of a weak man, or otherwise of a wise man not fully and considerately […] pondering the matter".[315] Shapiro recognised that the conventions of factual discourse were "more often enunciated than realised."[316] Certainly this appears to be the case at Jonson's Staple.

The workings of the Staple demonstrate both awareness of strategies for the avoidance of factual error in news, and a disregard for such strategies. Thus Master Cymbal delineates the organization of information:

> This is the outer room, where my clerks sit
> And keep their sides; the Register i'the midst;
> The Examiner, he sits private there within;
> And here I have my several rolls and files
> Of news by the alphabet, and all put up
> Under their heads.
> (1.5.2-7)

The roles and office space of personnel are distinct; the news is alphabetised and "subdivided" (7) by type, whether "vacation news, / Term news, and Christmas news" (12-13), and by reliability "news of doubtful credit, as barbers' news - / And tailors' news, porters' and watermen's news" (10). Differentiating news by source credibility suggests sensitivity to the potential for error in establishing and reporting matters of fact. While the Staple may distinguish news stories of doubtful credit, however, it still circulates them, as the story of Spinola's invasion attests. Similarly, the standard methods of corroboration and credit are disregarded. The Staple makes no direct appeal to witnesses, and embrace partisanship, as in the example of the fictitious

---

[315] Bacon, *Of the Colours of Good and Evil*, *WFB*, 7.77. "Colours" have "power to alter the nature of the subject in appearance, and so to lead to error", Ibid.
[316] Shapiro, *Culture*, pp. 89-90.

Spinola reports. Staple clerks may switch between “Protestant news” (14) and "Pontificial news” (15), since it is “but writing so much over again" (3.2.69).[317] The clerks thus compose news *in utramque partem*; this mental habit, cultivated by humanists, was “a schooling in partiality”.[318] Joel Altman has argued that this rhetorical model informed Tudor drama in which it was used to imitate a form of sophistical debate.[319] The technique may, however, be used in the examination of questions to attain “the suspension of belief necessary to arrive at a clearer view of the truth”.[320] Yet it seems more likely that the Staple uses this rhetorical and dialectical method rather to strengthen a partisan, Protestant or “Pontificial”, standpoint, tapping the profits available in partisan news sales.

Turning to how the Staple presents its news, we find Fitton claiming of the mock-corantos that "all are alike true and certain" (3.2.27). ‘Certain’, ‘true’, or ‘exact’ were terms in the discourse of fact appropriated by news writers.[321] These terms, Shapiro notes, would later be contrasted with rumour and hearsay in John Wilkin’s *Essay towards a Real Character and a Philosophical Language* (1668).[322] Jonson’s news office is typical of news reporting which abused terms which act as signifiers of fact to persuade customers of the credibility of their news. Circumstances are also fabricated to accredit stories: the King-Pope-Emperor was appointed upon “the thirtieth of February” (3.2.23).

---

[317] On Jonson's mockery of “journalistic impartiality” see Rockwood, p. 140.
[318] Kathryn Murphy and Anita Traninger, “Introduction,” *Emergence*, p.15. See Traninger, “Taking Sides and the Prehistory of Impartiality”, *Emergence*, pp. 33-64.
[319] Joel Altman, *The Tudor Play of Mind*: *Rhetorical Inquiry and the Development of Elizabethan Drama* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978).
[320] Ibid., p. 43. See Stanley Fish, *Self-Consuming Artifacts: The Experience of Seventeenth-century Literature* (Berkley: University of California Press, 1972), pp. 78-155.
[321] For example: *An Exact and True Collection* (London: 1646); *An Exact and True Diurnal* (London: 1642); *The Certaine Newes of this present Weeke* (London: 1622).
[322] Shapiro, *Culture*, p. 92.

The dubiety of newsmen's methods attracted censure and satire.[323] J. Davies' *Scourge for Paper-persecutors* (1625) charges leading newsman Nathaniel Butter, whom Jonson also targeted, with circulating lies. Criticism also came from within the news business. Jacobean intelligence writer, John Chamberlain, registered his concern with the veracity of corantos. Newsmen, he writes, print "all manner of news" and "the uncertaintie" and "varietie of reports is such that we know not what to believe"; moreover, "what is geven out to day for certain is to morrow contradicted".[324] This "uncertaintie" elicits scepticism (a reaction to the difficulty of establishing truth and the potential for error that is latent in this difficulty) in Chamberlain. He suggests that the passage of information was beyond the control of publishers and that their means of corroborating information were inadequate. Moreover, Chamberlain, a manuscript and letter newswriter, intimates that printed news is lacking the credit that comes with the personal endorsement of the writer thus furthering the spread of error because it is not 'guaranteed'. In time, some publishers acknowledged their errors and errata sheets appeared. Jonson's Staple makes no such concessions; rather, ironically, it claims it shall "reform" (1.5.55) an "error" (54) of the news industry, namely the printing of news. This, humorously, is a minor issue beside the methodological abuses and inadequacies of the Staple and the actual news trade, which disseminated misinformation that furthered the confusion of information and particularisation of errors in print.

---

[323] Mock journals satirising the news: Samuel Sheppard's *Mercurius Dogmaticus* (London: 1648) and *Mercurius Phreneticus* (London:1652); *Mercurius Insanus, Insanissimus* (London: 1648).

[324] Letter from John Chamberlain to Dudley Carleton of February 1620, quoted in Folke Dahl, *A Bibliography of English Corantos and Periodical Newsbooks, 1620-1642* (London: Bibliographical Society, 1952), p. 49.

The reception of news and the cognitive passions of inquiry

Butter's editor answered accusations that his corantos "publish any tidings which were only rumoured without any certainty".[325] His rejoinder placed the interpretative burden upon the reader: "I rather will write true tidings only to be rumoured, when I am not fully sure of them, then to write false tidings to bee true, which will afterwards proue otherwise" for this method shows "my loue and diligence to the vnpartial reader".[326] The impartial reader, a rhetorical formula used increasingly in the seventeenth-century, was a notional figure who read with intelligence, sympathy, and unprejudiced judgement.[327] Butter's editor implies that gathered news is transmitted to the reader unmediated by editorial intervention or obligations of ascertaining proofs; the interpretive onus lies wholly with the reader. As Joad Raymond notes, the rhetorical formula of the impartial reader might be invoked to "touch the charity of the reader" thus "pre-emptively seeking to capture [their] goodwill".[328] Cymbal, who is familiar with the associated notion of the "gentle reader" (1.5.33), surely could not find one more sympathetic to his news than Pennyboy Junior.

Having established that the Staple abuses the persuasive capacity of the language of fact, I turn to the reception of news and how theories of error from the *cultura animi* tradition inform Pennyboy's less than forensic reception of the Staple's fabrications. Pennyboy is easily pigeonholed as a credulous reader, prodigal, gull, and extension of the Bartholomew Cokes format. Yet this familiar stage type is the most complex

---

[325] *Late Newes or True Relations*, 30 (London: 2 July 1624), pp. 1-2.
[326] Ibid.
[327] On the 'impartial reader' see Raymond, "Exporting Impartiality", pp. 151-158.
[328] Ibid., p. 154.

character in the play.[329] Further attention needs to be given to the role of wonder and curiosity in his relationship with news, to his awareness of the conventions of fact, and to his inconsistent application of these conventions, which has gone unnoticed. This selective scrutiny, in the case of Jonson's mock-corantos, preserves their falsehoods for the enjoyment that may be derived from them.

Pennyboy disrupts the Jonsonian dynamic of the abuse of individuals with subjective quirks by opportunistic, forensically shrewd conmen. Turning the tables on a would-be trickster, Pennyboy credits himself, in metatheatrical language, with the ability to "see through" the "perplexed plots / And hidden ends" (5.2.42) of Picklock's attempt to steal his inheritance. For "the unwinding of this so knotted skein" (44) and the resolution of the inheritance plot, he depends upon systems of proof neglected by the Staple. Pennyboy is competently versed in the foremost mode of proof, ignored by Staple news, the use of a witness. Indeed, events necessitating forensic proficiency aid Pennyboy's personal growth allowing him to overcome the *cultura animi* notions of error within his character and faultlessly execute the logic of fact.

Accused of having confessed to duping Pennyboy's father of his wealth, Picklock, lawyer and Staple emissary, questions the circumstances of his alleged confession: "When? Where? To whom?" (5.2.48). The "to whom" must be revealed: "I must have a witness" (65). Augmenting his point, and hoping to intimidate Pennyboy, Picklock marshals the language of court summons; the elusive witness requires "a writ of summons", "subpoena", an "attachment" (63-64). The prodigal produces his witness

[329] Ann Barton agrees: Pennyboy is an "attractive and complicated character"; in *Staple*, Jonson tries to "break free of character types [...] from his earlier comedies." Anne Barton, *Ben Jonson, Dramatist* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), pp. 238-239.

and, not to be outdone, addresses Tom in the same courtroom idiom: “Come forth, Tom. / Speak what thou heard’st, the truth, and the whole truth, / And nothing but the truth" (67-9). Pennyboy utilises modes of proof for corroborating matters of fact when he is at financial risk. Wits, in Jonson’s corpus, exploit the “pervasive law-mindedness” of characters.[330] Yet here a would-be wit’s inflated sense of his own grasp of the law leads him to presume the legal ignorance of his mark.

Picklock’s presumption of Pennyboy’s ignorance of how to operate the logic of fact is not ungrounded for when it comes to Pennyboy’s eager consumption of news the prodigal does not openly interrogate the factuality of the Staple product. His fondness for news is reflected in his name; a printed broadside could be purchased for a single penny.[331] Pennyboy’s humour, a weakness for the new and novel, for the very latest news of atypical happenings, explains his selective application of the modes of proof to the reception of information. "I would hear now / Some curious news" (3.2.94-95) he declares. The Prodigal is curious, in the sense of inquisitive, for *the* curious, or that which is singular.[332] In “these our miserable dayes”, Wright perceived “as curious a generation as ever was clapped under the cope of Heaven”.[333] Pennyboy numbers amongst Wright’s curious generation. His curiosity seeks fantastic news to excite his wonder; the Staple supplies this, drawing to it “the curious and the negligent [...] To taste the *cornucopiae* of her rumours” (116-119). The novelty of Pecunia, described

[330] Hutson, *Suspicion*, p. 333.
[331] Tessa Watt, *Cheap Print and Popular Piety 1550-1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 11.
[332] See Barbara M. Benedict, *Curiosity: A Cultural History of Early Modern Inquiry* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001) for a discussion of the variation in how the complex terms ‘curious’ and ‘curiosity’ were understood. Also: Neil Kenny, *The Uses of Curiosity in Early Modern France and Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press); Kenny offers himself as a guide through the “semantic swamp” (428) of ‘curiosity’s’ wide range of early modern meanings.
[333] Wright, *Passions*, p. 265.

as a “wonder, / Of these times [to] dazzle the vulgar eyes” (3.2.237-238), also excites Pennyboy’s curiosity: "I cannot satisfy / My curious eyes" (2.5.59-60). The unsettled emotions Pennyboy experiences on beholding Pecunia resemble the “walking up and down of the Soule”, where the mind never settles, which Reynolds called *ambulatio animae* –itself a condition attendant upon curiosity:[334]

> My passion was clear contrary and doubtful.
> I shook for fear, and yet I danced for joy
> I had such motions as the sunbeams make
> Against a Wall or playing on water,
> Or trembling vapour of a boiling pot –
> (2.5.62-67)[335]

Pennyboy’s agitated passions cause him to outwardly tremble. By virtue of being “rarely still” the passions impair the concentration leaving one prone to what Susan James styles “error as inconstancy”.[336] This inconstancy may extend to the interrogation of matters of fact and, thus, to the identification of proofs to discredit matters of fact.

The blindness of customers to proofs which discredit Staple news resembles Reynolds’ *cultura animi* category of "voluntary error".[337] Reynolds’ Latin tag "quod volumus facile credimus; what suits our wishes, is forwardly believed" is applicable to the Anabaptist Dopper’s fascination with millenarian infused news (3.2.23-149) and to those who read corantos with the same Protestant ideological bias with which

---

[334] Reynolds, *Treatise*, p. 175-6.
[335] Cf. the parallel description of Medea’s passion in Apollonius Rhodius, *The Argonautica*, tr. R.C. Seaton (London: Heinemann, 1912), 3.755-759, and Reynolds, *Treatise*, p.106. On the image in ancient Greek and early modern representation see Gail Kern Paster, *Humoring the Body: Emotions and the Shakespearean Stage* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), p. 9.
[336] James, *Passions and Action*, p.163, pp. 180-181.
[337] Reynolds, *Treatise*, p. 175-176.

they were written.[338] Whether Reynolds' tag applies to Pennyboy depends on whether he has "forwardly believed" Staple news. Does Pennyboy's novelty-seeking humour impede his execution of the popular skills of evidence evaluation? Is his a case of "when men's minds come to sojourn with their affections" (*Discoveries*, 1046-7)?

Wright followed the patristic, medieval attitude of hostility towards curiosity as a morally ambiguous passion allied to pride and lust.[339] In the seventeenth century curiosity as a cognitive passion of inquiry was reinvigorated and closely interconnected with wonder. Wonder spurred curiosity and for selected thinkers became a valuable, though potentially problematic, motivation to knowledge seeking.[340] However, an excess of wonder or astonishment arrests one's faculties completely, by the "fixing of the mind on one object of cogitation".[341]

Pennyboy is fully aware that the Staple sells fabrications; his mind has not been brought to the mental impasse of astonishment. Rather Pennyboy's aesthetic attitude to news appreciates the enjoyment invented news provides:

> […] if the honest common people
> Will be abused, why should not they ha' their pleasure
> In the believing lies

---

[338] Ibid., p. 495.

[339] Cf. Augustine's denunciation of curiosity: *Confessions*, tr. Henry Chadwick (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 10.35, pp. 211-212; 5.3, pp. 74.

[340] For a historicised account of curiosity and wonder see Daston and Park, pp. 303-328. On 'wonder and error' see Sutton, "Controlling the passions", pp. 129-132. On wonder's pros and cons within a discussion of the passions as a source of error see Nicolas Malebranche, *Father Malebranche's Treatise Concerning the Search after Truth,* tr. T. Taylor, 2 vols. (1694), 5, ch.7-8.

[341] Bacon, *Sylva Sylvarum*, *WFB*, 2.570. On astonishment see also: René Descartes, *The Passions of the Soul*, *PWD*, 2.71.

(1.5.42-44)

In an interesting transference, Pennyboy delivers these lines which, as we have seen, had formerly belonged to the Printer of *News*. Pennyboy derives pleasure from fabrications; he may recognise Staple news "lies" (1.5.44) but eagerly consumes Staple news because it excites his wonder. Pennyboy dissociates himself from the "abused" individuals whose manners render them susceptible to believing fabrications deceitfully employing factual signifiers, but does wish to share in the pleasure of fabricated facts that the "abused" experience. As we noted, many *cultura animi* definitions of error revolve around assent; Pennyboy never actually gives his assent to, that is to say, believes, Staple news, so it remains a grey area as to whether he errs. He is certainly party to error as one of the cognitive-affective distempers, specifically the potential for error built into the passion of wonder; but of error, as a specific sense of being mistaken in a matter of fact, Pennyboy appears not to be guilty.

Wonder was an ambivalent cognitive passion for Jonson.[342] Pennyboy's wonder-seeking temperament is a metatheatrical comment in which the prodigal's happy consumption of fanciful news parallels the audience's reception of the superficial spectacles of theatre. In *News*, Jonson is unambiguous that wonder impairs understanding. The moon dwellers "entranced […] with wonder" (248-249) must set aside this encumbering passion to achieve knowledge.[343] Jonson spurs the "dazzled" moon dwellers to "collect your sight" so that "You may by knowledge grow more

---

[342] Peter Platt relates Jonson's problems with wonder to the feud with Inigo Jones; this quarrel embodies the "tension" between "reason and marvel". Peter Platt, *Reason Diminished: Shakespeare and the Marvellous* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), p. 100.
[343] On wonder as "broken knowledge" see Bacon, *Advancement*, p. 8.

bold, / And so more able to behold" (261-268) James' resplendent virtues.[344] Jonson constrains wonder, preventing it hindering the judgement, whilst not allowing it and the entertainment it brings to diminish entirely. The early modern audience was trained to interrogate plausibility and credibility. Yet, the "state of truth" (Prologue for the stage, *Staple*, 26) in which Jonson's drama may maintain the audience allows them to indulge wonder and suspend the necessity for certainty/truth, like Pennyboy in his receipt of news, but also, like Pennyboy, without giving their assent.

Upsetting types: the cultivation of the mind

That affection impedes the mind and leads characters with subjective eccentricities to err in matters of fact is a conclusion one may draw from many of Jonson's plays. *Staple* is less straightforward in this respect for Pennyboy upsets his type; he is a shrewd gull, a fool redeemed, and an intriguing evolution of the stage prodigal. Like so many of Jonson's plays, *Staple* emphasises the importance of interpretation or judgement, and attacks those who lack discernment. The "state of truth" Jonson claims that he can maintain us in is one in which individuals are capable of exercising judgement and avoiding error.[345] Yet the satire of the unperceiving gull is problematized, for Pennyboy possesses discernment but chooses when to apply it.

Act 5 contains most indication of Pennyboy's cultivation. Pennyboy enters wearing his extravagant attire beneath his father's patched cloak; an overly confident Picklock equates it with Pennyboy's wit: "Why my velvet heir / Turned beggar in mind as robes?" (5.1.60-61). However, the prodigal's sartorial comedown appears to have

[344] Platt's also identifies this incited dissipation of wonder. *Reason Diminished*, pp. 114-115.
[345] Jane Rickard, "A Divided Jonson?: Art and Truth in The Staple of News", *ELR* 42 (2012): pp. 294-316, p. 298.

sharpened his wits. A dress-conscious playwright, Jonson opens *Staple* by attiring Pennyboy in the latest fashions; the scene recalls Wright's assessment of "New fangleness" of clothing which "proceeddeth from an inconstant minde".[346] Pennyboy's dress was a symptom of his *ambulatio animae,* or restless soul, that causes the mind to range.[347]

Sober attire reflects Pennyboy's new mental focus; he has begun to cultivate that self-critical independence of mind which will liberate him from his former follies: "I now begin to see my vanity" (5.1.13). The prodigal considers himself as the object of critical observation and the subject of fault-finding comment; upon the "tongues of all" Pennyboy is "the fable o'the time, / Matter of scorn and mark of reprehension" (5.1.12-13). This is a striking reversal from his earlier request that others "look on me [...] with all thine eyes / To see me at best advantage" (1.1.4-7). Pennyboy has internalised the critical gaze of which early modern conduct books required the reader to imagine themselves the object; this gaze "interprets bodily deportment as symptomatic of the soul's internal regime".[348]

From being a potential target for abuse, Pennyboy becomes a wit by outmanoeuvring Picklock, presenting his witness, and intercepting the document which had given Picklock power of attorney over Pennyboy Canter's estate. His success aligns him

[346] Wright, *Passions*, p. 220.
[347] Reynolds, *Treatise*, p. 175.
[348] Lorna Hutson, "Civility and Virility in Ben Jonson", *Representations*, 78:1 (2002): pp. 1-27, p. 8. Hutson traces this required internalisation to Plutarch's moral essays ('On the avoidance of anger' and 'How to profit from your enemies') and their early modern translations which reiterated Plutarch's advocacy of moral improvement through self-surveillance. See Corneanu on Plutarch's influence upon early modern *cultura animi* authors: *Regimens*, p. 61, pp. 79-80.

with other victorious stage prodigals.[349] Part of this success is his betrothal at the play's conclusion. Pennyboy's personal growth is not at an end; in marriage Pecunia shall "teach" him the "golden mean" which is "with sound mind; this, safe frugality" (5.6.64-66). Thus Jonson concludes his retelling of the prodigal story with both a financial gain and a moral one associated with the ethical culture of the mind; Pennyboy's transformation sees him progress towards self-scrutiny and self-regulation.

Pennyboy has been allowed to develop self-awareness and learn self-scrutiny as a result of the tribulation of his father's experiment. Rather than using acerbic satire to purge his foolish manners, via condemnation or ridicule, Jonson tolerantly gives Pennyboy the capacity to regulate the inconstancy of his mind which stems from a wonder-seeking temperament. How successful Pennyboy's reformation would have been had the Staple not exploded is another issue; so too is whether it will be undone by his father's instruction to "Put off your rags and be yourself again" (5.3.22). Regimens emphasise that self-scrutiny must be accompanied by lifelong self-regulation.[350]

Man's educability in Staple *and* The Devil is an Ass

Above I suggested that Jonson's attitude to the cultivation of the mind wavered between Baconian optimism for man's educability and Wright's pessimistic stance on man's capacity for improvement. Jonson's ambivalence regarding moral

[349] Unpunished prodigals appear in: Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher's *The Scornful Lady* (London: 1613), Middleton's *A Trick to Catch the Old One* (London: 1608), and William Rowley's *A New Wonder, A Woman Never Vexed* (London: 1632). On Jacobean city comedies glorifying the prodigal see Barton, *Jonson, Dramatist*, p. 242.
[350] Corneanu, *Regimens*, pp. 147-8.

transformations conflicts with his corrective agenda. In the ambiguity surrounding the permanence of Pennyboy's transformation, one may trace Jonson's doubts about his endeavour to help man rid himself of error as a member of the cognitive-affective distempers and those errors of fact that result from such distempers.

Jonson's *cultura animi* attitude was certainly informed by an awareness of human nature's inflexibility; he creates characters with indelible character flaws, such as Epicure Mammon and Carlo Buffone, who are beyond rehabilitation. But there is, of course, a difference between dramatis personae and actual human beings. In the case of these characters, Jonson seems to agree with Wright that man lacked application to change, and he was reluctant to aid those uninterested in doing so (to do "good to any man against his will"). Yet Jonson did not deem man to be incapable of changing, and characters like Buffone provide incentive, acting as deeply unattractive negative exemplars for the audience, exciting their antipathy towards the unchecked rule of cognitive-affective distempers.

Characters rarely experience moral epiphanies in Jonson's drama. *Devil* offers two exceptions in Wittipol and Manly. Jonson, though ambivalent about moral transformations, does stage the cultivation of the mind and, on occasion, these transformations are enabled by legal process. We have seen Pennyboy's legal parry fix his *ambulatio animae*, focusing his mental energies upon the cornerstones of all discourses of fact – on the discovery of the facts of the matter concerning Picklock's duplicity, on the location of the documents which facilitate it, and on the presentation of witnesses. *Devil* presents a further example of a character's growth in affective self-awareness accompanying legal process. Jonson's legal imagination delivers to

Wittipol "[t]he brave occasion virtue offers" (4.4.29). Fitzdottrel's convenient infatuation with the Spanish lady Wittipol impersonates leads to his careless disposal of his estate in a deed of feoffment. Rather than cuckold Fitzdottrel, Wittipol is moved to protect Mistress Fitzdottrel as an innocent party "matched to a mass of folly" (4.4.20). By laying aside his adulterous intentions and making noble use of his forensic disposition to enfranchise Mistress Fitzdottrel financially, Wittipol grows beyond his former gallant character type.

These instances of legal process elicit instances of personal growth or reveal that this growth has occurred; they are occasions when characters combine the popular forensic disposition of sixteenth-century drama with affective self-awareness. Pennyboy's and Wittipol's growth renders them better suited to execute the logic of factual discourse. Jonson shares Bacon's interest in the interconnectedness of the cognitive and affective components which contribute to error formation and error avoidance. Just as Bacon united practical moral philosophy with his 'new logic' to further the progress of natural philosophical inquiry, Jonson recognises, and recommends to his audience (who may be 'cultivated' by example), that the cultivated mind better enables unperturbed cognition and the avoidance of errors of fact.

The second transformation of *Devil* is Manly's volte-face from being Wittipol's assistant in an adultery plot to close the play as Jonson's moral mouthpiece. Several critics are uncomfortable with this shift; Douglas Duncan believes it short-circuits the "currents of excitement" that occur during the "best moments of the play" whilst Peter Womack perceives an unfortunate swing from psychological realism of character to a

debate between abstract principles of “desire and prudence”.[351] Another sound reason to be unconvinced is Jonson’s ‘Epistle to Sir Edward Sackville’ (*Underwood* 13) which, supporting a notion of virtue as cultivation or *habitus*, tells of how moral transformations occur by increments:

> ’Tis by degrees that men arrive at glad
> Profit in aught; each day some little add;
> In time twill make a heap. This is true
> Alone in money, but in manners too.
> (133-136)

These increments are palpable to the maturing individual; adapting Plutarch’s sentiments on ‘How a man may become aware of his progress in virtue’, Jonson poses a series of rhetorical questions, concluding with an emphatic statement gainsaying Manly’s epiphany:

> Can I discern how shadows are decreased
> Or grown, by height or lowness of the sun?
> And can I of less substance? When I run,
> Ride, sail, am coached, know I how far I have gone,
> And my mind’s motion not? […]
> No! He must feel and know, that will advance:
> Men have been great, but never good, by chance
> Or on the sudden.
> (120-127)[352]

If we can measure physical qualities we can discern “the mind’s motions” and “feel” its alteration. Of course, the reality of the mind and the mirror of reality Jonson staged are not quite the same; the latter is subject to the playwright’s dramatic and

---

[351] Peter Womack, *Ben Jonson* (Oxford: 1986), p. 47. Duncan, *Lucianic Tradition*, p. 228.

[352] See Plutarch, *Moralia*, tr. F.C. Babbitt et al., 15 vols. (London: Heinemann, 1927-76), 1.409. Also Seneca, *Ad Lucilium Epistulae morales*, tr. R.M. Gummere, 3 vols. (London: Heinemann, 1917-25), 123.16: “No one is good by chance: virtue must be learned.”

didactic licence. Manly's sudden moral outburst may evince a moral fervour Jonson was simply unable to contain.[353]

Ann Barton concludes that *Devil* "celebrates" the "ability of at least some people to change and grow".[354] But are Barton's "people" men or characters? The elision of stage and audience is particularly strong in *Devil*, achieved by Fitzdottrel's desire to leave to watch the very performance underway; this elision promotes a blurring of characters, as studies of man, and the actual men and women of the audience. Barton's celebration is also qualified by Jonson's disappointment that the audience will likely fail to emulate Wittipol's maturation just as the majority of the characters, Merecraft and Everill in particular, remain unreformed. Indeed, Richard Allen Cave questions whether the world of *Devil*, itself an extension of Jacobean London given the noted elision, is ultimately "unredeemable" because it cannot recognise Wittipol's transformation "let alone understand or emulate it".[355] What Cave perceives, in contrast to Barton, is not celebration but a playwright wearied by his failure to effect moral change in his audience. This weariness is again suggested in *Underwood*, where Jonson assumes a tone of moral independence from the world whilst sensing that however engaged he remains with it, he is powerless to effect change in a world "unresponsive to his counsel".[356] That Jonson continues to try to effect change is further evidence of his conflicted attitude towards man's educability.

---

[353] On Jonson's difficulty containing this fervour see Duncan, *Lucianic Tradition*, p. 228.
[354] Barton, *Jonson, dramatist*, p. 235.
[355] Richard Allen Cave, *Ben Jonson* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Education, 1991), p. 134.
[356] Jonson, *Underwood*, ed. Colin Burrows, *CBJ*, 7.74.

During his career Jonson's approach towards the cultivation of his audience altered, as did how he desired them to receive his representations of cognitive-affective error. The Prologue of *Every Man In* desires the audience's punitive laughter, which graces Jonson's satirical portraits of the particularised cognitive-affective errors of humanity, to be transferred to the reception of these errors in the world outside the theatre. Laughter and ridicule are potent weapons in Jonson's early comical satire. By the time of *Devil*, Jonson recommends his audience set aside the sense of superiority which generates their laughter and resist "taking joy, or pride / In human errors" for "We do all ill things" (5.8.169-70). *Devil* and *Staple* evince a more tolerant view of man's capacity for error (whether as a cognitive-affective distemper or the factual errors that they cause); Jonson has evidently progressed from the acerbic, purgative methods of *Every Man In* and *Every Man Out*. By this point in his career, Jonson was questioning the efficacy of his former strategy for the correction of manners; addressing his audience in the prologue to *Devil*, Jonson concedes "We know not how to affect you" (19). This admission suggests Jonson faltering as he undertook his final dramatic attempt "to better men's minds, [and] destroy their manners" (*Discoveries*, 1080-1081) before a ten-year hiatus from the stage.

Jonson's approach was certainly different in *Devil*. Many of the *cultura animi* aspects of Jonson's comedy are retained: the play displays to the audience the affective dimensions of error; its plot unravels the complex relationship between errors of judgement and the passions (such as pride and greed) and it makes no secret of its agenda for cultivating the mind. But Jonson's means to this end have changed. *Devil* is, on the whole, more uncomplicatedly moral than many of Jonson's earlier comedies

which generally incorporated a degree of what Duncan calls "teasing".[357] This oblique strategy for moral direction challenges the audience's discrimination whilst playing upon its susceptibilities; it sees the playwright become "an ironist who lures us into false or incomplete or compromising reactions to what passes on stage".[358] We may find ourselves rooting for adultery at one point in *Devil*, but ultimately Jonson concludes the play with an unambiguous moral instruction: to recognise our moral and cognitive-affective errors and pursue a "true life" realised through the transforming power of "shame" (5.8.174). This is more effective than the traditional method of satire, "punishment" (174). At *Devil*'s close, Jonson's doubts about the audience's educability and about his more oblique strategies to affect this materialise in the vein of didacticism.

"[T]he comedy of life expresseth so many and various affections of the mind"[359]

There are "no fewer forms of minds than of bodies amongst us" (*Discoveries*, 486), wrote Jonson. *Cultura animi* texts offered Jonson a catalogue of affective stances to reproduce. Moreover, the attention they gave to the complex relationship between errors of judgement and the passions provided Jonson with insight into the interactions of cognitive and affective components in error formation. Jonson supplements the particular interest of *cultura animi* authors in unravelling the relationship between errors of judgement and the passions by speculating upon the permutations of circumstance, narrative, and distemper which might combine within his dramatic spaces to particularise error as a mistake in matters of fact.

---

[357] Duncan, *Lucianic Tradition*, p. 6.
[358] Ibid., p. 3.
[359] Jonson, *Discoveries*, 1800-81.

The techniques of evidence evaluation and forensic rhetoric associated with the law and the 'culture of fact', which critics have shown early modern drama absorbing and which I suggest contributed to the particularisation of error, should prevent and disprove errors of fact. Jonson studied the affective fallibility of the mind in the operation of the logic of fact; legal process and evidence evaluation were opportunities to demonstrate an imperfect human capacity for judgement and the corruption of judgement by distempers. However, as I have shown, there were also occasions where forensic proficiency and affective self-scrutiny coexist within characters. What is more, this cognitive-affective self-awareness advances their moral operation of the law.

This chapter proposed that Jonson's drama was attuned to a theory of error as a member of the cognitive–affective distempers that was a distinctive feature of *cultura animi* texts of his period whilst, moreover, considering intellectual sympathies between Jonson and notable *cultura animi* authors. Jonson's well documented corrective dramatic agenda is rearticulated within the *cultura animi* context and its interest in error as a member of the cognitive-affective distempers, and – to a lesser extent – the vulgar errors tradition. Together these informing contexts helped shaped Jonson's antipathy to error and his theatrical project for the "true tillage of the mind" (*Discoveries*, 343).[360]

---

[360] Jonson shares this metaphor of cultivation with Bacon. Cf. "Georgickes of the mind concerning the husbandry & tillage therof", *Advancement*, p. 135.

Chapter 3

Diagnostic and Curative Errors in Two Caroline Plays

This chapter concerns the theatrical treatment of melancholy as informed by a concern with medical error and methodological advances attendant on the diffusion of the conventions of fact into medical and natural philosophical discourse. While learned medicine recorded its methodological consciousness of error in texts which particularised error, the playwrights discussed in this chapter suggest that error in highly particularised forms, error crafted to rather than by circumstances, has curative utility. The playwrights incorporate these specialised forms of error into their exemplifications of theatre as cure.

Engaging with seventeenth-century medical discourse on melancholy, John Ford's *The Lover's Melancholy* (licensed November 1628) and Richard Brome's *The Antipodes* (first performed 1638) adopt and adapt ideas from Robert Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*. These playwrights, in their use of particularised formulations of error, reacted to popular concerns with advances in medical methodology and medical error, specifically those encapsulated in the theatrical stereotype of the quack physician. These advances saw practices integral to the culture of fact, especially to its natural philosophical execution in the pursuit of facts of nature, adopted by medical practitioners.

I begin by detailing medicine's affiliation with the culture of fact and the methodological advancements in question, before examining how learned and

popular medical discourse of the period particularised error. The chapter then considers melancholy's relationship with the identified contexts of error before assessing the plays in light of these contexts, especially the use of highly particularised formulations of error by stage physicians in diagnostic and curative devices.

Medicine and the culture of fact

The concept of fact was adapted from the spheres of law and history to natural history and natural philosophy;[361] matter of fact expanded to cover natural phenomena, whether observed or generated experimentally.[362] Medicine was intimately linked with natural history by virtue of dealing with the observation of natural objects, occurrences, and experimental results.[363] Seventeenth-century English medicine's increasing interest in observation developed in tandem with the emergence of the discourse of fact in other disciplines, most notably natural philosophy with which medicine was also closely tied.[364]

Following Bacon, English naturalists pursued a natural history composed of facts; the credibility of a matter of fact is tied to the observation and experience of it. To induce belief, it should be substantiated by first-hand observation, and the testimony of

---

[361] On natural historians and experimentalists adopting and adapting fact to suit their emphasis on observation of particular natural phenomena, see Shapiro, *Culture*, p. 106.
[362] Ibid., p. 109.
[363] The aspects of medicine identifiable with natural history were increasing in the seventeenth-century, as the development of anatomy theatres and physic gardens at the universities attests. Yet there remained aspects (such as the theoretical consideration of causes, and spiritual physic) which could not be called natural history.
[364] On medicine's dependence upon natural philosophy, see Andrew Wear, *Knowledge and Practice in English Medicine, 1550-1680* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 362.

credible, impartial witnesses.[365] The permeation of the concept and conventions of fact into several seventeenth-century discourses saw corroboration by witnesses become a practice they all shared.[366] Observation, along with experiment, became the "dominant" mode of scientific inquiry and the primary means to ascertain natural facts.[367] Observation as a source of knowledge was common to Paracelsian medicine and Galilean natural history.[368] As the sixteenth-century progressed, medicine's dependence on observation and experience grew, as a consequence partly of the "recognition" that both sense data and reason played a role in ancient Greek authors, and partly of the increasing popularity of Hippocratic methods.[369] As this dependence grew, the study and description of the particulars of nature replaced the belief that one worked from first principles in the pursuit of science. This was reflected in medical instruction offered by the best European faculties, including Padua's, a popular choice with English students.[370] Once trained, they returned to England with an eye for the particular.

Several figures, despite their different outlooks, fortified the view that medicine's future lay in acquiring facts via observation and experiment. The Helmontians strengthened medicine's dependence on natural philosophy, promoting observation,

---

365 See Shapiro, *Culture*, p. 9, pp. 13-18.
366 Ibid., p. 100.
367 Ibid., p. 111.
368 Wear, *Knowledge*, p. 98. On Paracelsus see Walter Pagel, *Paracelsus: An Introduction to Philosophical Medicine in the Era of the Renaissance (New York: Karger,* 1982).
369 Gowland, *Worlds*, p. 38. On the early modern conception of Hippocrates see: Wear, *Knowledge*, p.374; Wesley D. Smith, *The Hippocratic Tradition* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1979), ch.1.
370 See Harold J. Cook, "Medicine", *Cambridge History of Science*, ed. Katharine Park et al, 7 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 3.415. On Padua's popularity, Robert G. Frank, "The Physician as Virtuoso in Seventeenth-Century England", *English Scientific Virtuosi in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Los Angeles: William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, University of California, 1979), pp. 59-114, p.63

experimentation, and innovation whilst deploring reliance upon the past.[371] William Harvey helped legitimise the observational and experimental methods he employed to discover the blood's circulation.[372] Harvey was indebted to anatomists, especially Andre Du Laurens for whom *autopsia* (seeing for oneself) held greater certainty than doctrine.[373] George Ent and Francis Glisson continued Harvey's approach, at times in association with the '1645 group'.[374] Harvey, the Helmontians, the Oxford physiologists, and the '1645 group' reinforced the view that medicine's future lay in observationally and experimentally obtained facts.[375]

Error: the context of learned and popular medicine

The particularisation of medical error arose not only from the permeation of factual conventions into medicine, but also from medical humanism, which aimed to restore the purity of ancient medical texts and identify errors in the increased numbers of new editions of ancient writings. The introduction noted Leoniceno's attack on Pliny's *Historia naturalis*, which suggested that even exemplary editions contained "several

371 For a discussion of the Helmontians see Wear, *Knowledge* ch.8. Also see Cook, "Medicine", p. 423.

372 On Harvey as a legitimising figure for a new methodology, see Frank, "Physician", pp. 66-71.

373 Andrew Wear, "William Harvey and the 'Way of the Anatomists'", *History of Science* 21.3 (1983): pp. 223-249. *De motu cordis* (Frankfurt: 1628) advocates *Autopsia*. The preface to *De generatione* (London: 1651) extols the certainty of observation. See Wear, "Anatomists", pp. 228-229. Wear stresses the indebtedness of Harvey's method to his Paduan training. Harvey invoking the language and conventions of fact: *De motu cordis* aims to "lay open my observations and experiments" and "to render" the circulation "confirmed by sense and experience", William Harvey, *Two Anatomical Exercitations* C*oncerning the Circulation of the Blood* (London: 1653), p. 74. On *De generatione* using legal phraseology to advocate first-hand observation, see Shapiro, *Culture*, p. 111.

374 On Harvey's disciples see Robert G. Frank, Jr., *Harvey and the Oxford Physiologists* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), ch.2. See Frank's discussion of the '1645 group', "Physician", pp. 80–84. Also Charles Webster, *The Great Instauration*: *Science, Medicine and Reform, 1626-1660* (London: Duckworth, 1975), pp. 54-57. This group's physicians support the argument that English physicians ceased to be repositories of received knowledge and became innovators and investigator within a larger knowledge generating community. Frank, "Physician", pp. 65-66.

375 See Wear, *Knowledge*, p. 365.

categories of error and confusion of fact" engendered by Pliny's method.[376] Leoniceno's contribution to medical humanism in his attack of Pliny saw humanism's philological agenda shift towards a more methodological focus; a distinction becomes clear between errors in the transmission of ancient texts and errors in their content. By the 1530s Leoniceno was not alone in suggesting that authorities had erred.[377] Jean Baptiste Van Helmont vowed to "renounce the errors of the schools concerning [...] the groundwork of medicine".[378] The "Errors of the Ancients" and the "error of the Schools" were themes of Noah Biggs' *Mataeotechnia medicinae praxeos* (1651).[379] The utility of received knowledge was questioned; its accuracy was doubtful and it stultified progress.[380] The particularisation of error justified calls, including Biggs' petition to Parliament, for medicine's reformation.[381]

Medical error texts did not exclusively concern the learned errors identified by humanists; lay demand for medical knowledge was considerable.[382] James Primrose's *Popular Errours* aimed to "shew forth certaine Errours of the people, which disturbe [...] curing".[383] Primrose addresses mistaken medical practice in topics affecting daily

---

[376] French, "Pliny", p. 261. For these categories see Leoniceno, *Opuscula* (Basel: 1532), pp. 2r, 3r, 3v, 5r, 16v.
[377] Cook, "Medicine", p. 413.
[378] As quoted in Walter Pagel, *Joan Baptista Van Helmont: Reformer of Science and Medicine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p. 19.
[379] Noah Biggs, *Mataeotechnia medicinae praxeos* (London: 1651), p.9, p.51. See also Wear, *Knowledge*, p. 374.
[380] Reliance upon ancient medicine yielded "much Iteration, but small Addition": Bacon, *Advancement*, p. 99.
[381] On Biggs see Allen Debus, "Paracelsian Medicine: Noah Biggs and the Problem of Medical Reform", *Medicine in Seventeenth Century England* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974): pp. 33-48.
[382] On vernacular popularity, see Peter Slack, "Mirrors of Health and Treasures of Poor Men: The Uses of Vernacular Medical Literature in Tudor England", *Health, Medicine, and Mortality in the Sixteenth Century*, ed. Charles Webster (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), pp. 238-273.
[383] James Primrose, *Popular Errors* (*PE*) (London: 1651), B3.

life: whether plague is infectious; whether consumption is known by the urine; bloodletting during pregnancy; when purging pills should be taken, and tobacco usage. Increasing popularity can also be seen in vernacularisation: Van Foreest's *The Arraignment of Urines: Wherein are Set Downe the Manifold Errors and Abuses of Ignorant Vrine-Mongring Empirickes* (1623) was "*for the benefit of our British nations … translated into our English tongue*" by Dr James Hart. Primrose's *Popular Errours* appeared first in Latin but was reissued in English translation in 1651. These texts detailed errors arising from: superstition; credulity; partisanship; choice of medical practitioner; physicians' understanding of medical teachings; diagnostic and prognostic failure.[384] Women, apothecaries, barber-surgeons, and quacksalvers (or mountebanks) were common sources of error.[385]

"*The Judgement of Doctor Zacutus*" recommends Primrose's text because it "detects" – again using the terminology of fact – the "Errours of Quacksalvers".[386] Primrose characterises mountebanks by their theatricality and ineffective use of experiment, they: "shew forth their tricks upon the Stage" and "[i]f they had remedies […] seeing

---

[384] On errors arising from superstition see Primrose, *PE*, p. 108, p. 183, p. 193; Laurent Joubert, *Popular Errors*, tr. Gregory David de Rocher (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1989), p. 49; Joubert, *The Second Part of the Popular Errors*, tr. Gregory David de Rocher (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1995), p. 191. On errors arising from credulity see Pieter van Foreest, *The Arraignment of Vrines* (London: 1623), bk.2, ch.3. On jargon duping the ill-educated see Biggs, *Mataeotechnia*, p. 184. On the uneducated perpetuating the errors of phoney and ill-qualified practitioners through partisanship and slander, see Van Foreest, *Arraignment*, p. 67, p. 47. On the public preference for physicians who use the professional terms of medical learning to those with experience, see Primrose, *PE*, p. 2. Preference for mountebanks, see Bacon, *Advancement*, p. 97. On physicians spreading errors through ignorance and poor understanding of physic, see Primrose, *PE*, p. 2.

[385] See Primrose, *PE*, ch.3 and ch.5. Criticism of women physicians: Scipio Mercurio, *De gli errori populari d'Italia* (Verona: 1645), pp. 1-2; Van Foreest, *Arraignment*, p. 72; Primrose *PE*, ch.5. On Barber-surgeons: Mercurio, *Errori populari*, pp. 208, p. 210, p. 208.

[386] Primrose, *PE*, Bv.

the successe, we would commend their experiments".[387] The mountebank's theatricality is a source of error; mountebanks do "mens deaths make [through] their experiments" and "imitate good and skilfull physicians, but cannot attain to them".[388] Mountebanks act the part of the skilful physician but, like a bad actor, fail in the execution. Other physicians, including Francis Herring in his translation of Johann Oberndorff's *The Anatomyse of the True Physition and the Counterfeit Mounte-bank* (1602), adapted the concerns of anti-theatrical writers in their characterisation of the mountebank.[389] These physicians used the notion of role-play "to define the illegitimacy of their competitors" and characterise them as "actors who mount the stage medical practice".[390] To the ranks of false physicians, Van Foreest added "Empiricke-Urine–mongers" who, theatrically, adopt a "stern countenance" and "counterfeit gravity" to examine patients' urine.[391] Van Foreest stresses the ignorance and credulity of the patient-audience whose attention is consumed by pseudo-medical spectacle; their credulity is akin to an audiences' willing (and comparatively harmless) suspension of their critical faculties when at a play.

The contemporary literature on dubious practitioners was "voluminous", and within London unlicensed practitioners "flourished".[392] Improvements to formal medical education alongside alterations to the policing of medicine contributed to learned and popular awareness of medical error. The 1620s saw an increase in medical

---

387 Ibid., p. 23. False physicians stage "iuglings, cousinages & impostures". John Cotta, *A Short Discouerie of the Vnobserued Dangers of Seuerall Sorts of Ignorant and Vnconsiderate Practisers of Physicke in England* (London: 1612), p. 8.
388 Primrose, *PE*, p. 59.
389 See William Kerwin, *Beyond the Body: The Boundaries of Medicine and English Renaissance Drama* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2005), ch.5.
390 Ibid., p. 133.
391 Van Foreest, *Arraignment*, bk.2 ch.3; p.59.
392 Cook, "Medicine", p. 419n. Margaret Pelling and Charles Webster, "Medical Practitioners", *Health, Medicine and Mortality,* pp.165-235, p. 165.

students proportionate to the growth of the universities and the lengthening of the degree for Doctor of Medicine.[393] Professionalization promoted physicians' assertions of their medical superiority and the attempt by the College to monopolise the practice of medicine in London.[394] The stereotype of the incompetent physician in Jacobean and Caroline drama was an expression of popular awareness of medical error informed by the crowded medical marketplace, the College's prosecutorial battles, and the uncertain status of physicians resulting not just from awareness of dubious practitioners, but from calls for the reformation of medicine and the methodological changes which were in motion.[395] The stereotype drew upon a lack of faith in physicians who were popularly perceived as inconsiderate and, as Van Helmont suggests in his "wish" that physicians would "No more attempt [...] to dreign the hopes, bodies, veins, strength and purses of the sick", somewhat vampiric in their propensity to deplete their patients both fluidly and financially.[396]

Diagnostic error

This subsection moves on from the general overview of identified sources of medical error to dwell specifically upon diagnostic and prognostic failure. Diagnosis required a physician to examine the pulse and urine; observe the patient for signs and symptoms; touch them, and hear their account of the illness.[397] Accurate diagnosis was unlikely if based upon just one of these factors and might elude even experienced physicians. In *Methodi Vitandorum Errorum* (1603), Sanctorius Sanctorius, Paduan

---

[393] Frank, "Physician", p. 63.
[394] Harold J. Cook "Policing the Health of London: College of Physicians and the Early Stewart Monarchy", *Social History of Medicine* 2 (1989): pp. 1-33.
[395] On London's medical marketplace see Harold J. Cook, *Decline of the Old Medical Regime in Stuart London* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986), ch.1.
[396] Jean Baptiste van Helmont, *Deliramenta catarrh,* tr. Walter Charleton (London: 1650), p. 8.
[397] Wear, *Knowledge*, pp. 121-2.

professor of the theory of medicine, under whom Harvey studied, wrote that in "curative medicine infinite errors can be made, either in the recognition of disease, or of the cause, [...] or in prognosis or finally in the administration of remedies".[398] Writing "*Against those who scorn physicians for diagnosing illnesses incorrectly*", Joubert cites mitigating factors. Although by "the observation of natural things" one can "guess roughly what will happen", yet "nothing is certain, given the inconstancy" of "corruptible things" and patient's "hidden constitutions".[399] The physician's observations are, like those of the early modern audience, limited. The audience has signs and symptoms from which to infer characters' temperaments and motives but they are unaware of characters' changeability and hidden constitutions. An exploration of observational physic would seem particularly well suited to a theatre which played upon these observational limitations.

After diagnosis, prognosis is the next challenge; the "only way to avoid all error", Girolamo Cardano, another Paduan alumnus, advised, was to avoid prognosis; for even "experienced" physicians "fail sometimes in their predictions".[400] For inaccurate prognoses, Cardano and Joubert blame patients and carers (for diverting the course of illnesses) and the crowded medical marketplace.[401] In this marketplace, whose diagnosis and prognosis should one trust? The pamphleteer and newsman Marchamont Nedham, also a physician of Helmontian outlook, favoured "*no formal* Doctor" to "follow his own observation and experience" and would not accede to the

398 Quoted in Wear, "Medicine in Early Modern Europe, 1500-1700," *The Western Medical Tradition: 800BC to AD 1800*, ed. Lawrence Conread et al (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 215-361, p. 259.
399 Joubert, *Popular Erreurs*, p. 59.
400 Cited in Maclean, *Logic,* p. 70n.149.
401 Joubert *Popular Erreurs*, p. 60.

"Maxims and Remedies" of "*Hippocrates* and *Galen*".[402] Contrastingly, English physician Daniel Coxe favoured well-studied doctors for their knowledge of other physicians' experiences with which they might supplement their own.[403] Individuals might look closer to home; lay demand for medical knowledge fuelled a popular medical culture which encouraged people to diagnose and treat themselves and their families.[404] A 'have a go' approach to diagnosis might seem error-fraught. Yet laypeople, employed as 'searchers' in medical inquests, could identify the major diseases; their "senses are sufficient" and by using them, laymen avoid the "niceties" and "uncertain[ty]" of "learned diagnosis".[405]

Diagnosis, when there are bodily signs and symptoms and when the patient can articulate the nature of their ailment, is one thing. Diagnosis when the ailment is within the mind or soul and shaped by forces, not physiological, but religio-cultural and, moreover, the patient's reason has been compromised by it, is quite another. Melancholy is the ailment in question and one which linked various kinds of error, which I will now address, including errors attendant upon difficult diagnoses, the Fall, and delusion on the part of the patient.[406]

Error: the context of melancholy

In this period, melancholy was a malady recorded with particular frequency. As we noted in relation to the particularisation of error by *cultura anima* authors,

---

402 Marchamont Nedham, *Medela Medicinae. A plea for the free profession, and a renovation of the art of physick* (London: 1665), pp. 432-3.
403 Daniel Coxe, *A Discourse, wherein the Interest of the Patient in Reference to Physick and Physicians is Soberly Debated* (London: 1669), pp. 119-200.
404 On diagnosis as lay medical skill see Wear, *Knowledge*, pp. 110-115.
405 John Graunt, *Natural and Political Observations … Made upon the Bills of Mortality* (London: 1662) from 5th edn. 1676, p. 21. Wear, *Knowledge*, pp. 111-112.
406 On melancholy as a disease of the soul, see Jeremy Schmidt, *Melancholy and the Care of the Soul* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007).

melancholy predisposes individuals to errors of judgement; melancholy individuals are susceptible to the imagination which is "fruitful in producing Error".[407] In the work Englished as *A Discourse of the Preservation of the Sight; of Melancholike; of Rheumes, and of Old Age* (1599), André Du Laurens attributes, as was conventional, a prominent role to the imagination in melancholy. The imagination is one of man's "noble powers" and its operation should be controlled by reason; in the melancholic, however, "the spirits being […] blacke and ouercooled" do "trouble" the mind's "noble powers, and principally the imagination, presenting vnto it continually blacke formes and strange visions".[408] Melancholy perverts objective apprehension, exposing one to erroneous perceptions.[409]

In *Julius Caesar* (1599), Messala affirms this origin of error before Cassius' corpse. The fatal error of Cassius was to believe, swiftly and without corroboration, Pindarus' battlefield narration of the fall of Titanius. Addressing both the fault and the corpse, Messala speaks to "hateful Error, Melancholy's child" (5.3.66),[410] who "dost show to the apt thoughts of men / The things that are not" (67-68); it heightens the imagination, promotes illusion, and undermines the interrogation of matters of fact. Thus Cassius has misread his own victory as defeat; Titanius concludes his address to Cassius' corpse, "Alas, thou hast misconstrued everything" (83). Melancholy causes such errors of misapprehension yet it remained a difficult cause of error to trace precisely. The dedication of *cultura animi* authors to unravelling the relationship

---

[407] Reynolds, *Treatise*, p. 25.
[408] Andre Du Laurens, *A Discourse of the Preservation of the Sight; of Melancholike; of Rheumes, and of Old Age* (London: 1599), p. 72.
[409] On melancholy among the passions in seventeenth-century thought see Schmidt, *Care*, ch.2.
[410] William Shakespeare, *The Complete Works*, eds. Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998).

between errors of judgement and the passions evinces the complexity of error's cognitive-affective roots. Burton's *Anatomy* is further testament to this; a sizable work, it expanded repeatedly as it continued to catalogue the symptoms, kinds, causes, and treatments of melancholy. Burton suggests that the kinds of melancholy are without number and that "from these Melancholy Dispositions, no man living is free [...] Melancholy in this sence is the Character of Mortalitie".[411] My Introduction established melancholy as the predicament of fallen humanity; for Burton, melancholy was entwined with Adam's sin.[412] Melancholy, a torment for man's innate sinfulness, was both a cause and consequence of error. Among Calvinists, the "Character of Mortalitie" was coloured by predestination.[413] Doubt of election and the religious despair it engendered, John Stachniewski has argued, was widespread in English culture.[414] The *Anatomy*'s section on religious melancholy reveals concern that Calvinist theology bred despair.[415]

In addition to appreciating the cognitive-affective and spiritual dimensions of melancholy, Burton inherited the notion of melancholy, as it was etymologically and traditionally understood, as black bile. Vernacular medical writing supported this

---

[411] Burton, *Anatomy*, [1.1.1.5], p. 136, ll.19-23.
[412] See Burton, *Anatomy*, [1.1.1.1.]. See Gowland, *Worlds*, p. 27.
[413] See Nicholas Tyacke, "Puritanism, Arminianism and Counter-Revolution", *The Origins of the English Civil War*, Conrad Russell (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1973), pp. 119-43; Peter Lake, "Calvinism and the English Church 1570-1635", *Past and Present* 114 (1987): pp. 32-76.
[414] John Stachniewski, *The Persecutory Imagination: English Puritanism and the Literature of Religious Despair* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), p. 12. Schmidt contextualises the experience and expression of melancholy within the discourse of religious despair rooted in Calvinism. See *Care*, ch.3.
[415] For a detailed discussion of this section see Stachniewski, *Persecutory*, ch.5. Whereas Timothy Bright's *Treatise of Melancholy* (London: 1586) addresses a reader showing signs of election, Burton comforts all readers. See Mary Ann Lund, *Melancholy, Medicine and Religion in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 59.

humoral model which characterised melancholy as a preponderance of black bile.[416] Nonetheless melancholy retained the potential to elude. Burton relentlessly seeks the roots of melancholy, whether distempers are congenital, due to diet, lifestyle, or circumstance, and advises upon treatment. These questions are also characteristic of the plays I now discuss which are similarly interested in ascertaining the 'roots' of melancholy and in the observational and experimental processes of its diagnostic localisation and treatment. Ford focuses on diagnosis utilising conventions associated with the investigation and corroboration of scientific fact; Brome focuses upon treatment which utilises an artificial geography of melancholy that is in conflict with the objective matter-of-fact reality of London's socio-political life.

My readings parallel Hutson's model of reading plays of the period as adopting forensic methods for the investigation of matters of fact. As the discourse of fact moved from law into a broad range of discourses, so too the theatrical adoption of factual discourse moved from law to medicine. I show the adoption of medical methodology, indebted to factual discourse, by stage physicians. In so doing, two somewhat critically maligned stage physicians are reinterpreted.

The Lover's Melancholy

The Lover's Melancholy shares with *Hamlet* care for determining the cause of a prince's distemper. Ford's physician, Corax, must identify the melancholy afflictions

[416] Significant texts: Bright, *Treatise*; Wright, *Passions*; Juan Huarte, *The Examination of Mens Wits* (London: 1594). Medical texts reiterated humoral theory: Philip Moore, *The Hope of Health* (London: 1565); Petrus Pomarius, *Enchiridion medicum* (London: 1609); Thomas Brugis, *Marrow of Physicke* (London: 1648). Further examples in Irma Taavitsainen, "Dissemination and Appropriation of Medical Knowledge: Humoral Theory in Early Modern English Medical Writing and Lay Texts", *Medical Writing in Early Modern England,* eds. Irma Taavitsainen et al (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011) pp. 94-114.

of Prince Palador and the former statesman, Meleander. The latter is easily diagnosed; stripped of his titles, bereft of his daughter Eroclea, he bemoans his situation. Palador is a more secretive melancholic, and so greater sensitivity and stage time are employed to observe him for signs and symptoms.

Corax's diagnosis of Palador is protracted and theatrical; this has led to criticisms of Corax, who is mistakenly interpreted in light of the theatrical stereotype of the incompetent physician or mountebank.[417] S.B. Ewing is particularly derogatory, criticising what he reads to be repeated attempts to treat Palador. Corax is dismissed as "a learned but bigoted professor" who "undertakes by every treatment known to his science" and "[e]very one fails".[418] In fact, Corax is involved in a lengthy process towards precise diagnosis. Exact diagnosis will dictate the most efficacious treatment. Palador's affliction must be differentiated from the many melancholic states Burton records. Ewing admits a complicating factor to Corax's task; this is that Palador is "furnished with a wealth of symptoms of general melancholy, drawn from the body of *The Anatomy*".[419] Given his wealth of symptoms, a forensic element to diagnosis is required to identify the precise form of Palador's melancholy.

---

[417] See Tanya Pollard, "'No Faith in Physic': Masquerades of Medicine Onstage and Off", *Disease, Diagnosis and Cure on the Early Modern Stage*, eds. Stephanie Moss et al (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004) pp. 29-41; Michael Neill, "The Moral Artifice of *The Lover's Melancholy"*, *English Literary Renaissance* 8 (1978): pp. 66-83; G.F. Sensabaugh, *The Tragic Muse of John Ford* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1944) pp. 47-50.

[418] S. Blaine Ewing, *Burtonian Melancholy in the Plays of John Ford*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1940), pp. 36-37.

[419] Ibid., pp. 36-7.

Palador's tutor, Aretus, much like Polonius, fears that there is "something hid / Of his [the prince's] distemper", which he plans to "find out" (2.1.26-27).[420] After recruiting Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, Polonius informs Claudius and Gertrude: "Mad let us grant him, then; and now remains / That we find out the cause of this effect - / Or rather say 'the cause of this *defect*', / For this effect defective comes by cause."[421] In Hamlet's case courtiers probe his antic disposition, an assumed humour which shields his true melancholy from their intrusive diagnostic gaze. Having revealed the cause of his melancholy to the malcontent courtier Rhetias, Palador also recommends humoral diversion. Palador instructs Rhetias to follow his example and "Humour the lords as they would humour me" (225). He puns upon senses of "humour" as a diagnosis of melancholy, the assumption of a fake humour, and comedy.

Palador is an uncooperative patient; if the "patient will not be conformable" then the physician's "endeavours will come to no good end", Burton notes.[422] Burton envisions a simpler, less politically loaded, doctor-patient relationship than Palador can possibly have. Without his consent to treatment, diagnosis is problematic. Diagnosis must be from a distance, the patient observed but not directly examined. The doctor is thus in a similar predicament to that of the early modern audience. The indirect nature of diagnosis may be more error-prone. Polonius fails utterly at this form of forensic diagnostics; although he spies, he does not truly observe and his diagnostic tests are biased by preconceptions of cause.[423] Corax adopts a different mode of inquiry, similar to that which Hamlet uses on Claudius; this experiment yields

---

420 John Ford, *'Tis A Pity She's a Whore and Other Plays*, ed. Marion Lomax (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).
421 Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, *The Complete Works*, 2.2.101-04
422 Burton, *Anatomy*, [2.1.4.2] p.14, ll. 4-6.
423 *Hamlet* 2.2.163-6 and 3.1.31-178.

observable phenomena concerning the matter of fact in question, Palador's distemper.

Corax's primary diagnostic tool is the Masque of Melancholy; he stages this device before Palador to "try how this can move him" (1.2.148). Its precursor is Hamlet's play-within-a-play, "The Murder of Gonzago", which uses spectatorship to diagnose guilt rather than illness.[424] Shakespeare and Ford use these plays-within-plays to facilitate "spectatorship-as-diagnosis". Katharine Maus, commenting on this form of observation, recognises the hazards of "reliance upon inferential reasoning" to come to conclusions about characters' behaviour; the audience is judging upon "untrustworthy" appearances.[425] Although not conclusive, the intense reaction provoked in Palador – an angry diktat and his immediate exit (3.3.108-9) – gives some weight to the inferences drawn by the observer.

Corax is a keen observer whose masque demonstrates knowledge of, and independence from, melancholy scholarship. Without the knowledge Corax possesses, his diagnostic test would be impossible. Corax's learnedness is suggested by his lecture of Aretus on melancholy: it is a "commotion of the mind, o'ercharged with fear and sorrow", he instructs, which forms in "the seat of reason" before infiltrating the "seat / Of our affection" in the heart (3.1.106-110). In the 1629 quarto, this speech features an unobtrusive marginal note, "Vid. Democrit. Iunior", which

---

424 Caroline stage doctors "discover[ed] a remedy for acute melancholy by adapting the old homiletic device for provoking confessions of guilt." Charlotte Spivack, "Alienation and Illusion: The Play-within-a-Play on the Caroline Stage," *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England* 4 (1989): pp. 195-210, p. 196.

425 In theatre so self-conscious of "its own representational limitations, the spectator is obliged to evaluate symptoms": the "art of spectatorship is also an art of diagnosis." Katharine Eisaman Maus, "Horns of the Dilemma: Jealousy, Gender, and Spectatorship in English Renaissance Drama", *ELH* 54.3 (1987): pp. 561-583, p. 576.

encourages readers to compare Corax's melancholic distempers with Burton's, and so recognise how and why they have been amended. Misreading of Corax's dependence upon Burton has detracted from the appreciation of his observational and experimental approach.[426] A closer look at the masque reveals the full scope of this diagnostic entertainment, and that Corax is both a scholar and an observational physician desirous of "seeing for oneself".

In dramatizing a few guises of melancholy pictorially, the material Burton detailed at subsection 1.1.1.4 of the *Anatomy* is made more engaging and distracting -- and distraction was Burton's favoured antidote for his own melancholy. The players are dressed as Lycanthropia, Hydrophobia, Delirium, Phrenitis, Hypocondriacal melancholy, and Wanton melancholy. Ford follows Burton in this subgrouping, but with his own amendments. These amendments, for which Corax has been accused of incompetence, associate cuckoldry with hydrophobic melancholy and female pride with phrenitic melancholy.[427] I argue, however, that Corax is methodical, and these amendments purposeful.

It has not sufficiently been recognized that the masque does more than confirm Palador's affliction. *The Lover's Melancholy* rather stages the view found in Burton that if the monarch is melancholy, the nation will similarly become diseased.[428] Corax modifies documented melancholic pathologies, hybridising them with immediate relevance to Palador's melancholic court. Corax's amendment of Burton to associate

---

[426] On the masque as derivative see Ewing, *Burtonian Melancholy*, p. 96.

[427] Ewing views the masque as a "mad confusion" where Corax muddles symptoms and diseases. Ibid., p. 39.

[428] See Burton "Democritus to the Reader", p. 66, ll.29-30. On the transference of melancholy from Palador to his court see 1.1.68-70.

female pride with Phrenitis is aimed at Thamasta. Amethus criticised his sister's attire, the "glittering pomp of ease and wantonness" (1.3.4) which distorts the female frame. Melancholy "transform[s] / Men into monsters" (3.1.97-99); aberrant pride in "antic fashions", however, is the distemper that "shape[s] a woman monstrous" (1.3.5-6).[429] Corax's phrenitis is a crude distortion of feminine pride, designed to make it additionally repellent to Thamasta and the court audience. The treatment for Thamasta's melancholic pride is public humiliation; revelation was precisely what she feared, having implored Eroclea, "Pray conceal / The errors of my passions" (3.2.173-4).

Corax's amendment of Burton to associate hydrophobia with cuckoldry encourages Palador to evaluate his errors of judgement by observing the practical consequences of this hybridised affliction. The focus on cuckoldry should not be overstated for the hydrophobic melancholic's monologue concerns the loss of possession more broadly. "Was I not an emperor?" he asks. Yet all the trappings of this status -- the fawning women, the respectful greetings, the position at the head of his nobles -- slipped from his grasp as he "fell" (29, 30, 30). This is the tragic fall of those in high places. Hydrophobics, Burton notes, are susceptible to the falling sickness; Corax transmutes this medical falling to the sphere of political rule.[430]

Corax's hydrophobic melancholic rules according to irrational whim; this is an error of judgement which may precipitate one's fall from power. Inaction can have the same consequence. During Act 2, scene 1, Aretus criticised Palador for coveting his position without wishing to displace his pleasures to deserve and uphold it. The

---

429 Thamasta's pride is of dress and station 1.3.24-32, 3.2.113-14.
430 Burton, *Anatomy*, [1.1.1.4], p. 135, l.1.

question of right rule is at the crux of Corax's hydrophobia. The hydrophobic melancholic's ravings concern his political and marital 'rule'; Ford is using the commonplace analogy of consort and kingdom. The state of deposed kingship is akin to the state of cuckoldry; each involves the usurpation of another man's 'rights'. Corax's alteration of hydrophobic melancholy suggests the political costs of imprudence. This amendment aids Corax's subtle critique of the court's "sloth / Of sleep and surfeit" (2.1.57), an indolence which is undermining Palador's rule. The masque provides Palador and Thamasta with an *autopsia* of their own distempers. In this respect, Corax's drama operates much like the traditional mirror for princes; yet, this reflective capacity of drama is here incorporated into a diagnostic exercise utilising conventions associated with the investigation and corroboration of scientific fact.

The final form of melancholy Corax wishes to address is love-melancholy; the representation of this condition is however absent.[431] Circuitously Corax begins what we may assume will be a prognosis, that "were your highness but touched home […] with this [love-melancholy]" (3.3.106) then ... But we do not learn of the then, for Palador has awoken to the pointed dwelling upon love-melancholy and demands "Let no man name the word [love] again" (108).[432] The diagnosis of Palador can be inferred.

---

[431] On love-melancholics as figures of fun prior to Ford's play see Bridget Gellert Lyons, *Voices of Melancholy: Studies of Literary Treatments of Melancholy in Renaissance England* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1971), p. 25, p. 77.

[432] Palador becomes "so personally involved" that he plays "the unassigned role of Love-Melancholy." Spivack, "Alienation", p. 200.

The masque tricks its court audience into completing the meaning of its content, with reference to their own, personal context. Palador notes the gap for love-melancholy in Corax's plot summary; settling upon this omission, he pronounces that "the plot deceives us" (3.3.91). Later, when dwelling upon the events of this masque, he will ruminate that "there is some practice, sleight or plot" (4.3.34) at work. Palador is correct, for he has been artfully diagnosed against his will.

The masque does not replicate Burton's subgroups of melancholy, but hybridises them so as to unsettle the distempered court audience. The diagnostic scope of the masque is ambitious; Corax seeks to prove that Palador is suffering from love-melancholy but he also identifies the mutations of melancholy within Palador's court. Corax's "spectatorship-as-diagnosis" works on more than one level. He observes Palador to learn the root of the Prince's melancholy whilst Palador observes forms of melancholy (native to his court) which, if properly construed, should enable self-diagnosis of his faulty governance of self and state. But Ford's ambition for the masque is perhaps greater again.

Whilst enumerating the deficiencies of medicine, Bacon noted that "if men will intend to obserue, they shall finde much worthy to obserue".[433] The masque makes observation imperative. One must pay close attention to glean Corax's meaning. Observation is also imperative for the masque to diagnose and treat its spectators.[434] Reduced to this indirect diagnostic process, Corax has become like the audience

---

[433] Bacon, *Advancement*, p. 99.

[434] As an observational physician Corax is allied with the physicians of Shakespeare's later plays whom "the audience can trust as observers": Barbara Traister "Note Her a Little Farther": Doctors and Healers in the Drama of Shakespeare,' *Disease, Diagnosis and Cure*, pp. 43-52, p. 48.

observing and inferring. During Act 2, scene 1 the audience has effectively learnt of the cause of Palador's melancholy; we are in the position to observe another observing and, more uniquely, to corroborate his diagnostic observations. The imperative of observation is woven through the layers of audience, whilst the errors of judgement and conduct associated with each melancholic affliction facilitate the diagnostic process as the patients/spectators react to observing them.

Corax's next patient is Meleander. Curing the monarch is prerequisite to the health of the hierarchy beneath him. Meleander considers himself to be as good as dead; in this living death he desires expiration. Du Laurens, who recorded the strange imaginations of melancholics, mentions those, who believing that they are dead, forgo sustenance. To treat such cases "Phisitions" settle upon a "sleight" to make melancholics eat; this is to have a servant "counterfeit himself dead, yet not forsake his meate".[435] This treatment, which invalidates the melancholic's delusion of death, requires a lucid individual to dramatically enter into the melancholic's delusion. If one defined error as anything that deviates from objective reality, then this treatment, which mimics delusions, uses error to treat distorted perceptions of reality. The physician comprehends the distinction between delusion and reality; yet, if the patient perceives the staged distortion to be the truth, as the 'deceased melancholic' does, then this is also an error, but a valuable and potentially curative one.

[435] Du Laurens, *Discourse*, p.102. Burton cites Du Laurens at [1.2.3.2.], p. 255, l.4 and [1.3.1.3], p. 401, ll.22-24.

The implication is that there is a diagnostic and curative utility in experimentally reproducing delusional states. Burton, who references Du Laurens, describes this as treatment by "artificial inventions".[436] Where patients "cannot discerne what is amisse, correct or satisfie it", friends must "alienate his minde, by some artificiall invention".[437] So a trick that enters into a melancholic's disposition may help cure him.[438] Corax adopts this tactic:

> MELEANDER Show me the dog whose triple-throated noise
> Hath roused a lion from his uncouth den
> To tear the cur to pieces.
> CORAX Stay thy paws,
> Courageous beast; else, lo the Gorgon's skull
> That shall transform thee to that restless stone
> Which Sisyphus rolls up against the hill […]
> (4.2.48-53)

Given his morbid humour, Meleander conceives of his antagonist as Cerberus, guard dog of Hades. In reciprocating mythological terms, Corax, pretending to be a gorgon, threatens to turn Meleander into the rock of Sisyphus, another inhabitant of Hades. Corax may impersonate a gorgon using his physician's hat to stop, like stone, Meleander in his tracks. Mythically the "Gorgon's skull" was a symbol to ward off enemies. There is further significance to Corax's choice of the gorgon; she held the potential to revitalise the dead.[439] Apollodorus records the tale of Corax, the raven, who told Apollo of Coronis' infidelity; like his Fordian namesake, the raven exposes the amatory tangles of others. Apollo kills Coronis but spares her baby, Asclepius. In

---

436 "I read a multitude of examples of Melancholy men cured by such artificiall inventions." Burton, *Anatomy* [2.2.6.2], p.112, ll.22-23.

437 Ibid.,, [2.2.6.2], p. 107, ll.7-9.

438 On tricks to treat melancholy see Karen L. Edwards, "Thomas Browne and the Absurdities of Melancholy," *"A Man Very Well Studyed": New Contexts for Thomas Browne*, ed. Kathryn Murphy et al (Leiden: Brill, 2008), pp. 211-26.

439 Meleander does not believe he is dead, but is morbidly inclined: "If the fates / Have spun my thread, and my spent clew of life / Be now untwisted" (4.2.57-59).

adulthood he became a surgeon and used Gorgon's blood "which had flowed from the right, to save […] by this means that he raised the dead."[440] Corax's alias aids his interaction with Meleander whilst disguising his intent to 'resurrect' the old man.

The conceit of mythological hostilities helps Corax engage Meleander. Next he probes Meleander's melancholy by imitating grief at the loss of a daughter. Meleander is unwilling to share this distemper: "With what greediness / Do I hug my afflictions!" (124-25). Corax again observes patients observing imitations of their own affliction; Meleander's inability to sympathise with another in similar plight indicates the severity of his condition.

The physician's role requires considerable acting ability.[441] Meleander's cure is another enactment, with Corax as director. Cleophila is one of his actors, a diligent one who asserts "I have studied / My part with care, and will perform it" (5.1.146-47). There is dramaturgy to the sequential entrance of messengers, who formulaically confer honours upon Meleander before presenting him with a miniature of Eroclea. Incrementally, Meleander is recalled to life. The final "cordial" (91), delivered by Cleophila, is Eroclea. Once administered, all that remains are the betrothals. Burton concludes his section on love-melancholy with "The last and best Cure" which is to let sufferers "have their Desire".[442] The final trick is Palador's. Once a patient, he now practises a cure upon Meleander that is "a counterfeit" (5.2.223); in exchange for a portrait, Palador "seizes on [...] The real substance" (224-35) of his future health, the lady Eroclea.

---

440 Apollodorus, *Library*, p. 119.
441 On the "trick" to cure melancholy as a "dramatic performance" see Edwards, "Absurdities", p. 218.
442 Burton, *Anatomy*, [3.2.5.5].

Corax's diagnosis and treatment of Palador and Meleander utilises error's potential (in highly focused formulations crafted to the patients' circumstances) as a diagnostic and curative tool. First, it aids diagnosis by the patients' observation of and reaction to errors of judgement. Secondly, diagnosis and treatment are facilitated by the physician deviating from objective reality to enter into a patient's delusion.

Ford was reacting to medical methodological advances which saw practices integral to the culture of fact and its natural philosophical execution in the pursuit of facts of nature adopted by medical practitioners. My reading has paralleled Hutson's play-reading model of the absorption of legal forensic means for interrogating matters of fact into the theatre by demonstrating that Corax's practice replicates contemporary medical methodology's emphasis on observation and experiment. This emphasis, moreover, merges with theatrical affect and effect with the result that Corax's diagnoses and treatments become enactments. This merger, however, instils doubts about Corax for his theatricality resembles the mountebank's. Corax is informed by popular concerns with medical error; Rhetias teasingly taunts him with terms for fake physicians, "Mountebanks, empirics, quacksalvers, mineralists, wizards" (1.2.108-109).[443] An audience conscious of the contemporary discourse of medical error is affectively primed to expect Corax to err. Yet Ford fulfils and subverts these expectations; medical errors abound in Corax's practice but they are strategically used to effect cures. Ford's reaction to discourse particularising medical error was to consider whether, given the theatre's historical exploitation of error to effect plot

[443] Kerwin notes that it is said of Corax that he "vapours like a tinker, and struts like a juggler" (4.2.44) which is a "description similar to that for the College of Physicians' category of mountebank". *Beyond*, p. 181. Yet these are Trollio's words, Meleander's loyal though humorously unperceptive servant.

creation and resolution, particularised forms of error might have a curative utility. Moreover, his physician uses particularised error to cure generalised error conceived as the state of being melancholy. What results is an expression of a notion of curative theatre in which medical error, prescribed by a new breed of stage physician, performs a therapeutic function.

Corax is one of the new breed of physicians; his use of theatrical experiments aligns him not just with mountebanks but with those figures who fortified the view that the future of natural philosophy and medicine were in acquiring facts via observation and experiment. The masque, Corax's experiment, is a contrived set of circumstances in which to observe a natural phenomenon (or the matter of fact), that is the patient within a controlled environment of prescribed factors; Corax uses it to verify his hypothesis regarding the form of Palador's melancholy. Ford's physician is an amalgam of the practitioners favoured by Nedham and Coxe. Corax's practice as a well-read physician is informed by Burton's subgroups of melancholy, yet he is not restricted by these precedents but tempers them according to his own experience and observations.

The Antipodes

This section discusses the cure accomplished by Hughball, the physician of Brome's play. Like Corax, Hughball can be interpreted in light of the stereotype of the incompetent physician given to theatrical, medical spectacle. However, Hughball's theatricality is more exaggerated and the particularised errors employed medicinally to treat the generalised error (conceived of as the state of being melancholy),

correspondingly extravagant. The form Hughball's cure takes is dictated by his patient's distemper and by a specific discourse of fact which informs his distemper. Before explaining Hughball's cure further, I establish melancholy's relationship with this discourse, the discourse of travel.

Discourse on melancholy was "ramified across a wide range of Renaissance disciplines"; not just medicine, moral philosophy, and theology, but also geography.[444] The relationship between travel and melancholy is unclear; Adam Kitzes notes vaguely that "to some extent melancholy was associated with travel".[445] Burton explains the force of the melancholy imagination using a metaphor of travel and prescribes travel as the "best remedy" for love-melancholy.[446] However, upon leaving one's environs, one may discover other places peopled by melancholics. Referring to Joseph Hall's *Mundus alter et idem* (1605), Burton writes that its journeying narrator "puts melancholy men to inhabit just under the [South] Pole".[447] Geographical opposites were used to suggest cultural, moral, and mental inversion; the inhabitants of Hall's *Moronia* were not of sound mind.[448] Thus the elusive antipodes became a projected location where reasoning was the inverse of that in more northerly climes.

---

444 Gowland, *Worlds*, p. 28.
445 Adam H. Kitzes, *The Politics of Melancholy from Spenser to Milton* (London: Routledge, 2006) p.16.
446 Burton, *Anatomy*, [1.2.3.2], p. 254, ll.29-32; [3.2.5.2], p. 212, ll.2-3. On Burton's interest in geography see Eleanor Patricia Vicari, *The View from Minerva's Tower: Learning and Imagination in the Anatomy of Melancholy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989), p. 31. See also Anne S. Chapple, "Robert Burton's Geography of Melancholy", *Studies in English Literature* 33.1 (1993): pp. 99-130, p. 106.
446 Burton, *Anatomy*, [1.2.2.5] p. 235, ll.30-31.
447 Ibid., [1.2.2.5] p. 235, ll.30-31.
448 "As early as Mandeville, geographical opposites had naturally suggested moral opposites". Ian Donaldson, *The World Upside-Down: Comedy from Jonson to Fielding* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), p. 84.

Burton used armchair travel to treat his own melancholy;[449] travel literature offers mental stimulation, diversion, beneficial perspective to correct melancholic solipsism, and a harmless geography in which to exercise the imagination.[450] That is, of course, when travel literature is not the cause of one's melancholy. In *The Antipodes*, however, we meet Peregrine who suffers from a melancholy fixation with travel narratives. Peregrine is "[a]ddicted to" travel reports (1.1.127); he religiously reads them, everyday "convey[ing] his fancy round the world" (137).[451] The root of Peregrine's melancholy is his vagabond imagination. As his name suggests, Peregrine is a wanderer; he is much like Hall's young man, of *Virgidemiarum* (1599), who is enthralled by tall tales and who would mortgage his worldly wealth for adventure.[452]

Burton preferred accurate travel accounts.[453] Nonetheless, fancy or fanciful errors, the products of surmise, hearsay, and embellishment, amassed around the limited information concerning Australia. First-hand observation, by several credible witnesses, is the best corroboration for all matters of fact; however, the "more exotic the place visited, the greater the problem of credibility."[454] Travel narratives frequently took the form of eyewitness accounts; yet there was often, Shapiro found, an absence of testimony to corroborate the matters of fact tales related, despite these accounts being "larded with conventions of proof for matters of fact and claims of true and impartial reporting".[455] More than any other discourse of fact, travel literature

---

[449] On the diversion of travel literature see Burton, *Anatomy*, [2.2.4.1] pp. 86, ll.33-35, p. 87, ll.1-12, p. 86, ll.24-30.

[450] Vicari, *View*, p. 55.

[451] Richard Brome, *The Antipodes*, *Three Renaissance Travel Plays*, ed. Anthony Parr (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999).

[452] Joseph Hall, *Virgidemiarum* (London: 1599) bk.4, satire 6, p. 48.

[453] Burton, *Anatomy*, [2.2.3.1], p. 38, ll.22-34.

[454] Shapiro, *Culture*, p. 71.

[455] Ibid.

elicited distrust and its abuse of the conventions and language of fact threatened "all knowledge claims based on 'matters of fact'".[456] Peregrine's melancholic imagination and wanderlust compromise his ability to interrogate the credibility of the matters of fact detailed in travel narratives. Indeed, he is enthralled by the travel author whose name "came to signify 'travel[l]er' (as well as 'liar') for European culture":[457] Peregrine appears on stage reading *The Travels of Sir John Mandeville* (1.3.25–42).[458]

The treatment performed by Hughball depends upon Peregrine becoming a 'traveller' and observer; it recalibrates Peregrine's "noble powers" so that his reason may come to rule his imagination. Hughball's experimental treatment uses mock-travel to disillusion; he creates Anti-London, an amalgam faux geography of mock-travel satire, Mandevillian narratives, and Peregrine's imagination, for the travel-melancholic to explore and against which to measure his reason. According to Matthew Steggle, Brome's "strong interest in place" is one of his "distinctive characteristics".[459] That "[t]reatment of place" is "often a matter of illusion", is apparent in *The Antipodes*; yet Steggle overlooks place as a treatment in itself.[460] Hughball utilises error, as a contravention of the observable matter of fact of objective reality informed by the 'marvels' of Peregrine's dubious travel narratives; he does so within a precisely

---

[456] Ibid., p. 85.
[457] Mary B. Campbell, *The Witness and the Other World: Exotic European Travel Writing, 400–1600* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), p. 149.
[458] On the implications of Mandeville, see Claire Jowitt. "The Politics of Mandevillian Monsters in Richard Brome's The Antipodes," *A Knight's Legacy: Mandeville and Mandevillian Lore in Early Modern England*, ed. Ladan Niayesh (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011), pp. 195–212, p. 197; David McInnis, "Therapeutic Travel in Richard Brome's The Antipodes", *SEL* 52.2 (2012): pp. 447-469, p. 460.
[459] Matthew Steggle, *Richard Brome: Place and Politics on the Caroline Stage* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004) p. 8.
[460] Ibid., p. 9.

staged treatment that occasions Peregrine to re-engage with his society, its laws, and mores.

Hughball's Antipodes stages many of the socioeconomic and demographic factors which Bacon's "Of Travel" (1625) and Sir William Petty's unpublished "Method of Enquiring into the State of Any Country" recommend their travellers to observe, including matters of fact relating to the juridical systems, social and professional groups, and the state's trades and recreations.[461] In regards to these factors, Hughball explains that the "people there are contrary to us" (1.3.116). Anti-London is directly under London; it is home to the same people, religion, and language; its inhabitants differ only in manners (2.2.38-41).[462] In Anti-London, Peregrine observes and progresses interactively through scenes inverting social, sexual, professional, and juridical stations and procedures. His treatment engages with a geography that is erroneous by virtue of its inversion of the observable cultural norms of London.[463] Peregrine witnesses an elderly wife berate her young husband for refusing to do his 'duty' by a tradesman's wife in recompense for goods received. Her tyrannical rule is assuaged by her waiting woman. Each recognises their subservience to the other according to the Antipodean inverse principles of social hierarchy. Leaving this domestic setting, the melancholic audience of Joyless and his wife, Diana, observe an impoverished lawyer and his oxymoronic clientele: a sober poet, a cowardly captain, and a gallant beggar. Diana's comments, explaining the inversions, punctuate the

---

461 On "Political descriptions", see Shapiro *Culture*, pp. 77-82.

462 On the danger of travel to the cultural integrity of the traveller see McInnis, "Therapeutic", pp. 454-455.

463 On "theatrical journeys of the imagination" providing "release" for "dangerous energies and emotions" see Julie Sanders, "The Politics of Escapism: Fantasies of Travel and Power in Richard Brome's *The Antipodes* and Ben Jonson's *The Alchemist*," *Writing and Fantasy*, eds. Ceri Sullivan et al (London: Longman, 1999), p. 147.

scene; the jest of these is that although seemingly contrary, these inversions of nature and profession are not wholly alien to London.[464] The familiarity of these inversions provides Peregrine with an easy conceptual shift with which to begin his treatment.

Hughball's treatment is incremental and masque-like in the structured entrance, presentation, and dispatch of stylised figures until Peregrine's heated imagination leads to unforeseen circumstances. In the short intermission for the 'internal audience' of Diana and Joyless, news arrives that Peregrine has raided the prop cupboard. Having laid waste to its monstrous contents, he:

> takes the imperial diadem and crowns
> Himself King of the Antipodes, and believes
> He has justly gained the kingdom by his conquest
> (3.315-27)

Burton toyed with such a colonial enterprise; upon the southern continent he would make "a *Utopia* of mine own, a new *Atlantis*, a poetical commonwealth" where he "will freely domineere, build Citties, make Lawes".[465] The Antipodes offers the overheated melancholy imagination "roome enough" to build its civilisations[466]Peregrine is Burton's melancholic bent on conquest. As Burton wrote, the violent imaginations of melancholics "conceave so many [...] absurd apparitions, as that they are Kings".[467] The power of Peregrine's imagination threatens to overthrow his treatment. Peregrine's treatment by "fictive deception" treads a fine line between curing the melancholic and, given his tendency to "blur the lines

---

464 See Martin Butler, *Theatre and Crisis: 1632-1642* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984) pp. 215-16.
465 Burton, *Anatomy*, "Democritus Junior to the Reader", p. 85 ll.35-38.
466 Ibid., p. 86, ll.6-8.
467 Ibid., [1.2.3.2], p. 252, ll.18-24.

between reality and fiction", intensifying his delusions.[468] Hughball's treatment is, however, at a critical juncture; Peregrine wishes to enforce order, yet does so in the manner of the melancholic fantasist. His move to govern, although promoted by self-aggrandising fantasy, gives hope that, in time, Peregrine will govern himself and his reason will govern his imagination.

The scenes of the sober-seeming wanton and the man-scold signal the escalation of Peregrine's treatment. These scenes stage the illogical practice of justice, a theme initiated by Byplay's impersonation of a governor ruling upon the case of the reluctantly adulterous gentleman (3.321-484). Byplay's governor, muddling the process of accusation and defence, asserts he "will not hear / Any complaint before I understand / What the defendant can say for himself" (375-377). The constable of act four, in accordance with Antipodean gynaecocracy, must hear the woman's case before that of the serving-man and the gentleman. The constable is also unlikely to take the men's side because they are "two, and one is easier / To be believed" (4.99-100). The systems of proof used in the interrogation of a matter of fact, systems which should protect against error by employing probability and the right to fair plea, are thus overturned.

Antipodean manners provide a necessarily extreme contrast to rational conduct so that the acutely distempered patient may perceive the irregularity and react to it. A desire to bring Antipodean manners into line with "the manners of our government" (4.164) sees Peregrine realign himself with London manners by instructing others in

[468] Katherine Walker, "'Sometimes an actor himself'': Robert Burton and Therapeutic Theatricality", *Prose Studies* 35.3. (2013): pp. 223-238, p. 235, p. 227. She argues for Burton's ambivalence towards theatrical cures.

these manners. As Peregrine, in pursuit of fulfilling this task, commits himself further to the reality of this fictive deception, Hughball and his master of the revels, Letoy, must act quickly, by entering into the narrative of Peregrine's Antipodean conquest, to retain control of their treatment. Their intervention directs Peregrine's treatment to its final stage; this is consummated marriage with his wife in her guise as the heir to Anti-London. This, in addition to all the intervening artifice of Anti-London, seems to do the trick.

Hughball, an amiable charlatan who never "endures the name / Of doctor" (1.1.93-4), is another stage physician fashioned against the backdrop of the popular consciousness of medical error, the practices of mountebanks, and the College of Physicians' prosecutions.[469] Joyless enquires "how long" (90) Hughball has practised. Is he the experienced physician Primrose desired?[470] In place of an answer, Joyless is informed that Hughball has practised "Never in public"; this avoidance of the question suggests Hughball's inexperience (though it differentiates him from those practitioners who peddle their cures in the marketplace). Given the lengthy medical training to become a Doctor of Medicine, Hughball's youthfulness betrays his pretence. Peregrine asks whether Anti-London has "young scholars", a suitable contradiction in terms from this inverse society, "When we [London] have beardless doctors?" (2.204). Peregrine is oblivious to having penetrated Hughball's pretence, though the point is unmissed by Hughball and the audience. Brome is transparent about Hughball's pretence and demonstrates his awareness of popular concern with medical error only to subvert the stereotype of the incompetent physician by making

[469] On the College's mid-1630s prosecutions see Cook, "Policing", p. 11.
[470] Primrose, *PE*, P.2.

his charlatan's cure successful. *The Antipodes* is not only informed by concerns with medical error but by the particularised errors of travel literature, particularly Mandeville's concern to "speke of straunge thinges" of "maneres and dyversitees of countrees", which it replicates.[471] Errors of fact, of the kind found in dubious travel narratives, are critical to the operation of our charlatan's cure.

The physician's artifice

Letoy instructs us to "Observe the doctor's art" (4.495); our physicians' art hinges upon artifice, theatricality, and experiment which are characteristics of the mountebank. Burton believed physic was discredited "by reason of these base and illiterate Artificers" dubbed "Mountebanks, Quacksalvers, Empericks".[472] This description of medical imposters resonates with the practice of our physicians; they are "Artificers", skilled craftsmen, stage managers, actors, and specialists in the treatment of melancholy by artificial invention.

The physicians diagnose and treat melancholy by artifice which inveigles patients more deeply into the cause and expressions of their distemper; the intention is that patients emerge with their "noble powers" rebalanced. The physicians' artifice relies upon highly specialised formulations of error – whether these are staged errors of judgement and manners contravening those of objective reality, errors of misapprehension attendant upon melancholic disorders, or the replication of the melancholic's delusions – to identify and alleviate melancholy. Corax cautiously engages his patients, realising "Passions of violent nature by degrees / Are easiliest

[471] Mandeville, *Mandeville's Travels*, ed. M.C. Seymour (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967), p. 15.
[472] Burton, *Anatomy*, [2.1.3.1] p. 11, ll.28-31.

reclaimed" (2.1.25-26),[473] providing an experimental space (his masque) in which to stage expressions of their melancholy distempers. The patient is exposed to tableaux of errors of judgement which are fashioned to their circumstance. Corax observes the patients observing with a view to ascertaining their distempers' origin and severity; their reactions confirm his diagnostic suspicions and aid self-diagnosis on the part of the patient. In contrast, Hughball does not "goe too perfunctorily to worke, in not prescribing a just course of Physicke, to stirre up the humor".[474] Hughball strains his patients' melancholy humours beyond their respective meridians; thus he transports a travel-melancholy youth to a Mandevillian continent. An elaborate feint of a city is achieved by artifice.[475] Within this experimental space, Hughball observes how the natural phenomenon that is Peregrine's compromised ratiocination varies as it encounters a controlled environment of exaggerated counter-rationality and factual travesty.

Joyless recognises Hughball's method when he questions his physician's intention, "Why may not this be then a counterfeit action, / Or a false mist to blind me with more error?" (5.2.146-47). He adduces error's power to disorientate which we encountered in the use of mists by allegorical depictions of error (chapter 1). This expression of the nature of artifice, or counterfeit action, (although perhaps unintended by the speaker), appreciates that to interact with and observe errors of

---

[473] This sensitivity is the "Fordian aesthetic of reticence" which authentically transforms characters' emotional states. Lisa Hopkins, "Staging the Passions in Ford's *The Lover's Melancholy*," *SEL* 45.2 (2005): pp. 443-459, p. 452.

[474] Burton, *Anatomy*, [2.1.4.1], p. 13, ll.13-15.

[475] On the prospect of reform and improvisation in this meta-theatrical space see Ira Clark, *Professional Playwrights: Massinger, Ford, Shirley, and Brome* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1992) p. 188.

judgement and manners contravening those of objective reality provides a vivid source of contrast which can enable one to perceive rationality more clearly.

Despite the early modern theatre's frequent tendency to undermine the reliability of observation (more specifically inference grounded in observation), we have seen the necessity of observation to the process of diagnosis and treatment in these plays. This might reasonably be read as an indication of the playwrights' awareness of the increased dependence, from the sixteenth-century onwards, upon observation and experience in the practice of medicine. Our playwrights tap popular concerns with medical error by drawing upon the theatrical stereotype of the incompetent physician, which was in turn informed by discourse on dubious practitioners, only to subvert it. Furthermore it has been suggested that Corax is one of the new breed of physicians who held that medicine's future lay in the acquisition of facts via observation and experiment. Despite the uncertainty surrounding these physicians, which causes us to examine their conduct closely, the only medical errors they commit are subtly curative.

My examination of medicine's affiliation with the culture of fact and medical error texts provides a further example of error being particularised within the culture of fact. Foremost, this chapter's study of the cultural history of error through the lens of drama discovered playwrights theorising upon error's curative utility. Not only has this chapter presented further proof of the shift of concern towards errors as particular mistakes in matters of fact but it has shown particularised error conceived of as a means to redress generalised error. My readings of Ford and Brome's plays demonstrated that the physicians use particularised error – whether as errors of

misapprehension or errors of fact which imitate dubious travel narratives – to cure generalised error, conceived of as the state of being melancholy. We are now placed to conclude the thesis with a brief consideration of a famous example of particularised error's utility to the correction of another state of generalised error, that of fallen humanity, and the "restoration of paradise" via the "cultivation of facts".[476] This is supplementary to charting the overall trajectory of generalised to particularised error, and its implications, as it has been seen in the preceding chapters, and suggesting further possible areas of consideration.

[476] Picciotto, *Labors*, p. 58.

Conclusion

This thesis took as its focus the particularisation of error 1600-1650. It aimed to uncover an alteration in the articulation of error resulting from the permeation of factual conventions into many early modern discourses and to demonstrate that error articulated as a specific sense of being mistaken in matters of fact was a significant concern. This thesis has not, nor did it intend to, suggest that sensitivity to error and anxiety concerning its manifestations was a peculiarly early modern affair, but rather that the emergent culture of fact altered the means by which the perennial concern of error might be negotiated. This conclusion is left to summarise the findings of each chapter, pose some more general conclusions, and indicate further and more wide-ranging issues that this work raises as well as consider how it has intersected with extant scholarship and criticism in other areas.

The Introduction set out my argument for the particularisation of error within the culture of fact. It traced the incorporation of the language of fact (especially judicial vocabulary) into the titles of texts concerning error. The conventions and the language of fact were shown to be a persuasive register authors might adopt to articulate perceived errors. Several contexts of error, which combined to make error particularly salient in the period, were identified and these contexts, given their significance, consequently reappeared throughout, and informed, the following chapters. Taking the stance that the cultural history of error may be studied though the lens of drama, the chapters traced these contexts – the Fall, melancholy, the 'Reformation of error', the Protestant ideology of Truth, doubt, and seventeenth-

century print culture – interacting with the rise of evidence and matter of fact in selected plays.

I began with the decline of the ideological and iconographical tradition of Protestant Truth which had formerly imposed conceptual limitations upon the representation of error. Having traced the not uncomplicated evolution of representation of error from a potent generalised figuration to particularised notions (through the analysis of various and complex representations of truth and error within a shifting and religio-politically turbulent context) I concluded with the culmination of this transition in mid-century sectarian and controversialist literature. Here we found both modes of representing error (monsters evocative of earlier generalised allegorical figurations of error and error as particular instances of being mistaken in matters of fact) simultaneously present but to differing degrees. *Gangraena*, a work using the language and conventions of factual discourse to articulate the religious error of sects, presented the subordination of the earlier ideological and iconographical mode for representing error. Hence Edwards battled a serpentine figuration of error, the sectarian hydra, armed with facts. This chapter challenged Shapiro's assessment as to when religious controversialist authors adopted the concept of fact by providing evidence of this occurring in pre-Restoration controversialist writings.

Having charted this evolution in the representation of error, I turned to consider particularised errors resulting from fallen humanity's affective distempers, given the attention the seventeenth-century *cultura animi* tradition devoted to analyses of error as a member of the cognitive affective distempers. By concentrating on both this and another important scholarly area in which error is central, forensic rhetoric

as it has been brought to bear on drama by Lorna Hutson, our understanding of Jonson's drama has been furthered. Jonson's attitude to the cultivation of the mind was found to share affinities and distinctions with two prominent *cultura animi* authors with whom he was acquainted: Thomas Wright and Francis Bacon. Jonson's corrective agenda and antipathy to error was reoriented in light of this association. Not only was his drama attuned to a theory of error as a cognitive–affective distemper, but Jonson stages the affective fallibility of the mind in the operation of the logic of fact. Legal process and evidence evaluation were opportunities for Jonson to demonstrate man's imperfect judgement and the corruption of judgement by distempers which results in particularised errors. However, as I have shown, there were also occasions where forensic proficiency and affective self-scrutiny coexist within characters; moreover, this cognitive-affective self-awareness advances their accurate and moral operation of the law.

These arguments further aspects of recent work in the field. Corneanu's work has been cast in a new light by bringing to bear some of her insights on the narrative of the rise of evidence and matter of fact through the lens of Jonson's drama. Hutson's secondary topic of wits assisting distempered individuals to err is furthered by bringing to bear upon it a theory of error that derives from the *cultura animi* tradition.

Towards the end the chapter, a notion of error avoidance through the cultivation of the mind and of *habitus* emerged. This matter, which the chapter briefly touched upon, bears further discussion as it raises interesting questions about the intertwining of ethics and epistemology in early modern cognition and, specifically, in

the matter of error avoidance, which might be resolved. In the plays considered, Jonson associated the accurate and moral operation of the factual conventions of the law with an equable mind. This might lead one to ask whether the avoidance of error was the cultivation of an equable disposition rather than a matter of being right in particular, local instances. Does *habitus* undermine the association of the particularisation of error in the period with the rise of the culture of fact and related epistemological issues of certainty and uncertainty? I would argue no, for *habitus* or the conditioned mind of the *cultura animi* tradition is something individuals, if they have successfully cultivated and maintained it, carry with them in every particular situation where there is a binary epistemological outcome of right or wrong.

Work by authors like Corneanu and Gaukroger have constructively and persuasively moved discussions of early modern texts about cognition and knowledge away from epistemological questions of truth and certainty, towards ethical questions of goodness and *habitus*. Yet questions of ethics and morality remain intertwined with epistemological issues in early modern thought. Immorality, after all, occasioned the cognitive deficit (which complicates knowing) that *cultura animi* authors understood the Fall to have visited upon man; and, as Picciotto suggested, in her study of authors of the experimentalist tradition, the achievement of a "cumulative culture of works" "organised around the production and cultivation of facts" would effect the "restoration of paradise" and, presumably, the reparation of man's ethical shortcomings.[477] In a period when error was being particularised and consciousness of error in printed works was relatively high, the cultivation of *habitus* was another

[477] Picciotto, *Labors*, p. 58.

tool, a defensive one, preventing individuals succumbing to factual errors in the diverse circumstances of their lives.

Moving on from the law and news reporting, the discourses of fact considered in chapter 2, chapter 3 turned its gaze to medicine, an evolving discourse of fact with considerable methodological consciousness of error. My demonstration that Corax's practice replicates contemporary medical methodology's emphasis on observation and experiment advanced upon Hutson's original play-reading model of the absorption of legal forensic means for interrogating matters of fact into the theatre. Just as the discourse of fact moved from law into a broad range of discourses, so too the theatrical adoption of factual discourse moved from law to medicine. My parallel play-reading approach was useful for demonstrating this and for the reinterpretation it occasioned of two critically maligned stage physicians. These physicians had previously been interpreted in light of the stage stereotype of the quack physician informed by the attention medical error texts gave to mountebanks. I suggested that they were a new breed of stage physician whose observational and experimental practice reflects methodological advances attendant on the diffusion of the conventions of fact (designed to prevent error) into medicine.

The plays analysed in chapters 2 and 3 provide a perspective upon the theme of error's utility and productivity that the Introduction noted as present in recent critical studies of error. For David W. Bates the "essential promise of error" was its "potential as a site of truth's appearance".[478] The dramatists in question actively and curatively employed forms of factual error to assist characters and audiences. For

[478] Bates, *Enlightenment*, p. 15.

Jonson, this was an encouragement of the audience toward the cultivation of the mind, ridding it of affective-distempers which impede the individual's operation of the logic of fact and thus promoting accurate and moral legal process and evidence evaluation. For Ford's physician the potential of error, in highly focused formulations crafted to the patients' circumstances, lies in its diagnostic and curative applications. Firstly, error aids diagnosis by the patients' observation of and reaction to errors of judgement; and, secondly, diagnosis and treatment are facilitated by the physician deviating from objective reality to enter into a patient's distorted perceptions of reality. For Brome's physician, errors of judgement and manners which contravene those of objective reality provide his patient with a vivid source of contrast which enables him to perceive rationality more clearly. The patients of these stage physicians are thus diagnosed, their melancholic disorders treated, and their "noble powers" rebalanced.

Drama's historical prerogative to utilise error, especially in the creation and resolution of plots, dates back to Aristotle's *hamartia*. Early in the seventeenth-century Shakespeare integrated error's plot utility with the typology of Truth and Time. In *The Winter's Tale* (1611), Time does not reveal Truth, rather he is a figuration that drives the plot by creating and unpicking errors.[479] Shakespeare integrates the typology with the New Comedic theory of plot centred upon the *nodus erroris*; a figuration of time is entrusted to untie the knots of the plot and bring about

[479] "I that please some, try all, both joy and terror / Of good and bad, that makes and unfolds error, / Now take upon me, in the name of Time, / To use my wings" (4.1.1-4) Shakespeare, *Complete Works*. See Soji Iwasaki, "*Veritas filia temporis* and Shakespeare," *ELR* 3 (1973): pp. 249-63.

the plot's denouement.[480] In the plays of Ford and Brome, however, a figuration with the capacity to resolve plots, characterised by its creation and resolution of error, is replaced by particularised error (as a mistake in matters of fact) and its utility in curatively resolving plots. Given this thesis's active combination of cultural history and literary investigation, the question arises: was playwrights' use of error a dramatic whimsy or did it also reflect a contemporary cultural trend in the history of error wherein error was perceived to be a conduit to truth, a potential "site" for truth's appearance, or a negative kind of knowing?

The utility of a negative kind of knowledge is glimpsed in Bacon's *New Atlantis* (1626). The ideal community of learning, Salomon's House, incorporates error, as the deliberate and deceitful misrepresentation of the facts of nature, into its programme of knowledge acquisition. This is achieved in its "houses of deceits of the senses" where they "represent all manner of feats of juggling, false apparitions, impostures, and illusion".[481] The community has the ingenuity to deceive beholders by cloaking their inventions in more a wondrous guise than they naturally possess. Nevertheless they "hate all impostures" and it is "severely forbidden" to "shew any natural work or thing, adorned or swelling but only pure as it is, and without all affectation of strangeness".[482] This passage has perplexed readers: why would a community "pursuing truth want to erect a *deception laboratory*?"[483] Why indeed, if "impostures"

---

[480] "O time, thou must untangle it not I / It is too hard a knot for me t'untie" (2.2.40-41). On Time as a plot-clarifying agent see also George Chapman, *All Fools*, *The Plays of George Chapman*, ed. Allan Holaday (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1970), 4.1.209-13.
[481] Francis Bacon, *The Major Works: Including New Atlantis and the Essays*, ed. Brian Vickers (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 486.
[482] Ibid.
[483] D. Graham Burnett, "Deception as a Way of Knowing: A Conversation with Anthony Grafton", *Cabinet* 33 (2009), pp. 69-76, p. 69.

are distasteful to them? The apparent perplexity can be resolved however by closer attention to Bacon's account of knowledge and deception elsewhere.

Edenic man pursued "pure knowledg" "of nature and vniversality", however, "proude knowledge of good and euill" tempted Eve, perverting the Edenic pursuit of pure knowledge, and fuelling the "zeale and iealousy of Diuines".[484] This zeal fed the opinion that knowledge should be "accepted of with great limitation and caution" for "thaspiring to ouermuch knowledge, was the originall temptation and sinne, where-upon ensued the fal of Man".[485] The consequence of this assessment (which elides the "pure" and the "proude" qualities of knowledge) was the attitude that knowledge "hath in it somewhat of the Serpent".[486] The serpentine knowledge contains "venome" which causes "ventositie or swelling", it must be tempered with the "true correctiue", "Charitie"; knowledge not instructed by charity, which directed it towards the practical improvement of men's lives, was superficial.[487] The misrepresentation of natural facts in the house of deceits is described as "swelling"; such misrepresentation is thus serpentine knowledge.

Yet, the learned community realises the value of serpentine knowledge. Writing of fraudulent and evil arts, Bacon relates the fable of the Basilisk. If "he see you first you die for it: but if you see him first, he dieth. So is it with deceits and euill arts: which if

[484] Bacon, *Advancement*, pp. 5-6
[485] Ibid.
[486] Ibid.
[487] Ibid., p. 7.

they be first espied they leese their life”.[488] We must, therefore, be “beholden” to men like Machiavelli, “that write what men doe and not what they ought to do” -

> For it is not possible to ioyn serpentine wisedom withthe Columbine Innocency, except men know exactly all the conditions of the *Serpent* […] that is al fourmes and Natures of euill. For without this vertue lyeth open and vnfenced.[489]

Knowledge of the serpent is a pre-emptive defence against it. Bacon advocates a theoretical familiarity with serpentine wisdom and the “swelling” it effects. The house of deceits evinces Bacon’s concern with distinguishing the truth from false miracles;[490] its inclusion in Salomon’s house suggests Bacon was conceiving of a theory of knowledge in which deliberate mistakes in matters of fact, (whereby natural facts are misrepresented) were conducive to the pursuit of truth.

Bacon presents the ideal operation of serpentine wisdom for the purpose of the pure advancement of natural knowledge. Through the enactment of “juggling, false apparitions, impostures, and illusion” and, critically, “their fallacies [their refutation or exposure as illusion]” the community is trained to recognise such errors; the adept forger is, after all, often best placed to recognise a forgery.[491] Hughball’s theatrical treatment operates like a house of deceits and his patient, Peregrine, leaves this theatrical enterprise better able to recognise rationality and fact and to temper those faculties within him which compromise this perception. Were this thesis extended,

---

[488] Ibid., p. 144.
[489] Ibid., pp. 144-145.
[490] R. W. Serjeantson’s explanation of the house of deceits links error recognition with the study of natural philosophy and the early modern justification for studying natural philosophy, that it helped discover impostures, and false miracles. Serjeantson, “Natural Knowledge in the *New Atlantis*”, *Natural Knowledge in Francis Bacon’s New Atlantis*, ed. Bronwen Price (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), pp. 82-105.
[491] Anthony Grafton, *Forgers and Critics: Creativity and Duplicity in Western Scholarship* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990).

future work could consider further how far the analogy that, at times, the early modern theatre operates like a house of deceits through the constructive, instructive enactment of error, might hold.

As it stands, however, the thesis offers a counterpart to Barbara Shapiro's *A Culture of Fact*. Shapiro showed how legal procedures for the investigation and establishment of facts permeated other arenas and so established the concept of fact. This thesis considered how this altered the articulation of error, with the result that error became the consequence of the mishandling, deliberate or otherwise, of these procedures for establishing fact. As a small study, this thesis has been limited as to the length of historical period it could feasibly examine and the number of discourses of fact with which it could engage. Shapiro's dealt with law, history, chorography, travel reporting, the periodical press, religion, natural history, and natural philosophy. This study has touched upon confined sub-discourses of most of these. Shapiro saw the culture of fact reach its full expression in the late seventeenth-century. This thesis does not look beyond 1650; therefore, the consequences of the full expression of factual discourse for the articulation of error in the later part of the century remains to be seen. The value of this counterpart might be increased by extending its range of vision to additional discourse of fact as well as those from the later part of the century. Nevertheless, this thesis has shown both drama's broader engagement with discourses of fact (not just the law) and drama's engagement with the sensitivity to error surrounding the establishment of fact in early-mid seventeenth-century culture.

Numbered Appendix of Titles

[1] Ralph Brooke, *A discouerie of diuers errors published in print in the much commended Britannia* (London: 1599)

[2] Pieter van Foreest, *The arraignment of vrines: wherein are set downe the manifold errors and abuses of ignorant vrine-mongring empirickes, cozening quacksaluers, women-physitians, and the like stuffe* (London: 1623)

[3] Sir George Wharton, *Merlini Anglici errata. Or, The errors, mistakes, and mis-applications of Master Lilly's new ephemeris for the yeare 1647. Discovered, refuted; and corrected* (London: 1647)

[4] John Etherington, *A discouery of the errors of the English Anabaptists.: As also an admonition to all such as are led by the like spirit of error. Wherein is set downe all their seuerall and maine points of error, which they hold. With a full answer to euery one of them seuerally, wherein the truth is manifested* (London: 1623)

[5] Samuel Hartlib, *The reformed husband-man; or A brief treatise of the errors, defects and inconveniences of our English husbandry, in ploughing and sowing for corn.* (London: 1651)

[6] Ralph Brooke, *A catalogue and succession of the kings, princes, dukes, marquesses, earles, and viscounts of this realme of England, since the Norman Conquest, to this*

present yeare, 1619 … reforming many errors committed, by men of other profession, and lately published in print ... (London: 1619)

[7] Ephraim Pagitt, *Heresiography: or, A description of the hereticks and sectaries of these latter times* (London: 1645)

[8] Abiezer Coppe, *Copp's return to the wayes of truth: in a zealous and sincere protestation against severall errors; and in a sincere and zealous testimony to severall truths: or, Truth asserted against, and triumphing over error; and the wings of the fiery flying roll clipt, &c.* (London: 1651)

[9] Anthony White, *Truth and error discouered in two sermons in St Maries in Oxford* (Oxford: 1628)

[10] Thomas Edwards, *Gangræna: or A catalogue and discovery of many of the errours, heresies, blasphemies and pernicious practices of the sectaries of this time, vented and acted in England in these four last years* (London: 1646)

[11] Thomas Edwards, *The second part of Gangræna: or a fresh and further discovery of the errors, heresies, blasphemies, and dangerous proceedings of the sectaries of this time* (London: 1646)

[12] Thomas Edwards, *The third part of Gangræna, or, a new and higher discovery of the*

errors, heresies, blasphemies, and insolent proceedings of the sectaries of these times (London: 1646)

[13] I.W, *The copie of a letter sent by a learned physician to his friend: wherein are detected the manifold errors vsed hitherto of the apothecaries, in preparing their compositions, as sirropes, condites, conserues, pilles, potions, electuaries, losinges, &c* (London: 1586)

[14] John Lesly, *The parasynagogue paragorized, or, A parenetical confutation of the epidemical error: which asserteth, separation from parochial church-communion : demonstrating their practice, who on the Lords day neglect the publick exercises of divine worship in their parochial congregations, and frequent (cæteris paribus) other churches, to be anti-scriptural* (London: 1655)

[15] George Gifford, *A short reply vnto the last printed books of Henry Barrow and Iohn Greenwood, the chiefe ringleaders of our Donatists in England: Wherein is layd open their grosse ignorance, and foule errors: vpon which their whole building is founded.* (London: 1591)

[16] Sir Francis Hubert, *The historie of Edward the Second, surnamed Carnarvan, one of our English kings: together with the fatall down-fall of his two vnfortunate favorites Gaveston and Spencer: now published by the author thereof, according to the true originall copie, and purged from those foule errors and corruptions, wherewith that spurious and surreptitious peece, which lately came forth vnder the same tytle, was*

too much defiled and deformed : with the addition of some other observations both of vse and ornament (London: 1629)

[17] Thomas White, *A discoverie of Brownisme: or, a brief declaration of some of the errors and abhominations daily practiced and increased among the English company of the seperation remayning for the present at Amsterdam in Holland* (London: 1605)

[18] Thomas Wright, *Certaine articles or forcible reasons: Discouering the palpable absurdities, and most notorious and intricate errors of the Protestants religion* (Antwerp: 1600)

[19] Ralph Austen, *A treatise of fruit-trees: shewing the manner of grafting, setting, pruning, and ordering of them in all respects: according to divers new and easy rules of experience; gathered in ye space of twenty yeares. Whereby the value of lands may be much improued, in a shorttime [sic], by small cost, and little labour. Also discovering some dangerous errors, both in ye theory and practise of ye art of planting fruit-trees ...* (Oxford: 1653)

[20] John Darrel, *A suruey of certaine dialogical discourses: vvritten by Iohn Deacon, and Iohn Walker, concerning the doctrine of the possession and dispossession of diuels: Wherein is manifested the palpable ignorance and dangerous errors of the discoursers, and what according to proportion of God his truth, every christian is to hold in these poyntes.* (England?:1602)

[21] Richard Broughton, *The first part of the resolution of religion, divided into two bookes, conteyning a demonstration of the necessitie of a divine and supernaturall worshippe.: In the first, against all atheists, and epicures: in the seconde, that Christian Catholic religion is the same in particuler, and more certaine in euery article thereof, then any humane or experimented knowledge, against Iewes, Mahumetans, Pagans, and other external enemies of Christ. Manifestly convincing al their sects and professions, of intollerable errors, and irreligious abuses* (Antwerpe:1603)

[22] Henry Northampton, *A defensatiue against the poyson of supposed prophecies.: Not hitherto confuted by the pen of any man, which being grounded, either vpon the warrant and authority of old painted bookes, expositions of dreames, oracles, reuelations, inuocations of damned spirits, iudicials of astrologie, or any other kinde of pretended knowledge whatsoeuer, de futuris contingentibus; haue beene causes of great disorder in the common-wealth, especially among the simple and vnlearned people. Very needfull to be published, considering the great offence, which grew by most palpable and grosse errors in astrologie.* (London: 1620)

[23] Thomas Bakewell, *A short view of the Antinomian errours: with a briefe and plaine answer to them, as the heads of them lye in order in the next page of this book : being a nest of cursed errors hatched by hereticks, fed and nourished by their proselites: being taken as they were flying abroad were brought as the eagle doth her young ones to see if they could endure to looke upon the sun-beams of truth with fixed eyes, the which they could not: were presently adjudged to be a bastard brood, and their necks chopt off, and their carkasses throwne to the dunghill.* (London: 1643)

[24] Richard More, *The carpenters rule, or, a booke shewing many plain waies, truly to measure ordinarie timber, and other extraordinarie sollids, or timber: with a detection of sundrie great errors, generally committed by carpenters and others in measuring of timber; tending much to the buyers great losse.* (London: 1602)

[25] John Goodwin, *Sion-Colledg visited. Or, Some briefe animadversions upon a pamphlet lately published, under the title of, A testimonie to the truth of Jesus Christ, and to our Solemne League and Covenant, &c. Subscribed (as is pretended) by the ministers of Christ within the province of London. Calculated more especially for the vindication of certaine passages cited out of the writings of J.G. in the said pamphlet, with the blacke brand of infamous and pernicious errors, and which the said ministers pretend (amongst other errors so called) more particularly to abhominate. Wherein the indirect and most un-Christian dealings of the said ministers, in charging & calling manifest and cleere truths, yea such as are consonant to their own principles, by the name of infamous and pernicious errours, are detected and laid open to the kingdome, and the whole world. By the said John Goodwin, a servant of God and men, in the Gospel of Jesus Christ* (London:1648)

[26] Thomas Browne, *A key to the Kings cabinet; or Animadversions upon the three printed speeches, of Mr Lisle, Mr Tate, and Mr Browne, spoken at a common-hall in London, 3. July, 1645. Detecting the malice and falshood of their blasphemous observations made upon the King and Queenes letters* (Oxford: 1645)

[27] Daniel Cawdrey, *Vindiciæ clavium: or, A vindication of the keyes of the kingdome of Heaven, into the hands of the right owners. Being some animadversions upon a tract of Mr. I.C. called, The keyes of the kingdome of Heaven. As also upon another tract of his, called, The way of the churche of New-England. Manifesting; 1. The weaknesse of his proofes. 2. The contradictions to himselfe, and others. 3. The middle-way (so called) of Independents, tobe the extreme, or by-way of the Brownists. By an earnest well-wisher to the truth* (London: 1645)

[28] Henry Parker, *Animadversions animadverted. Or a reply to the late Animadversions upon those notes which the late Observator published upon the seven doctrines and positions which the King by way of recapitulation lays open so offensive* (London: 1642)

[29] Girolamo Cardano, Contradicentium medicorum liber continens contradictiones centum octo (Venice: 1545)

[30] Jacques Peletier, *De conciliatione locorum Galeni, sectiones duae* (Paris: 1560)

[31] Francisco Vallés, *Controversiarum medicarum et philosophicorum libri decem* (Compluti: 1556)

[32] T.C., *A glasse for the times by which according to the Scriptures, you may clearly behold the true ministers of Christ: how farre differing from false teachers. With a briefe collection of the errors of our times, and their authors names. Drawn from their*

own writings. Also proofes of Scripture by way of confutation of them, by sundry able ministers (London: 1648)

Bibliography

Primary Works

A.B.C.D.E., E.M.A.D.O.C, *Novembris Monstrum, or, Rome Brovght to Bed in England* (London: 1641).

Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum, 1642-1660, eds. C.H. Firth and R.S. Rait (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1911).

An Exact and True Collection (London 1646).

An Exact and True Diurnal (London: 1642).

Anon, *The Royall Passage of her Majesty from the Tower of London, to her Palace of Whitehall, with all the all Speeches and Devices, both of the Pageants and Otherwise* (London: 1604).

Apollodorus, *The Library of Greek Mythology*, tr. Robin Hard (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).

Apollonius Rhodius, *The Argonautica*, tr. R.C. Seaton (London: Heinemann, 1912).

Aphthonius, *Progymnasmata* (London: 1575).

Ayloffe, William, *Government of the Passions* (London: 1700).

Bacon, Francis, *The Advancement of Learning*, ed. Michael Kiernan, *Oxford Francis Bacon* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000).

Bacon, Francis, *In praise of knowledge*, *The Works of Francis Bacon* (*WFB*), ed. James Spedding et al, 14 vols. (London: Longman, 1857-74), 8.

Bacon, Francis, *Sylva Sylvarum*, WFB, 2.

Bacon, Francis, *Translation of the Novum Organum*, *WFB*, 4.

Bacon, Francis, *Of the Colours of Good and Evil*, *WFB*, 7.

Bacon, Francis, “Letter to Savill,” *WFB*, 7.

Bacon, Francis, *The Major Works: Including New Atlantis and the Essays*, ed. Brian Vickers (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

Beaumont, Francis, and John Fletcher, *The Scornfvl Ladie* (London: 1613).

Ben Jonson, ed. C.H. Herford and Percy Simpson, 11 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925-52).

Bernard, Richard, *The Isle of Man* (London: 1627).

Biggs, Noah, *Mataeotechnia medicinae praxeos* (London: 1651).

Bright, Timothy, *Treatise of Melancholy* (London: 1586).

Brome, Richard, *The Antipodes*, *Three Renaissance Travel Plays*, ed. Anthony Parr (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999).

Browne, Thomas, *Pseudodoxia Epidemica*, ed. Robin Robbins (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981)

Browne, Thomas, *A Key to the Kings Cabinet* (London: 1645).

Brugis, Thomas, *Marrow of Physicke* (London: 1648).

Bunyan, John, *The Pilgrim's Progress* (London: 1678).

Burton, Robert, *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, eds. T.C. Faulkner et al, 6 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989-2000).

Calvin, John, *Institutes of the Christian Religion,* tr. Ford Lewis Battles, ed. John T. McNeill, 2 vols. (London: S.C.M. Press, 1960), 1.

Campion, Thomas, *The Works of Thomas Campion*, ed. Walter R. Davis (London: Faber, 1969).

Carter, Richard, *The Schismatick Stigmatized* (London: 1641).

The Certaine Newes of this present Weeke (London: 1622).

Chapman, George, *The Plays of George Chapman*, ed. Allan Holaday (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1970).

Charron, Pierre, *Of Wisdome, Three Bookes*, tr. Samson Lennard (London: 1608).

Chiondini, *Consultationes Responsiones et consultationes medicinales* (Venice: 1607)

Comes, Natalis, *Mythologiae* (Padua: 1616).

The Concurrent Testimony of the Ministers in the County of Wiltes … against the Errors, Heresies, and Blasphemies of these Times, and the Toleration of them (London: 1648).

Cotta, John, *A Short Discouerie of the Vnobserued Dangers of Seuerall Sorts of Ignorant and Vnconsiderate Practisers of Physicke in England* (London: 1612).

Coxe, Daniel, *A Discourse, wherein the Interest of the Patient in Reference to Physick and Physicians is Soberly Debated* (London: 1669).

D'Abano, Pietro, *Conciliator* (Venice: 1476).

Dekker, Thomas, *Dekker, his Dream* (London: 1620).

Descartes, René, *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes* (*PWD*), ed. and tr. John Cottingham et al, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984-85).

Du Laurens, Andre, *A Discourse of the Preservation of the Sight; of Melancholike; of Rheumes, and of Old Age* (London: 1599).

Edwards, Thomas, *The first and second part of Gangraena* (London: 1646).

Everyman and Medieval Miracle Plays, ed. A.C. Cawley (London: Dent, 1993).

Farnworth, Richard, *The Spirituall Man Iudgeth all Things* (London: 1655).

Fletcher, Phineas, *The Locusts, or Apollyonists* (Cambridge: 1627).

Fletcher, Phineas, *The Poems of Phineas Fletcher*, ed. Alexander B. Grosart, 4 vols. (Blackburn: C. Tiplady, 1869).

Ford, John, *'Tis A Pity She's a Whore and Other Plays*, ed. Marion Lomax (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

Galen, *The Passions and Errors of the Soul*, *Selected Works*, ed. P.N. Singer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

Goodwin, Geofrrey, *The Fall of Man, or, the Corruption of Nature* (London: 1616).

Goodwin, John, *Cretensis: or A Briefe Answer to an Ulcerous Treatise, Lately Published by Mr Thomas Edwards, Intituled Gangræna* (London: 1646).

Graunt, John, *Natural and Political Observations … Made upon the Bills of Mortality* (London: 1662; 5th edn. 1676).

Hall, Joseph, *Virgidemiarum* (London: 1599).

Hall, Joseph, *A Modest Confutation* (London: 1642).

Hammond, Henry, *Of Conscience* (London: 1644).

Harvey, William, *De motu cordis* (Frankfurt: 1628).

Harvey, William, *De generatione* (London: 1651).

Harvey, William, *Two Anatomical Exercitations Concerning the Circulation of the Blood* (1653).

Howard, Henry, Earl of Surrey, *Poems*, ed. Emrys Jones (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964).

Howell, T.B., *Complete Collection of State Trials*, 34 vols. (London: T. C. Hansard for Longman, 1809–1826).

Hesiod, *Theogony, Works and Days, Testimonia*, ed. Glenn W. Most (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2006).

Huarte, Juan, *The Examination of Mens Wits* (London: 1594).

The Impartial Intelligencer (London: June 1653 onwards).

The Impartial Scout (London: June 1650 onwards).

Jonson, Ben, *Every Man Out of His Humour*, ed. Helen Ostrovich (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001).

Jonson, Ben, *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson*, ed. David Bevington et al 7 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

Jonson, Ben, *The Staple of News*, ed. Devra Rowland Kifer (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1975).

Jonson, Ben, *The Staple of News*, ed. Anthony Parr (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988).

Joubert, Laurent, *Popular Errors*, tr. Gregory David de Rocher (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1989).

Joubert, Laurent, *The Second Part of the Popular Errors*, tr. Gregory David de Rocher (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1995).

The Kingdomes Faithfull and Impartiall Scout (London: February 1648).

Lacan, Jacques, "Truth emerges from the Mistake," *The Seminars of Jacques Lacan*, ed. Jacques-Alain Miller, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), vol. 1, tr. John Forrester, pp. 261-72.

Late Newes or True Relations, 30 (London: 2 July 1624).

Leoniceno, Niccolò, *Opuscula* (Basel: 1532).

Lupton, Donald, *London and the Country Carbonadoed and Quartred into Severall Characters* (London: 1632).

Luther, Martin, *Luther's Works*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan and Helmut T. Lehmann, 55 vols. (St. Louis: Concordia: 1955–1986).

Malebranche, Nicolas, *Father Malebranche's Treatise Concerning the Search after Truth*, tr. T. Taylor, 2 vols. (1694)

Mandeville, Sir John, *Mandeville's Travels*, ed. M.C. Seymour (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967).

Mercuiale, *Medica practica ... libri V* (Lyon: 1617).

Mercurio, Scipio, *De gli errori populari d'Italia* (Verona: 1645).

Mercurius Insanus, Insanissimus (London: 1648).

Mercurius pragmaticus, ed. Thomas Lock (London: 16-25 May 1653).

Middleton, Thomas, *A Trick to Catch the Old One* (London: 1608).

Middleton, Thomas, *A Game at Chess* (London: 1624).

Middleton, Thomas, *A Game at Chess*, ed. T.H. Howard-Hill (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993).

Middleton, Thomas, *Thomas Middleton: The Collected Works*, ed. Gary Taylor et al, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007).

Milton, John, *Animadversions upon the Remonstrants Defense against Smectymnuus* (London: 1641).

Milton, John, *Complete Prose Works of John Milton* (*CPW*) ed. D.M. Wolfe et al, 8 vols. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953–1982).

Milton, John, *Paradise Lost,* ed. John Leonard (London: Penguin, 2000).

Moore, Philip, *The Hope of Health* (London: 1565).

Nedham, Marchamont, *Medela Medicinae. A Plea for the Free Profession, and a Renovation of the Art of Physick* (London: 1665).

Oldenburg, Henry, *Correspondence*, ed. and tr. A. Rupert Hall and Marie Boas Hall, 13 vols. (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1965-86)

Pagitt, Ephraim*, Heresiography: or, A Description of the Hereticks and Sectaries of these Latter Times* (London: 1645).

Paré, Ambroise, *The Works of that Famous Chirurgion Ambrose Parey*, tr. Thomas Johnson (London: 1634).

Plutarch, *Moralia*, ed. Frank Cole Babbitt, 15 vols. (London: Heinemann, 1927-76)

Pomarius, Petrus, *Enchiridion medicum* (London: 1609).

Primrose, James, *Popular Errors* (London: 1651).

Punt, William, *A New Dialoge Called the Endightment agaynste Mother Messe* (London: 1548).

Ross, Alexander, *Mystagogus Poeticus* (London: 1647).

Rowley, William, *A New Wonder, A Woman Never Vexed* (London: 1632).

Senault, Jean-François. *Natural History of the Passions* (London: 1674).

Seneca, *Ad Lucilium Epistulae morales*, tr. R.M. Gummere, 3 vols. (London: Heinemann, 1917-25).

Shakespeare, William, *The Complete Works*, eds. Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998).

Shepherd, Luke, *Pathose, or an Inward Passion of the Pope for the Losse of hys Daughter the Masse* (London: 1548?).

Sheppard, Samuel, *Mercurius Dogmaticus* (London: 1648).

Sheppard, Samuel, *Mercurius Phreneticus* (London: 1652).

Sloane, Hans, *A Voyage to the Islands Madera, Barbados, Nieves, S. Christophers and Jamaica, with the Natural History of the Herbs and Trees, Four-Footed Beasts, Fishes, Birds, Insects, Reptiles, ...* (1707).

Spenser, Edmund, *The Faerie Queene*, ed. A.C. Hamilton (London: Longman, 1977).

Spenser, Edmund, *The Faerie Queen* (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth, 1999).

St. Augustine, *Confessions*, tr. Henry Chadwick (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992; repr. 2008).

Taylor, John, *The Anatomy of the Separatists* (London: 1642).

Taylor, John, *A Swarme of Sectaries and Schismatiqves* (London: 1641).

Reynolds, Edward, *A Treatise of the Passions and Faculties of the Soul of Man* (London: 1647).

Ripa, Cesare, *Iconologia* (Padua: 1618).

Ripa, Cesare, *Iconologia* (Venice: 1645).

Ross, Alexander, *Mystagogus Poeticus* (1647).

Udall, Nicholas, *Respublica*, ed. W.W. Greg (London: Early English Text Society, 1952).

Pieter van Foreest, *The Arraignment of Vrines: Wherein are Set Downe the Manifold Errors and Abuses of Ignorant Vrine-Mongring Empirickes, Cozening Quacksaluers, Women-Physitians, and the Like Stuffe* (London: 1623).

Van Helmont, Jean Baptiste, *Deliramenta catarrh,* tr. Walter Charleton (London: 1650).

Von Marnix, Philipp, *Bienenkorb des heiligen Römischen Immenschwarms* (Strasbourg: 1579).

Walker, Obadiah, *Of Education* (Oxford: 1673).

Warres, John, *Touchstone of Truth: Wherein Veritie, by Scripture is Plainely Confirmed, and Error Confuted* (London: 1621).

Whitney, Geoffrey, *A Choice of Emblems* (Leyden: 1586).

Wilkins, David, *Concilia Magnae Brittania et Hiberniae*, (London: 1737).

Wright, Thomas, *The Passions of the Minde in General* (London: 1601).

Secondary Works

Achinstein, Sharon, “The Politics of Babel in the English Revolution”, *Pamphlet Wars: Prose in the English Revolution*, ed. James Holstun (London: Frank Cass, 1992), pp. 14-44.

Altman, Joel B., *The Tudor Play of Mind: Rhetorical Inquiry and the Development of Elizabethan Drama* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978).

Apostle, Hippocrates G., “An Aristotelian Essay on Error”, *Hamartia: The Concept of Error in the Western Tradition*, eds. Donald V. Stump et al (New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 1983), pp. 97-117.

Ayres, Michael, "Theories of Knowledge and Belief", *Cambridge History of Seventeenth-Century Philosophy*, ed. Daniel Garber and Michael Ayres, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 2.1031.

Bagchi, David, “Christ's Descent into Hell in Reformation Controversy,” *Studies in Church History* 45 (2009): pp. 228-47.

Baldwin, H.E., "Milton and Phineas Fletcher," *Journal of English and Germanic Philosophy* 33 (1934): pp. 544-46.

Baldwin, R.G., "Phineas Fletcher: His Modern Readers and His Renaissance Ideas," *Philological Quarterly* 40:4 (1961): pp. 462-475.

Barnouw, Jeffrey, "Passion as 'Confused' Perception or Thought in Descartes, Malebranche, and Hutcheson", *JHI* 53 (1994): pp. 397-424.

Baron, Sabrina A., "The Guises of Dissemination in Early Seventeenth-century England: News in Manuscript and Print," *The Politics of Information in Early Modern Europe,* eds. Brendan Dooley and Sabrina A. Baron (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 41-56.

Barton, Anne, *Ben Jonson, Dramatist* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984).

Baskervill, C.R., *English Elements in Jonson's Early Comedies* (New York: The Gordian Press, 1967).

Bates, D.W., *Enlightenment Aberrations: Error and Revolution in France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002).

Baum, Helena Watts *The Satiric and Didactic in Ben Jonson's Comedy* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1947).

Baumlin, James S., "Generic Context of Elizabethan Satire: Rhetoric, Poetic Theory, and Imitation", in *Renaissance Genres,* ed. Barbara Kiefer Lewalski (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1986), pp. 448-56.

Benedict, Barbara M., *Curiosity: A Cultural History of Early Modern Inquiry* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001).

Bergerson, David M., "Middleton's Moral Landscape: *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside* and *The Triumphs of Truth*", *"Accompaninge the players": Essays Celebrating Thomas Middleton, 1580-1980*, ed. Kenneth Friedenreich (New York: AMS Press, 1983), pp. 133-45.

Blair, Ann, "Reading Strategies for Coping with Information Overload, ca. 1550-1700", *JHI*, 64 (2003): pp. 11-28.

Blair, Ann, "Errata Lists and the Reader as Corrector", *Agents of Change: Print Culture Studies after Elizabeth L. Eisenstein*, eds. Sabrina Alcorn Baron et al (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press in association with the Centre for the Book, Library of Congress, 2007), pp. 21-41.

Burnett, D. Graham, “Deception as a Way of Knowing: A Conversation with Anthony Grafton”, *Cabinet* 33 (2009), pp. 69-76.

Butler, Martin, *Theatre and Crisis: 1632-1642* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984).

Bylebyl, Jerome J., "The School of Padua: Humanistic Medicine in the Sixteenth-Century", *Health, Medicine and Mortality in the Sixteenth-Century*, ed. Charles Webster (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), pp. 335-37.

Campbell, Mary B., *The Witness and the Other World: Exotic European Travel Writing, 400–1600* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988).

Campbell, O.J., *Comicall Satyre in Shakespeare's Troilus and Cressida* (San Marino: Huntington Library, 1938).

Carlton, Charles, *Charles I: The Personal Monarch* (London: Routledge, 1995).

Cave, Richard Allen, *Ben Jonson* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Education, 1991).

Chapple, Anne S., “Robert Burton’s Geography of Melancholy”, *SEL* 33.1 (1993): pp. 99-130.

Clark, Ira, *Professional Playwrights: Massinger, Ford, Shirley, and Brome* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1992).

Cook, Harold J., *The Decline of the Old Medical Regime in Stuart London* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986).

Cook, Harold J., “Policing the Health of London: College of Physicians and the Early Stewart Monarchy”, *Social History of Medicine* 2 (1989): pp. 1-33.

Cook, Harold J., "Medicine", *Cambridge History of Science*, eds. David C. Lindberg and Ronald L. Numbers, 7 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 3.407-434.

“The Copious Text”, *Renaissance Studies* 28.2 (2014).

Corneanu, Sorana, *The Regimens of the Mind*: *Boyle, Locke, and the Early Modern Cultura Animi Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011).

Cory, H.E., "Spenser, the School of the Fletchers, and Milton," *University of California Publications in Modern Philology* 2 (1912): pp. 362-67.

Craik, Katherine, *Reading Sensations in Early Modern England* (New York: Palgrave, 2007).

The Culture of Playgoing in Shakespeare's England, ed. Anthony B. Dawson and Paul Yachnin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

Cummings, Brian, *Mortal Thoughts: Religion, Secularity, and Identity in Shakespeare and Early Modern Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

Cummings, Brian, "Protestant allegory", *The Cambridge Companion to Allegory*, ed. Rita Copeland and Peter T. Struck (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 117-190.

Curran, Kevin, *Marriage, Performance, and Politics at the Jacobean Court* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009).

Dahl, Folke, *A Bibliography of English Corantos and Periodical Newsbooks, 1620-1642* (London: Bibliographical Society, 1952).

Daston, Lorraine and Katherine Park, *Wonders and the Order of Nature* (New York: Zone Books, 1998).

Davidson, Clifford, "The Iconography of Illusion and Truth in The Winter's Tale", *Shakespeare and the Arts*, ed. Cecil Williamson Cary (Washington: UP of America, 1982), pp. 73-91.

Davis, Natalie Zemon, *Society and Culture in Early Modern France* (London: Duckworth, 1975).

Debus, Allen, "Paracelsian Medicine: Noah Biggs and the Problem of Medical Reform", *Medicine in Seventeenth Century England* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974): pp. 33-48.

Diehl, Huston, "Graven Images: Protestant Emblem Books in England", *RenQ* 39.1 (1986): pp. 49-66.

Donaldson, Ian, *The World Upside-Down: Comedy from Jonson to Fielding* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970).

Donaldson, Ian, *Ben Jonson, A Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

Dooley, Brendan, *The Social History of Scepticism* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999).

Doran, Susan, *Elizabeth I and Religion* (London: Routledge, 1994).

Duncan, Douglas, *Ben Jonson and the Lucianic Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979).

Edwards, Karen L., "Thomas Browne and the Absurdities of Melancholy," "*A Man Very Well Studyed": New Contexts for Thomas Browne*, eds. Kathryn Murphy and Richard Todd (Leiden: Brill, 2008), pp. 211-26.

Eisenstein, Elizabeth L., *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979).

Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, *Divine Art, Infernal Machine* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011).

Encyclopaedia of the Middle Ages, ed. Andre Vauchez, 2 vols. (Cambridge: James Clarke, 2000).

Evans, G.R., *Problems of Authority in the Reformation Debates* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

Evans, G.R., *Getting it Wrong: The Mediaeval Epistemology of Error* (Leiden: Brill, 1998).

Ewing, S. Blaine, *Burtonian Melancholy in the Plays of John Ford* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1940).

Fabiny, Tibor, "'Veritas Filia Temporis' The Iconography of Time and Truth and Shakespeare," *Shakespeare and the Emblem: Studies in Renaissance Iconography and Iconology*, ed. Tibor Fabiny (Szeged: Dept. of English, Attila József University, 1984), pp. 215-271.

Fallon, Stephen M., "Milton's Sin and Death: The Ontology of Allegory in *Paradise Lost*," *ELR* 17 (1987): pp. 329-50.

Fish, Stanley, *Self-Consuming Artifacts*: *The Experience of Seventeenth-century Literature* (Berkley: University of California Press, 1972).

Fish, Stanley, *Surprised by Sin: The Reader in Paradise Lost* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971).

Fox, Robert C., “The Allegory of Sin and Death in *Paradise Lost”*, *Modern Language Quarterly* 24 (1963): pp. 354-64.

Frank, Robert G., “The Physician as Virtuoso in Seventeenth-Century England”, *English Scientific Virtuosi in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Los Angeles: William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, University of California, 1979), pp. 59-114.

Frank, Robert G., *Harvey and the Oxford Physiologists* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980).

French, Roger K., "Pliny and Renaissance Medicine," *Science in the Early Roman Empire*, ed. French et al (London: Croom Helm, 1986), pp. 252-81.

Frye, Susan, *Elizabeth I* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).

Gallaher, Philip J., “‘Real or Allegoric’: The Ontology of Sin and Death in *Paradise Lost”*, *ELR* 6 (1976): pp. 317-335.

Gaskell, Malcolm, *Crimes and Mentalities in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

Gordon, Donald, “’Veritas Filia Temporis”: Hadrianus Junius and Geoffrey Whitney”, *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 3 (1940): pp. 228-240.

Gaukroger, Stephen, *Francis Bacon and the Transformation of Early Modern Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

Gentilicore, David, *Healers and Healing in Early Modern Italy* (Manchester: Manchester University Press: 1998).

Gless, Darryl, *Interpretation and Theology in Spenser* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

Gowland, Angus, *Worlds of Renaissance Melancholy: Robert Burton in Context* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

Gowland, Angus, “The Problem of Early Modern Melancholy”, *Past and Present* 191 (May 2006): pp. 77-120.

Grafton, Anthony, *Forgers and Critics: Creativity and Duplicity in Western Scholarship* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990).

Grafton, Anthony, *The Culture of Correction in Renaissance Europe* (London: British Library, 2011).

Green, Mandy, *Milton's Ovidian Eve* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009).

Gregerson, Linda, *The Reformation of the Subject: Spenser, Milton and the English Protestant Epic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

Grossman, Marshall, "Reading, Death and the Ethics of Enjoyment in Spenser and Milton," *Imagining Death in Spenser and Milton*, eds. Elizabeth Jane Bellamy et al (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), pp. 116-130.

Grundy, Joan, *The Spenserian Poets* (London: Edward Arnold, 1969).

Handling Sin: Confession in the Middle Ages, eds. Peter Biller and A.J. Minnis (York: York Medieval Press, 1998).

Hamilton, A.C., *The Spenser Encyclopedia* (London: Routledge, 1990).

Hamlin, William, *Tragedy and Scepticism in Shakespeare's England* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

Handover, P.M., *Printing in London from 1476 to Modern Times* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1960).

Harrison, G.B., "Books and Readers, 1591-4," *The Library*, 4th Series. 8 (1927), pp. 273-302.

Harrison, Peter "Reading the Passions: The Fall, the Passions, and Dominion Over Nature," *The Soft Underbelly of Reason: The Passions in the Seventeenth-Century*, ed. Stephen Gaukroger (London: Routledge, 1998), pp. 49-78.

Harrison, Peter, "The Bible and the Emergence of Modern Science," *Science and Christian Belief* 18.2 (2006): pp. 115–12.

Harrison, Peter, *The Fall of Man and the Foundations of Science* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

Healy, Thomas. "Sound Physic: Phineas Fletcher's The Purple Island and the Poetry of Purgation," *Renaissance Studies* 5 (1991): pp. 341-52.

Herrup, Cynthia B., *The Common Peace: Participation and the Criminal Law in Seventeenth-century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

Heyd, Michael, *Be Sober and Reasonable: The Critique of Enthusiasm in the Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries* (Leiden: Brill, 1995).

Hopkins, Lisa, "Staging the Passions in Ford's *The Lover's Melancholy*," *SEL* 45.2 (2005): pp. 443-459.

Howard-Hill, T.H., *Middleton's "Vulgar Pasquin": Essays on A Game of Chess* (London: Associated University Presses, 1995).

Hughes, Ann, "Thomas Edward's *Gangraena* and the Heresiography Tradition", *Heresy, Literature and Politics in Early Modern English Culture*, eds. David Loewenstein and John Marshall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 137-159.

Hughes, Anne, *Gangraena and the Struggle for the English Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

Hutson, Lorna, "Civility and Virility in Ben Jonson," *Representations* 78:1 (2002): pp. 1-27.

Hutson, Lorna, *The Invention of Suspicion: Law and Mimesis in Shakespeare and Renaissance Drama* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

Iwasaki, Soji, "Veritas filia temporis and Shakespeare," *ELR* 3 (1973): pp. 249-63.

James, Susan. *Passion and Action: The Emotions in Seventeenth-Century Philosophy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997).

Jowitt, Claire. "The Politics of Mandevillian Monsters in Richard Brome's The Antipodes," *A Knight's Legacy: Mandeville and Mandevillian Lore in Early Modern England*, ed. Ladan Niayesh (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011), pp. 195–212.

Kearney, James Joseph, *The Incarnate Text: Imagining the Book in Reformation England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009).

Keightley, Thomas. *The Mythology of Ancient Greece and Italy* (London: Whittaker & Co., 1838).

Kelsall, Malcolm, "The Historicity of Paradise Regained," *Milton Studies* 12 (1978): pp. 235-251.

Kernan, Alvin, *The Cankered Muse*: *Satire of the English Renaissance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959).

Kerwin, William, *Beyond the Body: The Boundaries of Medicine and English Renaissance Drama* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2005).

King, John N., "Milton's Cave of Errour: A Rewriting of Spenserian Satire," *Worldmaking Spenser* ed. Patrick Cheney (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2000), pp. 148-155.

King, John N., "Milton's Sin and Death: A Rewriting of Spenser's Den of Error," *Form and Reform in Renaissance England*, eds. Amy Boesky and Mary Thomas Crane (London: Associated University Presses, 2000), pp. 306-320.

Kitch, Aaron, *Political Economy and the States of Literature in Early Modern England* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009).

Kitzes, Adam H., *The Politics of Melancholy from Spenser to Milton* (London: Routledge, 2006).

Klein, Joan Larsen, "From Errour to Acrasia," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 41.3 (1978): pp. 173-199.

Klotz, Lisa, "Ben Jonson's Legal Imagination in *Volpone," SEL 51:2* (2011): pp. 385–408.

Lake, Peter, "Calvinism and the English Church 1570-1635", *Past and Present* 114 (1987): pp. 32-76.

Larmore, Charles, "Scepticism", *Cambridge History of Seventeenth-Century Philosophy*, ed. Daniel Garber and Michael Ayres, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 2.1145-1194.

Lerer, Seth, *Error and the Academic Self: The Scholarly Imagination, Medieval to Modern* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002).

Lewalski, Barbara K., *The Life of John Milton: A Critical Biography* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2003).

Lindley, David, *Thomas Campion* (Leiden: Brill, 1986).

Loveman, Kate, *Reading Fictions, 1660–1740: Deception in English Literary and Political Culture* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008).

Lund, Mary Ann, *Melancholy, Medicine and Religion in Early Modern England*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

Luxon, Thomas H., *Literal Figures: Puritan Allegory and the Reformation Crisis in Representation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995).

Lyons, Brigit Gellert, *Voices of Melancholy: Studies of Literary Treatments of Melancholy in Renaissance England* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1971).

MacCaffrey, Isobel Gamble, *Paradise Lost As "Myth*" (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1967).

MacCulloch, Diarmaid, *The Later Reformation in England, 1547-1603* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1990).

Mack, Peter, *Elizabethan Rhetoric: Theory and Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

MacLean, Ian, *Interpretation and Meaning in the Renaissance: The Case of Law* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

Maclean, Ian, *Logic, Signs and Nature in the Renaissance: The Case of Learned Medicine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

Marshall, Peter, *Reformation England, 1480-1642* (London: Arnold, 2003).

Marshall, Peter, "The Reformation of Hell? Protestant and Catholic Infernalisms in England, c. 1560–1640," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 61.2 (2010): pp. 279-98.

Martindale, Joanna, "The Best Master of Virtue and Wisdom: The Horace of Ben Jonson and His Heirs", *Horace Made New: Horatian Influences on British Writing from the Renaissance to the Twentieth Century*, ed. Charles Martindale and David Hopkins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 50-85.

Maus, Katherine Eisaman, *Ben Jonson and the Roman Frame of Mind* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984).

Maus, Katherine Eisaman, "Horns of the Dilema: Jealousy, Gender, and Spectatorship in English Renaissance Drama", *ELH* 54.3 (1987): pp. 561-583.

McBain, James, "Early Tudor Drama and Legal Culture, c. 1485-1558" (Unpublished DPhil thesis: University of Oxford, 2007).

McInnis, David, “Therapeutic Travel in Richard Brome’s *The Antipodes*”, *SEL* 52.2 (2012): pp. 447-469.

Mediaeval Handbooks of Penance: A Translation of the Principal Libri Poenitentiales and Selections from Related Documents, ed. and tr. John T. McNeill and Helena M. Gamer , 2nd edn (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990).

McPherson, David, “Ben Jonson’s Library and Marginalia: An Annotated Catalogue,” *Studies in Philology* 71:5 (1974): pp. 1-106.

Menn, Stephen, “The Intellectual Setting”, *Cambridge History of Seventeenth-Century Philosophy*, ed. Daniel Garber and Michael Ayres, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 2.33-86.

Mitchell, Peter, *The Purple Island and Anatomy in Early Seventeenth-Century Literature, Philosophy, and Theology* (Madison, N.J.: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2007).

Moul, Victoria, *Jonson, Horace and the Classical Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

Muggli, Mark Z., "Ben Jonson and the Business of News," *SEL* 32:2 (1992): pp. 323-340.

Mukherji, Subha, “False Trials in Shakespeare, Massinger, and Ford,” *Essays in Criticism* 56.3 (2006): pp. 219-240.

Murrin, Michael, *The Veil of Allegory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969).

Neill, Michael, “The Moral Artifice of *The Lover's Melancholy”, ELR* 8 (1978): pp. 66-83.

Neto, José R. Maia, “Academic Scepticism in Early Modern Philosophy”, *JHI* 58 (1997): pp. 199-220.

Nevitt, Marcus, *Women and the Pamphlet Culture of Revolutionary England, 1640–1660* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006).

Norbrook, David, “The Reformation Masque,” *The Court Masque,* ed. David Lindley (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), pp. 94-110.

Oxford English Dictionary. Consulted at www.oed.com.

Oyer, John S., *Lutheran Reformers Against Anabaptists: Luther, Melanchton, and Menius, and the Anabaptists of Central Germany* (Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1964).

Pagel, Walter, *Joan Baptista Van Helmont: Reformer of Science and Medicine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982).

Pagel, Walter, *Paracelsus: An Introduction to Philosophical Medicine in the Era of the Renaissance* (New York: Karger, 1982).

Pamphlet Wars: Prose in the English Revolution, ed. James Holstun (London: Frank Cass, 1992).

Paster, Gail Kern, *Humoring the* Body*: Emotions and the Shakespearean Stage* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

Patrick, John M., *Milton's Conception of Sin as Developed in Paradise Los*t (Logan: Literary Licensing, LLC, 1960).

Pelling, Margaret and Charles Webster, "Medical Practitioners", *Health, Medicine, and Mortality in the Sixteenth Century*, *ed. Charles Webster* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), pp.165-235.

Perry, Curtis, *The Making of Jacobean Culture: James I and the Renegotiation of Elizabethan Literary Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

Pettegree, Andrew, *The Book in the Renaissance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010).

Pheifer, J.D., "Errour and Echidna in *The Faerie Queen*: A Study in Literary Tradition"*, Literature and Learning in Medieval and Renaissance England*, ed. V.J. Scattergood (Blackrock, County Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1984).

Picciotto, Joanna, *Labors of Innocence in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2010).

Platt, Peter, *Reason Diminished: Shakespeare and the Marvellous* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997).

The Politics of Information in Early Modern Europe, eds. Brendan Dooley and Sabrina A. Baron (London: Routledge, 2001).

Pollard, Tanya, "'No Faith in Physic': Masquerades of Medicine Onstage and Off", *Disease, Diagnosis and Cure on the Early Modern Stage*, eds. Stephanie Moss and Kaara L. Peterson (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004) pp. 29-41.

Poole, Kristen, "Dissecting Sectarianism: Liberty of Conscience, the Swarm, and Thomas Edward's *Gangraena*," *Form and Reform*, *Reform in Renaissance England*, eds. Amy Boesky and Mary Thomas Crane (London: Associated University Presses, 2000), pp. 45-69.

Poole, Kristen, *Radical Religion from Shakespeare to Milton* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

Poole, William, *Milton and the Idea of the Fall* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

Popkin, Richard, *The History of Scepticism from Erasmus to Descartes* (New York: Humanities Press, 1964).

Prest, Wilfrid, "William Lambarde, Elizabethan Law Reform, and Early Stuart Politics," *Journal of British Studies* 34 (1995): pp. 468-469.

Quilligan, Maureen, *Milton's Spenser: The Politics of Reading* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983).

Quint, David, *Epic and Empire: Politics and Generic Form from Virgil to Milton* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).

Raymond, Joad, *The Invention of the Newspaper* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005).

Raymond, Joad, *Pamphlets and Pamphleteering in Early Modern Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

Raymond, Joad, "Exporting Impartiality", *The Emergence of Impartiality*, ed. Kathryn Murphy and Anita Traninger (Boston: Brill, 2013), pp. 141-67.

Rescher, Nicholas, *Error: On Our Predicament When Things Go Wrong* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2007).

Revard, Stella, "Milton and Myth", *Reassembling Truth: Twenty-First Century Milton*, eds. Charles W. Durham and Kristin A. Pruitt (London: Associated University Presses, 2003).

Rickard, Jane, "A Divided Jonson?: Art and Truth in The Staple of News", *ELR* 42 (2012): pp. 294-316.

Ricks, Christopher, *Milton's Grand Style* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963).

Rigolot, François, *L'erreur de la Renaissance* (Paris: Champion, 2002).

Rigolot, François, "The Renaissance Fascination with Error," *Renaissance Quarterly* 57:4 (2004), pp. 1212-1234.

Rittgers, Ronald K*., The Reformation of the Keys: Confession, Conscience, and Authority in Sixteenth-Century Germany* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2004).

Roberts, John, *The Necessity of Errors* (New York: Verso, 2011).

Robertson Jr., D.W., "A Note on the Classical Origin of "Circumstances" in the Mediaeval Confessional", *Studies in Philology* 43 (1946): pp. 6-14.

Rockwood, Catherine, "No Thy Side: Propaganda and Parody in Jonson's *Staple of News*," *ELH* 75:1 (2008): pp. 135-149.

Rosenburg, Daniel, "Early Modern Information Overload", *JHI* 64:1 (2003): pp. 1-9.

Sahel, Pierre, "The Strangeness of Dramatic Style: Rumour in *Henry VIII*," *Shakespeare Survey* 38 (1985): pp. 146-8.

Sanders, Julie, "The Politics of Escapism: Fantasies of Travel and Power in Richard Brome's *The Antipodes* and Ben Jonson's *The Alchemist*," *Writing and Fantasy*, eds. Ceri Sullivan and Barbara White (London: Longman, 1999), pp. 137-150.

Saxl, Fritz, "Veritas filia Temporis," *Philosophy and History*, eds. R. Klibansky and H.J. Paton (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1936), pp. 197-222.

Schmidt, Jeremy, *Melancholy and the Care of the Soul* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007).

Schmitt, Charles B., "The Rediscovery of Ancient Scepticism in Modern Times", *The Sceptical Tradition*, ed. M. Burnyeat (Berkley: University of California Press, 1983).

Selden, Raman, *English Verse Satire, 1590-1765* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1978).

Sensabaugh, G.F., *The Tragic Muse of John Ford* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1944).

Serjeantson, R. W., “Natural Knowledge in the New Atlantis”, *Natural Knowledge, in Francis Bacon’s* New Atlantis, ed. Bronwen Price (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), pp. 82-105.

Shapiro, Barbara J., *A Culture of Fact: England, 1550-1720* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000).

Shapiro, Barbara J., “Classical Rhetoric and the English Law of Evidence”, *Rhetoric and Law in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Victoria Kahn and Lorna Hutson (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), pp. 54-72.

Shell, Alison, *Catholicism, Controversy and the English Literary Imagination, 1558-1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

Sinfield, Alan, *Literature in Protestant* England, *1560-1660*, (London: Croom Helm, 1983).

Slack, Peter, “Mirrors of Health and Treasures of Poor Men: The Uses of Vernacular Medical Literature in Tudor England", *Health, Medicine, and Mortality in the Sixteenth Century*, ed. Charles Webster (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), pp. 238-273.

Smith, Wesley D., *The Hippocratic Tradition* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1979).

Spivack, Charlotte, “Alienation and Illusion: The Play-within-a-Play on the Caroline Stage,” *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England* 4 (1989): pp. 195-210.

Stachniewski, John, *The Persecutory Imagination: English Puritanism and the Literature of Religious Despair* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991).

Steadmen, John M., “Errour and the Renaissance Allegorical Tradition,” *Neuphilologische Mitteilung* 62 (1961): pp. 22-38.

Steadman, John M., "Sin, Echidna and the Viper’s brood," *Modern Language Review* 56.1 (1961): pp. 62-66.

Steggle, Matthew, *Richard Brome: Place and Politics on the Caroline Stage* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004).

Stein, Arnold, *Answerable Style: Essays on Paradise Lost* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1953).

Stroud, T., “Ben Jonson and Father Thomas Wright,” *ELH*, 14 (1947): pp. 274-82.

Sullivan, Ceri, “Thomas Middleton's View of Public Utility”, *Review of English Studies* 58:234 (2007): pp. 162-74.

Sutton, John, “Controlling the Passions: Passions, Memory, and Moral Physiology of Self in Seventeenth-Century Neurophilosophy”, *The Soft Underbelly of Reason*, ed. Stephen Gaukroger (London: Routledge, 1998), pp. 115-146.

Taavitsainen, Irma, “Dissemination and Appropriation of Medical Knowledge: Humoral Theory in Early Modern English Medical Writing and Lay texts”, *Medical Writing in Early Modern England,* eds. Irma Taavitsainen and Päivi Pahta (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011) pp. 94-114.

Teskey, Gordon, “From Allegory to Dialectic: Imagining Error in Spenser and Milton,” *PMLA* 101 (1986): pp. 9-23.

Traninger, Anita, “Taking Sides and the Prehistory of Impartiality”, *The Emergence of Impartiality*, ed. Kathryn Murphy and Anita Traninger (Boston: Brill, 2013), pp. 33-64.

Traister, Barbara, “‘Note Her a Little Farther’: Doctors and Healers in the Drama of Shakespeare”, *Disease, Diagnosis and Cure on the Early Modern Stage*, eds. Stephanie Moss and Kaara L. Peterson (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), pp. 43-52.

Treip, Mindele Anne, *Allegorical Poetics and the Epic: The Renaissance Tradition to Paradise Lost* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1994).

Tyacke, Nicholas, “Puritanism, Arminianism and Counter-Revolution”, *The Origins of the English Civil War*, ed. Conrad Russell (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1973), pp. 119-43.

Vicari, Eleanor Patricia, *The View from Minerva’s Tower: Learning and Imagination in the Anatomy of Melancholy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989).

Walker, Katherine, “‘Sometimes an Actor Himself’: Robert Burton and Therapeutic Theatricality”, *Prose Studies* 35.3. (2013): pp. 223-238.

Watt, Tessa, *Cheap Print and Popular Piety 1550-1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

Wear, Andrew, "William Harvey and the ‘Way of the Anatomists’", *History of Science* 21.3 (1983): pp. 223-249.

Wear, Andrew, “Medicine in Early Modern Europe, 1500-1700,” *The Western Medical Tradition: 800 BC to AD 1800*, Lawrence Conread et al (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 215-361.

Wear, Andrew, *Knowledge and Practice in English Medicine*, *1550-1680* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

Webster, Charles, *The Great Instauration: Science, Medicine and Reform, 1626-1660* (London: Duckworth, 1975).

Williams, Sheila, "Two Seventeenth Century Semi-Dramatic Allegories of Truth the Daughter of Time," *Guildhall Miscellany* 5 (1963): pp. 207-20.

Womack, Peter, *Ben Jonson* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986).

Zlatar, Antoinina Bevan, *Reformation Fictions: Polemical Protestant Dialogues in Elizabethan England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).